

# TRAVERSE CITY MASTER PLAN

Shaping  
Our Future

SUPPLEMENTAL REPORT

A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR THE CITY OF TRAVERSE CITY

**AUGUST 2024**

*Aerial view of downtown Traverse City waterfront.*

CITY OF TRAVERSE CITY  
GRAND TRAVERSE COUNTY, MICHIGAN

CITY OF TRAVERSE CITY PLANNING COMMISSION  
RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE  
CITY OF TRAVERSE CITY MASTER PLAN 2024

WHEREAS, the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (MPEA), 2008 PA 33, MCL125.3801 et seq. requires municipal planning commissions to prepare a "master plan" pertinent to the future development of the municipality; and

WHEREAS, the City of Traverse City Planning Commission has prepared a draft Master Plan for the City, to update and replace its previous Master Plan; and

WHEREAS, the City of Traverse City authorized the distribution of the draft Master Plan to the general public and the various entities as required by the MPEA, for review and comment purposes on June 4, 2024; and

WHEREAS, the proposed Master Plan was made available to the various entities and the general public as required by the MPEA, and a public hearing thereon was held by the Planning Commission on August 7, 2024 pursuant to notice as required by MPEA; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission finds the proposed Master Plan as amended after the public hearing is desirable and proper, and furthers the land use and development goals and strategies of the City;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the City of Traverse City Planning Commission hereby adopts the City of Traverse City Master Plan as submitted for the public hearing held on August 7, 2024, with edits, subsequently identified by the Planning Commission, including the Future Land Use Map, Mobility Action Plan, and Supplemental Report along with all the text, charts, tables, maps, and descriptive and other matter therein intended by the Planning Commission to form the complete Master Plan.

Motion by: Shea O'Brien Seconded by: Anna Dituri

Roll Call Vote:

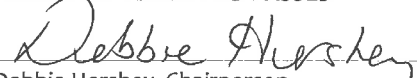
Ayes: Debbie Hershey, Anna Dituri, Shea O'Brien, David Knapp, Jerry Swanson, Jess Heller

Nays: Jackie Anderson

Absent: Mitch Treadwell

Abstain: None

**RESOLUTION DECLARED PASSED**

  
Debbie Hershey, Chairperson  
City of Traverse City Planning Commission

8/28/2024  
Date

**CERTIFICATE**

I hereby certify the foregoing resolution is a true and correct copy of the resolution that was approved by a majority of the City of Traverse City Planning Commission by a roll call vote at a special meeting of the Commission held on August 20, 2024 in compliance with the Open Meetings Act.



\_\_\_\_\_  
Shea O'Brien, Secretary  
City of Traverse City Planning Commission

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to the community members who took the time to participate in this process. This is your plan!

## City Commission

Mayor Amy Shamroe  
Mayor Pro Tem Mark Wilson  
Mi Stanley  
Mitch Treadwell  
Jackie Anderson  
Tim Werner  
Heather Shaw  
Mayor Richard Lewis\*  
Ashley Walter\*  
Linda Kolbert\*

*\*Indicates past member*

## Planning Commission

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Anna Dituri, Vice Chair  
Shea O'Brien, Secretary  
Jackie Anderson, City Commission Liaison  
Mitch Treadwell, City Commission Liaison  
Jerry Swanson, City Manager Appointee  
Brian McGillivray  
Jess Heller  
David Knapp  
Madeleine George, Student Liaison  
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Topher Martin\*  
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*\*Indicates City resident*

## LIST OF FIGURES

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| Figure 1: Traverse City Demographic Snapshot   | 11  |
| Figure 2: Traverse City and Traverse City $\mu$ SA Percentage Population Change and Projection | 16  |
| Figure 3: Traverse City Age Pyramid  | 17  |
| Figure 4: Racial Demographics in Traverse City   | 20  |
| Figure 5: Traverse City Household Incomes  | 21  |
| Figure 6 The Housing Crisis  | 30  |
| Figure 7: Traverse City Housing by the Numbers   | 33  |
| Figure 8: Traverse City Housing by the Numbers (continued)                                     | 34  |
| Figure 9: Housing Units Permitted by the City of Traverse City, 2017-2022                      | 34  |
| Figure 10: Type of Home, Traverse City Micropolitan Area                                       | 37  |
| Figure 11: Home Value Distribution, Traverse City Micropolitan Area                            | 40  |
| Figure 12: Year Built, Traverse City Micropolitan Area   | 42  |
| Figure 13: Transitioning Through Housing; Leaving Home   | 48  |
| Figure 14: Transitioning Through Housing; Aging in Place                                       | 49  |
| Figure 15: Transitioning Through Housing, Housing Instability                                  | 50  |
| Figure 16: Density Considerations  | 53  |
| Figure 17: Missing Middle Housing Typologies   | 57  |
| Figure 18: TCLP Energy Sources, 2022   | 134 |
| Figure 19: Projected Change in Average Annual Temperature by End of Century                    | 152 |
| Figure 20: Projected Change in Days with over 1" Precipitation by Mid-Century                  | 152 |
| Figure 21: Traverse City Trees   | 156 |
| Figure 22: Lake Michigan Water Levels  | 168 |
| Figure 23: Air Quality   | 171 |
| Figure 24: Principles of CPTED   | 188 |
| Figure 25: Employment Inflow Outflow   | 221 |
| Figure 26: Economic Output   | 223 |
| Figure 27: Thirlby Field Conceptual Illustration   | 247 |
| Figure 28: 950 Woodmere Avenue Conceptual Illustration   | 248 |
| Figure 29: 713/725 East Eighth Street Conceptual Illustration                                  | 251 |
| Figure 30: 1101/1137 South Garfield Avenue Conceptual Illustration                             | 252 |
| Figure 31: Tourism Word Cloud  | 261 |
| Figure 32: Doxey Irridex Model   | 262 |
| Figure 33: Tourism Priorities  | 262 |
| Figure 34: Grand Traverse County Monthly Population  | 263 |
| Figure 35: Economic Impacts of Tourism   | 264 |
| Figure 36: Economic Dependence on Tourism  | 265 |
| Figure 37: Social Impacts of Tourism   | 267 |
| Figure 38: US-31 Visitation Patterns   | 271 |
| Figure 39: Downtown Visitation Patterns  | 271 |
| Figure 40: Total Visitation Patterns   | 271 |
| Figure 41: Grand Traverse Mall Visitation Patterns   | 271 |
| Figure 42: Environmental Impacts of Tourism  | 278 |

## LIST OF TABLES

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Table 1: Regional Population Comparisons, 2010 & 2020  | 12 |
| Table 2: Traverse City Urbanized Area  | 13 |
| Table 3: Population Density, Traverse City Urbanized Area 2020   | 13 |
| Table 4: Traverse City Family Structures   | 18 |
| Table 5: Non-Family Structure in Traverse City   | 19 |
| Table 6: Median Income Based on Race and Gender in Traverse City, Traverse City $\mu$ SA, and Michigan | 21 |
| Table 7: Poverty Status, Michigan and Traverse City in 2010 & 2020                                     | 22 |
| Table 8: All People in Poverty, Traverse City & Surrounding Communities, 2010 & 2020                   | 23 |

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| Table 9: All People in Poverty, Traverse City & Surrounding Communities, 2010 & 2020 | 23  |
| Table 10: ALICE Household Stability Budget, Grand Traverse County                    | 24  |
| Table 11: Housing Units 2010 & 2020  | 35  |
| Table 12: Housing Stock by Number of Units in Building                               | 36  |
| Table 13: Vacancy, Traverse City Micropolitan Area                                   | 37  |
| Table 14: Owner- or Renter-Occupied Housing  | 38  |
| Table 15: Housing Value of Owner-Occupied Units                                      | 39  |
| Table 16: Median Home Value, Traverse City Micropolitan Area                         | 40  |
| Table 17: Housing Age of Owner-Occupied Units  | 41  |
| Table 18: Gross Rent   | 43  |
| Table 19: Vacancy, Traverse City Micropolitan Area                                   | 45  |
| Table 20: Mortgage Applications by Income, City of Traverse City                     | 46  |
| Table 21: Mortgage Applications by Race, City of Traverse City**                     | 47  |
| Table 22: Mortgage Applications by Ethnicity, City of Traverse City**                | 47  |
| Table 23: Residential Permitted Uses   | 54  |
| Table 24: Proposed Lot Reductions  | 55  |
| Table 25: Morgan Farms Future Framework  | 68  |
| Table 26: Slabtown Future Framework  | 71  |
| Table 27: Kids Creek Future Framework  | 74  |
| Table 28: Central Future Framework   | 78  |
| Table 29: Old Towne Future Framework   | 81  |
| Table 30: Lake Ridge Future Framework  | 84  |
| Table 31: Fernwood Future Framework  | 87  |
| Table 32: Hilltop Future Framework   | 89  |
| Table 33: Boardman Future Framework  | 92  |
| Table 34: NoBo Future Framework  | 95  |
| Table 35: Traverse Heights Future Framework  | 98  |
| Table 36: Oak Park Future Framework  | 101 |
| Table 37: Base of the Peninsula/BOOM Future Framework                                | 103 |
| Table 38: Triangle Future Framework  | 107 |
| Table 39: Oakwood Future Framework   | 109 |
| Table 40: Approach Zone Regulations  | 119 |
| Table 41: Crashes, 2021  | 125 |
| Table 42: Top 10 Problematic Intersections   | 125 |
| Table 43: Water System Demands   | 129 |
| Table 44: Green Infrastructure Methods   | 133 |
| Table 45: Existing Land Use, 2023  | 141 |
| Table 46: Wetlands   | 159 |
| Table 47: Kids Creek Watershed Restoration   | 166 |
| Table 48: Health Outcomes  | 179 |
| Table 49: Prevalence of Actions to Promote Preventative Care                         | 181 |
| Table 50: Uninsured Rates  | 182 |
| Table 51: Gendered Space Strategies  | 190 |
| Table 52: Adult Recreation Habits  | 195 |
| Table 53: Youth Recreation Habits by Age, Gender, and Race                           | 196 |
| Table 54: Arts and Culture Production Satellite Account, Michigan 2021               | 204 |
| Table 55: Structures on the National Register of Historic Places                     | 210 |
| Table 56: Top 5 Largest Industries in the Traverse City Region                       | 223 |
| Table 57: Top 5 Export Industries in the Traverse City Region                        | 224 |
| Table 58: Economic Base  | 224 |
| Table 59: Industry Trends  | 225 |
| Table 60: Top Industry Trends  | 226 |
| Table 61: COVID-19 Industry Classifications  | 226 |

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Table 62: Impact of COVID-19  | 227 |
| Table 63: COVID-19 Impacts by Industry                                  | 227 |
| Table 64: Community Feedback for Munson Avenue                          | 235 |
| Table 65: Munson Avenue Design Results                                  | 236 |
| Table 66: Community Feedback for Eighth Street and Garfield Avenue Node | 237 |
| Table 67: Eighth Street and Garfield Avenue Node Design Results         | 238 |
| Table 68: Community Feedback for Fourteenth Street                      | 239 |
| Table 69: Fourteenth Street Design Results                              | 241 |
| Table 70: Community Feedback for Garfield Avenue                        | 241 |
| Table 71: Garfield Avenue Design Results                                | 243 |
| Table 72: Tourism-Reliant Industries                                    | 266 |

## LIST OF MAPS

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| Map 1: Traverse City Region                              | 14  |
| Map 2: Human Climate Niche - 2020, 2070 - High Emissions | 25  |
| Map 3: Census Tracts                                     | 44  |
| Map 4: Neighborhoods                                     | 64  |
| Map 5: National Functional Classification                | 115 |
| Map 6: Downtown Parking                                  | 116 |
| Map 7: Airport Approach Zones                            | 120 |
| Map 8: Traverse City Route Map                           | 122 |
| Map 9: Crashes, 2021                                     | 124 |
| Map 10: TCLP Energy Sources                              | 135 |
| Map 11: Existing Land Use                                | 142 |
| Map 12: Existing Land Use Patterns                       | 144 |
| Map 13: Tree Canopy, West                                | 157 |
| Map 14: Tree Canopy, East                                | 158 |
| Map 15: Wetlands   | 161 |
| Map 16: Watersheds                                       | 163 |
| Map 17: Lower Boardman Restoration                       | 167 |
| Map 18: Coastal Flood Zones - East Bay                   | 170 |
| Map 19: Coastal Flood Zones - West Bay                   | 171 |
| Map 20: Traffic Pollution                                | 172 |
| Map 21: Surface Temperature 06/26/22                     | 174 |
| Map 22: Healthcare Access                                | 183 |
| Map 23: Violent Crimes (2018 - 2021)                     | 184 |
| Map 24: Property Crimes (2018 - 2021)                    | 184 |
| Map 25: TCFD Calls (2018 - 2021)                         | 186 |
| Map 26: TCFD Structure Calls (2018 - 2021)               | 187 |
| Map 27: Food Resources                                   | 192 |
| Map 28: Food Access                                      | 194 |
| Map 29: Historic Districts                               | 211 |
| Map 30: Park Access                                      | 214 |
| Map 31: Non-Motorized Routes                             | 217 |
| Map 32: Traverse City Workers – Home Location            | 222 |
| Map 33: DDA Boundary                                     | 229 |
| Map 34: Downtown TIF District                            | 231 |
| Map 35: January Tourists                                 | 272 |
| Map 36: July Tourists                                    | 273 |
| Map 37: January Locals                                   | 274 |
| Map 38: July Locals                                      | 275 |
| Map 39: STR Locations - April 2023                       | 277 |



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

|     |  |     |
|-----|--|-----|
| 1.  | Demographics                                 | 10  |
| 2.  | Housing                                      | 28  |
| 3.  | Neighborhoods                                | 62  |
| 4.  | Transportation & Mobility                    | 112 |
| 5.  | Infrastructure & Energy                      | 128 |
| 6.  | Existing Land Use                            | 140 |
| 7.  | Sustainability, Resiliency & Natural Systems | 150 |
| 8.  | Health, Safety & Wellness                    | 178 |
| 9.  | Arts, Culture & Recreation                   | 202 |
| 10. | Economic Development                         | 220 |
| 11. | Sustainable Tourism                          | 260 |
| 12. | Plan Review                                  | 280 |
| 13. | Community Engagement                         | 312 |
| 14. | Mobility Action Plan                         | 544 |

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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## WHAT IS A MASTER PLAN?

A Master Plan is a community's policy document used to guide decisions that affect its land, people, and structures. It is often thought of as a long-term "roadmap" to guide officials and decision-makers when they are faced with difficult land use and infrastructure decisions that have long-term impacts on the community. The Master Plan inventories several systems to identify how they work together, how trends have affected these systems over time, and what improvements a city can make to strengthen these systems to positively influence residents' quality of life. The following are among the major features discussed in this Master Plan:

- » Demographics,
- » Housing,
- » Natural Features,
- » Community Facilities and Services,
- » Open Space and Recreation,
- » Transportation Systems,
- » Economic Development, and
- » Land Use.

The plan then lays out "where we should go" based on a combination of residents' priorities and findings drawn from the inventory process. These priorities are the basis for actions that community leadership can pursue through policy; particularly through zoning ordinance updates.

The Michigan Planning Enabling Act (PA 33 of 2008) enables municipalities to create master plans to do the following:

- » Guide the use of limited resources efficiently;
- » Promote public health, safety, and general welfare;
- » Preserve the quality of the environment in the City; and
- » Guide zoning decisions.

The plan is designed to be comprehensive, future-oriented, and accessible to the public, after all, it is a reflection of the community's aspirations. That way, busy city officials do not get swept up in short-term gains at the expense of long-term progress. The Traverse City Master Plan includes three components: the roadmap, the supporting documentation, and the appendix. The roadmap outlines the guiding principles, future land use, and action plan. This is the portion of the document that will be used by elected officials and leaders to guide their decision making. The supporting documentation is all of the research, narrative, and recommendations that helped form the roadmap. These sections serve as additional resources to expand on specific elements for the future of Traverse City (housing, neighborhoods, etc.). Finally, the appendix includes the Mobility Action Plan and other documentation for the Master Plan.



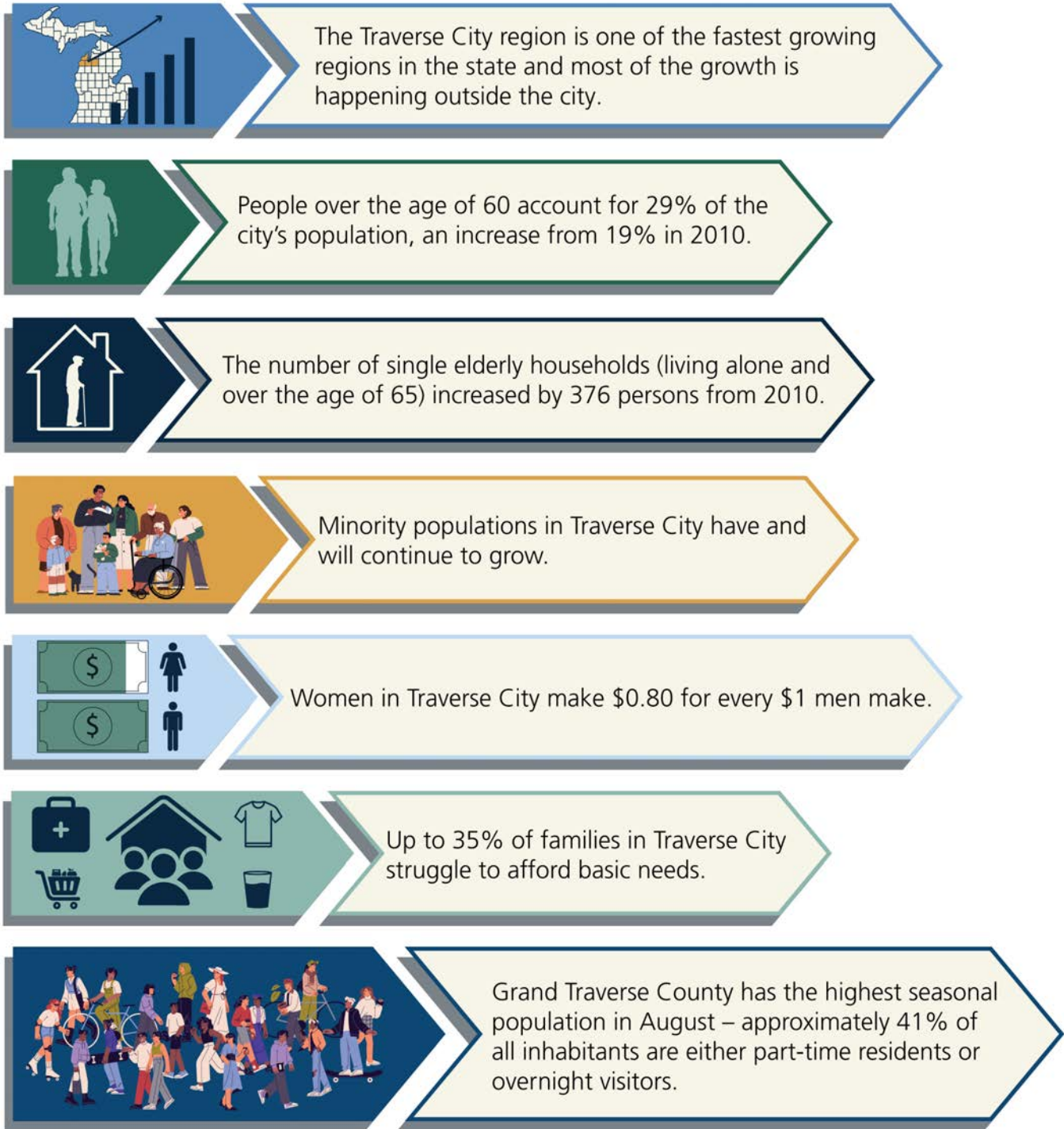
*5/3 Bank clock tower amongst Bradford Pear blooms.*

An analysis of a community's demographic characteristics is essential in the planning process. A community-focused approach begins with an understanding of the characteristics of people that live in the community, their economic backgrounds, and attributes of the surrounding environment. The following section details Traverse City demographics, how the city compares to surrounding jurisdictions, and how the city has changed over time.

## DEMOGRAPHICS

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Figure 1: Traverse City Demographic Snapshot



## THE TRAVERSE CITY REGION

There are many ways to define the Traverse City Region which may include areas that have strong economic and social ties to the city, areas that have a Traverse City address, or areas where people who colloquially identify as a “Traverse City local” live. The United States Census Bureau has multiple definitions of what may be considered a “region.” The Census definitions of “metropolitan/micropolitan statistical area” and “urbanized area” are the two best descriptors for what people identify as the “Traverse City Region.” The Traverse City Micropolitan Statistical Area (μSA) includes the four counties of Grand Traverse, Leelanau, Benzie, and Kalkaska. As of 2020, the region totaled 153,448 people.

Between 2010 and 2020, the Traverse City μSA grew by roughly 10,000 people, a 7% increase in population.<sup>1</sup> Over this period, the Traverse City μSA was the fourth fastest growing region of all of Michigan’s Metropolitan Statistical Areas and Micropolitan Statistical Areas combined. The growth rate of the Traverse City μSA was behind only the Lansing–East Lansing MSA, the Grand Rapids–Wyoming MSA, and the Ann Arbor MSA. Of the 16 total μSAs in Michigan, the Traverse City μSA exhibited the greatest population growth.

An urbanized area (UA) is delineated around densely developed urban land along with adjacent territory containing less densely settled land.<sup>2</sup> The Traverse City Urbanized Area includes all or portions of Acme, Bingham, Blair, East Bay,

**Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA):** An area with one or more counties that contains a city of at least 50,000 people or an urbanized area of at least 100,000 people.

**Micropolitan Statistical Area (μSA):** An area that contains an urban cluster of between 10,000 to 50,000 people.

**Urbanized Area (UA):** An area with a population of at least 50,000 people.

Elmwood, Garfield Charter, Green Lake, Long Lake, and Peninsula Townships in addition to the City of Traverse City. Between 2010 and 2020, the Traverse City UA grew by roughly 4,000 people, an increase of 8%, surpassing the growth of the four county Traverse City μSA by a percentage point.<sup>3</sup> The growth in the Traverse City UA accounts for roughly 40% of the growth in the μSA, indicating that the UA is driving a large share of the regional growth. However, growth across the UA is not equal. Population growth in the municipalities that intersect with the UA ranges from 2% to 20%. Three of the four fastest growing municipalities in the UA border the city. While most of the UA growth is not happening within city boundaries, Traverse City remains the economic and cultural center of the region; growth anywhere in the region has implications for demographic changes in Traverse City. Only a quarter of the population growth in the UA was in the city proper.

**Table 1: Regional Population Comparisons, 2010 & 2020**

| Geography                       | 2010 Population | 2020 Population | Change         |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Lansing–East Lansing Metro Area | 464,036         | 541,297         | 77,261 (16.6%) |
| Grand Rapids–Wyoming Metro Area | 993,670         | 1,087,592       | 313,432 (9.5%) |
| Ann Arbor Metro Area            | 344,791         | 372,258         | 27,467 (8.0%)  |
| Traverse City Micro Area        | 143,372         | 153,448         | 10,076 (7.0%)  |
| Cadillac Micro Area             | 47,584          | 48,725          | 1,141 (2.4%)   |

Source: Decennial Census 2010, 2020

**Table 2: Traverse City Urbanized Area**

| Community                           | 2010 Population | 2020 Population | Change              |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| Acme Township                       | 4,375           | 4,456           | 81 (1.9%)           |
| Bingham Township                    | 2,497           | 2,577           | 80 (3.2%)           |
| Blair Township                      | 8,209           | 8,994           | 785 (9.6%)          |
| City of Traverse City               | 14,674          | 15,678          | 1,004 (6.8%)        |
| East Bay Township                   | 10,663          | 11,589          | 926 (8.7%)          |
| Elmwood Township                    | 4,503           | 4,892           | 389 (8.6%)          |
| Garfield Charter Township           | 16,256          | 19,499          | 3,243 (19.9%)       |
| Green Lake Township                 | 5,784           | 6,703           | 919 (15.9%)         |
| Long Lake Township                  | 8,662           | 9,956           | 1,294 (14.9%)       |
| Peninsula Township                  | 5,433           | 6,068           | 635 (11.7%)         |
| <b>Traverse City Urbanized Area</b> | <b>47,109</b>   | <b>51,065*</b>  | <b>3,956 (8.4%)</b> |

Source: Decennial Census 2010, 2020, \*ACS 2020 5 YR Estimates

**Table 3: Population Density, Traverse City Urbanized Area 2020**

| Community                 | Inhabitants<br>(per square mile) | Housing Units<br>(per square mile) | Population<br>Change, 2010-2020 |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Acme Township             | 172.1                            | 88.0                               | 1.9%                            |
| Bingham Township          | 48.8                             | 20.1                               | 3.2%                            |
| Blair Township            | 252.6                            | 90.5                               | 9.6%                            |
| City of Traverse City     | 1,894.4                          | 826.6                              | 6.8%                            |
| East Bay Township         | 289.9                            | 117.4                              | 8.7%                            |
| Elmwood Township          | 245.4                            | 98.9                               | 8.6%                            |
| Garfield Charter Township | 733.4                            | 322.9                              | 19.9%                           |
| Green Lake Township       | 184.7                            | 83.5                               | 15.9%                           |
| Long Lake Township        | 333.0                            | 127.8                              | 14.9%                           |
| Peninsula Township        | 217.3                            | 92.9                               | 11.7%                           |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Fact Sheets

Map 1: Traverse City Region



## Traverse City Region

Sources: Michigan Open Data Portal, City of Traverse City

- Traverse City Micropolitan Statistical Area
- Urbanized Area
- City of Traverse City
- City
- Village



## Regionalism and Climate Change

Trends of population growth across the Traverse City Urbanized Area are indicative of increasing low-density, rural development throughout the region. Except for the City of Traverse City and Garfield Charter Township, all municipalities in the UA can be characterized as rural (less than 500 people per square mile) based on their population densities (illustrated in the table “Population Density, Traverse City Urbanized Area 2020”). Though the urban amenities of Traverse City are accessible by residents across the region, nearly 70% of residents in the UA live outside of the City and are likely to require personal transportation from their primary residence to the region’s health and wellbeing, economic, social, and cultural resources. This has implications for emissions levels that originate from vehicular travel as well as emissions that are a function of low-density development and energy consumption in housing. Growing populations in surrounding municipalities that are more rural in nature illustrate a greater likelihood for travel to Traverse City to become more prevalent and a higher demand for low-density, intensive energy housing.

## Regionalism and Equity

Equitable outcomes for residents of the Traverse City Urbanized Area are best realized when all municipalities work together to identify and work towards shared regional goals. This coordination enables resource sharing for the sake of UA residents as opposed to siloed efforts that may overlook similar experiences and needs that result from living in a shared geography. Further, regionalism’s relation to equity and sustainability is interconnected. Though residence in denser, more urban communities is typically regarded as more sustainable because of the associated walkability and energy efficiency of housing and commercial developments, there is often a higher demand to live in these areas which causes housing prices to increase. This often leads prospective residents to look for housing that may be further from the central attractions but more affordable and exemplifies common dynamics that dictate which populations have the ability to choose sustainable living options and immediate access to commonly sought after amenities.



*Aerial view of Traverse City.*

Source: City of Traverse City

## TRAVERSE CITY

### Population

After 80 years of almost continual growth, Traverse City's population peaked in 1960 at 18,432 people. The 1963 demolition of the Traverse City State Hospital (Michigan's northern most psychiatric asylum) began a trend of depopulation for the city.<sup>4</sup> Over the next four decades, Traverse City declined by an average of 6% each decade to 14,532 people by 2000.<sup>5</sup> This period of slight decline was likely a result of people moving out of the City into the surrounding region, illustrated by the growth of the four-county Traverse City μSA in the same period.<sup>6</sup> Estimates from the State of Michigan's Department of Technology, Management, and Budget project the μSA to continue growing, reaching roughly 164,000 people by 2040, 62% of which will reside in Grand Traverse County.<sup>7</sup>

Traverse City will likely continue to grow over the next few decades. However, as a community without significant portions of vacant or developable land, population growth in the City will be tightly tied to the number of new housing units built and occupied. Planning for and constructing new housing units has implications for Traverse City's economic growth and business development. Approximately 23% of business owners in Traverse City named barriers to attainable housing as the

most prevalent challenge to growing their business, second only to concerns about staffing (which are inherently related to workforce access to housing).<sup>8</sup>

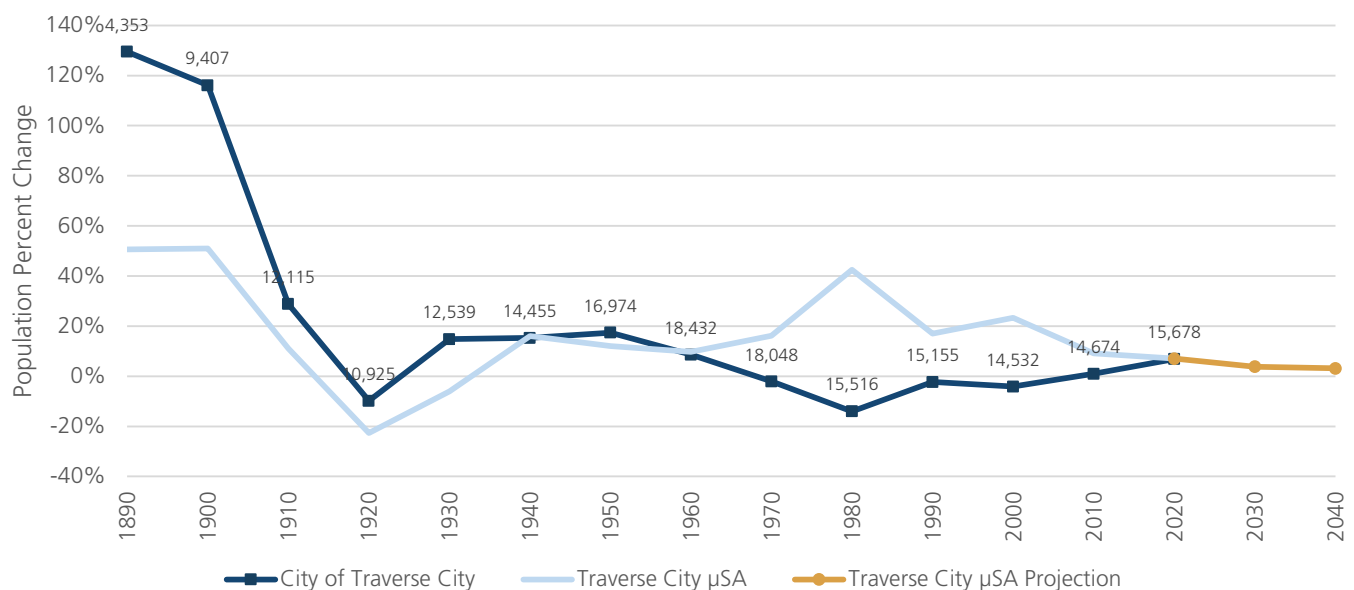
### Seasonal Population

Traverse City's reported population of 15,678 represents only a portion of the city's total population on a monthly basis. As a seasonal tourist community, Traverse City's total population of year-round residents, part-time residents, and overnight visitors fluctuates wildly throughout the year. In Grand Traverse County, the total population fluctuates from 109,408 in February to 161,088 in August with 41% of the August population being seasonal (e.g., individuals who are second homeowners or overnight visitors). Undoubtedly, most of this tourism driven seasonality is focused on Traverse City, and Traverse City's seasonal population estimates are likely more pronounced than that of the county. A more substantial discussion of the impacts of tourism and seasonal population change can be found in the "Sustainable Tourism" section of this document.

### Age

Like many communities in Michigan, Traverse City is aging. In 2010, the median age was 42.6 years, slightly higher than the state's median age of 38.1 years.<sup>9</sup> Driving the City's comparatively high median

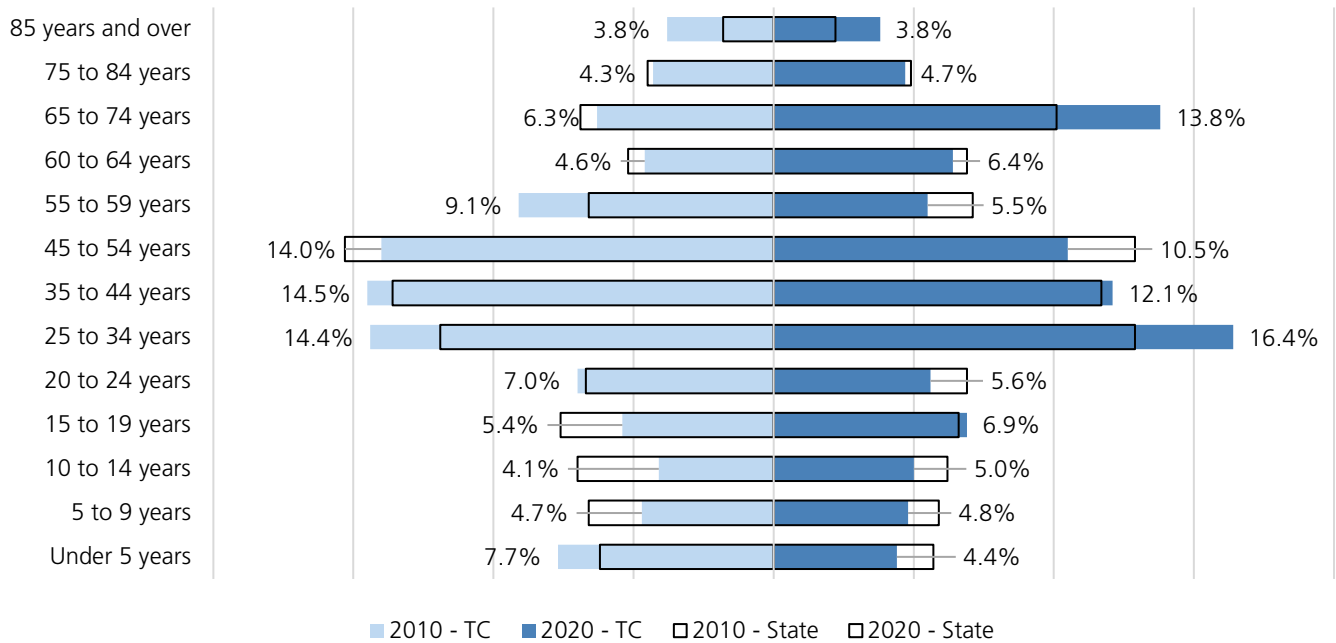
Figure 2: Traverse City and Traverse City μSA Percentage Population Change and Projection



Source: United States Decennial Census, 1880 – 2020, Michigan Department of Technology, Management, and Budget



**Figure 3: Traverse City Age Pyramid**



Source: American Community Survey 2010 & 2020 5 Year Estimates, DP05

age were a lower percentage of children aged 5 to 19, a higher percentage of people aged 55 to 59, and those over the age of 85 compared to the state median. In 2010, those aged over 85 accounted for 3.8% of the City’s population compared to just 1.8% of the state’s population. By 2020, the City’s median age increased to 45.7 years while Michigan’s median age increased to 39.8 years.<sup>10</sup>

Over the past decade, the City has experienced a substantial increase in people over the age of 60. In 2010, there were roughly 2,800 people over the age of 60, accounting for 19% of the population. By 2020, there were almost 4,500 people over the age of 60 living in Traverse City, accounting for 29% of the population.<sup>11</sup> The influx of an older population indicates that the City is an attractive place to live for new retirees and seniors. The ample supply of healthcare in Traverse City is a strong factor for attracting older populations. In Grand Traverse County, there is one primary care physician for every 757 residents, the third best ratio in the state.<sup>12</sup>

Another age group that increased from 2010 to 2020 were those aged 25 to 34, fairly uncommon in aging communities. This age cohort is commonly referred to as the family formation years because these are generally the prime ages to begin to have children.<sup>13</sup> An increase in the family formation

### Aging Communities and Equity

The presence of an aging community in Traverse City is indicative of the availability of necessary healthcare services and resources. However, the ability for senior residents to fully access and utilize these resources as they continue to age can differ based on income level, physical and mental abilities, employment history, retirement savings, quality of insurance, and more. Pursuing equity in aging communities can entail creating connections between existing social support networks, educational services, and civic and/or advocacy groups that are dedicated to broadening access to necessary services to all seniors, regardless of need and available resources. Equity-based goals can also encompass accommodations for populations with differing needs, including provisions that bolster full access and enjoyment to residential, business, and recreational spaces. The *Housing Chapter* of this master plan will detail primary considerations to support aging in place for individual houses, residential communities, neighborhoods, and more.

cohort is a strong indicator that young families are moving into the City, which is critical for long-term population stability. Without young families, aging communities will eventually see declines in school enrollment which can divert community resources from the public school system, further compounding the perception of the community as unattractive for new families.

While Traverse City experienced an increase in young families and retirees, the number of middle-aged people declined. In 2010, the number of people aged 35 to 59 accounted for 38% of the total population but only 28% in 2020, equating to a loss of roughly 1,200 people in the age group. Yet, the number of those aged 5 to 19 increased by over 500 people from 2010 to 2020.<sup>14</sup> The decline in the number of people aged 35 to 59 can likely be attributed to two population dynamics: there was a middle-aged bubble in 2010 that has now aged and are no longer considered middle-aged, and empty-nesters and middle-aged households without children have moved out of the community.

Overall, Traverse City’s population skews older, but the growth in young families will start to bring the median age of Traverse City down or at least remain consistent at current levels. Additionally, as the older population naturally declines over the next several decades, the population replacing them in the community will significantly alter the overall community composition. Current trends indicate that the replacement population will likely be a younger demographic.

## Households

Despite an increase in population, the number of households decreased from 2010 to 2020. In 2010, there were 6,915 households in the City compared to 6,888 in 2020.<sup>15</sup> As defined by the Census, a household includes all people who occupy a single housing unit.<sup>16</sup> A declining number of households and an increase in population can often signify substantial shifts in the population composition. However, the decline in households is so small (-0.3%) that it is not symptomatic of any broader changes and is likely an outcome of natural household changes (couplings, separations, relocations, etc.).

## Families and Non-Families

The United States Census Bureau defines households into two categories: families and non-families. Families are defined as a group of two or more people related by birth, marriage, or adoption. Between 2010 and 2020, the number of families increased slightly from 2,520 to 2,558. Notably, there was a substantial decrease in the number of single mothers living in the City during the same time.<sup>17</sup>

Non-families include any individuals living alone or living with people with whom they are not related. The number of non-families slightly declined between 2010 and 2020, but the change varied greatly by type of non-family. The number of single men over the age of 65 and living alone increased over the past decade (214.7%) as did the number of single women over the age of 65 and living alone (9.9%). The number of individuals

**Table 4: Traverse City Family Structures**

| Family Type                           | 2010         | 2020         | Change           |
|---------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|------------------|
| Married couple                        | 2,520        | 2,558        | 38 (1.5%)        |
| With children                         | 947          | 973          | 26 (2.7%)        |
| Male householder, no spouse present   | 203          | 315          | 112 (55.2%)      |
| With children                         | 127          | 182          | 55 (43.3%)       |
| Female householder, no spouse present | 700          | 575          | -125 (-17.9%)    |
| With children                         | 489          | 290          | -199 (-40.7%)    |
| <b>Total</b>                          | <b>3,423</b> | <b>3,448</b> | <b>25 (0.7%)</b> |

Source: American Community Survey 2010 & 2020 5 Year Estimates, B11003

**Table 5: Non-Family Structure in Traverse City**

| Non-Family Type             | 2010         | 2020         | Change             |
|-----------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------------|
| Male householder            | 1,319        | 1,405        | 86 (6.5%)          |
| Living alone                | 979          | 1,150        | 171 (17.5%)        |
| Living alone (15 to 64)     | 843          | 722          | -121 (-14.4%)      |
| Living alone (65+)          | 136          | 428          | 292 (214.7%)       |
| Not living alone            | 340          | 255          | -85 (-25.0%)       |
| Not living alone (15 to 64) | 330          | 228          | -102 (-30.9%)      |
| Not living alone (65+)      | 10           | 27           | 17 (170.0%)        |
| Female householder          | 2,173        | 2,035        | -138 (-6.4%)       |
| Living alone                | 1,912        | 1,693        | -219 (-11.5%)      |
| Living alone (15 to 64)     | 1,064        | 761          | -303 (-28.5%)      |
| Living alone (65+)          | 848          | 932          | 84 (9.9%)          |
| Not living alone            | 261          | 342          | 81 (31.0%)         |
| Not living alone (15 to 64) | 227          | 319          | 92 (40.5%)         |
| Not living alone (65+)      | 34           | 23           | -11 (-32.4%)       |
| <b>Total</b>                | <b>3,492</b> | <b>3,440</b> | <b>-52 (-1.5%)</b> |

Source: American Community Survey 2010 & 2020 5 Year Estimates, B11010

living alone and under the age of 65 decreased over the past decade, potentially indicating that single person households struggle to live in the City or that the 2010 single person households have formed different household types by 2020.<sup>18</sup> In total, 41.3% of all households in Traverse City are comprised of householders that live alone.

### Race and Ethnicity

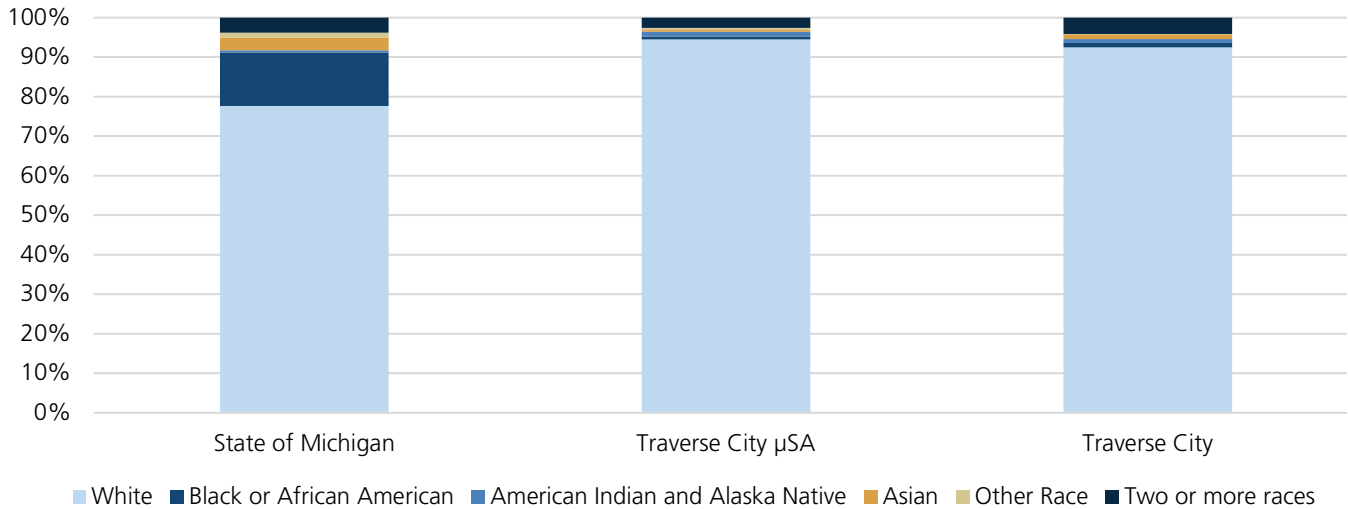
Traverse City is a predominantly white community. As of 2020, 92.3% of the City was white.<sup>19</sup> However, Traverse City is slightly diversifying. In 2010, white individuals represented 95.2% of Traverse City's total population, indicating that the portion of white residents has decreased by about 3% over this decade. Beyond comparing the aggregate racial composition of Traverse City, another measure of racial diversity is the Diversity Index (DI). The DI is the probability that two people chosen at random from a population will be of different racial and ethnicity groups; a larger DI indicates greater racial diversity within a particular geography. In 2010, Grand Traverse County's DI was 12.8%, meaning that there was a 12.8%

chance that two people chosen at random in Grand Traverse County will be of different races and ethnicities. In 2020, Grand Traverse County's DI was 19%, indicating a growing racial diversity in the county and the increasing likelihood that individuals of different races interact with each other.<sup>20</sup>

As the country becomes more diverse, Traverse City will as well. It is estimated that by 2045, people of color will comprise the majority of the county's demographic makeup. Recent racial demographic shifts in Traverse City are a combination of more multiracial households, more multiracial children, and a broader framework that allows residents to deeply consider racial identities.<sup>21</sup> For example, it wasn't until 2000 that the census allowed for people to select more than one race on their census form. As diversity and racial backgrounds become increasingly more discussed in the cultural zeitgeist, people may be more inclined to report their background and identities on their census forms.<sup>22</sup>

The Census differentiates race from ethnicity. As defined by the Census, ethnicity relates to Hispanic/Latino origin. Individuals who are ethnically

**Figure 4: Racial Demographics in Traverse City**



Source: American Community Survey 2020 5-Year Estimates, DP05

Hispanic and/or Latino will also have a racial identity determined by their own self-identification. In 2020, Traverse City’s Hispanic/Latino population was 3.3% of the total population, an increase from 2.0% in 2010.<sup>23</sup> By 2045, Hispanic/Latino is expected to be the second largest population behind non-Hispanic white in the United States.<sup>24</sup>

**Foreign-Born Status**

Traverse City has a very small foreign-born population. In 2020, 3.4% of the population was born outside the United States, compared to 6.9% of Michigan’s population. Over three quarters (76%) of Traverse City’s population were born in Michigan. However, Traverse City’s external draw is increasing. In 2010, 79% of residents were born in the state and 1.5% were born outside the United States, illustrating the changes that have taken place over the past decade. Of the City’s foreign-born population, 59% entered the U.S. prior to 2010, indicating that the majority of the foreign-born population the City is attracting have been settled in the U.S. for over a decade.<sup>25</sup>

**Educational Attainment**

Traverse City is a well-educated city that has become more educated over time. Almost 97% of residents over the age of 25 have at least a high school degree, and over 46% have at least a bachelor’s degree. In Michigan, 91% of people over the age of 25 have at least a high school degree, and 30% have at least a bachelor’s degree. In 2010, 40% of residents over the age of 25

**Income Inequality**

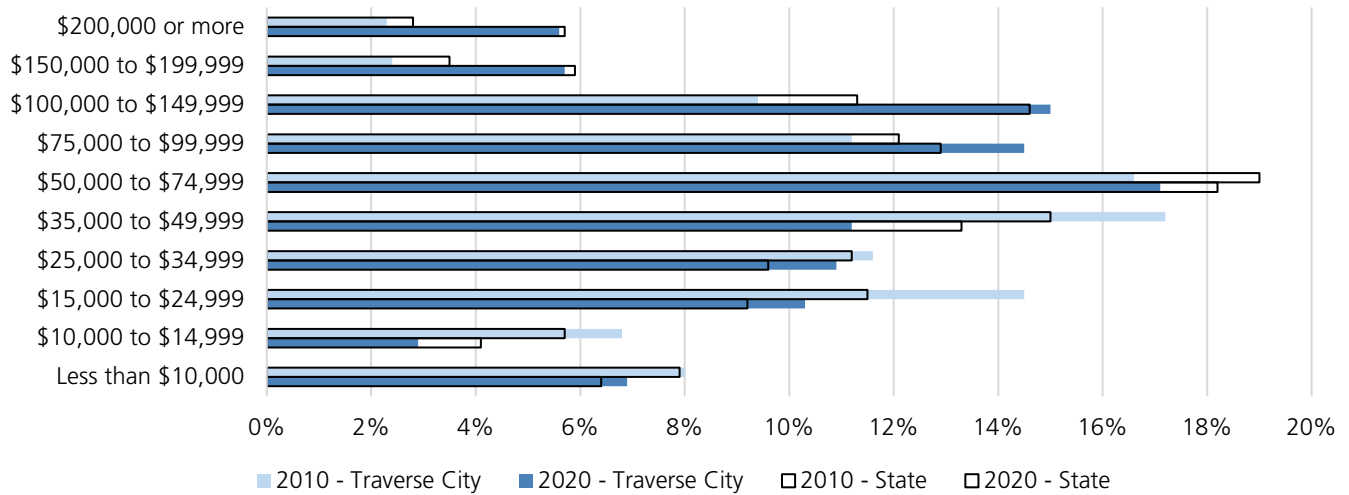
The Gini Coefficient is used to measure how evenly income is distributed throughout a population (income inequality). A coefficient of 0 represents complete income equality, while a coefficient of 1 (or 100%) indicates maximum inequality. Income inequality in Traverse City is roughly 40%, slightly lower than the state’s measure of 42%.

had at least a bachelor’s degree.<sup>26</sup> This increase in educational attainment indicates that over the past decades, new and long-term residents alike have achieved higher levels of educational attainment.

**Income**

There is a strong correlation between education level and income. Communities with higher levels of educational attainment often have a higher median household income. In 2020, the median household income in Traverse City was \$61,056, \$1,822 higher than the state of Michigan.<sup>27</sup> It is important to note that the data captured by the American Community Survey only represents year-round residents. The median household income would likely be substantially higher if seasonal residents were included in the dataset as individuals that own seasonal properties in the City tend to be wealthy. The City’s median family income was slightly higher at \$89,110 in 2020 compared to \$75,470 in the state. Over the past decade,

Figure 5: Traverse City Household Incomes



Source: American Community Survey 2010 & 2020 5 Year Estimates, DP03

Table 6: Median Income Based on Race and Gender in Traverse City, Traverse City μSA, and Michigan

|   | Traverse City | Traverse City μSA | State of Michigan |
|---|---------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Household Incomes</b>                      |               |                   |                   |
| White, not Hispanic/Latino                    | \$60,469      | \$61,746          | \$61,750          |
| Black or African American                     | n/a           | \$52,300          | \$35,322          |
| American Indian or Alaska Native              | \$28,621      | \$35,962          | \$42,453          |
| Asian   | n/a           | \$68,571          | \$86,611          |
| Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander     | n/a           | \$43,375          | \$59,508          |
| Some Other Race                               | n/a           | \$60,865          | \$44,286          |
| Two or more Races                             | \$42,594      | \$48,464          | \$45,242          |
| Hispanic/Latino                               | \$62,880      | \$45,813          | \$48,256          |
| <b>Earnings</b>                               |               |                   |                   |
| Men   | \$35,154      | \$40,321          | \$43,887          |
| Women   | \$28,200      | \$27,356          | \$29,603          |
| <b>Women's Earnings as a Percent of Men's</b> |               |                   |                   |
| All Women                                     | 80.2%         | 67.8%             | 67.5%             |
| White, not Hispanic/Latino                    | 67.9%         | 63.8%             | 62.2%             |
| Black or African American                     | n/a           | 70.7%             | 58.2%             |
| American Indian or Alaska Native              | 157.5%        | 88.7%             | 50.3%             |
| Asian   | 89.6%         | 55.8%             | 73.9%             |
| Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander     | n/a           | n/a               | 53.1%             |
| Some Other Race                               | n/a           | 116.8%            | 45.8%             |
| Two or more Races                             | 72.0%         | 58.5%             | 40.0%             |
| Hispanic/Latino                               | 143.8%        | 47.9%             | 47.0%             |

American Community Survey, 5 Year Estimates, B20017

the median household income has substantially increased. In 2010, the median household was \$49,804, 23% lower than 2020's median income of \$61,056.<sup>28</sup>

Incomes vary based on race and gender. In Michigan and the Traverse City μSA, Asian and White households have the highest median incomes, but in Traverse City, Hispanic/Latino households have the highest median incomes, contrary to state and regional trends. Women across all geographies (city, μSA, and state) earn less than men. In Traverse City, the gender pay gap is roughly a \$0.20 differential between men and women for every dollar earned, slightly less than the \$0.30 differential that is observed in the region and the State.<sup>29</sup> Women of color, who tend to earn the least amount of money of any demographic group, were found to earn more than white women and, in some cases, more than men in Traverse City. However, it is important to note that the Census does not report data for all demographic groups given the limited quantity of data for some subgroups and limitations to accurately sampling populations that are less prevalent in the City.

### Poverty

Poverty rates in the City have been declining over the past decade. In 2020, roughly 10% of Traverse City residents were living in poverty, compared to 14% the decade prior.<sup>30</sup> Overall, poverty rates in the City are lower than the State, which has also experienced a decline in poverty. Notably, the poverty rate for those over 65 increased in the State but decreased in the City over the past decade. Poverty status for the senior population is especially important to monitor because many

seniors are on fixed incomes and have limited opportunities to earn additional income.

While Traverse City has experienced decreasing poverty rates across numerous demographic groups from 2010 to 2020, other communities within the region observed the opposite trend which points to the possibility of impoverished families being “pushed out” and migrating to surrounding jurisdictions. For example, Garfield Charter Township is located on the southern border of Traverse City and has both the highest rate of poverty in the region as well as the greatest increase in residents living in poverty over the last decade.

The housing chapter of this plan will further detail rising housing costs in Traverse City and more affordable housing in surrounding counties, illustrating dynamics that contribute to migration and the subsequent change in a community's poverty rate.

A common criticism of the poverty line is that it is set at a threshold which is too low to capture all households struggling to make ends meet. The ALICE metric, created by United Way, is intended to measure households who earn above the poverty line but not enough to meet basic expenses. ALICE stands for Asset Limited, Income Constrained, and Employed. The ALICE metric is calculated by totaling the minimum basic expenses for food, housing, healthcare, childcare, and other essential needs for the area of study. An estimated 33% of households in Grand Traverse County are below the ALICE line, where as 24% of county households are below the ALICE line but above the poverty line.<sup>31</sup> In addition to calculating the minimum survival budget based on the minimum total cost

**Table 7: Poverty Status, Michigan and Traverse City in 2010 & 2020**

| Poverty Status         | State of Michigan |       | Traverse City |       |
|------------------------|-------------------|-------|---------------|-------|
|                        | 2010              | 2020  | 2010          | 2020  |
| All People             | 14.8%             | 13.7% | 13.9%         | 10.1% |
| People (65+)           | 8.3%              | 10.4% | 7.8%          | 7.5%  |
| All Families           | 10.6%             | 9.2%  | 7.5%          | 4.5%  |
| Families with children | 17.0%             | 15.6% | 15.4%         | 7.0%  |

Source: American Community Survey 2010 & 2020, 5 Year Estimates, DP03

**Table 8: All People in Poverty, Traverse City & Surrounding Communities, 2010 & 2020**

| Community                 | 2010 Poverty Rate | 2020 Poverty Rate | Percent Change |
|---------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|----------------|
| Acme Township             | 3.0%              | 4.3%              | 1.3%           |
| Bingham Township          | 4.4%              | 4.3%              | - 0.1%         |
| Blair Township            | 8.2%              | 14.9%             | 6.7%           |
| City of Traverse City     | 13.9%             | 10.1%             | - 3.8%         |
| East Bay Township         | 7.9%              | 6.0%              | - 1.9%         |
| Elmwood Township          | 7.0%              | 2.5%              | - 4.5%         |
| Garfield Charter Township | 12.4%             | 20.6%             | 8.2%           |
| Green Lake Township       | 6.2%              | 6.9%              | 0.7%           |
| Long Lake Township        | 4.2%              | 1.6%              | - 2.6%         |
| Peninsula Township        | 6.9%              | 8.7%              | 1.8%           |

Source: American Community Survey 2010 & 2020, 5 Year Estimates, DP03

**Table 9: All People in Poverty, Traverse City & Surrounding Communities, 2010 & 2020**

|                | Single Adult | Single Adult, One Child | Two Adults | Two Adults, Two Children | Single Senior | Two Seniors |
|----------------|--------------|-------------------------|------------|--------------------------|---------------|-------------|
| Housing        | \$623        | \$762                   | \$762      | \$892                    | \$623         | \$762       |
| Childcare      | \$0          | \$203-\$591*            | \$0        | \$405-\$1,131*           | \$0           | \$0         |
| Food           | \$266        | \$385-461*              | \$553      | \$807-\$925*             | \$229         | \$472       |
| Transportation | \$457        | \$606                   | \$606      | \$929                    | \$406         | \$545       |
| Healthcare     | \$189        | \$403                   | \$403      | \$569                    | \$469         | \$938       |
| Technology     | \$55         | \$55                    | \$75       | \$75                     | \$55          | \$75        |
| Miscellaneous  | \$188        | \$281-\$318*            | \$285      | \$423-\$504*             | \$208         | \$321       |
| Taxes          | \$287        | \$321-\$382*            | \$412      | \$435-\$633*             | \$296         | \$420       |
| Monthly Total  | \$2,065      | \$3,092-\$3,502*        | \$3,127    | \$4,653-\$5,540          | \$2,286       | \$3,533     |
| Annual Total   | \$24,780     | \$37,104-\$42,024*      | \$37,644   | \$55,836-\$66,480        | \$27,432      | \$42,396    |
| Hourly Wage    | \$12.39      | \$18.55-\$21.01*        | \$18.82    | \$27.92-\$33.24*         | \$13.72       | \$21.20     |

Source: United for ALICE, \*costs range depending on if children are in childcare

**Table 10: ALICE Household Stability Budget, Grand Traverse County**

|                | Single Adult | Two Adults | Two Adults, Two Children | Two Adults, Two in Childcare |
|----------------|--------------|------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| Housing        | \$762        | \$892      | \$1,082                  | \$1,082                      |
| Childcare      | \$0          | \$0        | \$665                    | \$1,772                      |
| Food           | \$543        | \$1,101    | \$1,967                  | \$1,720                      |
| Transportation | \$943        | \$1,151    | \$1,493                  | \$1,493                      |
| Healthcare     | \$162        | \$343      | \$504                    | \$504                        |
| Technology     | \$125        | \$145      | \$145                    | \$145                        |
| Miscellaneous  | \$321        | \$447      | \$746                    | \$861                        |
| Savings        | \$321        | \$447      | \$746                    | \$861                        |
| Taxes          | \$670        | \$837      | \$1,601                  | \$1,890                      |
| Monthly Total  | \$3,847      | \$5,363    | \$8,949                  | \$10,328                     |
| Annual Total   | \$46,164     | \$64,356   | \$107,388                | \$123,936                    |
| Hourly Wage    | \$23.08      | \$32.18    | \$53.69                  | \$61.97                      |

Source: United for ALICE

of household essentials, ALICE also calculates the senior survival budget and the household stability budget. The senior survival budget adjusts the survival budget for older adults who typically spend less on food and transportation than younger adults. The stability budget provides a more sustainable metric that reflects households with more financial stability and budgets for savings.

In Grand Traverse County, the minimum survival for a family of two adults and two children ranges from \$55,836 to \$66,480, depending on the age of the children.<sup>32</sup> Up to 29% of Traverse City’s two adult families with children earn less than the Grand Traverse County minimum survival budget. For single parent households, the number of Traverse City households earning below the survival budget is even higher at 48%.<sup>33</sup>

Poverty rates suggest that only 4.5% of families are earning incomes below what they need to survive, but the ALICE metrics show the number of financially burdened households is much more substantial. Of the two adult households with children in Traverse City, 62% do not make enough money to be considered stable. The percentage of two adults earning less than the stability wage is lower at 32%, highlighting the costs that children can bring to a household. Dual income

households provide more stability than single income households as 59% of Traverse City’s single adult households do not make enough money to be considered financially stable.<sup>34</sup>

## GREATER POPULATION TRENDS

Population trends and characteristics cannot be solely discussed within a city or regional boundary. National and even international population trends influence Traverse City and those who will choose to live in and visit the City in the future. The following discussions of climate change, climate migration, and an aging population serve as introductions to trends impacting Traverse City that will be investigated at greater length in later chapters of this master plan.

### Climate Migration

For thousands of years, people have moved (migrated) for a variety of reasons: in pursuit of economic opportunity and political asylum, to escape racial tensions, or because they were forced to leave their homes. Climate change has been added to that list as climate change impacts have contributed to the livability of various geographies across the country. Climate driven natural disasters, water scarcity, and rising global temperatures have and will continue to drive people to relocate.

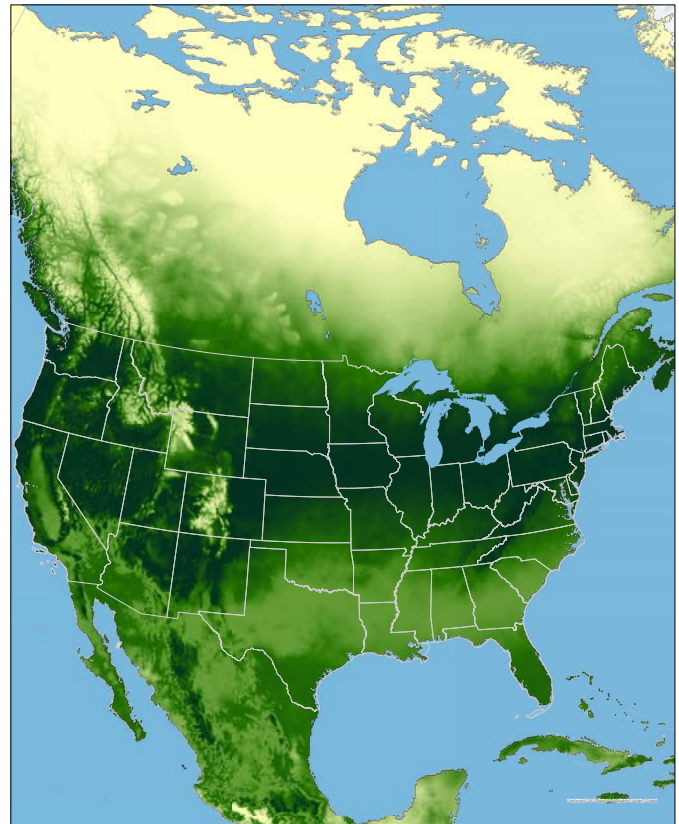


## Map 2: Human Climate Niche - 2020, 2070 - High Emissions



### Human Climate Niche - 2020

Sources: Xu, C., Kohler, T., Lenton, T., Svenning, J., Scheffer, M.



### 2070 - High Emissions



Recent studies estimate that 3% of the global population may relocate by 2050 due to climate change.<sup>35</sup>

Within the United States, changes to heat and temperature will significantly impact livability. Sea level rise alone will cause 13.1 million Americans to relocate by 2100.<sup>36</sup> The American heartland, from the Atlantic coast through north Texas and lower Midwest, and the California Coast are currently the most suitable zones for livability based on temperature and precipitation. However, as the climate changes and warms, the livability zone (human climate niche) will shift greatly north and range from the central Midwest to southern Canada, signifying a massive upheaval in where Americans live and grow food.<sup>37</sup>

### An Aging Population

By 2050, the number of adults over the age of 65 is expected to double to 90 million nationally. As people age, those with resources will relocate to age-friendly communities that meet their physical and social infrastructure needs including housing, mobility, and public services. The rapidly aging population is not solely the result of the baby boomer generation; lengthened life expectancy, declining birth rates, and decreased infant/child mortality all impact the structure of the United States' population. Simultaneously, the number of older adults living with one or more chronic diseases is also increasing, especially cognitive diseases such as Alzheimer's. An aging population also has an impact on the economy; as a population ages, a larger share of the population does not participate in the workforce which can slow economic growth.<sup>38</sup> Subsequent sections of this master plan will highlight the needs of an aging population.

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## DEMOGRAPHIC KEY POINTS

- » After four decades of slight population decline, Traverse City's population has shown slow growth from 2000 to 2020 and is projected to continue to increase.
- » Traverse City's population is aging. The median age of residents has increased from 42.6 years in 2010 to 45.7 years in 2020, exceeding the median age of all Michigan residents. The portion of Traverse City's population over the age of 60 has also increased over the past decade – in 2010, 19% of the City fell into this age cohort compared to 29% by 2020.
- » Traverse City's population is highly educated in comparison to the rest of the state. Rates of education have also increased over time within the City itself.
- » As a destination for tourism and the home of many seasonal residents, Traverse City's total population fluctuates significantly throughout the year. It is estimated that 41% of Grand Traverse County's population is seasonal in the month of August – much of this estimate is attributed to tourism activity in Traverse City.
- » Traverse City's median household income has increased by 23% from 2010 to 2020. The percentage of the City's population living under the poverty threshold has also decreased by nearly 4% in the same period. However, there is evidence that this change is a result of lower income households migrating out of the city to surrounding communities.



*Pavilion along Boardman Lake in Hull Park.*

Source: City of Traverse City

# 2



*Commonground, E Eighth Street.*  
Photo Credit: Gary Howe

Since the early 20th century, home ownership has been seen as a sign of personal and financial success. Owning a home provides a pathway to additional lines of financing and credit and is an enormous factor in building generational wealth. While home ownership is no longer the cultural symbol of success it once was, housing and access to it continue to be vitally important.

- » Housing construction accelerated in the City of Traverse City in 2021 and 2022.
- » Most homes in the City are single-family – however, the City of Traverse City has the most diverse housing stock in the region.
- » 32% of all households (and 58% of renters) in Traverse City have monthly housing costs that are unaffordable to occupants.
- » Approximately 39% of all city residents rent their housing, making Traverse City the most prominent “hub” of rental housing in the micropolitan area.
- » The City of Traverse City has the most expensive housing by median home value in the region.
- » 1,305 acres of land within the City (82.8% of the city’s total residential land area) are zoned R-1a/b which permit single-family and duplex structures.

## HOUSING

# The Housing Crisis

The 2008 recession was largely driven by a mortgage crisis and has had a lasting impact on the housing market nationwide. While the United States' economy has largely recovered in the years after the recession, the housing stock and market have not. Post-2008, the rate of residential construction has not kept pace with demand, leading to skyrocketing housing costs and rising rents. It is estimated that the United States has a deficit of approximately 4 million homes,\* and that Michigan specifically is in need of 87,000 homes. For Grand Traverse County, Housing North estimates an additional 5,715 housing units are needed through 2025 and that 72% of those new units within Grand Traverse County should be available as rentals.\*\*

This lack of supply, coupled with increasing demand, has led to a misalignment in the housing market. The depressed level of new construction and existing patterns of construction that cater solely towards middle- and high-income households cause households to remain in their current home for longer periods of time. This freezes a housing unit that would have re-entered the market if new construction were to open more housing options.

Older homes that have had multiple owners are typically more affordable to low- and middle-income households under normal market conditions. However, under current market conditions, when older, previously owned homes are listed, the demand is high enough that the sale price is no longer affordable. This bottleneck causes prospective homebuyers to continue renting housing units, preventing a transition from rental tenure to ownership which leads more households to rent as the only option.

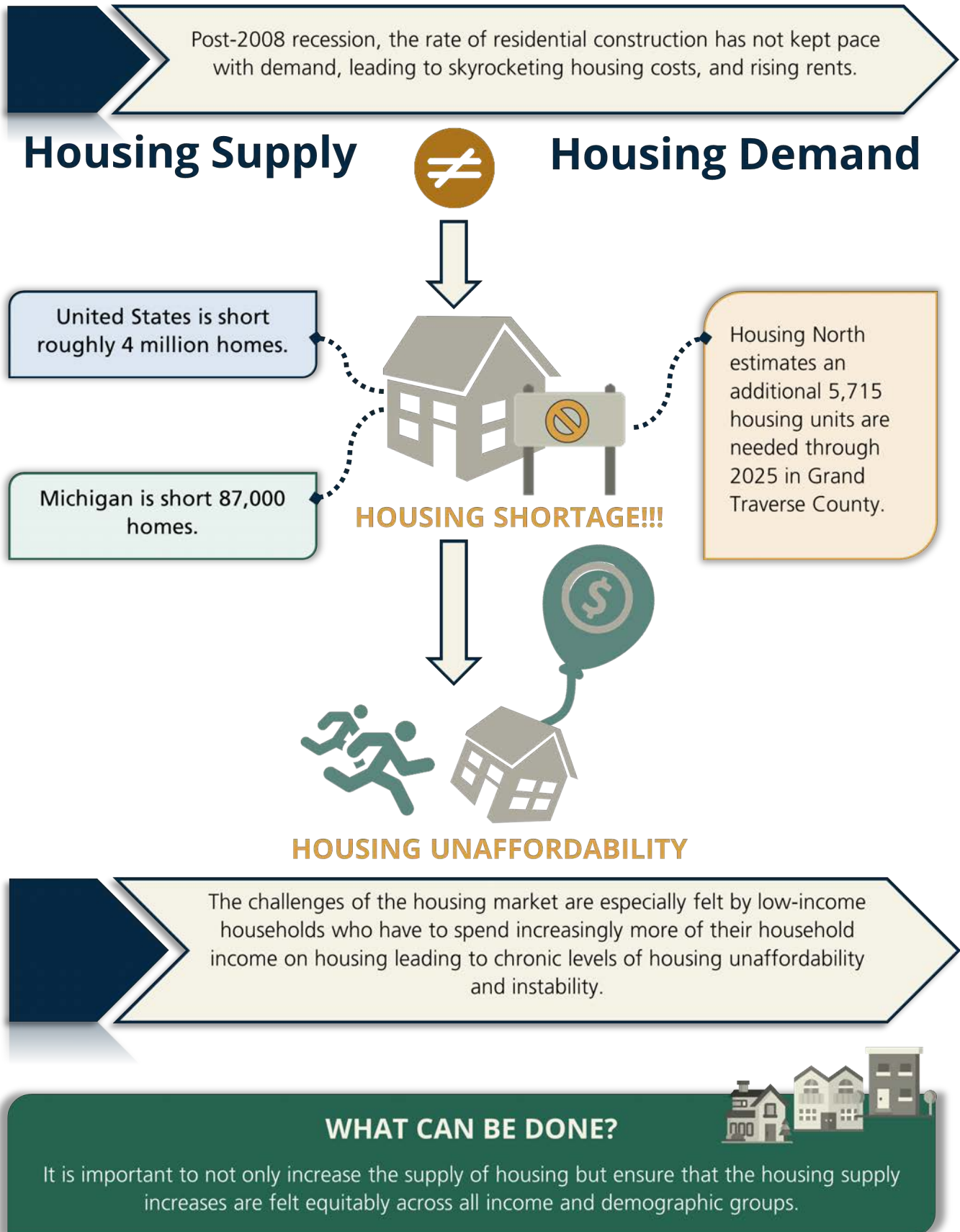
An increasing number of households that require rental units due to the unaffordability and/or unavailability of ownership units creates higher demand within the rental market and leads to rising rental prices. While the housing landscape of a community is impacted by a multitude of factors, unmet demand for rental units and rising prices can be compounded by the presence of short-term rental housing units that place a constrain on a community's supply of housing units available for long-term renters. Short-term rentals and their nuances will be discussed in future chapters on tourism and economic development – while they impact the availability of housing in a community, they also play an important role in accommodating visitors to the City, an increasingly important consideration for Traverse City.

The challenges of the housing market are especially pronounced for low-income households who must spend increasingly greater percentages of their household income on housing. This leads to chronic levels of housing unaffordability and instability, causing many households to be priced out of ownership. It is important to not only increase the supply of housing, but to ensure that the housing supply increases are felt equitably across all income and demographic groups through mechanisms and subsidies that enable affordable housing prices that limit cost burden for vulnerable populations.

\*Habitat for Humanity & The Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University, "2022 State of the Nation's Housing report." The State of the Nation's Housing 2022 (harvard.edu)

\*\* Housing North, "Grand Traverse County Overview," Addendum\_G\_GT+County+Report\_HNA+2023.pdf (squarespace.com)

Figure 6 The Housing Crisis



## A HISTORY OF ZONING

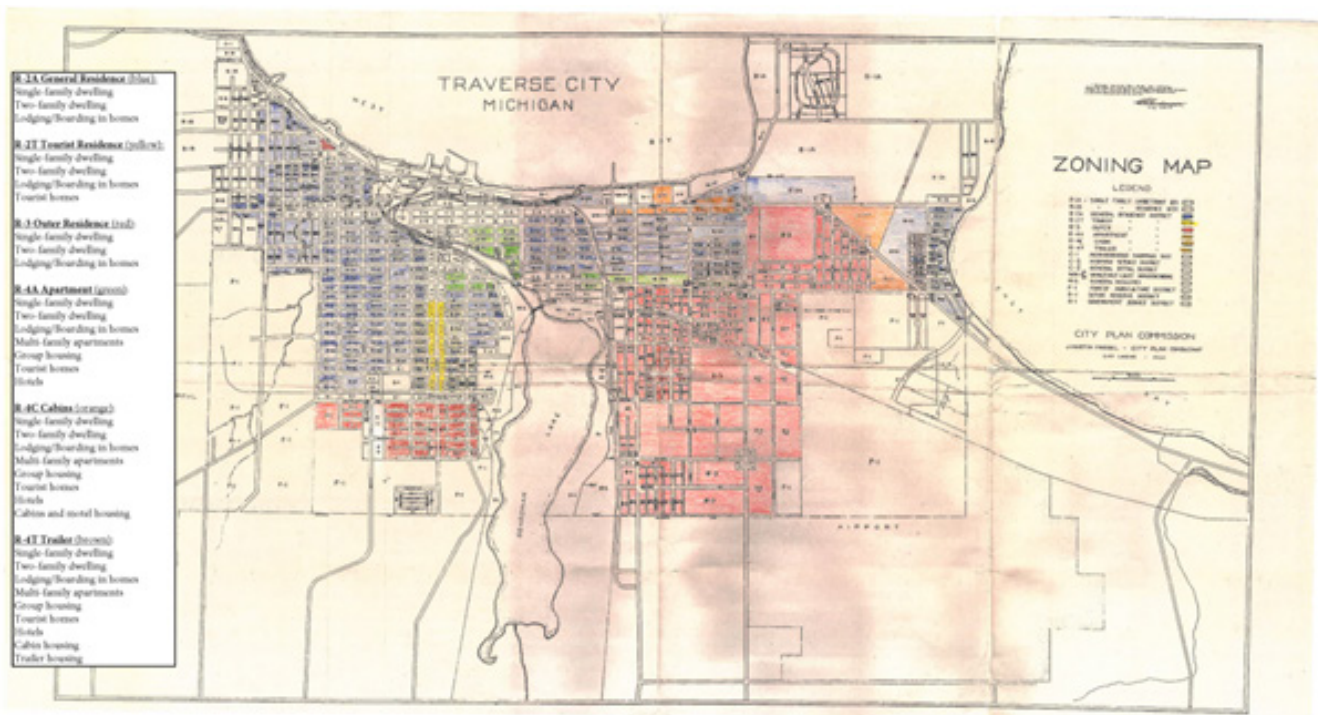
Zoning began in the early twentieth century as a tool to ensure that incompatible land uses (e.g., high-intensity industrial land uses and residential homes) were not placed near one another. Zoning is a relatively modern concept in Traverse City compared to other communities as the City's first zoning map was adopted in 1943. This means that much of Traverse City's housing was developed prior to a zoning map that regulated land uses.

The discretion involved in zoning and land use patterns allows for deliberate planning of land uses to both positive and negative ends. In addition to its original intent of separating incompatible uses, zoning has been used over time as an exclusionary tool to determine which kinds of housing options (and often the socioeconomic and racial identity of residents) are allowed within a neighborhood or community. Specifically, single-family homes have been historically prioritized by lenders, federal assistance programs, and policymakers involved in shaping communities' land use patterns. The exclusion of multi-family housing units (which often serve as more affordable options and opportunities to provide rental housing) has been common in

many communities, resulting in the exclusion of many people with lower incomes. Exclusionary residential zoning also has the impact of reinforcing patterns of residential segregation as limited housing options can prevent people of color and low-income households from becoming residents.<sup>1</sup>

With the widespread advent of the automobile as well as the creation of the interstate highway system, suburbanization (the creation of new single-family planned neighborhoods on the outskirts of an existing town) became widespread throughout the 1950s. This was tied, in many places, to a "white flight" pattern of migration in which many white families left urban centers because of a growing preference for single-family neighborhoods and a desire to leave the urban and industrial core. Although a white flight pattern did not occur in Traverse City due to the racial homogeneity of the area, suburbanization has nonetheless occurred in the area.

Until 1978, the Traverse City Zoning Ordinance was dominated by a "general residence" district which included single-family dwellings, two-family dwellings, and lodging houses. This was present in the Slabtown Neighborhood, Kids Creek Neighborhood, Central Neighborhood, Old Towne



Historic Zoning Map, 1949.

Source: City of Traverse City



*New single-family development on W Thirteenth Street.*

Photo Credit: Gary Howe

Neighborhood, and more. Other areas designated as the “outer residence” district (including the Fernwood and Traverse Heights neighborhoods) also allowed two-family dwellings. Considering the age of Traverse City’s housing stock, much of the City’s historic housing was built in a time when two-family dwellings and lodging houses were allowed in many neighborhoods.

To compete with the rapid suburbanization occurring on the fringes of the City, in 1978, there was a desire to change Traverse City’s zoning to emphasize single-family homes. This was an effort to remedy the City’s population outflow to neighboring areas that offered different kinds of housing than within city limits, including large lot sizes and new construction of single-family homes. As a result of these changes, the housing stock available within city limits is limited. Retaining the historic zoning that allowed two- or multi-family dwellings would have allowed for greater housing stock.

## **HOUSING BY THE NUMBERS – CITY OF TRAVERSE CITY AND TRAVERSE CITY MICROPOLITAN AREA**

This section aims to inventory the current housing stock in both the City of Traverse City and the broader region. Although each municipality’s actions can make substantial impact within their borders, the issue of housing has innate spillover effects that require collaboration across the entire region. The region must move in one direction, with local jurisdictions collaborating to provide fair and equitable housing solutions. Therefore, it is not only important to consider the housing conditions within the City of Traverse City, but the housing conditions in the Traverse City Micropolitan Area as a whole (defined by the U.S. Census Bureau as Grand Traverse, Leelanau, Benzie, and Kalkaska counties).<sup>2</sup>



Figure 7: Traverse City Housing by the Numbers

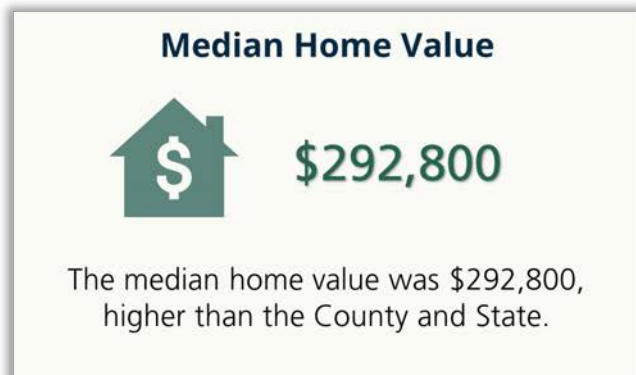
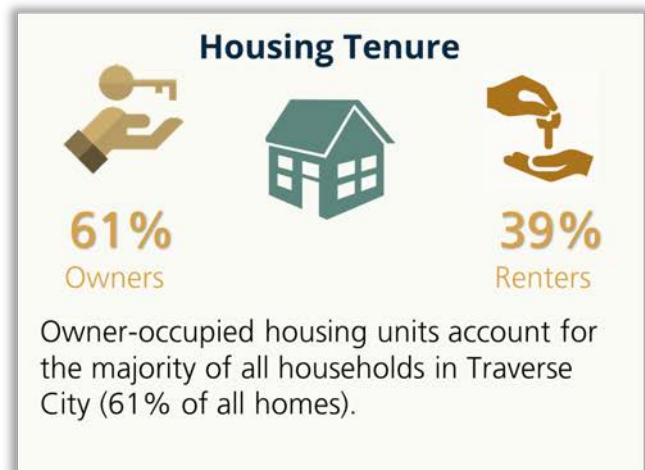
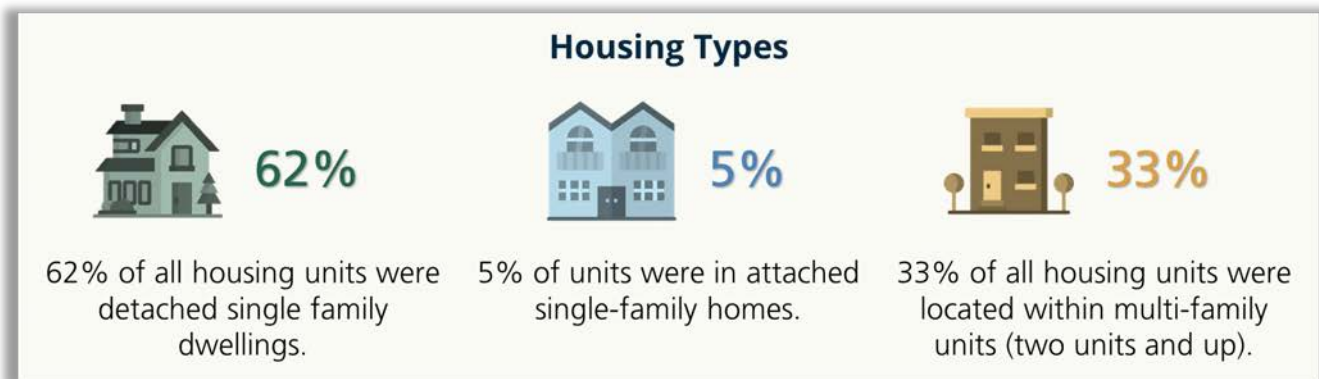


Figure 8: Traverse City Housing by the Numbers (continued)

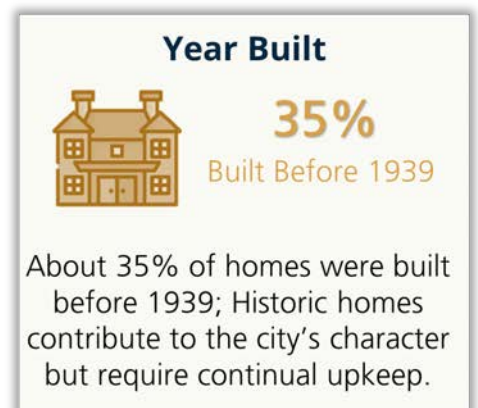
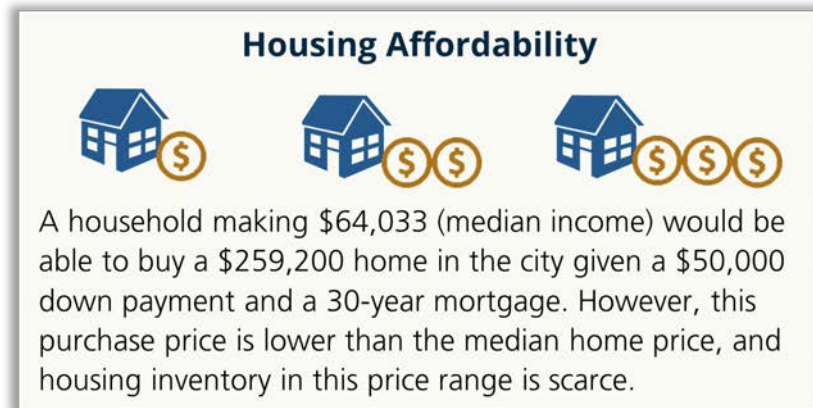
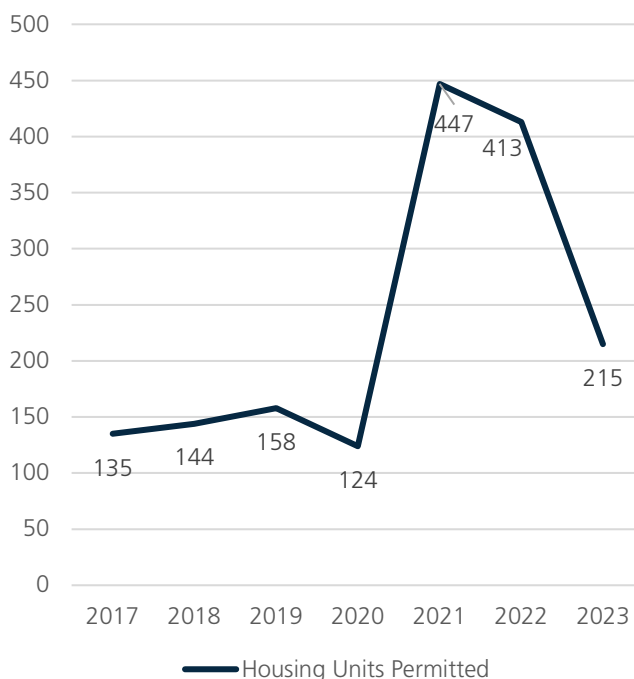


Figure 9: Housing Units Permitted by the City of Traverse City, 2017-2022



Source: Traverse City Planning Department

## Number of Units

### City of Traverse City

2020 Census data showed 8,412 housing units within the City of Traverse City, an increase from 7,358 in 2010.<sup>3,4</sup> Housing units include any division of separate living quarters, such as single-family homes, condominium units, apartments, or other units in a multi-family development. Housing inventory within the City of Traverse City has gradually increased over time, in line with population and economic growth. Permitted new construction within the City, by year, has consistently increased over the past few years. In 2021, 447 new units were permitted to be built in the City, a sharp increase from the previous year's 124 permitted housing units.<sup>5</sup> This is primarily due to the addition of several larger multi-family condominiums and apartment developments within the City. It should be noted that some new buildings include units for seasonal use and/or short-term rental units; meaning that although more housing is being built, not all of it is available

**Table 11: Housing Units 2010 & 2020**

| Community             | 2010   | 2020   | Change |
|-----------------------|--------|--------|--------|
| Traverse City         | 7,358  | 8,412  | 14.3%  |
| East Bay Township     | 5,227  | 5,692  | 8.9%   |
| Garfield Township     | 8,194  | 9,415  | 14.9%  |
| Elmwood Township      | 2,205  | 2,388  | 1.1%   |
| Peninsula Township    | 3,032  | 3,284  | 1.1%   |
| Acme Township         | 2,399  | 2,490  | 3.8%   |
| Long Lake Township    | 3,926  | 4,387  | 11.7%  |
| Blair Township        | 3,176  | 3,420  | 7.6%   |
| Green Lake Township   | 2,958  | 3,182  | 7.6%   |
| Fife Lake Township    | 855    | 847    | -0.9%  |
| Grand Traverse County | 41,599 | 45,776 | 10.0%  |
| Kalkaska County       | 12,171 | 11,570 | -4.9%  |
| Leelanau County       | 14,935 | 15,421 | 3.3%   |
| Benzie County         | 12,199 | 12,099 | -0.8%  |

Source: Decennial Census 2010, 2020, \*ACS 2020 5 YR Estimates

to year-round residents. More discussion on short-term rental uses is included in the Sustainable Tourism chapter.

### *Traverse City Micropolitan Area*

The comparison of 2010 and 2020 census data demonstrates that the City of Traverse City and Grand Traverse County are growing their housing inventories at greater rates than Benzie, Kalkaska, or Leelanau Counties. This growth indicates where the most demand for new housing is located. Additionally, townships bordering the City of Traverse City, specifically East Bay and Garfield Townships, have multiple housing projects under construction. Township-level data shows that Garfield and Long Lake Townships are growing their housing markets approximately on pace with the City of Traverse City, with East Bay Township shortly behind. Additionally, many of these townships have stricter regulations for short-term rentals, therefore reserving the vast majority of their housing stocks for long-term residents.

## Housing Types

### *City of Traverse City*

The City of Traverse City’s housing stock is mainly comprised of single-family homes. However, it has substantial housing diversity when compared with the rest of the area, with 32.7% of the housing stock in structures with two or more units. Of the housing units in the City, 61.4% are detached single-family homes, traditionally the most prevalent housing type in the United States. An additional 5.5% of housing units are in attached single-family homes, or townhouses. Of the housing stock in multi-family structures, the greatest share is in developments with 10 to 19 units (9.5%). 16.6% of the City’s total housing stock is in buildings with 10 or more units.

Although the City of Traverse City’s housing stock remains more diverse than the surrounding areas, the City had a greater number of duplexes and triplexes available under pre-1978 zoning standards. The two- and three-family homes within neighborhoods that are now zoned for single-

## Housing Stock Diversity and Equity

Municipal housing stocks that are dominated by single-family homes institute a requirement to purchase a set amount of land and “house” in order to live in a community. This poses threats to equitably accessing the amenities of a well-resourced municipality – individuals and families that do not need or that cannot afford the majority of available housing are shut out of living in specific areas. For these reasons, predominately single-family landscapes are less economically and racially diverse than areas with both single- and multi-family structures, perpetuating uneven access to public resources such as well-resourced public schools, parks and recreation systems, and more.



*New mixed-use development on West Front Street.*

Photo Credit: Gary Howe

family use (but previously allowed multi-family dwellings) constitute non-conforming uses. To qualify for a certificate of non-conforming use, the use must have been continuous since it was allowable in the zoning district. Therefore, only duplexes and multi-family homes that have been in continuous operation since they were allowed qualify as legal non-conforming uses. Conversely, those that have been converted to single-family homes cannot be converted back to multi-family use as a non-conforming use.

### *Traverse City Micropolitan Area*

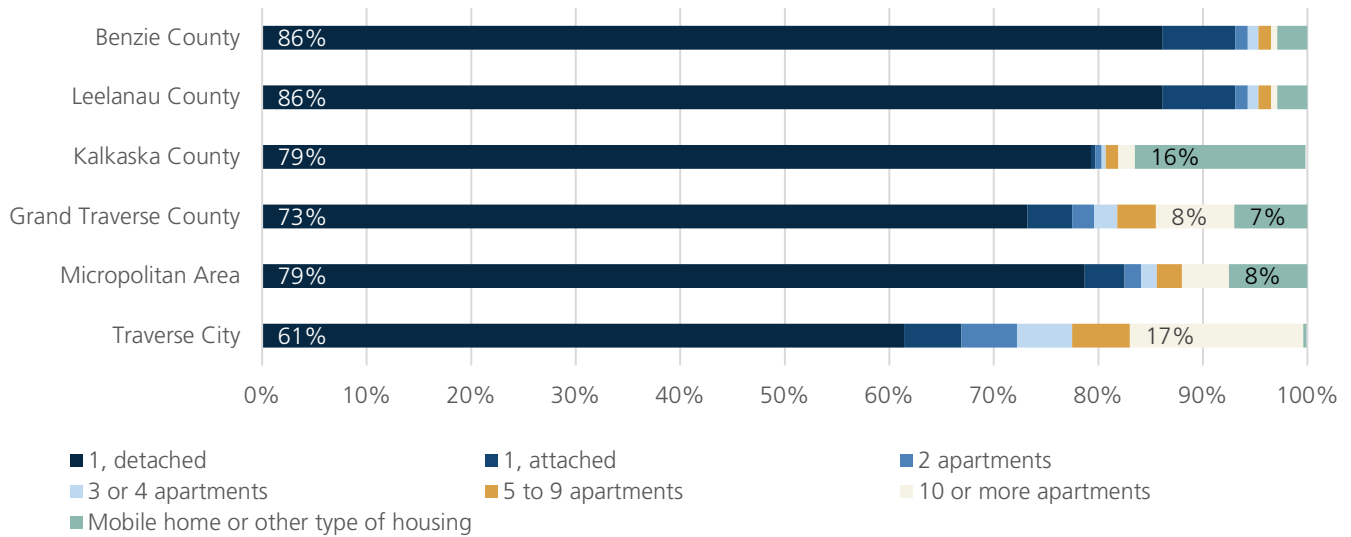
The City of Traverse City has the lowest proportion of single-family homes within the micropolitan area, with 61.4% of all housing units being detached single-family homes. The areas surrounding Traverse City have a more rural and/or suburban character, with density concentrated within city limits. Notably, Kalkaska County has a greater proportion of mobile homes than the City of Traverse City or the surrounding counties; mobile

**Table 12: Housing Stock by Number of Units in Building**

|                             | City of Traverse City |            | Grand Traverse County |            | Michigan  |            |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|------------|-----------------------|------------|-----------|------------|
|                             | Units                 | Percentage | Units                 | Percentage | Units     | Percentage |
| 1-unit, detached            | 4,713                 | 61.4%      | 32,564                | 73.2%      | 3,326,057 | 72.1%      |
| 1-unit, attached (townhome) | 420                   | 5.5%       | 1,905                 | 4.3%       | 212,338   | 4.6%       |
| 2 units                     | 409                   | 5.3%       | 952                   | 2.1%       | 106,323   | 2.3%       |
| 3 or 4 units                | 409                   | 5.3%       | 985                   | 2.2%       | 121,546   | 2.6%       |
| 5 to 9 units                | 423                   | 5.5%       | 1,637                 | 3.7%       | 191,014   | 4.1%       |
| 10 to 19 units              | 731                   | 9.5%       | 1,198                 | 2.7%       | 159,695   | 3.5%       |
| 20 or more units            | 541                   | 7.1%       | 2,149                 | 4.8%       | 245,415   | 5.3%       |
| Mobile home                 | 25                    | 0.3%       | 3,101                 | 7.0%       | 248,336   | 5.4%       |
| Boat, RV, van, etc.         | 0                     | 0.0%       | 1                     | 0.0%       | 1,189     | 0.0%       |

Source: 2020 American Community Survey, DP04: Selected Housing Characteristics

Figure 10: Type of Home, Traverse City Micropolitan Area



Source: 2020 American Community Survey, DP04: Selected Housing Characteristics

homes can serve as an important and flexible affordable housing option. Grand Traverse County also has a substantial proportion of mobile homes with several mobile home communities bordering the limits of Traverse City.

### Vacancy

#### City of Traverse City

There are an estimated 6,888 occupied housing units within the City and 783 vacant units, resulting in an occupancy rate of 89.8%.<sup>6</sup> The City's occupancy rate is higher than both the statewide occupancy rate of 87.1% as well as Grand Traverse County's occupancy rate of 85.0%. High

### Housing Density and Climate Change

Less dense patterns of housing development (as observed with predominately single-family environments) are associated with higher levels of carbon emissions. This increase in emissions can be attributed to larger housing units that require more energy to power, heat, and/or cool the entire space, as well as larger lot sizes that create more distance between houses and community amenities, and greater reliance on car travel in auto-oriented areas.

Table 13: Vacancy, Traverse City Micropolitan Area

|          | Traverse City |       | Micropolitan Area |       | Grand Traverse County |       | Kalkaska County |       | Leelanau County |       | Benzie County |       |
|----------|---------------|-------|-------------------|-------|-----------------------|-------|-----------------|-------|-----------------|-------|---------------|-------|
|          | Units         | %     | Units             | %     | Units                 | %     | Units           | %     | Units           | %     | Units         | %     |
| Occupied | 7,377         | 87.7% | 64,738            | 76.3% | 39,819                | 87.0% | 7,438           | 64.3% | 9,728           | 63.1% | 7,753         | 64.1% |
| Vacant   | 1,035         | 12.3% | 20,128            | 23.7% | 5,957                 | 13.0% | 4,132           | 35.7% | 5,693           | 36.9% | 4,346         | 35.9% |

Source: 2020 Decennial Census, H1

## Housing Tenure and Equity

The ability to rent housing offers renters the opportunity to build their wealth and save money before purchasing a home. The availability of rental options directly impacts the extent to which individuals across various age demographics and income brackets are pushed out of or pulled into a community. The prevalence of young adults in a community is specifically impacted by the opportunity to attain rental tenure in the municipality. Additionally, mechanisms that support affordable housing are most often offered through rental units by supplementing rent and monthly living costs. The limited availability of these units directly impacts the ability of individuals and families who need housing support from living in a particular community that has limited rental units.

occupancy and low vacancy rates reflect a lack of available housing inventory in the market. Given that Traverse City is a market with a great number of seasonal residences (which are included in the City’s vacant household rate), the high occupancy rate reflects the competitive housing market. Other factors that typically raise vacancy rates include widespread commercial use of housing, such as in short-term rentals. More than half of all vacant units in the City (52.6%) are estimated to be used for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use while just 22.3% are on the rental market.<sup>7</sup>

### Traverse City Micropolitan Area

Traverse City’s vacancy rate approximates Grand Traverse County’s, which is in line with nationwide trends of vacancy of about 10.3%. Kalkaska, Leelanau, and Benzie Counties reflect higher rates of vacancy, likely due to an abundance of second homes in these counties.

### Owner/Renter Occupancy

#### City of Traverse City

Most homes in the Traverse City area are owner-occupied (60.9%), as opposed to renter-occupied (39.1%). However, Traverse City has a significantly greater proportion of renter-occupied housing than either Grand Traverse County (23.5%) or Michigan (28.3%).<sup>8</sup> Further, Traverse City’s current proportion of owner-occupied housing is the lowest that it has been since 2013 when 60.66% of all housing units were owned rather than rented. From the City’s peak of homeownership in 2017 in which 63.25% of all homes were occupied by an owner, the rates of owner occupancy in Traverse City have decreased steadily in recent years through the present. The decline in homeownership and subsequent increase in the City’s proportion of rental population is an indication that city residents have increasingly become priced out of homeownership within city limits and either seek residence elsewhere or pursue rental options in the City.

### Traverse City Micropolitan Area

Compared to the City of Traverse City, the micropolitan area has substantially greater owner occupancy. In Traverse City, 39.1% of individuals

Table 14: Owner- or Renter-Occupied Housing

|                 | Traverse City | Micropolitan Area | Grand Traverse County | Kalkaska County | Leelanau County | Benzie County |
|-----------------|---------------|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Owner-occupied  | 60.9%         | 81.0%             | 76.5%                 | 85.0%           | 88.9%           | 90.9%         |
| Renter-occupied | 39.1%         | 19.0%             | 23.5%                 | 15.0%           | 11.1%           | 9.1%          |

Source: 2020 American Community Survey, DP04: Selected Housing Characteristics

**Table 15: Housing Value of Owner-Occupied Units**

|                    | City of Traverse City |        | Grand Traverse County |        | Michigan         |        |
|--------------------|-----------------------|--------|-----------------------|--------|------------------|--------|
| Less than \$50,000 | 57                    | 1.40%  | 1,995                 | 6.90%  | 311,344          | 10.90% |
| \$50,000-99,999    | 98                    | 2.30%  | 1,227                 | 4.20%  | 469,443          | 16.40% |
| \$100,000-149,999  | 348                   | 8.30%  | 3,685                 | 12.70% | 499,308          | 17.50% |
| \$150,000-199,999  | 450                   | 10.70% | 5,359                 | 18.50% | 488,633          | 17.10% |
| \$200,000-299,999  | 1,358                 | 32.40% | 7,976                 | 27.50% | 560,506          | 19.60% |
| \$300,000-499,999  | 1,276                 | 30.40% | 6,039                 | 20.80% | 384,080          | 13.50% |
| \$500,000-999,999  | 544                   | 13.00% | 2,312                 | 8.00%  | 117,813          | 4.10%  |
| \$1,000,000+       | 64                    | 1.50%  | 427                   | 1.50%  | 24,358           | 0.90%  |
| <b>Median</b>      | <b>\$292,800</b>      |        | <b>\$225,400</b>      |        | <b>\$162,600</b> |        |

Source: 2020 American Community Survey, DP04

rent; this differs from the remainder of Grand Traverse County in which just 23.7% of all residents rent their homes. In Kalkaska, Leelanau, and Benzie Counties, over 80% of individuals own homes. Of the roughly 12,000 rental units in the region, approximately 23% are located in the City, indicating that it is a major provider of rental housing for the region.<sup>9</sup>

## Housing Affordability

### City of Traverse City

The median home price in Traverse City has increased over time, outpacing area income growth. Between 2010 and 2020, the median home price increased 55.9% from \$187,800 to \$292,800, while median household income within the City of Traverse City grew just 6.6% from \$60,060 to \$64,033.<sup>10</sup> When home prices outpace wages, it becomes increasingly challenging for people to find affordable housing, resulting in households being forced to spend more of their income on housing, to reduce household expenditures on other necessary items and services, or to move out of the area.

For example, a household making the median income in the City of Traverse City would be able to buy a \$219,492 home with a \$20,000 down payment and a 30-year mortgage (accounting for baseline property tax and other considerations). However, this purchase price is lower than the median home value in Traverse City, and housing inventory in a range that is affordable for the median household income is much more scarce

than the portion of the City’s housing inventory that is priced in the range that covers the median home value.<sup>11</sup> Conversely, households that seek to purchase a home at the median value for Traverse City (\$292,800 with a \$20,000 down payment and 30-year mortgage) would need to make approximately \$76,000, over \$10,000 more than the City’s median household income.

Housing affordability is exacerbated in households that earn a fraction of the Area Median Income (AMI). In Traverse City, approximately 20% of all households earn less than \$25,000 annually, about 40% of the city’s AMI; nearly 10% earn less than \$15,000 each year, about 23% of the AMI. Affordable housing options for this portion of the City’s population are severely limited as only 3.7% of all owner-occupied homes have a value of less than \$100,000, and individuals that earn \$25,000 a year are estimated to be able to afford a home with a value of approximately \$77,500.<sup>12</sup>

### Traverse City Micropolitan Area

As Traverse City’s housing market has grown more competitive, the housing market in the micropolitan area has faced issues of increased demand and limited supply. This had led to a substantial increase in home values. The home value distribution table shows that Leelanau County is similar to Traverse City in housing values. However, Leelanau County has more luxury homes (over \$1,000,000) than Traverse City does, likely due to the abundance of waterfront property in the county.

## Regional Housing Affordability and Climate Change

Though the Traverse City Micropolitan Area offers more affordable housing options than the City itself, residence in any community that surrounds Traverse City comes with a high likelihood of increased emissions as cars travel to the City for various purposes. Additionally, rural communities that are adjacent to the City run the risk of becoming overdeveloped to meet the demand of individuals who desire to live in proximity to Traverse City but that cannot currently afford available housing prices within the City itself.

The greatest proportion of homes in Traverse City and Leelanau County are valued between \$300,000 and \$399,999. However, in Kalkaska County, Grand Traverse County, and Benzie County, most homes have values between \$200,000 and \$299,999. This indicates that homes in the rural parts of the region (except for Leelanau County) are currently a more affordable option than homes within the City. If more people move into the region without an adequate supply of housing in the City and adjacent townships, more people may be turning to the rural areas for their housing needs, resulting in more commuting into the City and greater suburban sprawl.

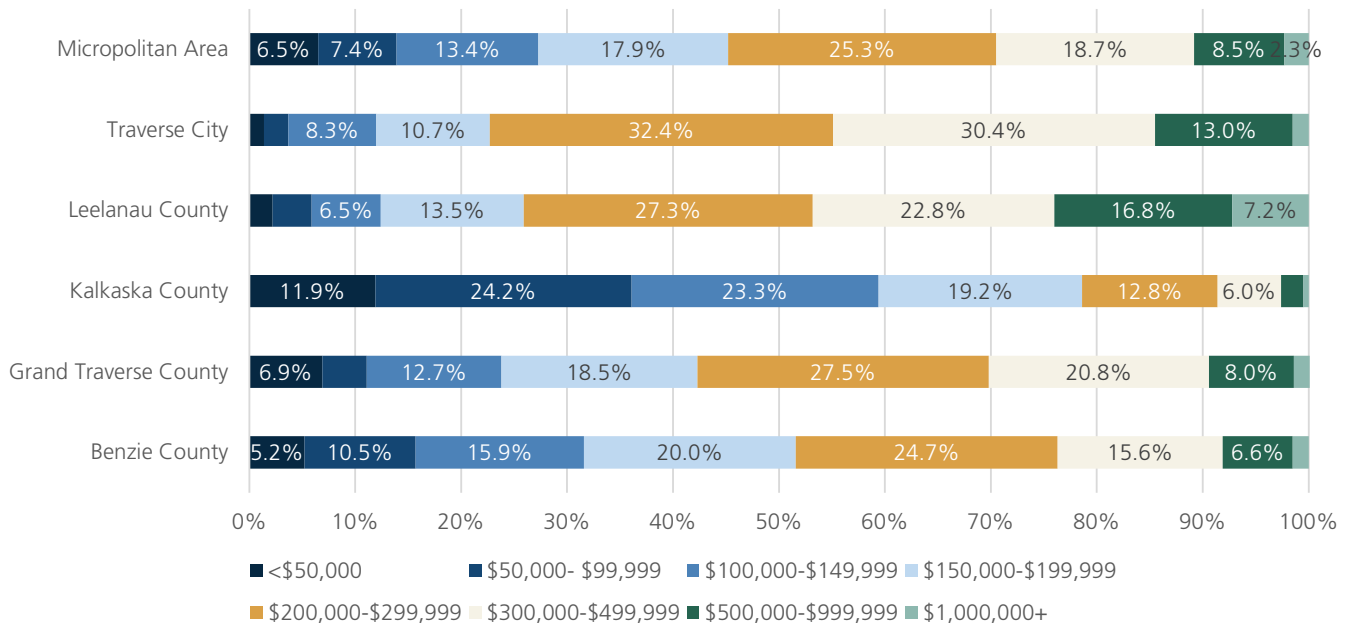
Additionally, the median home value in Traverse City (\$282,900) is similar to Leelanau County

Table 16: Median Home Value, Traverse City Micropolitan Area

|      | Traverse City | Grand Traverse County | Kalkaska County | Leelanau County | Benzie County |
|------|---------------|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|
| 2010 | \$178,400     | \$174,300             | \$105,900       | \$241,200       | \$160,200     |
| 2015 | \$185,500     | \$167,900             | \$98,300        | \$241,900       | \$150,000     |
| 2020 | \$282,900     | \$225,400             | \$127,600       | \$285,700       | \$195,400     |

Source: 2010, 2015, and 2020 American Community Survey, DP04: Selected Housing Characteristics

Figure 11: Home Value Distribution, Traverse City Micropolitan Area



Source: 2020 American Community Survey, DP04: Selected Housing Characteristics



(\$285,700). Both are substantially greater than the median home prices of Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, or Benzie Counties. Traverse City has seen the steepest growth in median home value since 2010.

## Year Built

### *City of Traverse City*

The age of housing stock impacts the character and layout of a city as well as the extent to which it can meet current and forecasted housing needs. Housing with historical character is valuable for the preservation of area history and aesthetic appeal. The City of Traverse City's housing stock is significantly older than the surrounding area, with 36.1% of the City's homes built before 1939.<sup>13</sup> Additional booms in housing came between 1950 and 1959, as well as 1970 and 1979. Many of the City of Traverse City's streets have ornate Victorian mansions that undoubtedly contribute to the City's aesthetic beauty. The display of the City's culture through its architecture is an irreplaceable asset to Traverse City. However, an older housing stock also requires investment in upkeep and maintenance, such as retrofitting plumbing lines, ensuring energy efficiency, and making accessibility accommodations as needed. These are unique considerations that Traverse City will need to keep in mind as it moves into the future with its distinct and historic housing stock.

## Aging Housing Stocks and Climate Change

Though an aging housing stock requires additional upkeep and maintenance, utilizing existing housing units for city residents can offset (or entirely avoid) new construction and related emissions, the extraction and waste of building materials, and expanded capacity of existing utility systems in the city.



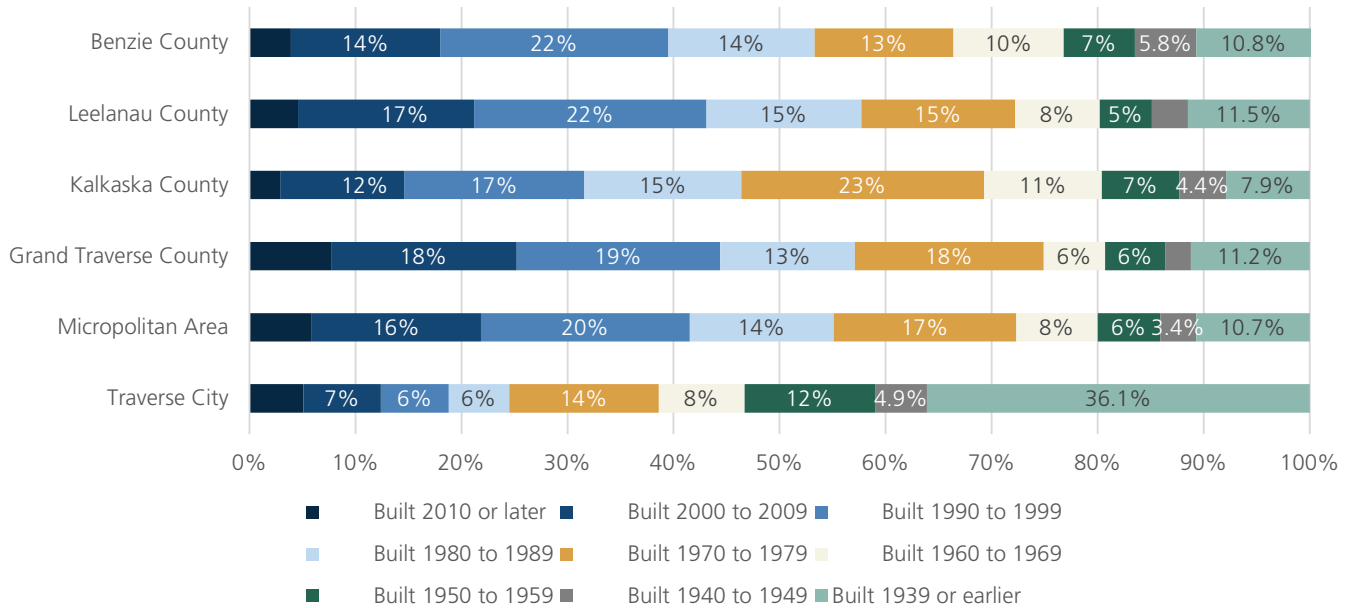
*Fernwood neighborhood residence on W Fifteenth Street.*  
Photo Credit: Google

**Table 17: Housing Age of Owner-Occupied Units**

| Year Built    | City of Traverse City |       | Grand Traverse County |       | Michigan |       |
|---------------|-----------------------|-------|-----------------------|-------|----------|-------|
| 2014 or later | 266                   | 3.5%  | 2,159                 | 4.9%  | 82,985   | 1.8%  |
| 2010-2013     | 125                   | 1.6%  | 1,256                 | 2.8%  | 56,872   | 1.2%  |
| 2000-2009     | 561                   | 7.3%  | 7,768                 | 17.5% | 454,659  | 9.9%  |
| 1990-1999     | 488                   | 6.4%  | 8,549                 | 19.2% | 611,539  | 13.3% |
| 1980-1989     | 439                   | 5.7%  | 5,665                 | 12.7% | 454,857  | 9.9%  |
| 1970-1979     | 1,083                 | 14.1% | 7,929                 | 17.8% | 708,551  | 15.4% |
| 1960-1969     | 619                   | 8.1%  | 2,575                 | 5.8%  | 544,231  | 11.8% |
| 1950-1959     | 947                   | 12.3% | 2,523                 | 5.7%  | 679,715  | 14.7% |
| 1940-1949     | 376                   | 4.9%  | 1,068                 | 2.4%  | 344,608  | 7.5%  |
| 1930-1939     | 2,767                 | 36.1% | 5,000                 | 11.2% | 673,896  | 14.6% |

Source: 2020 American Community Survey, DP04

**Figure 12: Year Built, Traverse City Micropolitan Area**



Source: 2020 American Community Survey, DP04: Selected Housing Characteristics

Traverse City’s Historic Districts Commission manages the Central Neighborhood, Boardman Neighborhood, and Downtown Historic Districts. The Commission ensures that homes in these neighborhoods are flagged for their historical importance, maintained and modified, or renovated consistently with the homes’ integrity and the neighborhood character.<sup>14</sup>

**Traverse City Micropolitan Area**

The year the housing stock was built reflects how a community has grown and developed over time. Traverse City’s housing stock is substantially older than the housing stock of the remainder of region; while over one third of all housing units in Traverse City was built before 1939, only 10.7% of the micropolitan area’s housing stock was built before 1939. The micropolitan area’s housing has been predominantly built in or after 1980, reflecting newer growth in the areas farther outside Traverse City as the population has continued to grow.

**Selected Monthly Owner Costs**

Selected monthly owner costs include the sum of all owner-occupied housing expenses that include mortgages and other outstanding debt-based payments, taxes, utilities, and services. Selected monthly owner costs may also include homeowner

**Selected Monthly Owner Costs**

The sum of payments for mortgages, deeds of trust, contracts to purchase, or similar debts on the property (including payments for the first mortgage, second mortgages, home equity loans, and other junior mortgages); real estate taxes; fire, hazard, and flood insurance on the property; utilities (electricity, gas, and water and sewer); and fuels (oil, coal, kerosene, wood, etc.).

Source: US Census Bureau

and/or condominium association fees, as well as mobile home specific costs (e.g., site rent, licensing fees). When households spend more than 30% of their income on housing costs, they are considered to live in an unaffordable housing unit. Within the Traverse City micropolitan area, 19.4% of homeowners with a mortgage spend 30% or more of their monthly income on housing costs. 9.2% of homeowners without a mortgage also exceed this threshold. This reflects that even among the people in Traverse City who have been able to attain homeownership, homeownership and associated costs can be a financial strain for nearly one in five households.

## Gross Rent

An estimate of monthly housing costs for renters that includes the contracted rent, plus the estimated average monthly cost of utilities (electricity, gas, water, and sewer) and fuels (oil, coal, kerosene, wood, etc.) if these are paid by the renter, or paid for the renter by someone else.

Source: US Census Bureau

### Gross Rent

Gross rent is an estimate of the monthly housing costs for renters. As shown in the table titled “Gross Rent,” the median gross rent within the City of Traverse City is slightly lower than in Grand Traverse County or Michigan statewide. However, it should be noted that the projected gross rent of \$930 is not in line with going rates for rent in Traverse City; this is a limitation of census data, which does not account for the full extent of the competitiveness of the Traverse City real estate market.

Despite this limitation, an ordinance adopted by the City Commission in October 2023 is expected to support affordable housing developments and the continuation of reduced rents. Following the state-wide law that opened payment-in-lieu-of-taxes, or PILOT, agreements to housing developments, city commissioners approved this provision within

Traverse City. This allows developers to pay a reduced rate instead of property taxes and, therefore, feasibly ensure that rental rates remain low for residents.

### Gross Rent as a Percentage of Household Income

Like selected monthly owner costs, the standard for affordable housing advises that no more than 30% of a household’s monthly income be spent on housing costs. However, abiding by this standard is often difficult for renters. In the City of Traverse City, 57.9% of all renters are cost burdened by housing costs that exceed 30% of the household’s monthly income. This reflects a lack of affordable rental inventory within the city and Grand Traverse County; rent in the county is more expensive than statewide median gross rents, and 52.0% of all renters in the county pay 30% or more in monthly income in housing costs.<sup>15</sup>

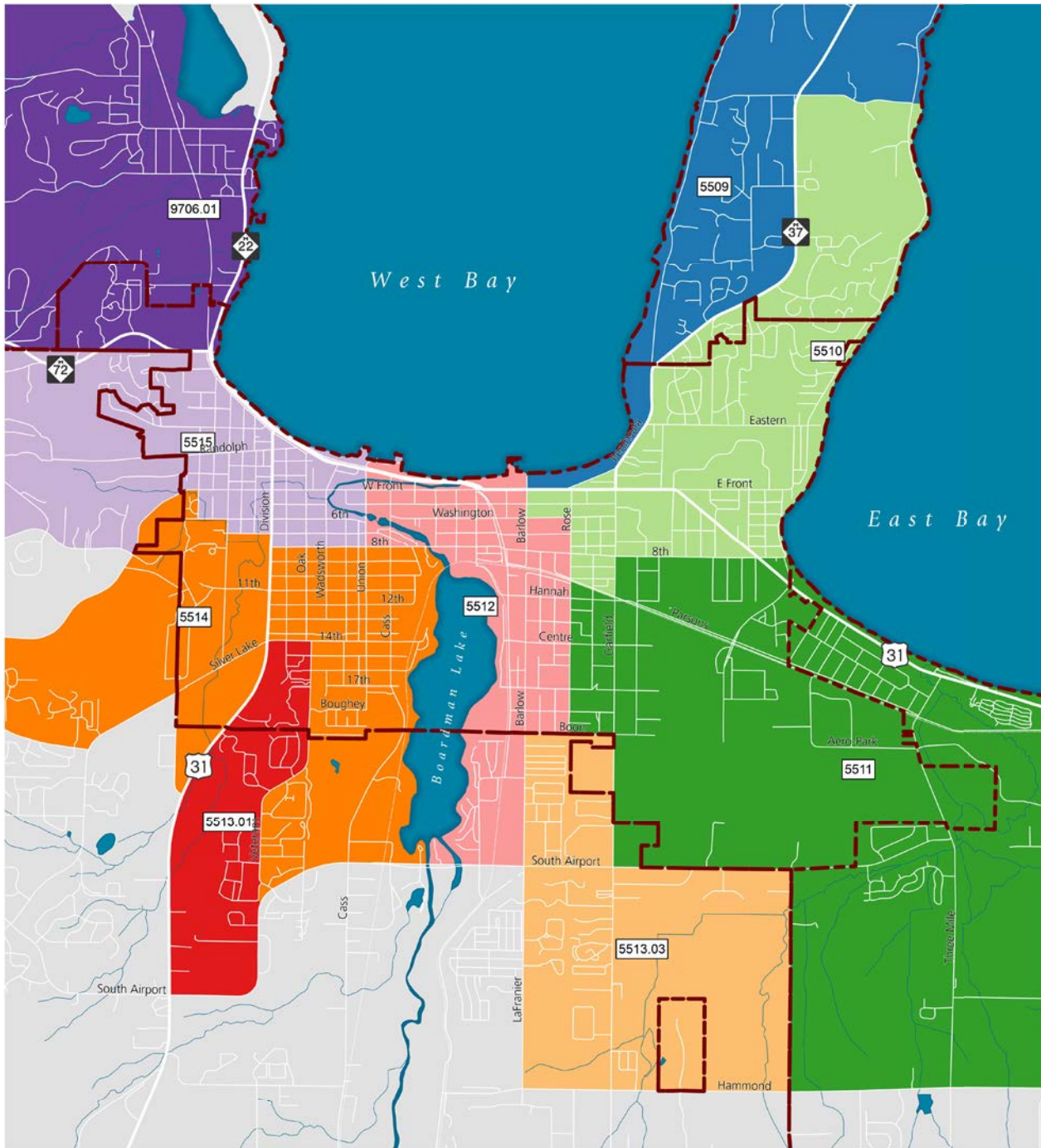
It should be noted that in the state of Michigan, renters generally pay more of their income in housing costs with 48.5% paying 30% or more monthly towards housing costs. However, this is exacerbated in the Traverse City area due to the low availability of housing stock for prospective renters as well as the high demand for rental units. Given a newly mobile remote workforce, there is increased competition for housing in the Traverse City micropolitan region. Additionally, tourism impacts rental rates within the Traverse City area

Table 18: Gross Rent

|                 | City of Traverse City |       | Grand Traverse County |       | Michigan     |       |
|-----------------|-----------------------|-------|-----------------------|-------|--------------|-------|
| Less than \$500 | 357                   | 13.4% | 933                   | 10.9% | 121,577      | 11.4% |
| \$500-999       | 1,181                 | 44.5% | 3,702                 | 43.4% | 542,176      | 50.8% |
| \$1,000-1,499   | 901                   | 33.9% | 3,173                 | 37.2% | 299,884      | 28.1% |
| \$1,500-1,999   | 216                   | 8.1%  | 560                   | 6.6%  | 70,405       | 6.6%  |
| \$2,000-2,499   | 0                     | 0.0%  | 55                    | 0.6%  | 18,995       | 1.8%  |
| \$2,500-2,999   | 0                     | 0.0%  | 18                    | 0.2%  | 6,245        | 0.6%  |
| \$3,000 or more | 0                     | 0.0%  | 93                    | 1.1%  | 8,396        | 0.8%  |
| <b>Median</b>   | <b>\$930</b>          |       | <b>\$965</b>          |       | <b>\$892</b> |       |

Source: 2020 American Community Survey, DP04

Map 3: Census Tracts



### Census Tracts

Sources: Michigan Open Data Portal, City of Traverse City

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:blue; border:1px solid black;"></span> 5509       | <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:orange; border:1px solid black;"></span> 5513.03  |
| <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:lightgreen; border:1px solid black;"></span> 5510 | <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:darkorange; border:1px solid black;"></span> 5514 |
| <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:green; border:1px solid black;"></span> 5511      | <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:lavender; border:1px solid black;"></span> 5515   |
| <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:pink; border:1px solid black;"></span> 5512       | <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:purple; border:1px solid black;"></span> 9706.01  |
| <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:red; border:1px solid black;"></span> 5513.01     |  |



both in competitiveness for long-term leases and the prevalence of short-term rental units that impact the availability of housing units on the year-round rental market.

### Home Mortgage Disclosure Act (HMDA) Mortgage Data

In 1975, the United States passed the Home Mortgage Disclosure Act (HMDA), intended to provide greater transparency throughout the mortgage lending process and to identify inequities in the lending processes of financial institutions. HMDA data contains information about the location, dollar amount, and types of loans made, as well as demographics of loan applicants. Analysis of HMDA data distinguishes patterns in mortgage lending in a community by geographic location, race and ethnicity, historic redlining, and income levels.

## Mortgage Origination

The process by which a lender works with a borrower to complete a mortgage transaction, resulting in a mortgage loan. In other words, origination takes place when a loan application, including mortgage applications, has been approved.

Source: Wall Street Mojo

### Mortgage Application by Geography

Census tracts are partially created with citizen involvement as part of the Census Bureau's Participant Statistical Areas Program. The Census Bureau will delineate tracts if no citizens respond to the survey. The map on the previous page shows the location and boundaries of each census tract.

Table 19: Vacancy, Traverse City Micropolitan Area

|                     |         | 2018   |                        |            |       | 2021   |                        |            |       |
|---------------------|---------|--------|------------------------|------------|-------|--------|------------------------|------------|-------|
|                     |         | Denied | Withdrawn by applicant | Originated | Other | Denied | Withdrawn by applicant | Originated | Other |
| Outside City Limits | 5501.01 | 11.1%  | 14.1%                  | 64.4%      | 10.3% | 4.0%   | 12.4%                  | 73.2%      | 10.6% |
|                     | 5501.02 | 12.2%  | 9.8%                   | 65.0%      | 13.0% | 8.2%   | 12.3%                  | 69.3%      | 9.8%  |
|                     | 5502    | 10.5%  | 19.7%                  | 53.9%      | 15.8% | 8.3%   | 15.1%                  | 64.5%      | 12.1% |
|                     | 5503    | 11.1%  | 16.7%                  | 58.3%      | 13.8% | 9.0%   | 9.2%                   | 66.9%      | 14.8% |
|                     | 5504    | 9.8%   | 13.2%                  | 62.2%      | 14.9% | 7.5%   | 11.8%                  | 68.6%      | 12.2% |
|                     | 5505    | 14.2%  | 12.9%                  | 57.8%      | 15.1% | 12.5%  | 8.6%                   | 67.3%      | 11.7% |
|                     | 5506    | 10.2%  | 13.8%                  | 62.0%      | 14.0% | 9.2%   | 8.9%                   | 70.3%      | 11.5% |
|                     | 5507    | 8.8%   | 11.9%                  | 66.3%      | 13.1% | 7.7%   | 10.8%                  | 68.7%      | 12.8% |
|                     | 5508    | 5.9%   | 9.6%                   | 72.0%      | 12.5% | 6.1%   | 15.3%                  | 67.9%      | 10.7% |
| Within City Limits  | 5509    | 7.5%   | 17.4%                  | 62.2%      | 12.8% | 7.9%   | 13.9%                  | 67.4%      | 10.5% |
|                     | 5510    | 8.3%   | 15.9%                  | 65.5%      | 10.3% | 6.4%   | 13.8%                  | 70.7%      | 9.1%  |
|                     | 5511    | 11.3%  | 15.3%                  | 61.3%      | 12.0% | 9.2%   | 12.1%                  | 69.2%      | 9.7%  |
|                     | 5512    | 14.2%  | 9.9%                   | 59.6%      | 16.3% | 3.1%   | 17.4%                  | 69.2%      | 9.8%  |
|                     | 5513    | 11.3%  | 7.2%                   | 71.1%      | 10.3% | 12.9%  | 17.7%                  | 59.7%      | 9.7%  |
|                     | 5514    | 10.4%  | 16.9%                  | 62.3%      | 10.3% | 8.7%   | 18.5%                  | 66.4%      | 6.4%  |
|                     | 5515    | 13.3%  | 7.8%                   | 64.4%      | 12.2% | 7.6%   | 14.7%                  | 65.6%      | 10.6% |
|                     |         | 9706   | 11.8%                  | 11.8%      | 60.9% | 15.2%  | 8.2%                   | 15.5%      | 65.4% |

Source: HMDA, 2018 & 2021

**Table 20: Mortgage Applications by Income, City of Traverse City**

| % AMI    | 2018   |                        |            |       | 2021   |                        |            |       |
|----------|--------|------------------------|------------|-------|--------|------------------------|------------|-------|
|          | Denied | Withdrawn by applicant | Originated | Other | Denied | Withdrawn by applicant | Originated | Other |
| <40%     | 36.0%  | 14.9%                  | 38.6%      | 10.5% | 20.5%  | 16.7%                  | 51.3%      | 11.5% |
| 40-59%   | 14.6%  | 13.2%                  | 65.1%      | 7.1%  | 10.6%  | 13.3%                  | 69.4%      | 6.7%  |
| 60-79%   | 11.8%  | 11.3%                  | 66.0%      | 10.8% | 8.8%   | 16.0%                  | 66.7%      | 8.5%  |
| 80-99%   | 4.8%   | 20.6%                  | 62.7%      | 11.9% | 6.7%   | 14.5%                  | 71.8%      | 7.1%  |
| 100-119% | 8.0%   | 20.5%                  | 57.1%      | 14.3% | 6.6%   | 15.8%                  | 69.4%      | 8.2%  |
| 120-139% | 9.5%   | 8.4%                   | 75.8%      | 6.3%  | 4.7%   | 11.2%                  | 77.7%      | 6.5%  |
| 140-199% | 9.3%   | 9.3%                   | 72.8%      | 8.6%  | 4.8%   | 15.6%                  | 70.5%      | 9.1%  |
| 200%+    | 3.1%   | 15.4%                  | 69.6%      | 11.9% | 5.4%   | 18.8%                  | 68.4%      | 7.4%  |

Source: HMDA, 2018 & 2021

The table titled “Vacancy, Traverse City Micropolitan Area” shows the percentage of actions taken on mortgages originating from all census tracts in Grand Traverse County. There was little variance in mortgage originations between census tracts in 2018. Tracts with fewer mortgage originations within city limits were census tracts 5509, 5511, 5512, and 5514, which all had less than 63% origination rates. In 2021, mortgage origination rates increased across the board; census tract 5513 was the only exception, decreasing to 59.7% origination. Census tract 5513 is wide-ranging, now divided into three sub-tracts not reflected in the HMDA data – 5513.01 with Veterans Drive, Bay Hill, and Forest Park; 5513.02 which follows the Boardman River to the south of town (outside of city limits); and 5513.03 along Hammond Road. The variance within this census tract likely impacts the data.

**Mortgage Application by Income**

Income also impacts mortgage applications. The table titled “Mortgage Applications by Income, City of Traverse City” reflects loans originated, approved, denied, and other actions taken by income as a percentage of Area Median Income (AMI). Area Median Income sets a localized standard to objectively measure income within a particular area. The results reflect, for both 2018 and 2021, that origination rates generally increase with income. Origination becomes more certain

### Mortgage Approval and Racial Equity

The history of redlining has played an enormous role in preventing non-white households from building wealth through homeownership by denying loan-based assistance with housing mortgages. Addressing this legacy and its lasting impacts in the present requires equitably considering mortgage applications and pursuing programs that can assist with housing costs and homeownership for racial and ethnic minorities.

(over 65%) when an applicant household reaches approximately 60-79% AMI.

**Mortgage Applications by Race or Ethnicity**

Historically, race and ethnicity have impacted mortgage determinations specifically through the practice of redlining, where neighborhoods with any minority residents were characterized as risky investments and highly likely to default on a loan. Residents in redlined neighborhoods were notably less likely to receive approval for mortgages. Although redlining is now an illegal practice, effects of redlining remain, with overall lower mortgage approval ratings for minority individuals.<sup>16</sup> It is difficult to examine whether this is occurring in Traverse City.

Table 21: Mortgage Applications by Race, City of Traverse City\*\*

|                                  | 2018           |                        |                |                | 2021          |                        |                  |               |
|----------------------------------|----------------|------------------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|------------------------|------------------|---------------|
|                                  | Denied         | Withdrawn by applicant | Originated     | Other          | Denied        | Withdrawn by applicant | Originated       | Other         |
| American Indian or Alaska Native | 62.5%<br>(5)   | 0.0%<br>(0)            | 37.5%<br>(3)   | 0.0%<br>(0)    | 9.1%<br>(1)   | 9.1%<br>(1)            | 81.8%<br>(9)     | 0.0%<br>(0)   |
| Asian                            | 20.0%<br>(1)   | 40.0%<br>(2)           | 20.0%<br>(1)   | 20.0%<br>(1)   | 5.9%<br>(1)   | 23.5%<br>(4)           | 58.8%<br>(10)    | 11.8%<br>(2)  |
| Black                            | 100.0%<br>(1)  | 0.0%<br>(0)            | 0.0%<br>(0)    | 0.0%<br>(0)    | 0.0%<br>(0)   | 50.0%<br>(1)           | 50.0%<br>(1)     | 0.0%<br>(0)   |
| Joint                            | 23.1%<br>(3)   | 7.7%<br>(1)            | 61.5%<br>(8)   | 7.7%<br>(1)    | 3.4%<br>(1)   | 13.8%<br>(4)           | 69.0%<br>(20)    | 13.8%<br>(4)  |
| White                            | 10.2%<br>(112) | 13.6%<br>(149)         | 66.0%<br>(723) | 10.2%<br>(112) | 7.9%<br>(148) | 14.9%<br>(276)         | 70.0%<br>(1,299) | 7.1%<br>(132) |

Source: HMDA, 2018 & 2021

Table 22: Mortgage Applications by Ethnicity, City of Traverse City\*\*

|                     | 2018           |                        |                |                | 2021          |                        |                  |               |
|---------------------|----------------|------------------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|------------------------|------------------|---------------|
|                     | Denied         | Withdrawn by applicant | Originated     | Other          | Denied        | Withdrawn by applicant | Originated       | Other         |
| Hispanic/Latino     | 27.3%<br>(3)   | 18.2%<br>(2)           | 54.5%<br>(6)   | 0.0%<br>(0)    | 15.0%<br>(3)  | 25.0%<br>(5)           | 45.0%<br>(9)     | 15.0%<br>(3)  |
| Joint               | 12.5%<br>(1)   | 12.5%<br>(1)           | 62.5%<br>(5)   | 12.5%<br>(1)   | 0.0%<br>(0)   | 4.8%<br>(1)            | 90.5%<br>(19)    | 4.8%<br>(1)   |
| Non Hispanic/Latino | 10.8%<br>(120) | 13.4%<br>(148)         | 65.2%<br>(721) | 10.3%<br>(116) | 7.8%<br>(146) | 14.7%<br>(274)         | 70.2%<br>(1,306) | 7.0%<br>(135) |

Source: HMDA, 2018 & 2021



Lake Ridge trail-oriented development on the west side of Boardman Lake.

Photo Credit: Gary Howe

Data in Traverse City is limited on mortgage approvals of individuals with racially and ethnically diverse identities due to low numbers of minority populations. For example, 2018 data indicates that 100% of Black applicants were denied, but this is a misrepresentation; HMDA data shows there was 1 Black applicant in 2018, and his/her mortgage was denied. Results in the tables titled “Mortgage Applications by Race, City of Traverse City” and “Mortgage Applications by Ethnicity, City of Traverse City” should not be interpreted as statistically significant.

*Mortgage Applications by Sex of Applicant(s)*

There was no significant difference found in originations, denials, or any other factor based on the sex of the applicant(s). In 2018, originations were slightly higher in households with joint applicants.

**TRANSITIONING THROUGH HOUSING**

As an individual enters the job market, pursues higher education, starts a family, or retires, their housing needs and preferences are expected to change. Therefore, a healthy housing stock is one that caters to various people at different points in their life. A homogenous housing stock (entirely single-family homes, for example) may cater to only certain households. As a result, the community may struggle to attract and retain individuals and

households who have housing preferences that do not match a homogenous stock of single-family homes. The following sections detail several key transitional housing steps. While everyone’s experience is unique and individual preferences may not align with the following transitional steps, this section provides a generalization of transitional housing needs for individuals leaving home, developing individual households, aging in place, and transitioning out of homelessness.

**Leaving Home**

The first experience that many people have with securing housing is when they leave their family home, or after leaving higher education. At this point in an individual’s life, income tends to be low, making housing affordability a priority.

Dormitory-style living and multi-bedroom rentals appeal to younger individuals because they can share the costs of housing with roommates. Typically, renting one bedroom in a multi-bedroom structure is cheaper than renting an individual one- or two-bedroom apartment or home. As individuals get older, progress in their career, and start to earn higher incomes, they typically desire more independent and private living arrangements and start to move into one- to two-bedroom rentals. However, taking the potential next step into home ownership is currently very challenging due to the factors described at the beginning of this chapter.

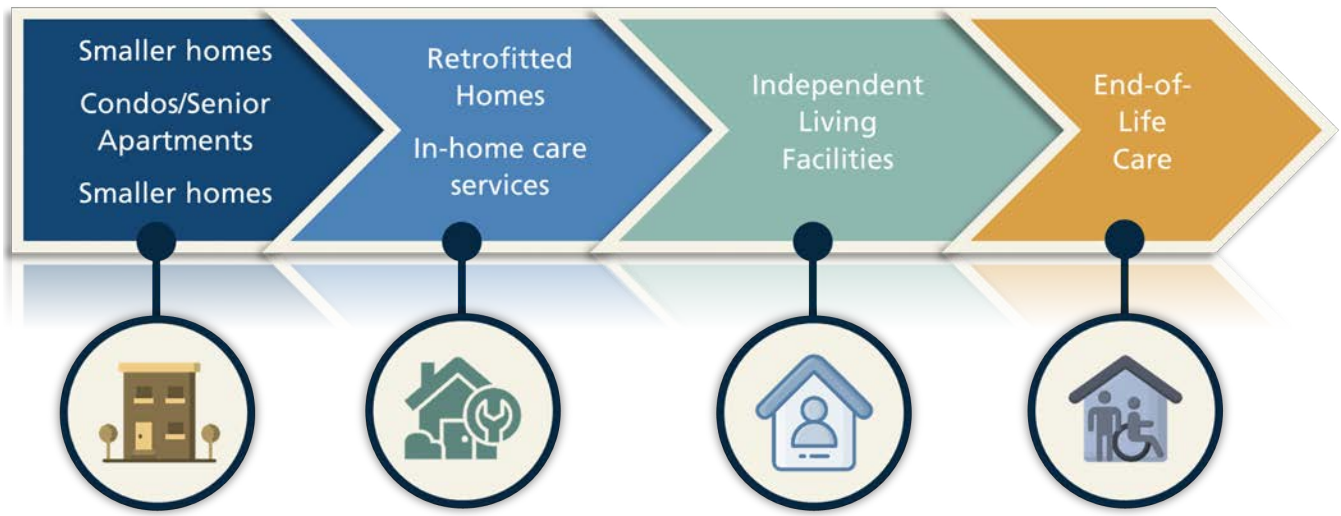
Figure 13: Transitioning Through Housing; Leaving Home





Figure 14: Transitioning Through Housing; Aging in Place

## Aging in Place



### Establishing Family or Household

As individuals advance in age and career, they begin to pursue more permanent household options, whether that be seeking a larger rental that suits their needs or seeking homeownership. Many individuals begin to form families at this time which may include forming partnerships, having children, or adopting animals, each of which require more spacious or differently-equipped housing options. For example, individuals may move from dormitory-style living to a townhome, or from one bedroom in a multi-bedroom rental to a small single-family home.

The challenge to find affordable housing makes the transition to household formation more difficult. This stage in the lives of young adults looks different than it once did; the remote work landscape provides less of an incentive to build long-term equity in a home, leading to changing preferences towards renting. Additionally, smaller family sizes have led to less of a demand for the large single-family homes that once signified this stage in adulthood. Because a substantial proportion of the City of Traverse City population lives alone, permanent, long-term housing options may require less square footage. Between 2010 and 2020, the percent of households with a person living alone stayed relatively constant from 41.8% to 41.3%.<sup>17</sup>

Generally, the transition into this stage of life from

multi-bedroom rentals includes seeking out longer-term housing options that are amenable to the household's needs. This can include greater square footage, a location close to schools and childcare, a yard or nearby parks for animals and children to play, or other amenities. For households that seek "the family home," moving to single-family homes can take place during this stage. Individuals often change their housing within this time period as their needs evolve; moving from a dormitory to an apartment with a partner, or to a small home if they have children.

### Downsized Housing and Climate Change

As aging residents develop a preference for smaller homes that match their needs as well as their capacity to maintain the property, their former residences re-enter the housing market and become available for purchase by a new owner. Facilitating and supporting this cycle by ensuring the availability of downsized homes that are suitable for an aging population is critical to sustaining a supply of housing from existing units rather than relying on the construction of new units which is associated with materials extraction, waste, increased emissions, and adding capacity to city systems.

Figure 15: Transitioning Through Housing, Housing Instability

## Housing Instability



### Aging in Place

As an individual or household ages, the desire and capacity to take care of larger homes that once worked well for a family usually declines. However, the desire to stay in the community remains strong as many older Americans look to age in place alongside their families, established networks, and even the neighborhood they have called home for many decades. It is important to provide housing options that can support the needs of older residents to ensure that they can remain in their community while having their needs met.

Typically, the first step for seniors when planning for a housing transition is to downsize from a family home. Homes that tend to fit this step are smaller single-family homes, condos, senior apartments, or homes within senior-living communities with various senior-style dwelling units. This phase fulfills senior housing needs for a decade or more until ambulatory ability and health become more limiting factors. Subsequently, seniors may retrofit their homes to accommodate limited mobility, and transition to single level living to reduce the need to climb stairs. Additionally, in-home care services can increase as ambulatory abilities decrease.

Seniors can live comfortably in retrofitted homes, provided they can access necessary services. However, when housing maintenance becomes too taxing or challenging, they may transition into

an assisted living facility. The National Institute on Aging recognizes four types of assisted living facilities: board and care homes (small private care facilities, typically without medical care), assisted living (providing some help with daily care and organizing resident activities), nursing homes or skilled nursing facilities (providing medical care, rehabilitation, and personal care), and continuing care retirement communities (with differing levels of care provided in different areas of the facility).<sup>18</sup>

In Traverse City, there are several small homes and senior living facilities that provide a smooth transition to age in place. However, it is important to ensure that senior care facilities have the capacity to continue to provide care for an increasingly large number of seniors. In 2022, Realtor.com rated Traverse City as the most affordable place to retire.<sup>19</sup> A lack of capacity and adequate residential senior care services would cause seniors in need of those services to remain in their homes for longer periods of time – this may not be the best fit for their needs and would also delay that housing unit from entering the market.

Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) are an increasingly popular senior living option that allow for a tailored senior living opportunity without substantially altering the main structure. Traverse City currently permits ADUs in all residential districts, but initially capped their rate of construction to 15 units per year. While the actual rate of construction was well below the annual cap for many years, in October

## Housing Services and Equity

Developing and providing a spectrum of housing services is critical to support all aspects of housing instability, including overcrowded housing and housing located far away from critical services. Supporting individuals who need housing assistance requires a vested effort to meet their needs without instituting other requirements to be fulfilled before they are placed into housing. The “housing first” approach to service provision does not require that individuals find employment, address patterns of substance abuse, or other areas of help before receiving access to long-term housing and food. Adopting this approach requires a commitment to equity and understanding houselessness as an outcome of compounding systemic inequity.

of 2023, this threshold was removed. Though this cap has been removed, the City requires property owners to live in either the primary structure or the accessory unit which may still pose a limitation to the prevalence and utilization of ADUs as a housing option.

### Housing Instability

The largest causes of homelessness are insufficient income and lack of affordable housing. While unemployment, poverty, mental illness, and substance abuse also contribute to housing instability, the lack of options for unhoused individuals is a critical issue and one that prolongs the amount of time these individuals live without permanent housing. Transitioning out of homelessness requires housing options and support services to address challenges that an unhoused individual faces. The longer a person experiences housing instability, the more difficult it becomes to transition back to stable housing.<sup>20</sup>

Emergency shelters provide the first line of support for those experiencing homelessness and a wide range of services to holistically address a variety of needs. In Traverse City, Safe Harbor and the Goodwill Inn offer emergency housing options, the Jubilee House and the Grand Traverse Women’s Shelter provide emergency support services, and Central United Methodist Church opens their doors to unhoused individuals during the day. The



*Riverview Terrace residential building owned and operated by the Traverse City Housing Commission.*

Photo Credit: Google

Goodwill Inn provides services to facilitate a pathway toward more stable and long-term housing options. Homeless transitional housing involves temporary residence of up to 24 months and support services to help unhoused individuals stabilize their lives and seek viable housing options before being without shelter. Permanent supportive housing is a more stable option that offers housing and voluntary and flexible support services to address and manage serious and chronic issues.<sup>21</sup> Finally, affordable housing is the last step in transitioning out of homelessness. If there are no affordable options available, there is nowhere for individuals to progress.

Additionally, housing instability manifests in more ways than just homelessness. Burdensome housing costs and limited affordable housing options can contribute to an increase in the number of individuals living in each household and the average number of inhabitants per room in order to split costs among a greater amount of people.<sup>22</sup> Further, housing instability does not always have a financial expression. In some cases, households will encounter affordable housing costs by universal standards but face burdens in terms of distances traveled to their places of employment, shopping and retail, and other services like healthcare, education, entertainment, and so on. Each of these manifestations speaks to a large, well-defined need for affordable housing in proximity to urban

amenities that ensures access to additional services and urban features beyond just shelter.

## Accessible Housing

Accessible housing options accommodate the needs of individuals with physical disabilities and, often, the mobility needs of individuals' differences in ambulatory ability. Accessible housing options and the modifications made by individuals to make their housing accessible span a broad spectrum of provisions, from a handrail in the bathroom to modifying countertop heights and light switches for someone using a wheelchair. The prevalence of older housing units in the Traverse City housing stock poses some barriers to accessible homes as accessible design considerations were not incorporated into the original units. Older homes that were not built to be accessible, therefore, are likely to require modifications over time. Oftentimes, multi-family housing structures can offer more accessible housing options where individuals do not have to maintain a yard or sidewalk and, often, have elevators to access upper floors. Under the Fair Housing Act (FHA), any building with four or more units (whether privately or publicly owned) must meet FHA Accessibility Guidelines.<sup>23</sup> The need for more accessible housing is top of mind in Traverse City; Riverview Terrace, a subsidized housing option in downtown Traverse City, is undergoing a \$11 million renovation project. A \$500,000 grant was obtained to convert 10 units to universally accessible units.<sup>24</sup>

## EXPANDING HOUSING OPTIONS

As highlighted throughout this section, housing availability and affordability are key challenges facing Traverse City. Inaction or maintenance of the status quo will result in housing values and levels of unaffordability continuing to rise. This will lead to existing residents being priced out of Traverse City, an inability to attract young professionals and low-to-middle-income workers, and increased sprawl and development on the City's borders and urban fringe. A predominance of single-family housing produces significant economic impacts, including on the individuals (specifically those in the service industry) who work in the City and are unable to find and afford housing units within the city limits. This will lead to sustainability issues with businesses in the service, retail, and hospitality industries, which are major economic drivers within Traverse City.

## Urban Sprawl and Climate Change

Sprawling urban environments create an inherent reliance on automobile travel. While some suburbs may be walkable or have non-motorized paths, many daily activities (commuting, attending school, grocery shopping, etc.) cannot be achieved without traveling via automobile. As many communities are focused on improving non-auto travel within their borders to reduce emissions, an important and needed step is to revise land use policies to permit more housing and mixed-use environments.

For these reasons, it is critical to address housing needs within the City and in the region by planning for and supporting new housing development. However, available land for new construction is limited in the City. Any substantive new development would likely require the redevelopment of existing land and infill on existing open land (including accessory dwelling units). Therefore, larger-scale redevelopment needs to be paired with selective density increases throughout the City. Increases in housing density address many of the housing needs facing the City and region.

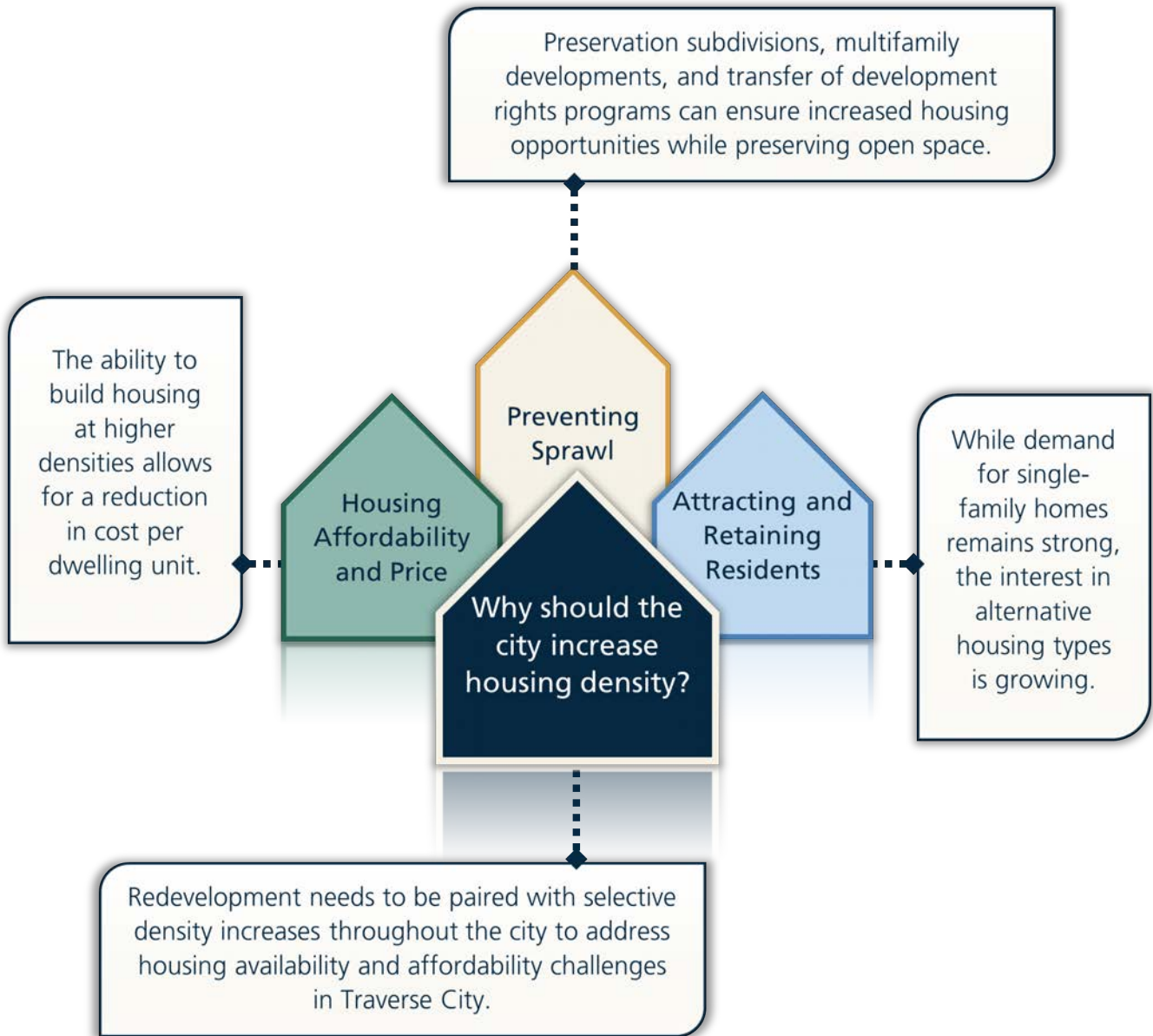
## Housing Affordability and Price

The ability to build housing at higher densities allows for a reduction in cost per dwelling unit because construction costs can be spread across multiple units. On average, constructing a duplex costs 37% less than building two single-family homes.<sup>25</sup> The economies of scale apply perfectly to housing: the more units built, the cheaper the cost per unit.

## Attracting and Retaining Residents

The ability to attract new residents and retain existing residents as they transition throughout their lives is key to community stability and sustainability. A community and economy cannot function effectively without workers of all ages, fields, and levels of experience. As a tourism and service-driven economy, it is essential for the City of Traverse City to attract and retain service

Figure 16: Density Considerations



workers, who generally cannot afford to purchase large, expensive single-family homes. Additionally, younger generations have more diverse housing preferences beyond the standard single-family home. While demand for single-family homes remains strong, interest in alternative housing types is growing. Therefore, to attract and retain new residents and workers, it is important to provide denser housing types.

### Preventing Sprawl

Increased demand for housing creates economic pressure on undeveloped land, including agricultural land and other ecologically valuable

areas. As demand remains strong, more undeveloped land is converted into housing, typically low-density subdivisions. This dynamic, commonly referred to as "urban sprawl," results in more cars on the road and longer travel times for people commuting into the city for goods, services, work, and entertainment. Often, the conversion of undeveloped land is antithetical to the goals of more rural neighboring communities, creating increased tension between development pressure and local communities.

Several townships around Traverse City have worked to guide the growth of their land



Ruth Park Apartments apartments on Wellington Street.  
Photo Credit: Gary Howe

while preserving natural resources, agricultural land, and viewsheds. Peninsula Township has a Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) program, funded by a township millage, to purchase the right to build structures on land identified in the Agricultural Preservation Area.<sup>26</sup> Acme Township has also instituted a Purchase of Development Rights program, prioritizing land within the Acme Township Farmland Preservation Zone.<sup>27</sup>

These preservation measures, paired with strategic planning of new housing creation, work to ensure that housing capacity and rural open space preservation work hand-in-hand. If communities take a hardline stance against all new housing, it can negatively impact the regional goals of housing availability and affordability. Therefore, it is critical that the responsibility of new housing units is shared and planned for among communities in the region. Surrounding townships can plan for housing and development types that fit well into a rural landscape, while limiting the effects of urban sprawl. Land use tools such as preservation subdivisions, multifamily developments, and transfer of development rights programs can ensure that municipalities' goals of preserving open space

Table 23: Residential Permitted Uses

| Zoning District           | Percent of Residential Land | Permitted Residential Homes |                         |            |                 |      |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|------------|-----------------|------|
|                           |                             | Single-Family               | Clustered Single-Family | Two-Family | Multiple Family | ADUs |
| RC                        | 2%                          | P                           | PC                      | -          | -               | PC   |
| R-1                       | 74%                         | P                           | SLU                     | -          | -               | PC   |
| R-2                       | 6%                          | P                           | SLU                     | P          | -               | PC   |
| R-9, R-15, R-29           | 17%                         | P                           | -                       | P          | P               | PC   |
| Non-Residential Districts |                             |                             |                         |            |                 |      |
| HR                        | -                           | P                           | -                       | P          | P               | -    |
| C-1                       | -                           | P                           | -                       | P          | P               | -    |
| C-2                       | -                           | P                           | -                       | P          | P               | -    |
| C-3                       | -                           | P                           | -                       | P          | P               | -    |
| C-4                       | -                           | P                           | -                       | P          | P               | -    |
| D-1, D-2, D-3             | -                           | P                           | -                       | P          | P               | -    |
| I                         | -                           | PC                          | -                       | PC         | PC              | -    |
| NMC-1, NMC-2              | -                           | P                           | P                       | P          | P               | -    |
| H-1, H-2                  | -                           | P                           | -                       | P          | P               | -    |

P = Permitted by Right, PC = Permitted with Conditions, SLU = Special Land Use

**Table 24: Proposed Lot Reductions**

| Zone | Minimum Lot Width          |          | Minimum Lot Area |          | Maximum Impervious Surfaces |          |
|------|----------------------------|----------|------------------|----------|-----------------------------|----------|
|      | Existing                   | Proposed | Existing         | Proposed | Existing                    | Proposed |
| R-1a | 90 ft                      | 70 ft    | 9,000 sf         | 7,000 sf | 30%                         | 35%      |
| R-1b | 35 ft/45 ft <sup>(a)</sup> | 35 ft    | 5,000 sf         | 4,000 sf | 45%                         | 50%      |
| R-9  | 50 ft                      | 50 ft    | 7,500 sf         | 5,000 sf | 35% <sup>(b)</sup>          | 60%      |
| R-15 | 50 ft                      | 50 ft    | 7,500 sf         | 5,000 sf | 40% <sup>(b)</sup>          | 60%      |
| R-29 | 50 ft                      | 50 ft    | 7,500 sf         | 5,000 sf | 50% <sup>(b)</sup>          | 60%      |

(a) 5 feet is required for lots north or east of US-31/M-72 and east of Milliken Dr.

(b) A 10% increase in impervious surface coverage is allowed for projects meeting the affordable housing requirements.

coincide with goals of creating increased housing opportunities and lessen the housing burden on the City of Traverse City.

## RECENT HOUSING SOLUTIONS AND REFORMS

Providing housing density is a function of the zoning environment. Over the past 60 to 80 years, zoning ordinances have been written to prioritize single-family homes over other types of housing. In some communities, single-family homes are the only type of residences permitted to be built. Many communities, including Traverse City, have changed their zoning codes to exclude non-single-family homes from many residential districts. In fact, in 1943, Traverse City permitted two-family homes in all residential districts, enabling many neighborhoods to be comprised of a mix of housing types.<sup>28</sup>

While Traverse City’s Zoning Ordinance has fluctuated in terms of its permissiveness for a diversity of housing types and densities, as of 2022, it includes 4 main residential zones, none of which are exclusively single-family. Accessory dwelling units are permitted (with conditions) in all residential districts, meaning that all residential zoning districts permit at least 2 dwelling units on a lot. The City’s Planning Commission has taken substantive steps towards addressing housing deficiencies (e.g., removing parking requirements for residential uses and, therefore, increasing land available for housing). This section will detail the most recent actions that have been implemented to support housing goals. Taken together, the following changes point to a significant opportunity to meaningfully increase Traverse City’s total

housing supply. However, it is also expected that such changes will take time to materialize in such a noticeable way.

## Eliminating Multi-Family Density Limits

In Fall 2021, Traverse City’s multi-family districts were consolidated into a single R-3 district, providing more flexibility in construction and renovation as well as greater opportunities for housing density. The R-3 district consolidates the prior R-9, R-15, and R-29 districts (which were zoned by density limits) and regulates by measures other than number of dwelling units, such as setbacks, height and lot size limits, proximity to other residential uses, and impervious surface coverage. This allows for greater flexibility in a building by permitting any number of units within it to regulate the structure itself rather than its density.

## Cluster Housing

As of 2023, the Traverse City Zoning Ordinance permits cluster housing in the R-1a, R-1b, and R-2 districts through a special land use permit approved administratively, with a minimum lot size of one acre. Clustered family homes are single-family homes arranged in close proximity. The overall housing density allowed is based on the usual density allowed in the zoning district, established through the minimum lot size.

Although cluster housing permits the same number of units per parcel typically allowed, cluster housing allows for parcels with unique topographical and ecological concerns (e.g., parcels bordering Kids Creek) to maximize their density around natural resources. It also allows

for multiple small homes to share one communal courtyard area, a popular and lower-maintenance option for residents who are aging-in-place. Reducing the minimum lot size to one acre makes more properties eligible, particularly the parcels most in need of this development style. Further, allowing cluster housing with an administrative special land use permit allows city staff to approve developments without needing the approval of City Commission and subsequent additional layers of approval, likely making the option more enticing. However, it is important to note that while this change in minimum lot size (from five acres to one acre) makes more properties in Traverse City eligible for this kind of development, side setback requirements can pose a barrier to definitively using cluster housing as a tool to increase density.

### Duplexes by Right

As of 2023, the City of Traverse City Zoning Ordinance permits the conversion of single-family dwelling units in the R-1a and R-1b districts to two-family dwelling units by right. A home that has been converted according to this provision would be considered a duplex because the definition of a duplex is “a single building designed for the occupancy of two-family units living independently of each other in two separate dwellings.” Many duplexes were present in the R-1a and R-1b districts prior to this change and were considered legal non-conformities which presents challenges when remodeling or selling/

buying the property. Permitting duplexes by right in these districts aligns the Zoning Ordinance with the historic development pattern and removes lengthy permitting and administrative processes for a use already permitted in the district. However, it is important to encourage the design of new duplexes such that their scale and massing are cohesive with the existing fabric of the neighborhood.

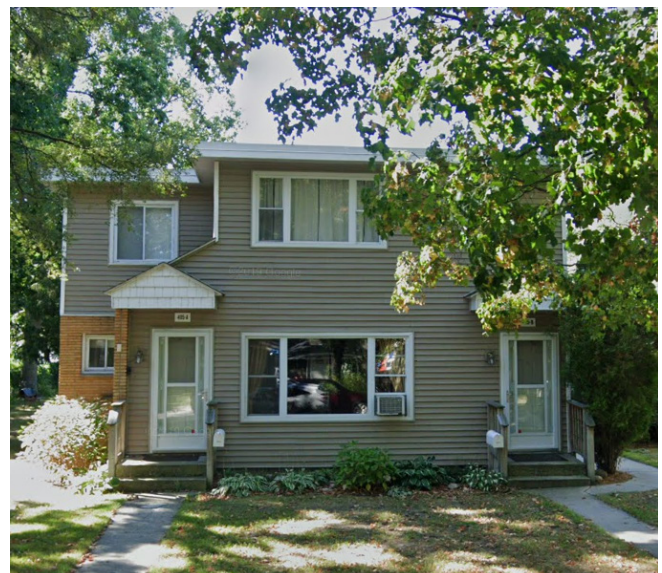
While this change provides a critical avenue to increase density, accessory dwelling units (ADUs) are currently permitted with single-family homes. Density could be increased further if ADUs were permitted on lots with duplexes; implementing this change would also support goals of reducing the amount of impervious surface per dwelling unit as three separate households would utilize the same roads and sidewalks.

### Two Principal Dwellings on Large Lots

In addition to recent changes to permit duplexes by right in the R-1a and R-1b districts, the Zoning Ordinance now also permits the placement of two principal dwellings on lots that are twice the minimum area. Previously, the request to site 2 principal dwelling units on the same property was specific to corner lots that are typically larger in size; permitting this development for any lot that is double the Zoning Ordinance’s minimum requirements further progresses the intention to increase density that drives this endeavor.



*Poor transition between intensities of land use in Kids Creek neighborhood.*



*Duplex in Fernwood Neighborhood.*



Figure 17: Missing Middle Housing Typologies



## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER ACTION

Traverse City has made remarkable progress towards creating a regulatory environment that increases housing density in subtle yet meaningful ways. The following recommendations are provided to further the City’s work in this realm and identify opportunities to build upon existing efforts towards increased housing density.

### Permit ADUS Without Primary Owner

To support the renters of Traverse City by increasing the supply of rental units beyond the development of apartments and other multi-family structures, the City may consider eliminating the requirement for a primary owner to be present in a lot’s principal property in order to build an accessory dwelling unit (ADU). In other words, allowing rental tenure for both a principal (single-family) structure and an ADU that is permitted by right would support renters by increasing the provision of rental units.

While this action has been approached in the past and met with some resistance from homeowners across the City, it is important to acknowledge that the primary owner requirement is, in some cases, arbitrary and easily circumvented in other circumstances. For example, on lots with double the minimum size requirements that are large enough to build two separate homes, it is possible for both structures to be rented; they are not subject to primary owner requirements simply because the second structure is considered a

house, not an ADU. Given this scenario, permitting the rental of ADUs without a primary owner in the principal structure is likely to also increase affordability as ADUs are traditionally smaller in size than single-family homes and therefore associated with cheaper rents.

### Pattern Book Homes

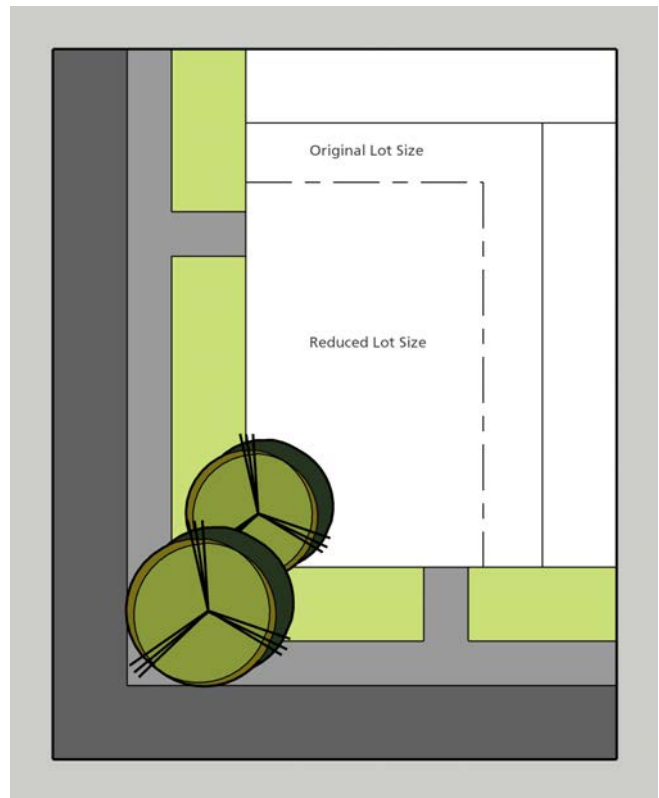
In the early 20th century, many suburban homes were ordered from a Sears of Aladdin catalog. These homes were inexpensive, easy to assemble, and met all necessary codes. Often referred to as “pattern book homes,” many are still in existence today. Recently, pattern book homes have made their way back to the housing construction industry. By adopting a set of pre-approved building patterns, local governments can offer a library of construction options to developers that have already been reviewed by the necessary local government staff. This significantly reduces the time a property owner needs to spend getting approval for their documents (site plan, construction documents, etc.). Pre-approved building plans do not completely remove municipal review as setbacks, dimensional requirements, and other zoning regulations will still need to be checked. However, developers would not have to hire an architect or engineer to draft any plans as the pre-approved pattern book plans are detailed enough to meet construction standards. Providing pattern-book homes reduces construction costs for developers and, as a result, reduces costs for prospective renters and buyers.

Beyond providing an affordable solution to increasing housing, an added benefit of pattern book homes is the ability for the drafting municipality to dictate the style, size, and appearance of the structure. Traverse City could draft patterns of duplexes and multiplexes that fit the scale of its residential neighborhoods so that when development in existing residential neighborhoods does happen, they are guaranteed to meet the scale and fabric of the neighborhood.

### Multiplexes by Right

Like permitting duplexes by right in the R-1a and R-1b districts, permitting multiplexes (triplexes and quadplexes) in the R-2 district by right would allow for subtle, incremental increases in housing supply and density without the need for special procedures or exceptions in approving their construction. This aligns with the intent of the R-2 district to provide flexibility in housing options and appropriate transitions between intensities of land uses. Triplexes are defined as “a single building designed for the occupancy of 3 family units living independently of each other in 3 separate dwellings,” and quadplexes are defined as “a single building designed for the occupancy of 4 family units living independently of each other in 4 separate dwellings.”

While this possibility was broached during the City’s housing reform conversations, changes ultimately resulted in allowing duplexes by right in both R-1 districts and two-family homes and/or 2 separate structures in the R-2 district. The motion to permit up to four units in the R-2 district, however, did not pass, therefore leaving R-1 and R-2 zoning districts virtually identical in terms of their maximum density provisions. The primary concerns towards triplexes and quadplexes were rooted in not knowing what these structures would look like in neighborhoods currently zoned R-2. The City should revisit this push to permit multiplexes by right and consider changes that allow 3 to 4 dwellings per acre. Additionally, the aforementioned pattern book homes may serve as a tool for this recommendation by providing residents an idea of what proposed multiplexes could look like, therefore reducing uncertainty associated with the aesthetics of their development.



*Reduced minimum lot size schematic.*

### Reducing Minimum Lot Sizes

Infill development is often limited by the fact that it is challenging to find properties that meet the minimum lot requirements for development, leaving many properties underutilized. Reducing minimum lot sizes would allow for parcels that are just under the minimum requirements to be redeveloped, or for mid-sized parcels to be split and developed. However, reducing the minimum lot size also requires increasing the maximum impervious surface area to accommodate building homes that are consistent with the existing size and style of the surrounding neighborhood.

### Multiple Homes on Larger Lots

For lots that are twice the minimum size and/or dimensions in the R-1 districts, building another home or structure requires a lot split, an often-arduous administrative process. Permitting the construction of an additional dwelling unit on the property by right would eliminate the need for a lot split, making this option more appealing and reducing barriers to housing construction. However, this option should only be allowed for lots that are twice or more the minimum size to maintain

consistency within the neighborhood. If only lots that are twice the minimum size are eligible for this provision, the impact on the neighborhood would be null; the only change would be administrative.

### Eliminating Density Limits

The NMC and Hospital districts, which apply to the NMC campus and Munson Medical Center respectively, have density requirements of their own. Any changes to the multiple-family residential zoning district should also be applied to the NMC and Hospital Districts. It is important to note that each of these specialty areas are governed by their respective management plans so any development would need to conform to those plans.

### Upzoning Around Higher Intensity Land Uses

Key to creating a livable and pleasant environment is gradually transitioning between different intensities of land use. For example, siting heavy industry next to residential developments creates significant compatibility concerns; without a transition between the two, the area becomes less livable. Therefore, upzoning some residential properties adjacent to more intense land uses would provide a smoother transition between intensities. This upzoning is reflected in the future land use plan.

### New Housing Incentives

In 2022, the State of Michigan passed several sweeping bills aimed to increase housing supply and housing construction. This package of bills were passed with the support of housing coalitions statewide.

#### *SB 432 – PILOTs for Housing*

This bill provides local governments the ability to develop Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) policies and enter into PILOT agreements with developers who are building or rehabbing affordable housing units. Currently, many local governments allow PILOTs for developments as part of the developer's process to be awarded low-income housing tax credits through MSHDA. This legislation allows local governments to review PILOT agreements for developments that are not applicants for state or federal tax credits, thus allowing a needed tool for governments and developers/builders to partner together to address local workforce housing needs.

A project is exempt from all ad valorem property taxes if: one (1) the local municipality has opted in, two (2) the housing project is owned by a nonprofit housing corporation, three (3) a housing project that is being developed or rehabilitated for workforce housing that is located in a municipality, and four (4) is subject to a municipal ordinance that is adopted by the governing body of that municipality to approve a housing project tax exemption under this subdivision.

The City has recently adopted an ordinance in accordance to the parameters of this bill. As of March 2024, two developments have been approved under it, and another is under review.

The approval or denial of a tax exemption under this subdivision must be in accordance with an ordinance or resolution concerning the selection of workforce housing projects adopted by the governing body. The owner of a housing project exempt from taxation under this section shall pay the municipality of the project an annual service charge for public services in lieu of all taxes.

**New Construction:** An amount that is the greater of the tax on the property on which the project is located for the tax year preceding date on which construction is commenced or 10% of the annual shelter rents obtained from the project.

**Rehabilitation Project:** An amount that is the lesser of the tax on the property on which the project is located for the tax year preceding the date on which rehabilitation is commenced or 10% of the annual shelter rents obtained from the project. The service charge must not exceed the amount in taxes that an owner would have otherwise paid if the housing project were not tax-exempt and must be paid in full for units not provided to low-income households.<sup>28</sup>

#### *SB 364 – Neighborhood Enterprise Zone Expansion*

Established Neighborhood Enterprise Zones (NEZ) have supported investment in infill revitalization for owner-occupied housing and mixed-use buildings in eligible communities. This bill extends the opportunity to use NEZs to all Michigan cities, villages, and townships. The governing body of a local governmental unit designates a neighborhood enterprise zone that cannot be less than 10 platted parcels of land (unless they are in a downtown revitalization district and total more

than 10 facilities). The land must be compact and contiguous. The expansion will let the local government support new (in whole or in part) residential homes and condominiums or new (in whole or in part) mixed-use buildings that include residential units with ground-floor retail, and rehabilitated facilities that meet certain investment criteria.

The NEZ tax rate is equal to half the tax rate during the year prior to the investment. Local units subject to the expansion may designate an NEZ only if the project encourages compact development, is adjacent to existing development, and can utilize existing infrastructure.<sup>29</sup>

Though Traverse City has not yet utilized this opportunity, it is important to proactively identify eligible locations (with the required 10 platted parcels) to facilitate developer interest and target this action where it is most needed.

### *SB 364 – Attainable Housing Facilities Act*

A local government can create an “attainable housing district” where property owners can apply for a partial tax exemptions if they meet specific affordability criteria determined by the local government. This tool will reduce real property taxes by 50% of the statewide commercial, industrial, and utility average for up to 12 years if they meet these criteria of affordability. This tool will enable local governments to support and encourage investment in rehabilitating attainable housing in Michigan communities. The following are the criteria:

- » Providing units at a price point that does not exceed 120% of the county-wide median income threshold for at least 30% of the units in the development.
- » Local governments have the flexibility to negotiate at or above the 30% to align with their goals. Local governments have the ability to negotiate the number of units and affordability requirements up to 120% AMI.
- » This tool can only be used for 4 or fewer rental units and a minimum of \$5,000 investment is required. For 5 or more rental units, see Residential Facilities Exemption.<sup>30</sup>

### *SB 422 – Residential Facilities Exemption*

The creation of a “residential facilities exemption” would allow a temporary tax abatement on qualified new housing development in districts established by local units of government for developments of five or more units and a minimum investment of \$50,000. Local governments would have the ability to establish residential facility districts used to provide tax abatements for qualified residential facilities.

This abatement supports both the renovation and expansion of aging residential units as well as the construction of new residential units in these districts.

Qualified new housing developments may include multi-family or single-family homes that are targeted towards populations earning below 120% of the area median incomes, with assurances that units are occupied as principal residence (year-round) to eligible households.<sup>31</sup>

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- 30 Ibid.
- 31 Ibid.

## HOUSING KEY POINTS

- » From 2010 to 2020, the total number of housing units in Traverse City increased by 14.3%, the second highest rate of all surrounding communities and counties. Another 1,075 housing units have been permitted since then (from 2021 to 2023).
- » Over 60% of all housing units in Traverse City are detached single-family homes. Many of the City’s duplexes and triplexes are a result of historic zoning standards that permitted greater neighborhood density but that now constitute “non-conforming uses.”
- » Traverse City’s vacancy rate is about 10.2%, lower than both Grand Traverse County’s and Michigan’s – further, about half of all vacant housing units are used by seasonal residents, therefore removing them from the available housing stock. This is an indication of a demand for housing that exceeds supply, a key driver in rising housing prices.
- » The median home price has risen by 55.9% from 2010 to 2020 and is currently estimated to be \$292,800; the median household income has risen by just 6.6% in the same period.
- » Over 36% of all housing units in Traverse City were built before 1939; conversely, just 12.4% were built after 2000.
- » Changes to the City’s zoning ordinance in 2022 have led to a greater permissiveness of housing types and densities in all residential zones. None of the four primarily residential zones are exclusively single-family, and accessory dwelling units are permitted in all residential zones (with conditions). Other changes pertaining to eliminating multi-family density limits, cluster housing, allowing duplexes by right, and permitting two principal dwelling on large lots were also the subject of recent zoning amendments.

# 3



## NEIGHBORHOODS

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## NEIGHBORHOODS OVERVIEW

Neighborhood connections and the social relationships within them have been a part of urban life since the early cities. Proximity and a sense of a shared community foster strong relationships between neighbors and a collective sense of care for where they live. Prior to the 20th century's mass suburbanization, most urban neighborhoods provided all basic needs, and some people lived in one neighborhood for their entire lives. After suburbanization, neighborhoods became more exclusively residential and lost some of their completeness. While predominantly residential neighborhoods can be healthy and strong, their residents often travel elsewhere to fulfill all of their basic needs. Neighborhood planning is transitioning to prioritize their traditional function where goods and services are provided in close proximity to residences, therefore encouraging walkability and short-distance travel.

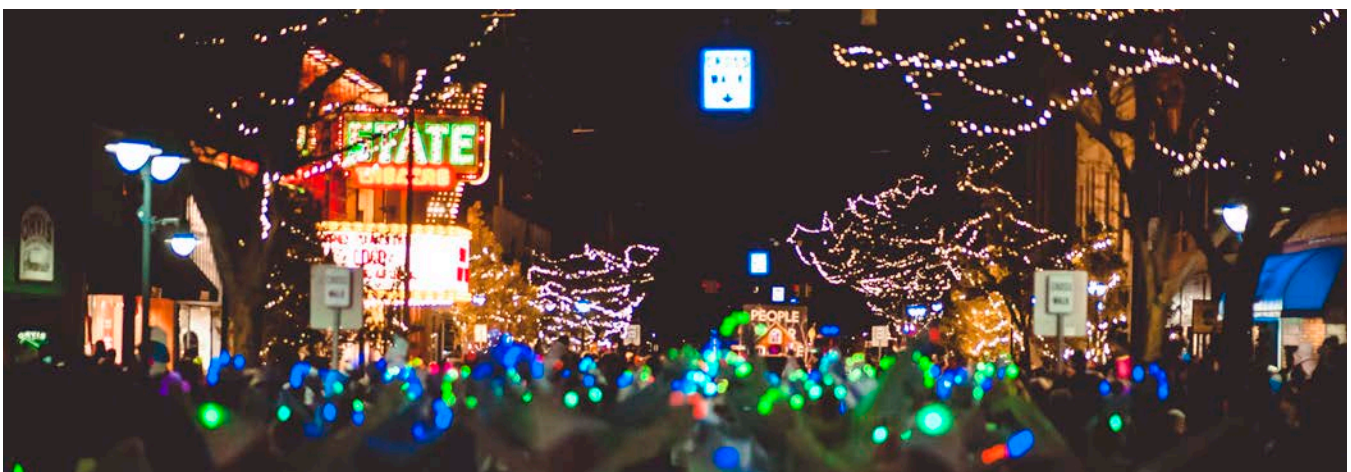
Neighborhoods are unique, and two neighborhoods in the same community may look very different; Traverse City is no exception. This chapter will examine various aspects of Traverse City's residential neighborhoods, including their histories, land use patterns, residential lot sizes and dimensions, common housing styles, neighborhood indicators, and community engagement results. The neighborhood boundaries presented in this Master Plan are not absolute and were established for the purpose of this planning process. As some of Traverse City's neighborhoods do not have defined boundaries, the selected communities may not reflect all neighborhood names or formally established neighborhood associations.

## Neighborhood Indicators

The following neighborhood indicators are a series of data points used to illustrate existing conditions of each neighborhood in Traverse City. These indicators provide a sense of what it is like to live in each neighborhood while simultaneously identifying their strengths as well as opportunities for enhancement. Each indicator is accompanied by a brief description and how they are identified and/or evaluated in each neighborhood.

It is important to note that each neighborhood indicator is applied to City neighborhoods that vary in the extent of their definition and recognition. While some boundaries are widely understood, others are more general and fluid. To the extent possible, each indicator is evaluated for the neighborhoods identified for the master planning process.

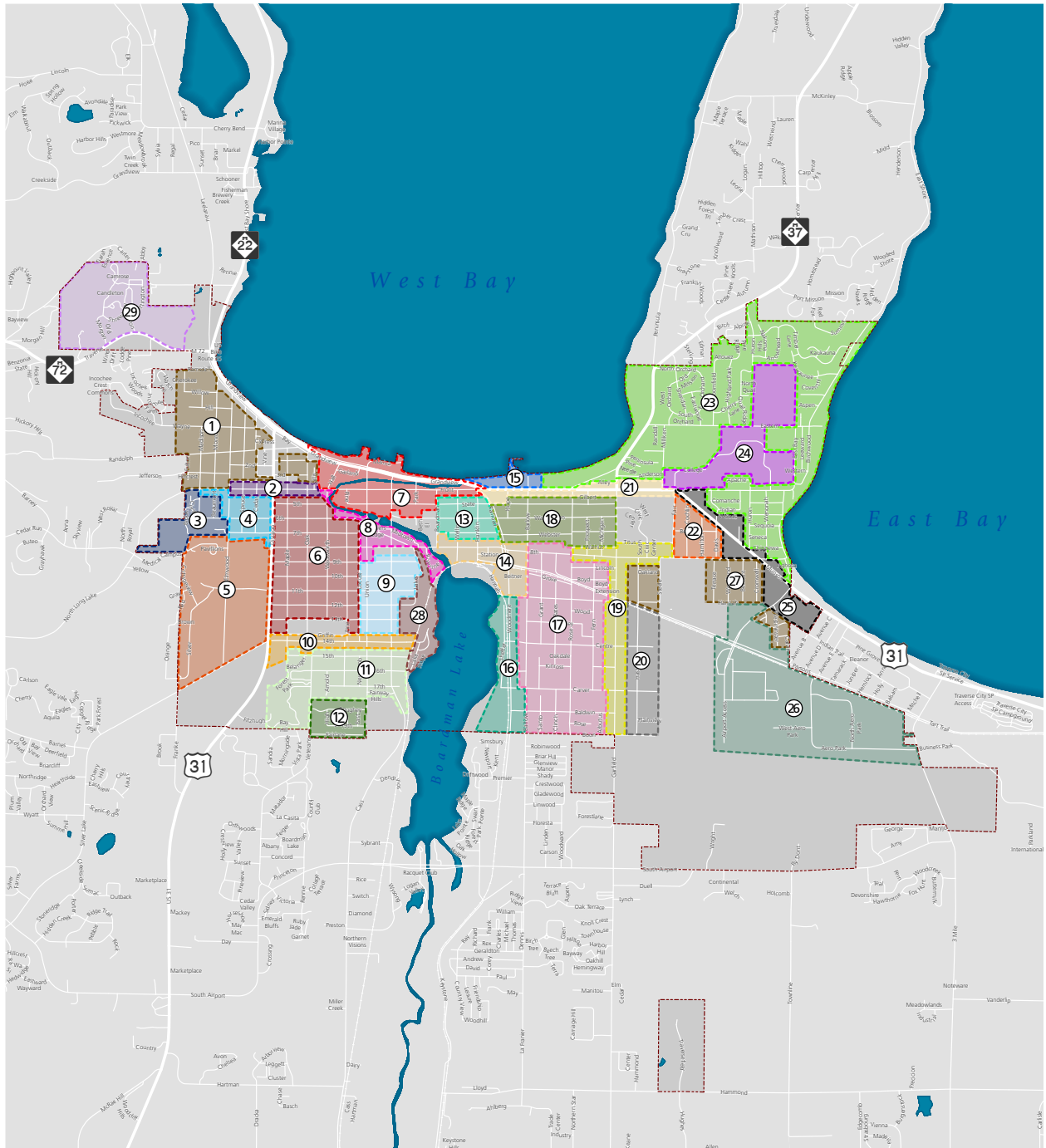
- » **Transit Access:** The percentage of parcels within 15-minute walking distance of a transit stop (Value Range: 0-100%)
- » **Food Access:** The percentage of parcels within 15-minute walking distance of a healthy food store that accepts SNAP benefits (Value Range: 0-100%)
- » **Healthcare Access:** The percentage of parcels within 15-minute walking distance of an essential healthcare provider (Value Range: 0-100%)
- » **Park Access:** The percentage of parcels within 15-minute walking distance to a public park (Value Range: 0-100%)
- » **Walk Score:** Walk Score is a proprietary



*Light Parade in downtown Traverse City.*

Source: City of Traverse City

Map 4: Neighborhoods



# Neighborhoods

Sources: Michigan Open Data Portal, City of Traverse City



- |                            |                                   |                                   |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1: Slab Town Neighborhood  | 11: SoFo/Ferwood Neighborhood     | 21: E Front St Corridor           |
| 2: W Front St Corridor     | 12: Hilltop Neighborhood          | 22: Triangle Neighborhood         |
| 3: Munson Medical Campus   | 13: Boardman Neighborhood         | 23: BOOM/Base of the Peninsula    |
| 4: Kids Creek Neighborhood | 14: North Boardman                | 24: NMC Campus                    |
| 5: Grand Traverse Commons  | 15: Waterfront                    | 25: Munson Corridor               |
| 6: Central Neighborhood    | 16: Woodmere Corridor             | 26: Aero Park Industrial Area     |
| 7: Downtown/DDA TIF '97    | 17: Traverse Heights Neighborhood | 27: Oakwood Neighborhoods         |
| 8: Midtown Neighborhood    | 18: Oak Park Neighborhood         | 28: Lake Ridge/West Boardman Lake |
| 9: Old Towne               | 19: Garfield & 8th St Corridor    | 29: Morgan Farms                  |
| 10: 14th St Corridor       | 20: Hastings St Industrial Area   |                                   |



calculation that estimates a neighborhood's total walkability. A score of zero (0) indicates that most, if not all, errands require a car, and a score of 100 indicates that a car is not necessary for daily errands. (Value Range: 0-100)

- » **Bike Score:** Bike Score is an estimation of a neighborhood's bike-ability based on the presence of biking infrastructure. A score of zero (0) indicates that an area has minimal bike infrastructure while a score of 100 indicates that biking infrastructure supports bicycling to all errands and destinations. (Value Range: 0-100)
- » **Crime Rate:** The number of crimes within the neighborhood per acre 2018–2021 (Measured in crimes per acre)
- » **Fire Rate:** The number of fire calls within the neighborhood per acre 2018–2021 (Measured in fire calls per acre)
- » **Temperature:** The difference in temperature in the neighborhood compared to the citywide average (Measured in degrees above average [+] and degrees below average [-])

Throughout the chapter, each neighborhood will be accompanied by a neighborhood indicator table that provides their specific value for each indicator as well as how this value compared to the other 15 neighborhoods. It is important to note that the lowest values for neighborhood crime rates (for example, 1.4 crimes per acre) correspond to a higher total ranking (1st among all neighborhoods).

Also included in each neighborhood's profile are figures to indicate the median property value, home size, year-round residents, and median year built. These figures are from the City's Assessing Department 2023 Tax Roll and reflect measures identified in 2023.

## Neighborhood Histories and Sanborn Fire Maps

To illustrate how the size, boundaries, and uses of a neighborhood have changed over time, Sanborn fire maps are used to provide historical analyses for many Traverse City neighborhoods. Created intermittently to illustrate liability for fire insurance companies throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, Sanborn maps provide valuable

documentation for how the built environment of American cities have changed over time. Today, these maps can be used to track the evolution of cities by comparing maps of the same areas at different points in time. In this chapter, Sanborn fire maps are described for the oldest neighborhoods of Traverse City to demonstrate how both the neighborhood and surrounding landscape of the city have changed from the late 1800s.

## Community Engagement and Neighborhood Future Framework

In this chapter, each neighborhood spread will conclude with a "future framework" table created from the results of two types of community engagement sessions. The first community engagement was the Master Plan's Open House hosted at the initiation of the master planning process in October 2022. During this engagement, attendees were asked broadly to identify which parts of Traverse City, including its residential neighborhoods, would most benefit from preservation, enhancement, or transformation. For all neighborhoods but Morgan Farms, the percentages pertaining to "preserve," "enhance," and "transform" indicate perceptions of all City residents, not just those who reside in each specific neighborhood. Because Morgan Farms is Traverse City's newest subdivision and located in a planned unit development (PUD), it was not included in this engagement (and, therefore, does not have percentages in its future framework).

In April 2023, neighborhood listening sessions were hosted in-person at numerous sites across the City (such as cafes, schools, churches, and community centers) as well as virtually. Specifically dedicated to the identities of individual neighborhoods, attendees could only attend listening sessions for the neighborhood in which they resided. During these sessions, attendees returned to the question of "preserve," "enhance," and "transform," but this time with the opportunity to provide specific feedback about various aspects of their neighborhood. Input was synthesized based on common trends and comprises the written part of each neighborhood's future framework. These insights provide a basis upon which to plan and prioritize neighborhood improvements based on a collective understanding of current residents.

# MORGAN FARMS

## Introduction

The Morgan Farms neighborhood, known for its calmness as well as its views of West Grand Traverse Bay, provides aesthetically unified housing of diverse types within its planned unit development structure. With single-family detached homes, townhomes, duplexes, condominiums, and multi-family apartment buildings, Morgan Farms maintains a similar new traditional craftsman style throughout its total 132 acres.<sup>1</sup>

## History

Morgan Farms is a Planned Unit Development within the City of Traverse City. Unlike the rest of the City which is located in Grand Traverse County, Morgan Farms is the only neighborhood in Traverse City that is located in Leelanau County. Despite being in Leelanau County, the property was annexed as part of the City; water and sewer service, therefore, are provided by the City. The project was proposed and established as a PUD in 2003, with goals of 400 homes in a walkable New Urbanist setting.<sup>2</sup> After a pause on construction due to the 2008 financial crisis and development funding issues, the project was revived in 2009 by Socks Construction, with road and site preparation beginning in 2010.<sup>3</sup> This makes Morgan Farms one of the newer neighborhoods in Traverse City as all homes have been built in or after 2010.

Since the development's creation, several types of homes have been constructed in the development's sub-areas. These sub-areas, or "neighborhoods" within the Morgan Farms neighborhood, are later delineated. Additional multi-family apartment buildings called the Legends Morgan Farms were constructed in 2022. These buildings, situated to the north of the Pine Bluff condominiums, were approved to provide 222 additional apartments when their Phase III PUD was approved.<sup>4</sup> A "neighborhood center," including commercial uses

and a gathering space, was once proposed for the entrance to Morgan Farms from M-72, however, these plans no longer exist.<sup>5</sup> The planned mix of commercial and residential development within Morgan Farms as part of its plans has changed multiple times; currently, Morgan Farms does not include any commercial use developments. However, the neighborhood continues to expand and may change in the future.

## Land Use

Though Morgan Farms offers a variety of housing types, many homes are large detached single-family residential homes, arranged in a cul-de-sac or network form. The current plan is broken into several sub-areas: Hill Valley Custom Homes (detached single-family homes); Parkview North and Parkview South (detached single-family homes); Pine Bluff condominiums (multi-family structures); The Cottages (detached single-family homes); The Grove (townhome, attached single-family homes); and Valley View (large duplexes). 2022 brought the addition of the Legends Morgan Farms (apartments). Land use practices vary between these sub-areas; single-family homes have a suburban pattern with lawn space and defined lots, and duplexes and condominiums present denser development without lawn space. Phase II, proposed in 2012 but not yet constructed, would add 66 hilltop home sites to the west of the current Pine Bluff Drive and Old Morgan Trail along the ridge line and to the north of the Legends Morgan Farms apartments.

Traverse City allows Planned Unit Developments. After planning staff reviews the PUD, it is submitted to the Planning Commission for review and recommendation, and the City Commission makes a final decision on its approval.<sup>6</sup> Each phase of a PUD, as is the case of Morgan Farms, is approved separately. The existence of Morgan Farms' PUD (but not its specific standards) is formalized in Chapter 1362, section 8 of Traverse City's zoning ordinance, "Mixed use PUD – Morgan Farm."<sup>7</sup>

## MORGAN FARMS HOUSING STYLES

New Traditional Craftsman



| MORGAN FARMS NEIGHBORHOOD INDICATORS |              |             |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|-------------|
| Indicator                            | Value        | Rank        |
| Transit Access                       | 80%          | 15th        |
| Food Access                          | 60%          | 15th        |
| Healthcare Access                    | 80%          | 12th        |
| Park Access                          | 100%         | 1st (tied)  |
| Walk Score                           | 14           | 15th (tied) |
| Bike Score                           | 36           | 15th (tied) |
| Crime Rate                           | 1.4/acre     | 1st         |
| Fire Rate                            | 0.1/acre     | 1st (tied)  |
| Temperature                          | -0.5 degrees | 6th (tied)  |

Median Property Value



Average Home Size



Year-Round Owner-Occupied Units



Median Year Built



**Table 25: Morgan Farms Future Framework**

|                  | Commentary   |
|------------------|--|
| <b>Preserve</b>  | <p>Residents of Morgan Farms indicated that one of the things that they liked most about their neighborhood is the quiet and serene setting with trees, landscaping, and greenspace. The separation from the City was also identified as a strength however, residents still valued being close to the City.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Trees, greenspace, parks and common areas, birds and animals,</li> <li>» Walkability, slow speed limits,</li> <li>» Quiet and safe.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Enhance</b>   | <p>Items that were brought up as enhancements to Morgan Farms included clarifying the governance structure and who is responsible for what in the neighborhood. Transportation improvements included lowering speed limits on M-72, improving the entrance, adding a light at M-22 and Carter Rd., and more pedestrian and bike connections to the nearby shops and city.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Transportation improvements               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» BATA stop</li> <li>» Add pedestrian and bike infrastructure to improve connection and walkability from Morgan Farms to nearby commercial developments and downtown Traverse City</li> <li>» Add a stop light to M-22 and Carter Rd,</li> <li>» Lower speed limits on M-72,</li> <li>» Improve entrance on M-72.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |
| <b>Transform</b> | <p>Little was mentioned as a priority for transformation in Morgan Farms. Residents noted two specific projects. The completion of the M-72/Grandview Parkway intersection reconstruction, and the addition of a gate on the Carter Rd. entrance. Adding a gate at Morgan Farms would make it the only gated residential neighborhood in the City. Gated communities project a sense of exclusivity and are not an equitable form of neighborhood construction or management. The City should work with residents of Morgan Farms to understand why there is a desire for a gate and look into better solutions to address their concerns.</p>   |

## Morgan Farms: Community Engagement Results

Morgan Farms stands as a distinct enclave within the City, with a tranquil ambiance that embraces its connection to the natural environment. The community places high value on their tree canopy, advocating for protection against clear-cutting and the conservation of green spaces that support wildlife. The pursuit of serenity extends to the streetscapes, with an interest in enhancing walkability and curbing vehicular intrusion. Concerns are particularly pointed towards the intrusive noise and safety hazards posed by heavy vehicular traffic on major roadways such as M-72 and M-22. The residents are vocal about seeking a reduction of traffic flow and speeds and the augmentation of pedestrian-friendly infrastructure along these major routes; measures including the addition of sidewalks, improved street upkeep, and the expansion of public transit amenities with increased bus stops and dedicated bicycle lanes. The citizens of Morgan Farms aim to safeguard the neighborhood’s serene, natural character and its pedestrian-oriented lifestyle despite development pressures.

# SLABTOWN

## History

In the late 1800s, the west side of Traverse City was a working industrial area with an amalgamation of sawmills, docks, warehouses, and horse stables. Wood from throughout the region was brought to this area of the city to be turned into lumber and wood slabs. Workers used leftover slabs to construct homes nearby, leading to the moniker of Slabtown. While the homes in Slabtown no longer use leftover wood slabs for construction, the history of the neighborhood remains a part of the neighborhood identity.<sup>8</sup>

## Land Use

Slabtown is bordered to the south and east by three major transportation routes; M-72/US-31, North Division Street, and West Front Street. The M-72/US-31 edge primarily contains residential homes with a few scattered commercial properties. Across M-72/US-31 is West End Beach, providing neighborhood residents with superb access to the beach and bay. Slabtown is partly split by North Division Street, with a small section of homes to the east of North Division included in the neighborhood association. North Division Street, through Slabtown, is a mix of commercial, institutional (church, school, city park), and multi-family residential uses. The West Front Street border, from South Elmwood Avenue to North Division Street, is a mix of commercial and residential uses, providing neighborhood residents with a small node of commercial goods and services. This section of West Front Street is the most western extension of the commercial activity stretching from downtown. The core of the neighborhood is entirely residential with predominately single-family structures. There are a few multi-family buildings on the fringes of the neighborhood along Gillis Street and North Division Street. Four (4) city parks (Ashton Park, Darrow Park, West End Beach, and Veteran's Park) as well as Slabtown Beach sit on the neighborhood's edges.

## Dimensional Standards

Generally, residential lots in Slabtown are 7,500 square feet with a common width of 50 feet and lot length of 150 feet. The homes are typically set back from the front lot line 25 feet and the front lot line ends approximately at the public sidewalk. Garages in Slabtown are predominately alley loaded wherever possible. Common side setbacks range from six (6) feet to 10 feet, depending on the property. While homes range in size, they are typically about 1,400 square feet. Zoning regulates lot coverage to a maximum of 35%, but most properties have coverages well below the maximum. Accessory dwelling units are permitted in Slabtown (based on the zoning classification of the residential properties) and fit comfortably behind the principal structure.

## Housing Styles


The style of homes in Slabtown ranges and generally depends on when the structure was built. Older homes tend to be minimal traditional and newer homes are generally new traditional craftsman. Minimal traditional homes were built between 1935 and 1950 and can be identified by low- to intermediate-pitched roofs, small typically one story structure, roof eaves that have little to no overhang, windows that are typically double hung, and little to no architectural detailing. New traditional homes began occurring post 1970 after a wave a modernist architecture and pulls from one or many older styles (ex: new traditional craftsman). In keeping with late 20th and early 21st century residential construction trends, new traditional homes tend to be larger and bulkier than their older counterparts.<sup>9</sup>

## SLABTOWN HOUSING STYLES


|                           |  |  |
|---------------------------|--|--|
| New Traditional Craftsman |  <p>NEW TRADITIONAL CRAFTSMAN</p> |  |
| Minimal Traditional       |                                   |  |

| SLABTOWN NEIGHBORHOOD INDICATORS |              |            |
|----------------------------------|--------------|------------|
| Indicator                        | Value        | Rank       |
| Transit Access                   | 100%         | 1st (tied) |
| Food Access                      | 100%         | 1st (tied) |
| Healthcare Access                | 100%         | 1st (tied) |
| Park Access                      | 100%         | 1st (tied) |
| Walk Score                       | 71           | 8th        |
| Bike Score                       | 91           | 4th        |
| Crime Rate                       | 4.3/acre     | 6th        |
| Fire Rate                        | 0.2/acre     | 3rd        |
| Temperature                      | -2.0 degrees | 2nd        |


Median Property Value

 \$401,348

Average Home Size

 1,648 sq. ft.

Year-Round Owner-Occupied Units

 62%

Median Year Built


 1910



Table 26: Slabtown Future Framework

|           | Community Support* | Commentary  |
|-----------|--------------------|---|
| Preserve  | 77%                | <p>Many elements of Slabtown were top priorities for preservation among residents, including its walkability, trees, historic architecture, and amenities. Residents also valued the relationships that they had with their neighbors.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Neighborhood parks (Ashton, Darrow, Hickory Meadows).</li> <li>» Walkability and sidewalks.</li> <li>» Residential style (large lots, low impervious surface, historic architecture, low density).</li> <li>» Quiet and safe.</li> <li>» Proximity to amenities.</li> <li>» Relationships with neighbors.</li> </ul>  |
| Enhance   | 18%                | <p>While there was strong support for existing neighborhood conditions, residents expressed a desire for specific and targeted enhancements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Improve Ashton Park by updating playground equipment and addressing downed trees.</li> <li>» Implement traffic calming measures.</li> <li>» Add street lighting in areas of Kid’s Creek.</li> <li>» Clarify and enforce existing short-term rental regulations.</li> <li>» Fill sidewalk gaps.</li> <li>» Maintain and improve street surfaces.</li> <li>» Add amenities at Darrow Park, including restrooms, picnic tables, and benches.</li> <li>» Improve pedestrian access to downtown, Grand Traverse Bay, Hickory Hills, Division St., and M-72 intersection.</li> <li>» Implement design and scale standards for commercial district in/adjacent to neighborhood.</li> <li>» Bury utility lines.</li> <li>» Upgrade public park, dog park, and tennis courts on Division St.</li> <li>» Maintain and add tree canopy.</li> </ul> |
| Transform | 5%                 | <p>There was very little mentioned in need of transformation in Slabtown. Residents expressed their desire to improve Bay Street traffic flow and the intersection of the M-72 and Grandview Pkwy.</p>  |

\*Based on number of responses from Open House

## Slabtown: Community Engagement Results

Slabtown, a traditionally residential enclave, has recently been the focus of intensified development efforts to boost housing density. The community has voiced objections to large-scale housing projects that they feel erode the area’s historic charm and tight-knit fabric. The local populace staunchly supports the maintenance of existing zoning laws to stave off the construction of multi-story apartment complexes and commercial ventures. There is a strong preference for preserving the neighborhood’s single-family dwellings, longer-tenured rentals, and proximity to essential services such as the local fire station. With the acceleration of development, there has been an uptick in traffic, which residents believe undermines safety and exacerbates road disrepair. High vehicle speeds and subpar street upkeep have placed the neighborhood’s walkability at risk. Concurrently, there is a call to protect the lush tree canopy and greenery, treasured features of spaces like Ashton Park with its inviting natural trails. Rather than pursuing growth that residents deem inauthentic, there is an appeal for thoughtful enhancement of the park’s infrastructure and communal amenities.

# KIDS CREEK

## Introduction

The Kids Creek neighborhood is one of the oldest in Traverse City and has evolved over time with the changing uses around it. The most notable changes in land use and activity around the neighborhood include the development of the Munson Medical Center campus (MMC) as well as the Grand Traverse Commons. The neighborhood has unique topography and environmental considerations as Kids Creek runs through the backyard of many properties. In addition to bringing natural beauty to the neighborhood, the presence of Kids Creek and its proximity to homes can present an intermittent flooding threat. Efforts must also be made to ensure the surrounding neighborhood has limited, sustainable impacts on Kids Creek. In recent years, efforts to restore Kids Creek have taken place near Munson Medical Center and in the northern part of the neighborhood. Headed by the Grand Traverse Bay Watershed Center, these improvements simultaneously sought to improve water quality and reduce the impact of stormwater and sedimentation. The Kids Creek neighborhood, a heavily wooded area, is located near the West Front Street corridor and adjacent to Slabtown.

## History

The Kids Creek neighborhood, one of the oldest in Traverse City, first appeared in the Sanborn fire maps in 1899 with Hannah & Lay Co.'s 9th Addition to Traverse City. The streets in Kids Creek (Spruce, Cedar, Elmwood, Seventh, and Sixth) are continuations of the street names in Slabtown and Central Neighborhood (after crossing West Front Street and Division Street, respectively). The Kids Creek neighborhood, like Slabtown, is not a historic district. As a result, the neighborhood has a mixture of older historic homes (built between the 1880s and 1900) and newer homes (built between approximately 1970s to early 2000s). The Kids Creek neighborhood, geographically, is enmeshed with the Munson Medical Center campus which has its own plan and continues to expand to serve Northern Michigan's medical needs.





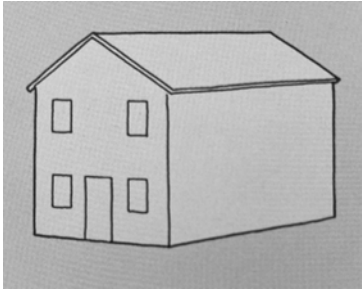

## Land Use

The Kids Creek neighborhood presents a diverse mix of housing types that are primarily single-family. Most of the Kids Creek neighborhood is not exclusively zoned for single-family use. Most of the homes in the neighborhood are smaller one- to two-story single-family homes, however, there are also several prominent multi-family housing developments. The R-2 mixed density residential district is the primary zoning type in the neighborhood and allows for duplexes by right. Additionally, the two blocks of Seventh Street closest to Elmwood Avenue are zoned R-3 which permits multi-family homes. This block has several multi-family developments, both newer and older; the condominiums at 825 W Seventh Street are newer developments, across the street from several older multi-family homes.

Additionally, the Kids Creek neighborhood land use pattern has the unique consideration of the creek which runs through the backyard of many homes. The 1910 Sanborn fire map reflects multiple homes along Seventh Street that are placed across multiple parcels to avoid the creek. Though parceling today is in line with each homes' actual location, measures taken by early inhabitants to avoid the creek reflect a persistent concern. Cottage clustering may be an option for the Kids Creek neighborhood so that home orientation can work with the neighborhood's unique topography and is particularly appropriate since the five-acre parcel minimum requirement has been lowered to one-acre. Cottage clustering would allow households in R-2 zoned parts of the neighborhood to build an additional smaller structure (if desired) while being cognizant of their proximity to Kids Creek.




## KIDS CREEK HOUSING STYLES


|                           |  |   |
|---------------------------|--|---|
| New Traditional Craftsman |  <p style="text-align: center;">NEW TRADITIONAL CRAFTSMAN</p> |   |
| Minimal Traditional       |   |   |
| National Folk             |    |  |

| KIDS CREEK<br>NEIGHBORHOOD INDICATORS |              |            |
|---------------------------------------|--------------|------------|
| Indicator                             | Value        | Rank       |
| Transit Access                        | 100%         | 1st (tied) |
| Food Access                           | 100%         | 1st (tied) |
| Healthcare Access                     | 100%         | 1st (tied) |
| Park Access                           | 100%         | 1st (tied) |
| Walk Score                            | 75           | 5th (tied) |
| Bike Score                            | 87           | 7th        |
| Crime Rate                            | 7.9 / acre   | 9th        |
| Fire Rate                             | 0.6 / acre   | 16th       |
| Temperature                           | -0.7 degrees | 5th        |


Median Property Value


\$400,030

Average Home Size


1,635  
sq. ft.

Year-Round Owner-Occupied Units


72%

Median Year Built



1910



Table 27: Kids Creek Future Framework

|           | Community Support* | Commentary  |
|-----------|--------------------|---|
| Preserve  | 55%                | <p>Residents noted that the Kids Creek neighborhood was well kept and safe, walkable, and quiet. The natural features (trees, creek, and green space) were commonly mentioned as assets as well.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Safe, well-kept, and quiet neighborhood</li> <li>» Kids Creek</li> <li>» Tree canopy</li> <li>» Natural area between Division Street and Silver Drive</li> <li>» Proximity to amenities</li> <li>» Relationships with neighbors</li> <li>» Walkability</li> <li>» Year-round housing</li> </ul> |
| Enhance   | 39%                | <p>The noted enhancements in Kids Creek fell into three main categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Transportation (walkability/sidewalk gaps, traffic calming, pedestrian crossings)</li> <li>» Improve access to and the condition of Kids Creek</li> <li>» Enforce STR regulations</li> </ul>  |
| Transform | 7%                 | <p>Very few things were mentioned in need of transformation in Kids Creek. Addressing the unhoused community of “The Pines” and creating a city park at a vacant lot along Cedar Street were the two transformative elements mentioned.</p>   |

\*Based on number of responses from Open House

## Kids Creek: Community Engagement Results

Nestled within Traverse City, the tranquil Kids Creek neighborhood takes pride in its natural surroundings. In addition to its proximity to the downtown, the area offers its residents the luxury of parks, trails, and the scenic flow of Kids Creek itself. The community advocates for the conservation of wildlife and supports initiatives to enhance green spaces and its tree canopy. On urban infrastructure matters, there is a vocal demand for improved road and sidewalk maintenance and the implementation of secure bike lanes. The desire for a strengthened network of pedestrian and cycling routes reflects Kids Creek’s commitment to fostering a close-knit and accessible community. In the realm of development, there is a strong push for the thoughtful transformation of empty plots, with a particular emphasis on creating higher-density residential options.

# CENTRAL

## Introduction

The Central neighborhood has grown with the evolution of Traverse City, while keeping the backbone of its historic character and flagship structures. Its tree-lined streets, sidewalk connectivity, and spacious lots and lawns make it a visually appealing neighborhood. Bounded by Union Street and Division Street to the east and west, respectively, Fifth Street to the north, and Fourteenth Street to the south, Central neighborhood's distinctive streets each have unique character and land use patterns while maintaining a cohesive feel. Additionally, portions of Central neighborhood comprise one of three Traverse City Historic Districts, reflecting heightened standards for land use, renovation, and development to preserve the architecture of the neighborhood. Central Neighborhood as a whole was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1979.

## History

Central neighborhood, like other neighborhoods in Traverse City, expanded in several additions. Considering the expansive scope of Central neighborhood, its growth phases are broken down here as reflected in the Sanborn Fire Maps, intermittently-collected historical maps of buildings and city parcels, used to provide information for fire insurance. Today, they can be used to track how cities evolve and change over time through comparison; this is particularly useful in tracking changes in Central Neighborhood, which has expanded and changed substantially over time.

- » Central neighborhood is partially depicted on the earliest Traverse City Sanborn Fire Map, (1884) with the four blocks of Sixth through Tenth Streets closest to Union Street comprising Perry Hannah's First Addition to Traverse City. Fifth Street (at this time, called State Street) was also included as part of Hannah Lay Company's Sixth Addition, bisected by the Chicago Missouri & Western Railway along the western portion of the Boardman River.
- » The 1890 Sanborn fire map illustrates that Perry Hannah's Second Addition to Traverse City expanded the neighborhood one block southward to Eleventh Street, and the Third Addition expanded the existing streets west to Division Street.

- » The 1894 Sanborn fire map shows minimal expansion of Central neighborhood, but the two blocks of Ninth through Eleventh Street closest to Division Street were platted as Perry Hannah's Fourth Addition.
- » The 1904 Sanborn fire map does not reflect additions to Traverse City, but the south side of Eleventh Street is delineated for the first time. Twelfth Street is also newly depicted to the east side of Union Street (in Old Towne). This fire map recognizes substantial residential development in Central neighborhood with the plotting of two individual maps within Central Neighborhood. Map #13 includes Central School (where Central Grade School now stands), a small carpenter shop, and many homes including the famed Perry Hannah House at the corner of Sixth and Pine. Map #18 similarly includes many residential homes, as well as two churches (the map highlights Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh Streets between Maple and Wadsworth; the northernmost portion of Central Neighborhood).
- » The 1910 Sanborn fire map includes all of Central Neighborhood in its current form. Twelfth through Fourteenth Street in the three blocks closest to Division Street are platted as Perry Hannah's Fifth Addition, while the two blocks of the same streets closest to Union Street are platted as Perry Hannah's Fourth Addition. By this point, Central neighborhood had enough residential development to warrant individual fire maps (maps #12-16), with the exceptions of two new additions closest to Fourteenth Street. In addition to sites previously highlighted, Map #13 features Traverse City's Carnegie library on Sixth Street, built in 1905 and funded by millionaire Andrew Carnegie on the condition that Traverse City provide a match and place it at a "suitable site." Perry Hannah pledged the location on Sixth Street (which was agreed to after some controversy) where the building remains.<sup>10</sup>
- » The 1920 Sanborn fire map is substantively the same as the 1910 map; one notable difference is that where Griffin Street was previously titled "First Fourteenth Street," it has its present name starting in the 1920 map. Maps #12-16 and #19-21 highlight Central neighborhood homes.

Many of the homes of Traverse City's founders and business leaders are located within Central

neighborhood, including the iconic Perry Hannah house on Sixth Street, listed separately on the National Register of Historic Places. As Hannah lived on Sixth Street and constructed his famed home there, he planned these first few blocks of Sixth Street in a pseudo-association style; architecture, lot layout, and more were regulated, leading to the notable differentiation of Sixth Street as a centerpiece within the city.<sup>11</sup> Most of the homes built on Sixth Street were built between 1890-1910, and the Carnegie Library (in 1905) was also built in this timeframe.

Central Grade School (reconstructed in 1936 after the 1934 fire and as part of New Deal Public Works Administration programs) sits on the former site of Traverse City's high school, bisecting Seventh Street and West Eighth Street. Though the school initially served students of all grade levels, in 1959, its high school grades moved to a separate building (Central High School); in 1970, middle school students were reassigned to West Middle School. This historic brick building is Traverse City's oldest neighborhood school, serving 565 students in grades preschool through fifth grade, and hosting the district's Talented and Gifted program. Central Grade School's renovated Lars Hockstad Auditorium regularly hosts events, including orchestral concerts, choral concerts, and film screenings.

The Central Neighborhood Association is one of the most active neighborhood associations in Traverse City. CNA hosts yearly events, such as PorchFest (a yearly free concert and event series hosted from the front porches of Central neighborhood homes), as well as quarterly meetings to discuss neighborhood-specific and city-wide issues.

## Land Use

Central neighborhood is a primarily single-family neighborhood; the exact style of home and proportionality varies from street to street. Fifth Street has larger homes on smaller lots, with the street itself shortened by the abutting Boardman River and topography. Sixth Street, a distinctive showpiece street, features large Victorian mansion-style homes on large lots. Seventh Street and West Eighth Street (two one-way streets paired in a couplet) are also laid out similarly, with slightly smaller homes on slightly smaller lots (but both still large). Ninth Street through Eleventh Street reflect similar land use styles, as well, with Twelfth Street varying slightly from the pattern of Ninth Street through Eleventh Street, with some interspersed smaller homes on larger lots in keeping with Thirteenth Street's pattern. Thirteenth Street has generally smaller homes than the other streets in Central Neighborhood, on larger lots that have intermittent foliage. Thirteenth Street homes are mainly in the cottage or ranch style; there are additionally newer homes, placed close together, in a new craftsman style across from the north side of Thirby Field. Though the neighborhood is predominantly composed of single-family homes, it also has the highest concentration of nonconforming residential uses.

Most of Central neighborhood's streets (through approximately Twelfth Street) are lined with mature trees. With some of the oldest homes in the city, non-conforming uses are plentiful in Central neighborhood; primarily with duplexes or other multi-family homes. Many homes, additionally, have carriage house structures which could easily serve as accessory dwelling units. As Central Neighborhood is a Historic District, it has additional setback and alley access requirements, as well as differing standards for renovation and new construction (overseen by Traverse City's Historic Districts Commission).


## Central: Community Engagement Results


Traverse City Central is renowned for its historic charm, resulting in a commitment to retaining its residential identity. The community values its single-family homes and advocates for zoning policies that safeguard their preservation. Integral to the neighborhood's distinctiveness are its historic brick roads, which, while cherished, have raised community concerns regarding upkeep. Residents seek improvements in street maintenance, more effective snow removal, and expanded parking options. The neighborhood's tree canopy, another emblematic feature, receives strong support from residents for its preservation. This natural canopy enhances pedestrian comfort with ample shade and contributes to mitigating light pollution, a further environmental and aesthetic concern for the residents of Traverse City Central.


# CENTRAL HOUSING STYLES

|                                   |  |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|--|
| <p><b>Minimal Traditional</b></p> |  |  |
| <p><b>National Folk</b></p>       |  |  |
| <p><b>Queen Anne</b></p>          |  |  |
| <p><b>Tudor</b></p>               |  |  |

| CENTRAL NEIGHBORHOOD INDICATORS |             |            |
|---------------------------------|-------------|------------|
| Indicator                       | Value       | Rank       |
| Transit Access                  | 100%        | 1st (tied) |
| Food Access                     | 100%        | 1st (tied) |
| Healthcare Access               | 100%        | 1st (tied) |
| Park Access                     | 100%        | 1st (tied) |
| Walk Score                      | 88          | 1st (tied) |
| Bike Score                      | 95          | 1st (tied) |
| Crime Rate                      | 6.1/acre    | 7th        |
| Fire Rate                       | 0.2/acre    | 3rd (tied) |
| Temperature                     | +0.5 degree | 11th       |

Median Property Value  
 \$325,500

Average Home Size  
 1,686 sq. ft.

Year-Round Owner-Occupied Units  
 79%


Median Year Built  
 1904



Table 28: Central Future Framework

|           | Community Support* | Commentary   |
|-----------|--------------------|--|
| Preserve  | 76%                | Residents of Central neighborhood are incredibly passionate about their neighborhood, and it was reflected in the long list of elements of their neighborhood that they determined should be preserved. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Preserved Areas</li> <li>» Parks, trails, and tree canopy.</li> <li>» Historic residential neighborhood (traditional street lighting, brick streets).</li> <li>» Walkability/bikeability.</li> <li>» Proximity to amenities.</li> <li>» Relationship with neighbors.</li> <li>» Limited/no STRs.</li> </ul> |
| Enhance   | 18%                | Residents also had a list of suggested enhancements for Central neighborhood, which has been condensed as well. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Improve pedestrian and sidewalk access and connections.</li> <li>» Placemaking (wayfinding, public art, public park).</li> <li>» Maintain high infrastructure quality.</li> <li>» East-West buffered and dedicated bike lanes (7th, 10th, and 12th).</li> <li>» Improve street and ally conditions.</li> </ul>  |
| Transform | 6%                 | Very few things were mentioned in need of transformation in the Central neighborhood. Addressing the unhoused community of “The Pines” and transforming the 14th St corridor were the two transformative elements mentioned.   |

\*Based on number of responses from Open House

# OLD TOWNE

## Introduction

Traverse City's Old Towne is a historically mixed-use neighborhood serving as a transition from the denser downtown area to single-family neighborhoods. Old Towne maintains elements of both; with a low-intensity, single- or two-story commercial area along Union Street and Eighth Street, and single-family and non-conforming two- and three-family homes bordering this commercial area. Old Towne has a cohesively historic feel, true to its name, with building facades reflecting architectural styles at the time at which they were constructed.

## History

Old Towne, formerly known as the "South Side" of Traverse City, was one of the earliest neighborhoods in Traverse City. With a mix of residential, low-intensity commercial, and industrial uses, Old Towne has been a lively center of commerce for Traverse City since its inception. Old Towne was developed in approximately 1860 (its centennial celebration occurred in 1969), and is featured in the first archived Sanborn Fire Insurance maps of Traverse City, labeled in 1884 as the first and second additions of the Hannah & Lay Company to Traverse City. The Hannah & Lay grist mill was a business focal point in Old Towne, until it burned to the ground in 1926. The Union Street dam was constructed in 1867 to power the mill, also providing a place for the Hannah & Lay saw mill to transport their logs. Additionally, passenger rail service to Traverse City was located in Old Towne; via the Chicago and West Michigan Railroad at a station along Union Street. In the 1920s, trains ran four times per day in the Old Towne district. Industrial uses are also interspersed on the east side of Old Towne; Cone Drive now stands on the former land of the Parsons Corporation, where the first numerical control machine was developed by John T. Parsons and Frank L. Stulen in 1948.

Today, Old Towne's commercial use presents a similarly wide range of uses to its historic practice: medical offices, legal offices, retail storefronts, and the historic Maxbauer's Market. Additionally, Old Towne is a focal point for summer celebration, hosting the parades for the Cherry Festival, and Union Street is closed yearly the market of the Old Town Arts and Crafts Fair. The main Old Towne

corridor along Union Street maintains its historic architecture, with building facades remaining historic in style. Parts of Old Towne have also changed to meet Traverse City's evolving needs; the Old Towne Parking Deck, with 522 spaces, provides short-term and permitted parking for downtown employees and visitors and is also LEED Silver certified with solar panels on the roof to intermittently power the garage's needs. Additional condominium developments are present adjacent to this parking deck, along Eighth Street. Like the downtown and Midtown districts, Old Towne has also benefited from TIF funding. TIF 2, responsible for much redevelopment and economic growth in downtown Traverse City, covered the Old Towne neighborhood from 1985 to its expiration in 2015 and created \$15.3 million in total revenue which helped to fund the Old Towne Parking Deck and public wifi projects. In 1985, the Old Towne TIF was created in its place, covering the Old Towne business district, Eighth Street from Cass Street to Boardman Avenue, and the Midtown, River's Edge, and Riverine developments. The 2016 Old Towne TIF plan includes infrastructure projects to improve parks, streets, and streetscapes.

## Land Use

Old Towne is a mixture of low-intensity commercial development and single- and multi-family residential homes that were primarily built between 1880 and 1930. Given its historically mixed-use character, businesses bordering residential parcels is more common in Old Towne than other Traverse City neighborhoods. The commercial development is primarily located along the Union Street corridor, with additional newer commercial and condominium residential development along Eighth Street. Notably, the mix of use that has historically existed in Old Towne continues to today; there is an abundance of non-conforming uses in Old Towne; duplex and triplexes that have been in continuous operation since before Traverse City was downzoned in 1979. Additionally, several historic higher-intensity uses are present in the residential portions of the Old Towne District; including St. Francis High School on Eleventh Street, which borders single-family homes, and Cone Drive and surrounding commercial businesses on E Twelfth Street. The duration of these facilities' tenancy has led them to be a part of the neighborhood's fabric as much as homes themselves.

## OLD TOWNE HOUSING STYLES

Townhome



| OLD TOWNE NEIGHBORHOOD INDICATORS |             |              |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|--------------|
| Indicator                         | Value       | Rank         |
| Transit Access                    | 100%        | T-1st (tied) |
| Food Access                       | 100%        | T-1st (tied) |
| Healthcare Access                 | 100%        | T-1st (tied) |
| Park Access                       | 100%        | T-1st (tied) |
| Walk Score                        | 88          | T-1st (tied) |
| Bike Score                        | 94          | 3rd          |
| Crime Rate                        | 23.7/acre   | 15th         |
| Fire Rate                         | 0.5/acre    | 15th         |
| Temperature                       | +0.7 degree | 12th         |

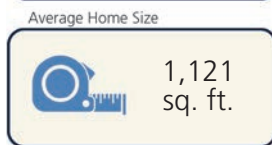




Table 29: Old Towne Future Framework

|           | Community Support* | Commentary   |
|-----------|--------------------|--|
| Preserve  | 16%                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Trees, trails, Boardman Lake.</li> <li>» Neighborhood scale retail.</li> <li>» Quiet and nice.</li> <li>» Historic.</li> <li>» Location, walkable/bikeable.</li> </ul>  |
| Enhance   | 52%                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Improve street and alley road conditions.</li> <li>» Implement stormwater control measures.</li> <li>» Traffic calming along Cass, Union, and Lake.</li> <li>» Public park near Cone Drive, Boardman Lake, and railroad.</li> <li>» Enforce blight regulations.</li> <li>» Better delineate or add bike lanes.</li> <li>» Add historic street lighting.</li> <li>» Maintain and improve tree canopy.</li> </ul> |
| Transform | 32%                | <p>The transformative projects that residents identified mainly centered around the corridors, Union St., 14th St., and Lake St. Residents stated that Union St. and 14th St. were primed well for neighborhood scale commercial corridors and that Lake St. needed to be curbed and connected so that it could be used as a cut through. Residents also expressed a desire for the large parking lot of St. Francis to be used for something else.</p>  |

\*Based on number of responses from Open House

## Old Towne: Community Engagement Results

Old Towne enjoys a prime location that offers a blend of history, natural beauty, and urban convenience. Situated near Boardman Lake, the neighborhood delights residents and visitors alike with its access to the TART trail and waterfront parks. Additionally, the proximity to downtown allows for easy walking access to retail, dining, and various services. However, its popularity as a destination has led to increased traffic, which has raised concerns about vehicle speeds and volumes in the area. The community is advocating for traffic calming strategies, including reduced speed limits, speed humps, and enhanced enforcement, to preserve safety and serenity on their streets. The need for infrastructural upgrades is also evident, with calls for street and alley rejuvenation involving repaving and pothole repair to facilitate safer and smoother biking. Amidst the efforts to conserve green spaces and local wildlife, Old Towne faces the delicate challenge of balancing the desire to minimize light pollution with the need for adequate street lighting.

# LAKE RIDGE

## Introduction

The Lake Ridge condominium development, built in 2003, was one of the first condominium developments in Traverse City. Lake Ridge is primarily comprised of three large multi-family complexes, with attached townhomes and a few detached single-family homes. Additionally, four (4) condo associations operate within the development: Lake Ridge, Lake Ridge Landing, Crystal Cove, and North Wind. Located off of Fourteenth Street and bordering the Old Towne and Fernwood neighborhoods, Lake Ridge is located adjacent to the TART Trail, and overlooks Boardman Lake. The complex has an additional green space, picnic and fire pit area, and kayak launch on Boardman Lake.

## History

Lake Ridge was constructed as a brownfield development during a period in which Traverse City applied for many brownfield redevelopment funds; Traverse City received \$27 million in brownfield redevelopment between 1995 and 2004. Boardman Lake has had many traditional industrial uses; industrial land pollution was present when the property was transferred out of railway ownership, has since been remedied with a due care analysis to confirm the cleanup. The land on which the Lake Ridge development now resides was previously a railyard, (from 1904-1982) including a roundhouse to turn trains around on the shoreline property, an ice house, storage warehouses, an asphalt plant, and a bulk fuel storage facility with multiple underground storage tanks. The Boardman Lake Avenue/CSXT Brownfield Plan was adopted in 2000, with a collaboration between the City of Traverse City and

Boardman West, LLC (the developer of Lake Ridge Condominiums), with a prospective number of 288 units in totality. The master deed for Lake Ridge Condominiums was established in 2001, with construction commencing in 2003. The Lake Ridge project was constructed in various stages: three (3) multi-unit buildings (with one (1) 72-unit building first constructed), a site condo with 14 single-family detached homes, and later townhomes and condominiums.

## Land Use

The Lake Ridge development represents dense land use for the City of Traverse City, with three (3) large multi-family condominium buildings. It also demonstrates the location of different, but compatible, uses in close proximity within the city. The Lake Ridge development itself includes condominium buildings, attached townhomes, condominium buildings with fewer larger units, and single-family detached homes. It is adjacent to the TART Trail recreational property, separating it from the industrial Cone Drive property and the Old Towne residential neighborhood, and adjacent to the Fernwood neighborhood and several commercial buildings to the south.

## LAKE RIDGE HOUSING STYLES

New Traditional Craftsman



### LAKE RIDGE NEIGHBORHOOD INDICATORS

| Indicator         | Value       | Rank       |
|-------------------|-------------|------------|
| Transit Access    | 100%        | 1st (tied) |
| Food Access       | 100%        | 1st (tied) |
| Healthcare Access | 44%         | 14th       |
| Park Access       | 100%        | 1st (tied) |
| Walk Score        | 51          | 13th       |
| Bike Score        | 78          | 10th       |
| Crime Rate        | 4.1/acre    | 5th        |
| Fire Rate         | 0.2/acre    | 3rd (tied) |
| Temperature       | +2.0 degree | 14th       |

Median Property Value



Average Home Size



Year-Round Owner-Occupied Units



Median Year Built



Table 30: Lake Ridge Future Framework

|           | Community Support* | Commentary   |
|-----------|--------------------|--|
| Preserve  | 14%                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Neighborhood scale retail.</li> <li>» Boardman Lake Loop trail.</li> <li>» Trees and natural foliage around the lake.</li> <li>» Public art.</li> <li>» Quiet/low traffic.</li> </ul>   |
| Enhance   | 41%                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» More trees and landscaping along the trail.</li> <li>» Lighting, wayfinding, and signage.</li> <li>» Benches and other amenities along the trail.</li> <li>» Improve Cass &amp; 14th St. intersection.</li> <li>» Boardman Lake shoreline.</li> </ul> |
| Transform | 45%                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Improve safety/accessibility along the railroad corridor</li> <li>» More public space</li> <li>» Commercial area along Lake St., north of Oryana</li> </ul>   |

\*Based on number of responses from Open House

## Lake Ridge: Community Engagement Results

Lake Ridge attempts to align contrasting objectives, serving as a predominantly condominium-based community while also adorning the shores of Boardman Lake. Owing to its relative modernity, the neighborhood has fewer historical elements to conserve, pivoting its attention to the stewardship and revitalization of natural terrains, such as the TART trail, and its commercial estates. Moreover, the populace advocates for infrastructural enhancements, specifically the expansion of and addition of left turn lanes at the junction of Cass Street and 14th Street, to improve traffic flow and safety.

# FERNWOOD

## Introduction

Traverse City's "SoFo" district, originally platted as Fernwood, is a quiet neighborhood reflecting greater diversity in housing style than other areas of Traverse City. Fernwood is a transitional neighborhood to the more suburban character of the Hilltop neighborhood. Adjacent to the Boardman Lake Loop, and the TART Trails non-motorized network throughout the city, Fernwood has close proximity to downtown.

## History

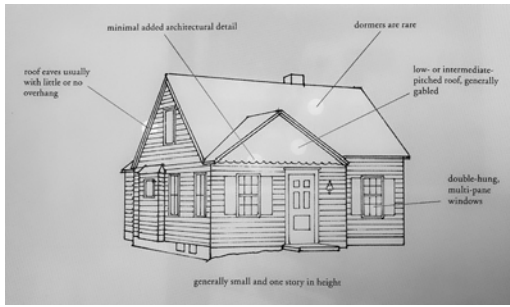
Fernwood was first acknowledged in the 1910 Sanborn Fire Map. The first and second Fernwood additions occurred in 1882, encompassing parts of the Fernwood and Hilltop neighborhoods; Fourteenth St. south, through Seventeenth St. Griffin & Winne's addition, with parts of Fourteenth and Fifteenth St. blocks, also occurred in 1882, along with Wilhelm's Addition (Fourteenth through Sixteenth St. between Union St. and Cass St.). The neighborhood has seen revitalization and continued investment as Traverse City's housing boom has continued. As a result, the "SoFo" ("South of Fourteenth") moniker has risen in popularity with the neighborhood's identity, and is used alongside the original plat name of Fernwood to refer to the neighborhood.

## Land Use

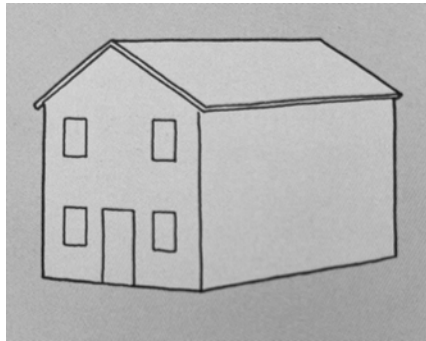
The Fernwood neighborhood is primarily comprised of single-family, mid-century modern homes in a low traffic-volume, quiet neighborhood; there are also many non-conforming duplex, triplex, and fourplex buildings within the neighborhood. Fernwood neighborhood homes have great variety in style and character; multi-family homes and smaller one-level homes are common. Many homes, particularly further south in the neighborhood, are built around or into the hillside as Boughey Hill steepens. Additionally, some commercial buildings and warehousing buildings, such as those concentrated on Sixteenth Street by Right Brain Brewery, are integrated into the neighborhood. On the west side of the neighborhood, on the west side of Veterans Drive, multi-family condominium and apartment buildings transition the neighborhood into the Fourteenth Street commercial district. These multi-family buildings, including Bay Hill Apartments, Tradewinds Terrace, The Strand, and The Caroline, are more affordable rental options within Traverse City. Bay Hill Apartments and Tradewinds Terrace designate some units specifically for low-income individuals and families making less than Area Median Income.

# FERNWOOD HOUSING STYLES

Minimal Traditional



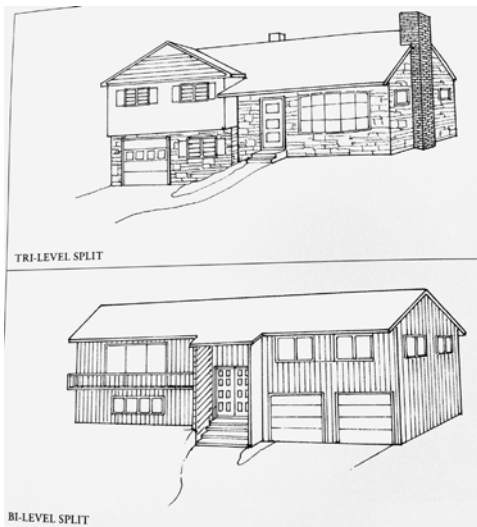
National Folk



New Traditional Craftsman



Split Level



| FERNWOOD NEIGHBORHOOD INDICATORS |           |            |
|----------------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Indicator                        | Value     | Rank       |
| Transit Access                   | 100%      | 1st (tied) |
| Food Access                      | 100%      | 1st (tied) |
| Healthcare Access                | 71%       | 13th       |
| Park Access                      | 100%      | 1st (tied) |
| Walk Score                       | 70        | 9th        |
| Bike Score                       | 53        | 14th       |
| Crime Rate                       | 9.0/acre  | 9th        |
| Fire Rate                        | 0.3/acre  | 9th (tied) |
| Temperature                      | 0 degrees | 8th (tied) |



Table 31: Fernwood Future Framework

|           | Community Support* | Commentary  |
|-----------|--------------------|---|
| Preserve  | 43%                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Tart Trail.</li> <li>» Tree canopy.</li> <li>» Convenient location to downtown and regional commercial.</li> </ul>   |
| Enhance   | 45%                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Traffic calming.</li> <li>» Maintain and add tree canopy.</li> <li>» Sidewalks and stormwater.</li> <li>» Pedestrian crossings across 14th St., Union St., and Cass St.</li> <li>» Connections to Boardman Lake Loop Trail.</li> </ul> |
| Transform | 11%                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Redevelop 14th St.</li> <li>» Add a public park in the neighborhood.</li> </ul>  |

\*Based on number of responses from Open House

## Fernwood: Community Engagement Results

Fernwood is a residential neighborhood, appreciated for its small-town ambiance and peaceful environment. It boasts convenient access to urban amenities in the downtown area as well as to Boardman Lake and the TART trail’s scenic routes. As development pressures grow, Fernwood’s inhabitants staunchly oppose zoning amendments that would pave the way for extensive, large-scale construction projects. They are committed to safeguarding the neighborhood’s single-family houses and are resistant to mixed-use development, aiming to retain Fernwood’s long-standing residential character rather than see it transform into a nondescript suburban landscape. To maintain Fernwood’s residential nature, the community endorses initiatives that promote walkability and bicycling. Concerns about vehicular speeds endangering pedestrians and the wellbeing of children have led to demands for stricter speed controls. Residents are advocating for improved pedestrian facilities, including the installation of sidewalks and better crosswalks, particularly on thoroughfares such as Cass Street, to ensure safe passage. These challenges of urban growth are also seen as a threat to the existing tree canopies, which contribute to Fernwood’s natural allure and are a cherished feature that residents are keen to protect.

# HILLTOP

## Introduction

The Hilltop neighborhood, the southern-most neighborhood in Traverse City, is a quiet neighborhood with cul-de-sacs and closed streets, similar to a suburban neighborhood in character. Mainly comprised of mid-century single-family homes, the Hilltop neighborhood also includes some non-conforming apartment-style multi-family homes and adjoining townhome-style single-family homes, bordering the centerpiece of the Traverse City Country Club. The Hilltop neighborhood borders the South Airport and Cass commercial corridors to the south (located outside of city limits), and there is some overlap of commercial land use within the Hilltop neighborhood.

## History

The Hilltop neighborhood, like neighboring Fernwood, was added to the City of Traverse City in small portions; east Sixteenth St. and Seventeenth St. (bordering Cass St.) were added in 1882 with the Steele & Spencer addition, and west Sixteenth St. and Seventeenth St. were added as a part of the 1882 Fernwood addition. The Country Club addition was added to the city in 1951, from land owned by the Red Mill Lumber Company, and an addition to the Country Club followed

(encompassing Nineteenth Street and Boughey St.). The historic Traverse City Country Club was established in 1915, and serves as a center for fitness and community events. Approximately 243 acres, the facility provides eighteen holes of golf, as well as an indoor fitness center, outdoor pool, tennis courts and pickleball, and use of the golf course in the winter for skiing, sledding, and snowshoeing. The neighborhood substantially expanded in the late 1940s through 1960s, with the addition of many single-family homes atop Boughey Hill.

## Land Use

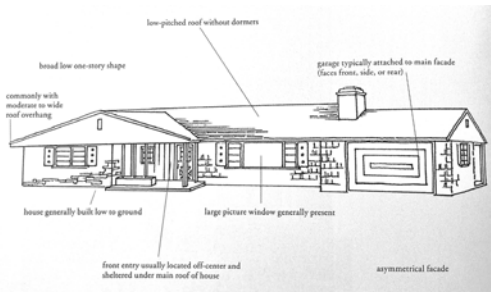

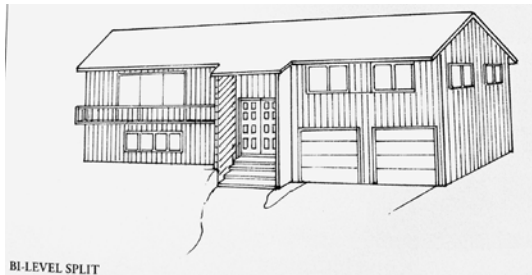

The majority of homes in the Hilltop neighborhood are single-family homes on larger lots; these lots have large setbacks. Most homes are one-level single family homes, primarily in the ranch style. In addition to the single-family homes, other homes are built in varying patterns within the neighborhood; on Boughey Street, one apartment complex built in 1940 is set far back from the street. The Fairway Hills planned unit development (PUD), in a townhome style with large adjoining single-family homes, is located off of Seventeenth Street, by the country club. Additionally, on the east side of the neighborhood, several office and professional buildings border Cass Street; multiple offices are located within one building.

## Hilltop: Community Engagement Results

The Hill Top Neighborhood is admired for its tranquil environment and excellent walkability, which fosters a strong community spirit. Residents advocate for improved pedestrian infrastructure, emphasizing the need for the construction of additional sidewalks to bolster such unity further. Praised for its verdant tree canopy, the community also envisions the preservation and expansion of this greenery, along with proposals for a new park to enrich the neighborhood's natural spaces.




## HILLTOP HOUSING STYLES


|   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);"><b>Ranch</b></p>       |                        |  |
| <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);"><b>Split Level</b></p> |  <p>BI-LEVEL SPLIT</p> |  |

| HILLTOP NEIGHBORHOOD INDICATORS |              |            |
|---------------------------------|--------------|------------|
| Indicator                       | Value        | Rank       |
| Transit Access                  | 100%         | 1st (tied) |
| Food Access                     | 100%         | 1st (tied) |
| Healthcare Access               | 2%           | 16th       |
| Park Access                     | 34%          | 16th       |
| Walk Score                      | 38           | 14th       |
| Bike Score                      | 55           | 13th       |
| Crime Rate                      | 1.9/acre     | 2nd        |
| Fire Rate                       | 0.1/acre     | 1st (tied) |
| Temperature                     | -1.6 degrees | 3rd (tied) |


Median Property Value

 \$295,900

Average Home Size

 1,512 sq. ft.

Year-Round Owner-Occupied Units

 88%

Median Year Built


 1969



Table 32: Hilltop Future Framework

|           | Community Support | Commentary   |
|-----------|-------------------|--|
| Preserve  | 53%               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Trees and birds</li> <li>» Quiet and strong social connections</li> <li>» Roads are walkable</li> </ul> |
| Enhance   | 28%               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Traffic calming, especially at the entrance of the Country Club</li> <li>» Street lighting</li> </ul>   |
| Transform | 19%               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Sidewalks</li> <li>» Housing density increases, where appropriate</li> </ul>                            |

\*Based on number of responses from Open House

# BOARDMAN

## Introduction

Traverse City's stately Boardman neighborhood is the first residential area next to the downtown commercial area. Boardman neighborhood houses, many ornate and Victorian in design, are generally large and majestic in style, seeming particularly so within the urban context of smaller lots. In addition to Victorian houses, brick homes and other homes simpler in design are present within the district; additionally, the size of homes in this neighborhood, as well as its historic character, have led to many non-conforming duplexes in the neighborhood.

## History

The Boardman neighborhood has been in place since Traverse City's founding, as home to some of the early town's most prestigious individuals. As an early area of expansion, the Boardman neighborhood accommodated notable residents and business moguls; Boardman neighborhood houses further away from the downtown center included more modest homes for working-class individuals in Traverse City, but are still large and very desirable homes, nonetheless. The Boardman neighborhood is easily walkable to downtown Traverse City. As a result, before downzoning changes to promote single-family housing were introduced in the 1970s, many of the large, historic

Boardman neighborhood homes were used as multifamily housing. (This is likely the cause of the prevalence of nonconforming duplexes today in the Boardman neighborhood; multifamily homes that have been kept in continuous use.) The Boardman neighborhood was designated by the Traverse City Commission as the Boardman Neighborhood Historic District within the city; changes and renovations to existing homes must go through the Traverse City Historic Districts Commission due to the historic character of the homes present. It was recognized on the National Register of Historic Places in 1978.

## Land Use

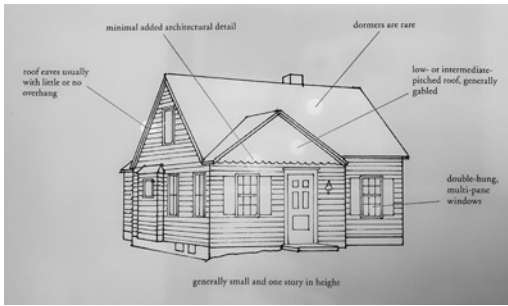
Due to its regal history, the Boardman neighborhood contains, generally, larger homes than most of Traverse City; homes are most similar in size and character to the Sixth Street neighborhood, and the Boardman neighborhood's small lot sizes (including half-lots) mean that these homes are in close proximity to one another. Although the majority of homes in the district are single-family, it is noteworthy that the neighborhood has two zoning types: R-1b (low-density residential that allows duplexes by right and R-2 (mixed density residential, allowing duplexes by right). There is little to no aesthetic change between them; additionally, due to the prevalence of non-conforming duplexes, multi-family homes are present in both districts.

## Boardman: Community Engagement Results

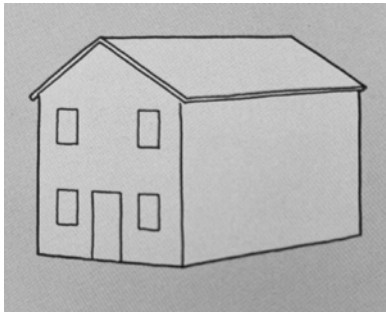
The Boardman neighborhood is highly valued for its quiet, historic, and residential qualities. These traits contribute to a child-friendly environment and engender a sense of tight-knit community. An abundance of trees provides shade and promotes walkability, further enhanced by the neighborhood's accessibility to downtown amenities. Consequently, maintaining Boardman's peaceful character is a significant concern among its residents. The neighborhood's rising appeal has led to concerns about overcrowding, amplified by heightened tourist activity, increased pedestrian and vehicle traffic, and greater light pollution. Considering these developments, the community advocates for regulations on short-term rentals, improved traffic management, and enforcement against parking violations and trespassing. Additionally, there is a need for a holistic approach towards the homeless population within the neighborhood, ensuring safety and support. Strategic urban planning is essential to reconcile Boardman's growth with its cherished communal atmosphere.

# BOARDMAN HOUSING STYLES

Minimal Traditional



National Folk



Queen Anne



Colonial Revival



New Traditional Craftsman



| BOARDMAN<br>NEIGHBORHOOD INDICATORS |           |            |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Indicator                           | Value     | Rank       |
| Transit Access                      | 100%      | 1st (tied) |
| Food Access                         | 100%      | 1st (tied) |
| Healthcare Access                   | 100%      | 1st (tied) |
| Park Access                         | 100%      | 1st (tied) |
| Walk Score                          | 76        | 4th        |
| Bike Score                          | 88        | 6th        |
| Crime Rate                          | 15.2/acre | 14th       |
| Fire Rate                           | 0.3/acre  | 9th (tied) |
| Temperature                         | 0 degrees | 8th (tied) |

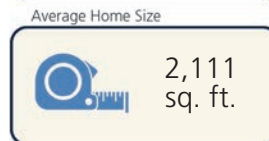


Table 33: Boardman Future Framework

|           | Community Support* | Commentary  |
|-----------|--------------------|---|
| Preserve  | 62%                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Proximity to Lake Michigan and Downtown</li> <li>» Tree lined streets.</li> <li>» Historic.</li> <li>» Social relationships.</li> <li>» Low density.</li> <li>» No/limited short term rentals.</li> <li>» Neighborhood amenities.</li> <li>» Walkability/bikability.</li> </ul>  |
| Enhance   | 19%                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Street improvements (safe pedestrian crossings, lighting, benches, traffic calming).</li> <li>» Park amenities (dog park, playground, swings).</li> <li>» Allow housing density that fits with existing scale.</li> <li>» Support for at risk population (unhoused/substance dependent).</li> <li>» Manage sewer smell.</li> </ul>                               |
| Transform | 19%                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Community conversations about Safe Harbor.</li> <li>» Better crossings across.</li> <li>» Improve E St. Front St. corridor.</li> <li>» Redevelopment opportunities at empty lot at Front and Barlow, 500 block of Eighth St., and Eighth St. and Webster St. intersection.</li> <li>» Encourage housing development at TCAPS administrative building.</li> </ul> |

\*Based on number of responses from Open House

# NOBO

## Introduction

Traverse City's "NoBo" district, located at the mouth of the Boardman Lake, is a primarily commercial area, with some intermixed residential development; NoBo is strong in adaptive reuse and historic development. Community staples and historic structures, including the Woodmere branch of the Traverse Area District Library, McGough's, Inc., and Oryana Food Co-Op, are popular attractions in the NoBo neighborhood – which has seen increased traffic and investment with the Depot development and Boardman Lake Loop multi-use trail. The NoBo district is a commercial center for Traverse City, with auto sales, printing and copying, feed and landscaping, and retail stores included among Commonground Cooperative and West Shore Bank. The Eighth Street redesign has continued to revitalize the corridor of Eighth Street located in NoBo, between Boardman and Woodmere; with an influx of

## History

The NoBo neighborhood is one of the oldest neighborhoods in Traverse City, displayed in the City's first Sanborn Fire Maps in 1884, as Hannah & Lay Co.'s second addition to Traverse City. NoBo has been a longtime industrial and commercial center due to its proximity along the Boardman

River, with the Oval Wood Dish Company property (one of the largest manufacturers in early Traverse City) located near the current Depot property, the Wells and Higman Company's Basket Factory at the intersection of Eighth and Wellington, and the Fulghum Manufacturing Company located approximately where the Riverine Development is currently. McGough's Feed & Landscaping, Inc. is also located in NoBo, where it has been since 1890; its historic red wooden building is a landmark in the neighborhood.

## Land Use


The NoBo neighborhood is a traditionally industrial and commercial neighborhood that has retained some of these uses over time. Its integration with the north shore of the Boardman Lake, and the Boardman Lake Loop trail, shapes it. Irregularly shaped parcels are the norm in NoBo, as many longstanding businesses are located in this district. Uses in NoBo are varied (primarily non-residential) and often located near one another, such as the multi-use Depot neighborhood, which includes office space and medical offices, with residential condos on the second floor. Additionally, the Depot bungalow court built by Habitat for Humanity borders the Filling Station (an adaptive reuse project, formerly a train station). The Woodmere branch of the Traverse Area District Library borders additional railroad property and Hull Park.

## NOBO HOUSING STYLES


|                           |   |   |
|---------------------------|---|---|
| National Folk             |                                |   |
| New Traditional Craftsman | <br>NEW TRADITIONAL CRAFTSMAN |  |

| NOBO NEIGHBORHOOD INDICATORS |             |            |
|------------------------------|-------------|------------|
| Indicator                    | Value       | Rank       |
| Transit Access               | 100%        | 1st (tied) |
| Food Access                  | 100%        | 1st (tied) |
| Healthcare Access            | 100%        | 1st (tied) |
| Park Access                  | 100%        | 1st (tied) |
| Walk Score                   | 75          | 5th (tied) |
| Bike Score                   | 84          | 8th        |
| Crime Rate                   | 47.6/acre   | 16th       |
| Fire Rate                    | 0.3/acre    | 9th (tied) |
| Temperature                  | +3.9 degree | 15th       |


Median Property Value

 \$220,800

Average Home Size

 1,435 sq. ft.

Year-Round Owner-Occupied Units

 54%

Median Year Built


 2003



Table 34: NoBo Future Framework

|           | Community Support* | Commentary   |
|-----------|--------------------|--|
| Preserve  | 5%                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Mixed-Use.</li> <li>» Transit access.</li> <li>» Walkability &amp; non-motorized access.</li> <li>» Historic buildings and nature.</li> <li>» Trees.</li> </ul>   |
| Enhance   | 55%                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Neighborhood scale retail.</li> <li>» Support for at risk population (unhoused/substance dependent).</li> <li>» Non-motorized connections between neighborhood amenities.</li> <li>» Traffic calming and safe pedestrian connections.</li> <li>» Affordable housing.</li> <li>» Childcare.</li> </ul> |
| Transform | 39%                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Parking lot/vacant space at Skegemog Gardens and Filling Station.</li> </ul>  |

\*Based on number of responses from Open House

## NoBo: Community Engagement Results

The NoBo neighborhood strikes a balance between urban connectivity and nature. With strong walkability, the neighborhood affords residents access to essential amenities, ranging from grocery stores to childcare services. Central to the neighborhood’s vibrancy is 8th Street, a hub of commercial activities where community members advocate for calmer traffic flow and improved pedestrian-oriented intersections. To enhance NoBo’s urban activity, there is a call to introduce more mixed-use developments along 8th Street, replacing dilapidated residential properties with commercial enhancements. Additionally, NoBo is the location of a homeless safe harbor, a facility which has garnered community backing. Residents advocate for the safe harbor to evolve into a year-round establishment, thus strengthening NoBo’s commitment to community welfare.

# TRAVERSE HEIGHTS

## Introduction

The Traverse Heights neighborhood, south of Eighth Street between Woodmere and Garfield Avenues, is a growing neighborhood with varied housing types and land uses. As a neighborhood with a historically lower-income population, Traves Heights has a comparatively more affordable housing stock than the remainder of Traverse City. The neighborhood has an integration of single-family homes with duplexes and multiplexes (both by right on R-2 parcels and non-conforming).

The Traverse Heights neighborhood has grown in resilience and cultural offerings over the years, with the revitalization of Traverse Heights Elementary, the addition of coffee shops and other community gathering places, and a new sidewalk network encouraging safe connectivity throughout the city. The neighborhood also includes a portion of the TART Trail, serving as a non-motorized connection to the Boardman Lake Loop, the west side of Traverse City, or to the east side of Traverse City along Parsons Avenue.

## History

The Traverse Heights neighborhood is located south of Eighth Street between Woodmere and Garfield Avenues; it continues to the southern boundary of Traverse City. The Traverse Heights neighborhood first appears on Sanborn fire maps in 1904, as part of the Hannah & Lay Co.'s 7th Addition to Traverse City (also encompassing part of Oak Park), and the Oak Heights Addition. Oak Heights continues to be used, informally, as a name for the northern part of Traverse Heights. In the 1910 Sanborn fire maps, the Barlow Farm addition was added to the south (with Kelley and Center streets). At this time, the Pere Marquette Railroad bisected the Traverse Heights neighborhood. In the 1920 Sanborn fire maps, Hannah & Lay Co.'s 13th Addition (between Barlow and Woodmere along Hannah Avenue), Boon & Anthony's Addition (between Barlow and Woodmere, between Center and Carver Streets), and Hannah & Lay Co.'s 15th Addition (at the corner of Woodmere and Boon Streets; Santo and Clinch Streets) were added. As previously mentioned, the Traverse Heights neighborhood has been historically a working-class neighborhood, with a lower-income population.

## Land Use

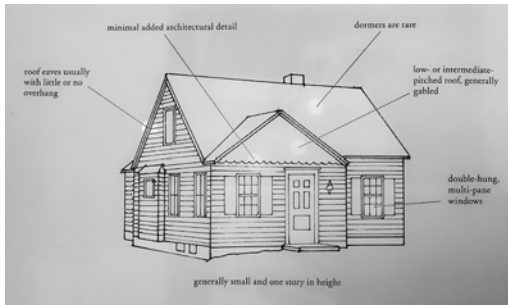
The homes in Traverse Heights are, generally, smaller than the homes in the remainder of Traverse City. Most are smaller one-level single-family homes. The homes in Traverse Heights were built in the mid-1900s; older Traverse Heights homes were built in the late 1940s, but many were also built in the late 1960s to early 1970s. The Traverse Heights neighborhood has seen more experimentation with missing middle housing than most neighborhoods in Traverse City. The diversity of zoning in Traverse Heights, with portions of land zoned R-2, allows for duplexes in parts of the neighborhood; both historic and new-build duplexes. There is a prevalence of non-conforming duplexes in the neighborhood, as well, where not allowed by R-2 zoning. Additionally, Traverse Heights was the first community to pilot accessory dwelling units, or "granny flats," as an available land use option in 2013. It also should be noted that, although it is just outside of the city limits, a community of mobile homes is located off of Barlow Street bordering Traverse Heights (Shady, Manor, Glenview, and Briar Hill Lanes). This community serves as an affordable housing option that is not well-represented in the City. The location allows for good accessibility to the rest of town; closer proximity and with less barriers than other mobile home communities nearby.

Lastly, the Traverse Heights neighborhood encompasses and borders diverse but important land uses within the City. The Woodmere Avenue corridor has several industrial uses across the street from the Traverse Heights neighborhood; there are also several lower-intensity commercial developments on the east side, bordering Traverse Heights homes. These include retail and office space, restaurants, and coffee shops; they serve as community centers and examples of mixed-use developments fitting cohesively within one neighborhood.

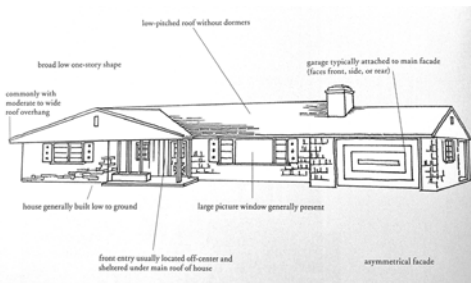


## TRAVERSE HEIGHTS HOUSING STYLES

Minimal Traditional



Ranch



Split Level



## Traverse Heights: Community Engagement Results

Traverse Heights benefits from its easy access to the downtown district and the TART trail. With its focus on residential living, the community aims to maintain single-family homes while ensuring affordability. The voice of the public has been clear regarding the need for increased investment in their surroundings. Top requests include the construction of sidewalks and crosswalks, coupled with the implementation of stop signs and stricter speed limits to foster a pedestrian-friendly environment. Moreover, there is a clear call for enhanced street maintenance, spanning from alley resurfacing to the care and beautification of public spaces. Investment in communal areas also ranks high on the neighborhood's agenda, with residents advocating for modernized park facilities and amenities as well as upgrades to the local ice rink. A key aspect of this investment includes greater efforts towards nurturing and expanding the neighborhood's tree canopy.

| TRAVERSE HEIGHTS<br>NEIGHBORHOOD INDICATORS |             |            |
|---|-------------|------------|
| Indicator                                   | Value       | Rank       |
| Transit Access                              | 100%        | 1st (tied) |
| Food Access                                 | 100%        | 1st (tied) |
| Healthcare Access                           | 100%        | 1st (tied) |
| Park Access                                 | 100%        | 1st (tied) |
| Walk Score                                  | 66          | 10th       |
| Bike Score                                  | 82          | 9th        |
| Crime Rate                                  | 8.7/acre    | 10th       |
| Fire Rate                                   | 0.3/acre    | 9th (tied) |
| Temperature                                 | +1.2 degree | 13th       |



Table 35: Traverse Heights Future Framework

|           | Community Support* | Commentary   |
|-----------|--------------------|--|
| Preserve  | 8%                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Mix of housing styles/density.</li> <li>» Walkability/bikability, connections to regional trails.</li> <li>» Trees, open space, parks.</li> <li>» Social relationships.</li> </ul>  |
| Enhance   | 75%                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Maintain and add tree canopy.</li> <li>» Implement traffic calming measures, paying particular attention to Rose, 8th St., Woodmere, and Barlow.</li> <li>» Fill sidewalk gaps.</li> <li>» Add/improve amenities at parks.</li> <li>» Encourage neighborhood-scale commercial activity along commercial corridors.</li> <li>» Support for at risk population (unhoused/substance dependent).</li> <li>» Street lighting.</li> <li>» Better BATA stops/connections.</li> </ul> |
| Transform | 17%                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Garfield Avenue corridor.</li> <li>» Railroad corridor in neighborhood.</li> </ul>  |

\*Based on number of responses from Open House

# OAK PARK

## Introduction

Oak Park, a quiet and walkable neighborhood near downtown Traverse City, is one of Traverse City's oldest neighborhoods. The neighborhood's tight lots and historic homes create a cohesive feel, and many historic homes remain within Oak Park, as one of Traverse City's first-developed neighborhoods. With community activities, including shared street programs to temper summer traffic and the large F&M Park that bridges the Oak Park and Boardman neighborhoods, Oak Park is a lively and community-oriented neighborhood with rich history.

## History

The Oak Park neighborhood, adjacent to the Boardman neighborhood, is similarly rich in history and architectural diversity. Portions of Oak Park first appeared in the 1890 Sanborn Fire Map, with the Hannah & Lay Co.'s 5th Addition to Traverse City. In the 1904 Sanborn Fire Map, Oak Park is continued with the Hannah & Lay Co.'s 7th Addition, the Grover Park addition, and the Edna Park addition. The modest yet regal homes of merchants and lumber industry employees that are commonly found in the Boardman neighborhood are also found in Oak Park. Most Oak Park homes were built between 1880 and 1900 with some additional structures built in the 1930s. The original

Oak Park Elementary was built in 1895 as one of Traverse City's five (5) original public schools, and was demolished in 1955. The rebuilt Oak Park Elementary closed as a public school in 2007 and is now used by the Northwest Education Intermediate School District as the North Ed Bridgeway facility; serving students with autism. The Oak Park Neighborhood Association was reestablished to promote social cohesion of the neighborhood and organize community events.

## Land Use

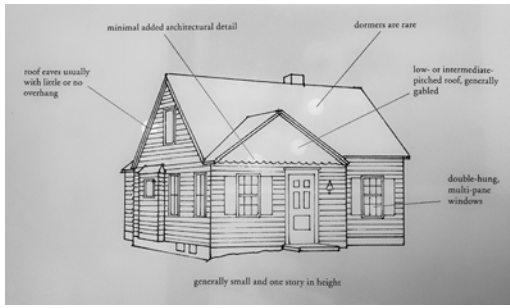
Oak Park primarily consists of single-family homes in addition to a few non-conforming duplexes, and some duplexes, allowed by right, in the block of East Eighth St. (which is zoned for R-2 use). Oak Park has lots of typical size, with wider homes and large yards. As discussed in the Parkway corridor chapter, Oak Park also borders multi-family condominium developments. As with many neighborhoods within the City, Oak Park has a well-connected sidewalk network on State, Washington, Webster, and cross-streets. The TART Trail also runs through Oak Park, along Railroad Avenue; Oak Park is connected to the broader region in non-motorized transportation. Oak Park borders the high-volume Garfield Avenue to the east, with the Grand Traverse County Civic Center directly across Garfield Avenue. As a result, there are several properties with large corner lots along Garfield Avenue that have implemented fences to separate themselves from traffic.

## Oak Park: Community Engagement Results

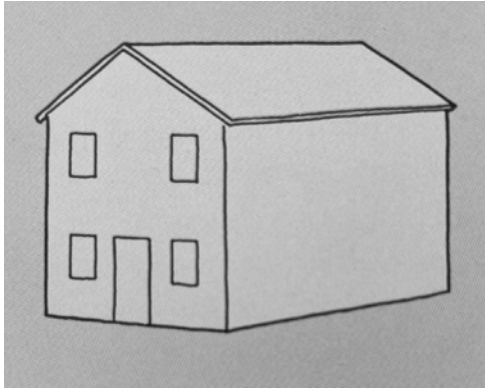
Oak Park possesses a strong sense of community with a humble single-family residential character. The neighborhood's highly walkable and bike-friendly streets contribute to the peace of less motorized streets. In response to the rising number of accessory dwelling units (ADUs), which may increase traffic and compromise the close-knit atmosphere, the community has voiced a desire to limit their expansion. Oak Park additionally enjoys the charm of F&M park, which provides residents with natural green space and a beautiful tree canopy. F&M park is both a meeting place and an escape within the neighborhood for different groups of people. To enhance this urban gem, there is a collective call for the creation of new facilities and amenities that would promote even more engagement within the park. Conversely, the condition of alleys in proximity to the park and across Oak Park is a matter of concern, with degraded surfaces, drainage issues, and unsafe speeds necessitating urgent attention. A concurrent plea from the community highlights the need for improvements to sidewalks and pedestrian crossings, underscoring an aspiration to further cultivate the accessible nature of the area for all who travel by foot or bicycle.

# OAK PARK HOUSING STYLES

Minimal Traditional



National Folk



New Traditional Craftsman



| OAK PARK<br>NEIGHBORHOOD INDICATORS |             |            |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|------------|
| Indicator                           | Value       | Rank       |
| Transit Access                      | 100%        | 1st (tied) |
| Food Access                         | 100%        | 1st (tied) |
| Healthcare Access                   | 100%        | 1st (tied) |
| Park Access                         | 100%        | 1st (tied) |
| Walk Score                          | 73          | 7th        |
| Bike Score                          | 90          | 5th        |
| Crime Rate                          | 8.9/acre    | 11th       |
| Fire Rate                           | 0.3/acre    | 9th (tied) |
| Temperature                         | +0.2 degree | 9th (tied) |



Table 36: Oak Park Future Framework

|           | Community Support* | Commentary  |
|-----------|--------------------|---|
| Preserve  | 73%                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Trails, parks, and trees.</li> <li>» Neighborhood scale retail.</li> <li>» Social connections.</li> <li>» Walkability/bikability (pedestrian island across Garfield).</li> </ul>   |
| Enhance   | 24%                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Maintain and enhance parks and trails with amenities.</li> <li>» Better pedestrian crossings across major thoroughfares.</li> <li>» Street improvements (surfacing, stormwater, bury utility lines).</li> <li>» Enforce short-term rentals.</li> <li>» Traffic calming.</li> <li>» Maintain and expand tree canopy.</li> </ul> |
| Transform | 3%                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Senior Center.</li> <li>» Garfield and Front St. Corridors.</li> <li>» Connect to Grand Traverse Bay.</li> </ul>   |

\*Based on number of responses from Open House

# BASE OF THE PENINSULA

## Introduction

The Base of the Peninsula neighborhood, bordering Northwestern Michigan College (NMC), East Bay, and West Bay, is located on the northeastern edge of Traverse City. The neighborhood surrounds NMC, Central High School, and Eastern Elementary campuses on three (3) sides. The Indian Woods sub-neighborhood is located in the southeast; the Birchwood Avenue sub-neighborhood is in the northeast; the Huron Hills and Orchard Heights sub-neighborhoods are in the north; and the Milliken Drive sub-neighborhood is in the west. Despite being distinguished by varying land use layouts and home types, these neighborhoods are all single-family residential (with some nonconforming duplexes interspersed). The neighborhood is in close proximity to numerous parks, including Bryan, Clancy, the Dutmer Natural Area, Highland, Huron Hills, and Sunrise Peace. Within the Base of the Peninsula, BOOM and Indian Woods are two established neighborhood associations. The waterfront land in this neighborhood, including public access points and East Bay Park, allows for easy access to East Bay. The Coastal Flood Zone map of East Bay indicates that parts of the neighborhood by East Bay Park may face challenges from coastal flooding as climate change progresses.

## History

The Base of the Peninsula neighborhood presents a bridge between the City of Traverse City and the Old Mission Peninsula and is considered a historic neighborhood. The first appearance of the Base of the Peninsula in Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps came in 1910, with the portion of Peninsula Drive meeting East Front Street and Munson Avenue included as part of the “Bayside Addition and Second Bayside Addition.” In 1920, the “Birchwood Addition” (Birchwood Avenue between E. Front Street and Eastern Avenue), “Kezis Mokesa” (eastern Indian Woods and East Bay Boulevard), and “Ah-Go-Sa Resort” (now Ahgosa Trail) neighborhoods were added. As early additions to the growing Traverse City and connections between Traverse City and the Old Mission Peninsula, these neighborhoods were important in the formation of Traverse City.



Image: Don “The Up North Memories Guy” Harrison, Flickr.

The neighborhood borders the campus of NMC, an institution with its own campus master plan. In addition to NMC, founded in 1951, Traverse City Central High School joined the area in 1959, originally named Traverse City Senior High School. In 1997, due to capacity, the current building became Central High School, and West Senior High was also constructed. Eastern Elementary, located adjacent to Central High School, also opened in the 1950s; in 2017, the building was replaced by a newly constructed building.

In 2022, the Base of Old Mission (BOOM) neighborhood association was recognized, encompassing Huron Hills, Orchard Heights, and Birchwood Avenue-East Shore Road north of Eastern Avenue, and later adding the Milliken Court neighborhood.

## Land Use

Within the Base of the Peninsula neighborhood, land use varies to a great extent. The area closest to the waterfront along East Bay Boulevard contains large and deep lots with homes set far back. The Huron Hills and northern Orchard Heights neighborhood are distinctly suburban in character, with large lot sizes and larger single-family homes. Within the Birchwood neighborhood, waterfront homes involve the same deeper lots as the area around East Bay Boulevard; the non-waterfront side of the street includes smaller historic ranch- and cottage-style homes. However, all neighborhoods are consistently single-family (with several nonconforming duplexes). Accessory dwelling units have become more common in the Birchwood Avenue neighborhood.

## Housing Styles

- » Birchwood neighborhood; mixture of small historic cottage-style homes and larger (newer construction) colonial and/or ranch-style waterfront homes.
- » Huron Hills neighborhood; more contemporary, mid-century ranch-style homes, as well as new spacious suburban two-level homes.
- » Orchard Heights neighborhood; larger homes in the hills, small ranch-style homes closer to Eastern Avenue.
- » Indian Woods neighborhood; small mid-century homes, some 90s ranch-style rebuilds, larger colonial and modernist homes by Apache Pass.
- » East Bay Boulevard neighborhood (eastern Indian Woods, waterfront); very deep and large lots, new construction and set back.

### BASE OF THE PENNINSULA/BOOM HOUSING STYLES

|             |  |  |
|-------------|--|--|
| Ranch       |  |  |
| Split Level |  |  |

## Base of the Peninsula/BOOM: Community Engagement Results

Located along the edge of Grand Traverse Bay, the BOOM neighborhood has unique concerns stemming from its proximity to the water. Residents emphasize the need for conservation of land and water rights, including sustained access to local beaches. They also prioritize water quality protection, advocating for measures to prevent sewage spills, upgrade infrastructure to halt untreated runoff, and implement permeable paving solutions. Moreover, the community values green spaces, seeking to preserve both the lush tree canopy and natural habitats. Despite BOOM's typically quiet residential setting, escalating traffic and vehicular speeds have become pressing issues. To address these challenges, the community calls for the enforcement of speed limits, traffic regulation, and measures to ensure safer vehicle speeds.

| BASE OF THE PENNINSULA/BOOM NEIGHBORHOOD INDICATORS |              |             |
|---|--------------|-------------|
| Indicator   | Value        | Rank        |
| Transit Access                                      | 61%          | 16th        |
| Food Access   | 17%          | 16th        |
| Healthcare Access                                   | 54%          | 14th        |
| Park Access   | 100%         | 1st (tied)  |
| Walk Score  | 14           | 15th (tied) |
| Bike Score  | 36           | 15th (tied) |
| Crime Rate  | 4.0/acre     | 4th         |
| Fire Rate   | 0.2/acre     | 3rd (tied)  |
| Temperature   | -5.4 degrees | 1st         |



Table 37: Base of the Peninsula/BOOM Future Framework

|           | Community Support* | Commentary   |
|-----------|--------------------|--|
| Preserve  | 74%                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Trees, beaches, and parks.</li> <li>» Close to schools.</li> <li>» Walkable/bikable.</li> <li>» Social connections.</li> <li>» Low density.</li> <li>» BATA access.</li> </ul>  |
| Enhance   | 21%                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Traffic calming.</li> <li>» Pedestrian enhancements (sidewalks, lighting, crossings).</li> <li>» Maintain and expand tree canopy.</li> <li>» Amenities for the parks.</li> <li>» Street improvements (resurfacing, bike lanes).</li> <li>» Enforce existing regulations (STR, blight, traffic).</li> </ul>  |
| Transform | 6%                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Encourage retail at neighborhood scale in nearby commercial redevelopments on Munson Ave.</li> <li>» Encourage use of permeable materials in public and private redevelopments.</li> <li>» Complete TART Trail extension along Peninsula Dr.</li> <li>» Evaluate road network within neighborhood and identify opportunities for traffic optimization.</li> </ul> |

\*Based on number of responses from Open House



# TRIANGLE

## Introduction

The smaller single-family home Triangle neighborhood is in a prime location, located south of Munson Avenue, north of Eighth Street, and adjacent to the Grand Traverse County Civic Center. With close proximity to Northwestern Michigan College and the offerings at the Civic Center, the Triangle neighborhood is highly connected to the rest of the city. The neighborhood is bounded by Fair Street on the west, the busiest thoroughfare in the neighborhood; remaining streets are quieter with lower volumes of traffic. The Triangle neighborhood borders the commercial uses of Munson Avenue and Eighth Street; on the fringes, some homes border chain and local restaurants, medical offices, hotels, and miscellaneous office buildings, making this one of the more integrated mixed-use neighborhoods in Traverse City.

## History

The Triangle neighborhood first appears in Traverse City's 1920 Sanborn Map, as the Foster and Crotters Addition. The Civic Center park, owned and operated by Grand Traverse County, has long been an integral part of the neighborhood in its varied iterations; in 1912, it became the Fairgrounds property with a transfer of ownership from the Whiting family to Grand Traverse County. After discussions about private development on the land led to community pushback, the future of the

property was planned in 1968 the Civic Center and Easling Pool were established in 1970, and the park officially was converted into the Grand Traverse County Civic Center in 1973. Homes built in the Triangle neighborhood that bordered the Civic Center were mainly built in this timeframe and shortly before; most homes in the neighborhood today were built in the 1950s and 1960s.

## Land Use

While the Triangle neighborhood is primarily a single-family neighborhood, there are some non-conforming duplexes in the neighborhood as well as the Fair Street condominiums that were built in 1970. The Fair Street condominiums' parcels are zoned R-3, the City's zoning district that permits multi-family development. Homes in the Triangle neighborhood (with some variation with ranch-style homes along Fair Street) are primarily small one-level Cape Cod. or Craftsman-style homes, approximately 1,000 square feet. Additionally, the Triangle neighborhood is notable for the uses it borders. Fair Street is a main thoroughfare to connect from Eighth Street to Munson Avenue, making this a higher-volume street. Several parcels at the corner of Munson Avenue and Fair Street are commercially-zoned, containing restaurants and office buildings. Along Titus Street to the south of the Civic Center, single-family homes are extremely small, with at least one non-conforming duplex. Parcels separating the Triangle neighborhood from Munson Avenue, running diagonally, are zoned for hotel-resort use.

## TRIANGLE HOUSING STYLES

|                     |  |  |
|---------------------|--|--|
| Minimal Traditional |  |  |
| Ranch               |  |  |

| TRIANGLE NEIGHBORHOOD INDICATORS |             |            |
|----------------------------------|-------------|------------|
| Indicator                        | Value       | Rank       |
| Transit Access                   | 100%        | 1st (tied) |
| Food Access                      | 72%         | 14th       |
| Healthcare Access                | 100%        | 1st (tied) |
| Park Access                      | 100%        | 1st (tied) |
| Walk Score                       | 60          | 11th       |
| Bike Score                       | 65          | 11th       |
| Crime Rate                       | 6.9/acre    | 8th        |
| Fire Rate                        | 0.3/acre    | 9th (tied) |
| Temperature                      | +0.2 degree | 9th (tied) |

Median Property Value

\$211,800

Average Home Size

1,012 sq. ft.

Year-Round Owner-Occupied Units

63%

Median Year Built

1955



Table 38: Triangle Future Framework

|           | Community Support* | Commentary   |
|-----------|--------------------|--|
| Preserve  | 27%                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Proximity to downtown, parks, and neighborhood assets.</li> <li>» Trees.</li> <li>» Social connections.</li> <li>» Quiet.</li> <li>» Low-density.</li> <li>» On-street parking.</li> <li>» BATA access.</li> </ul>  |
| Enhance   | 52%                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Improved walkability/bikability (sidewalk gaps, street crossings, connections to the Civic Center, connections to the TART Trail).</li> <li>» Maintain and add tree canopy.</li> <li>» Traffic calming.</li> <li>» Enforce blight regulations.</li> </ul> |
| Transform | 21%                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Munson Avenue Corridor.</li> <li>» Eighth St. and Garfield Ave. intersection.</li> </ul>  |

\*Based on number of responses from Open House

## Triangle: Community Engagement Results

Residents of the Triangle neighborhood take pleasure in a tight-knit community atmosphere, with nature readily accessible yet complemented by the neighborhood’s nearness to the city center. The local populace is keen on protecting the green spaces and the lush canopy of trees that enhance the area’s aesthetic. Given its convenient location adjacent to the civic center and cemetery, residents have the advantage of easy access to these facilities. However, there is a pronounced demand for improved pedestrian infrastructure. Calls have been made for the installation of new sidewalks, enhancement of street crossings, and better traffic management techniques to curb excessive vehicle speeds. Moreover, there is a strong collective preference for maintaining the area as a haven for single-family homes, steering clear of a shift towards transient housing options such as short-term rentals and condominium developments.

# OAKWOOD

## Introduction

The quiet Oakwood neighborhood is a middle ground neighborhood within Traverse City that borders several adjacent differing land uses while remaining secluded. Positioned in the middle of multiple commercial corridors, the neighborhood's quiet tree-lined streets remain separate from the surrounding activity. The neighborhood surrounds the forested, historic Oakwood Cemetery and borders the industrial Parsons-Hastings corridor to the south. Eighth Street and the Eighth-Munson corner are main thoroughfares for the City that border the neighborhood to the north and northeast. Regardless of surrounding commercial and higher-density residential activity, Oakwood is a quiet neighborhood in the City that is mainly comprised of split level and cottage style single-family homes.

## History

The Oakwood neighborhood borders Oakwood Cemetery, a majestic City park and cemetery, on both the east and west side. Oakwood Cemetery was established in 1861 as a compilation of four (4) cemeteries of different religious denominations, Catholic, City, Jewish, and Northern Michigan Asylum. Many of Traverse City's founders are laid to rest there. With large historic oak and other trees, Oakwood is a "garden-style" cemetery that is maintained by the City's parks and recreation division and open to the public as a park. The Cromwell Terrace neighborhood, formerly farmland, was a later addition to the city on the

eastern side of the cemetery. The neighborhood was platted as an addition to the City in three phases by the Batdorff family and the Cromwell Company. Cromwell Drive was added in 1946; Belmont Drive was added in 1950; Terrace Drive and Woodland Drive were added in 1951. Most homes in the neighborhood, ranch and split-level styles, were primarily built in the 1950s (with some in the late 1940s and early 1960s). The Oakwood neighborhood generally borders higher-intensity land uses due to its proximity to the Eighth Street and Munson Avenue commercial corridor, the Airport Access medical campus, and the Hastings-Parsons commercial-industrial corridor. As a result, traffic is monitored on Hastings between Parsons St. and Eighth St. to keep speeds at a residential 25 mile per hour limit.

## Land Use

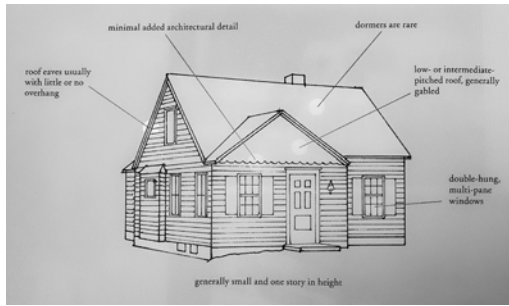
The portion of the Oakwood neighborhood along Hastings Avenue (between Parsons and Eighth St.) is a wooded residential street, with older cottage and ranch-style single-family homes on large lots. The portion of the Oakwood neighborhood between Oakwood Cemetery (to the west) and the Eighth and Munson intersection, the Cromwell Terrace area, is similarly single-family in character and primarily comprised of single-family ranch-style homes. Lots in both sides of the Oakwood neighborhood are deep. Commercial development is primarily on the other side of Eighth Street; however, the Terrace Shopper liquor and supplies store is located on the corner of Cromwell Drive, Eighth Street, and Munson Avenue, a walkable distance from the surrounding homes.

## Oakwood: Community Engagement Results

The Oakwood neighborhood is recognized for its tranquility and an expansive tree canopy that lends the area its name. Its inhabitants appreciate the ease of navigating the neighborhood on foot with destinations including the cemetery that fosters natural life nearby. Oakwood's distinctive charm comes from its absence of through streets and its unpaved alleys, which both minimize traffic and foster pedestrian and community engagement. Residents assert that the preserved layout, without through streets, diminishes the need for sidewalks, reinforcing the neighborhood's peaceful character. To bolster walkability, the community advocates for enhanced street lighting and improved pedestrian crossings along 8th Street, ensuring safety for all who traverse the area.

## OAKWOOD HOUSING STYLES

Minimal Traditional



### OAKWOOD NEIGHBORHOOD INDICATORS

| Indicator         | Value        | Rank       |
|-------------------|--------------|------------|
| Transit Access    | 100%         | 1st (tied) |
| Food Access       | 82%          | 13th       |
| Healthcare Access | 100%         | 1st (tied) |
| Park Access       | 92%          | 15th       |
| Walk Score        | 58           | 12th       |
| Bike Score        | 65           | 12th       |
| Crime Rate        | 2.9/acre     | 3rd        |
| Fire Rate         | 0.2/acre     | 3rd (tied) |
| Temperature       | -1.6 degrees | 3rd (tied) |

Median Property Value



Average Home Size



Year-Round Owner-Occupied Units



Median Year Built



Table 39: Oakwood Future Framework

|           | Community Support* | Commentary   |
|-----------|--------------------|--|
| Preserve  | 21%                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Low density; large lots; setbacks.</li> <li>» Trees and wooded.</li> <li>» Walkable.</li> <li>» Social relationships.</li> </ul>  |
| Enhance   | 42%                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Maintain landscaping, lighting, amenities along 8th St.</li> <li>» Better pedestrian crossings along Munson Ave. and Front St.</li> <li>» Architectural design standards.</li> <li>» Enforce blight regulations.</li> </ul> |
| Transform | 38%                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» 8th St. and Munson Ave. intersection.</li> </ul>  |

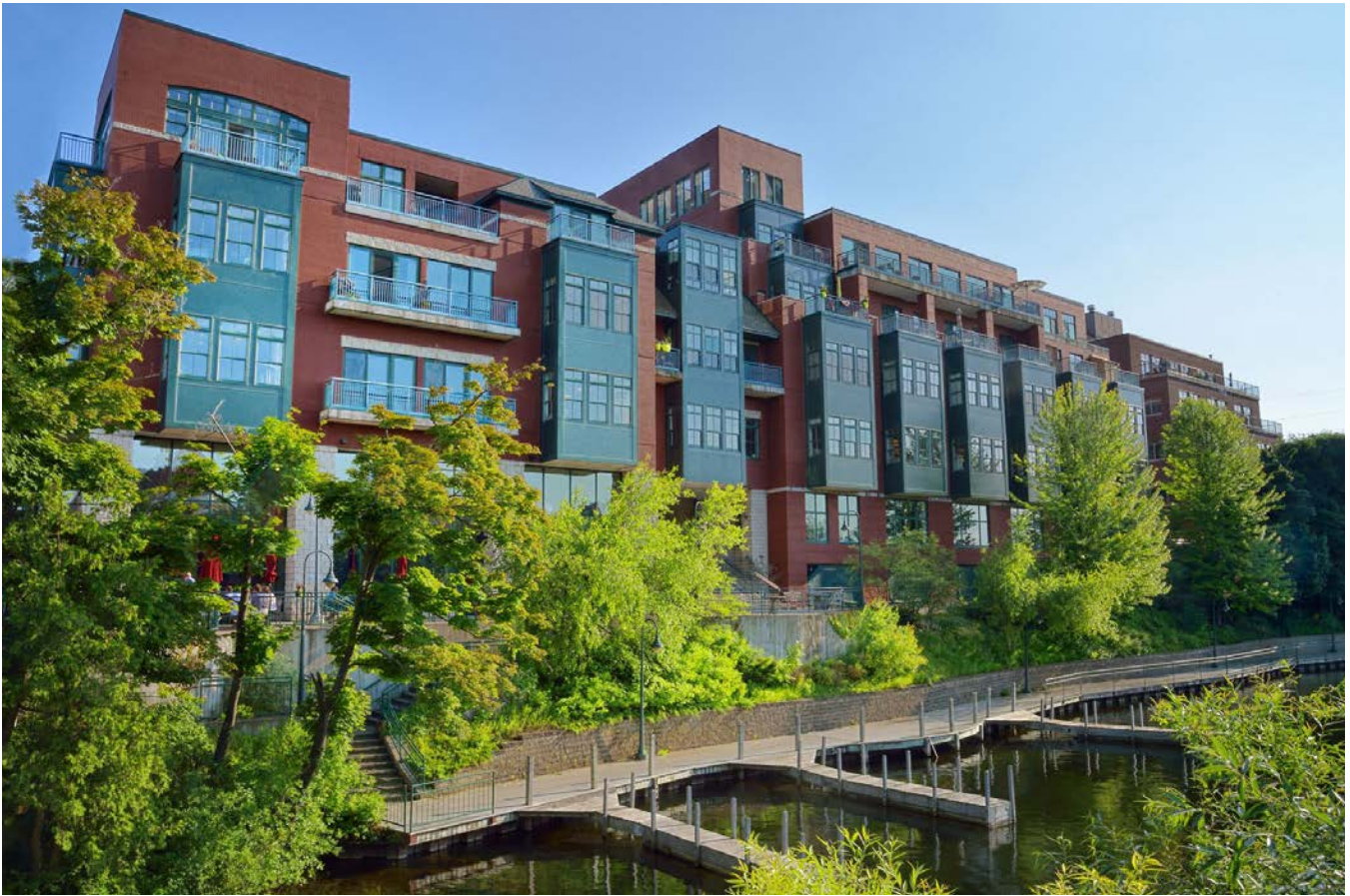
\*Based on number of responses from Open House

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## NEIGHBORHOODS KEY POINTS

- » Using neighborhood boundaries established throughout the master planning process, Traverse City's neighborhoods were evaluated by a series nine indicators, insights from open house and neighborhood listening session engagements, historical records, and market information.
- » Residents of various neighborhoods identified the following characteristics as ones that are highly valued and should be preserved: quiet environment, greenspace, parks, safety, walkability, proximity to amenities, aesthetic housing styles, public art, and social connections with neighbors.
- » Residents of various neighborhoods identified the following characteristics as ones that need additional investment in order to be enhanced: access to transportation, pedestrian and bicyclist infrastructure, upgrades to area parks, sidewalk repairs, short-term rental regulations, street lighting, traffic calming, support for the unhoused population, and neighborhood-scale businesses.
- » Residents of various neighborhoods identified the following characteristics as ones that need to be reconsidered and transformed entirely: traffic flow at nearby intersections, unused vacant lots, unnecessary parking lots, few public spaces, and few crosswalks.



*River's Edge mixed-used development on the site of the former Traverse City Iron Works.*  
Photo Credit: City of Traverse City

# 4



Transportation networks are essential for everyday life. Streets, sidewalks, and trails provide access from one's home to work, social spaces, and other daily destinations. With a thoughtful land use plan, travel distances to destinations can be shortened. In turn, this will help to reduce traffic congestion, travel costs, and environmental impacts. These local networks connect to a larger transportation system that includes highways, rail, and airports, allowing for the movement of people, goods, and products to the nation and beyond.

Trail systems offer residents and visitors non-motorized transportation and recreational opportunities and may also provide connections to other communities. Public transportation systems provide riders inexpensive and low-environmental impact alternatives compared to traveling by private automobile. When planning and building transportation projects, it is important to support a safe, accessible, and inclusive transportation system that accommodates all users year-round.

- » The recent designation of the Traverse City area as an MPO will potentially bring more transportation funding to the city.
- » Most of downtown is within a 5-minute walk from a parking deck. Vertical and street parking should be prioritized over surface parking.
- » Plans have emerged for a Michigan passenger rail network that would extend to Traverse City and bring people to the city, connect to the large metropolitan area, and potentially offset some future congestion in the city.
- » Airport regulations are in conflict with some of the City's land use policies. A collaborative solution needs to be developed.
- » BATA has plans to expand service and increase the frequency of some bus routes.

## TRANSPORTATION & MOBILITY



## TRANSPORTATION PLANNING IN TRAVERSE CITY

Transportation planning has long been a priority for Traverse City. There are prominent and active transportation groups that have worked with the city to expand non-motorized transportation options and public transportation solutions. This section of the plan intends to build upon work that has already been done, some of which is summarized below.

### Existing Transportation Plans

#### *Traverse City Pavement Management Report, 2006*

The City of Traverse City Pavement Management Report (2006) is a comprehensive analysis of the City's pavement condition and pavement management system as it pertains to stormwater management, sidewalks, pedestrian, and non-motorized use. The document also recommends a future investment strategy as well as includes a table detailing the level of future investments required for Traverse City streets and sidewalks in the coming years.<sup>1</sup>

#### *Infrastructure Strategy Policy, 2009*

The City of Traverse City Infrastructure Strategy Policy is a document that outlines goals and strategies regarding city infrastructure. The policy emphasizes five priorities: sidewalks and bikeways, local streets, major streets, special assessments, and residential/commercial alleys. Each of the priorities is addressed through the lens of three broad principles that include using the asset management plan, utilizing two technical resources, and optimizing utility upgrades.<sup>2</sup>

#### *Traverse City Complete Streets Policy, 2011*

The Traverse City Complete Streets Policy is a resolution document that aims to improve walkability and pedestrian safety on all streets in the City of Traverse City. 'Complete streets' is a design framework that enables safe, convenient access for all users. As mentioned in the document, complete streets are achieved when transportation agencies routinely plan, design, construct, operate, and maintain transportation networks to improve travel conditions by providing access points where appropriate and planning for thoroughfare for bicycles on streets that are most safe.

#### *Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program, 2011*

In 2011, the City Commission adopted the Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program with the intention to improve traffic conditions through street calming enhancements. The program included a communication channel where residents can request traffic calming devices around the city. This program is onerous and burdensome, making it difficult to implement.

#### *Corridors Master Plan, 2013*

The Corridors Master Plan was a design and land use document that outlined improvements for East Front Street, West Front Street, Eighth Street, Fourteenth Street, and Garfield Avenue. The plan laid the groundwork for the Envision Eighth Street Plan four years later.

#### *Traverse City Local Safety Initiative Review, 2013*

The Traverse City Local Safety Initiative Review is a review document of city street safety. The document analyzes local crash data from January 2009 and December 2013. Crash test data was collected from several major street segments and intersections. The city used this data to develop generalized suggestions for street safety.<sup>3</sup>

#### *Active Transportation Plan, 2014*

The Active Transportation Plan was developed by the Active Transportation Committee (a working group of the Planning Commission). The Active Transportation Plan outlines active transportation priorities and projects. The plan was not formally adopted by the City Commission.

#### *Infrastructure Strategy Resolution, 2014*

In 2014, the City amended the infrastructure plan to state that future infrastructure work would have to follow an asset management plan and utilize designs from the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The resolution also stated that the city's infrastructure must be managed as a cohesive system and that sidewalks and local streets are the highest priority for maintenance.

#### *Envision 8th Plan, 2017*

The Envision 8th Plan is a corridor planning document for 8th Street in downtown Traverse

City. Through public engagement, the City of Traverse City in collaboration with other professionals, created a new vision for the corridor that emphasizes workforce housing, commercial businesses, and walkability through mixed-use planning. The plan also addresses pedestrian safety through the development of nodes and promenades and the implementation of green corridor streets.<sup>4</sup>

### *Traverse City Street Design Manual, 2018*

The City of Traverse City Street Design Manual, completed in 2018, is a comprehensive design guidebook intended to guide the creation of safe, pleasant, efficient, and high-quality streets. In collaboration with stakeholders and residents of Traverse City, the toolkit outlines five main goals: connect neighborhoods, fill in the gaps, promote transportation choices, strengthen cooperation, and collaborate with transportation agencies.<sup>5</sup>

### *Transportation Demand Management Study, 2022*

In 2022, the DDA conducted a transportation demand management study that identified short-term improvements and outlines a need for additional work. Short-term priorities generally centered around improving mobility in the DDA.

### *Complete Streets Resolution, 2022*

In 2022, the City Commission reaffirmed the 2011 policy and the City's commitment to a Complete Streets Policy. The resolution was intended to support the Mobility Action Plan, discussed later in this chapter.

## Regional Transportation Planning

Following the 2020 United States Census, the Traverse City area reached the population threshold required to become a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). MPO status will allow the Traverse City region to access federal dollars for road and transportation projects. Becoming an MPO also means more collaboration between local governments and transportation agencies on regional transportation decisions. In 1962, the Federal Highway Act mandated regional transportation planning in conjunction with the construction of the interstate highway system. The Act also required that transportation projects in urbanized areas with populations of 50,000 or more be based on a transportation process that

is governed cooperatively between the state and local governments, the 3C process. Metropolitan Planning Organizations are tasked by the federal government with overseeing regional transportation under the umbrella of the 3 C's: comprehensive, continuing, and cooperative. MPOs are responsible for creating a long-range transportation plan, which outlines transportation projects up to 20 years out. The long-range transportation plan must be updated every five (5) years and include public participation. Furthermore, the MPO is also tasked with developing a short-term transportation improvement plan, which requires approval from the state. Both the long-range transportation plan and short-term transportation improvement plan for the Traverse City MPO are on track to be completed by the end of 2026.<sup>6</sup>

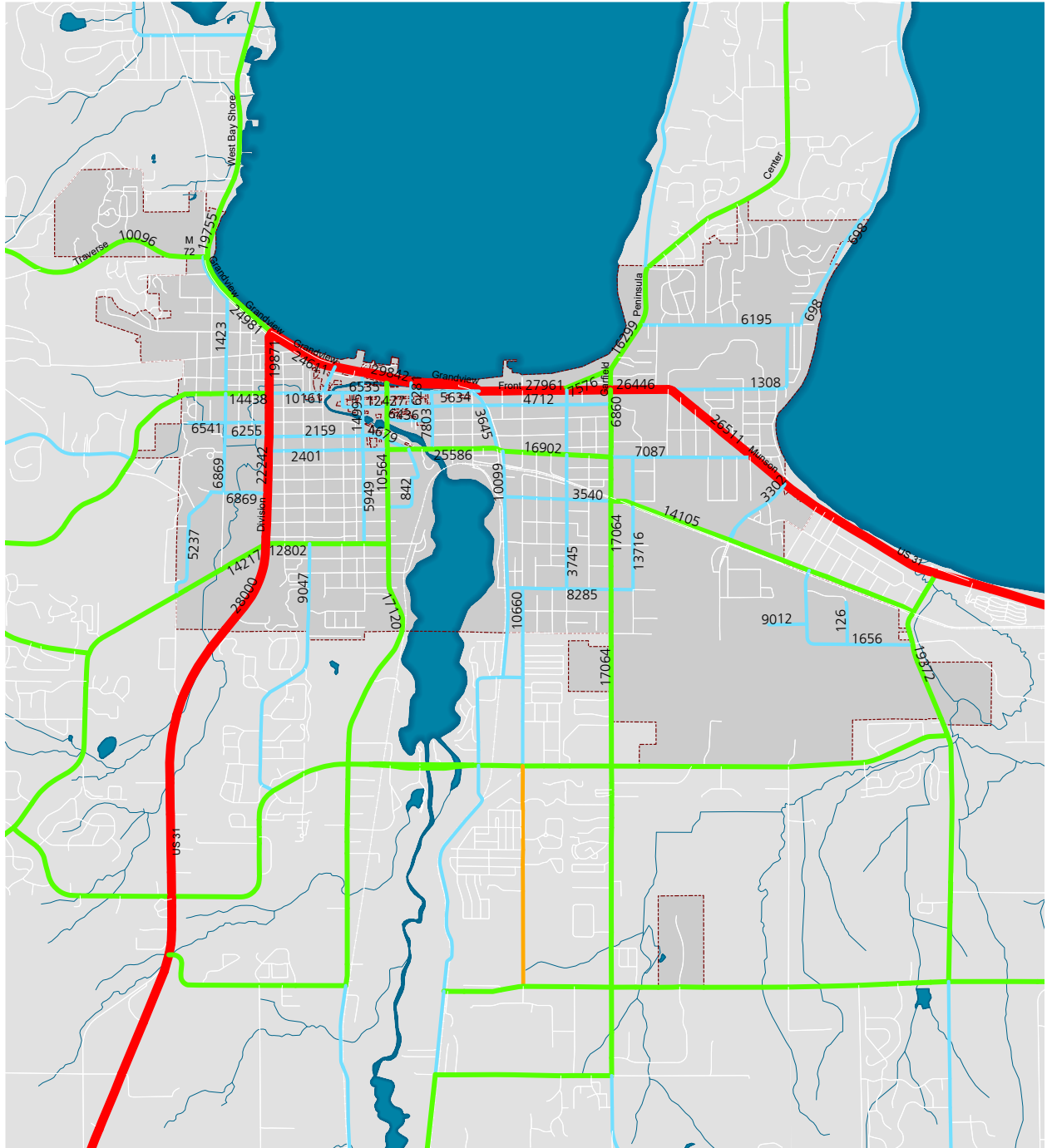
On March 15, 2023, Networks Northwest, Traverse City's regional planning agency responsible for managing 10 counties in northern Michigan, gave a presentation on how northern Michigan's first metropolitan planning organization will be formed and what it will mean for the future of the region. The most notable benefit of MPO status to the Traverse City area is funding. The Traverse City' areas federal funding will be upgraded to \$1 million in federal Surface Transportation Program funds. Additionally, the City's annual Consolidated Planning Grant funds will be upgraded to an estimated \$228,000 as well as \$120,000 in Carbon Reduction funds. This funding can be utilized within the MPO to support major transportation projects such as highway repairs, road resurfacing, and reconstruction.<sup>7</sup>

## MOTORIZED TRANSPORTATION

### Vehicle





The predominant transportation mode in Traverse City is automotive. Most people travel to and from the city by car, however, 10.6% of all households in Traverse City do not own a car, a figure that is critical to consider for general mobility across the City.<sup>8</sup> Of all households without a car, 84.6% are renter-occupied households, and 46.7% of these households are occupied by a householder over the age of 65 years.<sup>9</sup> The automotive transportation network as illustrated by the map titled "National Functional Classification" shows the hierarchy of streets in Traverse City. Major arterials are the top of the road hierarchy and include interstates, freeways, expressways, and other principal

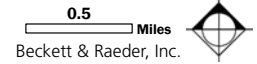
Map 5: National Functional Classification



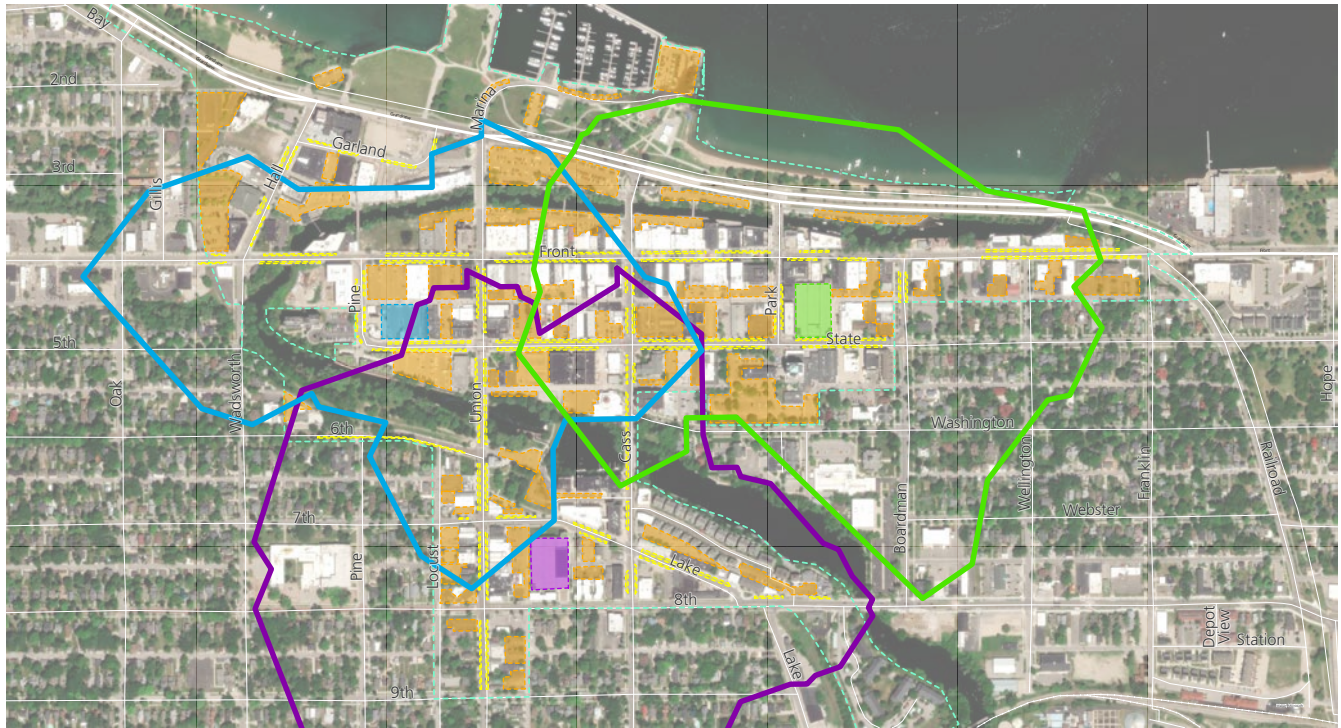
## National Functional Classification

Sources: Michigan Open Data Portal, City of Traverse City

-  Major Arterial
-  Minor Arterial
-  Major Collector
-  Local Road
- ##** Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT)



## Map 6: Downtown Parking



### Downtown Parking

Sources: Michigan Open Data Portal, City of Traverse City

- Parking Lot (Public & Private)
- Street Parking
- DDA Boundary
- Hardy Parking Deck
- Old Town Parking Deck
- Future Parking Deck
- 5 min walk from Hardy Parking Deck
- 5 min walk from Old Town Parking Deck
- 5 min walk from Future Parking Deck



roadways. Major arterials carry high volumes of traffic at high speeds and are designed for long-distance travel. US 31 is Traverse City's only Major Arterial and experiences a maximum annual average daily traffic of 29,842, making it the most used road in the City. The next road typology in the hierarchy is the minor arterial. Minor arterial roads provide service for trips of moderate length and offer connectivity to the higher arterial roads. Minor arterial roads in Traverse City (as shown in green on the map) include M-22, Cass Street, Hammond Road, and South Garfield Avenue among others. Finally, major collector roads serve the roadway network in Traverse City by gathering traffic from local roads and funneling them to the arterial network.<sup>10</sup> Major collector roads (as shown in blue on the map) in Traverse City include Front Street, Eighth Street, Woodmere Avenue, East Shore Avenue, and several more.

### Parking

Community residents feel that parking is a common consideration for their access to amenities around

the City, especially in the summer months. Downtown is the hub of the City, and most parking concerns center around Traverse City's central business district. Parking and the related walking problem are complex because parking preferences and behavior range from individual to individual. For example, someone may feel comfortable parking in a neighborhood adjacent to downtown and walking 10 – 15 minutes to their destination. However, some people want to park within eyesight of their destination. For those who are comfortable parking away from downtown, there is no parking problem. For those who want to park steps away from their destination, there is never enough parking. To address the seasonal variation in parking demand and the extent to which parking's availability hinders trips across the City, Traverse City has implemented various Transportation Demand Management practices as identified through two Transportation Demand Management Studies that took place in 2017 and 2022.<sup>11</sup>

In the City's downtown, parking is not required by zoning; downtown development is focused on

vibrancy with parking incorporated after meeting this goal. While a sea of surface parking lots does not create a vibrant atmosphere, there needs to be enough to accommodate the traffic coming into downtown. The map titled Downtown Parking shows parking locations within the DDA. As illustrated on the map, there is hardly an area of downtown devoid of parking. The surface parking lots (both private and public) shown on the map total almost 27 acres of land, roughly 15% of the DDA. Vast parking lots create dead zones in vibrant commercial areas, decreasing the pedestrian experience and segmenting downtown. A surface parking lot is an inefficient use of land in a central business district because that land could be used for high-density development and economically viable businesses. Surface parking sacrifices vertical space in the name of parking convenience. Conversely, parking decks are a more efficient way to house vehicles because they utilize vertical space. There are two parking decks in Traverse City, and another one is planned for construction. These decks are spread out around downtown, providing suitable coverage. While it is difficult and nearly impossible to provide parking that is simultaneously convenient, accessible, and free, parking decks provide a viable opportunity to meet demands for parking in the area. As shown on the Downtown Parking Map, most of downtown is accessible within a 5-minute walk of one of the parking decks.

A strategic transition of surface parking to a higher and better use would allow for the continued growth of the downtown. Development pressure is high in the downtown; if space does not become available, that development pressure will then start to creep into adjacent neighborhoods, an incredibly undesirable option as reiterated by the community throughout this Master Plan process. While the loss of surface parking may perturb some people, the benefit to the community far outweighs the loss of a handful of parking spots. Effective management practices that are implemented by the City provide better use of all existing space, better matching each area with the most appropriate uses.

Another way to alleviate parking pressure downtown is to reduce the number of vehicles downtown by encouraging people to travel downtown by foot, bike, or public transit. Recommendations for nonmotorized improvements are discussed later in this chapter. Additional

mobility initiatives are also provided in the Transportation Demand Management Plan.

## Train/Rail

The only rail line in Traverse City is a freight line owned by MDOT and leased by the Great Lakes Central (GLC) railway. The rail line circles Boardman Lake with connections south of the city along Woodmere and Cass. The tracks extend to the west along Parsons Rd. and terminate in Williamsburg. According to 2017 train counts, there are about one to two trains per week in Traverse City, a very low volume of train traffic that contributes to a misconception among some residents that the tracks are inactive.<sup>12</sup> The tracks are crossed constantly by pedestrians and bicyclists, creating a safety concern. However, because the tracks are at grade level and there are no clear crossing points, this behavior will likely continue. Hannah Avenue is an area of particular concern. The rail line separates the library and Hull Park, and people (including children) travel between the two constantly. With the recent completion of the Boardman Lake Loop Trail, there will be more people than ever in this area. While there have not been any recent serious accidents, there needs to be careful consideration about how to manage pedestrian/bicycle traffic over rail lines. One potential solution is to use landscaping and plantings to direct people to defined crossings. Plantings are preferred over hard solutions (like fences or walls) because they enhance the visual appeal and the environment, as opposed to a fence which does neither.

Currently, the rail lines in Traverse City only carry freight but new plans involved the possibility of expanding passenger rail service to Traverse City. The Ann Arbor to Traverse City passenger rail is a new project that intends to achieve energy-efficient, safe travel from southern to northern Michigan while supporting economic development in the communities along the route. Surveys of residents in Lower Michigan and the opinions expressed by northwest Michigan Citizens in the Grand Vision community planning process indicated that the number one transportation infrastructure improvement Michiganders wanted was passenger rail service to Traverse City.<sup>13</sup> The A2TC railway connects Petoskey, Traverse City, Williamsburg, Cadillac, Mt. Pleasant, Alma, Owasso, Durand, Port Huron, Howell, Detroit, Ann Arbor, Battle Creek, Kalamazoo, Holland,



Proposed Ann Arbor to Traverse City rail service.

## Passenger Rail Lines and Climate Change

Interest in a railway that connects much of the state of Michigan presents a large-scale yet feasible project that has a prospect of high usage that would justify the investment. While everyday rail travel requires large capital investments that may not receive the necessary support to come to fruition, a trans-state railway would reduce car travel between Michigan's major regions and cities, impacting emissions and normalizing rail travel.

and Grand Rapids; although each of these cities can access the A2TC railway, not all have a direct connection and therefore would require transfers between other routes. While the opportunity for travelers to reach Traverse City by train has many upsides, residents are concerned about the influx of tourists and the City's ability to handle more people in the summer months. To mediate concerns regarding the number of travelers brought to Traverse City, the Groundwork Center used forecasts to evaluate the profitability of the passenger rail based on projections for growth in tourism arriving in automobiles and jets. Ultimately, the forecasts found that some travel could shift to passenger rail from the more widely used transportation forms, helping to slow the growth in automobile traffic. Track repairs have paved the way for the A2TC railway to remain on schedule for limited service to begin in 2025, although special excursion trains could begin service sooner. There

will be a need to build a transportation hub at the train terminus in Traverse City to support incoming travelers.

## Air

The Cherry Capital Airport is located at 727 Fly Don't Drive, along South Airport Rd, in Traverse City and is under the jurisdiction of the Northwest Regional Airport Authority, a body that was recently created and that is separate from any other unit of local government. The Airport offers flights through six airlines: American Airlines, Delta Air Lines, United Airlines, Allegiant Air, Sun Country, and Avelo that provide 20 nonstop flights to cities across the United States. Flights include Chicago, Detroit, Minneapolis- Saint Paul, Phoenix-Mesa, Denver, Dallas, Dallas Fort-Worth, Atlanta, Charlotte, Houston, Washington DC (Dulles and Reagan), Newark, Philadelphia, New York, Boston, Punta Gorda, St. Pete-Clearwater, Orlando, Fort Lauderdale, and New Haven. Peak traffic occurs on a seasonal basis.<sup>14</sup>

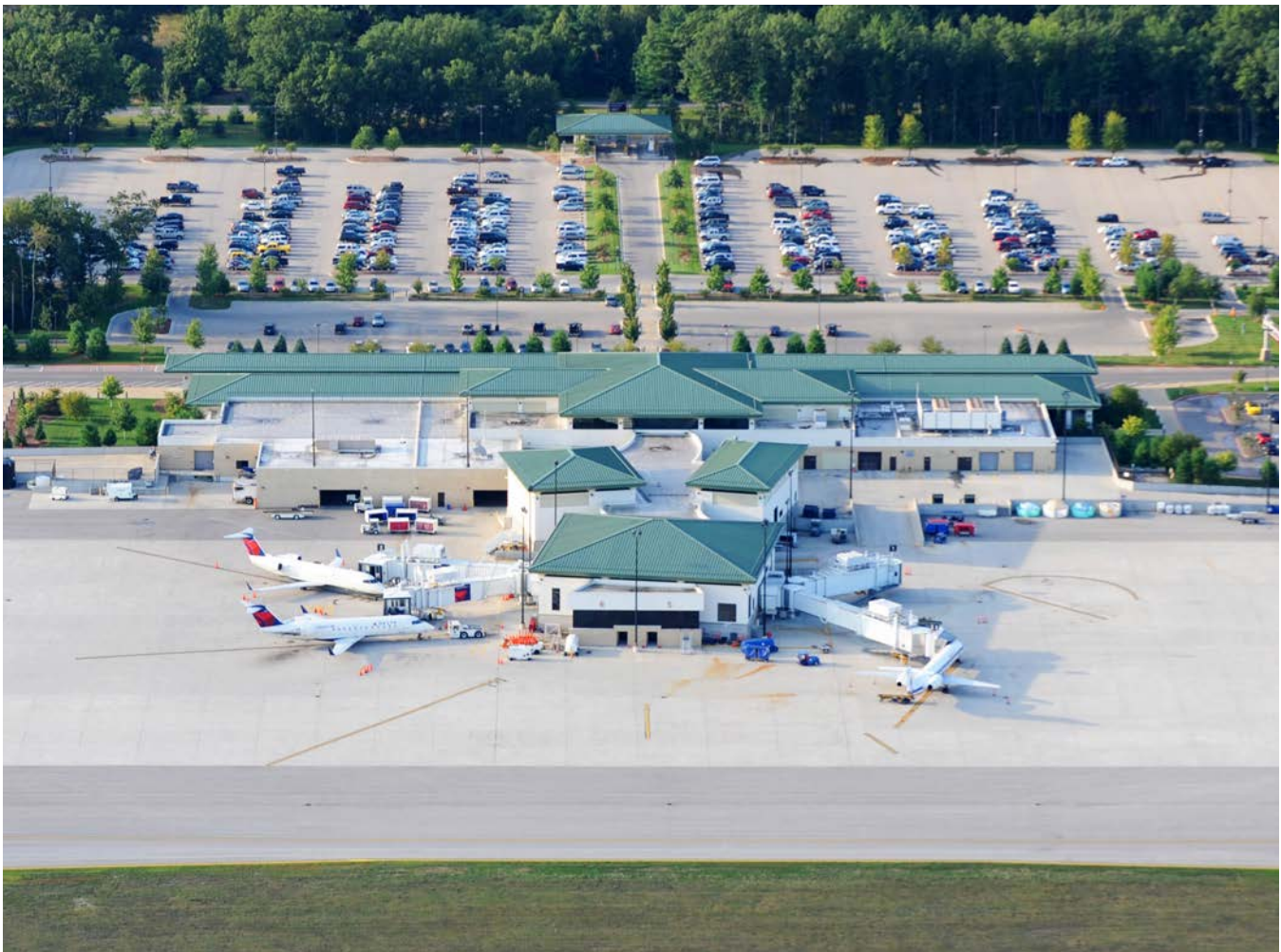
The Cherry Capital Airport is currently in the process of expanding. In October 2021, plans were approved to increase parking and to add a new section of parking. The airport now has 200 short term parking spaces, 1,181 long term parking spaces, and has recently constructed a gravel cell phone parking area. The parking project included four new electric vehicle (EV) charging spaces, along with underground stormwater retention systems and routine maintenance on the existing lot. In total, the project added 445 new parking spaces, a 43% increase in the Airport's long-term parking capacity. Furthermore, Cherry Capital has plans to expand the airport terminal. The expansion is proposed in two phases. The expansion outlines a 15-jet-bridge Airport and when complete would include three terminal concourses, each with five jet bridges. Construction on the first phase of the terminal expansion, which would add a concourse and five additional jet bridges, is expected to begin in 2026.<sup>15</sup>

While having an airport within city limits provides convenient access to air travel, it can create conflicts between the function of the airport and the interests of the city and residents. Each airport has "approach zones" which extend beyond the runways to illustrate the path that planes take to land at the airport, as shown on the map titled Airport Approach Zones. While the approach zones

**Table 40: Approach Zone Regulations**

|            | Land Use Guidelines  | Regulations  |
|------------|--|--|
| Zone 1 & 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Avoid land uses that concentrate people outdoors or indoors.</li> <li>» Prohibit all residential uses.</li> <li>» All non-residential uses are subject to the population density guidelines.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» 0–5 people per acre.</li> <li>» Landscaping requirements shall only permit low-growing vegetation.</li> </ul>   |
| Zone 3     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Avoid land uses that concentrate people outdoors or indoors.</li> <li>» Limit residential development to low-density design.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» &lt;25 people per acre.</li> <li>» Prohibit mobile home parks.</li> <li>» Landscaping requirements shall only permit low-growing vegetation.</li> </ul>   |
| Zone 4     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Limit population concentrations.</li> <li>» Limit residential development to low-density design.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» &lt;40 people in a building.</li> <li>» &lt;75 people outdoors.</li> <li>» Prohibit mobile home parks.</li> <li>» Zone for uses other than schools, play fields, hospitals, nursing homes, daycare facilities, and churches.</li> </ul> |

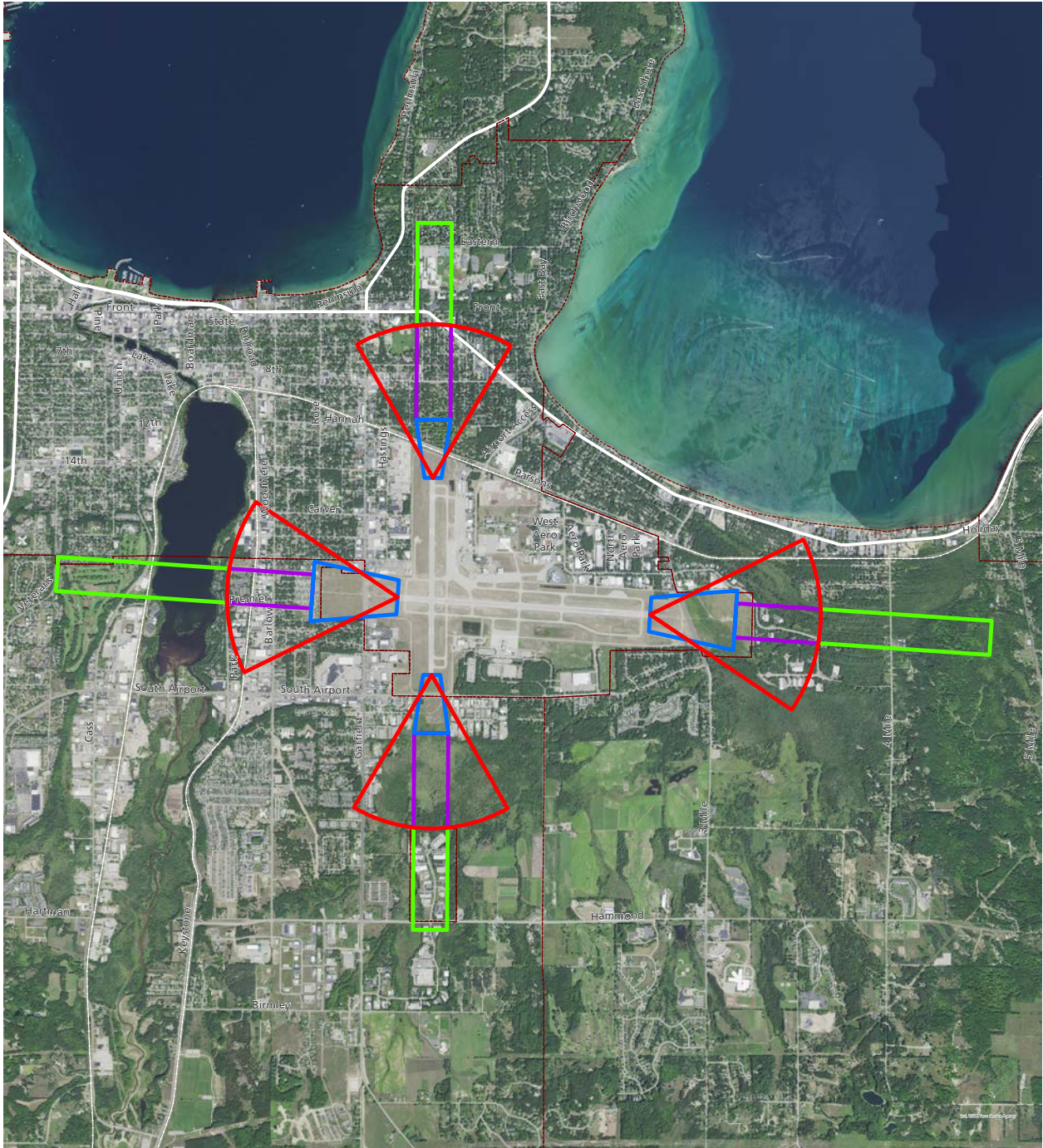
Source: Cherry Capital Airport



*Cherry Capital Airport.*

Source: The Traverse Ticker

Map 7: Airport Approach Zones



## Airport Approach Zones

Sources: Michigan Open Data Portal, City of Traverse City

- Zone 1
- Zone 2
- Zone 3
- Zone 4





extend beyond the boundaries of the airport, they influence local land use. Several years ago, trees were cut down in the manufactured housing community along Barlow St. to ensure that the approach zones were clear.

There are many areas within the approach zones that do not meet the guidelines set by the airport approach zone regulations. Many approach zone regulations are antithetical to the goals of this Master Plan. For example, Oakwood Cemetery is within Zone 2, which is under the approach zone regulations, this zone prohibits trees. However, Oakwood Cemetery is home to mature oak trees, and removing these trees to comply with airport approach regulations is strongly discouraged. Central High School and the Grand Traverse Civic Center are also in the approach zones, uses which the regulations say are not allowed, and many homes within approach zones do not conform to the density requirements. However, preserving these homes and neighborhoods is essential.

Approach zones are not the end all be all of development and land use policy near the airport. Airport zoning guidelines have existed since 1950. As of 2001, the State of Michigan required all municipalities to incorporate the current requirements into their Master Plans and to take them into account in amending their zoning ordinances. The City has historically permitted non-conforming developments within the Airport zoning guidelines. With the update to the City's master plan and recent amendments to the City's zoning ordinance it is critical that the two zoning plans appropriately accommodate one another. A mechanism to begin this process that has been initiated by the Northwest Regional Airport Authority is the creation of a Zoning Commission under the Airport Zoning Act within the Michigan Aeronautics Codes, which will provide an avenue to better address existing and future non-conforming developments within the City.<sup>16</sup>

Currently, the Northwest Regional Airport Authority (NRAA) is working to establish a zoning commission that would operate separately from the zoning board. The NRAA is governed by a Board of nine members - three are appointed by the Leelanau County Board of Commissioners, and six are appointed by the Grand Traverse Board of Commissioners. The commission acts like a Board of Zoning Appeals by determining

## Bay Area Transportation Authority and Equity

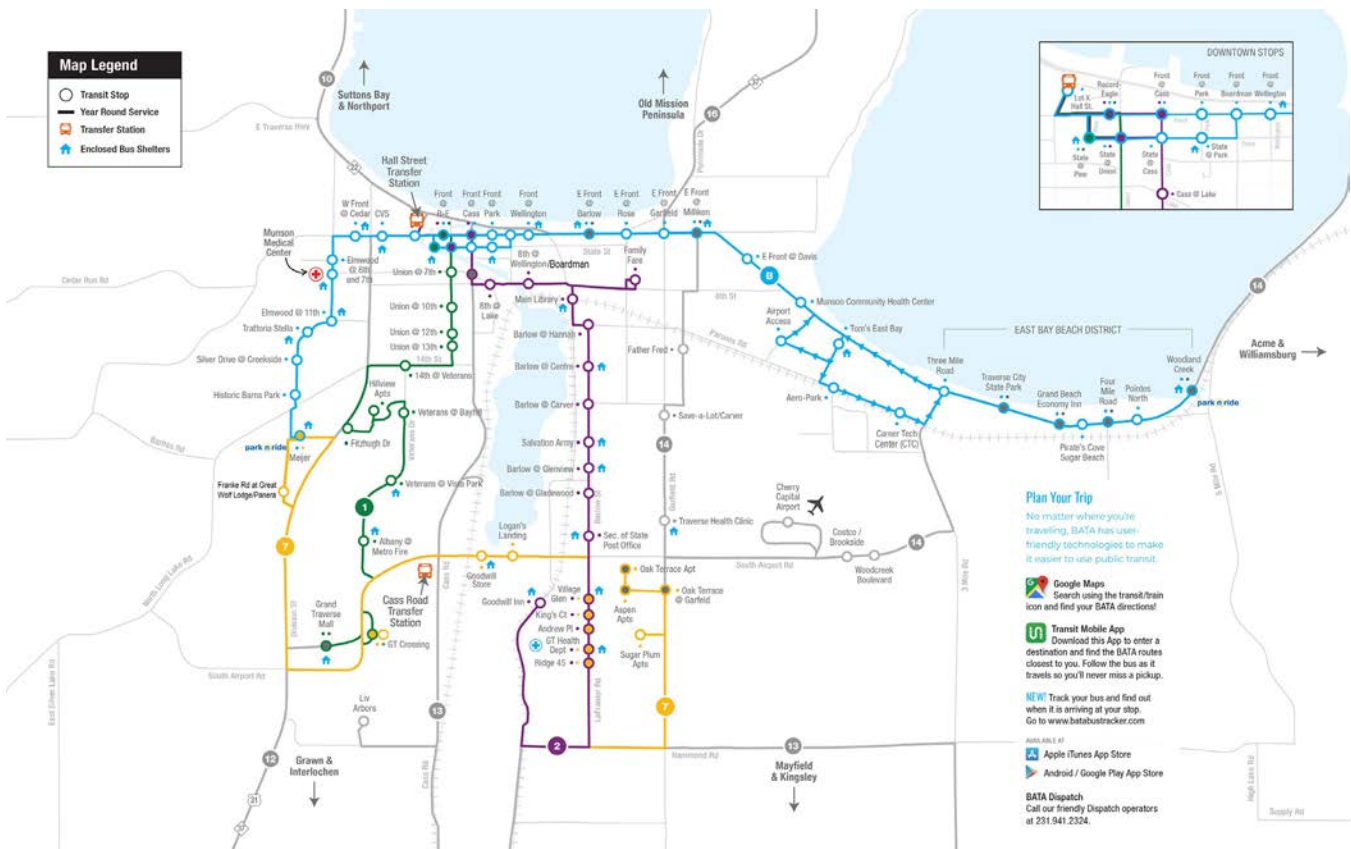
Public transit systems provide necessary services to community residents that may not have regular access to a car, inherently bolstering equitable outcomes that heighten access to the parts of a city that are not reachable on foot or bike. BATA further promotes equitable access through its Bayline transit route which is free of charge, frequently run, and provides connections to necessary grocery services. This bus line has the potential to address food insecurity or the presence of food deserts through its connections. The high ridership of the route also speaks to the demand for transit in this capacity and affirms the fact that such transportation services will be utilized.

appropriate mitigation techniques and designs to allow developments that are at odds with existing approach zone regulations. This is permitted under the governing act, and the NRAA are currently visting different jurisdictions to educate them on this action.

### Public Transportation

Bay Area Transportation Authority (BATA) is the regional public transit authority serving Grand Traverse County and Leelanau County. BATA aims to deliver safe, high-quality, efficient, and reliable transportation services for the region. Most of BATA's fixed routes are based in the City with some additional routes that extend into the rural areas of Leelanau and Grand Traverse County. In 2022, BATA had a total ridership of 281,360 passengers, 11% of whom were elderly and 16% of whom were disabled.<sup>17</sup> In 2019, BATA had 582,827 riders, indicating that ridership has not rebounded since the COVID-19 pandemic. However, this is primarily attributed to a lack of drivers rather than a lack of demand for transit services. BATA's most heavily used route is the Bayline, a free route that runs along the Parkway and that connects the Meijer in Garfield Township to a park-and-ride in East Bay Township. The line runs every 18 minutes, making it the most frequent route in the city. BATA has recently installed GPS devices on its buses which provide real-time updates on bus arrivals.

Map 8: Traverse City Route Map



Source: Bay Area Transportation Authority

## Transit-Oriented Development and Equity

The proposed development headed by BATA, the Traverse City Housing Commission, and Habitat for Humanity illustrates the mutual benefit of pursuing the development of a transportation operations center, housing, and childcare for future customers, residents, and employees of the project. There is a high likelihood for one individual to utilize the services of this development in various capacities as a housing resident who utilizes transportation services and the childcare center while also seeking employment through any of these operations. Siting this development in a rural area has further equitable implications by enabling connectivity from remote centers to desired destinations.

BATA's organizational structure includes the leadership team, dispatch and ticket services team, mechanic and facilities crew, and drivers. BATA is overseen by a board of directors and aided by a local advisory board. BATA's board of directors is comprised of seven elected and appointed representatives from Leelanau and Grand Traverse Counties. The local advisory council is a group of 11 community members that represent several local organizations within the Grand Traverse area and includes a city commissioner, the director of the Grand Traverse Commission on Aging, and an independent living resource specialist. BATA is funded in part by a voter-approved millage in Leelanau and Grand Traverse County.

In 2023, BATA adopted BATA Next Wave, a plan for the next 5–10 years of BATA management. During the planning process, the community identified improved bus frequency, extended service hours, and additional route connections/service areas as the top priorities for BATA. The plan outlines strategies for improved bus frequency on existing routes, better east-west connections in Traverse

City, more consistent weekend service, more service areas (airport, new transit center, eastern Traverse City), better connections in the rural areas, and improved financial efficiency.

BATA, in collaboration with the Traverse City Housing Commission and Habitat for Humanity, recently purchased and began construction on a 50-acre land parcel in the northeast corner of LaFranier and Hammond Roads in Garfield Township. The site will be used to construct one of the largest rural transit-oriented development projects in the Midwest. The project includes a new headquarters facility, an 87,000-square-foot operations and service center, a bus garage facility, housing, and childcare. The project is funded by over \$17 million from the Federal and State Departments of Transportation and supplemented with authority capital funds. The housing development on the site has received a \$6 million grant for the first phase of development. The development brings in more than \$90 million of long-term infrastructure and economic impact to the community and fifty new full-time positions.

In addition to BATA, Indian Trails buses provide connections through Traverse City to Grand Rapids, Cadillac, and St. Ignace.<sup>18</sup> Bus service systems in Antrim, Benzie, and Wexford Counties also have connections in Traverse City.

### Ridesharing

In the modern era, ridesharing has become a popular option for individuals looking to travel with the speed, convenience, and efficiency of a car without needing to own an automobile or pay for the associated costs of insurance, parking, and so on. Ridesharing services like Uber and Lyft have also provided the opportunity for those looking for employment to begin servicing riders with flexible hours.

TransportHer is an independent ridesharing service founded in 2017 and designed to keep vulnerable ride-share users safe. For a brief period of time, TransportHer was the only ridesharing service in Traverse City, operating alongside the area's long-standing cab service. In August 2018, Lyft announced the decision to expand ridesharing to Traverse City, with Uber following shortly behind. As of September 2018, Traverse City residents can utilize rideshare services from Lyft, Uber (Uber X and Uber XL), and TransportHer for quick transit in and around the city. The decision to bring Lyft

## Non-Motorized Transportation and Climate Change

Traverse City's long-term commitment to bolstering the City's non-motorized infrastructure has tangible implications for the environment and the City's aggregate carbon footprint. The Mobility Action Plan is evidence of this commitment and the intrinsic connections between employment, housing, services and amenities, recreation, entertainment, and natural features, and how City residents can access each of these spaces and activities. Normalizing alternative forms of transportation (outside of auto-oriented transportation) by providing safe, high quality non-motorized infrastructure can alter the behavior of residents and support sustainable habits that favor the environment.

and Uber to Traverse City has met the demand for transportation year-round, with more efficiency and stability than cab services.<sup>19</sup> BATA also provides a ridesharing service called Link where users can schedule rides in advance or in real-time.

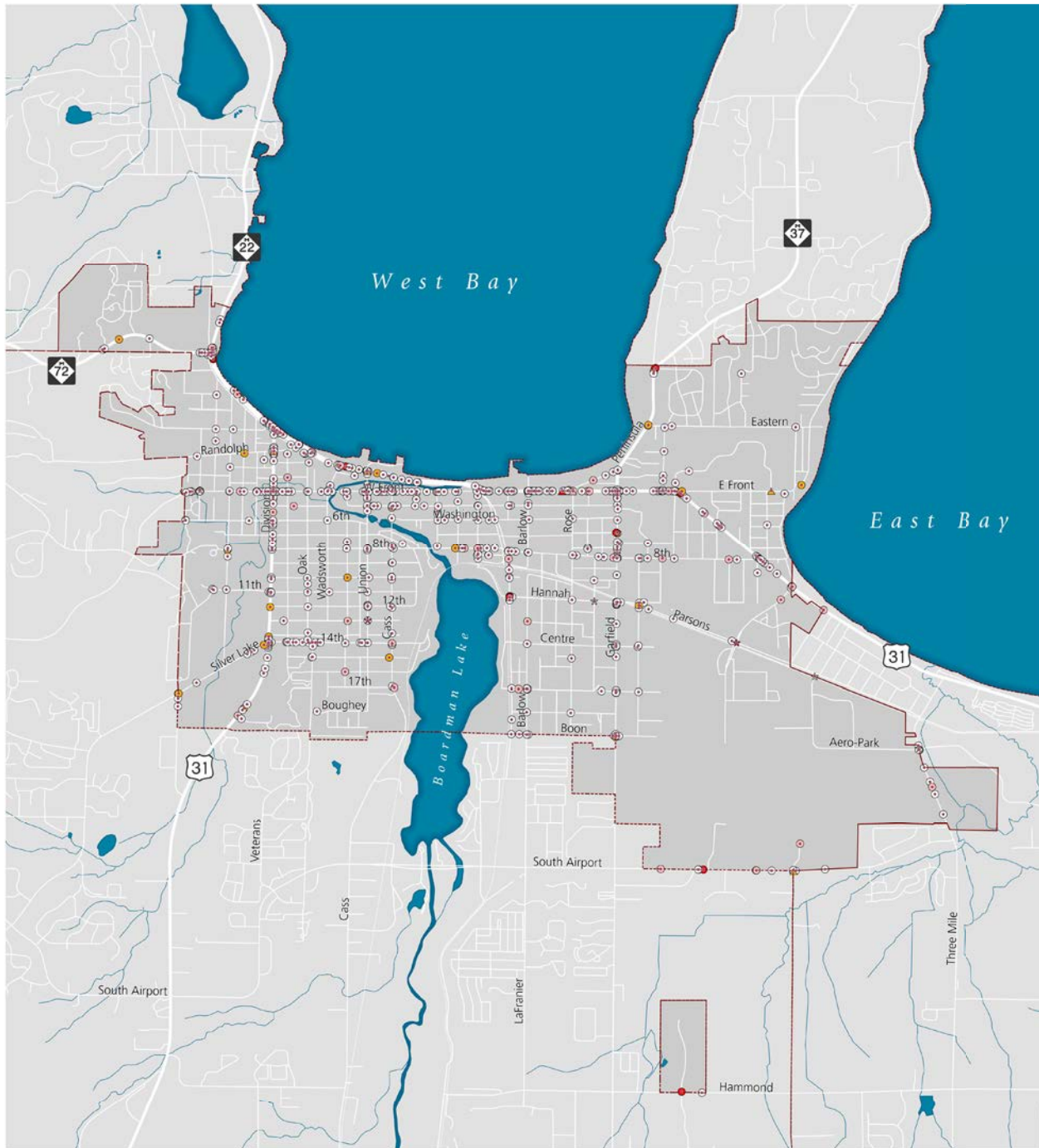
### NON-MOTORIZED TRANSPORTATION

Active transportation (walking, biking, etc.) has been a long-standing priority in Traverse City. In conjunction with the Master Plan, the City developed a Mobility Action Plan that improves active transportation in the City and outlines a plan to integrate active transportation planning into the street design process. As the Mobility Plan is a sub-topic plan in the appendix of this Master Plan, only a high-level review of the document is included here. The Mobility Action Plan will be included as a subtopic plan in the appendix of this document. The Mobility Action Plan states that the mobility vision for the community is that "Traverse City will be a place where people can access jobs, housing, amenities, and natural features using a safe and balanced mobility network that reduces the region's carbon footprint."

### Transportation Safety

Street design is one of the most influential factors in determining safety. To identify areas that may need design intervention, it is helpful to look at

Map 9: Crashes, 2021



## Crashes, 2021

Sources: Michigan Open Data Portal, City of Traverse City



- |  |                            |
|--|----------------------------|
| ▲ Pedestrian Involved                      | ■ Fatal Injury             |
| ★ Bicycle Involved                         | ■ Suspected Serious Injury |
| ● No Pedestrian and<br>No Bicycle Involved | ■ Suspected Minor Injury   |
|  | ■ Possible Injury          |
|  | □ No Injury                |

areas of the City that have high levels of traffic crashes. The map titled Crashes, 2021 shows the location of all reported crashes in Traverse City. In total, there were 451 reported crashes over the year, the vast majority of which involved automobiles.<sup>20</sup> While pedestrian and bicycle crashes accounted for less than 4% of the total incidents, the injuries sustained by pedestrians and bicyclists were, on average, more severe than the injuries

sustained by drivers and passengers in automobiles. This means that when pedestrians and bicyclists are involved in a crash, the stakes are much higher. Additionally, pedestrian fatalities have increased over the past five years across the nation due to larger vehicle sizes and poor street and highway design, making it a more pressing need to be addressed.

**Table 41: Crashes, 2021**

|                        | Automobile | Pedestrian Involved | Bicycle Involved | Total      |
|------------------------|------------|---------------------|------------------|------------|
| No Injury              | 645        | 4                   | 7                | 656        |
| Possible Injury        | 77         | 4                   | 4                | 85         |
| Suspected Minor Injury | 28         | 4                   | 1                | 33         |
| Suspected Major Injury | 6          | 1                   | 2                | 9          |
| Fatal Injury           | 2          | 0                   | 0                | 2          |
| <b>Total</b>           | <b>758</b> | <b>13</b>           | <b>14</b>        | <b>785</b> |

Source: Michigan Traffic Crash Facts

**Table 42: Top 10 Problematic Intersections**

| Intersection                          | Number of Crashes |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Grandview Pkwy./Division Ave.         | 29                |
| W. Front St./Division Ave.            | 23                |
| E. Front St./Garfield Ave.            | 22                |
| 14th St./Division Ave.                | 22                |
| Randolph St./Division Ave.            | 21                |
| E. Front St./College Dr./Milliken Dr. | 19                |
| Eighth St./Munson Ave.                | 19                |
| Grandview Pkwy./Hall St.              | 17                |
| E. Front St./Barlow St.               | 16                |
| W. Front St./Union St.                | 14                |

Source: Michigan Traffic Crash Facts

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## TRANSPORTATION & MOBILITY KEY POINTS

- » Following 2020 decennial census counts, the Traverse City area reached the population threshold that is required to become a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). This status will give the region access to federal funding for road and transportation projects and encourage greater collaboration between the MPO, local governments, and transportation agencies on regional transportation decisions.
- » Travel by automobile is the most common mode of transportation in Traverse City; however, about 10.6% of all households in the City do not own a car.
- » Surface parking lots within the boundaries of the Downtown Development Authority's jurisdiction cover nearly 27 acres of land, about 15% of the area. While this supports access to all of the events and amenities of the City's downtown, this land area could be better utilized for other uses that are more productive than parking. Vertical parking decks provide a compromise that sustains downtown access while making land area available for redevelopment.
- » Plans have emerged for the Ann Arbor to Traverse City (A2TC) passenger rail which is intended to promote safe, energy-efficient travel from southern to northern Michigan. The proposed railway would connect Petoskey, Traverse City, Williamsburg, Cadillac, Mount Pleasant, Alma, Owosso, Durand, Port Huron, Howell, Detroit, Ann Arbor, Battle Cree, Kalamazoo, Holland, and Grand Rapids. This line presents the opportunity to bring people to Traverse City, connect to the large metropolitan area and state, and potentially offset future congestion.
- » Cherry Capital Airport is located in Traverse City and offers flights through six different airlines with direct connections to 20 cities across the country. The airport's approach zones are defined by the 1950 Airport Zoning Act updated and established as part of a 2001 Michigan State Law under MCL 259.431-465. However, because these zones extend beyond the runways, these regulations are often in conflict with land use policies of the City. The Northwest Regional Airport Authority is working to establish a zoning commission that would identify mitigation techniques and designs to navigate these conflicts.
- » Bay Area Transportation Authority (BATA) is the regional public transit authority serving Grand Traverse County and Leelanau County. In collaboration with the Traverse City Housing Commission and Habitat for Humanity, BATA recently purchased and began construction on a 50-acre land parcel in northeast Garfield Township. The site will be used to construct one of the Midwest's largest rural transit-oriented developments. The project includes a new headquarters facility, an 87,000-square-foot operations and service center, a bus garage facility, housing, and childcare.

# 5



*Heritage Sustainable Energy solar array on the site of the former TCLP wind turbine generator.*

Without infrastructure and energy, the function of modern-day life would not be possible. This section details some of the infrastructure and energy systems in Traverse City including water, wastewater, storm water, and green infrastructure. Additionally, this section provides information on Traverse City's energy supply and energy goals.

- » Traverse City's water and wastewater systems are aging and require upgrades and improvements.
- » In 20 years, Traverse City's ability to supply water will be reaching system capacity.
- » The stormwater asset management plan recommended adopting a fee structure to provide funding for stormwater improvements.
- » Traverse City Light and Power's current energy portfolio is on track to reach 40% renewable by 2025 with a goal of 100% by 2040.
- » Personal scale renewable energy is permitted in Traverse City.

## INFRASTRUCTURE & ENERGY



## INFRASTRUCTURE

### Water

The history of water infrastructure in Traverse City can be traced back almost 150 years, beginning in 1881 when Henry Campbell built the first water works in the City on what is now the Open Space. The City's first pipes were hollowed out pine logs that were coated in tar and sawdust and bound with iron rings. In 1900, Campbell and Son's Waterworks Company sold the system to the City. The water system began major upgrades in the 1960s which included the creation of a new water treatment plant (at Eastern Ave and E Bay Blvd N) and improvements to the intake pipe in the East Arm of Grand Traverse Bay. With these upgrades, the system was able to deliver 5 million gallons per day (MGD) to customers. Further improvements were made in 1972 (new capacity of 12 MGD), 1993 (new capacity of 20 MGD which is current capacity), 1995 (disinfection and zebra mussel control), 2000 (new EPA standards), and 2006 (improvements to the west side of the system).<sup>1</sup>

Currently, the Traverse City water system provides potable drinking water to the City and surrounding townships of Garfield, Elmwood, and Peninsula. East Bay Township's water system also has an emergency connection to the Traverse City's system but operates independently otherwise. The entire system consists of 125 miles of water mains and two booster pumping stations. Over two-thirds of the piping is cast iron and the majority of water

mains were constructed prior to 1970. As shown in the table titled Water System Demands, the current needs of the system are well below the maximum capacity of 20 MGD. However, it is important to note that the reported system demands in the table reflect an annual average, and demand is greater in the summer when there are more people using the system. In 2020, the highest recorded day of demand for the year was 13.06 MGD and took place in the middle of the summer on July 21st.

In 2021, the City commissioned a study of the water system to identify the deficiencies and needs of the aging system. The study identified that Traverse City must take action to improve or replace specific elements of the water system in order to meet the requirements of the Michigan Safe Drinking Water Act. Over a 5 year period (proposed 2022–2026), the recommended improvements to the water system are estimated to cost a total of \$18 million dollars.<sup>2</sup> A separate Water Reliability Study was conducted in 2021 and found that while the water supply system meets current and projected 5-year demands, the supply system will be approaching capacity in roughly 20 years.

In order to be compliant with the Michigan Safe Drinking Water Act, Traverse City must sample the water at the water treatment plant and test the level of contaminants in the water supply. In 2021, no contaminants were detected in the water at a level beyond excepted ranges.<sup>3</sup>

Table 43: Water System Demands

|                               | City of Traverse City (MGD) | Garfield Township (MGD) | Peninsula Township (MGD) | Elmwood Township (MGD) | Unaccounted Water (MGD) | Total Supplied Water (MGD) |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| 2017                          | 2.39                        | 1.68                    | 0.17                     | 0.03                   | 1.08                    | 5.35                       |
| 2018                          | 2.06                        | 1.80                    | 0.18                     | 0.03                   | 1.12                    | 5.19                       |
| 2019                          | 2.47                        | 1.69                    | 0.17                     | 0.03                   | 1.03                    | 5.39                       |
| 2020                          | 1.94                        | 1.79                    | 0.20                     | 0.04                   | 0.88                    | 4.85                       |
| Residential Water Connections | 5,870                       | 2,273                   | 554                      | 46                     |                         | 8,743                      |

Source: Traverse City DWSRF Plan, 2021

## Water, Wastewater, and Equity

Access to utility systems, including clean water and wastewater treatment facilities, is an issue of equity. Discrepancies in consistent access are more likely to impact disinvested communities that may not have the financial resources to support or advocate for improvements in utility service, quality, or overall reliability. The Lower Boardman/Ottaway Sanitary Sewer Replacement project seeks to address potential geographical inequities that would arise from the discharge of untreated wastewater into the Boardman/Ottaway River. Should this infrastructure fail, residents in proximity to the treatment center and river will be disproportionately impacted by the fallout of the event simply because of where they call home. Additionally, the City has discussed the possibility to adjust water rates based on household income. While these measures are being considered, the state senate has similarly explored bills to limit customers' water bills to no more than 3% of their household income.

### Wastewater

The flipside of supplying water to Traverse City is collecting and treating the wastewater that is returned. Traverse City's wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) is located on the north side of Boardman/Ottaway Lake. Originally built in 1932, the WWTP has a capacity of 8.5 MGD and is staffed by roughly a dozen employees. On average, the system treats 4.5 MGD and collects wastewater from six surrounding townships (Elmwood, Peninsula, Acme, East Bay, Garfield, and Blair). The WWTP has been managed in partnership with Jacobs (formerly

CH2M) since 1990. From July 2021 to June 2022, the WWTP treated 1.8 billion gallons of wastewater and successfully removed over 99% of pollutants from wastewater. Treated water is returned to the Boardman/Ottaway River in accordance with all state regulations and guidelines.

In 2021, the City commissioned a study of the wastewater system to identify needed improvements to the system. It found that the aging equipment and condition of existing facilities pose a long-term threat to the water quality of the Boardman/Ottaway River and Grand Traverse Bay. If no action was taken, the City may fall out of compliance with state regulation. Primary improvements identified were primary treatment improvements, UV disinfection upgrades, Lower Boardman/Ottaway Sanitary Sewer Replacement, infiltration and inflow removal, East Front Street Sewer Improvements, and US-31 utility replacements. While many of these improvements are invisible to the general public, the Lower Boardman/Ottaway Sanitary Sewer Replacement is a critical issue. When the River turns east to the north of Front Street, it is channeled by a retaining wall to the south and a landscaped bank to the north. Behind the retaining wall is a major wastewater line which is over 90 years old. Before improvements were implemented, the Boardman/Ottaway River scoured the supports under the retaining wall, leaving the wastewater line at risk of breaking and discharging untreated wastewater into the mouth of the Boardman/Ottaway River. This was a top priority of the Wastewater Improvements Project Plan; construction on the project began in early 2023 and was completed at the end of the same year.<sup>4</sup> Over fiscal years 2022-2026, improvements are expected to cost \$27.5M.



*Boardman/Ottaway River Retaining Wall.*



*Flooding/Sewage Discharges.*

Source: The Ticker

## Stormwater

The final primary piece of Traverse City’s water infrastructure is the stormwater system. The stormwater system is intended to capture, treat, and discharge stormwater (rainfall, runoff, etc.). However, unlike water and wastewater systems, stormwater has no set fee structure; so, improvements and upgrades to the stormwater system are often sunk costs. While some communities have instituted a stormwater utility charge, Traverse City investigated this possibility and ultimately determined it was not feasible because of the legal framework that exists around utility fees.

A functioning and effective stormwater system is essential as intensive periods of rainfall can overwhelm the entire water/wastewater system and cause sewer backups and releases of untreated wastewater. Over the past several years, there have been notable unplanned discharges of stormwater and wastewater into the Traverse City environment during periods of intense precipitation.<sup>5,6</sup> As climate change continues to intensify extreme precipitation events, ensuring the wastewater system is in working order is crucial. Adopted in 2007, the Stormwater Asset Management Plan recommends that the city adopt a revenue collection system to fund critical improvements of the stormwater system.<sup>7</sup>

To reduce stormwater flowing into the system and aid in the prevention of surface and ground water contamination, Traverse City adopted the “Ground-Water Protection and Storm-Water Control Ordinance” in 2019. The ordinance requires that regulated land uses, as defined by the ordinance, must obtain a permit from the City Engineer.

## Green Infrastructure

The water, wastewater, and stormwater systems are all considered grey infrastructure, which are traditional infrastructure systems like pipes, gutters, and retention basins. However, infrastructure is

## Stormwater and Climate Change

As climate change continues to impact weather system patterns, heavy rainfall events that require a greater capacity in stormwater infrastructure will become more frequent. To avoid flooding and backups in the City’s water, wastewater, and stormwater systems, improvements to the entire water system are critical. These improvements and, when possible, expansions may merit prioritization to ensure that the built environment is adapted to a changing climate.

## Equity and Green Infrastructure

The benefits and outcomes of green infrastructure include the mitigation of environmental hazards such as flooding, poor air quality, air pollution, and urban heat islands. While the City of Traverse City's climate is strongly moderated by Lake Michigan and Grand Traverse Bay, recent flooding events point to the importance of wider spread green infrastructure implementation. Historic disinvestments from marginalized communities have caused these hazards to disproportionately manifest in their neighborhoods, illustrating the massive potential that lies in prioritizing equity in green infrastructure planning and implementation. However, a recent study analyzing 122 green infrastructure city plans found this equitable focus to be severely lacking in terms of the plan's overall vision, planning process, and geographical distribution of green infrastructure projects. It is critical to build a green infrastructure planning process and project around a well-defined problem that considers and includes the experiences and desires of under-resourced communities. Additionally, widespread implementation of green infrastructure requires a dedicated source of funding to support initial incorporation as well as regular maintenance.

not limited to the grey variety. Green infrastructure is broadly defined as "a range of measures that use plant or soil systems, permeable pavement, or other permeable surfaces or substrates, stormwater harvest and reuse, or landscaping to store, infiltrate, or evapotranspiration stormwater and reduce flows to sewer systems or to surface waters.<sup>8</sup>" The main goal of green infrastructure is to manage the flow of water into the ground instead of into the grey infrastructure system. Green infrastructure has many benefits, including lessening the impact of impervious surfaces by facilitating the movement of water into the ground or into vegetation to avoid overloading the stormwater system. Excess stormwater runoff can negatively impact waterbodies by carrying nutrients and pollutants from the land into the water. The table titled "Green Infrastructure Methods" shows several examples of green infrastructure techniques.

Green infrastructure improvements may be included in public investment with streetscape

updates, or in private investment as a requirement for new development. Places that generate a large degree of runoff (such as large parking lots, dense groupings of buildings, or manufacturing centers) should be targeted for green infrastructure development. The City's stormwater ordinance states that that all stormwater facilities shall be designed, constructed, and maintained to aid in the protection against the detrimental effects of storm-water quality, incorporating therein Best Management Practices (BMP's) and low impact development.<sup>9</sup> Low impact development is a term that refers to using green infrastructure techniques. Additionally, the ordinance provides recommended resources for low impact development to aid applicants in designing facilities with low impact development strategies. While introducing green infrastructure at a wider scale includes numerous benefits to the built environment of Traverse City, a dedicated, separate source of funding is needed to support this implementation and regular maintenance.

## ENERGY

In Fall 2020, Governor Gretchen Whitmer signed an executive order that committed the State of Michigan to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 28% in 2025 and 52% by 2030 in order to reach carbon neutrality by 2050. In support of this mandate, the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy released the MI Healthy Climate Plan in April 2022 to outline a pathway forward in order to meet these goals. Renewable energy sources, electric vehicles, investment in public transit, improved rates of recycling, and pursuing energy efficiency in residential and commercial buildings are just some avenues towards greenhouse gas reduction.<sup>10</sup>

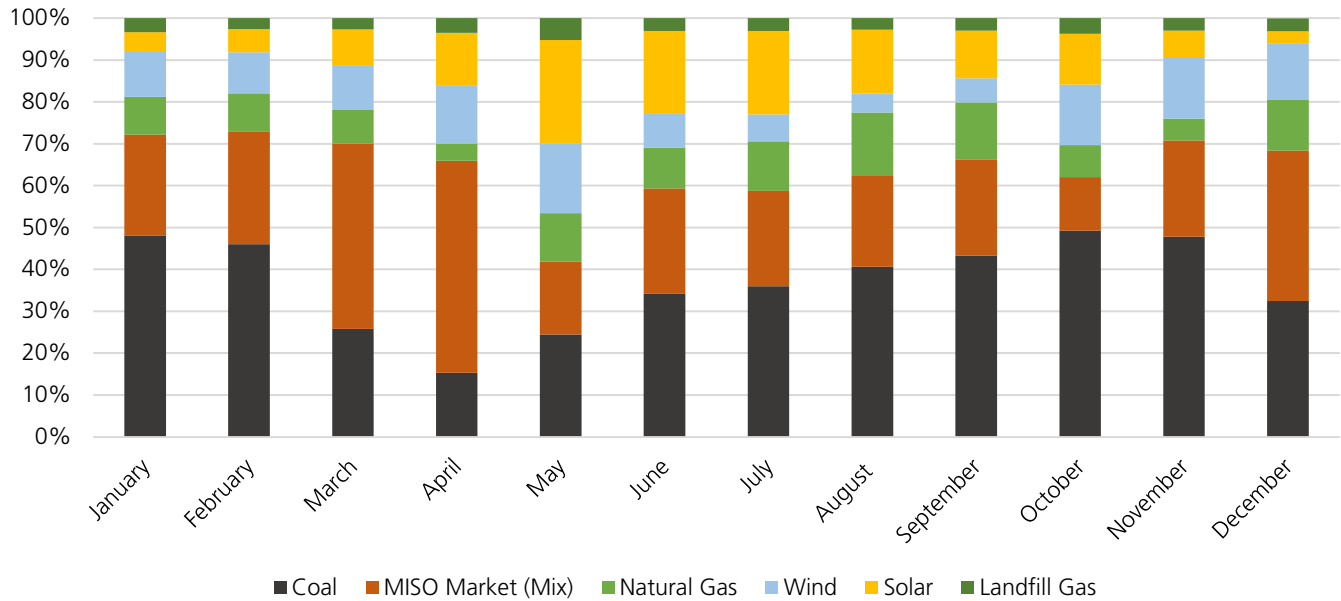
Electricity is provided to Traverse City residents by Traverse City Light and Power (TCLP). TCLP is a municipal utility, meaning that it is community owned. In addition to providing electricity to customers in Traverse City, TCLP provides service to limited areas of East Bay, Elmwood, Garfield, and Peninsula Townships. As reported by TCLP in 2022, the largest consumers of electricity take place in areas commercial uses (43% of all kwh), followed by industrial uses (37.3%), and residential (18.4%). The remaining categories of energy consumption are for public authority (1%) and lighting (0.3%).

Table 44: Green Infrastructure Methods

| Method               | Description  | Example   |
|----------------------|--|---|
| Rainwater Harvesting | Systems that collect and store rainwater for later use.  |    |
| Rain Gardens         | Shallow, vegetated gardens that collect and absorb runoff from streets, sidewalks, and roofs.                                  |    |
| Planter Boxes        | Boxes along sidewalks, streets, or parking lots that collect and absorb rainwater. These also serve as streetscaping elements. |    |
| Bioswales            | Linear and vegetated channels, typically adjacent to a road or parking lot, that slow, retain, and filter stormwater.          |   |
| Permeable Pavement   | Pavement that absorbs, filters, and stores rainwater.  |  |
| Green Roofs          | Vegetated roofs that absorb and filter rainwater.  |  |
| Tree Canopy          | Trees reduce and slow stormwater flow.   |  |
| Infiltration Basin   | A ground depression used to capture and slow infiltrated stormwater.   |  |

Source: United States Environmental Protection Agency

Figure 18: TCLP Energy Sources, 2022



Source: TCLP

In January 2023, TCLP sourced roughly 26 million kilowatt hours (kwh) of energy, 16.3% of which came from renewable sources.<sup>11</sup> Nationally, electricity generation is the second largest contributor to greenhouse gas emissions; switching to more renewable sources is essential to reducing climate impacts. As a community-owned entity, TCLP is well positioned to be a leader in climate conscious energy production. Over 2022, renewables accounted for 17.9% to 46.5% of TCLP’s energy sources, depending on the month. In May 2022, 46.5% of TCLP’s energy was from renewable sources, driven by a large boom in solar energy production. By 2025, TCLP anticipates 43.7% of its energy sources will come from renewables and has a goal that 100% of its energy sources will come from renewable sources by 2040.<sup>12</sup>

All of TCLP’s listed energy sources are in Michigan, as shown in the map titled TCLP Energy Sources. While TCLP does purchase energy from the MISO Market which encompasses a larger trade area beyond Michigan, the company’s non-MISO Market sources are in Michigan. The MISO (Midwest Independent System Operator) market is the energy market that covers most of the Midwest and parts of Canada. Energy generated within this market is put onto the MISO grid (the larger energy system) and can be purchased by energy provides anywhere

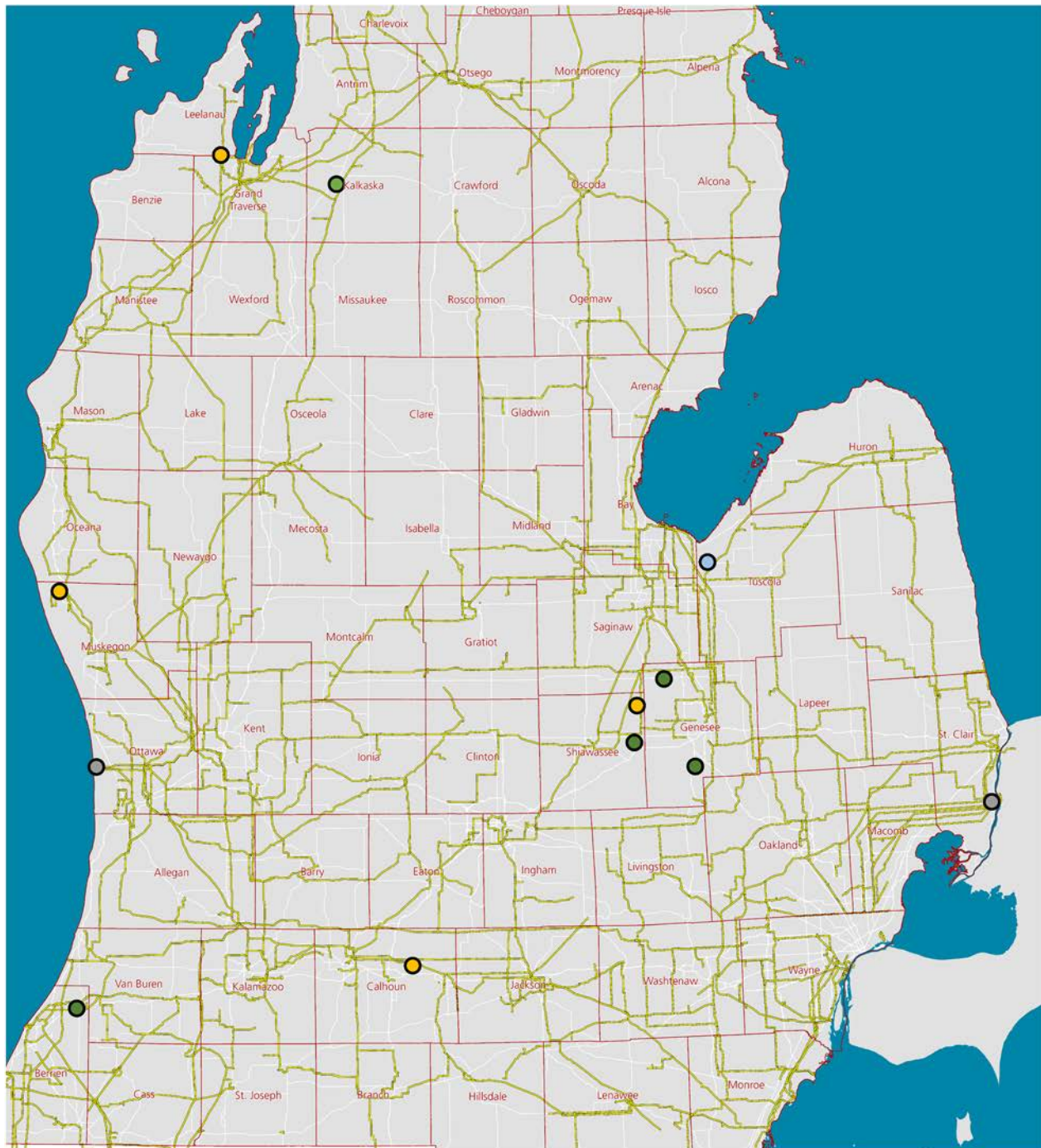
within the MISO system. Energy purchased as a part of the MISO Mix could be from any energy production facility within the MISO system.

Most of the non-MISO Mix energy production facilities are hundreds of miles away from Traverse City and transmit energy to the TCLP service area by large transmission lines that crisscross not just the state, but the country.

In 2022, TCLP updated its strategic plan to reflect the needs of its customers and objectives of the organization. The strategic plan outlined four key properties: financial stability, power supply and energy conservation, enhancing operational excellence, and customer satisfaction. Most relevant to this Master Plan are TCLP’s priorities around power supply and energy conservation. The top goal of this priority is to achieve a 100% renewable energy portfolio by 2040; according to TCLP, it is ahead of current targets to achieve that goal. Other goals outlined in the strategic plan include installing improving electric metering, developing a net zero plan, and supporting electrification.<sup>13</sup>

To help achieve its goals, TCLP created a Climate Action Plan that was completed and approved at the end of 2023. Key actions proposed to eliminate greenhouse gas emissions that catalyze climate change included a transition to 100%

Map 10: TCLP Energy Sources



## TCLP Energy Sources

Sources: Michigan Open Data Portal, City of Traverse City, TCLP, EIA

- Coal
- Natural Gas
- Solar
- Wind
- Landfill Gas
- Transmission Line



renewable energy, increasing grid reliability through supplemental power generation, and creating a comprehensive customer-focused program to support education efforts that promote energy efficiency. Customer-based actions also include providing educational, technical, and financial resources that enable well-informed, sustainable switches in power use.

TCLP will also be instrumental in supporting the shift to an electric vehicle transportation network. TCLP has already installed several Blink charging stations in the Traverse City area and is in discussions with a university in Michigan to develop an EV plan.<sup>14</sup>

### Household Energy Use

While TCLP's energy goals are primary at the energy level, there are many ways that households can reduce energy consumption, improve energy efficiency, and contribute to the larger energy goals of climate positive energy use.

#### *Green Pricing Program*

Currently, TCLP offers a voluntary green pricing program (VGP) for customers that mandate a certain percentage of that customer's energy come from renewable sources. Options include 25%, 50%, 75%, and 100% renewable energy supply. There is an added customer cost to this program which is set at \$0.0042 per kWh.<sup>15</sup> However, as TCLP transitions to more renewable energy sources, those who sign up for the VGP will see costs decline.

#### *Time of Use Program*

In 2023, TCLP began a Time of Use pilot program. A Time of Use program is a variable energy pricing program that charges lower rates during off-peak hours and higher rates during on-peak hours. Off-peak hours are the periods of the day when electricity is in low demand (Monday–Friday 4 p.m.–11 a.m.); on-peak are the periods of high demand (11 a.m.–4 p.m.). TCLP charges \$0.1957 per kWh during on-peak periods and \$0.800 per kWh during off-peak periods, plus a small monthly fee. This program is intended to encourage consumers to shift their electricity consumption to periods of low demand. An example would be running the dryer

## Renewable Energy Installations and Equity

Though the benefits of renewable energy infrastructure include reduced household expenditures over time and cleaner sources of energy, the initial costs of installation can present significant barrier to adoption for many households, particularly low-income individuals. Despite these barriers, the U.S. Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy has focused efforts to promote more equitable distributions of renewable energy infrastructure and bolster greater access for a wider range of communities. These efforts include energyshed research; the Low-Income Communities Bonus Credit Program to promote clean energy investments in low-income, tribal, and affordable housing communities; and community solar infrastructure which enables multiple consumers to benefit from a solar energy source in order to offset the costs of individual rooftop solar panels and to enable apartment renters to benefit from a solar energy source.

Source: How EERE Is Addressing Inequitable Energy Infrastructure | Department of OurEnergy

later in the evening. While the Time of Use program is only in the pilot stages, adopting a wider time of use pricing model will help TCLP achieve its goals of decarbonization and a higher percentage of renewables in TCLP's energy portfolio.<sup>16</sup>

#### *Energy Efficiency*

Old appliances, like refrigerators and air conditioners, can use a substantial amount of energy compared to newer energy efficiency models. Replacing outdated and/or inefficient appliances can reduce household energy consumption, reducing demand on the energy system and reducing costs for households. TCLP offers financial credit to those who recycle refrigerators, freezers, air conditioners, and dehumidifiers.<sup>17</sup> A similar program is offered from commercial properties and provides rebates for LED bulbs and other appliances and energy efficient upgrades.<sup>18</sup>



### *Renewable Energy Installations*

In urban areas like Traverse City, large-scale utility solar and wind installations are not feasible because of the space needed and potential for conflicts with adjacent land uses. However, small-scale renewable installations are incredibly effective in urban areas, most commonly placed on rooftops. Small scale wind and solar installations are currently permitted in most zoning districts in Traverse City, with applicable standards.<sup>19</sup> For TCLP commercial and industrial customers, Venture North provides 0% interest loans up to \$50,000 for energy efficiency electrical upgrades and products.

For those generating electricity at a personal scale, TCLP runs a net metering program to incorporate that production into the larger energy system. Those enrolled in the program see costs offset equal to the difference between energy produced, and energy consumed. If energy produced exceeds

the energy consumed for any given month, energy is credited toward the next month. If, at the end of a 12-month cycle, energy produced still exceeds energy consumed, the energy credit is returned to TCLP, without compensation to the producer.<sup>20</sup>

### *On Bill Financing*

To help customers improve household energy efficiency, TCLP created the On Bill Financing Program. This program provides loans to TCLP residential customers ranging from \$5,000-\$30,000 for energy-saving home improvements and/or renewable energy projects. The loan repayment is set at 3% interest for the life of the loan and payments are included in the user's monthly energy bill. This program is open to all TCLP residential customers and eligible properties include single-family homes and low density, small scale multi-family (1-4 unit) structures.



*The Boardman/Ottaway River at Murchie Bridge.*

Source: City of Traverse City

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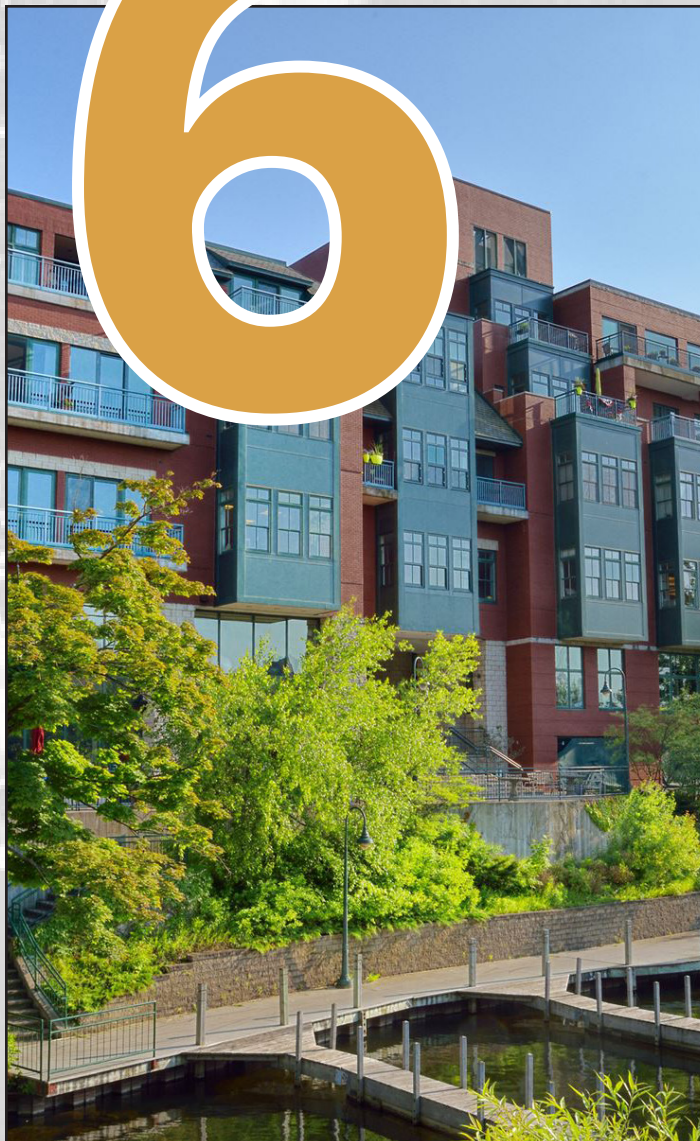
## INFRASTRUCTURE & ENERGY KEY POINTS

- » Traverse City's water system is nearly 150 years old and is in need of improvements and updates. A recent study recommended improvements to the system over a five-year period for a total of \$18 million. The City's wastewater system is also aging and, without improvements, may pose a threat to the water quality of the Boardman/Ottaway River and Grand Traverse Bay. The Wastewater Improvements Project Plan outlines necessary improvements from 2022 to 2026 that are estimated to cost \$27.5 million.
- » Traverse City's stormwater ordinance requires that all stormwater facilities incorporate best management practices and low impact development to protect against the negative impacts of stormwater quality. This supports the implementation of various green infrastructure techniques – to further their efficacy, implementation, and regular maintenance, a separate, dedicated source should be pursued.
- » Traverse City residents receive their electricity from Traverse City Light and Power (TCLP). In 2023, 16.3% of all electricity came from renewable sources. By 2025, TCLP predicts that 43.7% of all energy sources will come from renewable sources and aims for 100% of energy to come from renewable sources by 2040.



*Old Town Solar.*  
Source: City of Traverse City

# 6



*Rivers Edge mixed use building at the site of the former Traverse City Iron Works.*

At its core, a Master Plan is a guide for land use and how land use influences all elements of a community. Key to understanding the connection between land use and economic development, natural features, housing, and all other community features is an analysis of the existing land use pattern and how the history of land use development has shaped the City of Traverse City. This chapter includes a discussion of the existing land use categories and patterns in the city.

- » The largest land use category in the City is tax-exempt land, comprising 2,300 acres, or 43% of the total land area. Governmental agencies, non-profits, religious institutions, and schools all fall into this category.
- » Roughly 100 acres of vacant residential land are left in the city.
- » Commercial land use patterns include the city core, neighborhood commercial areas, and commercial corridors.
- » NMC and Central High School, the Grand Traverse Commons, and Munson Medical Center are the most unique land use patterns in the city. Allowing numerous uses in close proximity to each other can offer a lesson to other parts of Traverse City as well as external municipalities.

## EXISTING LAND USE

## CURRENT LAND USE CATEGORIES

Land and land use can be broken into a seemingly infinite number of categories and combinations. One common way to categorize land use is by using assessing records. In order to correctly tax properties, local assessors apply property classifications as residential, commercial, or industrial to all parcels of land in the City. This classification is important as different uses are taxed at different rates. Using the assessing property classes as a lens to analyze land use provides a clear understanding of the existing land uses in the City of Traverse City. The map titled Existing Land Use, 2023 shows the existing land uses in the city, according to the assessing property classifications.

### Commercial Land

In total, commercial land accounts for roughly 910 acres of land in the City, about 17% of the total area. Most of the commercial land is concentrated along commercial centers and commercial corridors. However, it is important to note that some apartments and larger rental properties are also classified as commercial properties. Most of the commercial land is considered to be “improved,” meaning that the property has a structure. There are only 78 acres of vacant commercial land in the city, or 1.4% of the City’s total land area, indicating that future commercial development is likely to be through redevelopments or increased density on existing commercial properties. Commercial condominiums account for almost 290 acres, 5.4% of the total land. Commercial condominium properties are those where owners own or rent individual units on a larger property but don’t necessarily own a part of the actual land.

### Residential Land

Residential land is the second largest land use in the City and the largest non-public/quasi-public land classification. Residential land totals almost 2,000 acres in the City, accounting for about 37% of all the land in the City. The majority of residential land is improved (1,239 acres, or about

Table 45: Existing Land Use, 2023

| Property Classification | Acres          | Percent of Total |
|-------------------------|----------------|------------------|
| <b>Commercial</b>       | <b>910.1</b>   | <b>16.9%</b>     |
| Improved                | 542.9          | 10.1%            |
| Vacant                  | 78.0           | 1.4%             |
| Condominiums            | 289.2          | 5.4%             |
| <b>Residential</b>      | <b>1,974.8</b> | <b>36.6%</b>     |
| Improved                | 1,238.8        | 23.0%            |
| Vacant                  | 105.6          | 2.0%             |
| Condominiums            | 630.4          | 11.7%            |
| <b>Industrial</b>       | <b>184.0</b>   | <b>3.4%</b>      |
| Improved                | 177.9          | 3.3%             |
| Vacant                  | 6.1            | 0.1%             |
| <b>Exempt</b>           | <b>2,324.4</b> | <b>43.1%</b>     |
| <b>Total</b>            | <b>5,393.3</b> |                  |

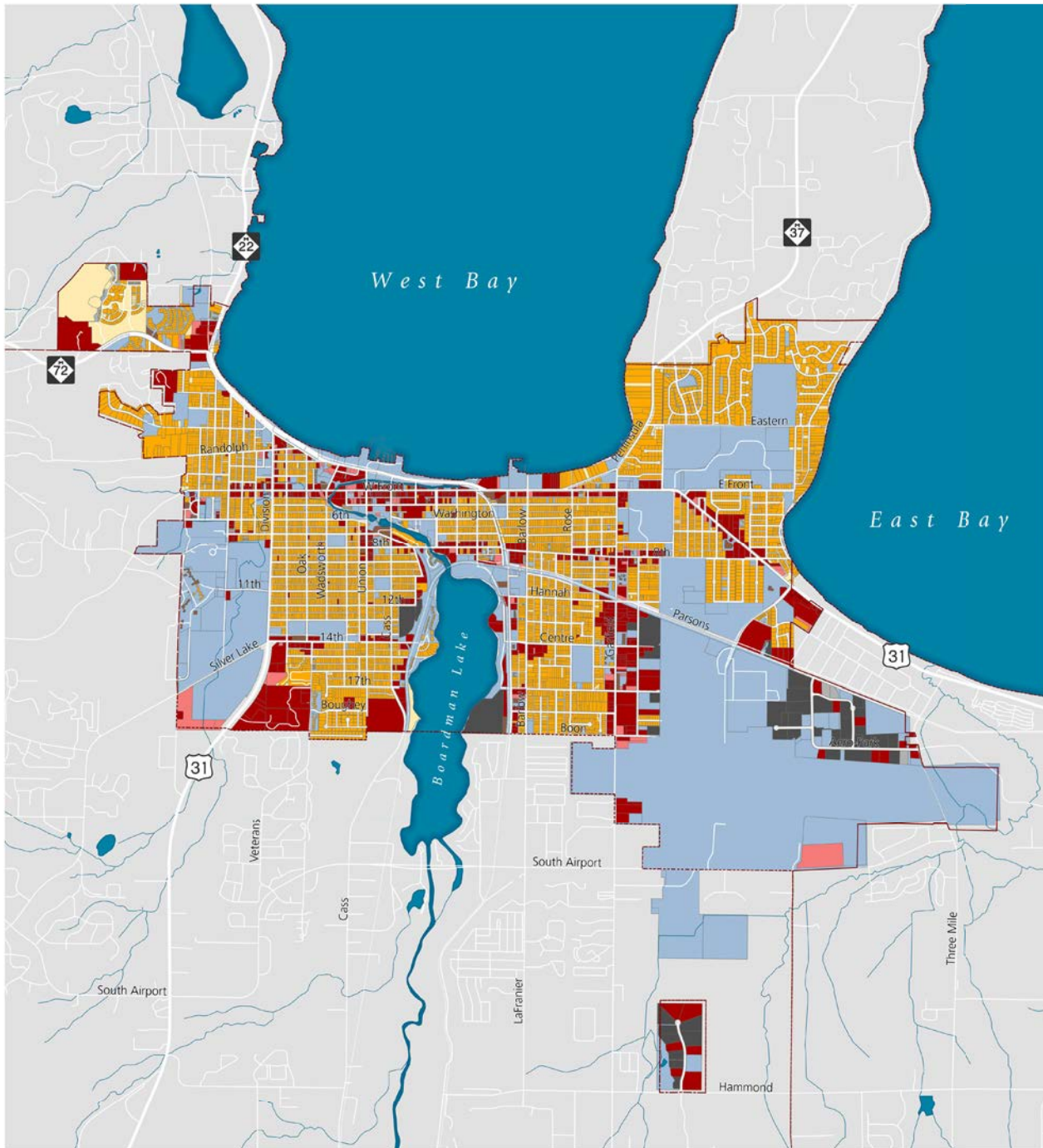
Source: City of Traverse City

62% of all residential land) followed by residential condominiums (630 acres, or 31.5% of residential areas). While many people colloquially use the term “condominium” to describe a style of residential development, in this context the term refers to an ownership structure where households own an individual unit in a larger residential building but do not own any of the land the building sits on. Vacant residential land accounts for slightly more than 100 acres and exactly 2% of all the land in the city. As a community that is facing extensive residential development pressure, the lack of available vacant residential land means that new housing construction will be predominately redevelopment or selective density will be increased in existing residential areas.

### Industrial Land

Compared to all other land use categories, industrial land accounts for very little land in the City, 184 acres or 3% in total. Industrial properties

Map 11: Existing Land Use



## Existing Land Use

Sources: Michigan Open Data Portal, City of Traverse City

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #800000; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Commercial, Improved    | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #333333; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Industrial, Improved |
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #FF69B4; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Commercial, Vacant      | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #A9A9A9; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Industrial, Vacant   |
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #654321; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Commercial, Condominium | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #ADD8E6; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Exempt               |
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #FFA500; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Residential, Improved   |  |
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #FFD700; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Residential, Vacant     |  |



are primarily grouped in industrial parks or in industrial corridors. The vast majority of industrial land is improved and only 3.3% of all industrial land in the City is vacant.

### Exempt Land

The final land use classification is the exempt classification. Exempt land includes all non-taxable land, such as governmental agencies, non-profits, religious institutions, and schools (public and private primary, secondary, and higher education). Exempt land is the largest land use in the City, accounting for roughly 2,300 acres, or 43% of the total land area. While communities need non-taxable uses, it is important to maintain a healthy balance of taxable and non-taxable land as property taxes are an important source of municipal revenues.

### LAND USE PATTERNS

While assessing records provide a valuable understanding of quantities and locations of land uses it can be difficult to identify overall land use patterns. Using the assessing records, aerial imagery, and field knowledge several overall land use patterns were identified, as shown on the map titled Existing Land Use Patterns. This analysis does not include a discussion on the residential land use patterns as those are included in the Neighborhoods chapter of this document.

## Walkability, Access, and Climate Change

The walkable features of Traverse City's City Core and Neighborhood Commercial districts have positive implications for climate change because they promote fewer emissions. As prominent areas of the City that drive economic activity, design features that support walkable access to numerous storefronts and restaurants reduce the reliance of car use as the primary means of access for all shops. However, residential land use patterns in the Neighborhoods chapter of this master plan provide nuance to the positive aspects of this feature. Both of the aforementioned land use districts are present in only one part of the City and are accessible by foot or bike for residents in the central or northern part of Traverse City. Though these districts are walkable and encouraging of mixed-uses between residential and commercial properties, residents of neighborhoods that are further from these districts do not have access to their own districts of mixed-use commercial activity. Therefore, accessing the City Core and/or Neighborhood Commercial districts still entails a persistent reliance on car-based transit to travel from many of the City's neighborhoods to these districts.

### City Core

A city core is the hub of a city and/or a region. For Traverse City, this area includes downtown and the extensions of the downtown commercial district along Front Street to the west and east. This area is defined by the highest density in the City and a mix of commercial, public, and residential uses. This area is highly walkable with sidewalks and complete street elements throughout the City core.



*Downtown Traverse City.*

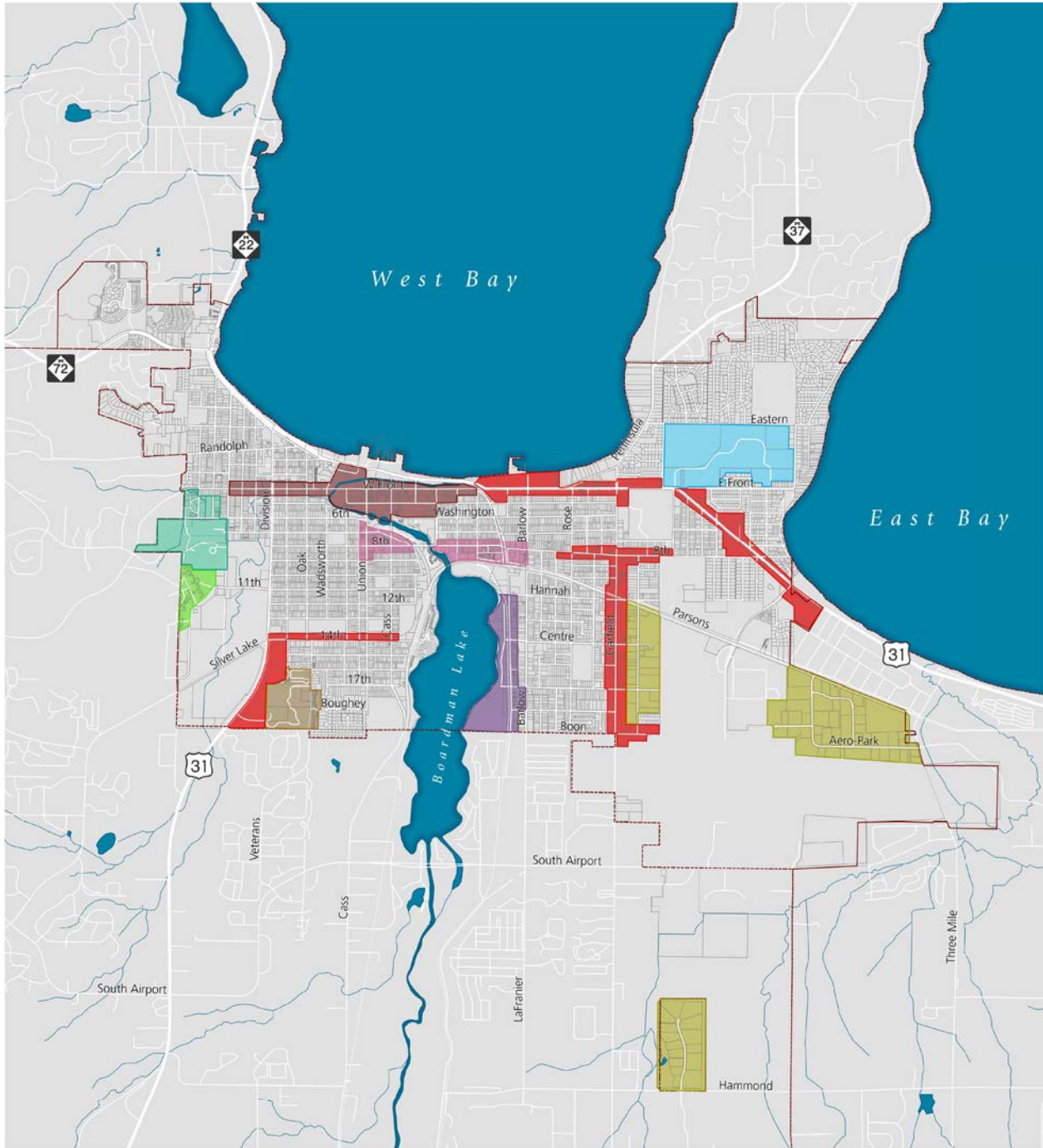
Source: GoogleEarth



*West Front Street.*

Source: GoogleEarth

Map 12: Existing Land Use Patterns



## Existing Land Use Patterns

Sources: Michigan Open Data Portal, City of Traverse City

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #8B4513; margin-right: 5px;"></span> City Core                 | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #ADD8E6; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Educational Campus   |
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #DDA0DD; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Neighborhood Commercial   | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #3CB371; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Medical Campus       |
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #DC143C; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Commercial Corridor       | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #8B4513; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Multi-Family Cluster |
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #6A5ACD; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Commercial/Industrial Mix |  |
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #8C8B40; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Industrial District       |  |
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #32CD32; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Grand Traverse Commons    |  |





## Neighborhood Commercial

In contrast to the city core, the neighborhood commercial areas are not as dense but are still walkable and able to serve the residential areas around them. While these areas may not be the regional draw like the city core, they remain important commercial areas that service a more local audience. They also contain a mix of uses including commercial and residential.



*Eighth Street & Cass Street.*

Source: GoogleEarth



*Seventh Street & Union Street.*

Source: GoogleEarth

## Commercial Corridors

The final predominant commercial land use pattern in the city is the commercial corridors. These commercial corridors are defined by the auto-centric development pattern with access drives onto the major streets and buildings often setback from the road. While sidewalks may be present along these corridors, the sea of surface parking lots and high volumes of traffic make them unpleasant for pedestrian and non-motorized travel.



*Garfield Avenue.*

Source: GoogleEarth



*Munson Avenue.*

Source: GoogleEarth

## Commercial/Industrial Mix

Woodmere Avenue is a unique area in the City. While not a true commercial corridor, there are commercial uses interspersed with industrial and some residential uses. This area is characterized by larger warehouse-style buildings that hold building supply and manufacturing companies. Because of the lack of access drives and large parking areas, this part of the City is fairly walkable. However, a lack of pedestrian interest (street-facing retail, streetscaping) does not make it as enjoyable for pedestrians as compared to the core areas of the City.



*Woodmere Avenue.*  
Source: GoogleEarth



*Woodmere Avenue.*  
Source: GoogleEarth

## Industrial Districts

Traverse City has three primary industrial areas: Hastings Street, Aero Park, and Traverse Fields. These areas contain a vast majority of the city's industrial land. The buildings tend to be large and bulky to support the industrial uses within them. The Aero Park industrial area has several educational facilities and other uses that support the adjacent airport.



*AeroPark.*  
Source: GoogleEarth



*Traverse Fields.*  
Source: GoogleEarth

## Grand Traverse Commons

One of the most unique areas in the City, the Grand Traverse Commons, is a collection of rehabilitated State Hospital Buildings that now hold restaurants, stores, apartments, offices, and more. This area is jointly governed by the City and neighboring Garfield Township. Slowly over the past decade, additional buildings have been rehabilitated to build on the success of the early rehabilitation.

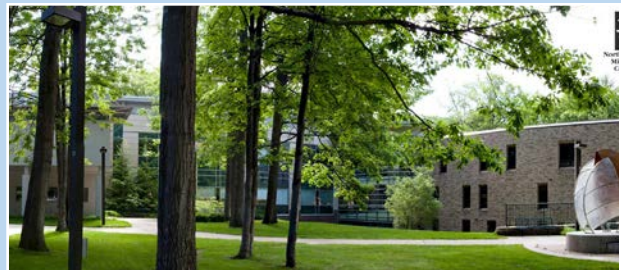


*Grand Traverse Commons.*

Source: GoogleEarth

## Educational Campus

Northwestern Michigan College is a major presence in the city. Central High School is adjacent to the college, contributing to the educational presence on the northeast side of the City. In addition to the educational spaces, the Dennis Museum and performance space, NMC dorms, and Central Athletic fields are also included in this educational campus.



*Northwestern Michigan College.*

Source: Northwestern Michigan College

## Medical Campus

Munson Medical Center and the surrounding healthcare buildings and businesses form a defined medical campus in the city. Having a grouping of medical buildings and a major regional hospital provides a high level of care and service to the community, and city residents do not have to travel to many different areas of the city to receive high-quality care. An additional campus on the east side of Traverse City provides access to an urgent care center, additional walk-in services, and a community library.



*Webber Heart Center and Munson Medical Center.*

Source: GoogleEarth

## Multi-Family Cluster

While multi-family buildings and apartments can be found throughout the City, there is a defined grouping of mid-sized apartments in the southwest corner of the city. This area also includes most of Traverse City's low-income and subsidized housing. While the existing land use map shows this area as commercial, some apartment buildings are classified as commercial properties in the assessing records, despite their residential use.



*Apartments.*

Source: GoogleEarth



*Children walking on a neighborhood sidewalk.*

Source: City of Traverse City

## Multi-Family Cluster and Equity

Traverse City's multi-family cluster illuminates challenges to equitable access of the City's assets, attractions, and defining features for low-income residents in subsidized housing complexes. While this district is adjacent to a commercial corridor, there is a definitive discrepancy between the features of this commercial land use compared to other commercial districts that promote walkability and mixed-use development (such as the City Core and Neighborhood Commercial districts). The features of the City's commercial corridors (e.g., auto-centric development patterns, high-volumes of traffic, and dominating surface parking lots) imply that safely accessing them warrants car-ownership and usage because the district is not conducive to pedestrian traffic. Access to the City's more walkable commercial district also requires a car because of the distance between the multi-family cluster and both mixed-use districts.

## EXISTING LAND USE KEY POINTS

- » In Traverse City, 36.6% of all land is zoned for residential uses, 16.9% is zoned for commercial uses, and 3.4% is zones for industrial uses.
- » Tax-exempt land (which includes governmental agencies, non-profit organizations, religion institutions, and schools) is the largest land use category and comprises 2,300 acres of land in Traverse City, or 43% of the entire city.
- » Just over 100 acres of residential land (2% of the total land area) is vacant and available for development, presenting a limitation to increasing the City's supply of housing.
- » About 78 acres of commercial land (1.4% of the total land area) is vacant and available for development, illustrating the importance of redeveloping surface parking lot areas in downtown Traverse City to support commercial development in the economic epicenter of the region.



*Bryant Park Beach.*

Source: City of Traverse City

# 7



*West Grand Traverse Bay.*

Climate resilience is characterized as a community's ability to "prepare for, respond to, and recover from the impacts of hazardous climate events" while ensuring "minimal damage to societal wellbeing, the economy, and the environment."<sup>1</sup> The following section will detail the potential impacts of a changing climate in Traverse City, current actions taken by the city to account for these changes, and recommendations for additional steps and programs to bolster community resiliency.

- » The National Climate Assessment predicts that the greatest climate change impacts in the Midwest will affect the region's agriculture, forestry, biodiversity and ecosystems, human health, transportation and infrastructure, and vulnerability and adaptation.
- » Michigan's 2022 MI Healthy Climate Plan details a statewide commitment to achieve a 100% economy-wide carbon neutrality by mid-century with an initial goal of 52% reduction of emissions by 2030.
- » Traverse City can mitigate climate threats through land-, water-, and air-based interventions, through actions that include, but are not limited to, the following: encouraging green roofs; supporting pollinator habitats; preserving, planting, and maintaining native trees and vegetation; promoting the use of green infrastructure to treat and reduce the amount of stormwater; contributing to regional efforts seeking to improve the Grand Traverse Bay Watershed; and addressing urban heat island effects.

## SUSTAINABILITY, RESILIENCY & NATURAL SYSTEMS

## THE CHANGING CLIMATE

*“Now is an essential moment where global commitments, national policies, and local planning must all work together to meet the demands of confronting and combating climate change and its impacts on people, places, and our planet.”*

– Leo Asuncion, Jr, AICP American Planning Association President

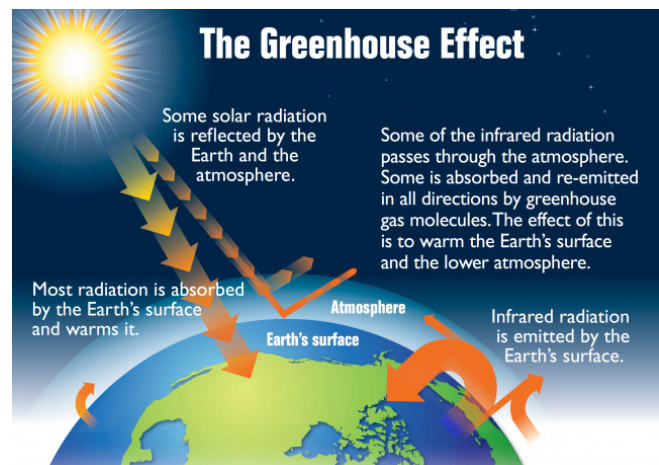
Earth’s climate is not a static environment. Throughout Earth’s 4.5-billion-year history, the climate has undergone notable shifts and distinct cycles. North America itself has transitioned through periods of glaciation to periods of tropical and balmy climates. Despite this global history of dynamic climate trends, the rate and degree to which the current climate is changing is unprecedented and, consequently, has and will continue to have substantial impacts on every aspect of livability.

### Human Influence

The Industrial Revolution was a period of significant advancement in human society and resulted in increased wages, more goods and services available, and a migration from rural agrarian life to urban manufacturing.<sup>2</sup> Despite all of the positive advancements from this period, human activities following the industrial revolution have released significant amounts of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases into the atmosphere, well beyond the natural occurring levels. These gases contribute to a phenomenon known as the “Greenhouse Effect.” When solar radiation reaches the Earth, it is absorbed by the Earth’s surface which naturally warms the planet. Once some of the solar radiation is absorbed by the planet, some of it is released back into the atmosphere and, eventually, back into space as infrared radiation. However, increased levels of greenhouse gases trap the remaining infrared radiation and direct it back towards Earth’s surface, contributing to warming beyond natural levels and resulting in accelerated climate change.<sup>3</sup> The largest contributor to climate change in the United States is transportation uses. The burning of fossil fuels for cars, trucks, and planes contributes to 27% of total greenhouse gases emitted in the U.S. Following transportation, electricity is the second largest contributor at 25% of emissions. Of all the electricity generated in the United States, 60% originates from fossil fuels. The third largest source

## Mitigation vs. Adaptation

Climate change mitigation and adaptation are two common phrases that are often (incorrectly) used interchangeably. Climate change mitigation entails preventative actions that reduce the levels of greenhouse gas emissions in the atmosphere. Climate change adaptation involves reactive actions that reduce the risk from climate change and its impacts.



of greenhouse gas emissions is the industrial sector (24% of all emissions).<sup>4</sup>

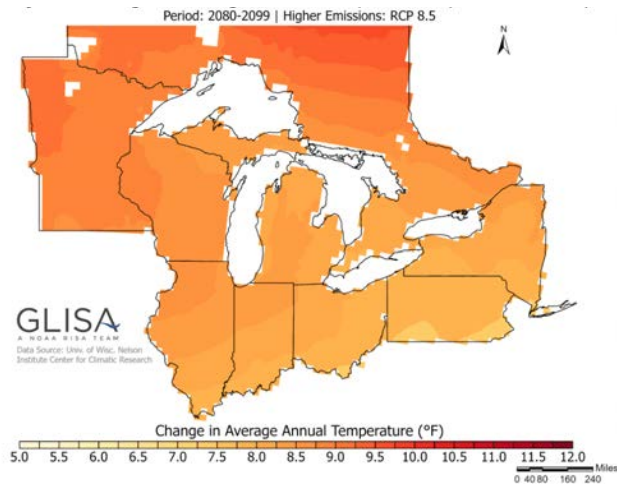
### Global Impacts

Increased greenhouse gas emissions and the resulting rising temperatures have implications beyond a warmer planet. Some of the global impacts of climate change include the following:<sup>5</sup>

#### *Increased Temperature and Extreme Heat*

The greenhouse gas effect will cause global temperatures to rise. Globally, the coldest and warmest days are expected to increase by an average of five degrees. Additionally, there will be more days of extreme heat; the number of days above 105 degrees is expected to triple in the U.S. by the end of the century. Heat related stress and death will also increase as a result of a changing climate, especially for those most at risk of heat related illness and death (e.g., the elderly, those with cardiorespiratory disease, etc.). The increasing temperatures will increase the demand for energy during the hottest periods as people rely on climate control systems to stay cool during the extreme

**Figure 19: Projected Change in Average Annual Temperature by End of Century**



heat, thus reinforcing emissions trends that initially increased the presence of greenhouse gases.<sup>6</sup>

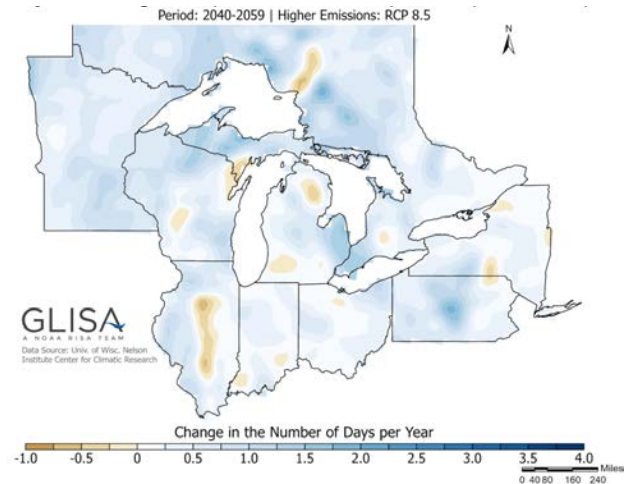
### *Warmer Ocean Temperatures*

While Traverse City does not sit on an ocean coast, the warming of the oceans will nonetheless impact the city. Rising ocean temperatures intensify storms and disrupt weather patterns. Precipitation events in northwest Michigan will become more sporadic but more intense, leading to short periods of heavy precipitation.<sup>7</sup>

### *Warmer Great Lakes Temperatures*

Traverse City's proximity to Lake Michigan has significant implications for the City as climate change impacts the nature of the Great Lakes. Earth's largest group of freshwater lakes has experienced impacts related to a warming climate; warmer water temperatures have contributed to higher rates of evaporation and, subsequently, lower water levels.<sup>8</sup> Lower water levels have implications for water-based infrastructure like docks and piers, shipping channels, water supply, and ecosystems along the shore.<sup>9</sup> Warm water temperatures and less ice cover also increase the prevalence of "lake effect" snowfall which occurs when cold air moves over warm water and causes heavy snowfall on the shore of the lake.<sup>10</sup> Additionally, this variability in the water levels across the Great Lakes is predicted to increase in frequency and magnitude with climate change. Both higher highs and lower lows of water levels will be observed regularly with quick shifts between both extremes.

**Figure 20: Projected Change in Days with over 1" Precipitation by Mid-Century**



### *Declining Arctic Sea Ice*

The declining sea ice has many consequences, including accelerating climate change (referred to as the so-called "death spiral"). As the arctic ice melts, less solar radiation is reflected into space while more is absorbed by the Earth's surface and atmosphere. This simultaneously causes, and increases, levels of warming.<sup>11</sup>

### *Sea Level Rise*

Since 1950, global sea levels have risen nearly 6.5 inches due to melting land ice and the thermal expansion of sea water. Sea levels are expected to continue rising, and at faster rates. This has the most profound impact on coastal cities where rising sea levels will lead to greater and more severe ocean coastal flooding and, subsequently, displace residents impacted by such flooding events.<sup>12</sup>

### *Acidification of the Earth's Oceans and the Great Lakes*

As Earth's oceans absorb more carbon dioxide, they become more acidic, negatively impacting ocean ecosystems. The increased acidification makes it difficult for plankton, coral, and shellfish to produce calcium carbonate, a necessary mineral for their hard skeletons or shells. The decline of these creatures causes a ripple effect throughout the ocean food chain and negatively impacts fish populations which supply a substantial portion of the global food supply.<sup>13</sup>

Increasing carbon emissions are also predicted to increase rates of acidification across the Great Lakes



Region at a rate that mirrors the degree to which oceans are impacted.<sup>14</sup> These trends are likely to have impacts on the economic, environmental, and social well-being of residents and visitors to the region. Increasing acidity will make lake water less habitable for some fish and vegetation, disrupting the region's ecosystem and changing the viability of key economic characteristics as they relate to the fishing and tourism industries. Related uncertainty pertaining to the changing region as a whole has an impact on residents of the Great Lake Region.

### *More Frequent and Intense Storm Events*

The changing climate will cause a shift in weather patterns. Heat waves, cold waves, heavy precipitation events, and droughts will become more frequent and more severe. Since 1901, the Midwest has seen the highest increase in extreme precipitation events, a trend that will continue.<sup>15</sup>

### *Inland Flooding*

The increase of heavy precipitation events will lead to an increase in severe flooding events. A 100-year flood event is a flood of an intense magnitude which has a 1% change of happening in any year. An increase in heavy precipitation increases the likelihood that a 100-year flood will happen two years in a row. Floodplains and flood depth are also expected to increase by 30%, meaning that near-flood environments will become at risk.<sup>16</sup>

### *Drought and Threatened Water Supplies*

The increased global temperature will draw more water out of natural retention bodies (lakes, wetlands, and soil), leading to deeper and longer droughts. When precipitation does reach drought-stricken areas, the drier soils will be less capable of absorbing water, increasing flooding. Additionally, water quality and quantity will be impacted by climate change. As streamflow decreases, the lakes that are fed by streams and rivers will experience a drop in water level.<sup>17</sup>

### *Increased Fire Activity*

A hotter, drier planet means increased fire risk. For the U.S. West, the amount of burned areas is expected to increase by 600% for every one degree increase in global temperatures. While Michigan has a relatively low level of seasonal fires, smoke can travel across the country from the U.S. West and impact communities in Michigan.<sup>18</sup>

## Flood-Prone Environments and Equity

As flooding becomes more severe, homes and buildings that are in floodplains will face more precarious situations and greater risks to their overall safety. The demographic characteristics of individuals that are likely to live in homes with a risk of flooding poses an issue of equity; in 2021, an NPR study found that homes sold by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development between January 2017 and August 2020 were in federally designated flood zones at almost 75 times the rate of all homes sold nationwide in the same period. The absence of federal regulations that require the disclosure of a home's risk of flooding as well as flood insurance requirements further compounded this discrepancy as occupants of these homes were not made aware of the situation until they were far along in the home-buying process.

Source: National Public Radio

### *Melting Permafrost*

Permafrost is a layer of frozen ground below the topsoil that contains frozen organic material. As global temperatures rise, the permafrost thaws and releases carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, accelerating climate change. Additionally, the bacteria and pathogens frozen in permafrost are at risk of thawing - diseases that were once thought to be eradicated may reemerge.<sup>19</sup>

### *Midwest Impacts*

While global impacts of climate change are felt universally and to varying degrees, the impact at a regional scale will vary. The National Climate Assessment (NCA), a report that is given to Congress and the President roughly every four years, details the impacts of climate change on the United States and its regions. The NCA identified six key climate change impacts in the Midwest: agriculture, forestry, biodiversity and ecosystems, human health, transportation and infrastructure, and vulnerability and adaptation.<sup>20</sup>

### *Agriculture*

The Midwest is a major producer of a wide range of food and animal feed for national

consumption and international trade. Increases in warm-season humidity and precipitation have eroded soils, created favorable conditions for pests and pathogens, and degraded the quality of stored grain. Projected changes in precipitation, coupled with rising extreme temperatures before mid-century, will reduce Midwest agricultural productivity to levels of the 1980s without major technological advances.<sup>21</sup>

### *Forestry*

Midwest forests provide numerous economic and ecological benefits. However, threats from a changing climate are interacting with existing stressors (such as invasive species and pests) to increase tree mortality and reduce forest productivity. Without adaptive actions, these interactions will result in the loss of economically and culturally important tree species, such as paper birch and black ash, and are expected to lead to the conversion of some forests to other forest types or even to non-forested ecosystems by the end of the century. Land managers are beginning to manage risk in forests by increasing diversity and selecting for tree species adapted to a range of projected conditions.<sup>22</sup>

### *Biodiversity & Ecosystems*

The ecosystems of the Midwest support a diverse array of native species and provide people with essential services such as water purification, flood control, resource provision, crop pollination, and recreational opportunities. Species and ecosystems, including the important freshwater resources of the Great Lakes, are typically most at risk when climate stressors like temperature increases interact with land-use change, habitat loss, pollution, nutrient inputs, and nonnative invasive species. Restoration of natural systems, increases in the use of green infrastructure, and targeted conservation efforts, especially of wetland systems, can help protect people and nature from climate change impacts.<sup>23</sup>

### *Human Health*

Climate change is expected to worsen existing health conditions and introduce new health threats by increasing the frequency and intensity of poor air quality days, extreme high temperature events, and heavy rainfalls; extending pollen seasons; and modifying the distribution of disease-carrying pests and insects. By mid-century, the region is projected

to experience substantial, yet avoidable, loss of life, worsened health conditions, and economic impacts estimated in the billions of dollars as a result of these changes. Improved basic health services and increased public health measures, including surveillance and monitoring, can prevent or reduce these impacts.<sup>24</sup>

### *Transportation and Infrastructure*

Storm water management systems, transportation networks, and other critical infrastructure are already experiencing impacts from changing precipitation patterns and elevated flood risks. Green infrastructure is reducing some of the negative impacts by using plants and open space to absorb storm water. The annual cost of adapting urban storm water systems to more frequent and severe storms is projected to exceed \$500 million for the Midwest by the end of the century.<sup>25</sup>

### *Community Vulnerability and Adaptation*

At-risk communities in the Midwest are becoming more vulnerable to climate change impacts such as flooding, drought, and increases in urban heat islands. Tribal nations are especially vulnerable because of their reliance on threatened natural resources for their cultural, subsistence, and economic needs. Integrating climate adaptation into planning processes offers an opportunity to better manage climate risks now. Developing knowledge for decision-making in cooperation with vulnerable communities and tribal nations will help to build adaptive capacity and increase resilience.<sup>26</sup>

## **MI Healthy Climate Plan**

In 2022, the State of Michigan published the MI Healthy Climate Plan, a statewide commitment to achieve a 100% economy-wide carbon neutrality by mid-century. This plan outlines eight key objectives:

- » Mitigate the worst impacts of climate change,
- » Spur economic development and create good-paying jobs,
- » Capture economic development and create good-paying jobs,
- » Protect and improve the health of Michiganders,
- » Position Michigan as a leader in climate action,
- » Protect our natural resources and wildlife,

- » Make Michigan energy independent,
- » Address environmental injustices.

By 2030, Michigan targets a 52% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions through cleaning the energy grid, electrifying vehicles, increasing public transportation, repairing and decarbonizing homes and businesses, driving clean innovation in industry, and protecting Michigan’s land and water. The entire initiative also states a commitment to environmental justice and pursuing a just transition to a carbon neutral future.<sup>27</sup>

### Traverse City Climate Action Plan

In 2011, the City of Traverse City undertook a climate action plan with the goal of protecting the environment, meeting the fiscal challenges at that time, and preparing for rising energy costs. The plan outlines ten key strategies to achieve the goals set by the climate action plan.

1. Reduce unnecessary electrical loads,
2. Purchasing energy efficient equipment,
3. Resource conservation policies or initiatives,
4. Optimize interior lighting,
5. Optimize HVAC performance,
6. Optimize exterior lighting,
7. Water system upgrades and conservation measures,
8. Utilize renewable energy,
9. Promote smart transportation options,

## LAND

### Greenspace

Traverse City’s public parks are the largest source of greenspace in the City. Traverse City’s parks and public lands are detailed in-depth in the “Arts, Culture, and Recreation” section of this Master Plan and in the city’s Parks and Recreation Plan. The largest undeveloped natural space in the City are the wetlands along US-31 and Silver Lake Rd. While these areas are not improved for recreational use, they contribute ecologically and aesthetically to the City. Despite a lack of large tracts of natural land (not uncommon for a city the size of Traverse City), the presence of many street trees, well-kept gardens and lawns, and public open spaces contributes to Traverse City feeling like a very natural city. As new development occurs within the City, it is important to maintain this sense of naturalness. New development is required to install/replace trees, shrubs, and grass through the landscaping standards in Traverse City’s zoning ordinance. Additional requirements like a minimum greenspace requirement and/or incentives for development would also help maintain or expand the greenspace and natural aesthetic of Traverse City.

### Green Roofs

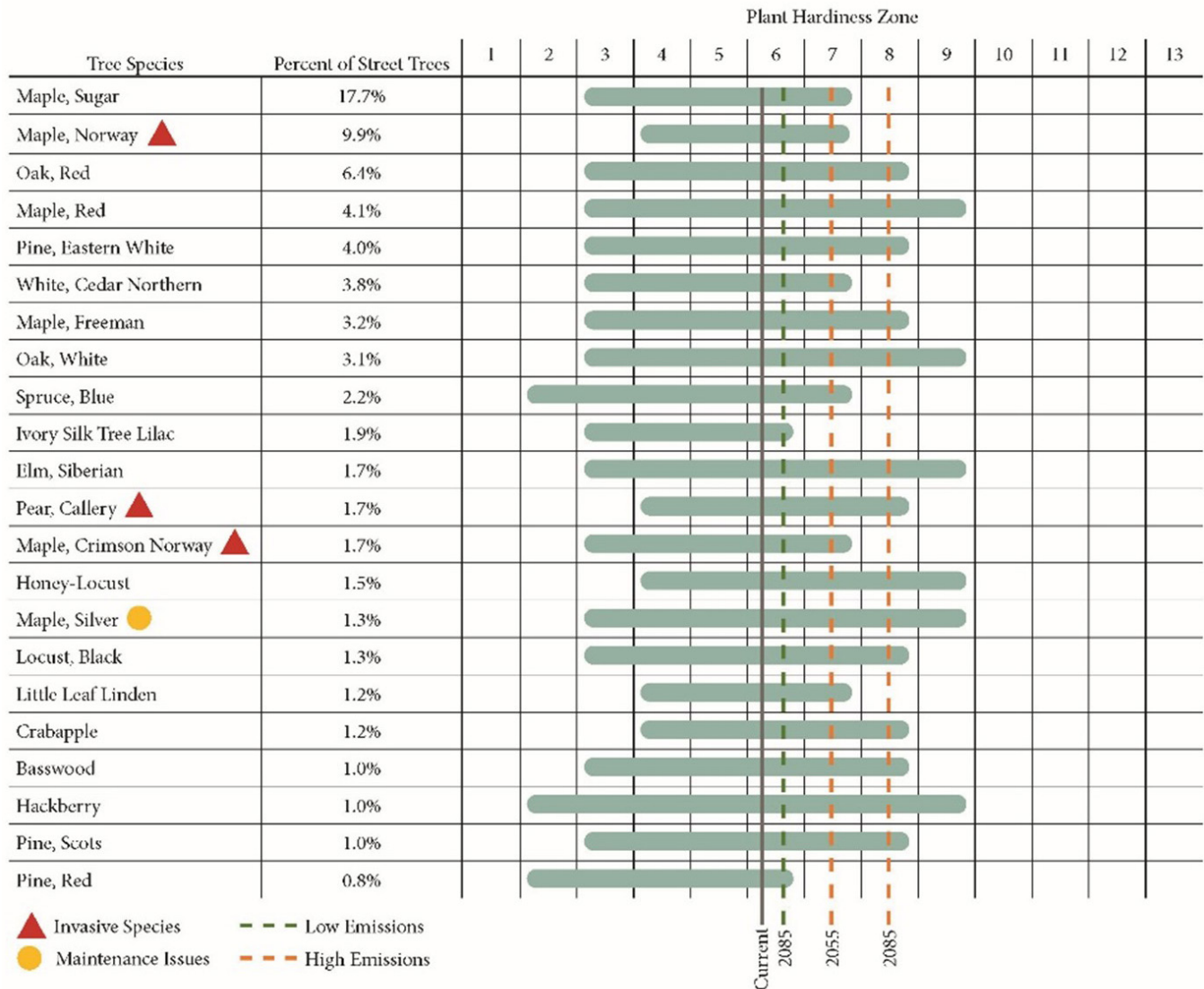
An estimated 475 acres within Traverse City is covered by a building and, therefore, covered by a roof, an equivalent area of three times the size of Disneyland.<sup>28</sup> Roofs in Traverse City tend to be made out of a hard, non-porous material that



*Green Roofs on Uptown Condominiums.*

Photo Credit: Inhabitect Architects

Figure 21: Traverse City Trees



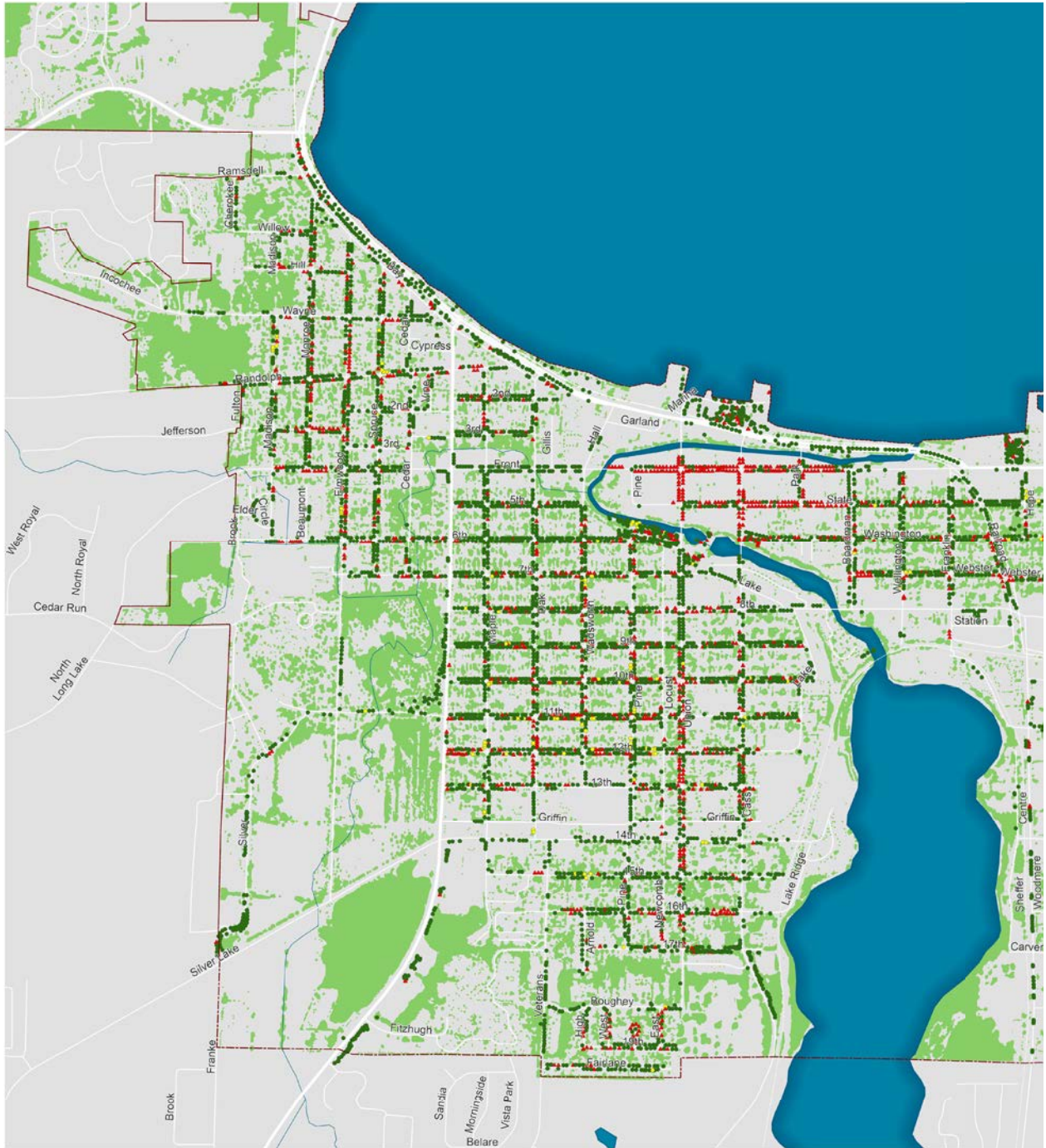
serves its purpose as a roof but also contributes to stormwater runoff. As opposed to a hard roof, green roofs are planted roofs consisting of vegetation like sedum or other small succulents and grasses. Green roofs provide many benefits beyond capturing stormwater as they reduce energy usage by cooling the building, provide a habitat for insects and other animals, reduce ambient temperatures and the urban heat island, and add aesthetic value to the building and neighborhood.<sup>29</sup> Compared to a black roof, green roofs are estimated to provide a return in investment within 6.2 years and a 5.2% rate of return in the environmental, habitation, aesthetic, and economic benefits that they offer, making them a financially beneficial building feature.<sup>30</sup> Many communities encourage development to include green roofs through the use of development bonuses or requiring a

minimum amount of greenspace in developments, of which green roofs would be included.

### Trees

One of the most valuable natural systems in any environment are the trees. In an urban environment, the urban forest system consists of street trees, trees on private property, and trees on public property and in parks. Trees provide numerous benefits including stormwater infiltration, cooling the ambient environment, absorbing sound, improving air quality, and providing aesthetic and health benefits. A single mature sugar maple tree, one of the most common trees in Traverse City, provides \$410 in energy savings, 10,251 gallons of avoided runoff, and \$407 of emission reduction/sequestration over a 40-year period.

Map 13: Tree Canopy, West



## Tree Canopy, West

Sources: Michigan Open Data Portal, City of Traverse City

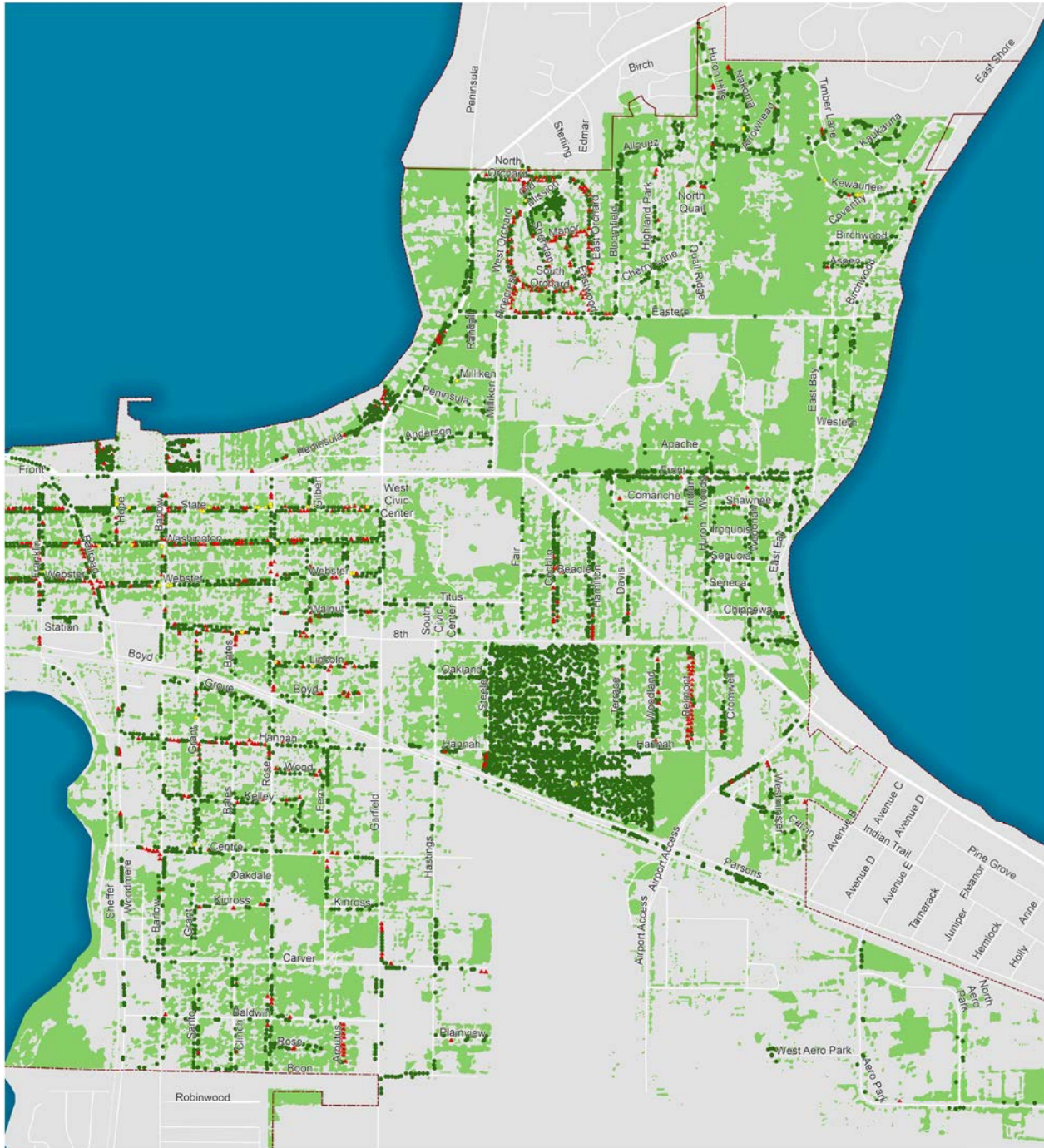
■ Tree Canopy

City Managed Trees

- Tree
- Tree, species is prone to maintenance issues
- Tree, species is considered invasive



Map 14: Tree Canopy, East



## Tree Canopy, East

Sources: Michigan Open Data Portal, City of Traverse City

■ Tree Canopy

City Managed Trees

- Tree
- Tree, species is prone to maintenance issues
- ▲ Tree, species is considered invasive



Climate change poses an existential threat to Traverse City’s urban forest. As the climate continues to warm, diseases and pests that are common in southern climates will start to move north, potentially threatening the health of the trees. Additionally, warmer climates may not be suitable for some of Traverse City’s trees. The figure titled Traverse City Trees shows the most common Traverse City managed trees (street trees, trees on public land) and the plant hardiness zones to which they are suited. Plant hardiness is used to determine what species would thrive in a certain climate environment. As shown in the figure, most of the city-managed trees are suited for Hardiness Zones 3–8; under a high emissions climate scenario, many trees in Traverse City may struggle and perish by 2085.<sup>31</sup> Also notable is that three of the most common city-managed trees are considered invasive and should no longer be planted by the city. Future plantings should focus on species that are at least suited for Hardiness Zone 8.

## Wetlands

Wetlands are one of the most unique and fragile ecosystems that provide numerous ecosystem services ranging from water filtration and capture to critical animal habitats. Wetlands have the unique capacity to retain large amounts of water during periods of excessive precipitation and slowly release it into the environment over time, reducing the impacts of flooding. The largest concentrations of wetlands in Traverse City are along Kids Creek, between the City’s southwestern corner and 11th Street, and along Mitchel Creek to the east of 3 Mile Road. There are two main types of wetlands: emergent and forested. Emergent wetlands are characterized by seasonal flooding, saturated soil,

**Table 46: Wetlands**

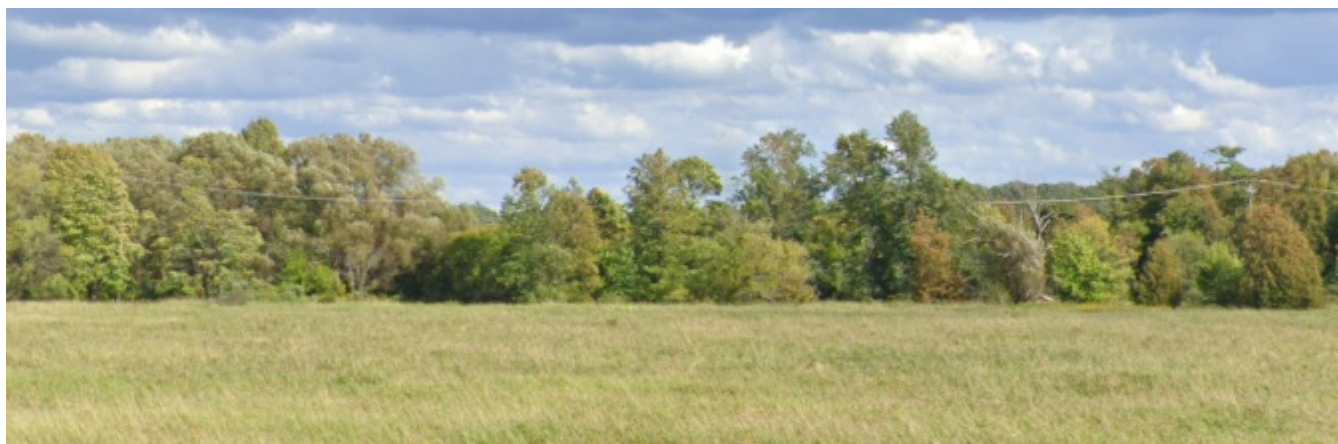
| Wetland Type*           | Acres | Percent of Total Existing Wetlands |
|-------------------------|-------|------------------------------------|
| Emergent Wetlands       | 93.6  | 42%                                |
| Forested Wetlands       | 128.6 | 58%                                |
| Total Existing Wetlands | 222.2 | 100%                               |

Source: EGLE

\*In addition to the total existing wetlands, there are 234.7 acres of Restorative Wetlands in Traverse City.

and domination by small perennial plants. Forested wetlands have more woody vegetation, compared to emergent wetlands, and have less saturated soils. In total, Traverse City has 222.2 acres of wetlands within its borders. An additional 234.7 acres of restorative wetlands are located in Traverse City. Restorative wetlands are areas identified by the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) as prime for wetland restoration because they were historically wetlands or have the right conditions to engineer a new wetland.

Because of their sensitivity and importance to the broader ecosystem, wetlands are tightly regulated. Wetlands larger than five acres, within 1,000 feet of a Great Lake, or located within 500 feet of an inland lake, pond, river, or stream are regulated by EGLE. Disturbing an EGLE regulated wetland by depositing fill material, dredging the wetland, draining water, or developing in the wetland requires obtaining a permit from EGLE.<sup>32</sup>



*Kids Creek Wetlands.*

Photo Credit: Google

In total, the Grand Traverse Bay has lost nearly 50% of its pre-development wetlands, and wetland loss continues to take place despite EGLE's wetland permit program. To further protect wetlands, local units of government across the Grand Traverse Bay watershed have adopted and implemented zoning tools that are intended to protect the environment. The most common tool that local governments leverage to protect wetlands is a requirement to establish wetland setbacks which function similarly to water and property line setbacks. Additional tools may include special use permits for developments that impact wetlands with a standard to limit adverse wetland impacts as a result of proposed developments.

While there is not a wealth of wetlands within City boundaries, there is a ring of wetlands around the City in the surrounding Townships. This outer ring of wetlands serves an important purpose for the city and the environment. As water moves across the land and drains into the bay and the Boardman River, it passes through this ring of wetlands, is filtered, and partially retained in the process. The loss of these wetlands would mean that as water drains into the City from the surrounding areas, it would bring more contaminants and move much more quickly, increasing the risk of flooding and erosion along the Boardman River, Kids Creek, and elsewhere. Therefore, the City will need to work with Garfield Township, East Bay Township, and Elmwood Township to preserve these vitally

important wetlands. Currently, Garfield Township's zoning ordinance has established wetland setbacks of 25 feet for a regulated wetland or an unregulated wetland area that otherwise meets the criteria to be designated as a wetland.<sup>33</sup> East Bay Township's zoning ordinance emphasizes wetland preservation through development standards.<sup>34</sup>

## Pollinator Habitat

An estimated 75% of the world's food production is reliant on pollinators.<sup>35</sup> Pollinators, most commonly insects, carry pollen from male to female organs of a plant, resulting in the production of the plant fruit (apples, cherries, squash, etc.). Many residential gardens also rely on pollinators for the healthy production of fruits and vegetables. While Traverse City has limited agricultural production, promoting healthy environments to support pollinators maintains a thriving regional ecosystem. On public lands, the City can support pollinators by planting native species and reducing the amount of mowed lawn. The City also requires property owners to maintain an orderly lawn and that all grasses must be cut below eight inches between May 1 and November 1. However, these regulations can negatively impact pollinators, especially in early spring, by reducing the amount of foraging and habitable space. To better support pollinator species, the city could institute a "No Mow May" program where property owners would not be penalized for an un-mowed lawn during the month of May. Additionally, the traditional monoculture lawn lacks the resources to support many pollinators. The addition of other plant species in a lawn like white clover and creeping thyme would provide necessary resources, maintain the appearance of a traditional lawn, and incorporate native plants into their decorative landscaping. An educational campaign to coincide with the "No Mow May" program would increase awareness of how to encourage other plant species in a lawn to support pollinators.

## WATER

Water is a defining aspect of life in Traverse City. Whether it is visiting one of the several beaches along Grand Traverse Bay, kayaking down the Boardman/Ottaway River, or simply driving along the shoreline, water has a constant presence in the community. The statement "we should proactively and consistently manage water, sanitary, and

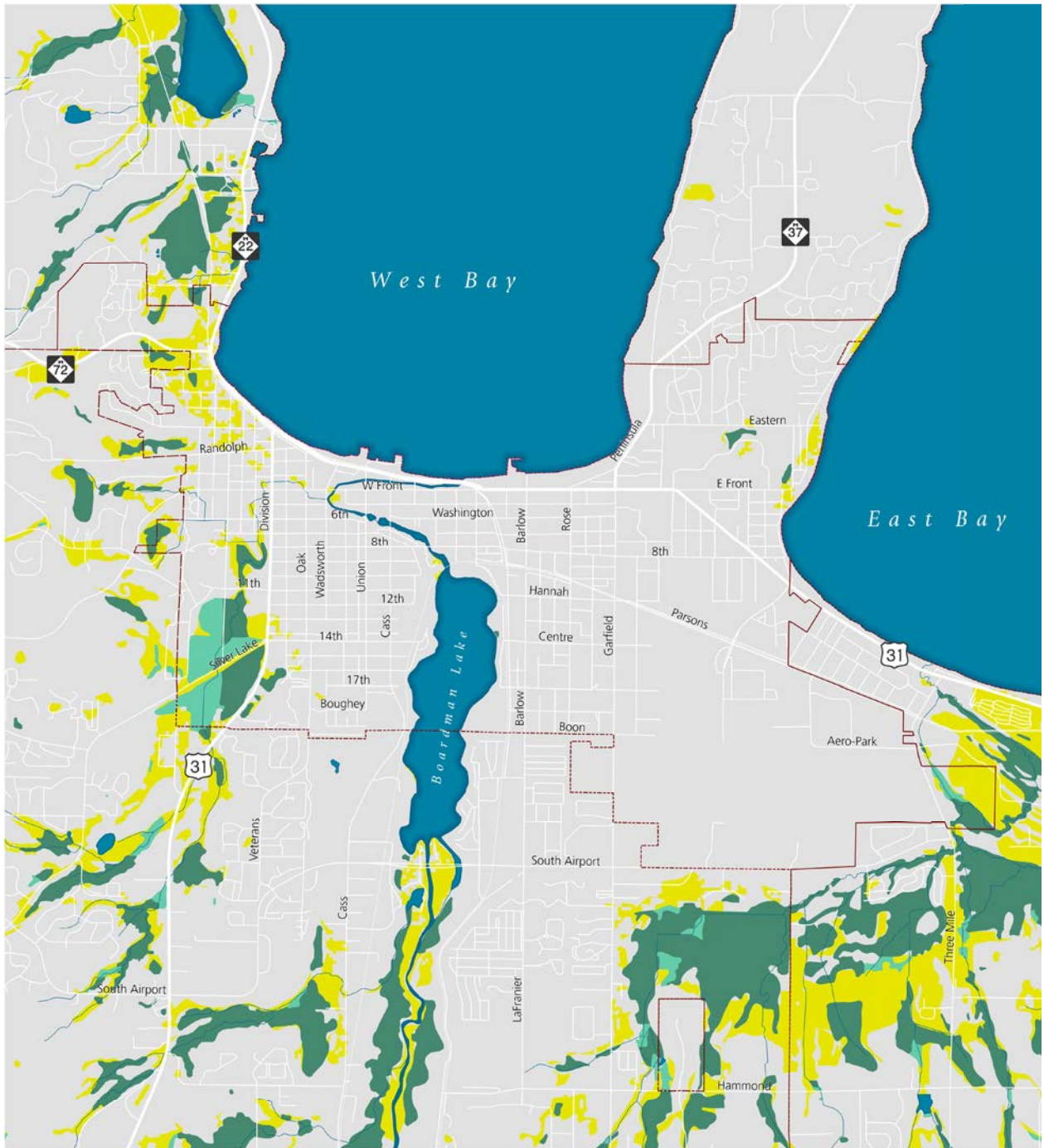


Pollinator Sign.

Photo Credit: Google



Map 15: Wetlands



## Wetlands

Sources: Michigan Open Data Portal, City of Traverse City

- Emergent Wetlands
- Forested Wetlands
- Restorative Wetlands

storm infrastructure systems for continued and improvement public health and safety” was the top goal identified by survey participants during Phase I of the Master Plan community engagement. The following discussion on water and the City begins in the upper watershed where precipitation, stormwater, and groundwater begin their journey towards Traverse City.

## The Grand Traverse Bay Watershed

A watershed is a geographic area of water drainage defined by high points in topography. Simply put, a watershed acts like a bowl directing water to a collection point (Lake Michigan). The Grand Traverse Bay Watershed is approximately 976 square miles and covers portions of Antrim, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, and Leelanau Counties. As water travels through the watershed, it moves from the upper reaches (the outer edges) through lower reaches and eventually discharges into Lake Michigan. While water moves very slowly through the watershed, the entire watershed is connected. Therefore, impacts on water quality, both good and bad, anywhere within the watershed will impact the water quality in Traverse City. Improving water quality is often an issue that requires extensive and effective regional collaboration.

The upper reaches of the Grand Traverse Bay Watershed extend into the forested and agricultural areas of rural Grand Traverse, Antrim, and Kalkaska Counties. This is where water begins its journey towards Traverse City. While miles from the City, these rural and natural areas are vitally important to the water quality and ecological health of the City’s waterbodies. As water moves through the watershed, it picks up pollutants and sediment, carrying them downstream towards Traverse City. By the time water reaches the City, it is bringing with it any discharged effluent throughout the watershed. However, water can also be cleaned as it travels through the watershed. Wetlands and riparian ecosystems act as natural filtration devices that can capture, remove, and/or dilute pollutants, lessening their impact on water quality. The work of organizations like the Grand Traverse Watershed Center focus on the holistic health of the entire watershed to improve water resources within every community. While the City has limited influence on the upper reaches of the watershed, it can participate in regional efforts to improve and maintain watershed health.

## Upper Boardman River

The Boardman River watershed and its tributaries originate at the southern edge of the Grand Traverse Bay watershed and covers parts of Grand Traverse County and Kalkaska County, as well as 20 smaller municipalities. The watershed covers a total of 287 square miles (about one third of the Grand Traverse Bay watershed), including 180 miles of river and tributary streams.<sup>36</sup> The vastness of the watershed contributes to the overall ecological health of Grand Traverse Bay; Boardman River’s designation as an “impaired waterbody” indicates that notable levels of pollutants have limited the function of the river.<sup>37</sup> Addressing this designation to support economic well-being for nearby residents, protecting and improving a high-quality environment, ensuring healthy lifestyles, promoting connections and stewardship between people and the environment, and integrating the watershed into the social and cultural fabric of the surrounding community will require multi-jurisdictional efforts.<sup>38</sup>

The impaired designation of the Upper Boardman River is a result of the presence of Polychloride Biphenyls (PCBs) in the water. These contaminants likely entered the Boardman River through atmospheric deposition, air pollution that has transferred to the water system via precipitation. PCBs were widely used in industrial and manufacturing operations until they were banned in the United States in 1979 due to their negative impact on human health.<sup>39</sup> While PCBs are no longer manufactured or used, their legacy is still polluting environments today. It is important to note that all Great Lakes and their connecting channels are mercury-impaired, and the entire bay and Boardman River watershed are impaired by dioxins, mercury, and PCBs. This pervasiveness speaks to the fact that all of Boardman River as well as its upper portion are impacted by pollution and decades of harmful practices that have damaged the Great Lake’s environment. While this wide-spread phenomenon is difficult to address without investigating the entirety of the Great Lake ecosystem, specific impairments within the Upper Boardman River call for targeted actions that can make a difference. For example, Kids Creek is a major tributary to the Boardman River that has a poor aquatic macroinvertebrate community.<sup>40</sup> This is caused by sedimentation, flow regime alteration, and other human-caused sources related to

stormwater; relatedly, the Kids Creek Restoration Project places a major focus on managing and reducing stormwater as well as improving the in-stream habitats of macroinvertebrates and fish.<sup>41</sup>

Significant restoration work along the Boardman River has taken place over the past decades. Beginning in 2004, when three hydroelectric dams along the Boardman River were discontinued, the community organized and worked to restore stretches of the river to their natural states. The first of the three dams was removed in 2012, and the final dam was removed in 2018. These dam removals and associated habitat restoration have returned the river to a more natural state, providing more spawning habitats for fish, allowing aquatic species to move throughout the river, and restoring the natural hydrologic processes of the river.

When water has made its way through the upper- and mid-reaches of the watershed, it enters Traverse City through one of four sub-watersheds (illustrated in the map titled Watersheds). Sub-watersheds are smaller drainage basins within a larger watershed. The Cedar Creek/Frontal West Arm Grand Traverse Bay sub-watershed includes the northwest corner of the city and water traveling through this sub-watershed drains directly into Lake Michigan. The Boardman Lake/Boardman River is the largest sub-watershed in Traverse City; 42% of the city is in this sub-watershed, and its drainage patterns direct water into Boardman Lake, Boardman River, and eventually Lake Michigan.

### *Boardman Lake*

Virtually bisecting the City, Boardman Lake is a significant community asset. It is used by residents and visitors alike for recreation and enjoyment. Boardman Lake is also classified as an impaired waterbody due to the presence of mercury in the water. Therefore, fish and shellfish consumption from the lake is discouraged because of the potential for negative impacts on human health.<sup>42</sup> It is important to note that these conditions and the presence of impaired fish are not exclusive to Boardman Lake as these problems persist across the region -- the fish of Boardman Lake are exposed to fewer contaminants than those of Long Lake because of the change over in water. Like PCBs, mercury entered the water system primarily through atmospheric deposition. As a large body of water within the watershed, it is a natural collection point for pollutants and sediments,



*Sabin Dam prior to removal.*

Photo Credit: InterFluve



*Sabin Reservoir Delta restoration.*

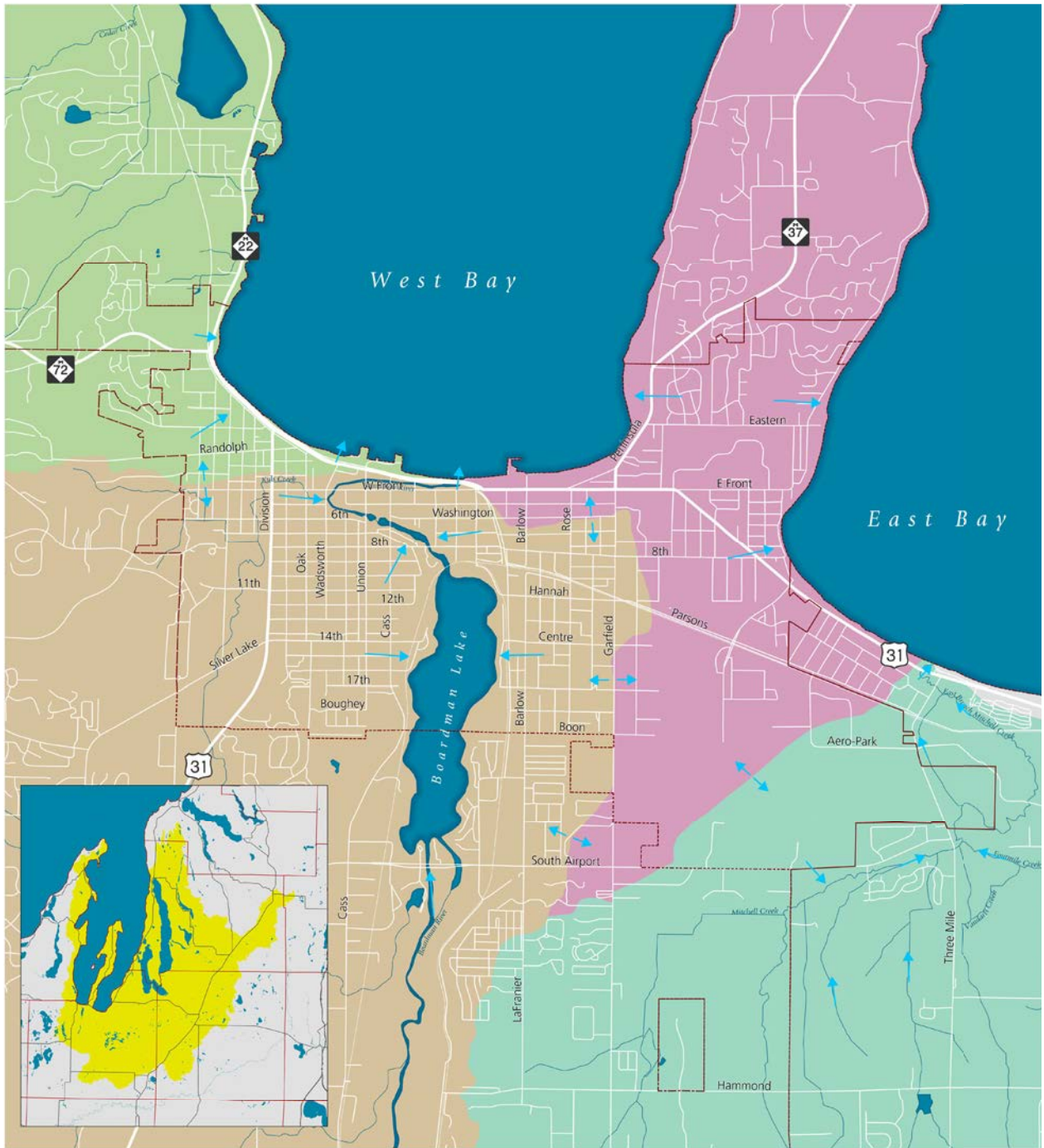
Photo Credit: InterFluve



*Floodplain restoration.*

Photo Credit: InterFluve

Map 16: Watersheds



## Watersheds

Sources: Michigan Open Data Portal, City of Traverse City

### Sub-watersheds

- Cedar Creek - Frontal West Arm Grand Traverse Bay
- Boardman Lake - Boardman River
- Prescott Lake - Frontal Grand Traverse Bay
- East Branch Mitchell Creek

- Grand Traverse Bay Watershed
- Water flow



especially for heavier pollutants that settle on the bottom of waterbodies. Therefore, improving the quality of Boardman Lake requires improvements to other areas of the watershed in addition to near lake environments. Stormwater control measures are one of the most common and effective ways to improve water quality in urban environments. While stormwater and water quality are inexplicably linked, stormwater is covered in detail in the infrastructure and energy section of this plan.

### *The Lower Boardman River*

The Lower Boardman River is a defining feature of Traverse City, meandering through downtown and discharging into Lake Michigan at the east end of Clinch Park. For the purposes of this narrative, the Lower Boardman River is considered to be the portion of the river from Boardman Lake to Lake Michigan. The Lower Boardman has been a subject of constant and intense study over the past several decades. The impact of the Boardman River on the city extends through land use, economic development, culture, recreation, and natural systems. The following narrative will primarily focus on the natural systems of the Boardman River, while land use, economic development, culture, recreation, and natural systems are all interconnected, each piece is discussed in the respective section.

The Lower Boardman River Unified Plan was created in 2021 to provide a clear direction for the future of the Lower Boardman and the surrounding area.<sup>43</sup> The existing Lower Boardman has been shaped to conform to the needs of the built environment and development. Historically, the banks of the river were stabilized to provide space for development and to protect that development from natural changes in the river hydrology, the damming of the river to generate power, and the use of the river as a convenient outlet for stormwater and other urban runoff. These historic alterations had drastic impacts of the ecological health of the river. Currently, the Lower Boardman is designated as an impaired waterway, with the aquatic life and wildlife cited as impaired factors.<sup>44</sup> The presence of PCBs is the main pollutant contributing to impaired status. Beyond water quality, the banks of the Lower Boardman hardly resemble a natural state. The Lower Boardman Plan reported in 2015 that 37% of the riverbank was vertical wall, 12% was high vegetative bank

(more than 10 feet above the river), and 38% was low vegetative bank (6 to 10 feet above the river). Both high and low vegetative banks are commonly stabilized with rubble and other construction materials. Restoring and improving the riverbank is key to improving the overall health of the Lower Boardman.

Urban river restoration is often a challenge because of the existing development along the rivers as well as persistent development pressures that lead to the removal of vegetation along the water. However, a significant portion of the land along the Lower Boardman is owned by the City, presenting opportunities to restore riverbanks on public lands. The figure titled Lower Boardman Restoration shows which areas of the Lower Boardman are owned by the city and where there are opportunities for restoration and habitat improvement, as identified in the Unified Plan.

Riparian habitat improvement entails replacing rubble and vertical walls with more natural riparian edges and native plants. Added enhancements like bird houses and hibernacula (hibernation shelters) also improve the ecological health of the riparian zone along the Lower Boardman. Ecological and habitat improvements do not end at the river's edge as in-stream improvements can support fish and other aquatic organisms. Rock vanes, log cover, basking structures, and spawning beds all support the local aquatic community.

Riparian and aquatic habitat improvements are much easier to accomplish on public land than private land because the City can undertake those restoration efforts at its own discretion. However, the City can encourage or require improvements through design and site regulations. Establishing a dedicated funding source to support these improvements is necessary to see them through.

### *FishPass*

Planning for FishPass, a new and innovative approach to managing fish and ecological health, began in 2016. Later that year, Traverse City was selected as the first site to construct and implement this new technology. At its core, FishPass is a sorting mechanism to ensure that only native species can migrate up the Boardman River to spawn and access habitat. Other non-native or invasive species will be prevented from moving upstream. The facility is designed to be able to

test and implement various technologies to sort native and non-native/invasive species. The project also includes other improvements, including natural stream restoration, canoe/kayak launches, a pedestrian bridge, and a research center.<sup>45</sup> The project was slated to begin construction in 2021 and to finish in 2023 but was delayed due to litigation over the use of the land. In the fall of 2022, the Michigan Court of Appeals ruled that the use of the land for FishPass was valid and within the purview of the City Commission.<sup>46</sup>

Kids Creek

A tributary of the Boardman River, Kids Creek runs roughly along US-31. Within the City, it stretches from the southern city border along the west side of US-31 and eventually connects with the Boardman River. Portions of the stream in the City are underground with day lighting in occasional locations.<sup>47</sup> Kids Creek is the primary avenue for floods in Traverse City and considered impaired by the State of Michigan for not meeting designated use standards for other indigenous aquatic life and wildlife, total body contact, and fish consumption. These designated uses have been negatively affected by elevated levels of E. Coli bacteria, poor aquatic insect communities, stormwater runoff, and the presence of PCBs. While Kids Creek is primarily frequented for recreational fishing purposes, the

creek discharges into the Boardman River and eventually Lake Michigan, along Clinch Park, which are used for a variety recreation activities. In response to the poor ecological health of Kids Creek, the Watershed Center of Grand Traverse Bay published the Kids Creek Sub-Watershed Action Plan in 2013. Recommendations in the Action Plan included the installation of green infrastructure and reduction of impervious surfaces to reduce stormwater runoff, creating and installing buffers between the creek and development(s), and shoreline restoration. Today, most of the recommendations in the Action Plan have been implemented. Since 2013, the Watershed Center and its partners have been working to complete projects to improve the health of Kids Creek, as shown in the table titled Kids Creek Watershed Restoration.

Mitchell Creek

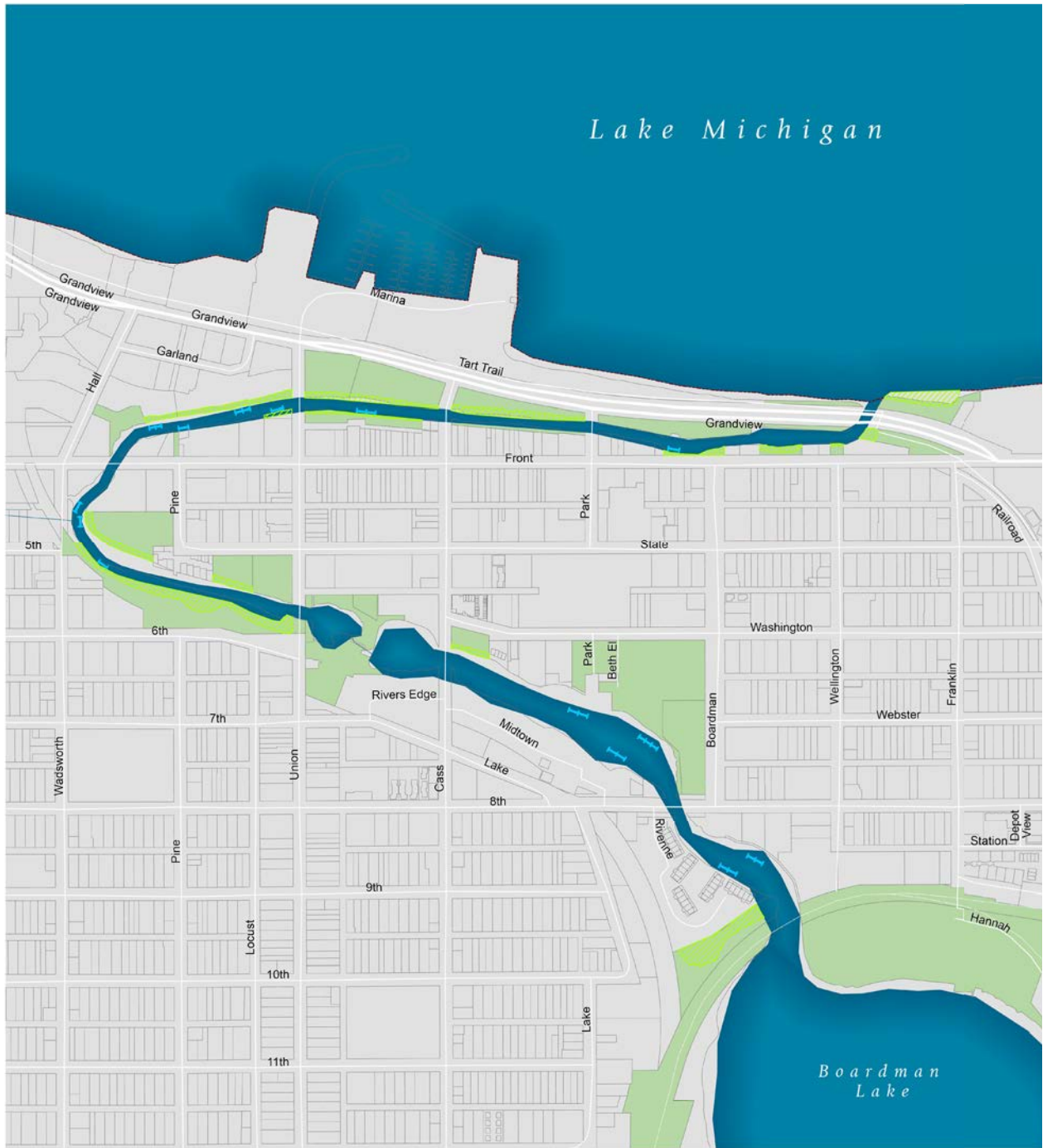
The East Branch Mitchell Creek Sub-watershed is the smallest sub-watershed in the City and crosses the southeast corner of the City. However, this area of Traverse City is adjacent to the Aero Park Industrial Park, a potential source of contamination. Mitchell Creek is considered an impaired waterway by the State of Michigan because it does not meet its designated use for total body contact due to elevated levels of E. Coli bacteria.<sup>48</sup> While the creek

**Table 47: Kids Creek Watershed Restoration**

| Year      | Project Name  | Cost        |
|-----------|---|-------------|
| 2013      | Kids Creek Daylighting Project at Munson.   | \$750,000   |
| 2013      | East Bay Park Microbial Filters Installation.   | \$809,000   |
| 2014      | Kids Creek, Munson Cancer Center, parking lot underground infiltration.   | \$210,000   |
| 2015-2017 | Kids Creek, Munson Green Infrastructure (green roof, downspout planters, pervious pavement, stormwater wetland).                      | \$851,000   |
| 2017-2018 | Kids Creek, Munson Green Infrastructure (rain gardens, storm tree boxes).   | \$627,000   |
| 2017      | Kids Creek Trib AA Restoration.   | \$210,000   |
| 2017-2018 | Kids Creek, Grand Traverse Commons and Grand Traverse Pavilions Green Infrastructure (rain garden, sediment basin, dry wells).        | \$293,000   |
| 2021      | Kids Creek, Cedar and 6th Street culvert replacements to restore the natural function of the stream.                                  | \$2,108,000 |
| 2022      | Kids Creek, Reduce stormwater runoff from the Meijer parking with five underground infiltration and six connected bioretention cells. | \$1,582,000 |




Source: The Watershed Center Grand Traverse Bay

Map 17: Lower Boardman Restoration



# Lower Boardman Restoration

Sources: Michigan Open Data Portal, City of Traverse City, Lower Boardman Unified Plan

-  Public Land
-  Potential Riparian Habitat Improvements
-  Potential Aquatic Habitat Improvements



itself is not used for swimming and boating, the creek does discharge at the western end of the Traverse City State Park, a popular swimming beach in East Bay Township. The presence of E. Coli is an indication that there is likely sewage or animal waste getting into the creek; because of the limited segment of Mitchell Creek that travels through the city, the contamination likely occurred upstream outside city limits. The Watershed Center Grand Traverse Bay is currently in the process of sampling and testing Mitchell Creek to identify the source of contamination.<sup>49</sup> Additionally, the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy (GTRLC) has established the Mitchell Creek Preserve, the Center’s soon-to-be headquarters.

### Lake Michigan

The defining feature of Traverse City is Lake Michigan. With almost 5.5 miles of lake shore, Lake Michigan (Grand Traverse Bay) is a vitally important part of the City. The quality of the region’s water is a driving force behind the tourism and recreation industries and is used and appreciated by residents and tourists year-round. However, almost like a living being, the lake changes and evolves over days, months, and decades.

### Coastal Resilience

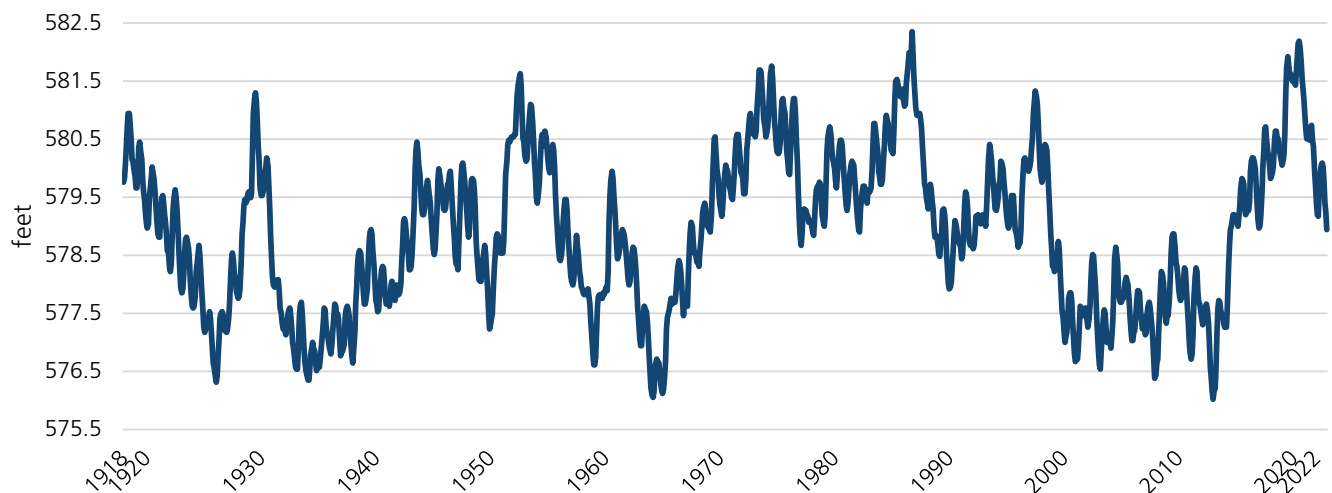
Planning for coastal resilience puts the dynamics of coastal environments at the forefront of the planning process. Along the Great Lakes, this includes accounting for the seasonal and cyclical rise and fall of the water elevation, storms, flooding, and native coastal ecosystems. In Traverse

City, the coastline along Grand Traverse Bay has experienced significant evolution over the history of the city. Originally, indigenous tribes in the region used the bay for travel and sustenance. As the region was colonized by Europeans, it became a hub of activity. Even into the late 20th century, Traverse City’s waterfront was a working waterfront dotted by industrial uses and storage facilities. Now Traverse City’s waterfront is a mix of public lands, residences, and hotels.

As a coastal community, the dynamics of Lake Michigan are ever present in Traverse City. Water levels have fluctuated over decades. The gravitational pull of the moon and wind cause minute changes daily, and cyclical changes in precipitation and runoff cause the Great Lakes to rise and fall feet over decades. As shown in the figure titled Lake Michigan Water Levels, Lake Michigan follows a fairly routine pattern of rise and fall. Lake Michigan’s historic low was recorded at 576.02 feet in January 2013 and peaked at 582.35 feet in 1986. However, in June of 2020, Lake Michigan was recorded at 582.19 feet, coming within ~2” of the historic high. This indicates that Lake Michigan was close to completing a change from a historic low to a historic high in a period of seven years. A change of this magnitude had never been recorded since data collection began 100 years ago. This trend of rapid lake fluctuations from historic lows to historic highs will likely continue and accelerate due to climate change.

During the period of high water in 2019, strong winds pushed water inland, flooding Clinch Park

Figure 22: Lake Michigan Water Levels



Source: Army Corps of Engineers





*Sunset on Grand Traverse Bay.*

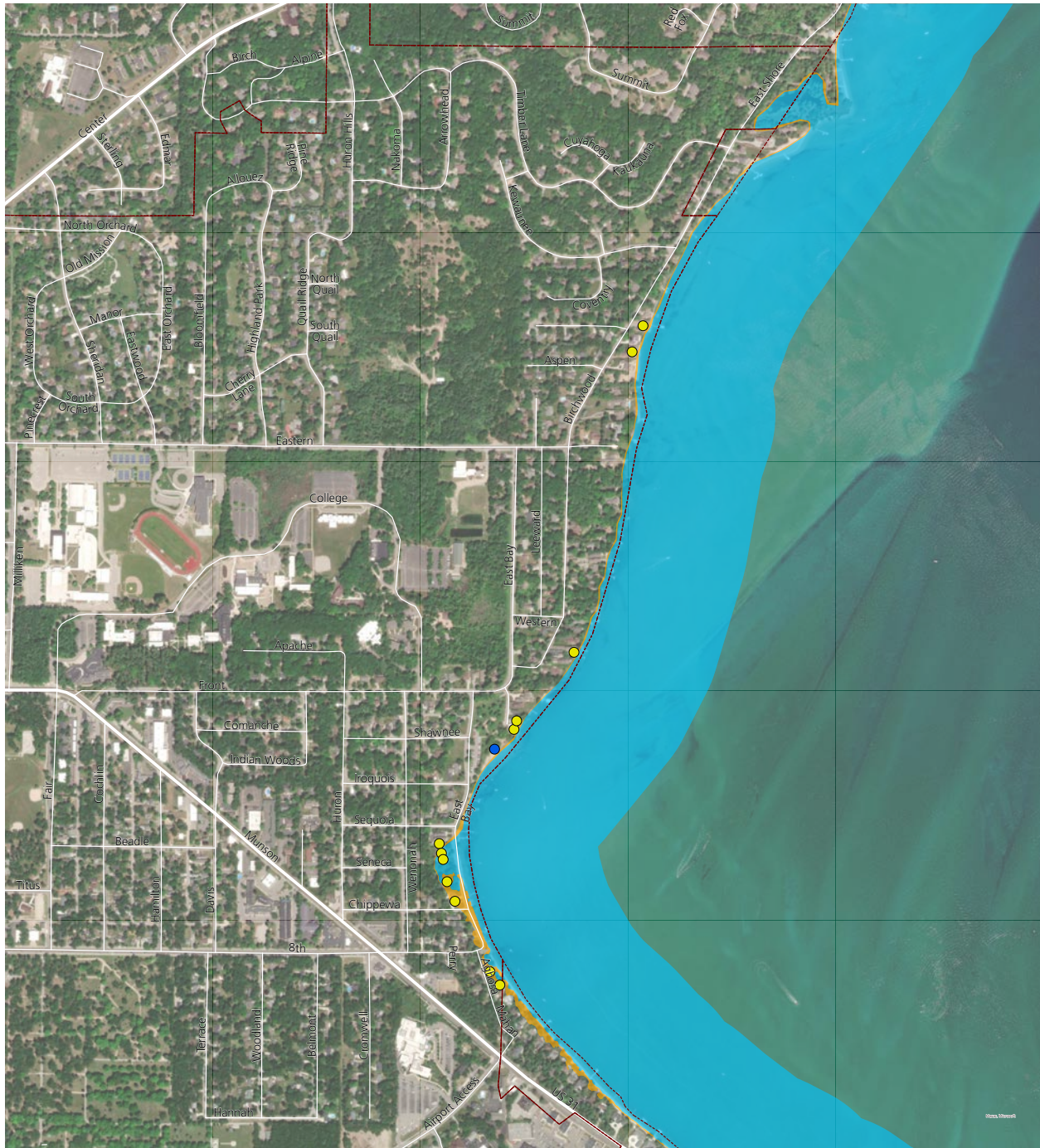
Photo Credit: City of Traverse City

and the public boat launch which rendered the facility unusable. The high water of Lake Michigan also caused a rise in the elevation of the Lower Boardman River, submerging many of the wooden boardwalks along the river and preventing boats, kayaks, and canoes from passing under several of the bridges. During periods of high water, even a moderate amount of precipitation or wind activity can cause serious impacts on near shore environments, highlighting the need to plan for high water along the coastline. However, the nature of Grand Traverse Bay does influence the coastal dynamics. Along the western Lake Michigan shoreline in communities like Frankfort, Leland, and Manistee, the open water of Lake Michigan builds more intense storms which lead to higher storm surges. As Traverse City is located at the end of a very long bay, the high waves and storm surges experienced by the open shores are not as common. Methods for determining coastal hazards and risk that are used commonly across the State of Michigan can also be used in Traverse City. Coastal hazard metrics provide a valuable way to assess risk and plan for fluctuating water levels.<sup>50</sup>

In many coastal communities across the State of Michigan, the dynamics of the Great Lakes contribute to the erosion of bluffs and beaches, the flooding of shoreland and near shore environments, and the destruction of property. In Traverse City, there is a lack of steep slopes which assuages some risk of shoreline erosion. However, there is developed land along the shoreline. A city parking lot near West End Beach is crumbling into the water due to erosion, illustrating the risks associated with development on the edge of the lake in addition to the prevalence of flooding.

FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Administration) publishes flood hazard zones, areas that are likely to flood in a precipitation event. Understanding where these flood zones are relative to critical assets gives some indication of what areas may be at risk for coastal flooding. The area impacted, as shown on the two figures titled Coastal Flood Zones, will likely vary depending on the severity of a storm and the height of the lake elevation. The most significant impacts are during periods of high water. There are four commercial buildings, four parking lots, eight public facilities,

Map 18: Coastal Flood Zones - East Bay



# Coastal Flood Zones - East Bay

Sources: Michigan Open Data Portal, City of Traverse City, FEMA



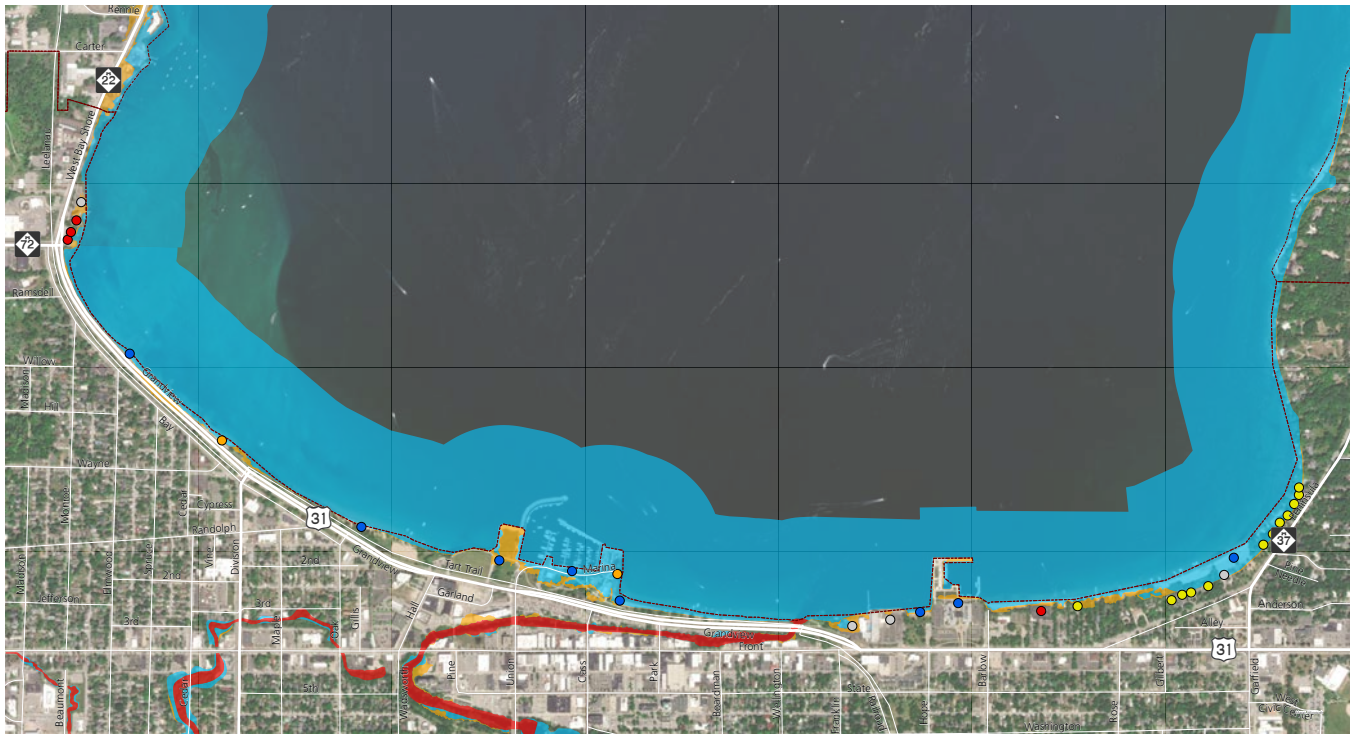
## FEMA Flood Zone

- Floodway
- 0.2% Annual Flood Hazard
- 1.0% Annual Flood Hazard

## At Risk Structure/Facility

- Residential Building
- Public Facility

## Map 19: Coastal Flood Zones - West Bay



## Coastal Flood Zones - West Bay

Sources: Michigan Open Data Portal, City of Traverse City

0.15 Miles  
Beckett & Raeder, Inc.

### FEMA Flood Zone

- Floodway
- 0.2% Annual Flood Hazard
- 1.0% Annual Flood Hazard

### At Risk Structure/Facility

- Commercial Building
- Residential Building
- Public Facility
- Parking Lot
- Recent Historic Flooding/Impact

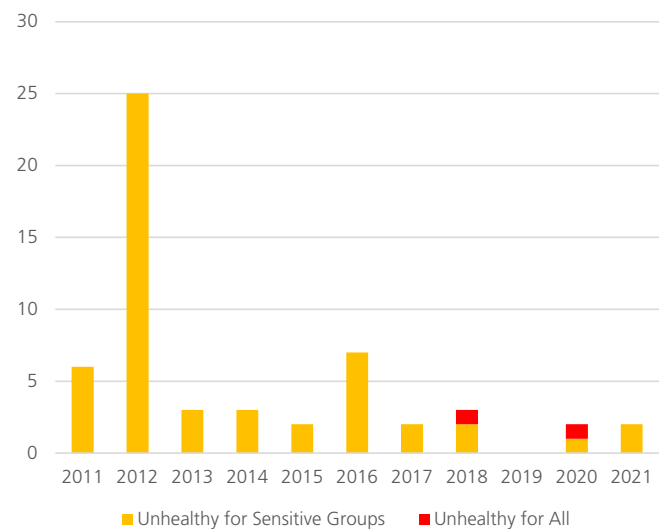
and 24 residential buildings intersecting the FEMA flood zones along the bay. However, the number would likely increase during a period of high water. The FEMA flood zones are intended to represent a 100-year (1% annual chance) and 500-year (0.2% annual chance) storm event, but these severe storms are increasing in frequency and intensity due to climate change. The 100-year and 500-year storm events are no longer accurate reference points. A comprehensive flood risk assessment can be found in the Infrastructure and Energy section of this plan.

## AIR

### Air Pollution

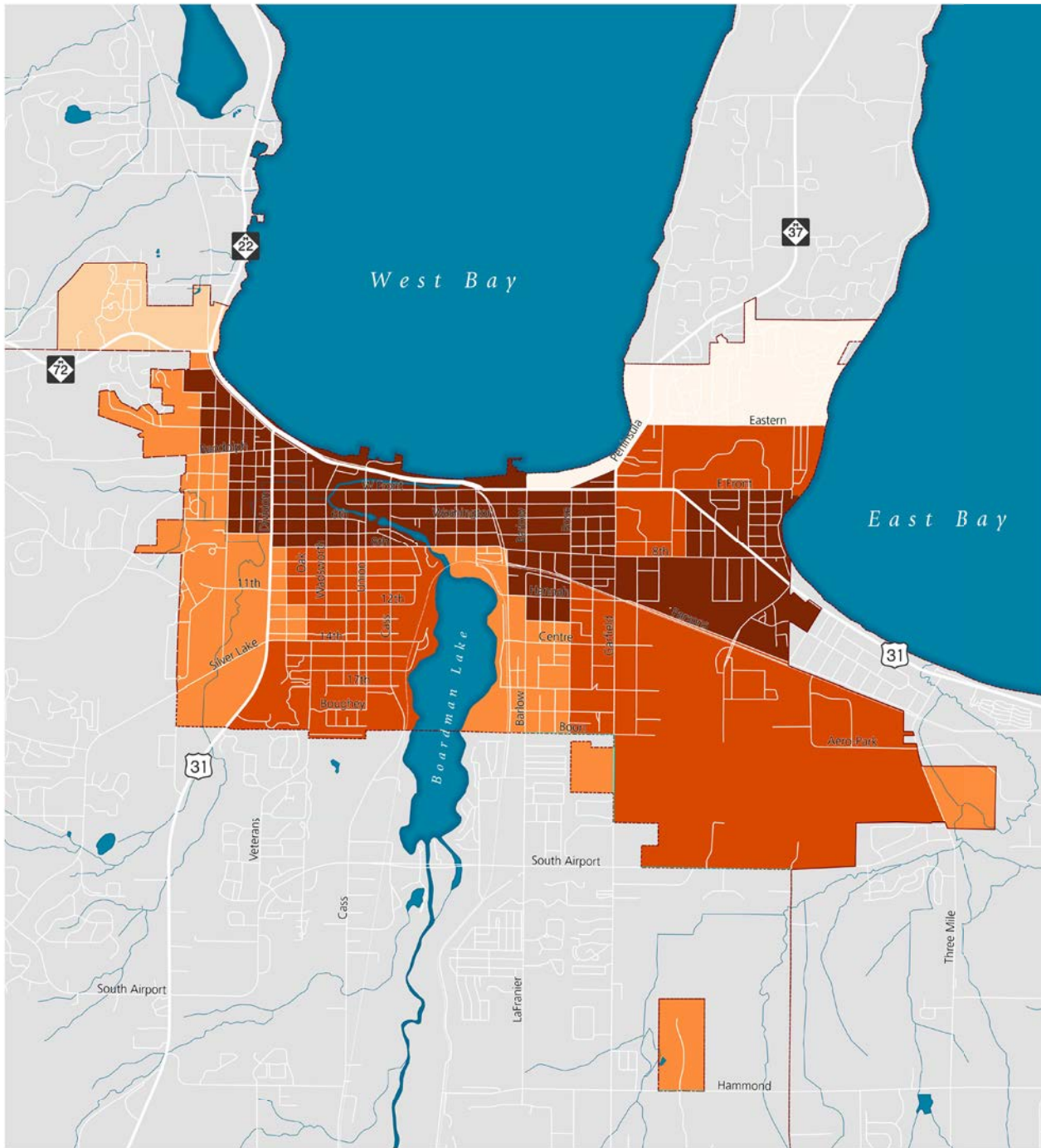
Air pollution can have many negative impacts on public health, including increased risk for respiratory illness and higher risk of cancer. As the figure titled Air Quality shows, the number of substandard air quality days (PM, or Particulate Matter, 2.5 and ozone) in Traverse City has stayed

Figure 23: Air Quality



Source: AirGov.com

Map 20: Traffic Pollution



## Traffic Pollution

Sources: Michigan Open Data Portal, City of Traverse City, EJScreen

### National Percentile

- 0% - 30%
- 31% - 50%
- 51% - 70%
- 71% - 80%
- 81% - 100%



fairly consistent over the recent years with its peak taking place in 2012.<sup>51</sup> Notably, the only two days in the past decade where air quality was deemed unhealthy for all individuals took place in 2018 and 2020. Of particular concern is the influence that traffic has on the air quality in the City. The neighborhoods along the Parkway from M-72 to S. Garfield are in the 90th percentile nationally for traffic pollution.<sup>52</sup> Traffic pollution is best mitigated by vegetative screening between the roadway and residential areas.

## Urban Heat Island

The built environment influences the ambient temperature (humidity, temperature, etc.). Areas with lots of vegetation and small buildings tend to be cooler than areas with vast amounts of parking and large buildings. The change in temperature throughout the built environment is referred to as the “Urban Heat Island.” The map titled Surface Temperature 06/26/22 shows the temperature throughout the City on a June day. Surface temperature was derived from LANDSAT satellite imagery taken on 06/26/22. The daily high (the temperature that was reported in weather applications and on the news) was 76°F, but as evident in the map, some areas of the city were significantly hotter than the daily high. Temperatures in and around Traverse City Airport were consistently around 100°F. Across the City, temperatures ranged from 65°F to 100°F, a massive difference. Building mass, pavement and asphalt, and lack of vegetation all contribute to higher temperatures, which is why many of the commercial corridors and shopping centers have higher temperatures.

Downtown Traverse City and the Munson Medical Campus, two areas of the City with the highest building density, experience higher temperatures, but not to the degree of the airport or other strip commercial developments. The main buildings on the Munson Campus have white roofs which reflects solar radiation back to the atmosphere/space, decreasing the amount of surface area that absorbs and radiates solar energy. Contrasting with the white roofs, the strip commercial development at the southeast corner of Airport Access and US-31 has black roofs and is one of the hottest areas of the City, reaching temperatures near 100°F. Many buildings downtown also have white roofs, but the surface parking lots are the main contributors to the urban heat island in downtown.

## Tree Coverage and Climate Change

Healthy, mature, and diverse tree canopies act as a natural cover that mitigates harsh climates, mitigates the impacts of an urban heat island, and works to combat climate change at large. Providing cooling relief for urban residents inevitably lessens the extent to which indoor energy is expended. Additionally, trees store carbon dioxide for their own growth, therefore lessening the presence of carbon dioxide and harmful emissions in the atmosphere. Long committed to promoting the benefits of trees, in 2018, the City of Traverse City completed an urban canopy assessment and tree management plan for all trees planted along city streets. In the report, the City was found to meet or come close to meeting its goal of planting 400 trees each year.

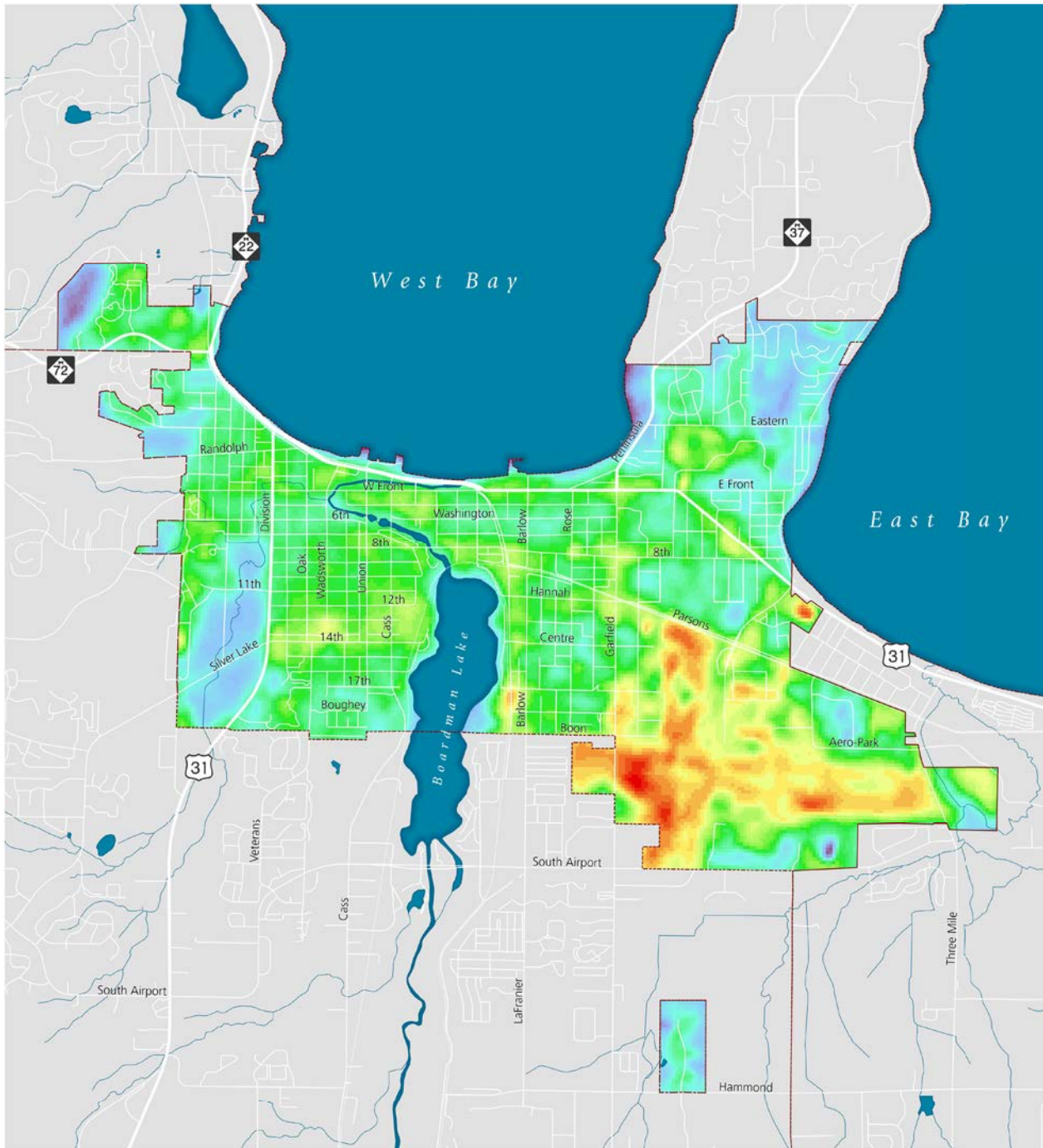
Source: City of Traverse City Urban Forestry Update

## Urban Heat Island and Equity

Higher temperatures that result from climate change will continue to perpetuate the urban heat island effect, creating dangerous circumstances for groups of city residents that may not have the means or resources to adequately cool themselves or find relief when this happens. The elderly portion of the population is particularly vulnerable and susceptible to negative impacts on their health during extreme heat events.

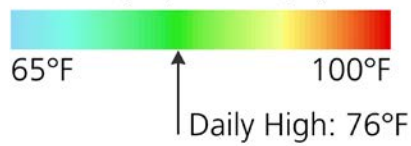
The coolest parts of the City are the wetlands along Kids Creek, the shoreline, the undeveloped land north of the Traverse City Water Treatment Facility, and the woodland to the west of Morgan Farms, all of which have a lot of vegetation or are near the water. Grand Traverse Bay and Boardman Lake act as temperature regulators that both release water vapor into the surrounding area and cool the ambient environment. Strategies to reduce the urban heat island include planting more vegetation and installing green and cool roofs. As climate change continues, it will be imperative to monitor the urban heat island and its impact on the community as high ambient

Map 21: Surface Temperature 06/26/22



## Surface Temperature 06/26/22

Sources: Michigan Open Data Portal, City of Traverse City



temperatures have implications for human health and contribute to heat-related illness and complications. The elderly, children, and low-income populations are particularly susceptible to complications resulting from high temperatures. From 2004 to 2018, there were an average of 704 heat-related deaths annually in the United States.<sup>53</sup> Additionally, elevated ambient temperatures require climate control systems (air conditioners) to work harder to keep indoor temperatures at a comfortable level, requiring more energy. Given that the current energy grid is still reliant on fossil fuels, increased energy needs correlate to increased greenhouse gas production, which drives temperatures higher over time.

## Carbon Sequestration

One of the most referenced climate mitigation strategies is carbon sequestration. Carbon sequestration refers to the process of removing carbon from the atmosphere or capturing it before it is released. There are three types of

carbon sequestration: biological, geological, and technological. Biological sequestration is the use of natural systems to store carbon. For example, a single mature tree is estimated to store roughly 48 pounds of carbon annually.<sup>54</sup> Conversely, cutting down trees has the effect of releasing additional carbon into the atmosphere, further illustrating the harms of deforestation.<sup>55</sup> Large bodies of water (such as lakes and oceans) also store vast amounts of carbon, absorbing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. Geological carbon sequestration is the storage of carbon in rocks and soil, which typically involves capturing carbon and injecting it deep into rocks. Finally, technical carbon sequestration is the use of mechanical processes to capture and transform carbon dioxide, a costly process that has yet to be introduced at mass scale. For Traverse City, biological carbon sequestration is the best method of capturing and storing carbon, primarily through the planting of vegetation.

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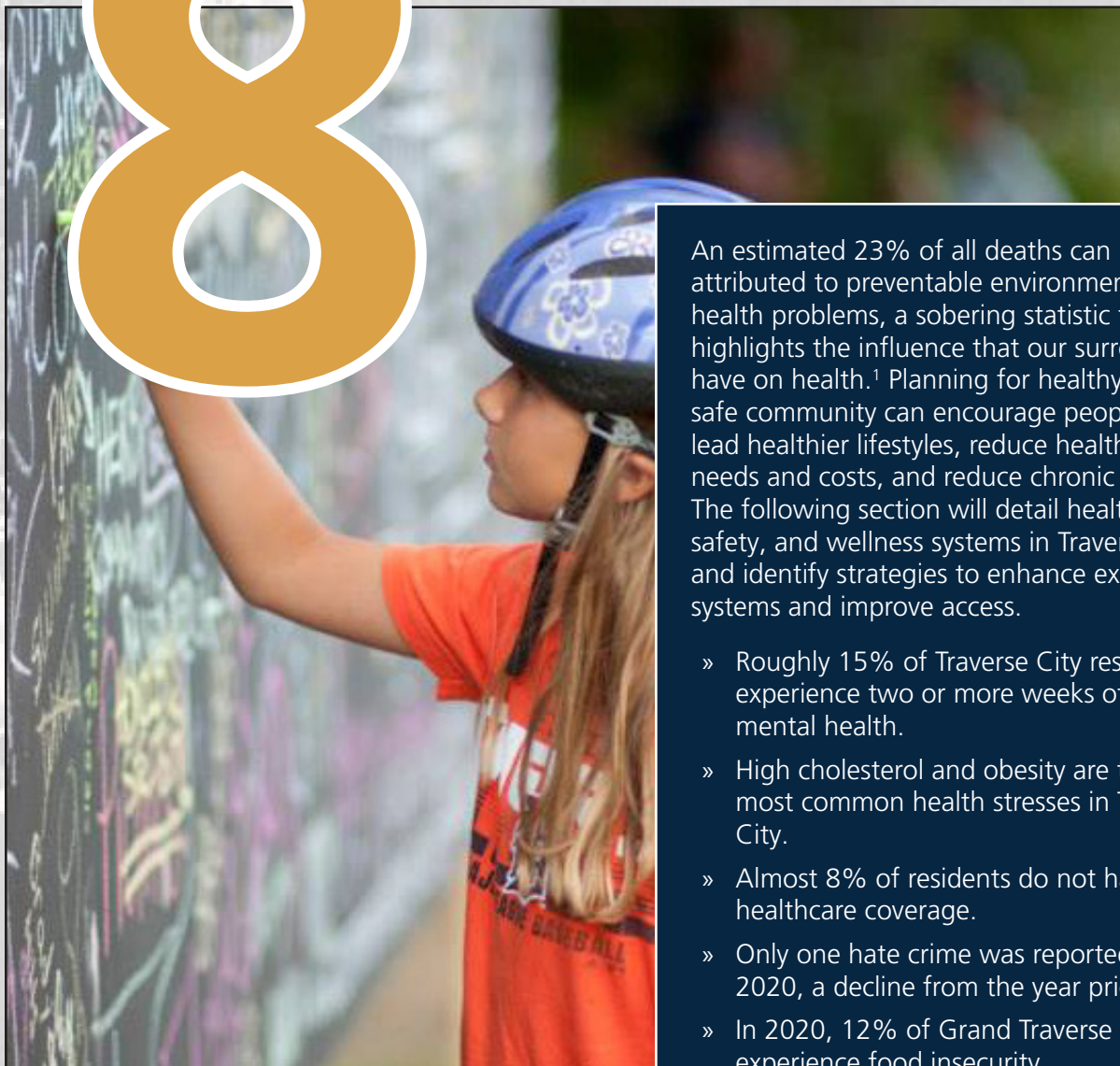
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## SUSTAINABILITY, RESILIENCY, & NATURAL SYSTEMS KEY POINTS

- » While the Midwest is insulated from many impacts of climate change and global warming, this perception is expected to drive migration to the region which may place a strain on infrastructural systems. Further, the Midwest is not entirely shielded from climate impacts. As temperatures across the globe continue to rise, the region can expect changes to agricultural production, forest characteristics, biodiversity and ecosystem functionality, human health, transportation and infrastructure, and community-wide capacity for adaptation.
- » The Michigan Healthy Climate Plan of 2022 lays the framework for 100% carbon neutrality by mid-century for the entire state. Traverse City's Climate Action Plan of 2011 similarly endeavors to approach environmental protection, economic sustainability, and address costs associated with the full pursuit of renewable energy sources.
- » Despite a limited number of contiguous tracts of natural land, the presence of many street trees, well-kept gardens and lawns, and public open spaces contributes to the natural features of Traverse City. It is important to maintain this sense of naturalness even as new development occurs, therefore supporting standards in the zoning ordinance that require new developments to install and/or replace trees, shrubs, and grass.
- » While there is not a wealth of wetlands within City boundaries, there is a ring of wetlands around the City in the surrounding Townships that functions to protect bodies of water within Traverse City (such as Kids Creek and the Boardman River) by filtering contaminants and slowing movement as water travels moves to drain into the bay. Grand Traverse Bay has lost nearly 50% of its pre-development wetlands, and wetland loss continues to take place despite EGLE's wetland permit program. To protect wetlands, local units of government across the Grand Traverse Bay watershed have adopted and implemented zoning tools to protect the environment. The most common tool is a requirement to establish wetland setbacks which function similarly to water and property line setbacks. Additional tools may include special use permits for developments that impact wetlands with a standard to limit adverse wetland impacts as a result of proposed developments.
- » The Grand Traverse Bay Watershed is approximately 976 square miles and covers portions of Antrim, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, and Leelanau Counties. As water travels through the watershed, it moves from the upper reaches (the outer edges) through lower reaches, eventually discharging into Lake Michigan. Within Traverse City, the water quality and presence of activity in Upper Boardman River, Boardman Lake, the Lower Boardman River, Kids Creek, and Mitchell Creek have the ability to impact the much broader watershed, illuminating the importance of restoration efforts and stewardship for each.

# 8



An estimated 23% of all deaths can be attributed to preventable environmental health problems, a sobering statistic that highlights the influence that our surroundings have on health.<sup>1</sup> Planning for healthy and safe community can encourage people to lead healthier lifestyles, reduce healthcare needs and costs, and reduce chronic illnesses. The following section will detail health, safety, and wellness systems in Traverse City and identify strategies to enhance existing systems and improve access.

- » Roughly 15% of Traverse City residents experience two or more weeks of poor mental health.
- » High cholesterol and obesity are the two most common health stresses in Traverse City.
- » Almost 8% of residents do not have healthcare coverage.
- » Only one hate crime was reported in 2020, a decline from the year prior.
- » In 2020, 12% of Grand Traverse residents experience food insecurity.
- » 32% of TCAPS students are eligible for free or reduced meals.

## HEALTH, SAFETY & WELLNESS

This chapter is dedicated to Jeanine Easterday.

## HEALTH

### Healthcare

Traverse City is a regional healthcare hub. Munson Medical Center and numerous other providers serve the City and surrounding communities. Healthcare providers in the City serve an important role in maintaining the health of the community and are also significant employers, as Munson Medical Center is one of the largest employers in the City.

### Emergency Services

Emergency care locations are an essential part of the healthcare system and are often the first stop for those with serious or life-threatening conditions. There is one emergency care center and one urgent care center in Traverse City. The emergency center is located at the Munson Medical Center, along the City's western border, and the other is located at the Foster Family Community Health Center, along US-31 at the City's eastern border. Munson Medical Center is a verified Level II trauma center, meaning that it is able to provide initial care for all injuries.<sup>2</sup> The closest Level I trauma center, the highest of the four ratings, is located in Grand Rapids, MI.<sup>3</sup> Emergency medical response and transportation is provided through Munson, Mobile Medical Response (MMR), and North Flight Aero,

providing ground and aerial emergency coverage to the entire Northern Michigan region.<sup>4</sup> In November 2023, voters passed a millage to fund a TCFD ambulance service which will be implemented by the end of 2024.

### Physical Health

Proper physical health is essential for proper body function. Healthy individuals tend to live longer, have higher levels of self-esteem, and be more resilient to disease and infections. In Traverse City, the four most common health ailments are high cholesterol, obesity, high blood pressure, and arthritis.<sup>5</sup> While most of these physical health benefits are directly addressed by the individual and their medical provider, Traverse City can promote healthy lifestyles through the construction and management of the built environment.

One primary way communities can support healthier lifestyles is by creating walkable environments and connecting people to public space and nature. Overall, Traverse City is very walkable; sidewalks line most streets, and the small geographic scope of the city means that people do not have to travel long distances to reach their destination. While climate trends in the winter can deter residents from walking as much as they would throughout the rest of the year,

Table 48: Health Outcomes

| Health Outcome      | Percent of Traverse City Adults | Percent of Grand Traverse County Adults | Percent of United States Adults |
|---------------------|---------------------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| High Cholesterol    | 32.2%                           | 34.8%                                   | 36.4%                           |
| Obesity             | 30.9%                           | 32.2%                                   | 33.0%                           |
| High Blood Pressure | 30.7%                           | 33.7%                                   | 32.7%                           |
| Arthritis           | 28.5%                           | 30.9%                                   | 25.2%                           |
| Asthma              | 10.0%                           | 9.9%                                    | 9.7%                            |
| All Teeth Lost      | 9.5%                            | 10.1%                                   | 13.4%                           |
| Diabetes            | 9.0%                            | 10.5%                                   | 11.3%                           |
| Cancer              | 8.1%                            | 8.7%                                    | 7.0%                            |
| COPD                | 7.0%                            | 7.9%                                    | 6.4%                            |
| Heart Disease       | 6.9%                            | 6.0%                                    | 6.1%                            |
| Stroke              | 3.0%                            | 3.3%                                    | %                               |
| Kidney Disease      | 2.8%                            | 3.0%                                    | 2.4%                            |

Source: PLACES

## Physical Health, Walkable Communities, and Climate Change

A built environment that enables safe access to various destinations through walking and biking simultaneously benefits resident health and reduces the aggregate carbon footprint left by the community. Lessening the dependency on auto-oriented travel is possible by designing and implementing a comprehensive network of trails, sidewalks, and walkways available across a jurisdiction that provides connections to all destinations sought by travelers. These same instances of pedestrian and biking infrastructure encourages access to these destinations through active, non-motorized modes of transportation which seamlessly incorporate physical activity into everyday life.

## Mental Health Services and Equity

Stigmas that challenge the legitimacy of an individual's mental health have an impact on the extent to which they will seek out services to treat or address an unhealthy mental state. This hesitancy to seek treatment can be exacerbated by expensive services that are not widely accessible for low-income populations, thereby reducing the likelihood that marginalized groups will seek out mental health services. Traverse City's Northwest Michigan Health Services health center addresses these barriers head-on through holistic treatment and service provision that are available on a sliding scale basis.

Traverse City has prioritized the implementation of adequate streetlamp lighting to offset seasonal darkness in the downtown commercial area and adjacent neighborhoods that were funded through special assessment districts. To better achieve pedestrian scale lighting throughout the City, more equitable ways to fund these changes will need to be identified and pursued. However, the communities surrounding the core of Traverse City prioritize auto-oriented travel, contributing to poor inter-pedestrian travel between the city core and surrounding areas.

## Mental Health

Mental health has become an increasingly important element in overall personal and community health. Stigmas around mental health often prevent those suffering from mental health challenges from seeking treatment or other support. In Traverse City, an estimated 14.8% of adults have more than 14 poor mental health days in a year, slightly higher than Grand Traverse County at 14.5%.<sup>6</sup> Traverse City's long winter seasons and subsequent reduced exposure to sunlight contribute to the prevalence of the "winter blues" and heightened feelings of sadness and fatigue.<sup>7</sup> Two health centers funded by the agency of Health Resources and Services Administration in Traverse City provide accessible, quality, and cost-effective services to support the mental and behavioral health of residents: Northwest Michigan Health Services and Traverse Health Clinic.<sup>8</sup> Northwest Michigan Health Services approaches patient mental health holistically by providing therapy, connecting patients to necessary medical and dental care services, and ensuring that daily needs (like food, housing, transportation, and education) are met, all through a sliding fee program.<sup>9</sup> The Traverse Health Clinic offers behavioral health services like therapy and counseling to individuals who receive primary care from their medical providers as well as those who do not.<sup>10</sup>

Like many physical health ailments, mental health is best addressed by an individual and their healthcare provider, but there are ways to improve mental health through the construction and maintenance of the built environment. Green space and access to nature, active space for exercise, human-scale design elements in the public realm (including public art), pro-social spaces, sleep (reducing

nighttime noise and light pollution), multi-modal transportation, and reducing air pollution are common design strategies to improve mental health.

### Preventative Health

Preventative healthcare refers to measures taken for the purpose of disease prevention, like cancer screenings or regular doctor visits. Risk of chronic illnesses such as stroke, arthritis, and diabetes are significantly reduced when individuals take preventive measures. The most common preventative measure taken in Traverse City was cholesterol screening, followed by cervical cancer screening, and mammography.<sup>11</sup> In addition to proactive screenings as preventative care, chiropractic, massage, and acupuncture treatments can also play a role in maintaining resident health and wellbeing. Traverse City has a robust network of practices that offer these services, often within the same healthcare center.

In Traverse City, the abundance of healthcare providers in itself does not pose a barrier to preventative care access. To increase the degree to which city residents access preventative health care measures, it is necessary to increase community education and outreach. Every three years Munson Hospital Systems conducts a Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) which takes a comprehensive look at the health and well-being of residents and communities in their service area.<sup>12</sup>

## Preventative Healthcare and Equity

In instances when an individual is not well covered by their health insurance or does not have health insurance, taking preventative measures to support good health may not be a high priority. Interactions with the healthcare system for those not fully covered are more likely to take place when there is an emergency, sickness, or other definitive need to seek out professional assistance. Those without health insurance are especially vulnerable and likely without year-round or full-time employment, contributing to additional challenges to affording health care services in both preventative and responsive settings.

Outcomes from the CHNA are strategies and steps that Munson Healthcare will take to address health needs in the community. Some of the strategies identified in CHNA for Grand Traverse County were to increase sharing of best practices, empower and engage the community, and increase the understanding and recognition of health problems facing less privileged residents, all strategies that would raise awareness of existing health programs and identify community health needs.

**Table 49: Prevalence of Actions to Promote Preventative Care**

| Health Outcome  | Percent of Traverse City Adults | Percent of Grand Traverse County Adults | Percent of United States Adults |
|---|---------------------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| Annual Checkup  | 74.4%                           | 75.6%                                   | 71.8%                           |
| Dental Visit  | 73.4%                           | 72.6%                                   | 64.5%                           |
| Taking Blood Pressure Medication (those with high blood pressure) | 74.0%                           | 79.1%                                   | 78.2%                           |
| Cholesterol Screening   | 88.5%                           | 89.4%                                   | 86.3%                           |
| Mammography   | 78.5%                           | 75.4%                                   | 77.8%                           |
| Cervical Cancer Screening   | 85.1%                           | 85.0%                                   | 83.7%                           |
| Colorectal Cancer Screening                                       | 77.6%                           | 79.5%                                   | 70.6%                           |
| Preventive Services (Older Men)                                   | 48.3%                           | 47.5%                                   | 44.0%                           |
| Preventative Services (Older Women)                               | 43.1%                           | 45.2%                                   | 37.4%                           |

Source: PLACES

**Table 50: Uninsured Rates**

| Traverse City Population                    | Uninsured |
|---|-----------|
| <b>Age</b>                                  |           |
| Under 6 years                               | 4.5%      |
| 6 to 18 years                               | 2.9%      |
| 19 to 25 years                              | 10.4%     |
| 26 to 34 years                              | 19.2%     |
| 35 to 44 years                              | 12.8%     |
| 45 to 54 years                              | 10.7%     |
| 55 to 64 years                              | 4.6%      |
| 65 to 74 years                              | 0.4%      |
| 75 years and older                          | 0.0%      |
| <b>Race</b>                                 |           |
| White                                       | 7.1%      |
| Black or African American alone             | 6.2%      |
| American Indian and Alaska Native alone     | 56.1%     |
| Asian                                       | 0.0%      |
| Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander  | 0.0%      |
| Some other race                             | 0.0%      |
| Two or more races                           | 13.7%     |
| Hispanic/Latino (of any race)               | 4.7%      |
| <b>Disability Status</b>                    |           |
| With a disability                           | 5.4%      |
| No disability                               | 8.1%      |
| <b>Educational Attainment</b>               |           |
| Less than high school graduate              | 14.0%     |
| High school graduate (includes equivalency) | 12.5%     |
| Some college or associate's degree          | 11.3%     |
| Bachelor's degree or higher                 | 5.2%      |
| <b>Employment Status</b>                    |           |
| Employed: Full-time                         | 9.4%      |
| Employed: Part-time                         | 17.3%     |
| Unemployed                                  | 24.0%     |
| <b>Household Income</b>                     |           |
| Under \$25,000                              | 10.3%     |
| \$25,000 to \$49,999                        | 11.0%     |
| \$50,000 to \$74,999                        | 14.8%     |
| \$75,000 to \$99,999                        | 2.4%      |
| \$100,000 and over                          | 5.1%      |

Source: American Community Survey 2020 5 Year Estimates, S2701

## Healthcare Access

Traverse City's population can't take advantage of the wealth of healthcare providers if they cannot access them. Healthcare access is especially important for vulnerable populations (those with disabilities, the elderly, low-income households, etc.) who are more likely to have transportation/mobility challenges and less likely to have the financial means to afford complete care.<sup>13</sup>

### Geographic Barriers

As shown in the map titled Healthcare Access, most of the City is within walking distance to an essential healthcare provider (dentist, emergency care, OBGYN, optometry, pediatric care, primary/family care, and psychiatry/mental health care) and a transit stop, indicating that most residents can either walk to a healthcare location or take public transportation. The base of the peninsula is one area of the city that has poor access to healthcare options both on foot and by public transportation.

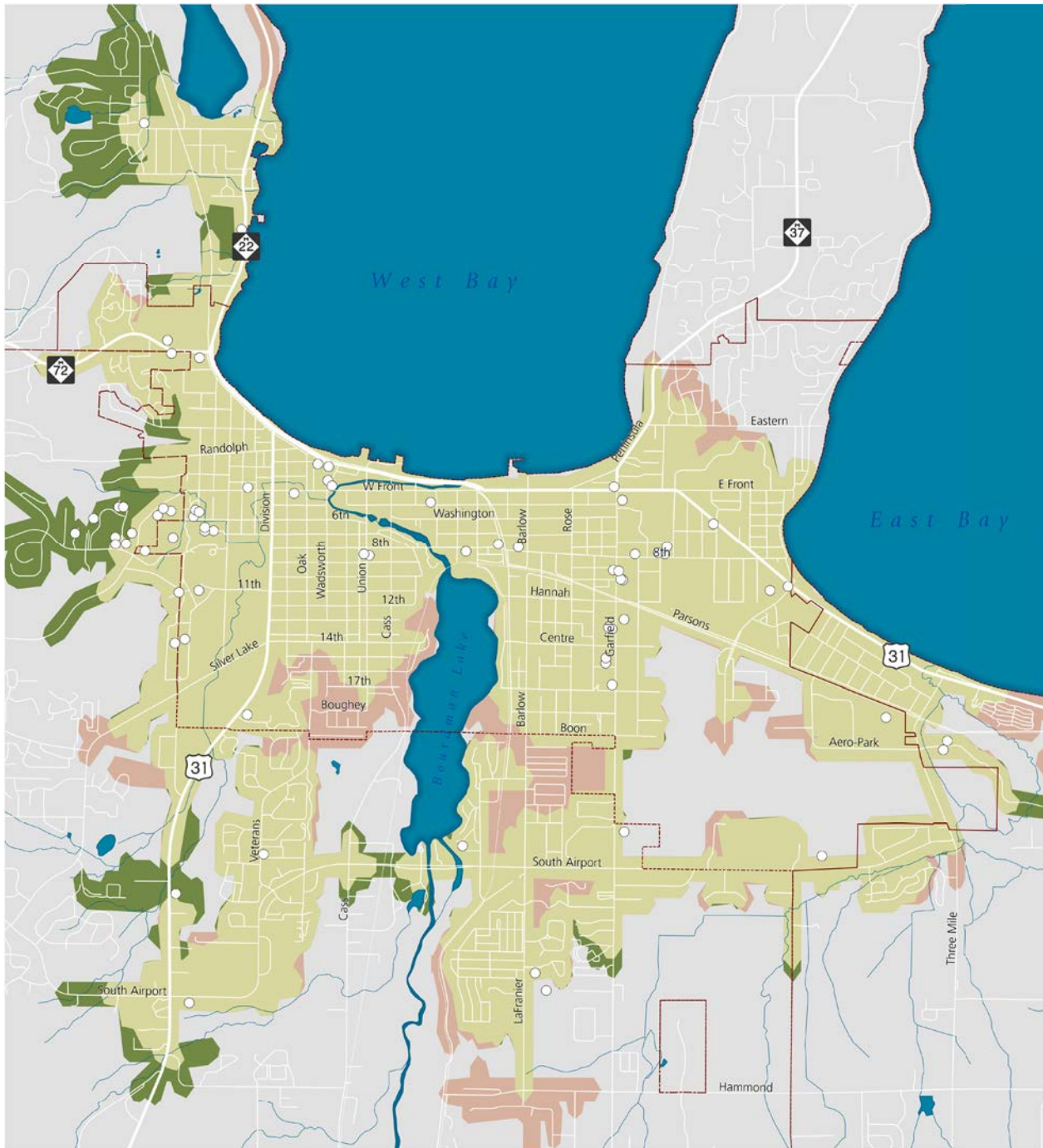
### Financial Barriers

In the United States, receiving healthcare is predicated on having health insurance. Roughly three out of ten uninsured individuals went without needed medical attention in 2020, and one out of ten uninsured children went without medical care.<sup>14</sup> In Traverse City, an estimated 7.8% of the population does not have health insurance, higher than Grand Traverse County (6.1%) and the State of Michigan (5.4%).<sup>15</sup> The majority of insurance coverage in the United States is private insurance (66.5%). Of the private insurance, 92% is employer based (54.4% overall), indicating that the majority of Americans rely on their employment for coverage. While Traverse City has little to no influence over broad health care policy, by managing the built environment in a healthy way and encouraging healthy lifestyles, the City can reduce negative health outcomes, in turn, reducing overall healthcare costs for both insured and uninsured.

### Increasing Healthcare Access

Traverse City's zoning ordinance currently permits health services in all commercial districts, in the development districts, industrial districts, and the hospital districts. This can make it challenging for those who live in large residential areas to access health care because they are not permitted in

Map 22: Healthcare Access



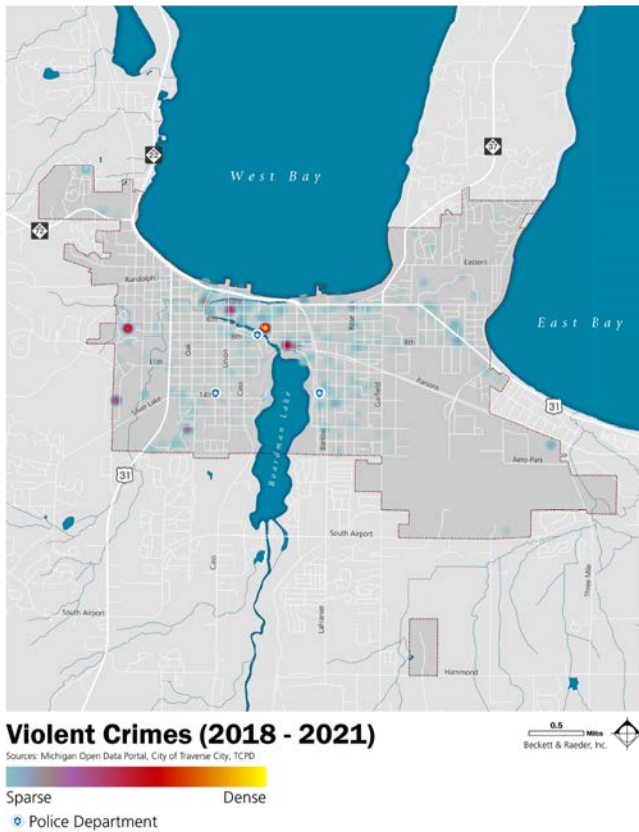
## Healthcare Access

Sources: Michigan Open Data Portal, City of Traverse City

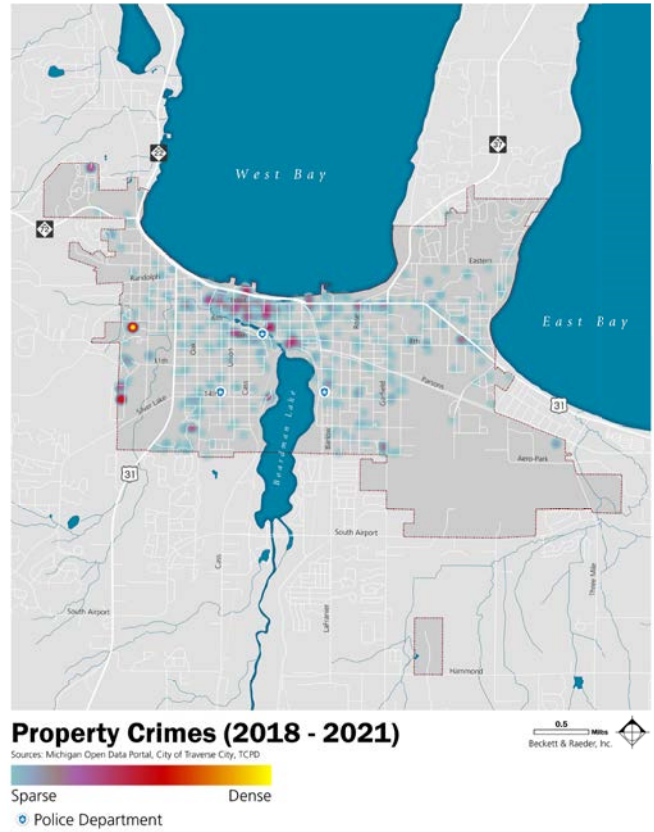
- Essential Provider
- 15 Min Walking to Essential Provider
- 15 Min Walking to Transit Stop
- 15 Min Walking to Essential Provider & Transit Stop



Map 23: Violent Crimes (2018 - 2021)



Map 24: Property Crimes (2018 - 2021)



nearby locations. Revising the zoning ordinance to allow select health care services in residential districts would improve access. Additionally, establishing nodes of commercially zoned land within or on the fringes of residential areas would increase access.

## SAFETY

### Public Safety

The Traverse City Police Department (TCPD) is the primary public safety agency in Traverse City. The Law Enforcement Center is currently located at 851 Woodmere, and is jointly occupied by the TCPD and the GTC Sheriff's Department. TCPD has 32 staff members broken into the patrol and investigative services division. TCPD practices Community Policing, a public safety philosophy that prioritizes connecting officers with the local community/neighborhood that they serve. TCPD also has a social worker on staff and is a participant in the Quick Response Team (QRT). In Traverse City, officers are assigned to one of four service areas in order to strengthen existing relationships and foster new connections. In addition to the four service areas, a dedicated officer is assigned to downtown.

### Violent Crimes

Violent crimes are some of the most serious crimes committed because of the lasting impact they can have on victims' lives. Violent crimes consist of murder and nonnegligent manslaughter, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault. In 2020, there were 87 violent crime offenses reported by the TCPD, a rise from 66 the year prior. Of the crimes reported in 2020, men accounted for 64% of violent crime offenders and 54% of violent crime victims, with the remaining victims being women or of an unreported gender. A personal residence/home was the most common location for a violent crime (36%), followed by streets/alleys/sidewalks (13%), and fields/woods (8%).<sup>16</sup>

In Traverse City, the highest concentration of violent crimes occurs at the jail/courthouse located along Boardman Avenue. However, these crimes likely occur with law enforcement present or nearby and pose little threat to the general public. Other concentrations of violent crime occur in the Munson Medial Campus and between 8th Street and the railroad tracks.





*Street Trees.*

Photo Credit: Gary Howe

### *Hate Crimes*

A hate crime is defined as a criminal offense which is motivated, in whole or in part, by bias.<sup>17</sup> In 2020, the Traverse City Police Department reported one hate crime, a decline from the three hate crimes in 2019. Over the past five years, hate crimes have been decreasing as seven hate crimes were reported by the Traverse City Police Department in 2016. However, the delicate nature of these offenses make it likely that their actual rate of occurrence are drastically underreported - the City's police predict that 3 to 10% of all crimes qualify as hate crimes. Over the past five years, half of all reported hate crimes were motivated by the victims' race, 39% by religion, and 11% by sexual orientation. TCPD has an LGBTQ Liaison who serves as a point of contact between the LGBTQ+ community and the TCPD. The liaison is charged with building mutual trust between the LGBTQ+ community and the TCPD by implementing a variety of community policing strategies and supporting diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives.

### *Property Crimes*

Since 2016, property crimes have been declining by roughly 11% annually. In 2020, 20 burglaries were

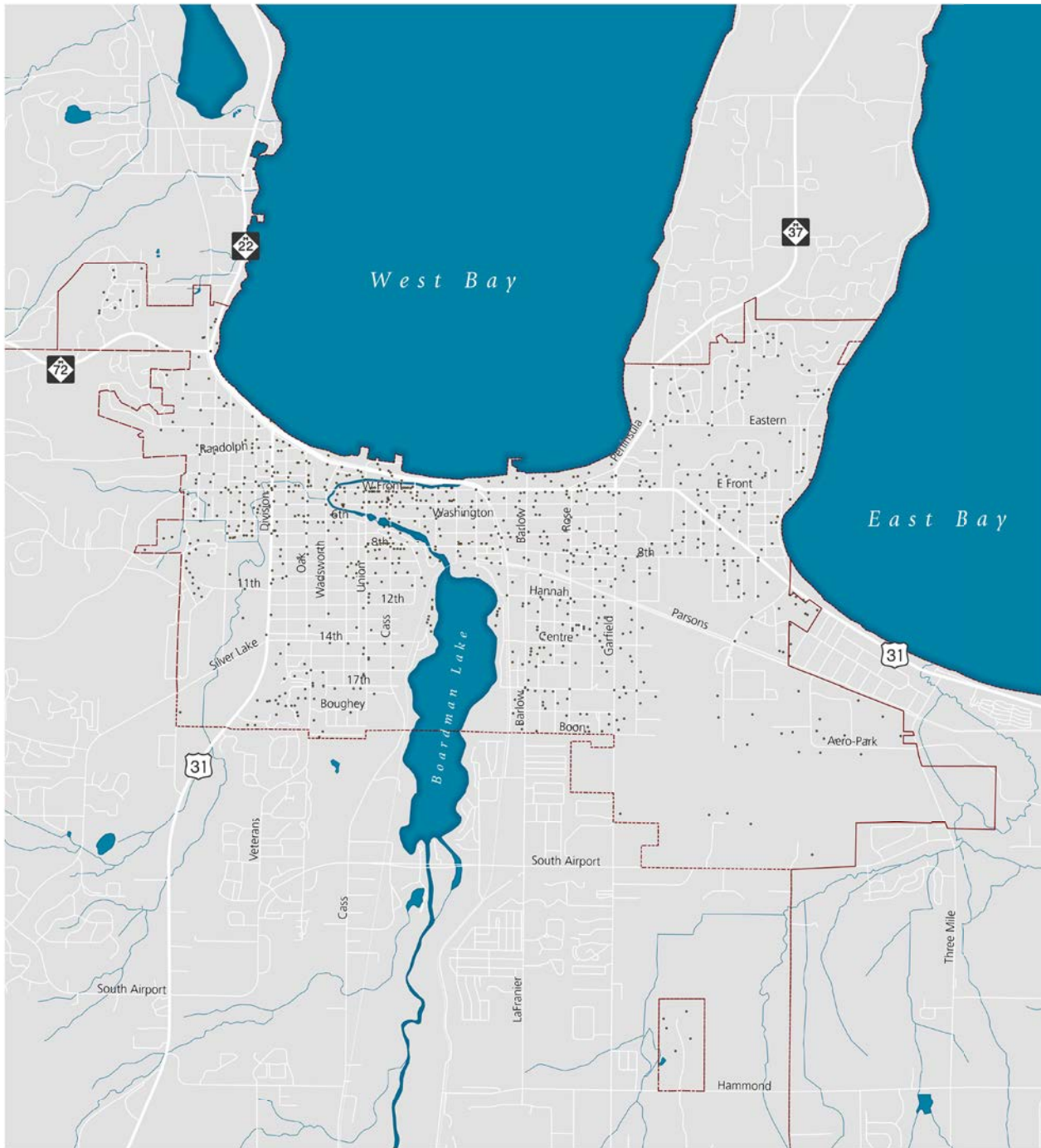
reported by the TCPD. Roughly 80% of the values of goods stolen was in the victims' automobiles, indicating that car theft is contributing the most to property crime loss.

The highest concentration of property crime is around the Munson Medical Campus. However, when looking at the downtown area (Front Street/ Boardman River) there are many moderate levels of property crime that if aggregated would likely be the highest concentration in the City.

### *Fire Protection*

The Traverse City Fire Department (TCFD) is the agency responsible for responding to fire and other hazard calls in the City. Additionally, TCFD aids other fire departments in the local area even if the call originated outside city limits. There are two TCFD stations located in the City: Station 01 at 500 W Front Street, and Station 02 at 1313 E Eighth Street. As shown in the figure titled "TCFD Calls", downtown, Munson Medical Campus, and the industrial areas around the airport have the highest amount of total fire calls. These calls may impact permanent structures (structure fires) as well as outdoor fires, vehicle fires, wildfires, and so on. When looking at only structure fires

Map 25: TCFD Calls (2018 - 2021)



### TCFD Calls (2018 - 2021)

Sources: Michigan Open Data Portal, City of Traverse City



Sparse Dense

TCFD Station



Map 26: TCFD Structure Calls (2018 - 2021)



### TCFD Structure Calls (2018 - 2021)

Sources: Michigan Open Data Portal, City of Traverse City



Figure 24: Principles of CPTED

**Natural Surveillance**

Good surveillance means that people can see what others are doing thereby deterring ‘would-be offenders’ from committing crime. Clear sightlines, low barriers, entries visible from the street, and effective lighting all contribute to natural surveillance.

**Access Control**

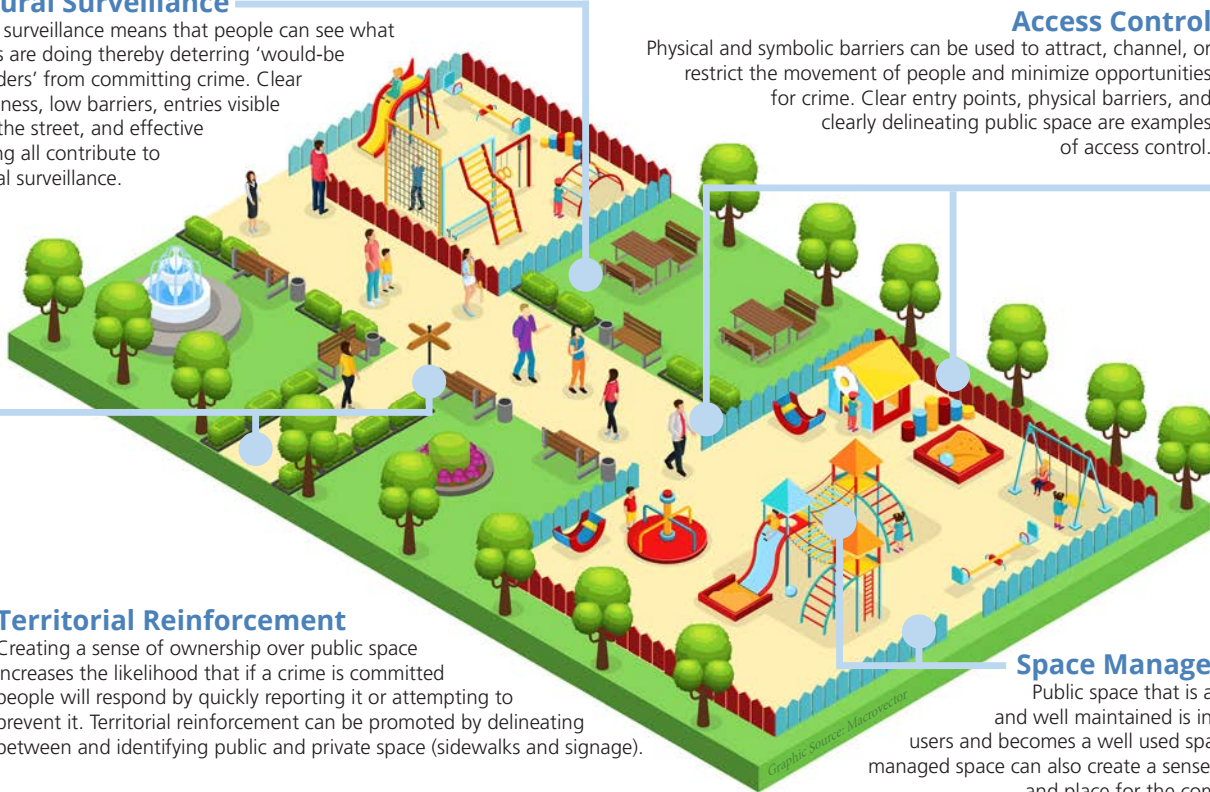
Physical and symbolic barriers can be used to attract, channel, or restrict the movement of people and minimize opportunities for crime. Clear entry points, physical barriers, and clearly delineating public space are examples of access control.

**Territorial Reinforcement**

Creating a sense of ownership over public space increases the likelihood that if a crime is committed people will respond by quickly reporting it or attempting to prevent it. Territorial reinforcement can be promoted by delineating between and identifying public and private space (sidewalks and signage).

**Space Management**

Public space that is attractive and well maintained is inviting to users and becomes a well used space. Well managed space can also create a sense of pride and place for the community.



that specifically impact residential, commercial, or industrial buildings, these areas remain hotspots for fires. The key to ensuring that TCFD can respond to all calls in a timely manner is ensuring that the fire equipment has adequate access both on the streets and onsite. For dense development, it is critical that fire equipment has clear access to all areas of the site and adequate space to operate.

**Fire Insurance Rating**

Fire insurance and insurance premiums are determined by a community’s ISO rating. An ISO rating (Insurance Services Office) is a measure of how well a fire department serves its community. Fire departments are scored on a scale of one to ten, with one being the highest rating a department can achieve. In 2019, the TCFD received an ISO rating of three, an improvement of two points from the previous rating of five. The improvement in ISO rating is due in part to the regional mutual aid agreements and efficient water and communications systems.<sup>18</sup> The improvement in ISO fire rating contributes to lower fire insurance costs and premiums.

**Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED)**

The design and construction of the built environment significantly influences how safe spaces are or how safe spaces are perceived to be. For example, an unlit alley tends to be perceived as an unsafe space during night compared to a well-lit downtown sidewalk. Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED pronounced sep – ted) is a public space design approach aimed at reducing victimization, deterring offenders, and building a sense of community.<sup>19</sup> There are four principles of CPTED:<sup>20</sup>

1. **Natural Surveillance:** Providing opportunities, both natural and technical, can reduce the attractiveness of crime targets. Good surveillance means that people can see what others are doing thereby deterring would-be offenders from committing crime in areas with high levels of surveillance. From a design perspective, deterrence can be achieved by:
  - » Locating public spaces in areas of high activity.

- » Providing clear sightlines.
- » Ensuring a range of land uses.
- » Locating entries that are visible from the street.
- » Installing effective lighting in public places.

**2. Access Control:** Physical and symbolic barriers can be used to attract, channel, or restrict the movement of people, and in turn, minimize opportunities for crime. Effective access can be achieved by:

- » Providing clear entry points.
- » Using vegetation as barriers to deter unauthorized access.
- » Designing public spaces that attract rather than discourage people from gathering.

**3. Territorial Reinforcement:** Territorial reinforcement is reliant on users of the space feeling that they have some sense of ownership of it and are therefore more likely to gather and enjoy the space. The ownership of space increases the likelihood that people who witness crime in or adjacent to that space will respond by quickly reporting it or by attempting to prevent it. Territorial reinforcement can be achieved by:

- » Having distinct transitions between the public and private areas.
- » Clearly defining spaces to express a sense of ownership.

**4. Space Management:** Public space that is attractive and well maintained is inviting to users and becomes a well-used space. Linked to the principle of territorial reinforcement, space management ensures that space is appropriately utilized and well cared for. Space management includes:

- » Creating a 'cared for' image through proper maintenance.
- » Encouraging design that promotes pride and a sense of place for the community.

CPTED principles are best enforced through the zoning ordinance, the document with the greatest influence of the built environment. Traverse City's zoning ordinance currently includes elements of CPTED, the street facing facades and windows in the multiple-family dwelling district and commercial districts encourage natural surveillance, access control, and territorial reinforcement.<sup>21</sup>

## Gendered Space and Equity

The notion of creating spaces that foster a sense of safety and inclusion for individuals with gender identities that were largely excluded from the original design of cities is an act of promoting equity. Because women and other individuals with marginalized gender identities are more likely to encounter barriers to safely accessing all parts of a city, addressing these concerns will encourage broader inclusion and access.

### Gendered Space

All people experience their surroundings differently. The interaction between an individual and their surroundings influences their perception of safety, comfort, and accessibility. For example, an individual may perceive a sidewalk with streetlights as safer during the evening compared to a sidewalk without streetlights. While some experiences in and apprehensions about the safety of built environment are widely shared, these perceptions vary greatly between individuals, especially between individuals of different gender identities.

Historically, our communities have been designed, built, and managed by men. While gender representation has never been higher, there are still a lot of practices and spaces that are not ubiquitous for all genders. The United Nations Development Programme released a report on designing cities for women.<sup>22</sup> While gender identities encompass more than men and women, this report specifically focused on designing space for women. However, these recommendations also likely improve space for individuals of multiple gender identities. The report identified four key areas for improvement:

- 1. Safety and Security:** A sense of safety and security is fundamental to one's quality of life.
- 2. Justice and Equity:** Justice and equity in the built environment refer to several factors, including governance (legislation, decision making), land-use policies, and the availability and accessibility of services and facilities.
- 3. Health and Wellbeing:** The built environment can play an influential role in supporting and improving the health and wellbeing of women and those with marginalized gender identities.

**Table 51: Gendered Space Strategies**

| Strategy   | Implementation   |
|--|--|
| <b>Safety &amp; Security</b>   |  |
| Design spaces through a safety lens  | Improving visual awareness in public spaces through rounded corners, natural lighting, and gradual slopes.   |
| Improve lighting in streets and public spaces  | Identify gaps in lighting along transportation routes and add lighting.                                      |
| Provide women-only spaces  | Work with women-entrepreneurs and business owners to develop female spaces like gyms and healthcare centers. |
| Encourage passive surveillance at transit stops                                      | Keep bus stops lit and visible from multiple areas.  |
| <b>Justice &amp; Equity</b>  |  |
| Create an advisory board for gender equality at the city level.                      |  |
| Partner with community organizations to support civic engagement.                    |  |
| Provide training to women on land use and tenant rights.                             |  |
| <b>Health &amp; Wellbeing</b>  |  |
| Provide inclusive and accessible breast and chest feeding spaces                     | Provide lactation spaces and wayfinding to them in city owned buildings.                                     |
| Provide healthcare access through mobile services                                    | Work with Munson Medical Center to expand mobile health care options.  |
| Establish community-based cooking centers and vegetable gardens                      | Expand community gardens in the city.  |
| Provide accessible sanitary products in public toilets                               | Provide free hygiene products in public facing toilets.  |
| Design inclusive co-housing spaces for women   | Group housing is currently a permitted use in the city.  |
| <b>Enrichment &amp; Fulfillment</b>  |  |
| Design parks in response to comfort and safety needs                                 | Use public art to raise awareness of women's issues.   |
| Provide mixed-use, adaptable community gathering spaces.                             |  |
| Incorporate spaces for cultural practices into designs.                              |  |
| Establish a code of conduct for nightlife public spaces that works to protect women. |  |
| Design and build monuments and statues depicting women.                              |  |
| Name streets and places after women.   |  |

**4. Enrichment and Fulfillment:** Cities affect our experience of the world and how empowered we feel moving through it. The types of spaces, facilities and events cities provide, and the hierarchies and narratives they promote, can help, or hinder, women as they seek to fulfil their own potential and achieve a meaningful and rewarding life.

The table titled Gendered Space Strategies includes a selection of strategies in the report and identifies actions the city can take to implement the strategies.

## WELLNESS

### Food Access

A healthy lifestyle is contingent on eating and having access to healthy food. Eating a complete and balanced diet is essential for proper sleep, cognitive function, and physical mobility. For children, food insecurity can lead to lags in development, poor academic performance, and lower participation in social activities.<sup>23</sup> Food accessibility is often taken for granted by those with resources to access and purchase healthy food, but for those without the necessary resources, getting healthy food can be a substantial challenge. In 2020, 11.8% of Grand Traverse residents experienced food insecurity, an increase from 10.7% in 2015.<sup>24</sup> The State of Michigan's food insecurity rate was 11.5% in 2020. Simply defined, food insecurity is the economic and social condition of limited or uncertain access to food.<sup>25</sup> In total, 10,940 individuals in Grand Traverse County experienced food insecurity in 2020, 2,140 of which were children. Rates of food insecurity vary by race; 21% of Black individuals and 18% of Hispanic individuals in Grand Traverse County experienced food insecurity. Of Grand Traverse County's White, non-Hispanic population, 9% experienced food insecurity. An estimated \$5.8 million is needed every week to cover the food insecurity gap in Grand Traverse County.<sup>26</sup> The root causes of food insecurity are varied, including the cost of food and geographic barriers to accessing healthy groceries.

#### *Financial Barriers*

The financial cost of food, especially healthy food, can be a barrier to food access. A 2017 study of supermarkets across the United States found

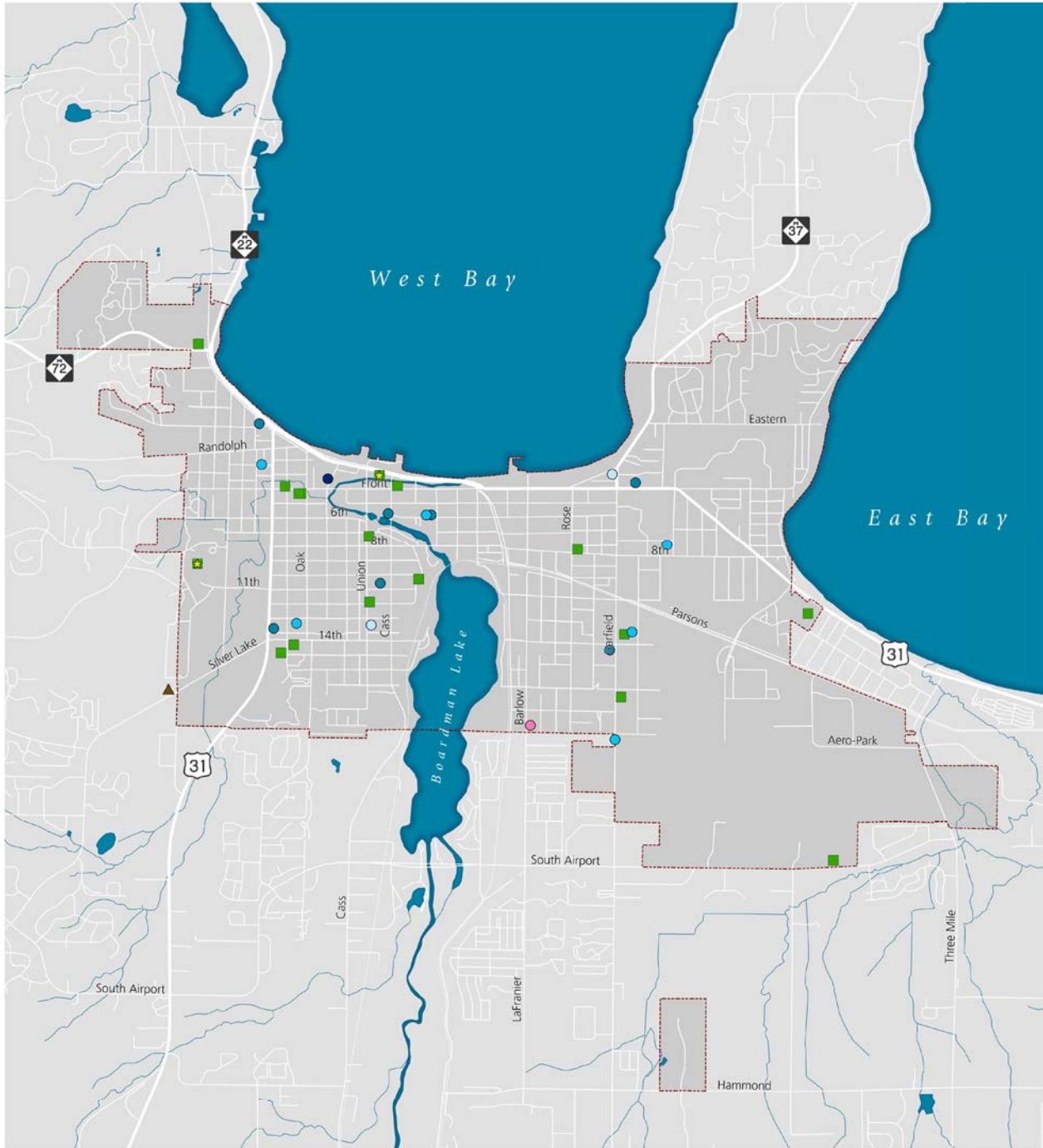


*Traverse City Farmer's Market.*  
Source: City of Traverse City

## Food Insecurity, Health, and Equity

Schools, food pantries, and food stores that accept SNAP benefits play a significant role in promoting equitable access to food for individuals and families that face financial barriers to buying groceries. While the cost of groceries is offset by these entities, affordable food that is easily accessed at gas stations and convenience stores has a high likelihood of being unhealthy than fresh produce that is only available at traditional grocery stores. This reinforces a trend in which low-income individuals and families that qualify for SNAP benefits and that benefit most from school meals and food pantries can be exposed to unhealthy habits because of the food that is most readily available to them and the barriers to accessing more healthy options.

Map 27: Food Resources



## Food Resources

Sources: Michigan Open Data Portal, City of Traverse City

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Monthly</li> <li>● Biweekly</li> <li>● Weekly</li> <li>● Daily</li> <li>● As Needed</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Food Store</li> <li>▲ Community Garden</li> <li>★ Farmer's Market</li> </ul> |
|---|---|





that healthier food options were almost twice as expensive as unhealthy options.<sup>27</sup> The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is one program that can help cover the gap between financial resources and food access. Enrollees in the SNAP program receive monthly funds on a card which can be used at participating stores to buy products. Eligible purchases include fruits and vegetables, meat, dairy, bread and cereals, snack foods, and seeds and plants. In Traverse City, an estimated 9% of residents receive SNAP benefits, slightly above the Traverse City  $\mu$ SA (7.9%) but below the State (13.3%). Of the 17 identified grocery and food stores in Traverse City, 13 (77%) accept SNAP benefits. The food stores that don't accept SNAP are generally specialty stores that sell specific food items, such as the butcher shop. All full-service grocery stores (Family Fare, Tom's, etc.) in Traverse City accept SNAP benefits. In total, there are 25 locations where SNAP benefits are accepted in the City, which include some pharmacies and gas stations. Using the Federal Government's criteria for assessing food insecurity, 52% of locations that accept SNAP benefits are considered healthy food stores. Gas stations and convenience stores that accept SNAP benefits are less likely to have fresh produce or other healthy options compared to full-service grocery stores, but over half of the SNAP locations in the city do provide healthy options.<sup>28</sup>

For children, school meal programs are an excellent way to ensure that children from low-income households at least have food during the school day. Many school meal programs also offer backpack options that provide at-home food options for evenings and weekends. In the Traverse City Area Public School (TCAPS) district, 2,755 (31%) K–12 students are eligible for free lunches and 293 (1%) are eligible for reduced-price lunches.<sup>29</sup> Due to action by the Governor, breakfast and lunch are now free for all students.

Food pantries are another resource for those experiencing food insecurity and offer food and other goods at reduced or no cost. The Northwest Food Coalition is a group of roughly 70 food pantries, emergency meal sites, and baby pantries in a six-county area in Northern Michigan, Grand Traverse County included. The coalition coordinates food programs and resources with the goal of achieving regional food security. In 2019, the coalition served 487,642 people.<sup>30</sup> Key to the operation of the coalition is Food Rescue, which

collects soon-to-expire, fresh, healthy food, and distributes it to the member organizations of the coalition.<sup>31</sup>

## Geographic Barriers

Even if people have the resources to access food, there may not be a grocery store nearby. For those without a vehicle (10.6% of Traverse City's households),<sup>32</sup> access to food is dependent on a store being within walking distance or accessible by transit. As shown in the map titled Food Access, most of Traverse City has access to healthy food stores that accept SNAP benefits, both on foot and by public transit. However, the base of the peninsula has poor food access. Residents have to walk more than 15 minutes to a transit stop or take a personal vehicle to access food options.

## Increasing Food Access

While many food access policies (SNAP and free/reduced lunch) are managed at the federal and state level, there are actions the City of Traverse City can take to increase food access in the community.

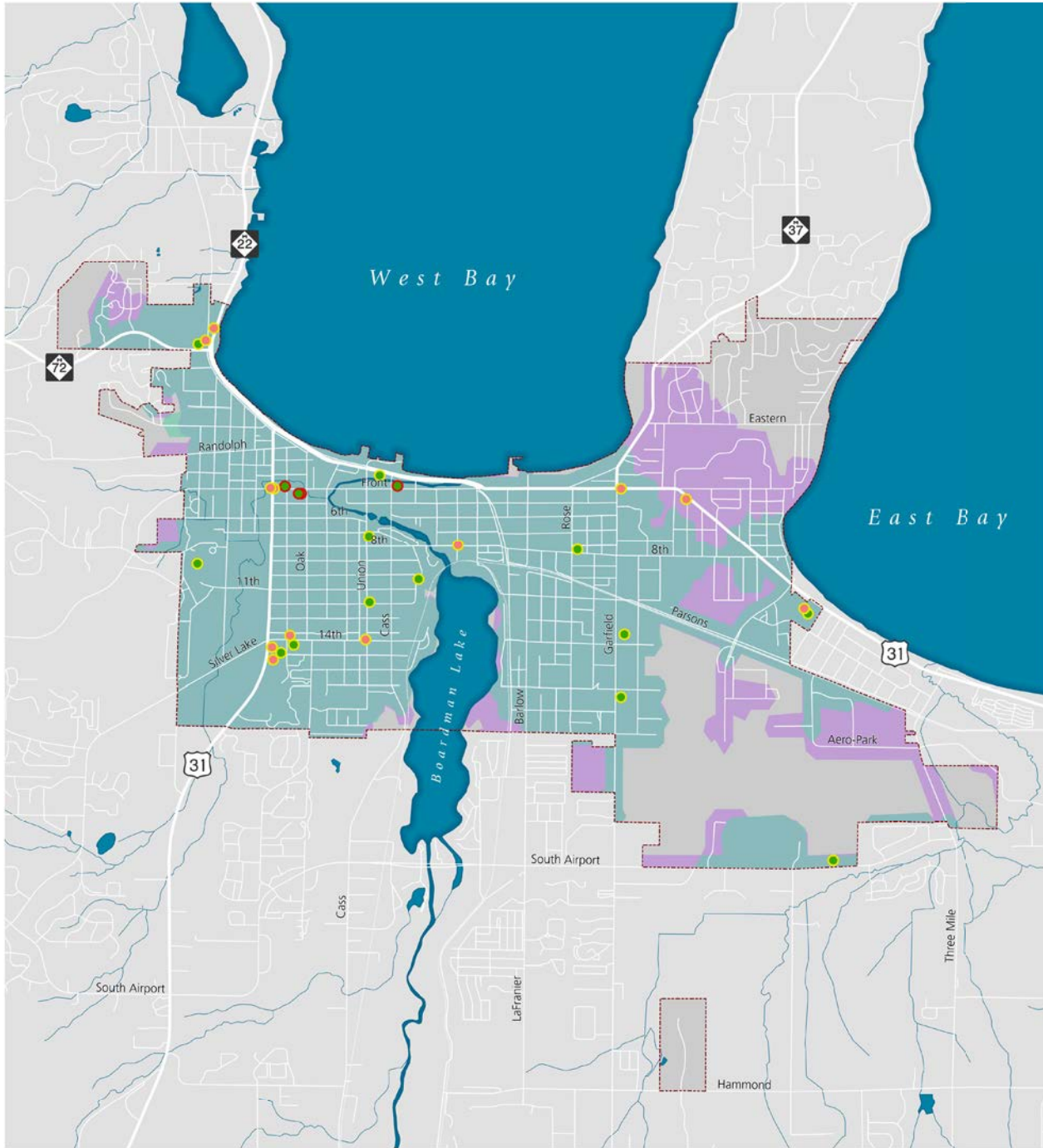
## Community Gardens

As a common strategy to increase food accessibility, community gardens empower residents to grow their own food instead of solely relying on purchasing produce. Community gardens offer an opportunity for community members to take ownership over a portion of their food supply. For residents without yards, community gardens are often the only opportunity for them to grow their own food. Traverse City has one community garden at the Historic Barns Park with 75 garden plots available for rent. Plot sizes are approximately 30' x

## Community Gardens and Climate Change

Community gardens support climate change adaptation by reducing urban heat islands, increasing storm water retention, and providing various other benefits to local ecosystem services. Additionally, providing a local source of food to surrounding residents reduces the extent that individuals rely on a car to access grocery and food stores for their produce.

Map 28: Food Access



## Food Access

Sources: Michigan Open Data Portal, City of Traverse City, USDA

- Accepts SNAP, Healthy Options
- Accepts SNAP, Unhealthy Options
- Doesn't Accept SNAP, Healthy Options
- 15 Min Walking to SNAP/Healthy Store
- 15 Min Walking to Transit Stop
- 15 Min Walking to SNAP/Healthy Store & Transit Stop



10' and cost \$100 annually to rent. The landscape and events of Historic Barns Park, including the community garden, is managed independently of the City by three organizations: SEEDS Ecology & Education Centers, the Botanic Gardens, and the Traverse City Community Garden. A second community garden at Traverse Heights Elementary School is overseen by a private citizen. Additional community gardens in other locations of the City would increase food accessibility, but it is important to ensure that the cost of participation does not inhibit those who would most benefit from a community garden from participating.

### Food Education

The Michigan State University Extension Office located at 520 W Front Street provides several food and nutrition programs. One such program, the Fruit and Vegetable Prescription Program delivers affordable, relevant, evidence-based education to help adults, young people, and families be healthy. Programs focus on helping participants gain the skills they need to buy and prepare nutritious, budget-friendly foods; increase their physical activity; breastfeed their babies; and stretch their food dollars.<sup>33</sup> The program is run at the Sara Hardy Farmers Market in Traverse City and the Benzie Farmers Market. Each education session earns a participant \$25 worth of tokens to be used at the market to purchase fruits, vegetables, seedlings, herbs, and mushrooms.

### Urban Agriculture

Urban agriculture refers to the practice of cultivating food in an urban environment. In larger metropolitan regions like Detroit or Flint, urban agriculture significantly reduces the geographic gap between where food is produced and where food is consumed. Traverse City does not have the scale of vacant lots like Detroit or Flint which support large scale urban agriculture. Therefore, not all urban agricultural practices are appropriate in the City. Additionally, unlike developed metro regions, Traverse City is surrounded by productive agricultural land that source the City with local food. For this reason, any agricultural production in the City needs to balance what is truly needed with what is already supplied by local farmers. Traverse City currently permits limited urban agriculture activities, including beekeeping and chicken coops (maximum of four hens per parcel).<sup>34</sup>

### Zoning Reform

Often a barrier to food accessibility is that communities do not permit grocery stores in zoning districts near residential neighborhoods. Traverse City's C-2 Neighborhood Center District is intended to "[accommodate] small businesses primarily serving adjacent neighborhoods with day-to-day retail goods and services" and permits grocery stores and fruit and vegetable markets, indicating there are no zoning barriers preventing food stores from being sited near residential neighborhoods.<sup>35</sup> Currently, Traverse City's zoning ordinance permits community gardens in all residential districts, governmental/public districts, open space districts, the NMC district, and the hospital district. These districts are the most logical for community gardens because they tend to be trafficked mainly by local residents and located closely to residential areas.

Table 52: Adult Recreation Habits

| Activity             | Percent of Adults | MPI |
|----------------------|-------------------|-----|
| Walking for Exercise | 32.1%             | 103 |
| Swimming             | 17.0%             | 109 |
| Hiking               | 15.6%             | 98  |
| Yoga                 | 11.8%             | 114 |
| Fishing              | 11.4%             | 106 |
| Weightlifting        | 10.8%             | 85  |
| Jogging/Running      | 10.3%             | 92  |
| Biking, Road         | 9.8%              | 87  |
| Aerobics             | 9.1%              | 109 |
| Bowling              | 8.9%              | 111 |
| Golf                 | 8.9%              | 113 |
| Canoeing/Kayaking    | 8.4%              | 115 |
| Basketball           | 6.7%              | 99  |
| Biking, Mountain     | 4.1%              | 108 |
| Soccer               | 4.1%              | 105 |
| Tennis               | 3.8%              | 100 |

Source: ESRI Business Analyst

Table 53: Youth Recreation Habits by Age, Gender, and Race

|                             | Percentage of students who were physically active for a total of at least 60 minutes per day on five or more of the past seven days |
|-----------------------------|---|
| <b>7th Grade</b>            | <b>58.8%</b>  |
| Male                        | 62.5%   |
| Female                      | 55.1%   |
| White                       | 58.7%   |
| Hispanic/Latino             | 54.1%   |
| American Indian             | 33.3%   |
| <b>9th &amp; 11th Grade</b> | <b>55.2%</b>  |
| Male                        | 65.1%   |
| Female                      | 45.6%   |
| White                       | 54.4%   |
| Hispanic/Latino             | 55.3%   |
| American Indian             | 41.7%   |
| <b>9th Grade Only</b>       | <b>63.0%</b>  |
| <b>11th Grade Only</b>      | <b>50.6%</b>  |

Source: Michigan Profile for Healthy Youth, 2018

## PHYSICAL ACTIVITY & EXERCISE

Physical activity is an essential aspect of a healthy lifestyle. Being physically active can improve brain health, help manage weight, reduce the risk of disease, and strengthen bones and muscles.<sup>36</sup> It is recommended that adults get 150 minutes of moderate intensity physical exercise and two days of muscle strengthening every week.<sup>37</sup> The table titled Adult Recreation Habits shows what activities Traverse City adults participate in. The MPI score measures against the U.S. average; values above 100 indicate that Traverse City adults participate in the activity more than the average American. Walking for exercise is the most popular recreation activity, followed by swimming and hiking. Canoeing/kayaking, yoga, and golf are the top three activities in which Traverse City adults participate at greater rates than the average American.

In 2018, over 50% of middle schoolers and highschoolers in Grand Traverse County were physically active for 60 minutes a day, 5 days a week. However, physical activity varied by gender and race. Male middle schoolers and high schoolers had higher rates of physical activity participation

compared to their female counterparts and American Indian students had the lowest rates of participation.<sup>38</sup> Most middle school and high school recreation takes place through school organized sports. TCAPS offers more than 24 organized sports at the high school level occurring from Fall to Spring.

### Community Exercise Events and Organizations

**TART (Traverse Area Recreation and Transportation Trails)** is a non-profit organization formed in 1998. TART's mission is to provide and promote a trail network throughout the Traverse City region through stewardship and connection to routes throughout the City.

**Smart Commute Week** is an event sponsored by Traverse Area Recreation Trails which promotes commuting by cycling, walking, taking the bus, and carpooling. The event is generally scheduled for early June. In 2019, 1,269 individuals participated in Smart Commute Week and covered over 100,000 miles. In 2022, 400 individuals participated in Smart Commute Week which is still building back since the COVID-19 Pandemic.<sup>39</sup>

**Traverse City Track Club** is a local non-profit organization that hosts year-round weekly running events that include the following: the Bayshore Marathon, Half Marathon, and 5K; Summer Run Series; Good Fight 5K Remembrance Run; Farmland 5K and Free for All Bike; Jingle Bell Run; and Frozen Foot 5 Mile.<sup>40</sup>

**Seasonal Fun Runs** include an annual Leaping Leprechaun 5K foot race in March that supports the Festival Foundation. October's Traverse City Zombie 5K Run supports Traverse Area Recreational Trails (TART), and a 5K Turkey Trot on Thanksgiving Day supports both Traverse Area Recreational Trails (TART) and the Festival Foundation.

**National Cherry Festival's Meijer Festival of Races** is a Half Marathon, 15K, 10K, and 5K running series event held in July on the final day of the National Cherry Festival.<sup>41</sup>

**Norte Youth Cycling** is a non-profit organization that offers year-round cycling events, programs, and camps to encourage development of healthy lifestyles and well-being for both youth and adults.<sup>42</sup>

**Iceman Cometh Challenge** is a point-to-point mountain biking event held the first Saturday in November. The race begins in Kalkaska and ends in Traverse City, covering 30 total miles. Attendance

peaks around 5,000 people for professional, amateur, and youth races.<sup>43</sup>

**North American Vasa Festival of Races** is a classic and skate cross country ski, snowshoe, and fat tire bike event held every February on trails maintained by Traverse Area Recreational Trails (TART).<sup>44</sup> While the race occurs outside the City limits, it is a popular regional event.

**Hickory Hills** is a public ski hill and community center outside of the City but partially owned and managed by the City. Hickory Hills has downhill ski slopes and cross-country trails and offers ski classes. Hickory Hills is also home to a disc golf course that is used during warmer months.

**Boardman Lake Loop Trail** is a four-mile trail that wraps around Boardman Lake, just south of downtown. Completed in July 2022, the Loop has become a popular venue for races and other running events while providing access to numerous parts of the City.

**Rainbow Run** is a color fun run and fundraiser that takes place around the Boardman Lake Loop Trail and is intended to celebrate the area's trail system while also benefitting the Northern Michigan 2SLGBTQ+ Community during Pride Month in June.



*Hickory Hills Ski Area.*

Source: City of Traverse City

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## HEALTH, SAFETY, & WELLNESS KEY POINTS

- » Regular physical activity has numerous benefits for mental and physical health in the short and long term. Communities can promote healthy lifestyles with walkable environments and recreational spaces for physical activity. Traverse City boasts significant walkability with many sidewalks and a relatively small land area that allows residents to reach many destinations by foot. While the winter season can impact this walkability, the City has implemented streetlamp lighting to offset seasonal darkness in the downtown area and for adjacent neighborhoods.
- » Preventative healthcare is readily accessible for Traverse City residents as the city is the site of many healthcare facilities. However, access to insurance presents a separate barrier for seeking out care – 36.1% of all households with an income below \$75,000 do not have health insurance, and nearly 20% of all individuals aged 26 to 34 years are also uninsured.
- » Geographic and mobility barriers can also pose challenges to healthcare access. Traverse City's zoning ordinance currently permits health services in all commercial districts, development districts, industrial districts, and hospital districts. Allowing health services in residential- and/or neighborhood-oriented zoning districts can further promote health care accessibility for those who live in large residential areas that are not integrated with other zones.
- » Various approaches to the planning and design of space can promote health and safety for all residents while simultaneously protecting more vulnerable demographic groups. Crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED) promotes safety through mechanisms that increase natural surveillance, access control, territorial reinforcement, and space management. Numerous strategies intended to protect female residents and other marginalized gender identities center safety, equity and inclusion, and health and wellbeing.
- » In Grand Traverse County, 11.8% of all residents experienced food insecurity in 2020, an increase from 2015 levels. In Traverse City, about 9% of all residents receive SNAP benefits. These residents can use their SNAP benefits at a total of 25 locations across the City, including pharmacies and gas stations. Additionally, 13 out of Traverse City's 17 grocery and food stores accept SNAP benefits, providing this group with a wider range of grocery options.
- » Community gardens, free school breakfasts and lunches, food education initiatives, urban agriculture, and zoning reforms to permit grocery stores in a wider range of residential and neighborhood districts each provide an opportunity to expand food access for all residents, including those experiencing food insecurity.
- » Traverse City's recreational and park landscape incorporates spaces for activities throughout the City. Additionally, a number of community events and organizations center their programs around exercise, including TART (Traverse Area Recreation and Transportation Trails), a number of philanthropic races, recreational clubs, and outdoor festivals.





*Hickory Meadows.*

Photo Credit: City of Traverse City

# 9



*East Front Street during the Covid-19 pandemic.*

## **ARTS, CULTURE & RECREATION**

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## SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

When looked at together, arts, culture, historic and cultural preservation, recreation, and a culture of volunteerism form a city's social infrastructure. A lot of planning for a community's future focuses on maintaining physical infrastructure that keeps our water clean and our roads paved so that people are safe and goods flow efficiently. In addition to meeting basic needs, cities also contribute to social infrastructure: an ecosystem of public, non-profit, private, and philanthropic spaces that strengthens a community's sense of place and belonging while providing enriching experiences for its residents and visitors. A city's social infrastructure is often comprised of places and activities that residents choose to engage with during their free time; for example, parks, public spaces, galleries, museums, and even casinos which provide a space that is colored by activities and music. These spaces and activities provide opportunities to socialize, learn, observe, explore, interact, make memories, and engage deeply with the cultivation of community through participation in a variety of events. Put in broadest terms, social infrastructure connects people to leisure as opposed to commodities and helps to foster humanizing experiences outside of work and homelife. This section explores social infrastructure in Traverse City to coalesce around priorities that integrate previous efforts and incorporate new ideas.

### Arts & Culture

Traverse City is the region's arts and culture epicenter. In 2020, the Arts Vibrancy Index put Traverse City in the top 10 for a medium sized city (compared to 900 other communities) for its level of supply, demand, and government support for the arts.<sup>1</sup> Part of its success is in its artistic legacy. Institutions like the Opera House have celebrated over 130 years in the community, and other institutions have been able to draw on a world-class talent pipeline from Interlochen Center for the Arts since the 1930s. Yet, in a world recovering from COVID-19, budget cuts to arts programs in public schools, and the popularity of streaming services, the arts scene is in a transition that will require re-thinking funding, availability of space, and programming to lift it back to its elevated status.

Traverse City's various artistic and cultural opportunities create a vibrancy that attracts many

"If there is any doubt in the significance of social infrastructure, ask yourself if a condominium would sell for \$1 million in a community without access to nature, architecture, and performance and visual art venues?"

- Debbie Hershey

### Challenges to the Arts

Funding  
Space  
Lack of Public Education  
Streaming Services

to the city. In addition to its inherent value as a form of self-expression, "arts and culture" has become quite a thriving sector of the economy, known as the creative industry. According to the Arts and Culture Production Satellite Account (ACPSA) which formed from a partnership between the Bureau of Economic Analysis and the National Endowment for the Arts, Michigan produced \$15.5 billion of value added (to economic value of arts and cultural production from 35 industries), held close to 110,000 jobs, and accounted for 2.6% of the state's employment. And that is trending upward. Since 2020, ACPSA value added has grown 10.7% in Michigan, compared with an increase of 14.4% for the nation. Despite this growth, Michigan is still about 38% below the national average and falls behind Midwest's ACSPA for value added, employment, and compensation.<sup>2</sup>

These figures are based on the top five industries that the ACPSA examines. Among these five industries, there are five sub-categories called "core arts and cultural industries" that are considered "idea originators of content associated with the creation of arts and culture." Both are listed in Table 54 along with value added, employment, and compensation.

Moreover, Americans for the Arts, a non-profit that conducts research on the impact of arts nationwide has found wide-reaching, positive impacts on individuals and communities:<sup>3</sup>

Table 54: Arts and Culture Production Satellite Account, Michigan 2021

|   | Value Added          | Employment       | Compensation*        |
|---|----------------------|------------------|----------------------|
| <b>ACPSA Industries by Value Added</b>          | <b>\$15,468,704</b>  | <b>109,943</b>   | <b>\$8,514,209</b>   |
| Government                                      | \$2,919,694          | 30,174           | \$2,343,837          |
| Broadcasting                                    | \$2,021,441          | 7,469            | \$761,026            |
| Wholesale and transportation                    | \$1,593,233          | 6,210            | \$557,386            |
| Publishing                                      | \$1,311,630          | 5,344            | \$759,472            |
| Advertising                                     | \$1,038,483          | 4,117            | \$331,251            |
| <b>Core Arts and Culture Industries</b>         | <b>\$3,898,013</b>   | <b>28,500</b>    | <b>\$2,442,728</b>   |
| Advertising                                     | \$1,038,483          | 4,117            | \$331,251            |
| Architectural services                          | \$424,948            | 2,660            | \$317,336            |
| Promoters of performing arts and similar events | \$288,302            | 1,750            | \$104,854            |
| Graphic design services                         | \$209,808            | 1,195            | \$125,084            |
| Museums   | \$203,707            | 3,054            | \$118,885            |
| <b>All Industries</b>                           | <b>\$572,205,800</b> | <b>4,279,524</b> | <b>\$321,348,022</b> |

\*Consists of the remuneration (including wages and salaries as well as benefits, such as employer contributions to pension and health funds) payable to employees in return for their ACPSA work during a given year. Source: Michigan Profile for Healthy Youth, 2018

Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis

- » **Unification:** 73% agree that the arts “help me understand other cultures better,” a perspective held across all demographic and economic groups.
- » **Tourism:** 34.1% of attendees traveled to an arts event from outside of the county in which the event took place; nonlocal attendees had twice as much event-related spending as their local counterparts (\$47.57 vs. \$23.44).
- » **Social Cohesion:** A high concentration of the arts in a city leads to higher civic engagement, more social cohesion, higher child welfare, and lower poverty rates.
- » **Youth:** Students engaged in arts learning have higher GPAs, standardized test scores and college-going rates, and lower drop-out rates, across all socio-economic strata. 91% of Americans believe that arts are part of a well-rounded K-12 education.

## ARTS VENUE AND PROGRAM INVENTORY

Below is a brief description of some of Traverse City’s art venues and events.

### Visual Arts

The Dennos Museum is Traverse City’s premier

visual arts venue. Located on Northwestern Michigan College’s campus, the Dennos Museum has collections of Inuit Art, Michigan artists, prints from Canadian Woodland Artists, and woodcuts of Jozsef Domján.<sup>4</sup> The museum also holds numerous educational sessions for all ages highlighting the collection. Within the museum is the Milliken Auditorium that can hold events for up to 350 people.

The Crooked Tree Arts Center, in the historic Carnegie Library Building, is an arts-based community organization located just south of the Boardman River on Sixth Street. The organization began in Petoskey but has since expanded to serve more of Northwest Michigan. The organization and its staff develop visual and performing arts programs, offer art classes, hold and promote a collection of indigenous artifacts, host exhibits, and art-based events.

### Commongrounds

Commongrounds is a downtown adjacent housing cooperative with the mission to build a more empowered community through cooperatively owned places that connect people and actively integrate wellness, arts, family, and food. It houses people along with visual arts programming, events,

and activities because they believe these are at the center of wellness. The Alluvion is an event space that holds 150 on the second floor of the co-op. This intimate space is designed with optimal acoustics and world-class equipment, dedicated to producing high-quality, highly accessible performances, community events, visual arts, classes, and workshops.

### *State and Bijou Theatres*

The State Theatre is owned and operated by the Traverse City Film Festival as a historic, art deco downtown movie house. It is a year-round, community-based, volunteer-run arthouse movie theater revitalized by the community in 2007. Fostering a sense of community and discovery by showing only the best available new release and independent films, the theatre selects movies that capture the human experience in transformative ways.<sup>5</sup> Its sister theatre, Bijou by the Bay, is located in the Conn Foster building in Clinch Park. It is a city-owned theater run by the same ethos.

### *Art Walk and Art Fair*

The Art Walk is an event where downtown merchants host artists in their shops and restaurants for an evening and patrons walk from venue to venue to look at art and talk to artists. There's even live jazz as you walk the streets. The Art Fair, held in the early summer, is a collection of artistic vendors that sell a variety of handmade pieces.

### **Performing Arts**

Interlochen Center for the Arts is the umbrella organization that encompasses six distinct program areas aimed to propel arts education and engagement: Interlochen Arts Camp, Interlochen Arts Academy, Interlochen Online, Interlochen Public Radio, Interlochen Presents, and Interlochen College of Creative Arts. The Center's summer arts program is available for all youth age groups. In these programs, students can learn creative writing, dance, film and new media, interdisciplinary arts, music, theatre, and visual arts.

City Opera House is a city-owned destination for quality arts and cultural entertainment, arts education, and public and private gatherings. It is one of 48 opera houses built in Michigan in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Today, only seven of these historic Victorian structures are open statewide. Of these, only the City Opera House

## **Art Education and Equity**

Children often become interested in the arts through early exposure and exploration. Developing an early interest can cultivate a lifelong appreciation of the arts or even lead to professional pursuits in an artistic field. While programs and classes of the arts in public schools provide an equitable opportunity for all students to engage with various artistic disciplines at no cost, constrained educational funds often impact the variety of artistic offerings in schools. Robust programming opportunities for children (like the ones offered at the Interlochen Center for the Arts, Old Town Playhouse, and the Opera House) can reinforce young people's engagement with the arts and provide equitable opportunities to explore new and unknown interests.

features two world-class Performing Arts series featuring professional national-touring artists, multiple arts education programs for youth, and community events year round including the National Writers Series and the former Traverse City Film Festival. Donors have played a tremendous role in keeping this building and programming operational.

The National Writers Series is a nonprofit organization that engages world-renowned authors in the Traverse City area. The goal is to create a deeper understanding of issues within and outside of our rural boundaries and to "raise writers" with programs that help students develop their imaginations and minds to think critically and express themselves through writing.

Traverse City's Central Neighborhood Association hosts PorchFest, an annual event that entails free musical performances on porches throughout the neighborhood. The event is free to attend and open to residents from across the City, providing an opportunity to encounter musical talent warm, welcoming neighborhood setting.

The Traverse Symphony Orchestra is northern Michigan's leading regional performing arts ensemble of a professional, part-time orchestra with quality musicians from throughout the area. It is a non-profit organization supported by the community through ticket sales, donations,

corporate sponsorship, and grants. The orchestra was founded in 1952 and has created an innovative season of concerts featuring leading guest artists from the national and international circuit.

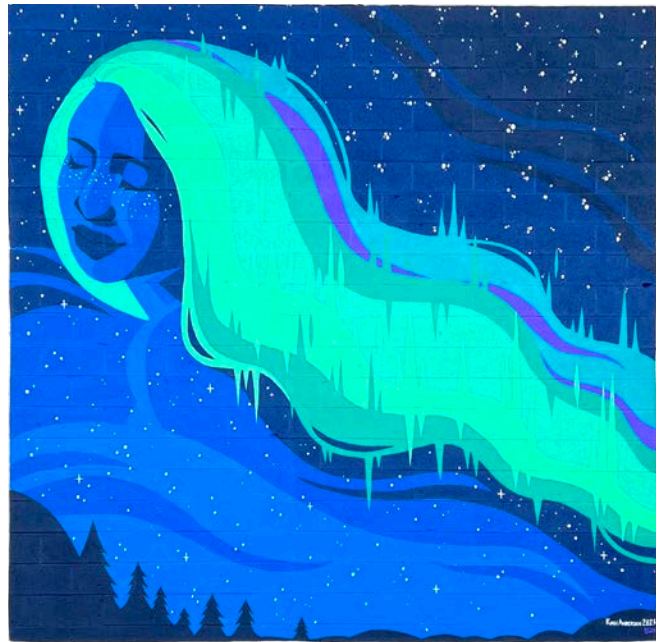
Created in April 1960 to bring amateur theatre to northern Michigan, the Old Town Playhouse is primarily a volunteer-based organization. The organization promotes quality community theatre experiences for the people of Northwest Michigan, through entertainment and educational opportunities in the theatrical arts. Even though it's closed during the summer months, it draws a seasonal audience of about 20,000 annually. It also has a youth education arm that provides summer programming, and performance and educational activities for youth age preschool through college.

The inaugural Traverse City Comedy Festival was hosted by the Downtown Traverse City Association and took place in January 2023. Held over the course four days, the Festival includes a wide variety of comedic performances, workshops, open mics, and networking events held at notable venues (including the City Opera House and Old Town Playhouse) across the City.

Finally, the Traverse City Cherry Festival has national appeal and regularly draw over 500,000 over the course of its eight day run each summer. In addition to a plethora of cherry-picking opportunities, the Cherry Festival hosts an array of musical entertainment and performance events, most of which are free to the public. Other festivals hosted by the City throughout the year similarly boast numerous performances to bolster their appeal.

## Public Art

Public art is an important community asset that enhances community spaces, commemorates significant events, creates destinations and forums for discussion, and supports local and regional artists. In 2014, Traverse City established a Public Art Program dedicated to developing and preserving public access to the arts and install art where the community gathers.<sup>6</sup> The Public Art Program is overseen by the Traverse City Arts Commission, an appointed city board. In addition to expanding public art on buildings in the City, the Arts Commission manages the existing public art collection and promotes art within the community. Public art installations can be permanent, rotating



*Serenity's Muse by Kiah Anderson.*

Source: Art on the TART



*The Dancers by Bart Ingraham.*

Source: Art on the TART

(in the same location with different pieces), or temporary (at-most two weeks). Their contributions are a good example of how public and private organizations collaborate to integrate art in residents' daily lives.

New public art projects go through a five-stage process:

1. project assessment,
2. project definition and call for proposals/artists,
3. artist selection,
4. art contract, and
5. installation.

Funding for public art is a combination of contributions from the City's general fund, the Downtown Development Authority's (DDA) funds, grants, private contributions, memorial funds, and donations.

### *Example of Public Art*

"Art on the TART" is a program that aims to enrich the trail network and therefore the users' experience. The beauty of this program is that it features artwork from multiple artistic disciplines, which include year-round public installations, temporary exhibitions, and community art. The collection illustrates the rich cultural identity of the Traverse City community and relates to its natural setting. The collaboration with community partners to make art accessible to all and engage trail users in thoughtful aesthetic expression showcases its commitment to its guiding principles.

## **PRESERVING, REVITALIZING, AND CELEBRATING INDIGENOUS CULTURE**

### **History of the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians**

The Anishinaabek are comprised of the people of the Three Fires Confederacy; the Odawa (Ottawa), the Ojibwa (Chippewa), and the Bodowadomi (Pottawatomi) people. With trade routes that stretched from the Atlantic Ocean to the Rocky Mountains and from Northern Canada to the Gulf of Mexico, the Anishinaabek were a wealthy nation that had well-established trading relationships with all neighboring nations. The eventual arrival of the French and English established both nations as trading partners as well.

In the 1840s, an Ottawa band led by Chief Shabwasung moved south from Cross Village to what is now known as Leelanau County to establish the permanent village of Eagle Town, renamed Peshawbestown in the Chief's honor. Around the same time, a chief named Ahgosa moved his Chippewa settlement from Old Mission to New Mission, a settlement now known as Omena that is located a few miles north of Peshawbestown.<sup>7</sup> In 1836, the newly established United States government presented the Anishinaabek people a treaty to sign that indicated their interest in the land of the Three Fires Confederacy. In 1837, the State of Michigan was established from lands that were ceded from the treaty of 1836; two thirds of

Michigan's current territory was ceded in that treaty. The Anishinaabek reserved lands for their own use and retained their rights to hunt, fish, and gather in this treaty on parts of the ceded territory.<sup>8</sup> However, in 1855, the Ottawa and Chippewa people signed the Treaty of 1855 which promised allotments of land and preserved the tribes' hunting and fishing rights. While a reserve was established, nearly all of that land was illegally taken such that neither band could keep the land they were promised.

Both treaties and subsequent land transfers came with numerous broken promises from the federal government. Most homestead claims were denied, and children were forced to attend schools far from their communities where their native cultures were ignored. Assistance from state and federal entities were minimal or non-existent. Additionally, recognition from the federal government was denied through 1980 as the Bureau of Indian Affairs incorrectly assumed that the Tribe was terminated by signing the Treaty of 1855.<sup>9</sup>

The Ottawa and Chippewa tribes applied for federal recognition three times throughout the 1900s and were denied the first two times.<sup>10</sup> In the early 1970s, a group of Indians in Leelanau County united to create a nonprofit corporation called Leelanau Indians Incorporated which created an official development plan for the community in 1977. In 1978, the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians again applied for federal recognition and became the first tribe in the United States to successfully achieve it under the Indian Reorganization Act, a newly created acknowledgement process that allowed tribes to form a constitution and independent government.<sup>11</sup> On May 27, 1980, the tribe was officially re-recognized as the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians, ratifying a constitution to form a government.

### **Anishinaabe Culture**

The Ottawa and Chippewa First Nations are a part of the Anishinaabe, a group of culturally and linguistically related First Nations that are concentrated around the Great Lakes in both Canada and the United States. Anishinaabe culture is rooted in numerous touchstones that include (but not limited to) art, relationships between non-humans and ecosystems, storytelling, and traditional moral frameworks such as the Seven Grandfather's Teachings.

The Seven Grandfather's Teachings originate from ancient tribal stories that have been passed down through oral storytelling traditions for centuries. These teachings outline values to guide interactions between individuals and all beings of the natural world and are considered to apply in all situations, to be interdependent on one another, and not to privilege humans over any other aspect of creation.<sup>12</sup> The seven values of these teachings are each embodied by an animal and are as follows:

1. Wisdom: beaver,
2. Love: eagle,
3. Respect: buffalo,
4. Bravery: bear,
5. Honesty: sage,
6. Humility: wolf,
7. Truth: turtle.

### Indigenous Culture in Traverse City

The culture and history of the Anishinaabe people (and the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians) has become more prevalent throughout Traverse City and the broader region. Though it has remained closed since the start of the pandemic, the Ewaaying Museum and Cultural Center presents artwork, historical records, and artifacts to “establish, gather, interpret, and maintain” a history of the region’s Anishinaabek people.<sup>13</sup> Additionally, the Traverse City Human Rights Commission and City Commission have advocated for and supported recognition of the second Monday of October as Indigenous Peoples Day as a way to continue efforts to promote the well-being of the Traverse City American and Indigenous community.<sup>14</sup>

Downtown Traverse City contains a mural in the Clinch Park Tunnel titled the Mazinaadin Exhibition that honors people and animals that are significant to the tribe’s traditions and beliefs, including eagles, wolves, and turtles.<sup>15</sup> Annual Peshawbestown Traditional Pow Wows are held each August and open for public attendance. The Traverse City Film Festival has also represented Anishinaabe culture through film showings that were submitted by members of the tribe and attendees that dressed in traditional clothing, played music and drummed, and lit sage.

The Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians has contributed to efforts in the City to preserve the environment, including the restoration of the Boardman/Ottawa River. The restoration of this watershed has intentionally sought to incorporate traditional ecological knowledge that emphasizes and connects to the Seven Grandfather's Teachings. As the Grand Traverse Band has long settled along the Boardman/Ottawa River and, subsequently, been impacted by patterns of colonial settlement, current efforts to restore the river seek and honor existing partnerships with the Ottawa and Chippewa as a band that is highly invested in supporting the river's natural prosperity.

Finally, the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians’ establishment of an Economic Development Corporation in 1983 led to it being the first tribe in Michigan to own and operate a casino. The Turtle Creek Casino and Leelanau Sands Casino are among the largest employers in northern Michigan that provide further support to the entire community by allocating 2% of all electronic gaming revenue to local schools, public safety, and healthcare services. Since this allocation program began in 1994, the Grand Traverse Band has contributed over \$42 million to benefit surrounding communities, including Traverse City.<sup>16</sup>

### Planning and Governing with a Framework of Decolonization

The desire to identify and encourage the “highest and best use” of all parcels across the City is an inherently colonial approach to land management. European settlers and land acquisition from indigenous nations like the Anishinaabe illustrate the original practice of valuing land from a capitalist perspective that privileges profit, development, and productivity over social value, indigenous value systems, and local place-based connections. These mindsets are reflected in current planning practices that often prioritize improvements over similar experiences of historic value or familial significance, especially in instances when urban development is planned for the benefit of visitors and tourists rather than local residents.<sup>17</sup>

The process of decolonizing planning is one that changes our relationship to land by upholding stewardship rather than ownership as the most valuable relationship one can have to land.<sup>18</sup> The values and traditions that have long governed the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa



Indians present a model to inform planning by upholding respect, relationships, meaning making, and intergenerational impacts as the basis for development decisions going forward.

## HISTORIC RESOURCES

### Benefits of Historic Preservation

Public awareness of historic preservation has grown after witnessing one-of-a-kind architecture and landmarks demolished. Residents recognized that a city's historic structures are at the core of placemaking, which comes with economic benefits of stabilizing neighborhoods or districts, enhancing property values, slowing the spread of blight, and attracting visitors or new residents to the area. Preservation is also environmentally friendly: due to materials and energy savings, the greenest building is one that is already built. It's a connection to a collective past that also beautifies the present, similarly to public art.

### *Historic Preservation Legislation*

In 1966, Congress passed its first ever legislation dedicated to historic preservation called The National Historic Preservation Act which required the implementation of State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPO) to oversee preservation efforts. Michigan predated the nation with the establishment of the Michigan Historical Marker Program in 1955.<sup>19</sup> Between 1999 and 2011, close to \$1.5 billion was funneled into historic rehabilitation projects through the State Historic Preservation Tax Credit.<sup>20</sup> The tax credits were lost for nearly a decade due to budget cuts but were reinstated in 2020 so that 25% of qualified rehabilitation expenditures can be claimed for reduced taxes.<sup>21</sup>

### National Historic Register

Established under the National Historic Preservation Act, the National Register of Historic Places is the nation's official list of properties important in American history, architecture, engineering, archaeology, and/or culture. Listing in the National Register neither protects a property nor places limitations on private property owners. Its purpose is to help local governments, state and federal agencies, and others to identify and consider historic properties in planning decisions. Joining the register provides property owners access to certain

## Historic Preservation and Climate Change

Encouraging the preservation and reuse of historic buildings has numerous benefits. Their rehabilitation simultaneously prevents the addition of vacant and/or deteriorating structures to a community, reduces the consumption of resources and building materials, and lessens the amount of waste put into landfills from new construction. Avoiding the demolition of old and historic buildings and subsequent construction of new buildings in their place preserves resources and energy, impacting the entire supply chain from materials extraction to building processes.






financial incentives, and if accepted, they give up some rights to what can be done to the property for preservation. To make it on the national register, SHPO assesses whether it meets one of four criteria:

1. Age (generally at least 50 years old),
2. Integrity of its original form,
3. Distinctive design or physical characteristics, and/or
4. Association with an important event, activity, or development of the past.<sup>22</sup>

Traverse City is adorned with beautiful architecture that has been preserved on the National Register of Historic Places.<sup>23</sup> Table 55 describes the brief history of structures and lists the date that the structure was put on the Register.

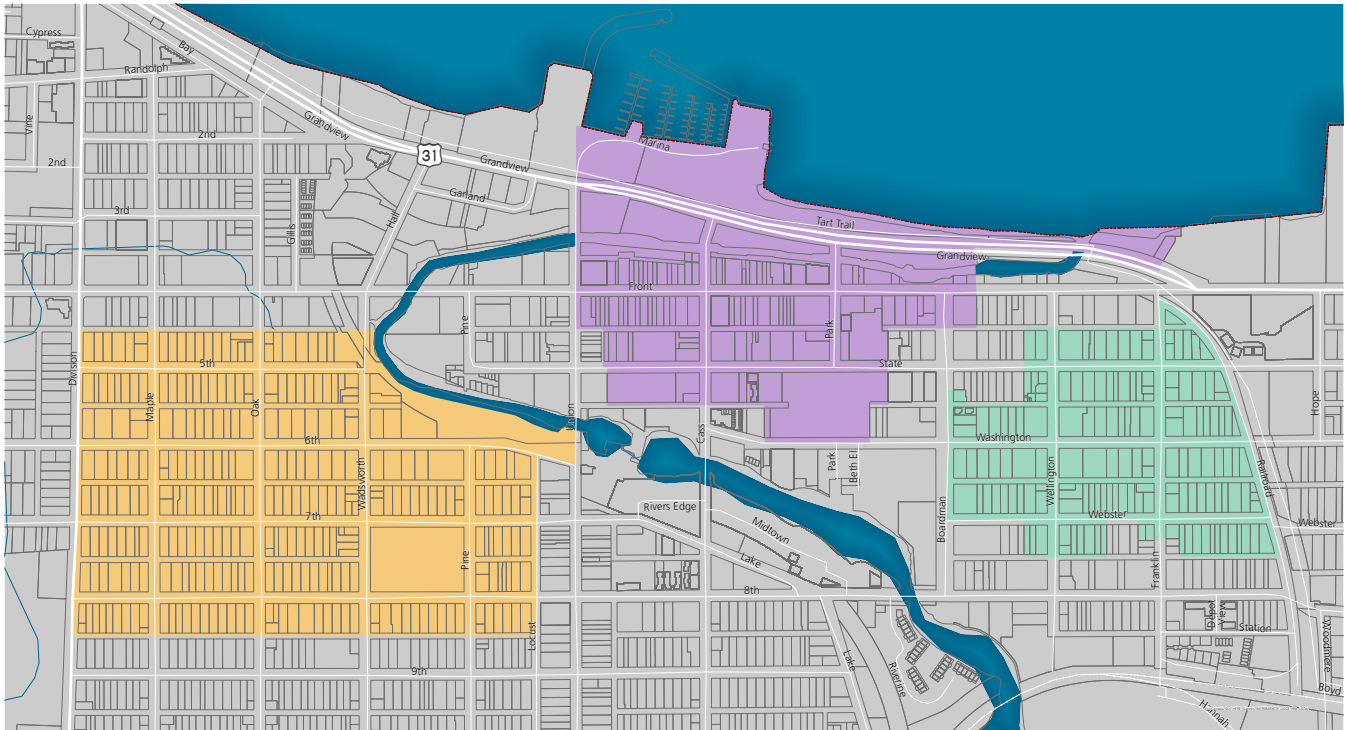
SHPO's spot in the Michigan Economic Development Corporation emphasizes the tie between art and its role as an economic driver. The state's Historic Preservation Plan also touches on the emotional value of being able to see and touch our history. It notes that historic preservation planning has been effective in increasing property values, returning unused buildings to productive uses and tax generation, providing sustainable options for new development, and creating places where different generations can relate to a place together.<sup>24</sup>

Table 55: Structures on the National Register of Historic Places

| Structures  | Listed Date | Image  |
|---|-------------|--|
| <p><b>American Legion Memorial Bridge:</b><br/>Reinforced concrete arch bridge completed in 1930.</p>   | 2000        |    |
| <p><b>City Opera House:</b><br/>In 1920, a movie theatre chain leased the opera house and closed it to prevent competition. It remained closed until 1985.</p>  | 1972        |    |
| <p><b>Perry Hannah House:</b><br/>Designed in 1891 by Grand Rapids architect W. G. Robinson for lumber baron Perry Hannah, a lumber baron known as the “father of Traverse City.” It is now used as the Reynolds-Jonkhoff Funeral Home.</p> | 1972        |   |
| <p><b>Northern Michigan Asylum:</b><br/>Also known as the Traverse City State Hospital and Traverse City Regional Psychiatric Hospital, it was established in 1881 under the supervision of prominent architect Gordon W. Lloyd</p>         | 1978        |  |
| <p><b>South Union Street/Boardman River Bridge:</b><br/>A girder bridge constructed in 1931 by the Michigan State Highway Department</p>  | 2000s       |  |

Source: images, Wikicommons.

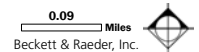
## Map 29: Historic Districts



### Historic Districts

Sources: Michigan Open Data Portal, City of Traverse City

- Central
- Downtown
- Boardman



SHPO helps property owners, developers, and local and state agencies identify opportunities to rehabilitate historic places. They administer the Federal Historic Preservation Tax Credit and manage the State Historic Preservation Tax Credits (restored in 2020) programs that provide financial incentives for property owners. Between 2016 and 2021, SHPO approved 124 projects totaling more than \$1 billion in qualified rehabilitation expenses through the federal program.<sup>25</sup> On top of that, they manage the Michigan State Historic Sites, a program similar to the National Register.<sup>26</sup> This is a list of properties preserved as historic sites by the state.

- » Congregation Beth El.
- » Grand Traverse Bay Informational Designation.
- » Grand Traverse County Courthouse.
- » Old Mission Peninsula Lighthouse Park.
- » Ladies Library Building.
- » Site of Novotny's Saloon.
- » Park Place Hotel.

- » Sleder's Tavern.
- » Weight Station.
- » Wilhelm Brothers Store.

### Historic District Commission (HDC)

At the local level, Traverse City's seven-person Historic Districts Commission investigates and recommends to City Commission areas it deems valuable for designation as Historic Districts and structures it deems valuable for designation as Historic Landmarks. Its guiding ordinance outlines its purpose to safeguard the City's heritage: to preserve cultural, political, architectural history through its historic landmarks. Members aspire for a coordinated preservation effort that contributes to the local economy and fosters civic beauty.

The HDC has designated three local historic districts: Central, Downtown, and Boardman. A local historic district is considered a historically significant area that is legally protected by an ordinance established under the state enabling legislation, Public Act 169 of 1970, as amended.

Between the three districts, there are over 700 parcels. It requires that proposed new construction, demolition, and exterior work that requires a building permit be reviewed and approved before it is undertaken. This review is legally binding and helps to ensure that development respects the character of the district. Local designation may also provide property owners with access to certain financial incentives. A historic district can change; a new one can be established or a current one removed with consent from a specific percentage of property owners as prescribed in the ordinance.

## RECREATION

The pandemic helped to clarify that public spaces and parks are essential for the health and well-being of a community. The benefits of public parks are well documented. The presence of quality parkland, public space, and trails is associated with higher property values, increased exercise, stormwater management, improved air quality, attracting businesses, and lower levels of crime.<sup>27</sup> This section summarizes the regional and local recreational opportunities and other notable public and private spaces available to Traverse City residents. This City is opportunely located among some of Michigan’s most beautiful natural resources, some of which are aptly harnessed for recreation.

### Regional System

Situated in the Boardman River Valley, the City is surrounded by a varied landscape within a region that has long been a recreational destination. Within a one-half hour driving distance from the City are a National Lakeshore, three State parks, two regional ski areas (Mt. Holiday and Hickory Hills), a large expanse of state forest lands, and a state game area. Within 90 minutes’ drive there are seven major ski resorts (Crystal Mountain, Nub’s Nob, Shanty Creek, Boyne Mountain, The Highlands, The Homestead, and Caberfae Peaks) for those who love winter sports. Proximity to such an array of recreational options is a boon for the region’s economy and quality of life. Groomed cross country skiing is available at Hickory Hills, Hickory Meadows, and Vasa Trails, as well as other less maintained public lands.

Outside of the city’s parks system, there are facilities under a mix of public, quasi-public, or private ownership that add to the area’s recreational offerings.

## Park & Recreation Plan Goals

1. Maintain and improve existing parks.
2. Increase awareness of city parks and recreation.
3. Develop a parks and recreation capital improvement fund.
4. Enhance active non-motorized recreation and transportation.
5. Enhance Boardman Lake and River recreational opportunities.
6. Senior citizen center support and improvements.
7. Improve signage, wayfinding, and branding for parks.
8. Land acquisition for parks.
9. Develop partnerships with schools.
10. Consider recreation programs.

- » The most notable facility is the Grand Traverse Civic Center. Owned and operated by Grand Traverse County, the Civic Center boasts an indoor pool and fitness center (operated by YMCA), ice arena (operated by Centre ICE), baseball/softball fields, skatepark, walking track, amphitheater, pavilion, sledding hill, and playground. The Civic Center is the only indoor community pool and only ice arena in the City (although it is only used as an ice arena from September to March). Participation at the Civic Center is free to the public in addition to some fee-based classes and programs.
- » The Traverse City Country Club is a private membership based recreational facility that has an 18-hole golf course, outdoor swimming pool, tennis and pickle ball courts, and winter ski and sledding. It is the only golfing opportunity within city limits.
- » The YMCA is a private membership club that has 2 campuses in Garfield Township. They offer group and individual activities to its members.
- » The Grand Traverse Commons, formerly the state hospital, hosts open space for live music,

events, and the venue Kirkbride Hall. Many trails are located in this area as well. Garfield Township recently adopted a trail master plan for the area that will begin implementing improvements in 2024.

### Traverse City Parks System & Access

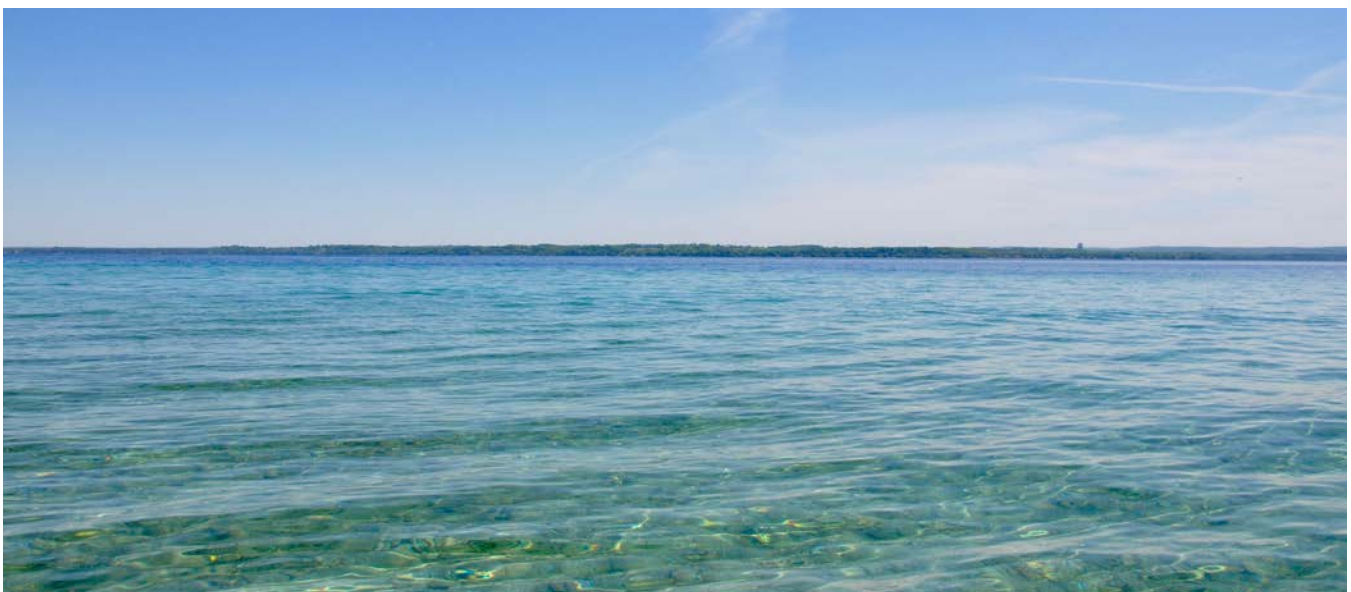
The Traverse City Park System is evaluated in detail in its 2021-2026 Parks and Recreation Plan. In that document, the size, type, amenities, and level of access are inventoried for each of the City's 34 parks, according to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources guidelines. The inventory demonstrated a wide range of parks within the system, from mini-parks to larger, specialized facilities such as Hickory Hills or the Grand Traverse Commons. It also demonstrated parkland distribution; land is concentrated along the bay or Boardman Lake. Diverse park sizes and types provide a wealth of recreation options; kayaking, hiking, down-hill skiing, and swimming are all possible within the city park systems. Survey respondents felt there were adequate parks in the City but their top three requests were for more nature areas, facilities for winter activities, and trails. This corresponds to their favorite activities listed: hiking, biking, beach going, passive activities, and nature observing. These responses help direct the Parks and Recreation Plan towards specific projects listed the Goals and Objectives that the Master Plan can align with.

### Park Access and Equity

The distribution and location of parks across a city is an issue of equity. Traverse City's parks illustrate consistent accessibility throughout most of the city, with the exception of some areas on the southern borders and the southeast corner near industrial uses. Future chapters in this master plan that detail Existing Land Uses and the City's Neighborhoods map the City's land uses which can provide context to which areas do not have the same extent of access to parks as the rest of the city.

### Park Access and Climate Change

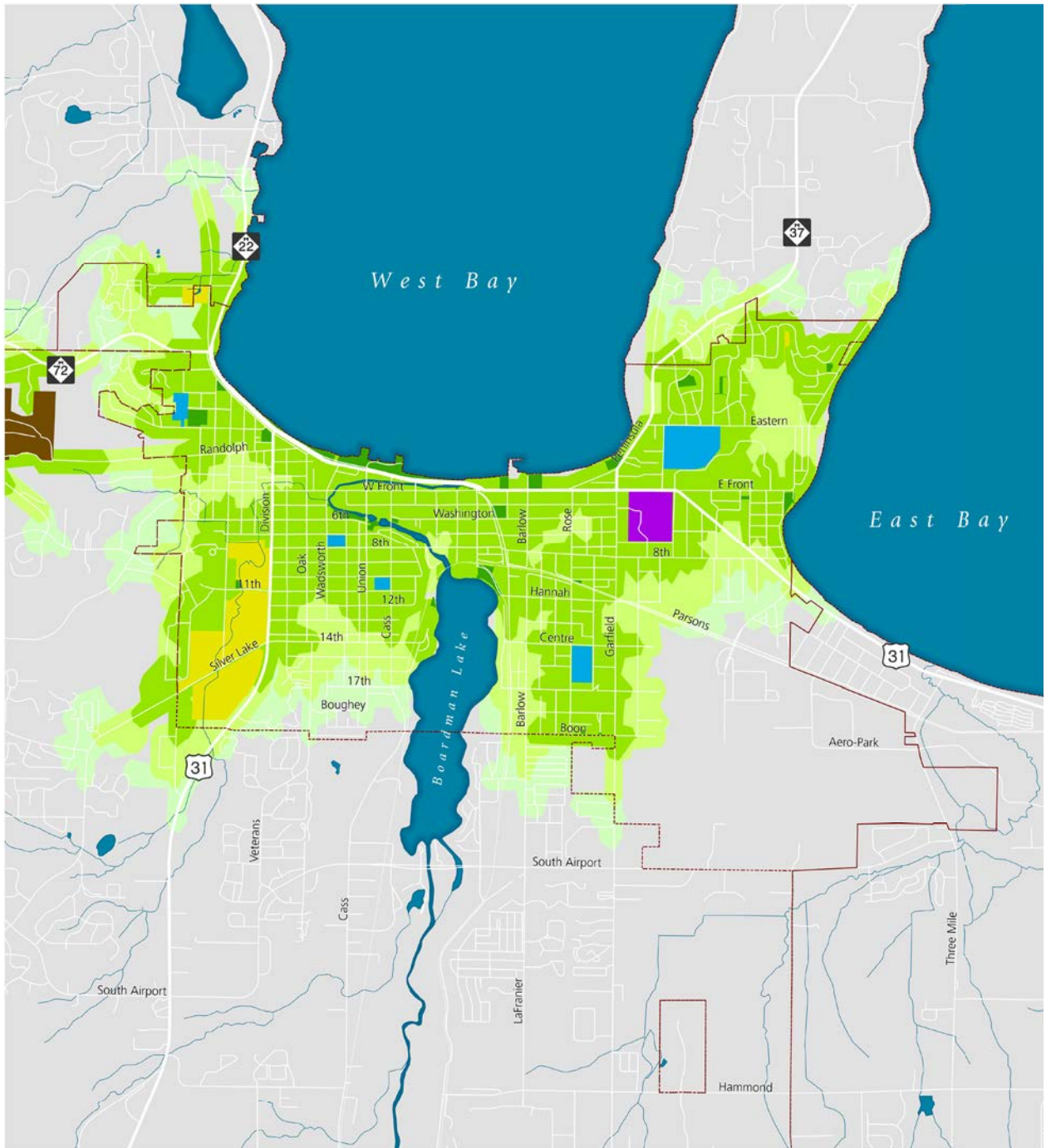
The ability to safely access parks has implications for emissions and climate change. The locations, proximity to residents, and overall connectivity of city parks impact the methods that visitors will use to access them and often presents the choice of traveling by foot, bike, or car. Accessing parks also entails considerations of safety and traffic; though a park may be in close proximity to a residence or neighborhood, limited non-motorized infrastructure (like sidewalk or crosswalks) can present concerns of safe access and may reinforce the need to travel by car to the park.



*East Bay.*

Source: City of Traverse City

Map 30: Park Access



## Park Access

Sources: Michigan Open Data Portal, City of Traverse City

- Traverse City Park
- School Facility
- County Park
- Recreation Area
- Natural Area
- 5 Minute Walking Distance
- 10 Minute Walking Distance
- 15 Minute Walking Distance



In addition to the accessibility scale used in the Parks and Recreation Plan that evaluates if amenities can be used universally, the map Park Access evaluates accessibility for getting to parks. The map calculates a 15-minute walking radius from parks (excluding mini parks), a distance that is considered comfortable for most people. The grey sections of the map indicate where households are outside of the walking range. Aside from the airport, only two neighborhoods, Hilltop and Traverse Heights, cannot easily access a park on foot. While the city fares well on relative closeness between parks and households, another layer of analysis would include the safety and completeness of the network that connects households to parks (i.e. sidewalks).

### Who Oversees Recreation?

The Parks and Recreation Commission is an advisory body to the City Commission on the operation, development, and planning of parks, recreation, and cemetery services and activities. Six of the seven commissioners are appointed by the City Commission, and the seventh member is the City Manager's appointee. This body is an important liaison between residents, parks and recreation staff, and elected officials.

In a more regional effort, Traverse City is also a part of the Recreational Authority, a joint authority with Garfield Township to collaborate on acquisition, construction, operation, maintenance, or improvement of public recreation spaces. In 2004, voters in both jurisdictions approved ballot measures for the Authority to purchase and operate three properties as public parks: Historic Barns Park, Hickory Meadows, and part of the Open Space on West Grand Traverse Bay. In November 2020,

voters approved a new 20-year operating millage for the Authority to continue its operations. At the end of 2021, the Authority acquired Hickory Forest, a 76-acre parcel adjacent to Hickory Hills and Hickory Meadows and will now steward the maintenance and operations of the area.

### Water Access

#### *Grand Traverse Bay*

While the bay offers stunning, scenic views, its shoreline is an area of great concern to maintain as a beautiful recreational asset. Due to a 40-year effort by the City to keep the bay open to the public, much of Traverse City's shoreline has been reclaimed for open space and recreation for the public. The bay offers a public resource for fishing, sailing, boating, swimming, wind-surfing, diving, and relaxing at Clinch Park.

Another challenge with the bay is more severe water level fluctuations recently. Depending on water levels, portions of recreational amenities become more difficult to access like the sandy beaches or the parking lots. Despite some of these constraints, the City aspires to connect bay front parks together, featuring trails with interpretive educational centers. Already, several historical and watershed educational stations have been installed.

#### *Boardman Lake and River*

The Boardman River enters into Boardman Lake and eventually into West Grand Traverse Bay. While the City continues to grow and develop, it strives to incorporate the river into the urban framework for active and passive recreation users. This includes linking the river to the City through public access points such as trails, parks, and/or launch



*West Grand Traverse Bay.*

Source: City of Traverse City

points as has been laid out in the 2013 Boardman River Recreation Plan. The 2021-2026 Park and Recreation Plan calls for the Boardman River Recreation Plan to be updated, signifying the City's continued commitment to the river's integration into its planning efforts (especially in conjunction with the Lower Boardman Unified Plan). One good example of river access is the Boardman Lake Trail Pavilion and Kayak Launch. This is a recreational space that has an accessible kayak launch, picnic shelter, and benches, providing opportunities for passive and active recreation.

The Boardman Lake and River provide opportunities for urban outdoor recreation including kayaking, canoeing, tubing, paddle boarding, sailing, rowing, and boating. In addition to water sports, the Boardman River is known as a fishing destination, specifically for trout. Brown Bridge Quiet Areas sits outside of the City's boundaries but carries significant value to the area. It is a city-owned, regional-scale parcel that serves as a park even though that's not its official designation. It offers hiking trails, including some accessible trails, water access on the Boardman River, and a canoe launch exists for access to paddling the Boardman River. The 2019 Brown Bride Trust Fund has proposed improvements to the area that would also be addressed through an updated Boardman River Recreation Plan.

## Non-Motorized Trails

The City's trail system is extensive, covering 17.1 miles. Trails are a beloved asset by the community and a priority for upkeep and development. Below is a description of the City's distinct trails.

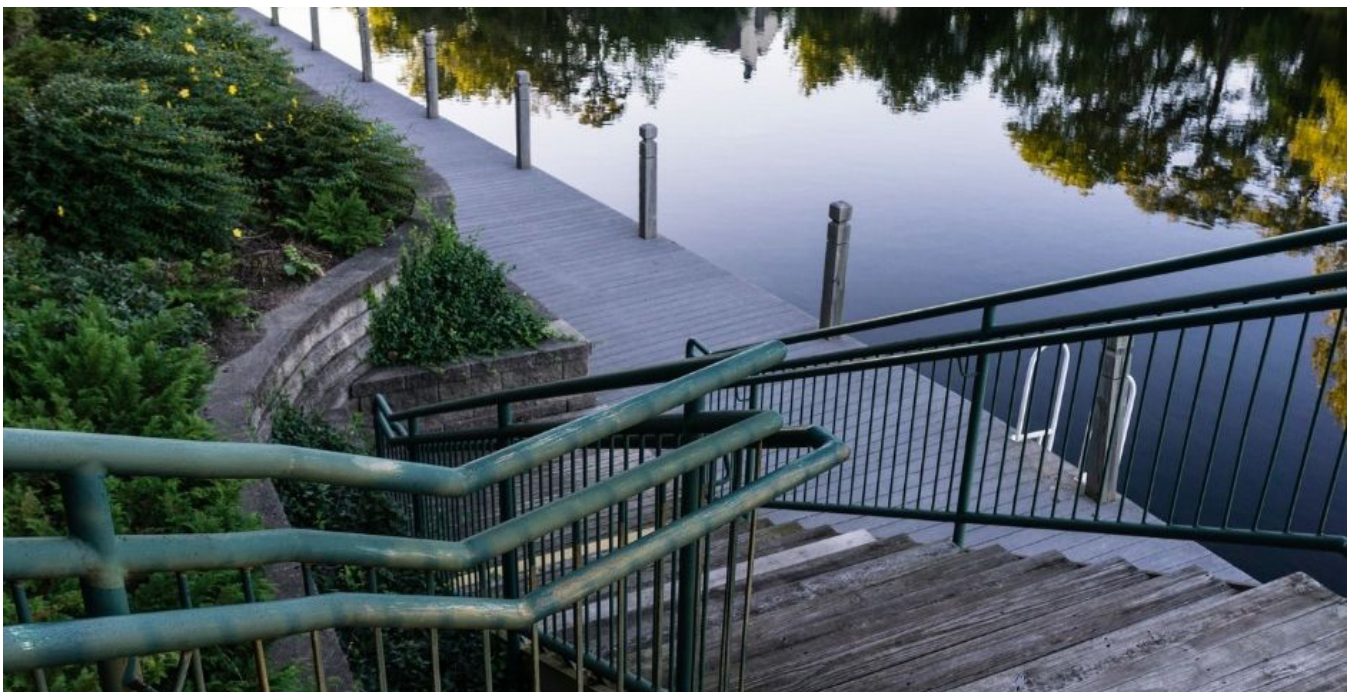
### TART

The Traverse Area Recreation Trails (TART) network consists of several multi-use trails in Grand Traverse and Leelanau counties. The portion that runs through Traverse City is a 4.5-mile paved urban transportation and recreation corridor, serving as a cross-town bike route. This trail starts in Acme Township and links to the Leelanau Trail on the west side of the City. This trail provides access to the beach, dining, parking, picnic area, and restrooms.

The TART in Town is an on-street network that includes several point-to-point bike routes in downtown Traverse City. The routes connect major institutions like the Commons, Munson Medical Center, and Traverse City Central High.

### Boardman Lake Loop

The Boardman Lake Loop Trail is owned by the City of Traverse City, in partnership with Grand Traverse County and Garfield Township. The 4-mile Boardman Lake Loop Trail is a trail that wraps around Boardman Lake, just south of

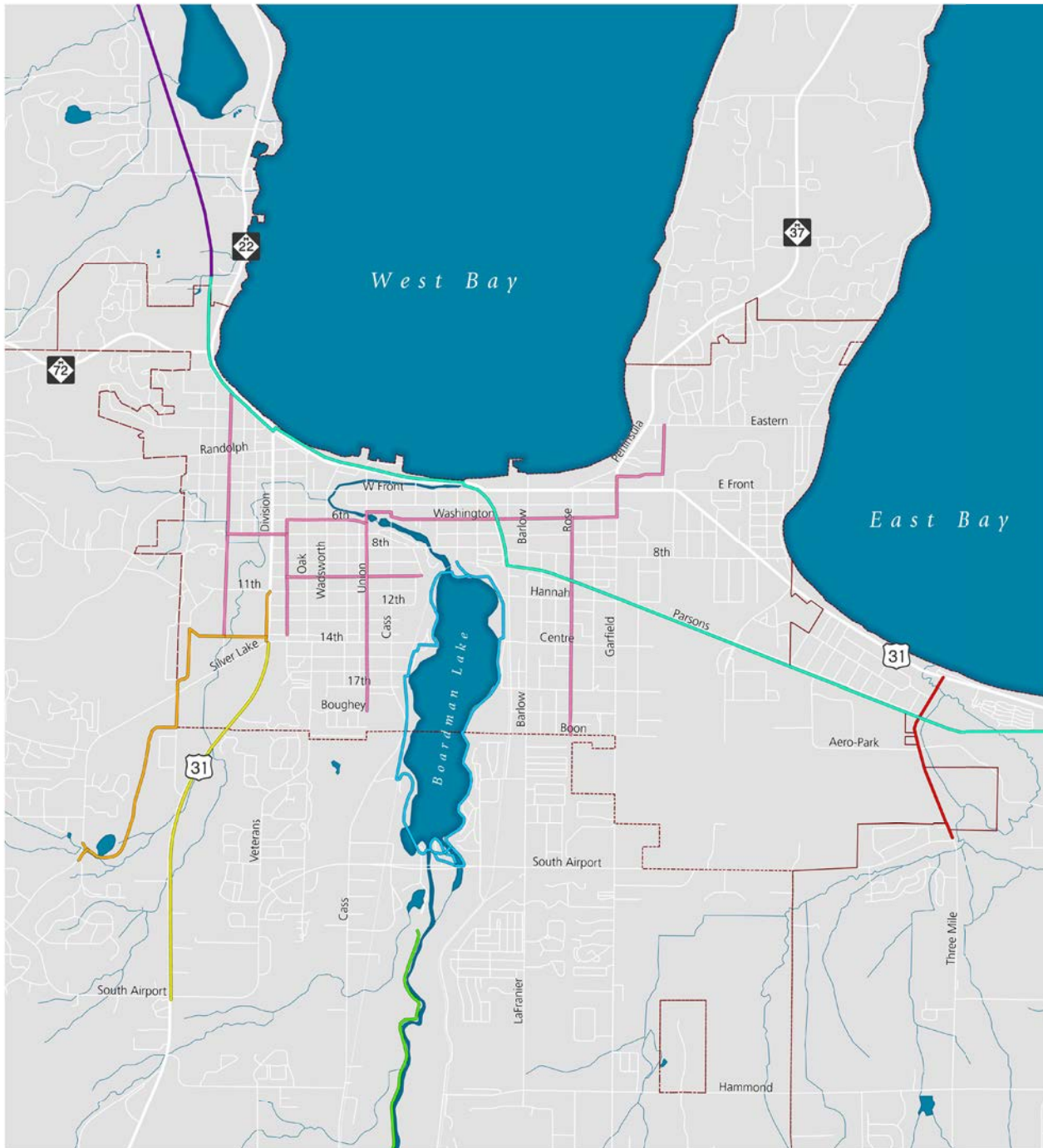


*Boardman River Trail.*

Source: City of Traverse City



Map 31: Non-Motorized Routes



## Non-Motorized Routes

Sources: Michigan Open Data Portal, City of Traverse City



- ~ TART
- ~ TART in Town
- ~ Mall Trail\*
- ~ Leelanau Trail (TART)
- ~ Boardman/Ottaway River Trail\*
- ~ Boardman Lake Loop Trail\*
- ~ Buffalo Ridge Trail\*
- ~ Three Mile Trail\*

\*TART involved in the maintenance and operation

downtown Traverse City. The northern portion offers commercial access, the east side is a heavily wooded segment, the southern end features two bridges over the Boardman/Ottaway River and an extended boardwalk over the Boardman Lake, and the western portion features lookout piers, fishing decks, and kayak launches.

### *Buffalo Ridge*

The Buffalo Ridge Trail is part of a network of trails nestled between Silver Lake Road and US-37. The Buffalo Ridge Trail is an almost 1.5-mile trail connecting The Village at Grand Traverse Commons to Traverse City West Middle School and the YMCA, the Historic Barns Park, and the Botanic Garden. When completed, the proposed 4.5-mile trail will connect the west and southwest areas of Traverse City.

### *Mall*

Built in 1997, the almost two-mile long Mall Trail parallels US-31 near the Grand Traverse Mall. The Mall Trail connects downtown Traverse City residents with many commercial businesses and restaurants.

## Non-Motorized Infrastructure and Climate Change

A robust network of hiking, biking, and walking trails directly impacts the frequency with which city residents will utilize non-motorized transportation methods. While many of Traverse City's trails fulfill recreational purposes, their prevalence and overall connectivity supports their usage for all purposes, including as alternative methods of transportation. Regular use of the City's trail systems for various purposes can reduce emissions that typically come from cars and automobile-oriented mobility.

### *Three Mile*

Named for its location, not its distance, this two-mile long trail that runs along Three Mile Road from the beach at Traverse City State Park on US 31 to South Airport Road. The trail was built as part of the Three Mile Road widening project in conjunction with the Grand Traverse County Road Commission. Work is underway to extend the trail from South Airport Road to Hammond Road.<sup>28</sup>

## ARTS, CULTURE, & RECREATION KEY POINTS

- » Traverse City has a robust artistic landscape. In 2020, the Arts Vibrancy Index placed Traverse City in the top 10 medium-sized cities for supply, demand, and governmental support of the arts.
- » The visual and performing arts scenes of Traverse City are supported by historic institutions (such as the Dennon Museum, Crooked Tree Arts Center, Commongrounds, State and Bijou Theatres, the Interlochen Center for the Arts, and City Opera House); community events (such as the City's Art Fair and Art Walk, PorchFesh, Traverse City Comedy Festival, and Traverse City Cherry Festival); and arts and culture organizations (such as the National Writers Series, Traverse Symphony Orchestra, and the Old Town Playhouse).
- » The Traverse City Arts Commission oversees the Public Art Program which is dedicated to developing and preserving public access to the arts by installing displays and installations in public spaces of community gathering.
- » Traverse City celebrates and preserves indigenous cultures in various ways. The Ewaaying Museum and Cultural Center presents artwork, historical records, and artifacts to "establish, gather, interpret, and maintain" a history of the region's Anishinaabek people, and the City has established an Indigenous Peoples' Day on the second Monday of October. A mural in downtown Traverse City honors the people and animals that are significant to the tribe's traditions and beliefs, and Peshawbestown Traditional Pow Wows are held each August and open to the community.
- » Traverse City's parks and recreational spaces provide incredible access to the region's natural resources and contribute significantly to the City's sense of place. The network encompasses regional recreational areas (like the Grand Traverse Civic Center), the parks and amenities of the City's recreation system, numerous bodies of water, and non-motorized trails that connect to various systems.

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# 10



East Front Street, Downtown Traverse City.

The City of Traverse City is an economic hub of the northwest region of Michigan's lower peninsula. Residents across the region travel to the city for healthcare and financial services. Even with the economic disruption of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Traverse City regional economy remained strong. Powered by the City's downtown, the commercial areas of the City cater to a mix of local and regional traffic which allows the City to remain an incredibly popular tourist destination. As the region and city continue to grow, the transformation and redevelopment of selected areas presents the opportunity to meet the future needs of the community.

- » 89% of the City's workforce lives outside the City.
- » Healthcare and finance are two of the biggest industries in the city.
- » Several major transformative projects are planned downtown, led by the DDA.
- » There is a community desire to see a transformation and various redevelopments along East Front Street, Munson Avenue, 14th Street, and Garfield Avenue.
- » Community priorities in redevelopment trend towards mid-rise mixed-use developments that stay in context with the surrounding neighborhoods.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## THE REGIONAL ECONOMY

### Employment

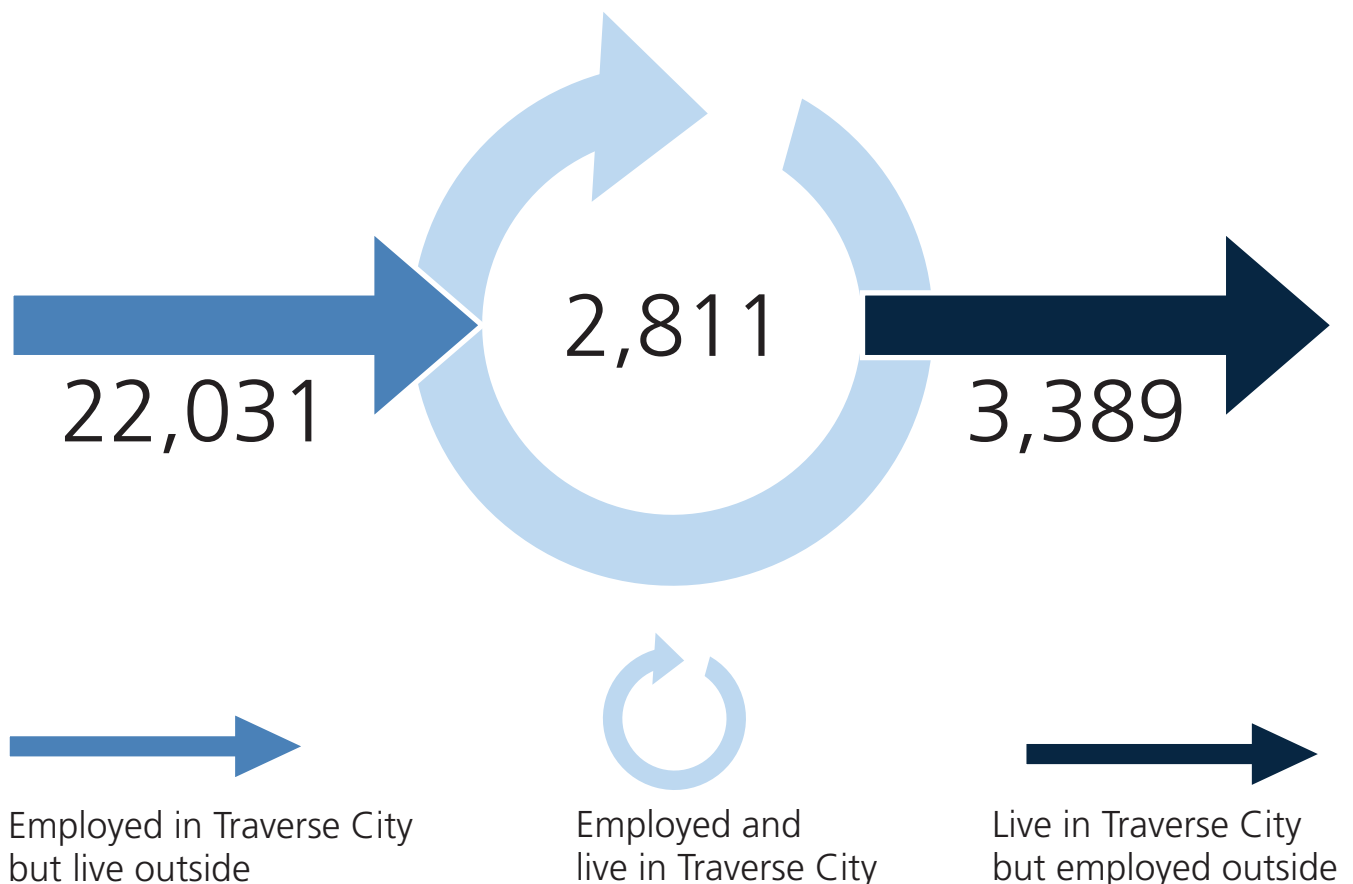
In 2020, roughly 24,842 people were employed in the City of Traverse City. Of these employees, the vast majority (89%) commuted into the City for work with the remaining 11% of workers living in the City. Additionally, 3,389 people are residents of the City but work elsewhere. Roughly 44% of all people working in the City work in a management, business, science, or arts occupation while 21% work in a sales or office occupation, 17% work a service job, 11% work in production, transportation, or material moving, and 7% work in natural resources, construction, or maintenance. According to 2021 ACS data, 4% of Traverse City workers worked from home. Notably, this dataset is self-reported, therefore leaving it up to the person filling out the survey to determine if they work from home. Of Traverse City's workforce, 12.1% commute from Garfield Charter Township, 7.6% from East Bay Township, and 7.2% from Long

Lake Township. Additionally, as shown on the map titled Traverse City Workers – Home Location, the workforce comes from all over the northern lower peninsula. The map only shows the top 100 home locations as defined by the number of Traverse City workers living in that community, meaning there are workers who live in communities not illustrated on the map.

### Sector Analysis

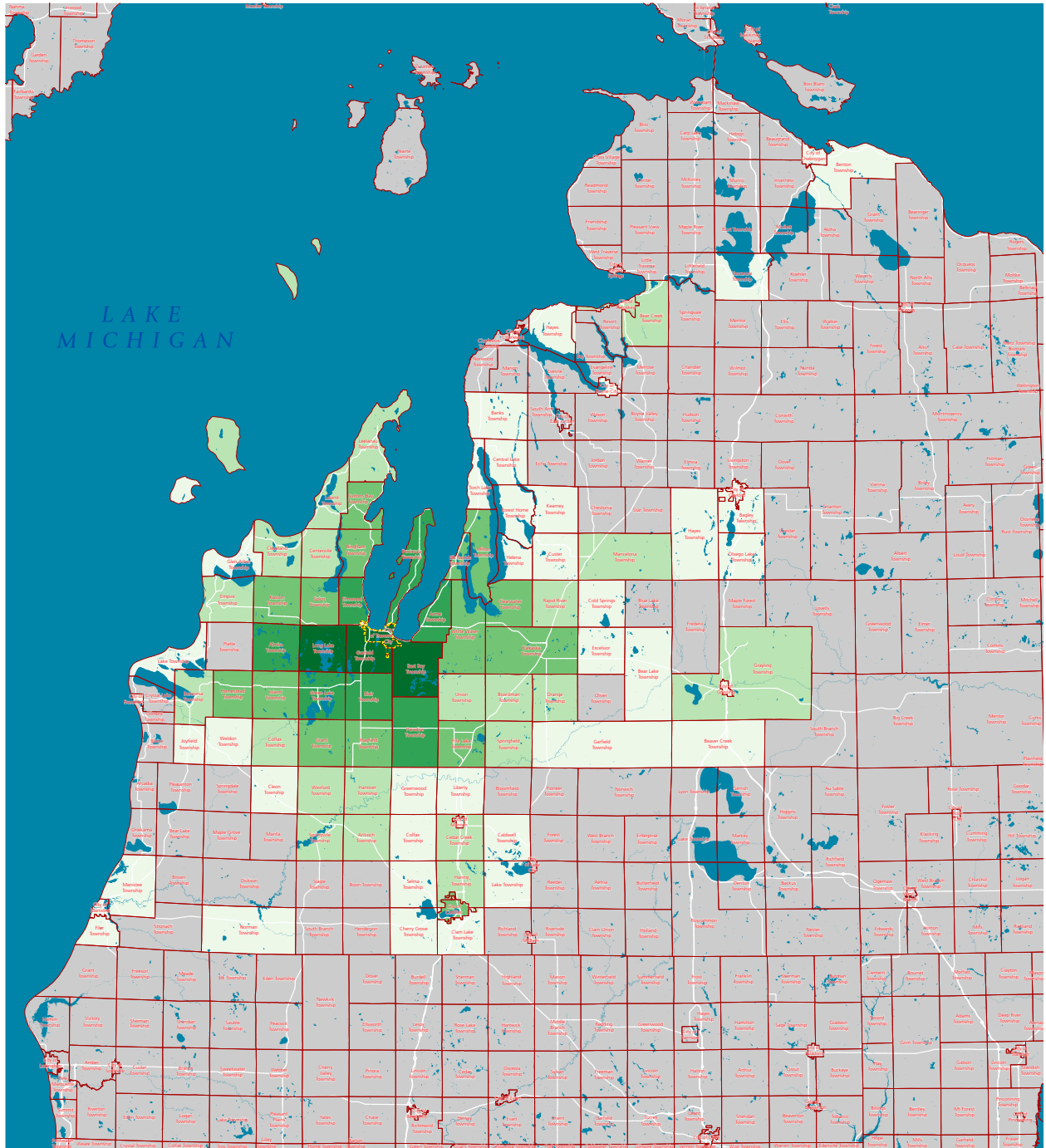
Economies are a diverse and complex web of relationships. Products on the shelf often come from a variety of globally sourced materials, undergo multiple stages of manufacturing, and are designed, engineered, and built by a multitude of people. IMPLAN, an input-output economic modeling tool, was used to illustrate the interdependency of industries and sectors in the Traverse City region (49684 and 49686 zip codes). The analysis was performed at this scale to better capture a regional economy while maintaining relevance to Traverse City. Data used in the

Figure 25: Employment Inflow Outflow



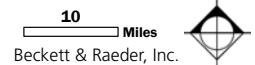
Source: US Census Bureau

Map 32: Traverse City Workers – Home Location



## Traverse City Workers - Home Location

Sources: Michigan Open Data Portal, City of Traverse City



- Traverse City
- 22 - 54 Workers
- 55 - 130 Workers
- 131 - 325 Workers
- 326 - 1,379 Workers
- 1,380 - 3,001 Workers

Note: Only Top 100 Home Locations included in dataset, 1.3% of workers not shown on map

analysis was sourced from various governmental sources including the Bureau of Economic Analysis, Census Bureau, and Internal Revenue Service. IMPLAN models upstream economic activity which includes the resources, supply, and manufacturing of goods and services. It does not model sales, use, and disposal activity. Notably, tourism is absent from this analysis because it does not neatly fall into an industry classification. Therefore, a separate discussion on the economic impact of tourism can be found in the sustainable tourism section of this plan.

IMPLAN models several elements of economic output, including labor income, intermediate output, and value added (see figure titled Economic

Output). Intermediate inputs include the purchase of goods and services that are used to produce other goods and services. For example, a computer manufacturing company would need to buy metal, plastic, and electronic parts in order to produce the final computer, all of which would be considered intermediate inputs. Value Added represents the contribution of industry activity to the gross domestic product. Labor Income is the total cost of labor and includes wages and all benefits. Proprietor Income is the income of the corporation/proprietor. Taxes on Production & Imports includes all taxes on goods and services, including tariffs, property taxes, and sales taxes. Government subsidies and other tax exemptions are also included as negative values.

Figure 26: Economic Output

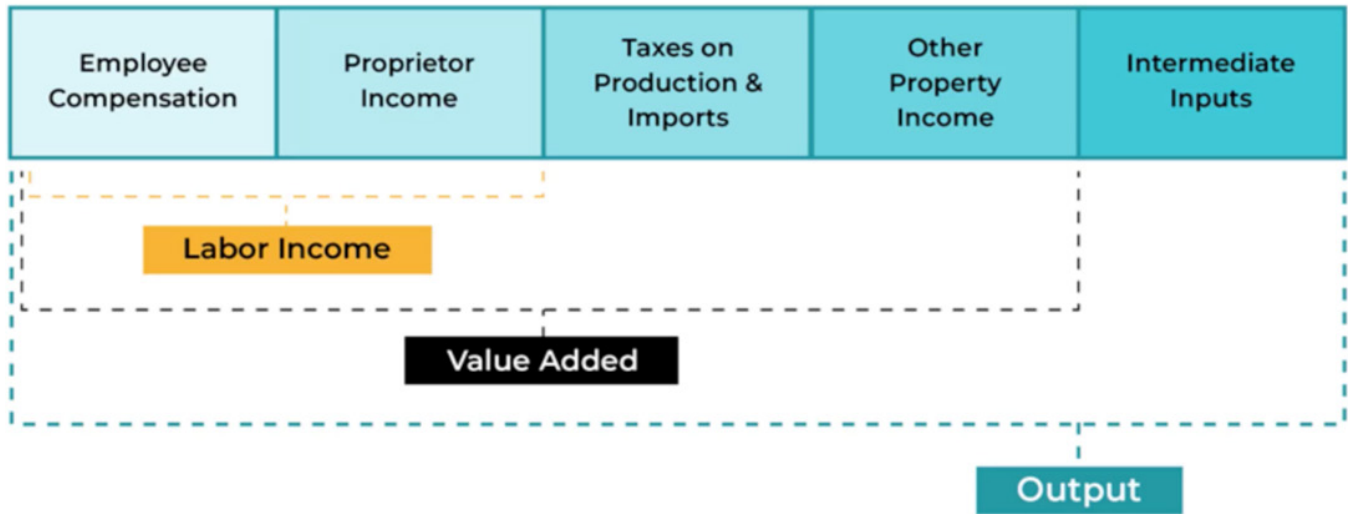


Table 56: Top 5 Largest Industries in the Traverse City Region

| Industry   | Total Economic Output (millions) | Intermediate Outputs (millions) | Value Added (millions) | Labor Income (millions) | Employment |
|--|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|------------|
| Hospitals  | \$763                            | \$377                           | \$387                  | \$333                   | 4,236      |
| Insurance agencies, brokerages, and related activities   | \$410                            | \$221                           | \$189                  | \$117                   | 1,328      |
| Real estate  | \$393                            | \$283                           | \$111                  | \$48                    | 2,404      |
| Offices of physicians  | \$288                            | \$83                            | \$205                  | \$197                   | 1,818      |
| Monetary authorities and depository credit intermediation (finance managers, loan offices, etc.) | \$244                            | \$125                           | \$120                  | \$81                    | 764        |

Source: IMPLAN, 2019

Other Property Income is the remaining dollars after taxes, labor income, and intermediate inputs are purchased, essentially profit. The total economic output of an industry is the combined value of labor income, value added, and intermediate outputs.

Of the 546 industries modeled by IMPLAN, 272 are active in the Traverse City Region (49684 and 49686 zip codes). The table titled Top 5 Largest Industries in the Traverse City Region highlights the five industries with the largest economic output in 2019. While more recent data is available, 2019 represents a pre-pandemic economy. The impacts of COVID-19 on the regional economy are discussed later in this chapter. Hospitals (Munson) are the largest industry in the Traverse City region, accounting for \$763 million in total economic output, roughly 9% of the region’s economy. The

industry is also the largest employer in the region, accounting for 7.8% of all employees. The top five industries illustrate that the Traverse City region is a hub for healthcare and finance.

To provide additional insights into the Traverse City Regional economy, a base sector analysis was performed. A base sector analysis identifies which industries are exporting goods and services out of the region and which are importing goods and services. A Location Quotient (LQ) value of one (1) or more indicates that the industry is exporting goods and services and, therefore, illustrates the extent to which the industry represents a regional specialization that is in demand elsewhere. An LQ value below one (1) indicates that the industry is importing goods and services into the region. As shown in the table titled, Top 5 Export Industries

**Table 57: Top 5 Export Industries in the Traverse City Region**

| Industry  | Location Quotient | Total Economic Output |
|---|-------------------|-----------------------|
| Semiconductor and related device manufacturing      | 18.9              | \$40,469,884          |
| Wineries  | 13.0              | \$45,242,241          |
| Other textile product mills                         | 11.9              | \$20,596,737          |
| Small arms, ordnance, and accessories manufacturing | 11.9              | \$1,250,296           |
| Motor and generator manufacturing                   | 11.5              | \$37,202,999          |

Source: IMPLAN, 2019

**Table 58: Economic Base**

|                           | Description  | Location Quotient | 2018 – 2019 Economic Output |
|---------------------------|--|-------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>Growth Industry</b>    | Industries that have a strong presence in the region and are expanding.    | LQ >1             | Positive Change             |
| <b>Emerging Industry</b>  | Industries that are expanding but have yet to establish a strong presence. | LQ <1             | Positive Change             |
| <b>Mature Industry</b>    | Industries that have been a specialty for the region but are declining.    | LQ >1             | Negative Change             |
| <b>Declining Industry</b> | Industries with a small presence and declining economic activity.          | LQ <1             | Negative Change             |



**Table 59: Industry Trends**

|                  | Industry Count |            | Employment |            | Economic Output (\$M) |            |
|------------------|----------------|------------|------------|------------|-----------------------|------------|
|                  | Total          | % of Total | Total      | % of Total | Total                 | % of Total |
| <b>Growth</b>    | 82             | 30.48%     | 25,684     | 47.29%     | \$4,390               | 51.82%     |
| <b>Emerging</b>  | 66             | 24.54%     | 11,929     | 21.96%     | \$1,495               | 17.64%     |
| <b>Mature</b>    | 52             | 19.33%     | 12,623     | 23.24%     | \$1,985               | 23.43%     |
| <b>Declining</b> | 69             | 25.65%     | 4,077      | 7.51%      | \$603                 | 7.11%      |

Source: IMPLAN, 2018 & 2019

in the Traverse City Region, manufacturing is a regional specialty as are wineries.

To identify economic trends, the 2019 figures for the Region’s industries were compared to the 2018 figures. Industries were then classified into one of four groups: growth, emerging, mature, and declining. The figure titled Industry Trends charts the Traverse City Region’s industries based on their LQ, change in economic output, and size of economic output.

The Traverse City Regional economy is in healthy shape. Almost one-half of the Region’s workers and over one-half of the county’s economic output are attributed to growth sectors. Additionally, roughly one-quarter of industries, workers, and economic output are in an emerging sector. While about one-quarter of industries are classified as declining, these industries account for 7-8% of total employment and economic output. The high number of industries that are declining indicates that the Traverse City regional economy will transition towards industries that are already performing well, allowing dedicated investments to these industries.

The industries that are performing well in terms of growth and specialization (growth industries) are currently the largest industries in the region, indicating that the drivers of the regional economy are performing well. Emerging industries are those in finance, science, and food service, which align with national economic trends. Declining industries in the region include some finance industries, some healthcare, and fossil fuel electricity generation. It is important to note that this is a one-year analysis, but economies should be monitored over multiple years to identify larger trends. However, 2018 was the oldest dataset available for the Traverse City

### Traverse City Industry Trends and Equity

The strength of Traverse City’s growth industries alludes to positive implications for the equity of workers in the City. As growth industries are specialized, growing industries, further investment in them to solidify their strength is highly likely. Traverse City’s growth industries employ the greatest portion of employees and produce the greatest amount of economic output which is indicative that economic productivity is not specific or confined to industries with relatively few employees. While this is a not a direct correlation to the City’s distribution of wealth, employees of growth industries can count on employment stability as their industries do not currently face a large threat of shrinkage or exodus.

Region (49684 and 49686 zip codes), making it difficult to analyze the economy over time.

The growth and emerging industries, especially those in the professional services and healthcare sectors, tend to locate in traditional office spaces (office parks, strip commercial). As these industries continue to expand, the demand for office space will likely increase. However, the COVID-19 pandemic significantly altered working/commuting trends, and many more workers work from home. While the demand for office space will likely increase, it will not be as strong as projections anticipated before the pandemic.

Table 60: Top Industry Trends

| Top Industries | Growth Industries  | Emerging Industries  | Mature Industries  | Declining Industries                                 |
|----------------|--|--|--|--|
| #1             | Hospitals (\$763M)   | Real estate (\$393M)   | Offices of physicians (\$288M)                                 | Other financial investment activities (\$54M)        |
| #2             | Insurance agencies, brokerages, and related activities (\$410M)    | Limited-service restaurants (\$123M)                         | Oil and gas extraction (\$210M)                                | Nursing and community care facilities (\$45M)        |
| #3             | Monetary authorities and depository credit intermediation (\$309M) | Scientific research and development services (\$85M)         | Electric power generation - fossil fuel (\$160M)               | Religious organizations (\$36M)                      |
| #4             | Full-service restaurants (\$245M)                                  | Architectural, engineering, and related services (\$81M)     | Retail - general merchandise stores (\$105M)                   | Electric power transmission and distribution (\$34M) |
| #5             | Legal services (\$162M)  | Wholesale - other durable goods merchant wholesalers (\$63M) | Bread and bakery product, except frozen, manufacturing (\$88M) | Insurance carriers, except direct life (\$28M)       |

Source: IMPLAN 2019

Table 61: COVID-19 Industry Classifications

| Classification            | Description   |
|---------------------------|---|
| Increase and Outperform   | The industry increased in activity from 2019-2021 and increased greater than the industry statewide     |
| Increase but Underperform | The industry increased in activity from 2019-2021 but not at a higher level than the industry statewide |
| Decrease but Outperform   | The industry declined in activity from 2019-2021 but not to the degree of the industry statewide        |
| Decrease and Underperform | The industry declined in activity from 2019-2021 and at a more severe rate than the industry statewide  |

*COVID-19 Pandemic*

The COVID-19 pandemic was one of the largest disruptions in the global economy since the Great Recession in 2008. Stores were forced to immediately close, restaurants went out of business, and convenience, delivery, and online shopping exploded. As a regional service destination, Traverse City was significantly impacted. To determine the degree to which COVID-19 impacted the Traverse City regional economy, 2019 IMPLAN figures were compared to 2021 figures. All industries were classified into one of four groups, as outlined in the table titled COVID-19 Industry Classifications.

In terms of employment and economic output, the Traverse City regional economy has rebounded fairly well the year after the pandemic began. Over 60% of employees and economic output were in an industry that increased economic output and outperformed 2020 in 2021. An additional 14% of industries increased their economic output, but not as much as their respective industries statewide. Notably, 35% of Traverse City’s industries declined

Table 62: Impact of COVID-19

|                           | Industry Count 2021 |            | Employment, 2021 |            | Economic Output (\$M), 2021 |            |
|---------------------------|---------------------|------------|------------------|------------|-----------------------------|------------|
|                           | Total               | % of Total | Total            | % of Total | Total                       | % of Total |
| Increase and outperform   | 121                 | 45.0%      | 31,757           | 61.3%      | \$5,540M                    | 61.2%      |
| Increase but underperform | 37                  | 13.8%      | 9,495            | 18.3%      | \$1,486M                    | 16.4%      |
| Decrease but outperform   | 16                  | 5.9%       | 1,704            | 3.3%       | \$230M                      | 2.5%       |
| Decrease and underperform | 95                  | 35.3%      | 8,875            | 17.1%      | \$1,793M                    | 19.8%      |

Source: IMPLAN, 2019 & 2021

Table 63: COVID-19 Impacts by Industry

| Top Industries | Increase and Outperform   | Increase but Underperform  | Decrease but Outperform   | Decrease and Underperform                                      |
|----------------|---|--|---|--|
| #1             | Hospitals (\$825M)  | Real estate (\$417M)   | Monetary authorities and depository credit intermediation (\$200M)      | Nursing and community care facilities (\$41M)                  |
| #2             | Insurance agencies, brokerages, and related activities (\$524M) | Limited-service restaurants (\$138M)                                       | Petroleum refineries (\$191M)   | Valve and fittings, other than plumbing, manufacturing (\$32M) |
| #3             | Offices of physicians (\$294M)                                  | Retail–building material and garden equipment and supplies stores (\$113M) | Oil and gas extraction (\$156M)   | Printing (\$28M)   |
| #4             | Electric power generation–fossil fuel (\$173M)                  | Retail–nonstore retailers (\$111M)   | Architectural, engineering, and related services (\$74M)                | Gambling industries (except casino hotels) (\$23M)             |
| #5             | Full-service restaurants (\$168M)                               | Legal services (\$99M)   | Securities and commodity contracts intermediation and brokerage (\$71M) | Other textile product mills (\$19M)                            |

Source: IMPLAN, 2019 & 2021

## COVID-19 Impacts and Equity

Trends related to Traverse City's recovering in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic are largely promising and indicate the resiliency of the industries (and their employees) that have increased and outperformed state-wide economic trends. While 45% of the City's industries have increased and outperformed trends of the state, 35% of all industries have decreased and underperformed. However, the 45% of high performing industries employ about 61% of all of the City's workers, illustrating that these workers are in a positive position in the wake of the pandemic's economic recovery.

and underperformed their statewide counterparts. These industries represent 17% of all employees and 20% of all economic output for the region. While these are significant pieces of the broader regional economy, these industries may still be rebounding, and it will take several more years to truly understand the complete impact of the pandemic. The table titled COVID-19 Impacts by Industry highlights the largest industries, by total economic output, in each category described.

Understandably, hospitals and physicians were two industries that grew during and after the pandemic, as was the case with other industries in the healthcare field. Finance and professional services (architecture, engineering) declined in the regional economy, and these industries are likely rebounding slower than others. Finance and professional services are two industries that have been growing over recent decades and are likely to continue to do so in the years to come.

### COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS

The economic drivers of Traverse City's economy are the City's commercial districts. These are the areas where people from outside the city come to dine, shop for everyday goods, or seek out entertainment at movies, performances, and other shows. Some commercial districts like the downtown are large regional hubs. Other districts like Eighth Street and Fourteenth Street cater to a more local customer base. Each of these districts is important to the economic vibrancy of Traverse City.

### Downtown

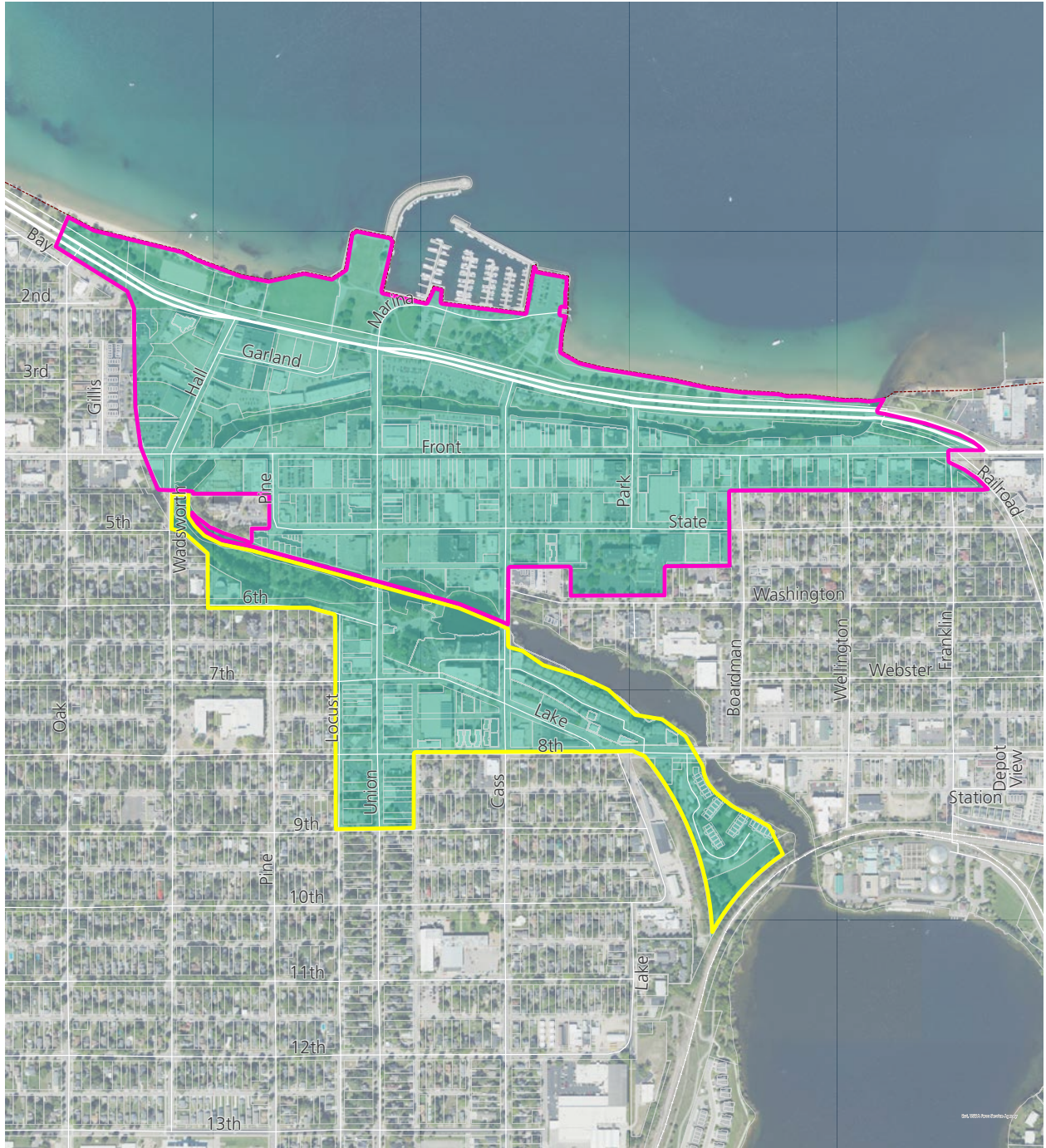
Perhaps the most well-recognized part of Traverse City is downtown. Downtown is the local and regional hub of activity, offering a wide variety of retail shops, entertainment venues, and dining opportunities. In addition to providing a destination for residents and visitors to pursue opportunities for entertainment and recreation, downtown Traverse City is also a core hub of banking, financial services, and employment offices, further defining the extent to which the space is utilized by employees on a frequent basis. Downtown is also the densest part of Traverse City, with multi-story buildings, small lots, and a vibrant social scene. When most people come to visit Traverse City, downtown is a top destination.

Despite being a hub of entertainment and attractions for people across the region, downtown is also beloved by local residents of Traverse City. Downtown is cherished for the amenities it offers and the atmosphere it creates for individuals who are visiting, local, employed in, or otherwise enjoying the area. In fact, properties located downtown generate the highest taxable value per acre in the entire county due to their location and the development pattern of the city's downtown. When asked during the Master Plan Open House in the fall of 2022 if downtown should be preserved, enhanced, or transformed, 24% of participants stated that downtown should be preserved and 55% stated it should be enhanced.

Unlike the other commercial districts, downtown is managed by a distinct organization: the Traverse City Downtown Development Authority (DDA). The DDA is responsible for leading the downtown, managing public infrastructure improvements, attracting new development, managing parking downtown, advocating for independent small-businesses, and coordinating community events within the DDA boundary. While most people think of downtown as four to five blocks of Front Street, the DDA's jurisdiction covers downtown and Old Town as shown in the map titled DDA Boundary. While the DDA operates as its own entity, appointments to the board and each year's budget is overseen and approved by the City Commission.

As the DDA is a component unit of the city government, it has a dedicated revenue stream. The DDA is funded through three primary revenue streams: Tax Increment Financing (TIF),

Map 33: DDA Boundary



## DDA Boundary

Sources: Michigan Open Data Portal, City of Traverse City

Traverse City DDA

TIF 97

Old Town



a dedicated milage, and contracts. In response to the closure of the Traverse City Ironworks manufacturing company in the Old Town district and the subsequent loss of about 100 jobs and perpetual disinvestment across the area, Traverse City created its first TIF district in 1985, referred to as the Old Town TIF or TIF 2.<sup>1</sup> A second TIF district was established for downtown Traverse City in 1997, referred to as TIF 97 (see the figure titled Downtown TIF Districts for boundary lines). When these TIF districts were established, the property taxes collected by the City and other taxing authorities on properties within the district were essentially frozen at 1985 or 1997 levels. As downtown grew, properties became more valuable because of the public infrastructure and private investment that incurred, and property taxes increased. The increased tax revenue was allocated to the DDA, and taxes collected by the City and other taxing jurisdictions remained capped at 1997 levels. For example, in 1997, a building in the downtown TIF 97 district generated \$100 in tax revenue. By 2000, the value of the building increased and generated \$120 in tax revenue. When that \$120 in tax revenue was collected, \$100 went to the city and other taxing jurisdictions while the remaining \$20 went to the DDA. This \$20 is used to fund infrastructure projects, public space projects, art installations, or any other projects under the DDA's purview. Over time and with additional investment, the increase in tax revenue that is allocated to the DDA has increased while tax revenues collected by the city are frozen at \$100.

TIF offers a unique method of collecting and redistributing tax revenues. The money collected from TIF districts goes to the DDA in order to fund public projects within the district, supplementing the City's general fund resources. TIF funds do not, however, support private development. Further, it is the only regional revenue collection and sharing system that is enabled by the state of Michigan to provide the infrastructure upgrades that are needed to support a regional commercial hub. This financing mechanism is important in urban environments as unique as downtowns which need constant stewardship, maintenance, and investment to remain strong, especially as preferences, spending habits, and local economies change over time. TIF revenue has provided an opportunity to invest in downtown Traverse City

## Tax Increment Financing and Equity

TIF districts enable development in city districts that have experienced disinvestment in anticipation of increasing property values and without needing to utilize extreme debt instruments of financing. However, as TIF districts are drawn and development begins to take place, the possibility of displacing long-term, low-income residents of the formerly disinvested area increases along with targeted property values (which is the ultimate intention of this financing instrument). It is important to implement mechanisms of protection and affordable housing so that residents of the area are able to remain and avoid being priced out.

since TIF 2 was first established in 1985. While the implementation of TIF districts expire once the duration of their term has finished, there is the opportunity to renew them so that their tax revenues may continue to be put towards significant regional costs that come from maintaining and investing in a regional hub. The Old Town TIF (TIF 2) was renewed in 2016, and TIF 97 will be considered for renewal prior to its expiration 2027 under a new development plan titled Moving Downtown Forward. Though each of Traverse City's TIF districts were established in different contexts than currently exist in the time of their renewal, the need to steward components of downtown remains, especially with each of the improvement projects that have been funded by TIF thus far.

All properties in the DDA are also assessed an additional property tax of 2 mills, and this levy is dedicated to funding the DDA's operational budget.<sup>2</sup> Finally, the DDA generates revenues from the services and programs that it provides including an association fee and an arts commission fee. The DDA's work over the past decades has been instrumental in transforming downtown into what it is today, and this transformative work would not have been possible without the contributions and success of the TIF district. Many big projects are on the horizon that will continue to enhance and strengthen downtown.

Map 34: Downtown TIF District



### *Moving Downtown Forward*

In 2022, the DDA Board of Directors approved “Moving Downtown Forward,” a comprehensive document that outlines the future direction of the DDA. Key takeaways as outlined in the report include the following:<sup>3</sup>

» **Downtown Traverse City’s Emergence as a Strong Economic Engine and Gathering Place for the Region.**

Just 25 years ago, Downtown Traverse City suffered from a lack of private investment, job loss, empty storefronts, crumbling infrastructure, polluted properties, and underutilized parcels. The DDA’s leadership, services, and strategic use of TIF have been instrumental in creating the downtown that the region enjoys today.

» **Despite its Vitality, Downtown Has Vulnerabilities.**

Vulnerabilities facing downtown include retaining and supporting small, independent,

and distinctive businesses; the availability of housing that is affordable to the workforce, lower income, and younger populations; determining how new infrastructure and investment in downtown can support sustainability in all of its dimensions (economic, environmental, and equity); and protecting and preserving a vital downtown in the uncertain times ahead.

» **Regional Prosperity is Tied to a Vital Downtown.**

The market assessment reveals that the entire Traverse City region is challenged by shifting demographics that are found in similar destination resort and amenity-rich communities around the nation. Aging demographics and a shortage of affordable housing will make it increasingly difficult to attract service and front-line workers and to keep growing families which are essential for maintaining a healthy economy. Downtown is a critical regional amenity that can appeal to younger demographics, foster innovation,

and embrace the values of sustainability that are critical to the next generations, including climate action, environmental stewardship, and societal inclusion.

» **Priorities for New Physical Improvements Are Clear.**

Priorities for physical improvements from downtown stakeholders and community members from both the City and the region align with DDA Board priorities. The top priorities that were identified from the community-wide online survey, in order, include:

- » Improve stormwater and wastewater management in downtown,
- » Increase parking supply by adding more parking structure(s),
- » Make downtown more pedestrian-friendly and accessible,
- » Increase downtown housing options, and
- » Incorporate climate action and climate resilience into downtown public infrastructure design and development efforts.

» **Priorities for New Services Are Clear.**

Top service and program priorities of downtown stakeholders, the DDA Board, and City Commission also mirror the top priorities for services from the online survey. In order from highest priorities, these include:

- » Create opportunities for affordable and local workforce housing in downtown,
- » Help protect and promote local independent businesses in downtown, and
- » Advance services that support climate action, sustainability, renewable energy, and energy efficiency.

» **The DDA's Mission Continues.**

Downtown Traverse City serves as the economic anchor for the region as well as the City. Downtown isn't done, and the community has clear priorities for downtown moving forward. Downtown continues to need a champion to implement and finance these shared priorities. If the DDA and TIF go away, City of Traverse City taxpayers will bear 100% of the financial burden of implementing the region's priority physical improvements and services for downtown.

The Moving Downtown Forward plan also outlined six guiding principles for the DDA as they continue their work. The six guiding principles are as follows:<sup>4</sup>

- » Design a great place for all ages and for future generations,
- » Advance climate action, sustainability, renewable energy, energy efficiency, and resiliency,
- » Protect and preserve small local independent businesses,
- » Champion the development of attainable and workforce housing, and
- » Support job growth and varied career opportunities.

To implement its objectives, the DDA outlined several key projects and programs including:<sup>5</sup>

- » Lower Boardman/Ottaway River improvements (see additional discussion below),
- » West End Parking Structure (see additional discussion under "West End Mixed-Use Development"),
- » A new Civic Square, and
- » Climate Action and Resilience.

*West End Mixed-Use Development*

A parking lot and small commercial buildings currently sit at the northeast intersection of State Street and Pine Street. However, in the next few years, that area may be transformed into a mixed-use development that includes retail, residential units, and a parking deck. The project supports the repurposing of existing surface parking lots and

**TART Trail Expansion and Climate Change**

Expanding the TART Trail into downtown Traverse City bolsters the trail's functionality as both a recreational asset and non-motorized transportation infrastructure that enables access to the commercial centers of the City. Expanding a trail dedicated to pedestrian use and access provides a legitimate opportunity to avoid car-based transportation and improve practical connectivity across the City as a whole.





*Boardman/Ottaway River conceptual plan for downtown.*  
Source: Traverse City DDA (view from Union St looking East)

## Boardman/Ottaway Downtown River and Climate Change

The City's approach to investing in the Boardman/Ottaway River emphasizes environmental considerations, conservation, and stewardship alongside promoting the river as an attractive destination. Doing so has the potential to enhance the experience of being downtown among this natural feature and, subsequently, increase visitors' perceptions and appreciation of the river. Integrating the river with the everyday functions of downtown businesses can bolster long-term practices of stewardship and produce widespread appreciation of water habitats.

is intended to transform the land to a higher and better use, address environmental impacts, provide much-needed housing, improve the appearance of that area of downtown, improve safety, improve traffic efficiency, and support the repurposing of downtown surface lots for infill.<sup>6</sup>

### *TART Trail Improvement and Extension*

In coordination with TART, the City and DDA intend to improve and extend a section of the TART Trail between West End Beach and the intersection of Peninsula Drive and Eastern Avenue. The project's partners will provide funding to support this endeavor as well. Improvements include widening the path to 16' in the most used portions, improving road crossings, adding interpretive signage and cultural markers, and creating new connections to Sunset Park, the Hagerty Center, Senior Center Park, Traverse City Central High School, Eastern Elementary School, and Northwestern Michigan College. As of the summer 2023, the project is in the process of being presented to the community.<sup>7</sup>

### *Boardman/Ottaway Downtown Riverwalk*

The Boardman/Ottaway River has been a defining feature of downtown Traverse City since its early days. The DDA and its partners started to imagine

the next evolution of the river and its relationship to downtown with the "Lower Boardman River Unified Plan." Over the following decade, the DDA and its partners have worked towards the vision identified in the Lower Boardman River Unified Plan. In 2022, extensive design work was done in consultation with the community to refine the vision. The conceptual design "addresses components related to site development, maintenance, year-round programming and placemaking including ecology, mobility, water access and recreation, the river's history and local culture, and public infrastructure including lighting, furniture, public restrooms, and waste management, as well as the relationship with the existing buildings and uses."

The plan has multiple benefits that include protecting and preserving water quality, restoring the natural habitat, increasing public space and public access, connecting the river with the backs of commercial buildings, and increasing public space along the northern side of Front Street. This project will be one of the most transformational projects in downtown since the DDA was created. The impact will boost local businesses and expand the downtown environment to the river by utilizing the northside of the buildings along Front Street, an area that is currently used for surface parking and informal pedestrian pathway.<sup>8</sup>

## State Street Conversion

In 2022, the DDA and City of Traverse City instituted a pilot (test) project by converting State Street, Pine Street, and Boardman Avenue from one-way traffic to two-way traffic. The pilot is intended to test if the interventions achieve the desired outcome of slowing traffic on State Street, creating a safer environment for pedestrians and cyclists, increasing overall connectivity, and spurring economic activity along State Street. While the project is still in the pilot phases, the changes may become permanent with additional infrastructural improvements to achieve a desired design.<sup>9</sup>

## West Front Street

As downtown transitions to the west, the commercial nature of West Front Street becomes more neighborhood in typology with smaller commercial buildings and residential structures. Starting at roughly Wadsworth Street and ending at South Elmwood Avenue, West Front Street is a neighborhood-oriented commercial corridor with restaurants, specialty food stores, and health and personal care services. As it does offer a direct connection to downtown, West Front Street is a busy western gateway into the City. When the community was asked if they would like to see this commercial corridor, preserved, enhanced, or transformed, 22% stated preserved, 63% stated enhanced, and 15% stated transformed.

### Neighborhood Oriented Development and Climate Change

Neighborhood oriented development approaches planning for residential areas in such a way that everyday needs and services are centrally provided and easily accessed by residents of the neighborhood. While this convenience has implications for walkability and reduced car usage in its most extreme and successful manifestations, it is also beneficial for neighborhood residents that have a smaller radius within which they must travel to fulfill their needs and desires. This inherently reduces car usage as distances traveled, whether walking or in an automobile, are notably lessened.

## Economic Development Priorities

The enhancement of this commercial corridor should include the continued expansion of pedestrian amenities like street furniture, wayfinding, and public space. West Front Street is a prime opportunity to develop a neighborhood-oriented commercial center that would provide goods and services to those living in close proximity. However, to keep the neighborhood atmosphere of the area, buildings should be architecturally compatible with the surrounding neighborhood, buildings should be placed on or near the sidewalk, and parking requirements should be eliminated or significantly reduced. To support the enhancement of West Front Street, the DDA management boundary should be extended down West Front Street.

## East Front Street /Munson Avenue (East Grandview Parkway)

As downtown transitions to the east, the commercial nature of East Front Street and then Munson Avenue is much more auto-oriented, catering to the high volume of traffic that travels along East Front Street and Munson Avenue. Drive-through restaurants, lodging facilities, and strip commercial developments are common. Businesses tend to serve the regional traffic (i.e., fast food, banks, and hotels) and are designed and oriented for auto access. When the community was asked if they would like to see this commercial corridor preserved, enhanced, or transformed, 2% said that East Front Street should be preserved, and 3% stated Munson Avenue should be preserved. For East Front Street, 34% stated it should be enhanced and 64% stated it should be transformed. For Munson Avenue, 64% stated that it should be enhanced and 33% stated it should be transformed. These two areas were identified by the communities as the areas most desired to be enhanced and/or preserved.

To further refine the community's vision for this area, a design workshop was held in the winter of 2023. Community members were broadly asked what is working well in this area, what is not working well, and what is possible here.

Participants were presented with a series of images that could represent the look and feel of the Munson Avenue corridor in the future. Specific feedback was provided for each image shared at the in-person workshop and through the online

Table 64: Community Feedback for Munson Avenue

### What is Working Well?

- » **Commercial offerings and variety:** Participants noted a variety of commercial offerings and businesses along the corridor, including food establishments and retail centers.
- » **Residential neighborhoods:** Participants noted a mix of residential areas along the corridor at relatively affordable price points compared to other parts of Traverse City and relatively fewer short-term rentals.
- » **Traffic flow and access:** Participants noted that traffic flows relatively well along the corridor and that maintaining access to businesses and amenities is important.
- » **Parking availability:** Participants noted ample parking availability for commercial and office land uses along the corridor.
- » **Recreation attraction:** Participants noted nearby recreation destinations like the State Park, public waterfront, TART Trail, and local nature preserves.
- » **Land use and aesthetics:** Participants noted well-maintained properties and green spaces along the corridor, including mention of trees, grass, and newer sidewalks that contribute to a pleasing corridor aesthetic.
- » **Public facilities:** Participants noted public facilities like the Denno's Museum, Maritime Center, Senior Center, and open spaces as positive assets to the corridor.

### What is Not Working Well?

- » **Lack of design standards:** Participants noted the lack of design standards along the corridor and the need for more appealing and cohesive design elements.
- » **Traffic congestion and speed:** Participants noted heavy traffic and high speeds along Munson Avenue, especially during peak times and the summer season.
- » **Pedestrian safety and crossings:** Participants noted the need for improved pedestrian facilities, including more sidewalks, safer road crossings, and better access for walking, biking, and rolling.
- » **Lack of left turn lanes:** Participants noted difficulties associated with making left turns onto or off of Munson Avenue, particularly at intersections and business entrances.
- » **Connectivity and accessibility:** Participants noted that Munson Avenue is lacking connectivity between different parts, including the north and south sections of the corridor, and limited access from bordering residential areas.
- » **Infrastructure and road conditions:** Participants noted issues with road quality, narrow sidewalks, sloped driveways, curb cuts, and long distances between crossings.
- » **Tourism-oriented land uses:** Participants noted perception about the corridor being too focused on tourism land uses, including hotels, motels, and chain retail, with limited amenities and land uses for locals to access.

### What is Possible?

#### 1. Improve Safety and Connectivity

The following ideas were shared by participants to improve safety and connectivity along Munson Avenue:

- » Enhance pedestrian safety through better lighting, refuge islands, and safe crossing options,
- » Install wider sidewalks, protected bike lanes, and pedestrian paths with barriers,
- » Implement traffic calming measures and prioritize non-motorized transportation, and
- » Improve pedestrian and bike connectivity to key destinations.

#### 2. Maintain Residential Character

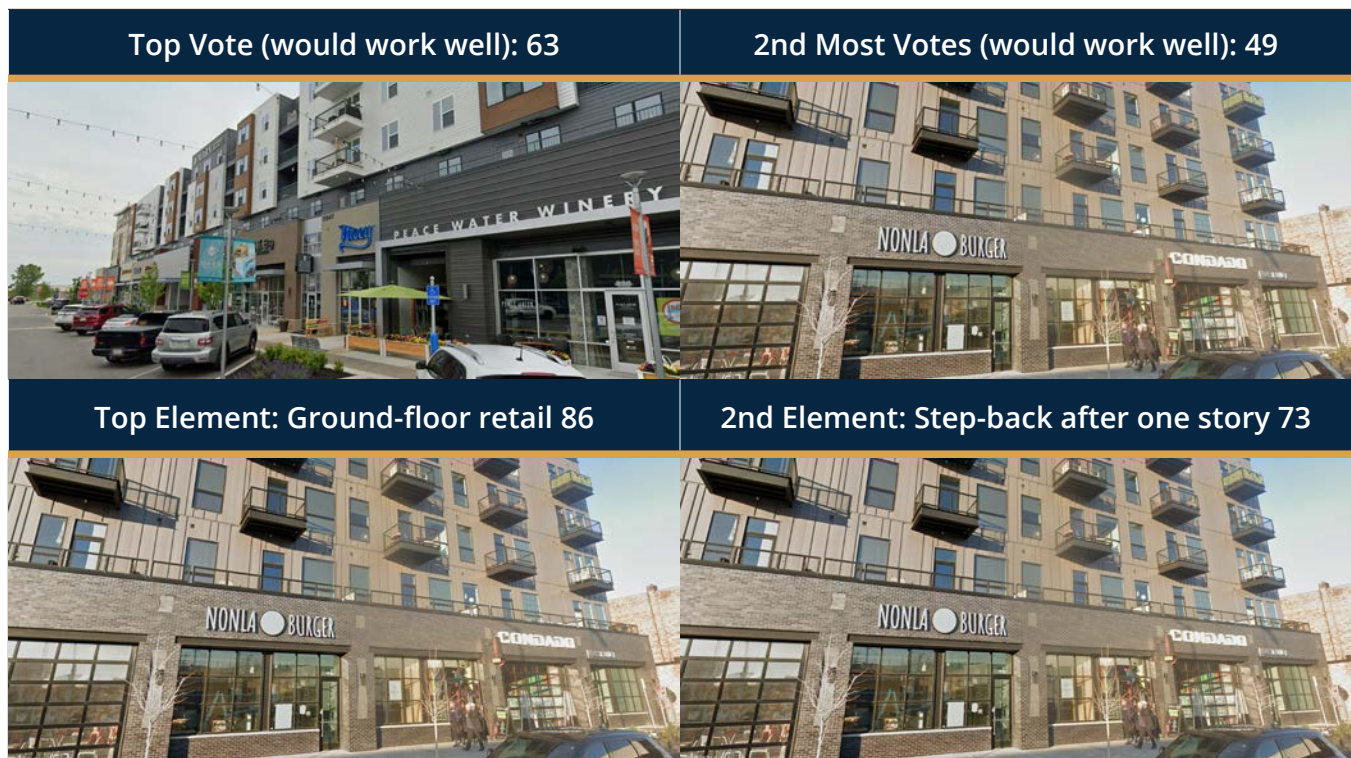
The following ideas were shared by participants to maintain residential character along Munson Avenue:

- » Preserve single-family homes and proposed zoning,
- » Maintain the charm of the area with nice sidewalks and green spaces,

**Table 64: Community Feedback for Munson Avenue (continued)**

|   |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Limit building heights and prioritize setbacks from the street, and</li> <li>» Preserve existing trees and enhance greenery.</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>3. Encourage Diverse Commercial and Housing Options</b></p> <p>The following ideas were shared by participants to encourage diverse commercial and housing options along Munson Avenue:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Avoid an overabundance of hotels and prioritize retail diversity, and</li> <li>» Consider mixed-use buildings with ground-floor retail and upper-floor housing.</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>4. Improve Transportation Flow and Infrastructure</b></p> <p>The following ideas were shared by participants to improve traffic flow and infrastructure along Munson Avenue:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Explore Michigan turns and roundabouts to keep traffic flowing,</li> <li>» Consider dedicated turn lanes and medians with greenery,</li> <li>» Upgrade roads and improve infrastructure, including signage and signals,</li> <li>» Enhance public transit options, including bus routes and covered transit stops,</li> <li>» Improve access to businesses on both sides of Munson Avenue for pedestrians,</li> <li>» Explore the expansion of the Bayline or other public transit solutions, and</li> <li>» Consider creating alternative access streets for hotels and retail.</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>5. Prioritize Environmental Considerations</b></p> <p>The following ideas were shared by participants to prioritize the natural environment along Munson Avenue:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Prioritize environmental sustainability in development plans,</li> <li>» Include green infrastructure, such as curb/median gardens and tree-lined boulevards, and</li> <li>» Address stormwater runoff and protect rivers and the bay.</li> </ul>   |

**Table 65: Munson Avenue Design Results**



survey. Participants were asked to vote on different aspects/elements that they liked about each image and to vote if they felt the building pictured would work well on the corridor.

The two images that received the most votes in support of use along the corridor were both mid-rise mixed-use buildings with ground-floor retail and residential uses on higher floors. The elements of the presented buildings that received the most votes were ground-floor retail and a height step-back after one story. The community feedback about the images points towards a community desire for a pedestrian/street-level oriented mixed-use commercial core.

### *Economic Development Priorities*

The transformation and enhancement of this commercial area should focus on identifying and redeveloping properties to their highest and best use as directed by the community. As outlined in the community feedback on this area, there is a desire for higher density development that maintains the pedestrian scale. Therefore, higher-density developments should use techniques such as height step-backs to minimize their impact on the street atmosphere and to keep ground floor space for street-facing activities (i.e., coffee shop,

retail, etc.). Properties that are most suited for redevelopment are those with one- to two-story buildings, small buildings, small footprints, and low lot coverage.

### **Eighth Street**

As one of the few East-West crossings in the city, Eighth Street is among the busiest internal corridors of the City. Eighth Street from Boardman Avenue to Woodmere Avenue, is the site of a recent major street reconstruction that the City has completed in the past decade. Beginning with the 2014 Traverse City Corridors Plan and evolving into the Envision Eighth Street Plan, the goal of the transformation was to enhance pedestrian and bicycle access and mobility, create a more pedestrian/street scale environment, and develop this section of Eighth Street as a distinct place. Completed in 2019, the project achieved its key objectives. Overall, Eighth Street is not a commercial corridor, but a transportation corridor with nodes of commercial activity. There are stretches of Eighth Street that are completely residential. Therefore, the future development of Eighth Street should focus on enhancing and supporting the nodes of commercial activity that will support the neighborhoods nearby. The development of neighborhood commercial nodes is essential for a 15-minute city.

**Table 66: Community Feedback for Eighth Street and Garfield Avenue Node**

| What is Working Well?  |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» <b>Access to goods and services:</b> Participants noted that the mix of retail, food, and service businesses at this intersection creates vibrancy and provides convenient access to goods and services for surrounding neighborhoods.</li> <li>» <b>Parking availability:</b> Participants noted parking availability and proximity to surrounding businesses as a favorable feature of this intersection.</li> </ul>  |
| What is Not Working Well?  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» <b>Traffic and congestion:</b> Participants noted concerns about traffic flow, congestion, and the need for additional lanes, especially for turning movements.</li> <li>» <b>Confusing for pedestrians and bikes:</b> Participants noted that it is confusing and unsafe to navigate service drives in front of commercial businesses at this intersection.</li> <li>» <b>Unattractive appearance:</b> Participants noted that the lack of landscaping, green spaces, street trees, outdoor patio spaces, and buildings of differing scales and forms make for an unattractive and uninviting aesthetic at this intersection.</li> <li>» <b>Parking:</b> Participants noted that there appears to be more parking than is necessary at this intersection and in confusing and disjointed configurations.</li> <li>» <b>Inefficient and inconsistent land use:</b> Participants noted that the current land uses at this intersection feel disjointed and inconsistent, and that the intersection could support mixed-use and residential land uses.</li> </ul> |

**Table 66: Community Feedback for Eighth Street and Garfield Avenue Node (continued)**

| What is Possible?  |
|--|
| <p><b>1. Redevelopment</b></p> <p>The following ideas were shared by participants to redevelop the Garfield Avenue and Eighth Street intersection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Support storefront and façade improvements for existing businesses,</li> <li>» Encourage a mix of commercial uses that cater to the needs of surrounding neighborhoods,</li> <li>» Encourage mixed-use developments that create a neighborhood feel, increase density, and maintain an environment to scale with surrounding neighborhoods,</li> <li>» Improve pedestrian and bike infrastructure and connectivity, and</li> <li>» Improve streetscape aesthetics, including landscaping, green spaces, trees, street lights, and street furniture.</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>2. Improve Connectivity for all Transportation Modes</b></p> <p>The following ideas were shared by participants to improve connectivity and accessibility for all users of this intersection, in cars, on foot, by bus, on wheels, or by bike:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Add turn lanes and optimize signal timing,</li> <li>» Add bike lanes and/or cycle tracks,</li> <li>» Improve sidewalk network, and</li> <li>» Add signage in areas where pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles are sharing the road/crossings.</li> <li>» Improve access to public transportation.</li> </ul>  |

**Table 67: Eighth Street and Garfield Avenue Node Design Results**

| Top Vote: 86  | 2nd Most Votes: 77   |
|---|--|
|  |  |
| Top Element: Ground-floor retail 118  | 2nd Element: Exposure to both sides 115  |
|  |  |

While the entirety of Eighth Street was not presented during the design workshop, one of the busiest nodes along Eighth Street, Eighth Street and Garfield Avenue, was discussed. This intersection was chosen because of its significance to the neighborhoods surrounding it and the redevelopment opportunities at the intersection.

The two images that received the most votes for being appropriate along the corridor were both low- to mid-rise mixed-use buildings with ground-floor retail and upper-floor residential. The elements of the presented buildings that received the most votes were ground-floor retail and exposure to the street on both sides of the building. Community feedback about the images points towards a community desire for a pedestrian/street-level oriented mixed-use node.

### *Economic Development Priorities*

To support the enhancement and development of neighborhood commercial nodes, the future development of Eighth Street should be geared towards these nodes. Utilizing zoning and selective redevelopment/infill development, the nodes can become neighborhood centers of activity that provide services and amenities to local residents. The Eighth Street and Garfield Avenue intersection presents the greatest redevelopment opportunity and is best suited for mid- to high-density development given its prominence as an intersection/node.

### Fourteenth Street

One of the smaller commercial areas of the city, Fourteenth Street serves a mix of local and regional uses. The areas of Fourteenth Street that are closer

**Table 68: Community Feedback for Fourteenth Street**

| What is Working Well?   |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» <b>Locally owned/small businesses:</b> Participants noted the corridor offers a variety of small-scale and locally owned businesses with easy parking access.</li> <li>» <b>Access to amenities and services:</b> Participants noted the corridor provides convenient access to grocery stores, convenience stores, pharmacies, gas stations, car washes, fast-food restaurants, schools, and other important facilities.</li> <li>» <b>Proximity to the Boardman Lake Trail:</b> Participants noted that the Fourteenth Street corridor benefits from its proximity to the recently completed Boardman Lake Loop Trail.</li> <li>» <b>Connection to downtown Traverse City, Garfield Township, and residential neighborhoods:</b> Participants noted the corridor serves as a connector to various commercial and residential neighborhoods and downtown Traverse City via the adjoining street network, including Division, Veterans Drive, Cass Street, and Union Street.</li> </ul>  |
| What is Not Working Well?   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» <b>Traffic congestion:</b> Participants noted there is a significant amount of vehicular traffic throughout the day, particularly during peak hours in the morning and afternoon, resulting in congestion and backups.</li> <li>» <b>Need for bike lanes:</b> Participants noted the need for dedicated bike lanes on Fourteenth Street to make it safer and more accessible for cyclists.</li> <li>» <b>Pedestrian safety and access:</b> Participants noted the lack of visible, maintained, and comfortable crossings and sidewalks for pedestrians.</li> <li>» <b>Inadequate turn lanes:</b> Participants noted the need for turn lanes along the entire stretch of Fourteenth Street to facilitate smoother traffic flow and reduce congestion.</li> <li>» <b>Lack of community vibrancy:</b> Participants noted the aesthetics of Fourteenth Street are not vibrant or attractive, citing missing street trees, vacant yards, and parking lots close to the street, which results in a lack of community vibrancy.</li> <li>» <b>Road conditions and infrastructure:</b> Participants noted that the corridor could use better maintenance and road repair to correct potholes and insufficient road width for the volume of traffic.</li> </ul> |

**Table 68: Community Feedback for Fourteenth Street (continued)**

|  |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» <b>Traffic signal issues:</b> Participants noted long wait times at intersections along the Corridor, including Veterans Drive and Division Street signals.</li> <li>» <b>Inadequate transit options:</b> Participants noted the need for improved multi-modal transit options to alleviate congestion and promote alternative modes of transportation and increase corridor vibrancy.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>What is Possible?</b>   |
| <p><b>1. Calm Traffic</b></p> <p>The following ideas were shared by participants to better manage traffic along Fourteenth Street:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Add pedestrian crosswalks and sidewalks,</li> <li>» Add bike lanes,</li> <li>» Optimize traffic signal timing,</li> <li>» Add turn lanes,</li> <li>» Maintain the road surface, and</li> <li>» Improve the streetscape with lighting, landscaping, trees, and other features.</li> </ul> <p><b>2. Encourage Mixed-Use Development and Housing</b></p> <p>The following ideas were shared by participants to encourage mixed-use development along Fourteenth Street:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Ensure zoning allows for development that combines retail and housing options to create a vibrant and diverse neighborhood, and</li> <li>» Ensure zoning allows for more dense housing to be developed at a variety of price points, including affordable housing.</li> </ul> <p><b>3. Create Community Vibrancy</b></p> <p>The following ideas were shared by participants to create vibrancy along Fourteenth Street:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Support locally owned businesses along the corridor,</li> <li>» Ensure zoning allows for commercial and retail uses that support surrounding residential neighborhoods,</li> <li>» Foster a walkable and welcoming corridor aesthetic,</li> <li>» Enhance existing connections to the Boardman Lake Loop Trail and surrounding neighborhoods, and</li> <li>» Add public art to the corridor.</li> </ul> |

to Division Street/US-31 orient to more regional uses with strip commercial, drive-throughs, and regional businesses. However, east of Maple Street, the businesses are more service-oriented and local in nature. The commercial activity of Fourteenth Street is primarily on the north side of the street with residential on the south side. When the community was asked if Fourteenth Street should be preserved, enhanced, or transformed, 8% stated preserved, 23% stated enhanced, and 69% stated transformed, making this one of the most popular areas for transformation.

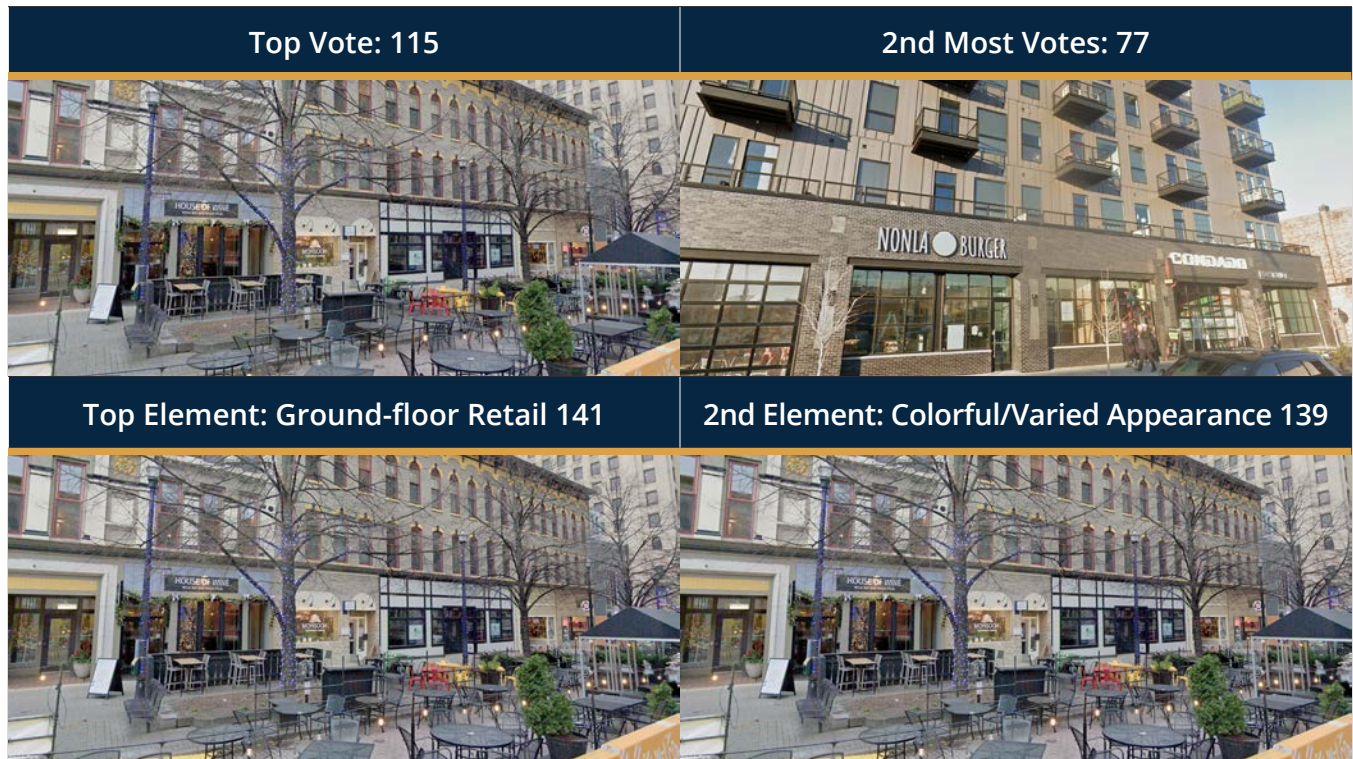
Fourteenth Street was included in the winter 2023 design workshop where participants were asked to identify what is working well, not working well,

and what is possible on Fourteenth Street.

The results from the design workshop show a community desire for a local commercial district with community vibrancy instilled through architecture, design, and public space. While the direction from the community is an increase in density along the corridor, the right design and building placement could leave little to no impact on the adjacent neighborhoods. The addition of a more retail/locally oriented commercial environment would also bring life and activity to an area of the City that has fewer anchors or community assets than other parts of the City.



Table 69: Fourteenth Street Design Results



*Economic Development Priorities*

The future direction of the Fourteenth Street Corridor will be highly dependent on the development/redevelopment that happens along the corridor. There is vacant, available land along the corridor that contributes very little to the overall function of the area. Transforming these underutilized spaces into higher-quality development and community assets would move the corridor in the direction that has been specified by the community. While community members share a desire to add bike lanes along the Fourteenth Street corridor, there is an enormous

opportunity to incorporate a non-motorized facility along the Griffin Street corridor so that it connects the Boardman Lake Loop Trail to the Grand Traverse Commons. Pursuing this option of development is aligned with the recommendations of numerous plans and would free more space along Fourteenth Street to pursue additional elements of placemaking.

**Garfield Avenue**

Garfield Avenue is one the busiest corridors in the city, running north to south and connecting many of the townships and smaller communities

Table 70: Community Feedback for Garfield Avenue

|   |
|---|
| <p><b>What is Working Well?</b></p>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» <b>Mix of commercial and residential:</b> Participants noted the variety of businesses, including retail, restaurants, grocery, and goods/services, adjacent to residential neighborhoods along the corridor.</li> <li>» <b>Sidewalks:</b> Participants noted the presence of sidewalks, along with pedestrian crosswalks, as a positive aspect of the corridor.</li> <li>» <b>Higher density housing along the corridor:</b> Participants noted the form of recent higher-density residential development as appropriate for the corridor though expressed concerns about preventing new housing developments from becoming short-term rentals (e.g., Trailside 45).</li> <li>» <b>Key corridor for accessing city/surrounding areas:</b> Participants noted that Garfield Avenue provides a key access point to the City and surrounding areas, including East Bay Township and South Airport Road.</li> </ul> |

Table 70: Community Feedback for Garfield Avenue (continued)

### What is Not Working Well?

- » **Traffic congestion, flow, and intersections:** Participants noted traffic issues, including congestion, backups, and poor traffic light timing. Some specific areas of concern are intersections, lane configurations, and transitions from multiple lanes to single lanes along the corridor. Participants noted a lack of visibility for traffic turning left or right, particularly at the Garfield Avenue and Eighth Street intersection.
- » **Lack of bike friendliness:** Participants noted dissatisfaction with bike infrastructure, including the need for better bike lanes and separated pathways to make Garfield Avenue a safer place to bike.
- » **Aesthetics and visual appeal:** Several comments mention the unattractive or run-down appearance of the corridor, including outdated or mismatched buildings, lack of green space, and a general lack of visual appeal.
- » **Inconsistency and lack of a cohesive vision:** Participants noted that the corridor is disjointed, hodgepodge, or lacking a cohesive plan. Comments highlight issues such as varied building types, strip malls, and mixed-use developments that do not seem to fit together harmoniously.
- » **Road conditions and infrastructure:** Participants noted that the corridor contains potholes, poor surface road quality, a lack of turn lanes, and confusing lane configurations. Some comments also mention the need for better signage and improved street lighting.
- » **Streetscaping:** Participants noted the lack of green space, trees, and streetlights along the corridor.
- » **Speeding and enforcement:** Participants noted high vehicle speeds and a lack of speed limit enforcement along the corridor.

### What is Possible?

#### 1. Safe and Diverse Transportation Options

The following ideas were shared by participants to create more opportunities to safely utilize Garfield Avenue via car, bike, foot, or wheels:





- » Add bike lanes or separate cycle tracks,
- » Improve sidewalk conditions and ensure consistent sidewalks along the entire corridor,
- » Improve pedestrian street crossings and ensure high visibility for motorists,
- » Implement traffic calming measures to slow vehicle speeds along the corridor, and
- » Improve turn lanes and signage at intersections to improve safety and visibility of traffic turning off and onto the corridor.

#### 2. Vibrant Neighborhood Character

The following ideas were shared by participants to encourage vibrant neighborhood character along the Garfield Avenue corridor:

- » Ensure zoning allows for a mix of residential and commercial buildings, with commercial uses on the ground floor and residential above, and at consistent scale and form relative to the roadway,
- » Require and/or implement attractive native landscaping, trees, and street lighting along the corridor,
- » Engage the community to identify the right building density, height, and design standards for the corridor to result in a corridor form that is interesting and welcoming but not overwhelming to surrounding residential neighborhoods,
- » Create small green spaces along the corridor for pedestrians, families, and users to rest and gather, and
- » Encourage redevelopment of existing properties, including vacant or underutilized lots and shopping centers.

Table 71: Garfield Avenue Design Results

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <p><b>Top Vote: 78</b></p>  | <p><b>2nd Most Votes: 71</b></p>   |
|  |  |
| <p><b>Top Element: Ground-floor Retail 123</b></p>                                | <p><b>2nd Element: Mix of materials on building face 97</b></p>                    |
|  |  |

to the southeast to the City. Development along the corridor is almost exclusively strip commercial in nature and auto-oriented in design. Businesses cater to a regional audience and there is little cohesion along the corridor. When the community was asked if this area should be preserved, enhanced, or transformed, 1% said preserved, 21% said enhanced, and 78% said transformed, the highest mark for an area to be transformed across the entire city. This corridor is where the community desires the most attention and transformation.

To that end, Garfield Avenue was a key focus of the design workshop held in the winter of 2023.

The key community goal for the corridor is to address transportation, primarily slowing down traffic and making it more suitable for all users. The second is for the development of Garfield Avenue as a vibrant area with a mix of land uses, a pleasant appearance, and public space. The buildings that the community identified as most appropriate were mid-rise mixed-use buildings with a varied appearance and ground-floor retail.

### *Economic Development Priorities*

As the development style along Garfield Avenue is strip commercial in nature, there is plenty of opportunity for large-scale transformation/ redevelopment. Infrastructure is in place, and the vast parking lots, small building footprints, and regional access make Garfield Avenue an attractive place for redevelopment. However, to achieve the community's desires for a cohesive neighborhood and commercial atmosphere, guidelines around building form and style need to be in place so the corridor does not become an incohesive mid-rise mixed-use density mess. Additionally, redevelopment should coincide with improvements to the streetscape and road so that the improvements to traffic are done in coordination with the redevelopment of the area.

### **Grand Traverse Commons**

One of the most unique areas of the City, Grand Traverse Commons is a prime example of adaptive reuse. The Traverse City State Hospital operated as an asylum for over 100 years but closed in 1989. By the late 20th and early 21st century, the rehabilitation of the main hospital building



*Traverse City Film Festival.*

Source: City of Traverse City

(Building 50) began. Today Building 50 is home to local shops, restaurants, offices, and residential units. As Building 50 became more active, buildings around Building 50 were gradually rehabilitated. Grand Traverse Commons is now a pocket of commercial activity and vibrancy, home to some of the best restaurants in the City, and includes a winery and public space. When the community was asked if this area should be preserved, enhanced, or transformed, 44% said preserved, 20% said enhanced, and 35% said transformed.

The Grand Traverse Commons is jointly managed by the City and Garfield Charter Township and has a dedicated plan for the future growth and

development of the area as well as its own development regulations. To this extent, the city has limited influence over this area but should continue to support the Grand Traverse Commons.

### *Economic Development Priorities*

The future of the Grand Traverse Commons will be largely influenced by the Grand Traverse Commons Master Plan and the partnership with Garfield Township. The city should continue to support the transformation of the Commons, through infrastructure improvements/upgrades, land use policies, and public space improvements.

## REDEVELOPMENT AREAS

Urban environments are not static. Part of the evolution of a community is the redevelopment of properties. Redevelopment brings new opportunities and a breath of activity and investment into areas that may have been historically disinvested. However, redevelopment should also be intentional and deliberate to ensure that the transformation of a property is based on the direction and needs of the community. Traverse City has identified several sites for targeted redevelopment, each of which represent areas of great opportunity that will serve as catalysts for the greater area around them. This Master Plan does not outline a plan or steps for the redevelopment of these sites, but rather identifies them as areas of opportunity and presents a potential vision. The redevelopment of these properties may take years or decades, but their potential in a higher and better use warrants an early discussion to begin the process of redevelopment.

The sites are separated into priority and legacy. Priority sites are those that the City has identified as top candidates for redevelopment, and legacy sites are sites that have been long-term priorities or properties that have been designated as redevelopment opportunities in the past.

### Priority Sites

The following redevelopment sites have been recently identified by the City as top candidates for redevelopment. It is important to note that though these sites present valuable opportunities for redevelopment based on location, site characteristics, and current usage, the visions for their redevelopment are theoretical and will not be forced upon current or future property owners. These concepts in and of themselves do not change any zoning districts or regulations. However, in the event that these properties would be redeveloped, the following ideas would support the parameters of redevelopment.



*Lay Park.*

Source: City of Traverse City

## Thirlby Field

Thirlby Field currently serves as the football stadium for Traverse City public schools and St. Francis catholic school. It encompasses four city blocks along Fourteenth Street from Oak Street to Pine Street, between West Thirteenth street and West Fourteenth Street. Constructed in 1934, Thirlby Field has played a unique role in the history of Traverse City and provides a point of attraction in the downtown area during football season. Throughout its history, Thirlby Field has been expanded to accommodate crowds of up to 12,000 visitors (or 15,000 with portable field seating). Renovations (including a new scoreboard in 2021) illustrate the significance of this site to the community.

While the field is heavily used during the season and for other community events, it often sits inactive as a dead zone along an important corridor which could have the potential to support uses that are ultimately more productive to Traverse City. The site is owned by Traverse City Area Public Schools (TCAPS), and any redevelopment of the property would require a transfer of the property. Both Traverse City West and Traverse City Central have football fields that are adjacent to the schools, and there is undeveloped land near Traverse City West that could be the site of a new football stadium. For a school district whose teachers and staff struggle to find affordable housing in the community where they work, the redevelopment of Thirlby Field could be a net benefit for TCAPS.

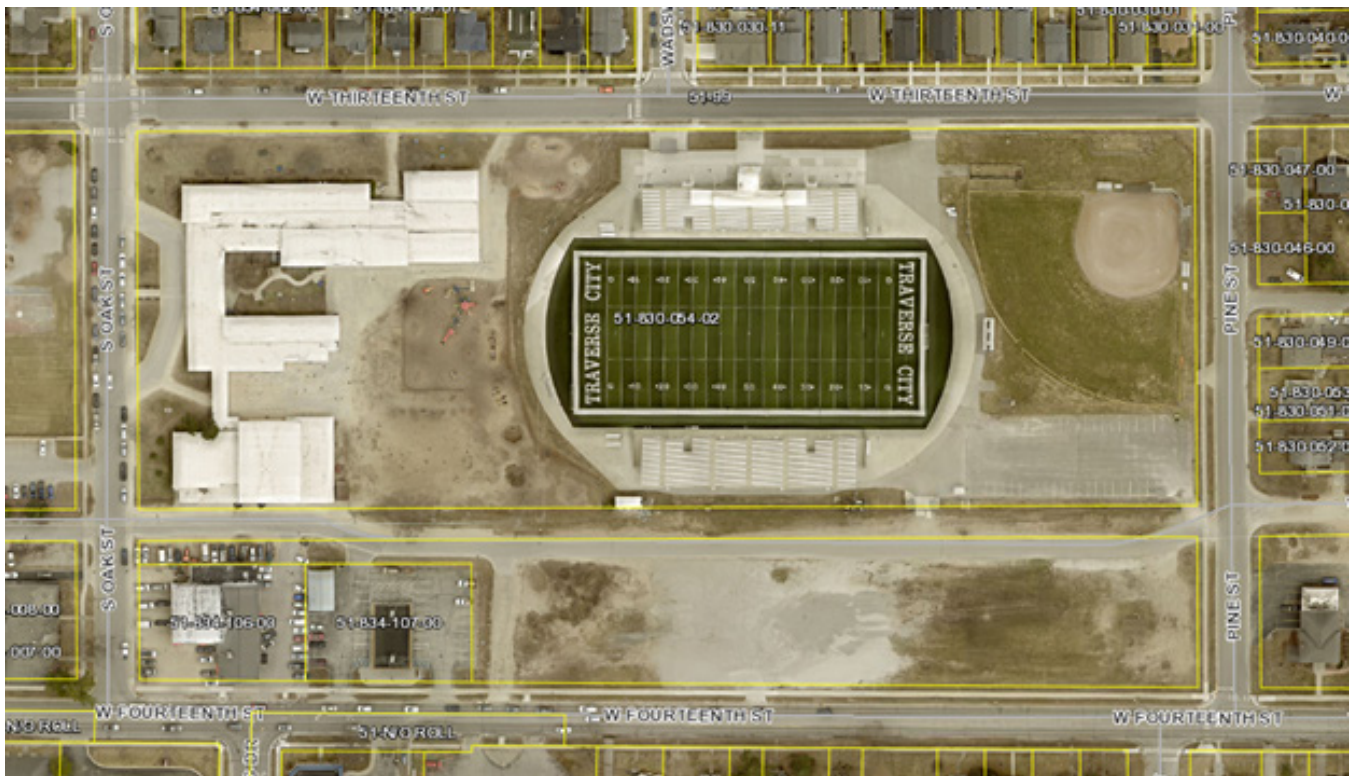
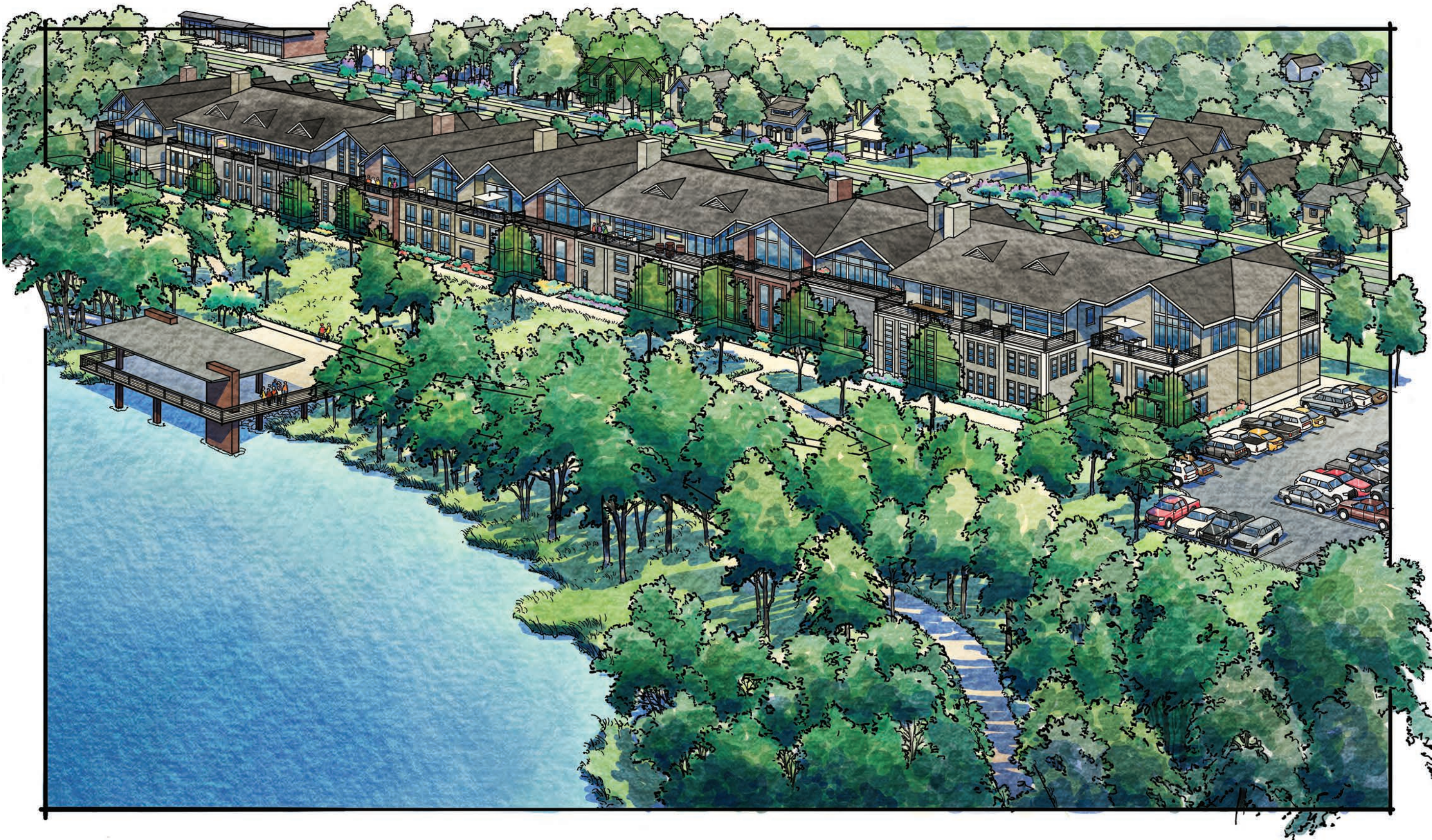


Figure 27: Thirlby Field Conceptual Illustration



Figure 28: 950 Woodmere Avenue Conceptual Illustration





## 950 Woodmere Avenue

Located along Woodmere Avenue between Carver Street and Center Street, 950 Woodmere is a prominent property in the corridor and sits on Boardman Lake. The recent completion of the Boardman Lake Loop Trail has brought new activity to the Woodmere Avenue Corridor. The site has potential to anchor the corridor. Currently, the Traverse Area District Library at the Eighth Street and Woodmere Avenue intersection anchors the northern end of the corridor, but there is not a strong anchor at the southern end of the corridor. This area of the City is somewhat separate from the commercial districts, and residents do not have convenient walkable access to goods and services. This site has the potential to fill that missing gap, build upon the newly created activity in the corridor, and enhance the neighborhoods. Additional development potential could occur on the City's adjacent site.



## 713/725 East Eighth Street

In 2019, the reconstruction of several blocks of Eighth Street was completed. This reconstruction included a new streetscape, placemaking, and non-motorized enhancements. While the reconstruction only included a portion of Eighth Street, it is intended to serve as a catalyst for the entire corridor. Located at the eastern end of the reconstruction, 713/725 East Eighth Street presents an excellent opportunity to build upon the success of the reconstruction. These properties are prominent at the intersection of Woodmere Avenue and Eighth Street, an important connection between the two corridors. The redevelopment of this area would serve as a connection between the two corridors that are currently separated by vacant properties and industrial buildings. While the Library does provide some transition between the Woodmere Avenue and Eighth Street corridors, another anchor would further cement the transition. The site is also adjacent to the TART Trail, providing convenient access to the regional trail system.

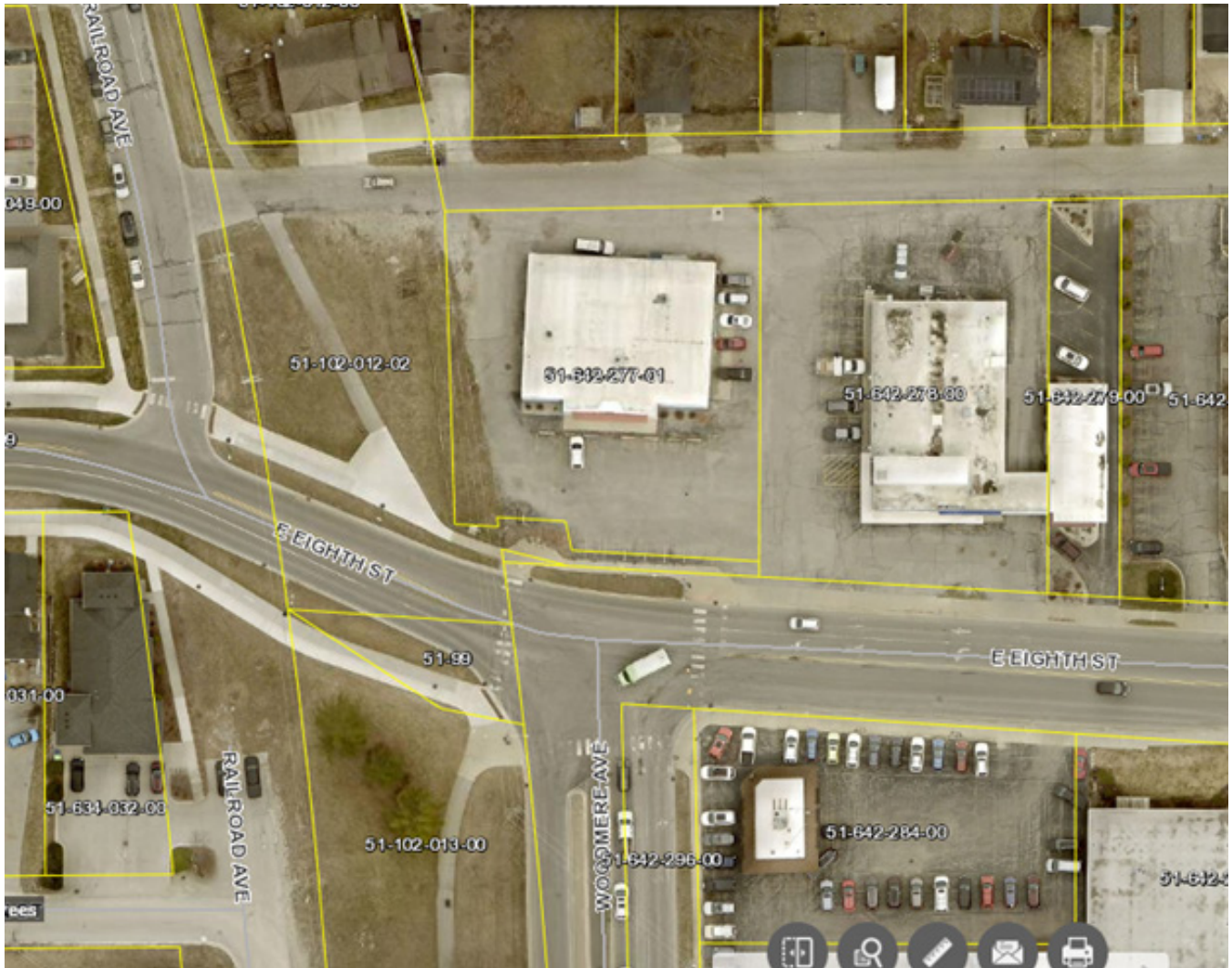


Figure 29: 713/725 East Eighth Street Conceptual Illustration

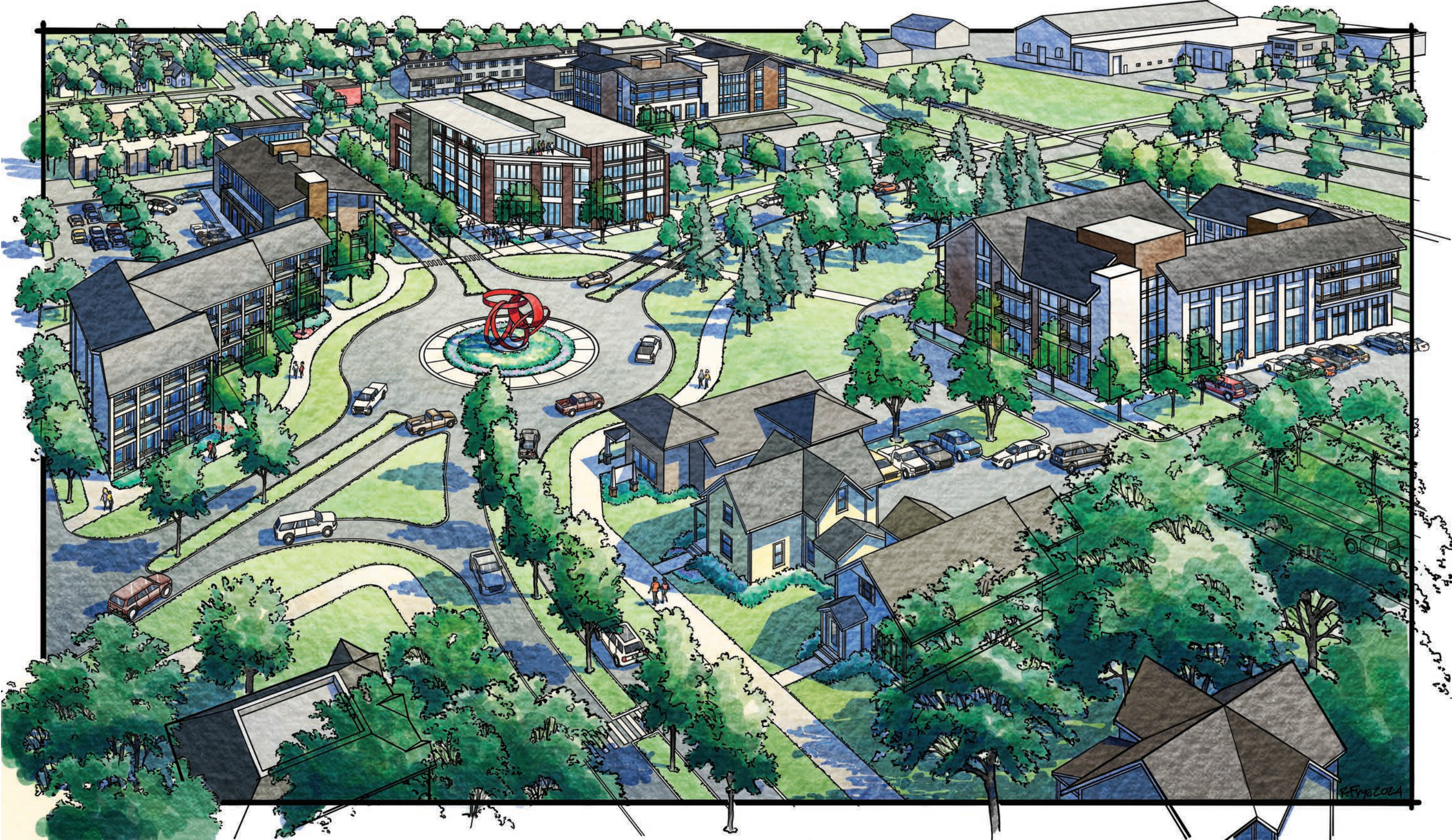
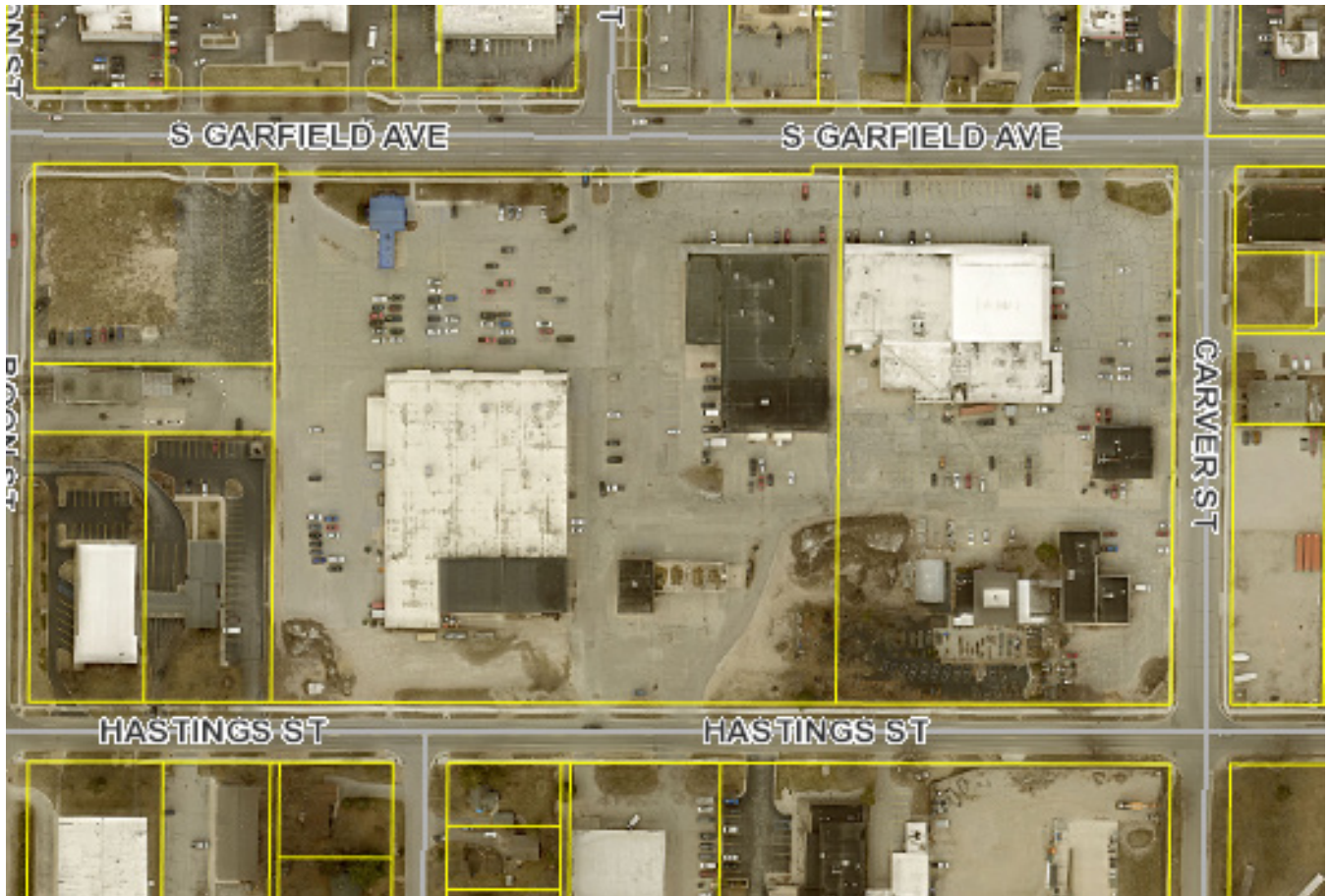


Figure 30: 1101/1137 South Garfield Avenue Conceptual Illustration



### 1101/1137 South Garfield Avenue

The low-density commercial strip development along South Garfield Avenue is not aligned with the vision of this Master Plan which prioritizes walkability, density within the context of the surrounding neighborhoods, and active corridors. Located along South Garfield Avenue and south of Carver Street, 1101/1137 South Garfield Avenue presents an opportunity to transform a large site along South Garfield Avenue. The majority of the site is currently surface parking, an inefficient use of land that is located along a major corridor. The community's priority for redevelopment along this corridor is for mixed-use, moderate-density development with ground-floor retail and a visually intriguing façade. The size of this site makes it conducive to such development, and redevelopment can serve as a catalyst for the transformation of the entire corridor.

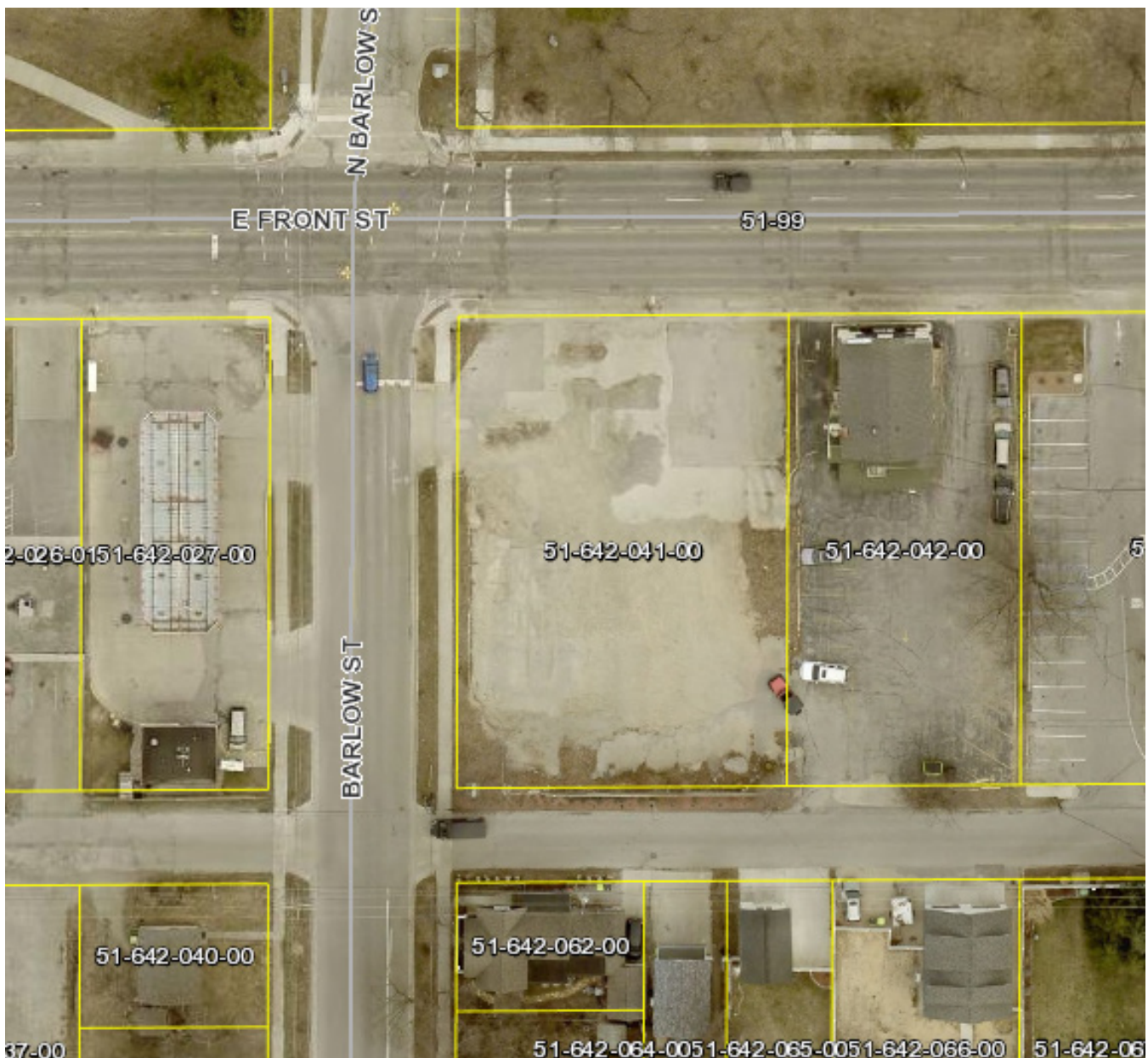


## Legacy Sites

The following redevelopment sites have been long-term, or “legacy” redevelopment priorities for the City. Some properties were previously designated as priority redevelopment opportunities, but have not yet undergone the redevelopment process.

### 802 East Front Street

The Parkway (US-31/East Front Street) is one of the busiest roads in the City that carries both local and regional traffic around the City. East Front Street (east of downtown) is a regional commercial corridor with banks, drive-throughs, and motels that was originally developed for automotive travel. While the commercial corridor backs up to Oak Park Neighborhood, it does not serve the residents of Oak Park as the car-centric development pattern is not conducive to neighborhood retail. While the entire corridor should not be redeveloped to serve as a neighborhood retail, 802 East Front Street presents an opportunity to serve both the regional traffic and the Oak Park Neighborhood. As it is located at the intersection of Barlow Street and East Front Street, it has visibility and access both regionally and at a neighborhood scale.



### 444 East Eighth Street

Currently a vacant lot, 444 East Eighth Street is located in the heart of the Eighth Street commercial district. The recent development of West Shore Bank, Common Grounds, and Ruth Park illustrates that this section of the corridor provides a prime opportunity for redevelopment. The transformation of this site would fill a dead zone in the corridor, creating a continuous section of activity and interest. Redevelopment of this site should be oriented toward the street to create a pedestrian-friendly atmosphere and build upon the redevelopment and work that has already happened in the corridor.



*720 East Eighth Street, 513/521 Woodmere Avenue*

Located to the south of one of the priority redevelopment sites, 720 East Eighth Street and 513/521 Woodmere Avenue is another opportunity to anchor the Eighth Street/Woodmere Avenue intersection and create a node of activity that serves the adjacent neighborhoods. Redeveloping this site in conjunction with the site to the north and the existing District Library would create a strong node of activity for both the Eighth Street and Woodmere Avenue corridors.





### 1040 East Eighth Street

The Eighth Street/Garfield Avenue intersection is dotted with auto repair and low-density commercial development. During the master plan process, the community reimagined this intersection as a moderate-density mixed-use node that provided neighborhood amenities and services. The redevelopment of 1040 East Eighth Street presents an opportunity to work towards that community vision for the intersection. The property has four access drives in close proximity to the intersection creating a lot of traffic hazards. Redeveloping this site would start to anchor a prominent intersection in the City and transition the area towards a walkable neighborhood-oriented environment.



## Redevelopment Strategies

Redevelopment does not happen in a vacuum and is often a result of private-public partnerships, incentives, and market forces that drive transformative redevelopment. To that end, there are actions that the City can take to encourage the redevelopment of the properties identified in this Master Plan.

### *Planned Unit Development*

A Planned Unit Development (PUD) is an agreement between the city and a developer. For the developer, a PUD gives flexibility in the development design and process. For the City, it ensures that certain goals and criteria are achieved with the development (for example, the conservation of natural features). Because a PUD is a negotiated agreement, it provides room for both parties to benefit and achieve a higher quality of development than what may be possible based on the zoning ordinance. Traverse City's PUD requirements emphasize historic preservation, high-quality design, and pedestrian access.

### *Administrative Approval/Review*

A common challenge with redevelopment is the lengthy procedure and approvals from various governmental bodies. This can delay the redevelopment timeline and increase costs. Therefore, the City can create a separate process for specific redevelopment sites that streamlines the process administratively. The City already uses administrative review for most planning approvals; creating an administrative path for redevelopment sites would expand on an existing practice.

### *Tax Increment Financing (TIF)*

As outlined earlier in this chapter, TIF financing is a tax capture strategy that reallocates local tax dollars to the capture agency. While the DDA is an entire district, TIF financing can be used at a site or property level to encourage redevelopment. Instead of the captured tax going to a governmental agency like the DDA, the captured funds would be used to reimburse development costs for environmental cleanup, public improvements, or construction costs. This reduces costs for the developer with the tradeoff being lower tax revenues for the City on the property for the life of the TIF.

TIF financing can be accessed at a property level in several ways. The most common site level TIF mechanism is the Brownfield Program. Brownfield properties are environmentally contaminated, functionally obsolete, blighted, or historic and are eligible for TIF financing as captured tax revenues can be used to reimburse the costs of environmental clean-up or general rehabilitation. It is important to note that housing is now also considered a reimbursable expense. A limitation of the Brownfield Program is that there is a specific list of criteria that determines eligibility. However, Michigan law outlines an oft-unused element of the Brownfield Act: the connection to a Land Bank. A Land Bank is a governmental agency that holds onto property, or "banks" properties, for future development. Because the property is controlled by a governmental agency, the Land Bank can be intentional about the projects and/or developers that it sells a property to. Properties that have been in a land bank are eligible for Brownfield TIF financing. Therefore, a Brownfield non-eligible property can be transferred to a land bank, which then makes the property eligible to access TIF funds through the Brownfield TIF, regardless of whether or not the property was initially classified as a Brownfield property.<sup>10</sup> This strategy would require close coordination with Grand Traverse County which runs both the Brownfield Redevelopment Authority and Land Bank.

### *Corridor Improvement Authority and Corridor Improvement Plans*

To assist economic development and redevelopment by making capital improvements in an established commercial district, the City is authorized to create a Corridor Improvement Authority (CIA) to head these initiatives. Distinct from a DDA, a CIA can target initiatives to commercial corridors located outside the bounds of the DDA by leveraging TIF, selling bonds, or establishing special assessment zones. Additionally, communities are permitted to establish multiple CIAs but may only create one DDA. Once established, the CIA has the ability to create corridor improvements plans that engage nearby residents, businesses within the corridor, and other relevant stakeholders to inform the improvement process.<sup>11</sup>

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- 11 Michigan Municipal League. Economic Development Tools – Corridor Improvement Authority. [https://www.mml.org/resources/publications/one\\_pagers/2019-2-27-FS\\_Econ\\_Dev\\_Tools-CIA-2019&Plus.pdf](https://www.mml.org/resources/publications/one_pagers/2019-2-27-FS_Econ_Dev_Tools-CIA-2019&Plus.pdf).



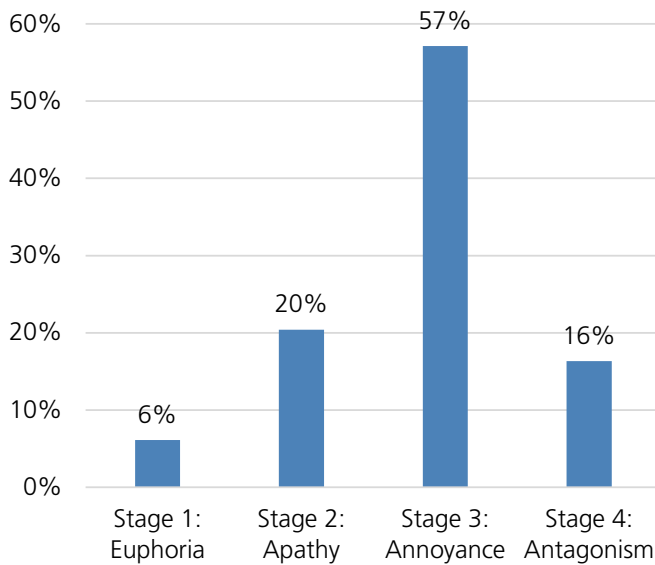
Tourism, unlike other industries such as manufacturing or retail, is not one specific business or location but a complex web of destinations, accommodations, and businesses. The amorphous nature of the industry makes it challenging to plan for or manage. Tourists are, by definition, from outside the community, making it difficult to engage them in the planning process. But like most industries, if tourism is not planned for, it can have negative impacts on a community.

- » Vibrancy, traffic, seasonal, summer, and over-tourism were commonly mentioned by community members when talking about tourism.
- » Community members expressed a desire to think about balance between the needs of the residents and the tourism industry.
- » In 2019, there were 8.4 million overnight trips to the Northwest Region.
- » From winter to summer, the Grand Traverse County population fluctuates by 47%.
- » \$2.6 billion (26%) of the Traverse City regional economy is dependent on tourism.
- » 87% of visitors travel to the region via personal vehicle.
- » Downtown, the Grand Traverse Mall, and the businesses along US-31 are tourism hotspots.

## SUSTAINABLE TOURISM



**Figure 32: Doxey Irridex Model**



and the interest in the area as a destination starts to decline.<sup>1</sup> A majority of participants indicated that the third stage of annoyance best described Traverse City’s current relationship with the tourism industry.

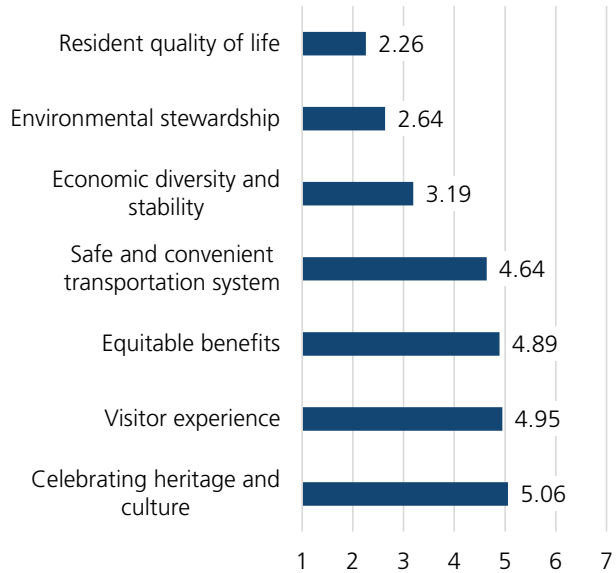
After the case studies were presented, participants were shown a summary of the goals from all six case studies and asked to rank the goals from one (most important) to seven (least important), as they apply to Traverse City. The top priority for participants was resident quality of life, followed by environmental stewardship and economic diversity and stability.

**TOURISM BY THE NUMBERS**

In 2019, PureMichigan published a travel visitation report for the 10-county Northwest Region, a summary of some key findings is included below.<sup>2</sup> This was the first visitation study published by PureMichigan, therefore, longitudinal data that reflect changes in travel behavior over time is not yet available.

- » 8.4 million overnight trips (16% of all overnight trips to the state)

**Figure 33: Tourism Priorities**



- » Purpose of Trip:
  - » Visiting Friends and Family (35%)
  - » Touring (17%)
  - » Outdoors (17%)
- » Origin of Trip:
  - » Metropolitan Detroit (25%)
  - » Grand Rapids – Kalamazoo – Battle Creek (21%)
  - » Flint – Saginaw – Bay City (11%)
- » 3.1 average number of nights spent in the region
- » 2.9 people average travel party size
- » Primary transportation:
  - » Own car/truck (83%)
  - » Rental car (5%)
  - » Plane (5%)
- » Accommodations:
  - » Home of friends or relatives (26%)
  - » Resort hotel (21%)
  - » Motel (20%)
  - » Other hotel (17%)
  - » Campground (9%)
  - » Second home (5%)
  - » Rented cottage/cabin (4%)

- » Top Activities:
  - » Shopping (33%)
  - » Beach/waterfront (25%)
  - » Swimming (18%)
  - » Landmark/historical site (17%)
  - » Winery (17%)
  - » National/state park (16%)
  - » Hiking/backpacking (15%)
  - » Casino (14%)
  - » Brewery (13%)
  - » Boating/sailing (11%)

Tourism in the region is heavily seasonal, peaking in the summer months. In 2022, Networks Northwest, the planning agency for the 10-county region of Northwest Michigan, conducted a population study to estimate the seasonal population for each county in the region. The total population included full-time residents, part-time/seasonal residents, and overnight visitors. According to the study, Grand Traverse County’s population ranges from 109,408 in February to 161,080 in August, a 47% increase. In the peak summer months, full-time residents represent roughly 60% of the total population.<sup>3</sup>

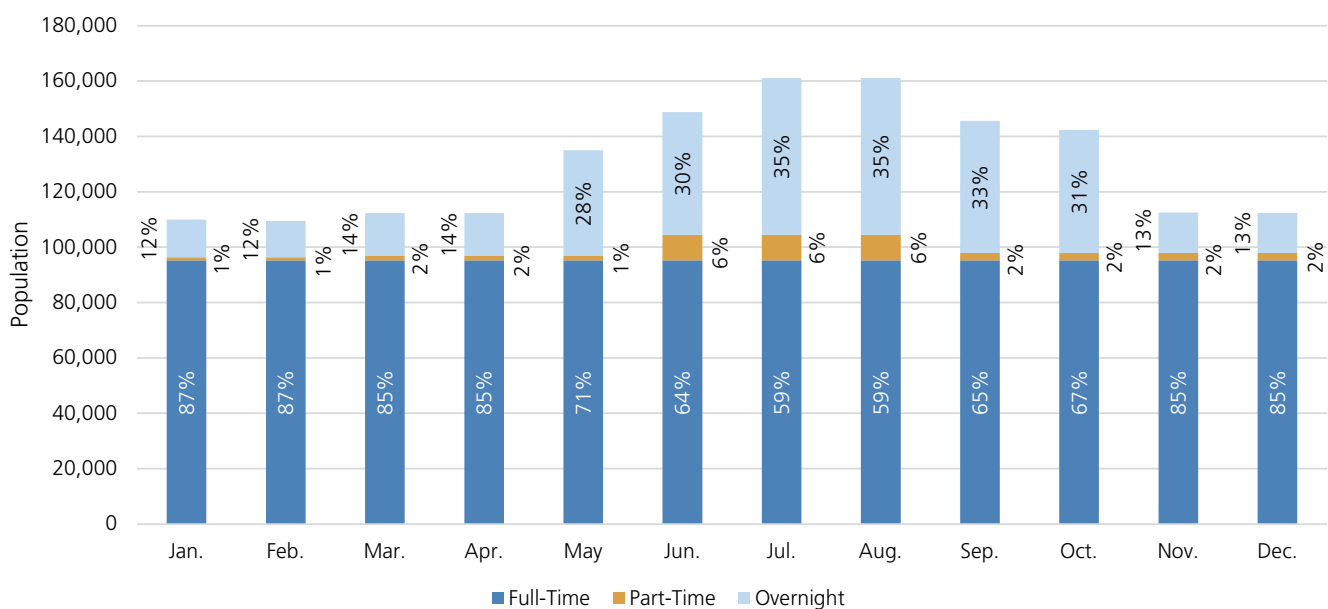
## SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

In the mid to late 20th century, the term “ecotourism” emerged to describe tourism driven by the appeal and draw of natural and ecological areas. Following the continued growth of the ecotourism industry, concepts of responsible travel and sustainable tourism have arisen in response to the negative impacts that tourists have had on ecological areas. While recent sustainable tourism work of the United Nations Global Sustainable Tourism Council has focused on providing sustainable guidelines for tourism operators (cruise lines, hotels, etc.) and destinations (experiences, attractions, etc.), the concept of sustainable tourism is starting to become a key element of communitywide objectives and goals in many tourism communities.

### A Sustainable Tourist Community

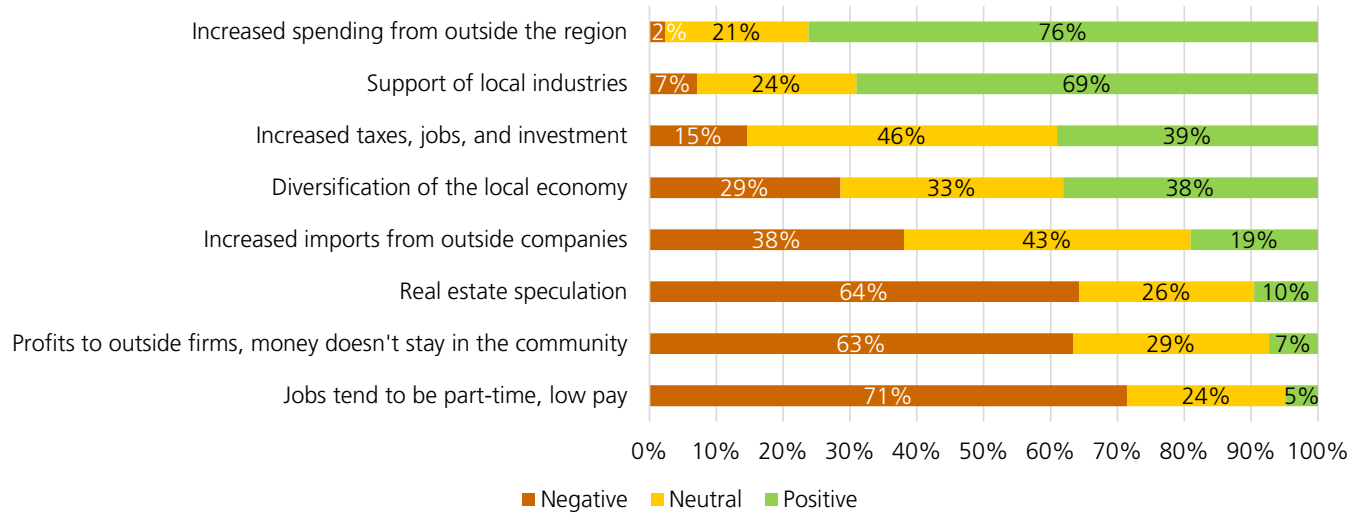
A common symbol for sustainability is the three-legged stool. The legs of the stool represent the economy, society, and environment. True sustainability addresses all three components; if even one leg is missing, the stool will be unstable and fall. This approach to sustainability can be applied to tourism, as tourism undoubtedly impacts Traverse City’s economy, social fabric, and environment.

Figure 34: Grand Traverse County Monthly Population



Source: Networks Northwest

**Figure 35: Economic Impacts of Tourism**



### Tourism and the Economy

Tourism and the Traverse City economy are inextricably linked. For example, visitors bring money from outside the region and spend it at local businesses, increasing the money circulating in the local economy. The visitors also support local businesses and industries that may not have the customer base locally to support operations. Despite this, the influx of visitors makes the business viable. However, often profits generated by the tourism industry are captured by outside firms like hotel chains, who don't reinvest the money into the community in the same way a local small business would. Tourism supported jobs also tend to be part-time and low paying, a challenge for workers living in a region where cost of living is high.

Participants at the tourism workshop were asked to review a series of economic impacts that tourism has had on Traverse City and identify the impact as negative, neutral, or positive. Increased spending from outside the region was the impact that was rated as most positive, and part-time, low-paying jobs was rated as the most negative. When planning for tourism, strategies should focus on enhancing the positive impacts and mitigating the negative ones.

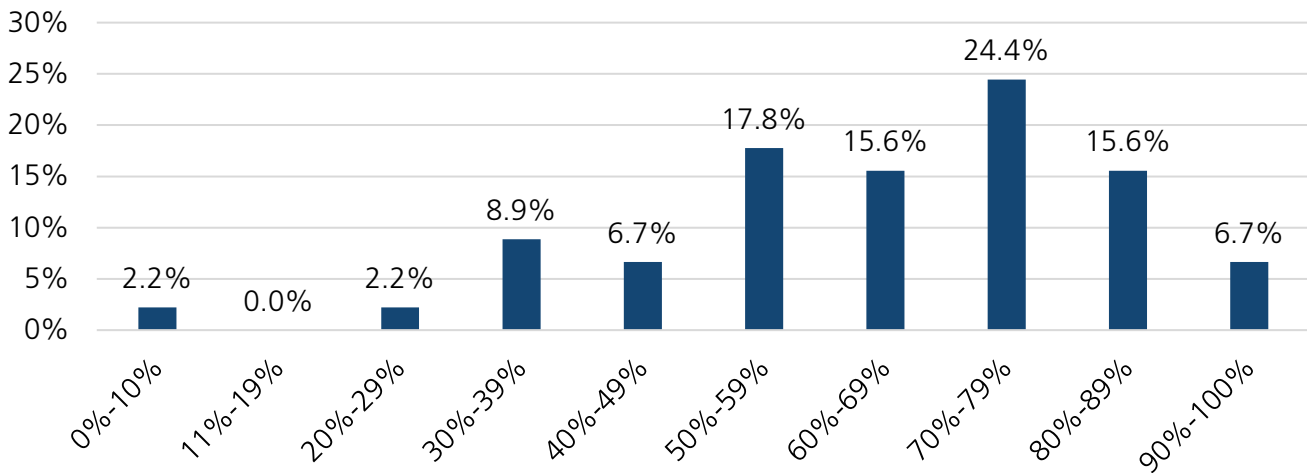
When participants at the tourism workshops were asked how much they believed Traverse City's economy depended on tourism, answers generally fell from the mid-30th percentile to the high-90th percentile, indicating a wide range of perceptions

about Traverse City's reliance on tourism for economic activity. A complete distribution of the responses is shown in the figure titled Economic Dependence on Tourism. Participants provided an exact percentage to the question, and responses have been generalized in the figure.

To illustrate the economic relationship between the City and the tourism industry, an economic analysis using IMPLAN was performed on the 49684 and 49686 ZIP codes. IMPLAN is the leading provider of economic impact data and analytical software. The software analyzes buy and sell relationships between industries, households, and the government to determine economic connections. The basis for the economic data is sourced from federal data sources put forth by the Bureau of Economic Analysis.<sup>4</sup> IMPLAN was combined with cellphone mobility data to determine how reliant an industry is on tourism. The cellphone mobility data was aggregated by location, not by individual; therefore, records are tied to a location and not an individual person. For example, for a business in the City of Traverse City, the cellphone mobility records show how many people visited each day, the times people visited, and the aggregate locations of where people traveled from. The records were then categorized by local and visitor. Those who were traveling to the business from roughly the area north of US-10 and west of US-127/I-75 were considered to be locals, and those traveling from outside that area were considered tourists. For each record in the cellphone mobility dataset, the percentage of locals and tourists was calculated.



**Figure 36: Economic Dependence on Tourism**



These records were then joined with IMPLAN to illustrate how much of the economy was reliant on tourism. For example, if the cellphone mobility records showed that 30% of the people visiting the clothing retail businesses were classified as tourists, it is assumed that 30% of the retail clothing industry is reliant on tourism. This process was repeated for every business and every industry in the 49684 and 49686 zip codes.

In total, the analysis showed that the tourism industry contributes roughly \$2.6 billion to the economy of the Traverse City Region (the 49684 and 49686 zip codes). Contributions are in the form of labor income, taxes paid, and buy-sell relationships. The \$2.6 billion represents 26.2% of the total economy in the Traverse City Region, indicating that tourism accounts for roughly one quarter of the Traverse City Region’s economy. However, not all industries are equally reliant on the tourism industry. The table titled Tourism-Reliant Industries highlights some industries in varying stages of tourism reliance.

If tourism were considered an individual industry rather than being measured by the economic activity that is generated by visitors, tourism would by far be the largest industry in the Traverse City Region. Currently, Hospitals is the largest industry in the Traverse City Region, accounting for 9.1% of the total economy. The importance of tourism to the local economy cannot be overstated; if the entire industry was to disappear overnight, the economy would shrink by roughly a quarter.

In addition to accounting for 26.2% of the total economy, tourism supports 37% of the jobs in the Traverse City Region.

In addition to the total representation of the economy, industries can be quantified based on the amount of dollars generated per dollar invested. The higher the dollar multiplies, the more economically productive the industry. The multipliers are totaled by adding the direct, indirect, and induced economic impact. The direct economic impact is the impact generated by the industry specifically. For example, the sale of a sandwich from a sandwich shop would be a direct economic relationship. Indirect economic relationships are the purchase and sale of goods and equipment to support the direct economic industry, the purchase of bread, lettuce, tomato, and all other ingredients that are used to construct the sandwich. Finally, induced relationships are the economic relationships generated by the wages of the workers throughout the production chain; for instance, the items or services the sandwich maker spent their wages on. The tourism industry is responsible for \$1.8 billion in direct impact, \$650 million of indirect impact, and \$148 million in induced impact, \$2.6 billion total. When converted, the tourism industry has a multiplier of 1.44, meaning that for every dollar generated directly by the tourism industry, another \$0.44 is generated elsewhere in the economy. When stacked up against the rest of the industries in the Traverse City Region, tourism’s multiplier ranks roughly 38th out of 274 total industries. This indicates that while

**Table 72: Tourism-Reliant Industries**

| Industry                                     | Percent Reliant on Tourism | Total \$ (2023) |
|--|----------------------------|-----------------|
| Independent artists, writers, and performers | 91.5%                      | \$2,564,083     |
| Photographic services                        | 71.1%                      | \$1,979,280     |
| Wineries                                     | 69.2%                      | \$31,638,408    |
| Scenic and sightseeing transportation        | 58.8%                      | \$20,886,909    |
| Hotels, motels, including casinos            | 51.1%                      | \$40,612,769    |
| Full-service restaurants                     | 48.9%                      | \$82,106,201    |
| Fruit farming                                | 41.8%                      | \$2,598,993     |
| Limited-service restaurants                  | 31.5%                      | \$45,454,750    |
| Hospitals                                    | 19.7%                      | \$158,928,862   |
| Commercial fishing                           | 8.4%                       | \$101,660       |

Source: IMPLAN

tourism certainly generates more money elsewhere in the economy, there are other industries that are also drivers of economic potential.

Overdependence on one industry can lead to significant challenges to economic resiliency, especially when the dependent industry experiences some form of change. The rustbelt cities of the Midwest provide a tangible case study of overdependence on one industry: manufacturing. While the decline of manufacturing does not seem analogous to tourism, the COVID-19 pandemic illustrated that the influx of tourists each year is not certain. Additionally, tourism growth is not infinite; at some point, capacity, shifting tourism interests, changes in the region, and/or tourism in the City will level off. Therefore, it is essential to diversify the local economy beyond tourism to avoid significant economic reverberations if or when the tourism industry is upended. Additionally, the tourism industry itself needs to diversify beyond the seasonal peaks. The annual highs and lows of visitors means that many tourism-related jobs are seasonal and disappear in the winter, making it challenging for local workers to support their households year-round.

### **TOURISM AND SOCIETY**

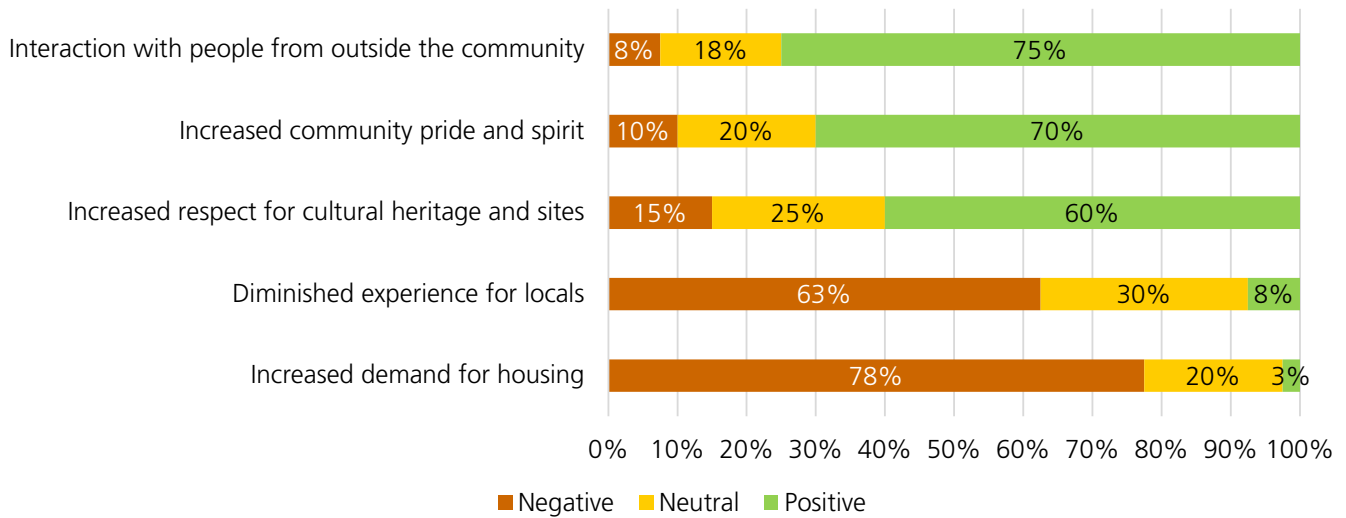
Participants in the planning for tourism workshops rated “resident quality of life” as the top priority when planning for tourism, an indication that the tourism industry is impacting the social fabric of the

### **Seasonal Employment and Equity**

Communities whose cycles of tourism are directly impacted by seasonal transitions face complicated challenges at the intersection of employment, residence, and service access. The “on-season” for tourism expectedly comes with an increased demand for workers to support an influx of visitors and related vacationing activities. However, as the season ends, temporarily employed workers are highly likely to be without work in the “off-season,” presenting challenges to employment, wage stability, and permanent residence. Additionally, seasonal employment rarely comes with benefits traditionally associated with full-time work, heightening the precarity faced by seasonal employees.

community. While participants were not asked to define quality of life, their open responses indicate that many see traffic, crowds, and impacts on housing as top concerns related to their quality of life. Additionally, participants ranked several social impacts of tourism as negative, neutral, or positive, illustrated in the figure titled Social Impacts of Tourism. Increased interaction with people from outside the community, increased community pride and spirit, and increased respect for cultural heritage and cultural sites were the highest rated social impacts and diminished experience for locals

**Figure 37: Social Impacts of Tourism**



and increased demand for housing were rated as the lowest.

### Transportation

Visitor transportation can be split into two categories: internal transportation and external transportation. Internal transportation refers to how visitors move around within the City, and external transportation methods refer to how visitors get to and from the City. These two elements of visitor transportation need to be considered differently. Internal travel tends to include shorter distances and originates from where visitors are staying (hotels, motels, etc.) whereas external transportation tends to cover longer distances that originate from the visitor’s home. These two categories of visitor transportation have different needs and thus different strategies to reduce cars on the road and the impact on residents’ quality of life.

#### External Transportation

According to the research published by PureMichigan, a vast majority of people visiting the region travel in a personal vehicle.<sup>5</sup> The main transportation route into and out of the city is US-31, meaning that most visitors arriving in a vehicle are entering the city off US-31. US-31 is designed to carry a large volume of traffic, but the volume of traffic moving along US-31 varies seasonally. It is important to acknowledge that traffic congestion is relative. Congestion in the Traverse City Region

is very different than congestion in Los Angeles or New York. While they are much bigger cities, waiting for an extra traffic light cycle at Division Street and the Parkway during the summer is not congestion. One way to measure congestion is using the Level of Service (LOS) method which rates roadways on a scale of A to F. A being free flowing traffic and F being stop-and-go traffic. Typically, roadways are designed with an acceptable rating of C or D, so in the summer when the roads in the Traverse City Region are reaching lower LOS ratings, C or D ratings, they are not becoming congested they are operating at the capacity they were designed for. Community sentiments and perceptions around traffic and congestion may be a result of the significant change in traffic patterns between the winter and summer months. The winter months, where most roads are operating at A or B LOS status may be perceived as the norm and during the summer months where the LOS decreases, community members perceive the reduced LOS as congestion because it is different from the winter norm. In reality, the summer months where the LOS is a C or D are the norm as that’s what the roads were designed for.

The other main transportation option for traveling to the Traverse City Region is via plane. The Traverse City Cherry Capital Airport has direct flights to 20 destinations and connecting flights to virtually everywhere else. However, the challenge for visitors arriving by air is how to reach their accommodations and destinations once they arrive

## Tourist Transportation and Climate Change

The built environment of a city as well as its existing systems of transportation directly impact the ways in which tourists navigate their time as visitors. Cities and common tourist districts that are dense in nature will enable exploration by foot without reliance on automobiles or rideshare systems (e.g., Uber and Lyft). However, low density patterns of development or destinations that are located outside of a dense city center will increase the likelihood that visitors use personal cars to access attractions in the absence of transportation systems that can accommodate these common trips. Consequently, cities have an opportunity to implement a shuttle or public transportation system to facilitate visits to common attractions to reduce emissions from personal vehicle travel. While these systems may not initially be as robust as a fully fledged transportation network, they present an opportunity to simultaneously ease the tourists' experience and drastically reduce emissions on trips to common attractions.

at the airport. Public transportation is an option for visitors as BATA's fixed route 14 connects to the airport, but the bus only arrives every two hours, a frequency that is unlikely to be acceptable to visitors who have the resources to travel by other means. Link On-Demand, BATA's ride hailing service covers the airport, but usage is contingent on visitors being aware of the service and being comfortable using it. Private ride sharing companies Uber and Lyft both service the City of Traverse City, although recent studies have shown that ride shares have a negative impact on traffic and congestion (however the studies were conducted in larger cities).<sup>6</sup> Eight hotels provide an airport shuttle, providing an option for visitors to travel between their accommodation and the airport, but these eight hotels represent a fraction of the accommodation businesses in and around the City.<sup>7</sup> For those not taking public transportation, a ride share, or hotel shuttle, the only other practical way to get from the airport to a destination is by car. Six rental car companies have locations at the airport.

Indian Trails, a commercial bus company, connects to Traverse City, with additional routes extending to major cities such as Chicago, Milwaukee, Duluth, and Detroit. However, the bus operates at a frequency and speed that is not convenient



*Traverse City Cherry Capital Airport.*

Source: Traverse City Ticker

for many travelers. Taking the bus from Chicago to Traverse City requires four transfers and is estimated to take roughly 50 hours.<sup>8</sup>

Improving external visitor transportation is challenging because visitors pick the most convenient option available to them. In the Traverse City Region, the most convenient option is typically by automobile. Efforts such as improving awareness of BATA's services may provide another option for those traveling from the airport, but the lack of other external transportation connections will mean that many visitors will continue to arrive by automobile.

### *Internal Transportation*

While there may be limited options for traveling to the City of Traverse City by means other than an automobile, a car is not necessary for moving around the City and the immediate area. Walking, biking, and public transportation are all excellent options for traveling within the City by means other than a car. However, all of these options are contingent on visitors knowing they are available. For visitors wishing to walk, wayfinding is essential. Signage that directs to popular destinations and lists how far away they are located provides visitors who do not know their way around with clear routes and paths.

Wayfinding is also critical for visitors wishing to bike as they too need clear routes and paths. Biking visitors must either bring a personal bike to the City or rent one once they arrive. Several bike rental companies in the Traverse City Region will deliver rental bikes within and near the City, meaning that visitors do not have to travel to one of the rental companies to access a bike. Additionally, safe and convenient non-motorized infrastructure is key to encouraging visitors to travel via bike. For those who do not know the community, a lack of dedicated non-motorized infrastructure or non-motorized routes may be a daunting challenge. To reduce conflicts with local non-motorized users and those more familiar with the transportation network, those renting bikes should be provided with information on local laws regarding non-motorized travel and these rules and laws should also be posted at various points along popular non-motorized routes.

BATA has several fixed routes that service the City. The Bayline is a free route that travels along

## Public Transportation and Equity

Investments in public transportation systems can support navigation around the City for both residents and tourists, promoting access to various factions of a city that might otherwise only be available by car. Such systems provide a tangible benefit to the tourists' experience while simultaneously allowing permanent residents to access all parts of the City without relying on a personal vehicle.



*Wayfinding signage with minutes.*

Source: Alta Planning + Design

US-31, connecting many hotels to downtown Traverse City. Visitor usage of public transportation is contingent on awareness and ease of use. To address this, BATA has recently developed an application and equipped their buses with real-time location tracking which will significantly improve ease of use. Hotels and popular businesses near the Bayline should post information about the route to increase awareness and permanent public postings at popular parks and beaches along the route would further increase awareness.

### Tourism Hotspots

Using the cellphone data described in the economic discussion of tourism, the monthly visitation patterns were mapped for the 49684 and 49686 zip codes. Patterns were separated into locals and visitors using the same metrics described previously. The maps titled January Tourists and July Tourists show the visitation patterns in the city for the months of January 2022 and July 2022. The higher the 3D bar and darker the color, the more visitors. The difference between the two months is striking. In January, the Grand



*Front Street in Downtown Traverse City.*

Source: City of Traverse City

Traverse Mall area, Downtown Traverse City, and the hotels along US-31 in East Bay Township are the popular destinations. In June, these areas remain the popular destinations but increase astronomically in scale. Additionally, the airport and several businesses in rural Grand Traverse County (Moomers and Boone's) become heavily visited in June.

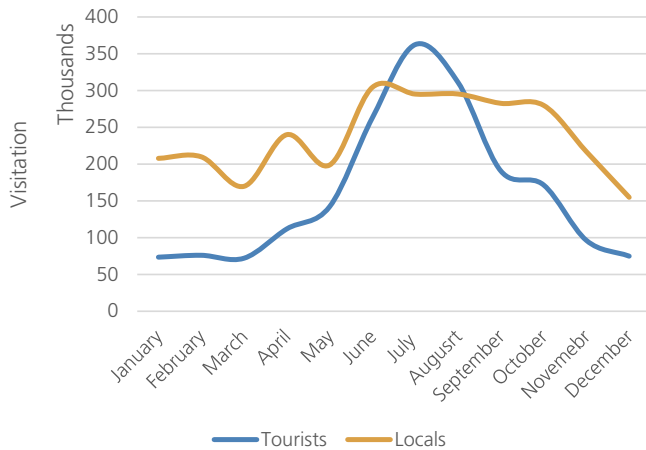
The cellphone analysis also included locals and the figures titled January Locals and July Locals show the visitation patterns in the region for residents. Like tourists, the Grand Traverse Mall area and Downtown are popular destinations in the winter and summer. But unlike the tourist patterns, Chums Corner, the Garfield Corridor, and South Airport, are frequently destinations for locals. Likely this deviation in visitation patterns between locals and tourists is because these areas have businesses that cater more towards the everyday needs of local residents than the retail/entertainment focus of downtown and businesses along US-31. Also notable is that local visitation downtown increases during the summer months, indicating that tourism is not driving locals out of downtown. However, local visitation patterns include some overlap with employment.

Downtown visitation, for both tourists and locals, spikes in the summer months of June through September. For those months, tourists outnumber locals downtown. Local visitation follows a fairly regular seasonal pattern with a small increase in the month of December, likely representing the holiday shopping season.

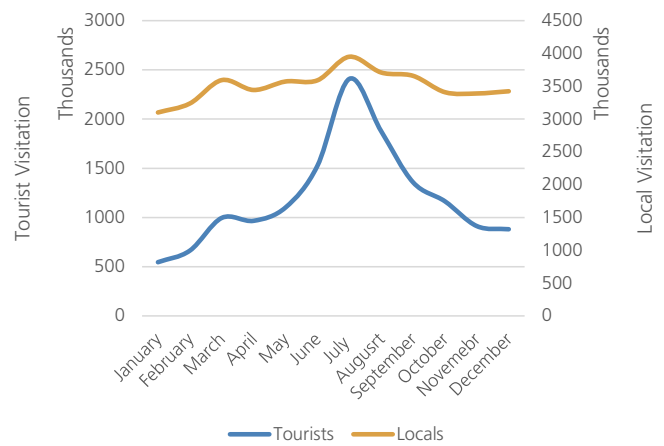


*Boardman River Trail.*

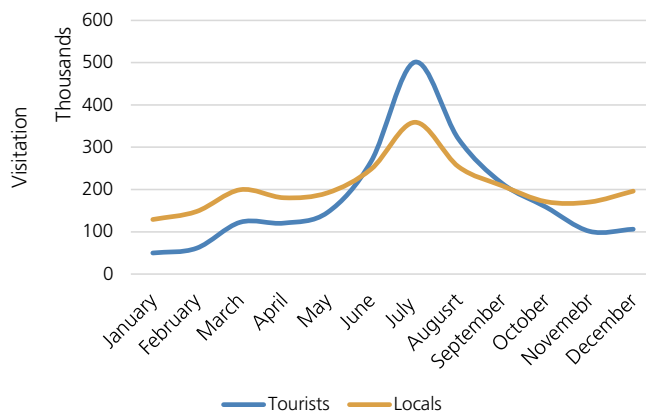
**Figure 38: US-31 Visitation Patterns**



**Figure 40: Total Visitation Patterns**



**Figure 39: Downtown Visitation Patterns**



**Figure 41: Grand Traverse Mall Visitation Patterns**



Unlike downtown, the Grand Traverse Mall area, which includes the shopping centers to the west, south, and east of the mall, does not follow a seasonal pattern to the degree of downtown. There appear to be two periods of increased tourist visitation to the Grand Traverse Mall area: mid-winter and mid- to late-summer. This area includes big-box stores like Target, Best-Buy, Home-Depot, and Walmart that could be drawing people from outside the region. These individuals are classified as tourists but are not visiting the Traverse City Region for the purpose of touring for a short period of time.

The businesses along US-31 from Acme to Garfield Avenue show a clear seasonal visitation pattern of tourists, likely a result of the high number of hotels and motels along the corridor. Locals also experience a seasonal summer bump in visitation, potentially capturing the seasonal workforce that

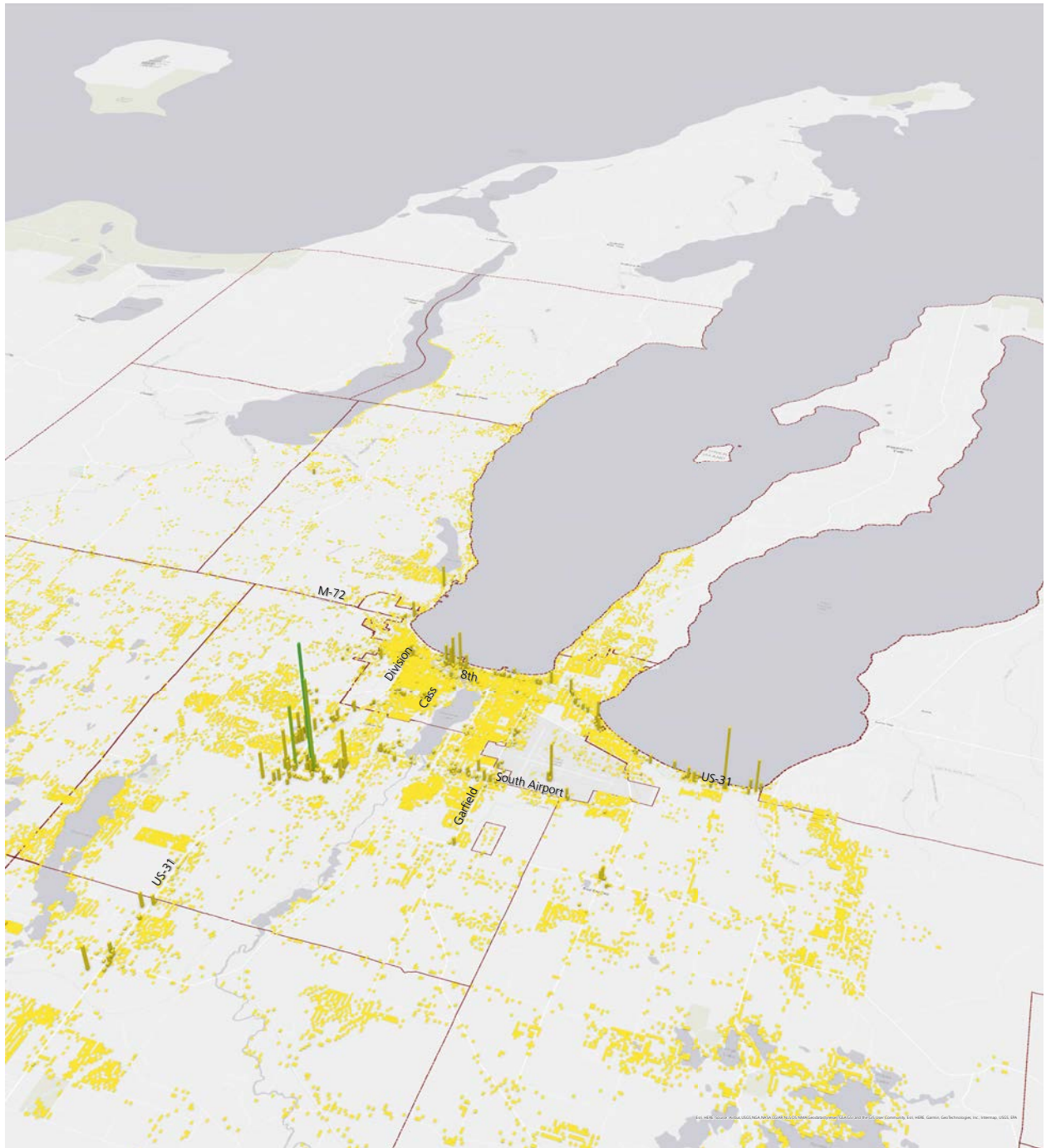
is needed to support the businesses along the corridor. Local visitation in late-winter and spring went through an irregular pattern of rise and fall, an interesting deviation from an expected trend.

When looking at the Traverse City Region (49684 and 49686 zip codes) as a whole, visitation follows a seasonal pattern. Tourism expectedly peaks in the summer months and tappers off towards the winter. Local visitation stays fairly consistent throughout the year, with a slight increase in the summer that likely represents people who live within the region that visit the Traverse City Region more frequently in the summer.

### Housing

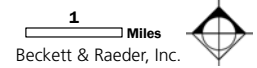
Another top concern among participants at the tourism workshop was the impact of tourism on housing. The relationship between tourism and housing is complex, and it is difficult to draw a

Map 35: January Tourists



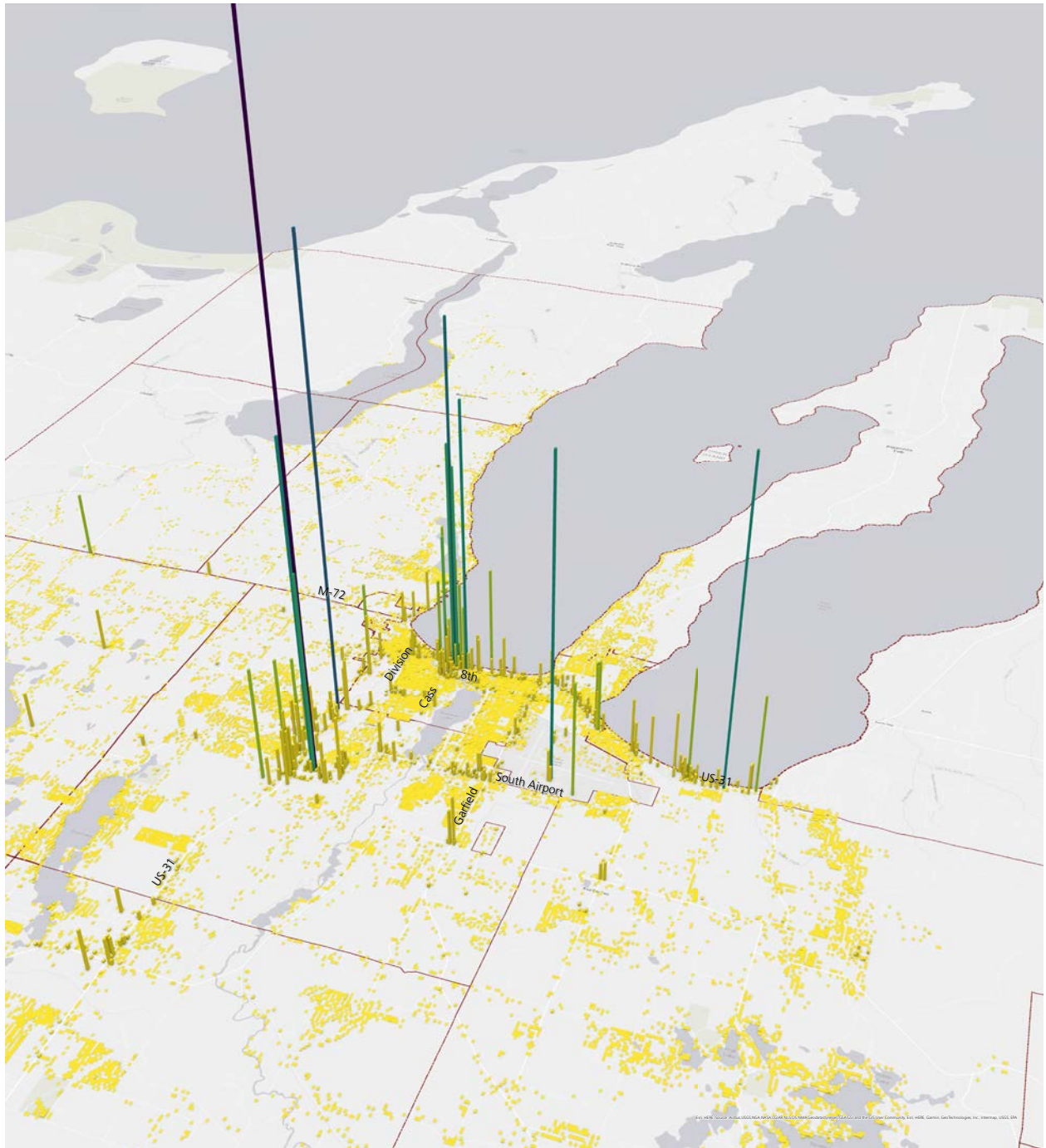
## January Tourists

Sources: Michigan Open Data Portal, City of Traverse City



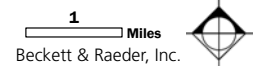


Map 36: July Tourists

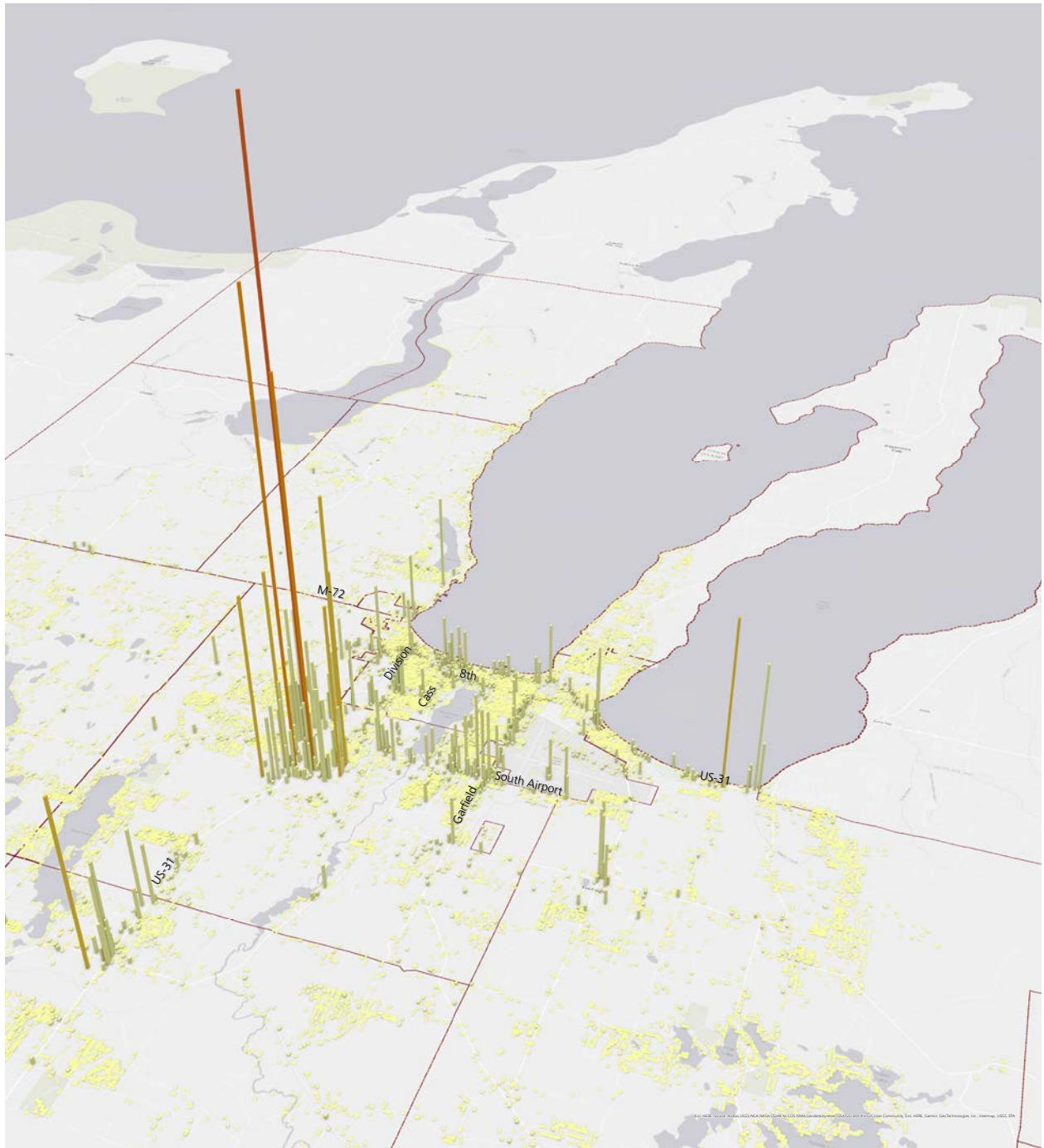


## July Tourists

Sources: Michigan Open Data Portal, City of Traverse City

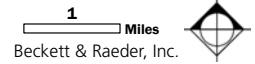


# Map 37: January Locals

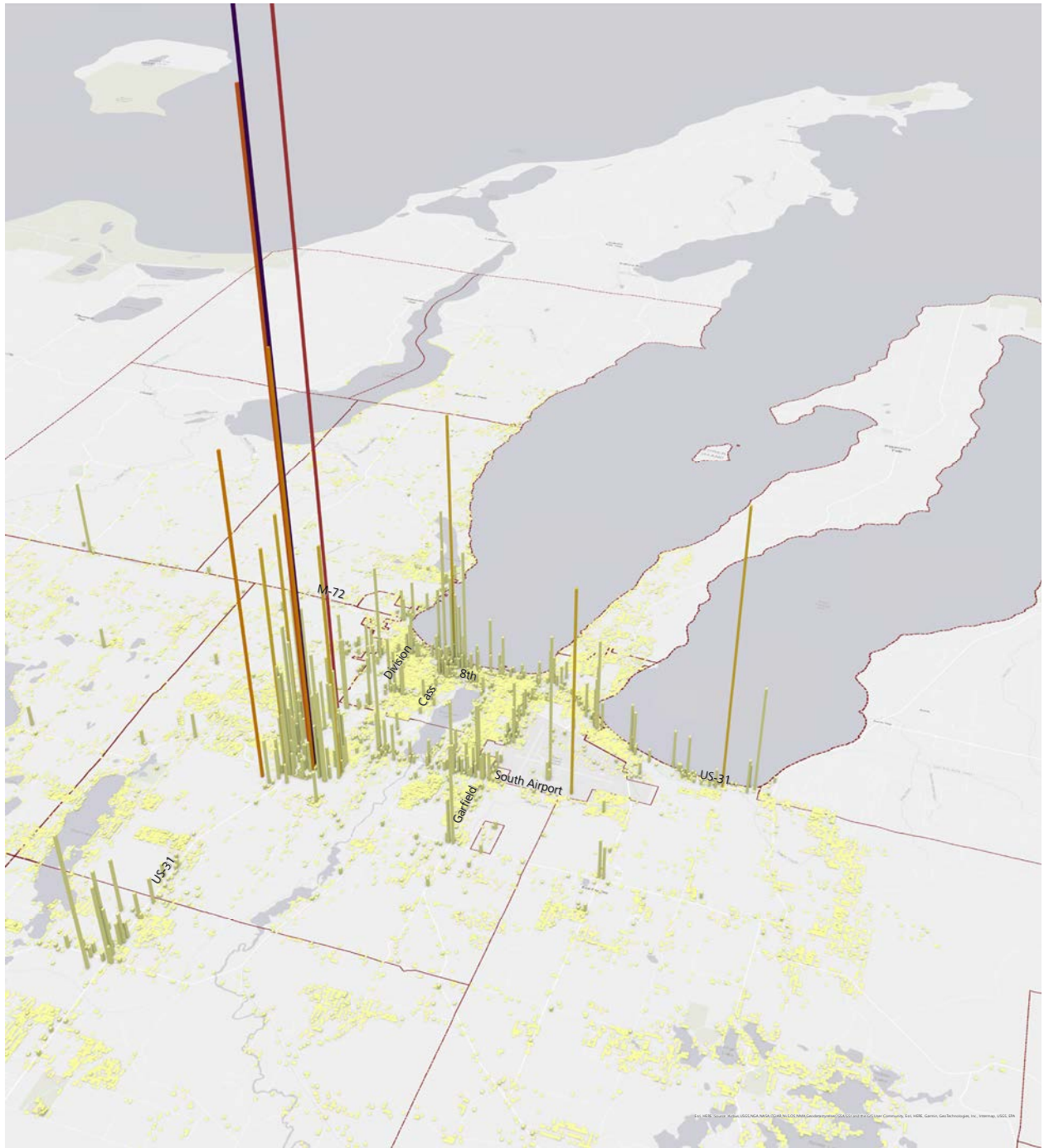


## January Locals

Sources: Michigan Open Data Portal, City of Traverse City

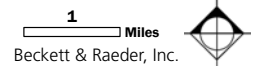


Map 38: July Locals



## July Locals

Sources: Michigan Open Data Portal, City of Traverse City



direct line between the tourism industry and its impacts on the local housing market. There are limited academic studies that explore the direct link between tourism and housing. However, existing studies generally conclude that increased tourism activity correlates with a rise in housing prices due to the increased interest in the community.<sup>9</sup> Increasing housing prices can lead to displacement as residents get priced out of the community. This displacement can negatively impact the tourism industry as tourism workers, who tend to work part-time and earn below average wages, are some of the first people to be negatively impacted by rising housing values.

### *Short-Term Rentals*

In the City of Traverse City, there is specific concern about the rise in Short-Term Rentals (STRs) and the impact of STRs on the housing market. The impact of STRs is twofold and entails the conversion of existing housing units and hotelization, both of which negatively impact housing affordability.

Firstly, a housing unit that has been converted from a rental or ownership unit to a STR unit has essentially been removed from the housing market because STRs are not a viable solution for long-term local housing. This reduces the total number of housing units in the community and as supply decreases and demand remains constant or increases, prices, both rental and ownership, increase. Secondly, as long as a STR owner can rent out the housing unit for less than a hotel and above long-term rental rates, there is no financial incentive to use the housing unit for a long-term rental.<sup>10</sup> A recent study from UCLA found that a 10% increase in Airbnb listings leads to a 0.42% increase in rents and a 0.76% increase in house prices.<sup>11</sup> Beyond the price and availability of housing, STRs can also influence the social operation of the surrounding neighborhood. An STR is a significant deviation of use from long-term rental or ownership and can be inconsistent with the function of a neighborhood if proper regulations are not in place to control nuisances.

As of March 2024, the City differentiates between a tourist and vacation home. A tourist home is a primary residence where the occupants rent out no more than three rooms for short-term use.

## Short-Term Rentals and Equity

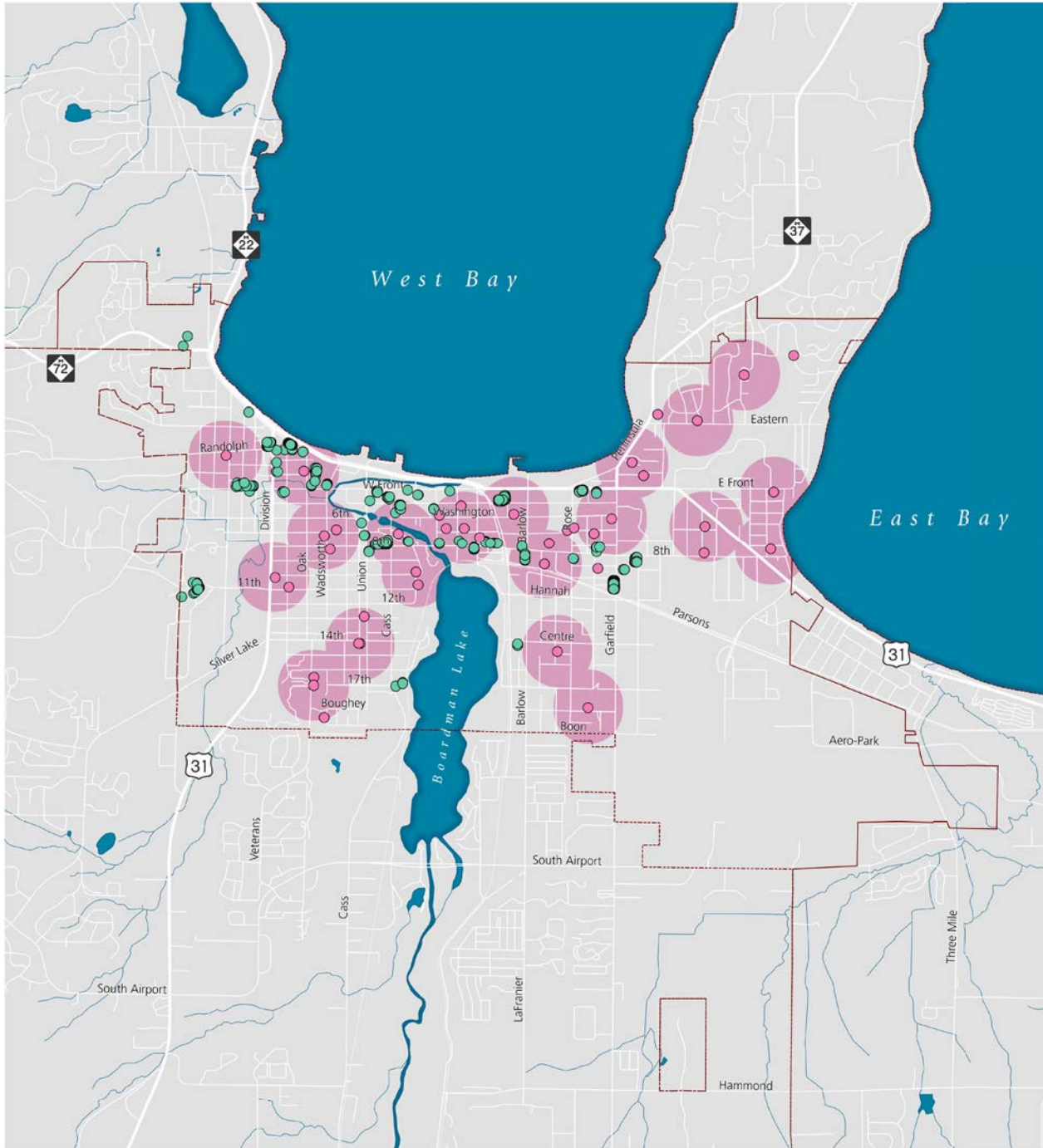
While the prevalence of short-term rentals in a community is not in and of itself the cause of rising housing prices, short-term rentals do hold the potential to push out marginalized residents and contribute to a neighborhood's gentrification. If the demand for tourism is high enough, housing units in low-income neighborhoods may be converted to more profitable STRs and, consequently, made unavailable for prospective long-term residents at affordable rates. These neighborhoods are especially susceptible to trends of STR conversion when they are located close to a city's downtown district as their proximity to numerous amenities is favorable to tourists with a desire to explore the area.

A vacation home is completely rented out for short-term use, defined as a period of less than 30 days. While the City permits tourist homes in all residential districts and commercial districts, vacation rentals must be single-family homes and are only permitted vacation rentals commercial, downtown, hotel, Grand Traverse Commons, industrial, and transportation zoning districts, meaning that that they are not currently permitted uses in the neighborhoods. All operating tourist and vacation homes are required to be licensed and inspected by the City to ensure they comply with the necessary regulations of the City of Traverse City. While there is concern around the impact that STRs have on the City, it is important to remember that they serve as a part of the accommodation sector which is essential for supporting the tourism economy of the region.

## TOURISM AND THE ENVIRONMENT

The environmental impact of tourism is challenging to measure, largely because it is difficult to connect large scale changes in the environment to one or a group of people. Participants at the tourism workshops were asked to rate the environmental impacts of tourism on a scale from positive to negative. Respect for natural features and recreation assets was rated the most positive, while invasive species was rated as the most negative factor.

Map 39: STR Locations - April 2023



## STR Locations - April 2023

Sources: Michigan Open Data Portal, City of Traverse City

- Vacation Home Rental
- Tourist Home Rental
- Tourist Home High Intensity Buffer



The environmental impacts in the chart titled Environmental Impacts of Tourism are difficult to quantify. The best way to ensure that tourists are respecting and taking care of the local environment is through education. Posting local environmental rules and regulations in addition to information on the local ecology and environment will help educate tourists on ways that they can take care of the local environment. Additionally, waste disposal locations should be conveniently placed in visible locations near popular tourist spots to minimize littering and improper waste disposal. Promoting non-automotive travel, as described previously, can help reduce emissions generated from vehicles reducing the overall number of greenhouse gases entering the atmosphere.

### TC TOURISM

Traverse City Tourism (TC Tourism) is an independent non-profit destination management organization that promotes the greater Traverse City area as a leisure and business destination. A destination management organization is an economic development organization charged with promoting an area as a destination for economic development purposes. TC Tourism is funded by a “room tax,” a 5% levy on hotel room rentals in 68 hotels located across the region. The organization’s services support tourism activities in Leelanau County, Benzie County, Grand Traverse County, and a portion of Antrim County. As outlined in TC Tourism’s community report, their goals are to drive commerce, guide visitors, and be a champion for the region. As the key promoter of Traverse City as a destination, TC Tourism is an essential part of

## Environmental Stewardship of Tourists and Climate Change

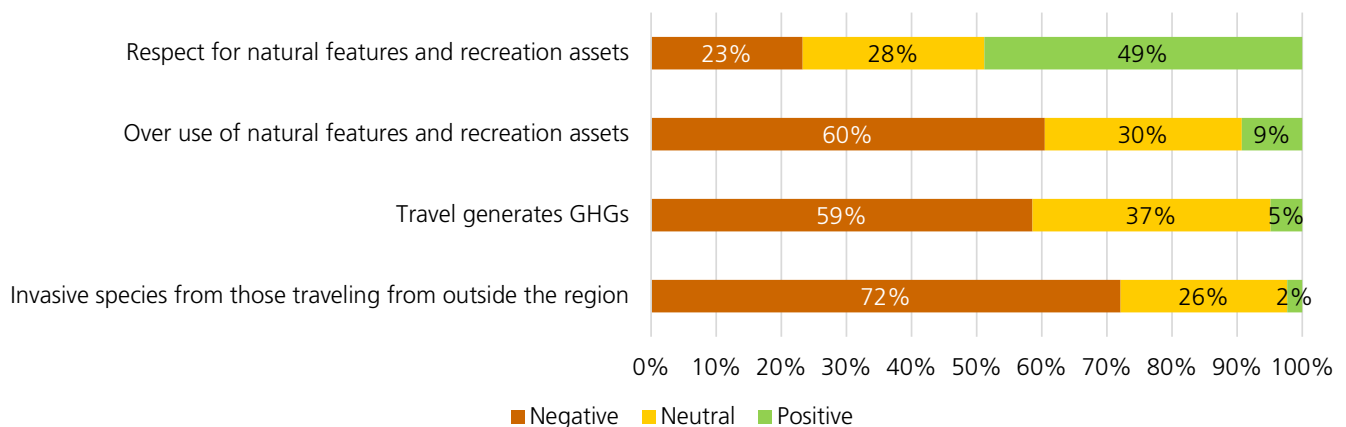
Visitors to a community maintain a responsibility to respect its environment, even during a temporary stay. Raising awareness around local environmental regulations can support this responsibility. More generally, however, tourists must adopt the mindset that their short-term behavior may have long-term impacts in positive or negative ways – wasteful behavior, excessive consumption, or general disrespect in an environment without relational accountability enacts harm and should be strongly discouraged.

the tourism conversation. Representatives from TC Tourism who participated in the tourism workshop stated that one of their main goals is to market the region as a year-round destination, highlighting the winter aspects of the community. TC Tourism also has a wealth of information on their webpage detailing many of the transformation and environmental aspects as discussed in this chapter.

### REGIONAL COLLABORATION

While the City of Traverse City may be the focal point of the region’s tourism activity, the City is not the only regional tourism destination. Sleeping Bear Dunes, one of the nation’s premier National Parks,<sup>12</sup> is located roughly 30 minutes to the west of the City. The emergence of the wine industry in Leelanau County and Old Mission Peninsula has

Figure 42: Environmental Impacts of Tourism



brought a wealth of people to the region, many of whom stay in or make day trips into the City, and the water and beaches of the region will continue to be a large draw. Therefore, this section is not intended to be a tourism plan for the City because any substantive tourism plan for the City specifically would be incomplete and ineffective. Therefore, any additional tourism plan or sustainable tourism work should be done from the lens of regionalism, connecting all of the destinations and communities within the region to form one unified tourism direction.



*Jupiter Park.*

Source: City of Traverse City

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- 11 Barron, Kyle and Kung, Edward and Proserpio, Davide, The Effect of Home-Sharing on House Prices and Rents: Evidence from Airbnb (March 4, 2020). Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=3006832> or <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3006832>.
- 12 Sleeping Bear Dunes is technically classified as a National Lakeshore, not a National Park

# 12



*Boardman/Ottaway River restoration project.*

## PLAN REVIEW

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The City of Traverse City has demonstrated its commitment to bettering the quality of life for its residents, evaluating its progress towards various goals, and prioritizing actions and programs based on community insights through a robust series of planning efforts. This section summarizes a series of plans that have informed the current state of urban functions in Traverse City and that provide the basis for many efforts that are described throughout this updated Master Plan.

Given the plethora of planning efforts undertaken by the City, there is a need to reevaluate their relevance as time goes on and updated planning actions are implemented. Past plans that have been implemented, expanded on, or effectively replaced through a series of updates ultimately become decommissioned as they take different forms. In Traverse City specifically, the 2013 Corridors Master Plan has evolved from the initial visioning process surrounding the City's five main thoroughfares to the implementation of changes to Eighth Street as outlined in the "Envision 8th Plan." This Master Plan further pursues changes to two other thoroughfares (14th Street and Garfield Avenue) through community-based design workshops. As changes to all five corridors are implemented, the original Corridors Master Plan will transition from its role as a guiding document to a historical report without the same relevance.



# City of Traverse City Capital Improvement Plan (2024/2025–2029/2030)

A Capital Improvements Plan is a schedule of public service expenditures to be prioritized for the concurrent six-year period. Though CIPs plan for capital improvements over the course of the following six fiscal years, Traverse City's capital improvement plan is updated annually to reflect changing priorities and project activity from the previous year. The CIP is distinct from the City's budget; not all projects within the CIP are included in the budget, and the City has the ability to budget from projects and activities that are not

included in the most up-to-date CIP. The projects included in each CIP are identified based on a series of criteria that highlight necessary improvements to City utilities, facilities, infrastructure, and systems that are capital intensive and expected to benefit the residents and visitors of Traverse City. The most recent CIP (2024–2029) is approved alongside a newly established Design Team which meets weekly to facilitate collaboration among departments in order to review and strategically pursue capital improvements in an effort to avoid siloed work.

## Community Overview and Housing Market Summary–Traverse City, Michigan (2023)

In 2023, Housing North retained Bowen National Research to conduct a community and housing market study on Traverse City, Michigan. This study endeavored to examine the demographic characteristics of the City as well as demographic projections and anticipated needs of the population as they relate to the housing market. Through this analysis, governmental, economic, and residential stakeholders will gain an updated, comprehensive understanding of the community's housing market and establish housing priorities, including the modification of local housing policies and enhancement of Traverse City's housing market to meet projected housing needs.

Based on demographic and housing characteristics of the Traverse City community, this report projected a rental housing gap of 1,438 and a for-sale housing gap of 1,819 through 2027. The gap in rental housing units mostly impacts residents that earn less than 50% of the Average Median Household Income (AMHI) with 62% of all missing units needed for that income bracket. The deficit of for-sale housing units is distributed more evenly between four income brackets; though households earning 81% to 120% of the AMHI

have the greatest portion of units needed (34.9%), households earning below 50% of the AMHI and over 102% of the AMHI are comparable in terms of housing units needed (24.4% and 23.6%, respectively, of the total projected gap).

The report concludes with a series of recommendations based on previous analyses of demographic and housing trends.

- » Encourage residential development for both rental and for-sale housing units to address notable deficits in both areas of tenure.
- » Prioritize the preservation and maintenance of the City's older housing stock.
- » Support housing developments that prioritize affordability for numerous demographic groups, including seniors, the workforce, young families, and low-income residents.
- » Increase capacity to address challenges related to housing through partnerships with organizations and housing developers.
- » Identify sites for residential development and determine how they need to be prepared to facilitate housing construction.

# Housing Needs Assessment – Grand Traverse County (2023)

To understand and address the broad housing needs of the Northwestern Michigan region, Housing North worked in partnership with the Frey Foundation, Networks Northwest, and Hagerty to conduct a Housing Needs Assessment for all 10 counties of the region. Bowen National Research ultimately projected a housing gap of 8,813 rental units through the year 2027 and a gap of 22,455 for-sale units during the same period.

In Grand Traverse County, a total housing gap of 11,361 units was projected through the year 2027 (3,569 rental units and 7,792 for-sale units). Of the total deficit of rental housing units, 66.1% is specifically attributed to households earning less than 50% of the Average Household Median Income (AHMI). Households earning between 51% and 80% of the AHMI are also notably impacted by the rental unit deficit with 20.5% of missing units attributed to this income bracket. Conversely, the deficit of for-sale housing units is most relevant for households earning between 81% and 120% of the AMHI (33.0% of all missing units) as well as those earning more than 120% of the AMHI (26.2% of the projected gap in housing).

Beyond identifying the current and projected housing gap for renters and owners across the county, this Housing Needs Assessment also investigated the housing cost burden for both tenure types. Though renters only account for about one quarter of the county's households, nearly half of all renters (48.7%) are cost burdened by housing and spending more than 30% of their

income on housing costs each month; another 24.5% are severely cost burdened with housing expenditures that account for more than 50% of their income on a monthly basis. Homeowners constitute the greatest portion of the City's tenure patterns; 20.3% are predicted to be cost burdened by monthly housing payments, and just 7% are estimated to pay more than 50% of their income on housing each month.

The Grand Traverse County Housing Needs Assessment concluded with a SWOT analysis to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to its housing landscape. While housing demand for both rented and owned households and the general household wealth of the county present definitive strengths, limited rental options and a lack of affordable workforce and senior housing units are offered as weaknesses. In addition to the opportunity for the county to address aforementioned gaps in rental and for-sale housing units, a notable number of commuters to the area presents an opportunity to further attract permanent residents on 168 parcels of land that are predicted to support residential development. Given these figures and projected, Grand Traverse County should be aware of the threats to its housing landscape which include evidence of residential out migration, an aging housing stock with some instances of deterioration, the influence of limited housing on attracting businesses and members of the workforce, and the influence of seasonal housing on the total housing stock.

# Unified Plan of the Lower Boardman River – Traverse City Downtown Development Authority (2022)

The Lower Boardman Unified Plan views the management of the 1.6 miles of downtown Boardman River through its environmental value, and aims to reinforce this value through a mutually beneficial method of management based on the wellness of the river and the community. The plan aims to enhance ecological and aesthetic river conditions, as well as instituting best stormwater management projects, and ensuring the linkage of the river to the City in physical, visual, and psychological ways. The plan also highlights existing initiatives addressing the downtown Boardman River (specifically, the Boardman River Watershed Prosperity Plan; FishPass; Boardman Water Trail Development Plan; Boardman River Plan; Boardman River Fisheries Report; Your Bay, Your Say; and Boardman River Wall Stabilization Project), and how it fits into the community master plan. The C-4 zoning district encompasses the core area of downtown.

The plan takes an inventory of the current uses and conditions of the Boardman River: uses by pedestrians, water-based recreation, and stormwater absorption into the Boardman River. There are six “reaches” identified by the plan, each with their own recommendations.

In the Action Plan portion of the plan, habitat restoration through geoengineering is a top priority. This includes the removal of vertical walls wherever possible, and the incorporation of soil when vertical walls are necessary but require replacement. There is also a strong public desire to see increased green space along the river as opposed to parking. Multi-modal access is also a top priority, with accessible and integrated riverwalks and pathways recommended, as well as infill to connect gaps in the river path system. The plan also recommends best practice for pollution control, based on the Traverse City Ground-Water Protection and Storm-Water Ordinance and the TIF 97 Stormwater Management Plan: including green roofs, bioswales, vegetated swales, soil erosion and sedimentation control, and rain gardens. The adoption of the City’s Riparian Buffer Ordinance is encouraged. The plan also includes a prospective change in use: using the Boardman River increasingly for scientific and/or cultural education purposes. Total investment projections based on recommendations is approximately \$27.2 million in 2021 dollars.

## Reaches of the Plan

- » Reach One: the northern end of Boardman Lake and transition to the Lower Boardman River, deeper than other sections, with low vegetated banks.
- » Reach Two: vertical walls at or near the water’s edge, a steep and high bank based on land modifications to increase buildability, lawn areas and parking lots draining, and the Union Street Dam.
- » Reach Three: the western bend of the Boardman River, south of Front Street, with topographically diverse edges, and with increasing velocity and decreasing depth. Kids Creek meets the Boardman River here.
- » Reach Four: low vegetated banks, with approximately 20% vertical wall, and the shallowest portion of the Boardman River. This is an extremely densely developed area, and a prominent fishing area (including the fish weir).
- » Reach Five: passing the 100 block and 200 block of Front Street, 55% vertical walls, and the greatest amount of storm sewer outfalls. Half of the riverbank is publicly owned.
- » Reach Six: the river meets Grand Traverse Bay, with approximately 65% vertical wall, and water quality concerns due to the nearby Grandview Parkway. Erosion concerns exist underneath the docks on the south side of the river.



# Moving Downtown Forward (2022)

The updated and adopted version of the Downtown Development Authority (DDA)'s [Moving Downtown Forward plan](#) addresses the strengths and projected improvements of Traverse City's downtown area. Traverse City's downtown is identified as an "economic engine" of the area.

With the guiding principles (shown in the following box), the plan focuses on economic and environmental sustainability; specifically, aiming to grow in providing resources for business support, implementing "creative solutions and a strong political commitment" to providing attainable and workforce housing in downtown, and increased environmental sustainability. The plan identifies that a lack of housing serves as a barrier for employers' hiring needs. It states that Traverse City is a "lifestyle city," and therefore appealing for new business development.

The plan also highlights funding options for the DDA, recommending a 30-year extension of TIF 97 funding. Wastewater and stormwater management were identified as a top priority for physical

improvements, followed by the Boardman-Ottaway Riverfront improvements, and the Civic Square.

Additionally, service expansion was mentioned, if business owners express interest in the DDA's services, with West Front Street and East Eighth Street projected as two emerging districts that could benefit from DDA resources.

## Guiding Principles

- » Design a great place for all ages and for future generations.
- » Advance climate action, sustainability, renewable energy, energy efficiency, and resiliency.
- » Preserve small local independent businesses.
- » Champion the development of attainable and workforce housing.
- » Support job growth and varied career opportunities.

# DWSRF (Drinking Water State Revolving Fund) Project Plan (2021)

This plan was prepared in preparation for a submission to EGLE for a potential qualification for Drinking Water State Revolving Fund loan assistance.

The plan describes drinking water within the Traverse City region. The City provides drinking water to the City and Garfield, Elmwood, and Peninsula Townships. East Bay Township also maintains an emergency connection to the City of Traverse City's water supply.

Intake is from East Bay, relocated from West Bay in 1965 – the nearby Water Treatment Plant is located near the intake on Eastern Avenue, with a capacity of 20 million gallons per day. There are eight pressure districts within the City: Central, Morgan Farms/Incochee, Incochee Upper, Wayne Hills Upper, Huron Hills Lower, Timber Lane, Huron Hills Upper, and Veterans Drive. Central, or PD-1, is the main pressure district in the City.

There are several upcoming projects planned for the drinking water distribution system.

## Planned Projects

- » An LCR (Lead and Copper Rule) Service Line Replacement slated between 2022-2026.
- » 2022: Wayne Hill Booster Station improvements.
- » 2023: North Madison and North Jefferson Watermain.
- » 2024: MDOT's US-31 Project, as well as 16-inch line on East Front from Franklin to Park Street.
- » 2025: 24-inch from Lake/Cass to Lake/Union and Lake/Union to Lake/Wadsworth.
- » 2026: 24-inch from Webster/Rose to 8th/Railroad and Garfield/Washington to Webster/Rose.

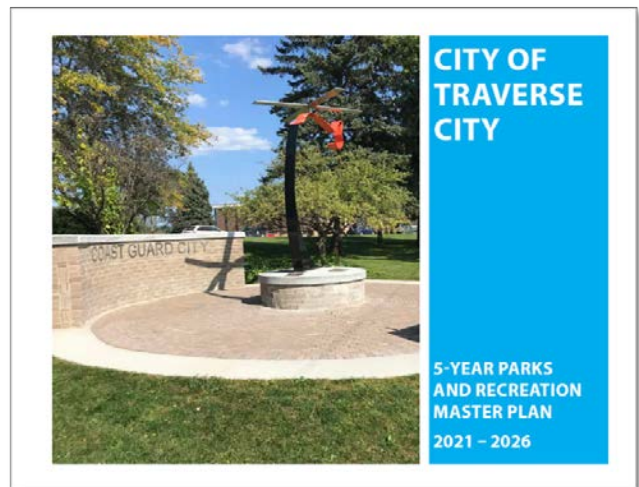
# City of Traverse City 5-Year Parks and Recreation Master Plan (2021-2026)

This master plan inventories existing parks and recreation resources in the City of Traverse City, and outlines goals for the future.

1. The first goal is to maintain and improve existing parks: specifically Indian Woods playground upgrades, Jupiter Gardens garden development, Boon Street equipment replacements, Hickory Hills trail network, volleyball court and West End Beach upgrades, Brown Bridge Quiet Area universal access, and enhanced trails and invasive species remediation at Grand Traverse Commons and Silverbrook Acres.
2. Secondly, increased awareness of city parks and recreation will allow for the increased recognition and use of more parks; a public survey found that 89% of individuals believed there were less parks within the City of Traverse City than there are.
3. The third goal, to develop parks and recreation, includes developing a capital improvement fund for City parks and recreation, and potentially a recreational millage for parks improvement.
4. The fourth goal, to enhance active non-motorized recreation and transportation, includes continuing advocacy for complete streets and multi-modal design features, and continuing to work with non-governmental organizations for trail planning and transportation planning (including Safe Routes to School and DDA planning).
5. The fifth goal, to enhance Boardman Lake and River recreational opportunities,

includes encouraging groups that encourage recreational use of the Boardman Lake, working to implement FishPass, and developing a riverwalk to provide connection between downtown and Boardman Lake.

6. The sixth goal is to support and improve the Grand Traverse County Senior Center through development of innovative programming.
7. The seventh goal is to improve signage, wayfinding, and branding for parks.
8. The eighth goal is to acquire more land for parks – examining which areas of the city are lacking parks, and the feasibility of land.
9. The ninth goal is to develop partnerships with schools to greater utilize playgrounds.
10. Finally, the tenth goal is to consider and review existing recreation programs administered by nonprofits, schools, and community organizations.



# Traverse City Street Design Manual (2018)

The Traverse City Street Design Manual has five goals for future redesigns of the public right-of-way between building faces:

1. Connecting neighborhoods,
2. Filling in the gaps,
3. Promoting transportation choices,
4. Strengthening cooperation, and
5. Collaborating with other transportation agencies.

It also outlines the process of project formation, public engagement, design review, final design, construction, and performance monitoring. Facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists are also highly encouraged on every street as part of the City of Traverse City's Complete Streets policy, including pedestrian crossings and bike lanes with varying protections.

A system of street typologies was created for Traverse City as a part of this plan.



## Street Typologies

- » Downtown Street: high intensity activity with an expanded pedestrian zone, including wider sidewalks, green space, urban plazas, and parking on both sides of the street.
- » Commercial Corridor: high travel volumes, city thoroughfares, usually with two or more lanes, streets, and used as transit routes.
- » Connector Street: transit corridor or key bicycle connections, streets constructed with curb and gutter, with moderate-density residential or transition zones.
- » Traditional Residential: Traverse City's traditional neighborhoods' (closely-spaced single-family housing) streets, narrow, low-volume streets connecting to the larger network, with sidewalks on both sides.
- » Contemporary Residential: narrow streets with low traffic volumes, often serving as "shared" streets with multiple modes of transportation.
- » Park Lane: serving public park areas, with access to public facilities or parking lots.
- » Private Street: in neighborhoods such as Morgan Farms and Grand Traverse Commons.
- » Industrial: lower-volume, commercial traffic, two lanes with wide shoulders.
- » Alleys: provide access to the transportation network from parking lots and garages, and to serve uses such as trash and recycling pickup.
- » Shared Street:
- » State Highways: (designed and maintained by MDOT)

# City of Traverse City Urban Forestry Update (2018)

This report discusses the work done by the Parks and Recreation Division for forestry; specifically, planting (on city property or in the right-of-way, in a one-lost to one-replaced ratio), inventory (using GPS locations), watering, routine pruning, and removal.

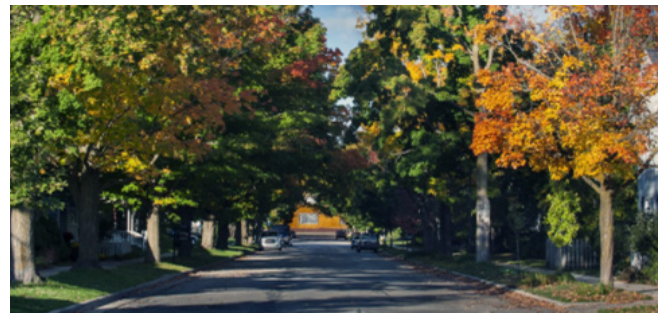
The City underwent an Urban Canopy Assessment from Davey Resource Group in 2017 to complete an inventory of City-owned street trees, and develop a management plan based on the present tree canopy.

The inventory of over 10,000 trees found that there was a large percentage of Sugar Maple, Norway Maple, and Red Oak trees (50% Maples). This is less diverse than best management practices, with 20% considered to be a maximum per species. In 1982, 70% of trees were maples, so the makeup is more diverse than previously. Tree distribution by maturity level is “close to [...] ideal.”

Increasing pruning levels was recommended, with inventorying remaining constant at 1,500 per year (and providing opportunity for simultaneous pruning).

Planting levels of nearly 400 trees per year are also nearly achieved, with 300+ trees per year as a result of partnerships with seasonal staff including Child & Family Services’ YouthWork. The plan also recommends consideration of reestablishing a part-time city forester position for scientific expertise and community outreach.

Land cover varies by zoning; institutional (e.g. Northwestern Michigan College) and governmental (e.g. Oakwood Cemetery) property have 65% and 46% canopy coverage, respectively, whereas commercially zoned areas have 17% canopy coverage.



## Tree Management Plan and Urban Tree Canopy Assessment (2018)

The tree canopy assessment done in 2018 by Davey Resource Group reflects a threat to biodiversity with a large portion of sugar maple and Norway maple trees in the City’s tree canopy.

A single genus ideally should represent no more than 20% of the tree inventory; however, maples represent approximately 50% of Traverse City’s tree cover. Ambrosia beetle species are the pests of greatest concern. However, the downtown district’s trees, as well as city-wide park trees, are generally rated as being in good condition.

With 33% of the City’s acreage covered by trees (higher excluding the airport, which cannot be planted), an additional 480 acres of land were identified as having potential to add tree canopy (bringing the total to 42% canopy cover). Although the distribution of trees is close to ideal, the plan recommends an increase in planting young trees to replace an aging and declining tree canopy.

Priority planting areas are primarily along the bay and in the Grand Traverse Commons area, with additional low-priority areas in Morgan Farms and in the Orchard Heights neighborhood.

Additionally, the benefits from Traverse City’s trees total over \$2 million annually, with pollutant removal and stormwater interception. Other economic benefits include an increase in residential and commercial property rates, an increase in available consumer prices, and a positive influence on individuals’ perceptions of commercial areas. Social benefits include decreased aggression and crime, as well as greater worker satisfaction.

Industrial, commercial, and medical land uses, which have the greatest stormwater impact, have the most room to improve their respective canopies, with 25%, 17%, and 27% tree canopy, respectively; However, their large amounts of impervious surfaces mean that it may be impossible to locate more trees on these types of land.

# City of Traverse City Commercial, Industrial, and Multi-Family (and Residential) Development and Construction Guide (2017)

These guides outline the process for permitting and approval of new development projects within the City of Traverse City. The process varies, depending on the type and location of project (e.g. a land use permit for a demolition project versus a right-of-way permit for working in the roadway). However, a fire marshal review is required for every project.

A historic preservation permit is required if the project is within one of the City's historic districts: the Boardman Neighborhood, Central Neighborhood, or downtown. The Residential guide is a separate document from the Commercial, Industrial, and Multi-Family Development guide, but follows the same process.

## Envision 8th Plan (2017)

Envision 8th Plan is the corridor master plan envisioning the future of the Eighth Street corridor, which included substantial public engagement through charrettes and a zoning workshop to identify the most favored plan for Eighth Street.

The corridor plan identifies proposed buildings in addition to existing buildings, with a maximum height limit based on the area of Eighth Street and higher with workforce housing incentives, and increased density between Woodmere Avenue and Barlow Street. A cycle track and greater pedestrian and bicyclist amenities (such as benches, bike racks, and trash receptacles) are also recommended.



## Traverse City Sanitary Sewer System Asset Management Plan (2017)

The Sanitary Sewer System Asset Management Plan is designed to assess wastewater infrastructure for long-term operations and improvements within the City of Traverse City. The plan assessed inventory and condition of manholes and pipelines through NASSCO's grading system; rated in severity from 1-5 (with 0 being the existence of no flaws, and 5 being the most severe flaws) on structural, operation & maintenance, and overall rating.

The wear on manhole infrastructure was deemed "age-appropriate," with an average structural rating of 1.75 and average operation & maintenance rating of 1.96. Sewer infrastructure

had an average structural rating of 1.82 and average operation & maintenance rating of 1.9. Prominent issues here were pipe failures and cracks, as well as deposits and roots. In evaluating the City's force mains, 60% indicated high probabilities of failure (meaning failure is imminent or likely). The nine pump stations are well-maintained. The plan describes future operations and maintenance strategies – specifically, regular inspection of sewer, manhole, and pump stations; repair and rehabilitation of aging infrastructure; upgrades to the wastewater treatment facilities. Approximately \$9 million annually would be required for this (an increase from the current \$6 million).



# City of Traverse City Water System Asset Management Program (2017)

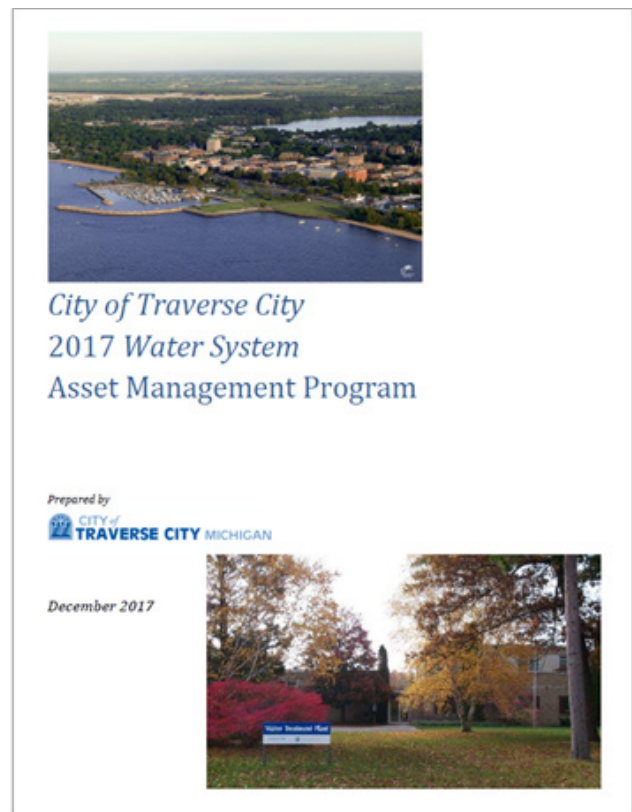
The Water System Asset Management Program plan delineates the specific roles of each division of public works: the Water Treatment Plant, Water/Wastewater Maintenance.

Distribution system assets include 988 hydrants, 118 miles of water main, 1,778 valves, and 7,461 meters.

Capital Improvement Plans identify \$3,740,000 in projected water expenditures for the fiscal year of 2017-2018 – the plan outlines ten short-term projects (within the next five years) and five long-term (five-twenty years) projects.

The plan also provides updates on recommendations from the water system reliability study conducted in 2014:

- » Water Accountability Plan expansion to track unbilled water: replacing the original master water meters at the Water Treatment Plant to provide a more accurate water output figure (lowering unaccounted water from 33% to 20%). Advanced Metering Infrastructure will also help improve accuracy (and pinpoint suspect plumbing connections).
  - » Water Use/Evaluate Alternatives to Increase Capacity: The City has proposed an east-west transmission main in the CIP.
  - » Replace Older, Deteriorating Mains.
  - » Meter Testing/Change-Out Program: with the Advanced Metering Infrastructure, all city meters will be changed out within the next two years.
  - » Valve Exercising Program: the City purchased a valve turning machine and a valve exercising program for all critical valves to be turned each year.
  - » Acquire Additional Assistance for Maintenance Activities: staffing has not been increased, but services have been contracted for cross-connection maintenance.
- » Dead End Mains: looping dead ends to improve water circulation is included on future CIP projects (Centre Place, Fairlane Drive, Medical Campus Drive, Randolph Street, and Red Drive).
  - » Emergency Response Plan: updated in 2015.
  - » Reliability Study.
  - » Other Maintenance Programs: a new 2 million gallon steel reservoir is being constructed adjacent to the existing 4 million gallon reservoir on LaFranier Road to provide redundancy.
  - » Obtain Some Level of Control of Township Systems: the City recreated the Director of Municipal Utilities position and conducting plan reviews for all major water infrastructure projects.



# Stormwater Asset Management Plan – OHM (2017)

This Stormwater Asset Management Plan, conducted in 2017, discusses the current gap in funding and planning for stormwater treatment in Traverse City; the City of Traverse City has no dedicated funding sources for stormwater infrastructure. The plan notes that communities face legal risk when attempting to establish a dedicated fund for stormwater, given judicial precedent. However, given the deterioration of buried infrastructure such as storm sewers and manhole deposits, as well as exposed infrastructure on beaches, stormwater management is necessary to avoid increased pollution and flooding. An annual revenue source of \$2.02 million is suggested by the plan (this could be an approximate \$6-7 fee per household, per month). The plan was funded by a Stormwater, Asset Management, and Wastewater grant from MDEQ, matched by the City of Traverse City.

The plan assessed inventory and condition of manholes and pipelines through NASSCO's grading system – rated in severity from 1-5 (with 0 being the existence of no flaws, and 5 being the most severe flaws) on structural, operation & maintenance, and overall rating. The majority of manholes had an average structural rating of 1.8 (mainly brickwork, pipe connection due to shifting, and expected inner wall cracking) and Operation and Maintenance (O&M) rating of 1.9. For the manholes that had O&M issues, these were driven by infiltration of soil, groundwater, and deposits. The study found that older manholes were in worse condition, generally. The majority of the storm sewer was in good condition, as well, with an average structural rating of 1.7 and average O&M rating of 1.9. Approximately 14 miles of pipe had structural defects rated 4 or 5 (the most severe and needing rehabilitation). Most catch basins were in good condition, with seven out of 154 in need of repair.

The plan also forecasts deterioration, relevant for Traverse City, given that most of the infrastructure was established between 1940 and 1970. Under the existing funding level, approximately 50% of the current infrastructure would fail over the next 40 years with the recommended funding level, this would decrease to approximately 2%. Hydrologic and hydraulic modeling also showed that City sewers were too small in some locations to provide adequate service, and provided recommendations for replacement. Level of Service: the “storm magnitude” tolerated without increasing surface flooding was also examined, prioritizing Grand Traverse Bay water quality.



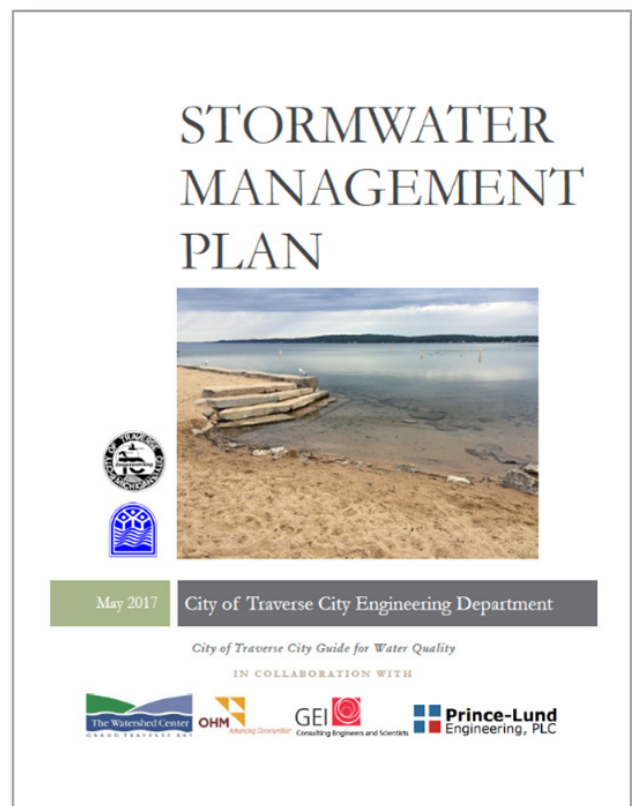
# Stormwater Management Plan – City of Traverse City Engineering Department (2017)

The Stormwater Management Plan works to mitigate the threat of stormwater polluting the Grand Traverse Bay through identifying baseline conditions, evaluating current assets, analyzing capacity, examining water quality, and planning advances in the Capital Improvement Plan. A timeline of water quality milestones, including the wastewater treatment plant’s implementation in 1931, completed sanitary and stormwater systems in 1973, the Ground-Water Protection and Storm-Water Runoff Control addition to the code of ordinances in 1991, beach monitoring in 2002, and beach improvement projects since. This plan included surveying, in which, 23% of residents noted that they experience flooding; 9% experience flooding several times per year, and 8% say they experience flooding “every time it rains.”

The City conducted an inventory of “key drainage courses” impacting stormwater, including the long-impaired Kids Creek area, which continues to experience habitat impairments near Seventh Street. Lower Kids Creek also experiences issues, with high sediment levels. A survey of the Boardman Lake shoreline was also conducted, with 21 areas of concern identified (no major areas of concern) as either erosion spots, lack of riparian buffer, stormwater outfalls, or boat launch runoff. A map, by kind of pollutant, is available in the document. Capacity was also analyzed for each of the 95 drainage boundaries, using computer modeling to identify undersized pipes. Recommended infrastructure replacements include culverts at the Elmwood-Silver Lake crossing, 14th Street two-track crossing, 11th Street, the pedestrian pathway north of 11th Street, and Upper Front Street.

Recommendations include strengthening City policy to encourage the infiltration of stormwater

before reaching catchbasins, stormwater treatment systems, or surface waters. Best management practices with low-impact development include green roofs, rain gardens, permeable pavement, and leaching basins (these “use[...] the soil and plants as natural filters.”) When combined with a stormwater sewer program, these become more effective. Monitoring of stormwater drains’ pollutants is also recommended, to track changes over time, pollutants including E. coli are prevalent in stormwater, but less present in the Boardman River and Grand Traverse Bay. Traverse City’s current policies of fall leaf pickup, spring cleanup, Clean Up and Green Up recycling event, street sweeping, and catch basin cleanup are effective.



# Grand Traverse Commons Development Regulations (2017)

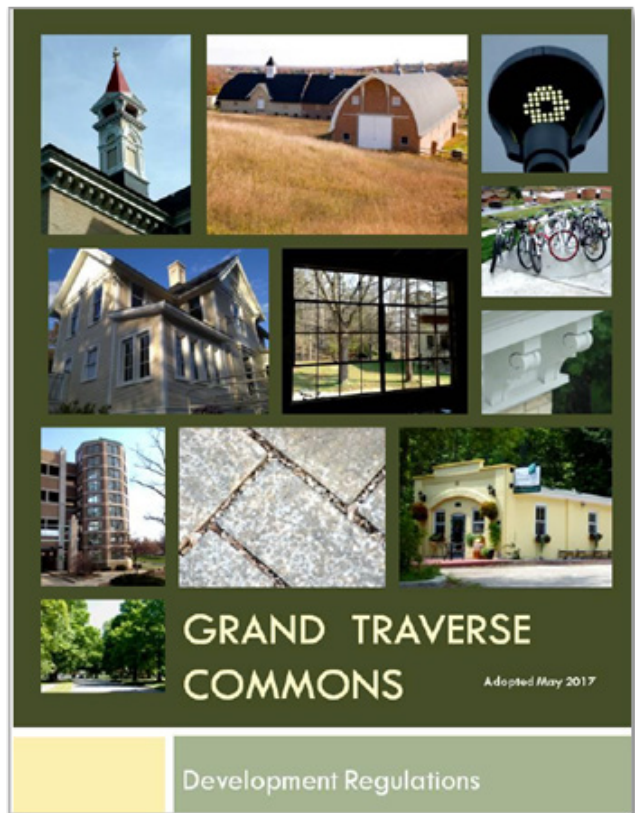
The Grand Traverse Commons Development Regulations plan describes standards for building architecture and allowable uses by zoning district, as well as aesthetic regulations for features such as fences, lamps, and parking areas. Given that the Grand Traverse Commons Redevelopment District is jointly administered by the City of Traverse City and Garfield Township, permits for building reconstruction and structure alterations are administered by different municipalities (given the location of the building).

The development regulations also describe allowable uses in the Village District, Medical District, Institutional District, Residential District, Recreation and Cultivation District, and Conservation and Recreation District.

- » Within the Village District, uses allowed by right include residential spaces, art galleries, retail services, and restaurants.
- » Within the Medical District, uses allowed by right are similar, excepting broadened veterinary use and decreased retail use.
- » Within the Institutional District, business, education, office use (including legal and real estate), personal services, and government uses are allowed by right.
- » Within the Residential District, single-family dwellings, bed and breakfast establishments, design, and personal and cultural services are allowed by right, so long as they do not become a nuisance.
- » The Recreation and Cultivation District allows for park and open space, the botanical gardens, and small-scale farming or energy.

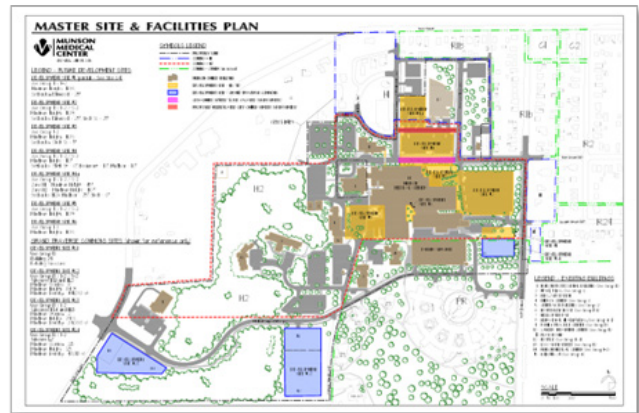
- » The Conservation and Recreation District allows for “passive recreation,” in addition to restrooms, pavilions, and warming huts.

The plan also describes the site plan review process for all zoning types; a pre-application conference review with Planning Directors, application, official review, and approval (which, if including a Special Land Use Permit, will be referred to the Planning Commission).



# Munson Medical Center Master Site & Facilities Plan (2016)

The Munson Medical Center Master Site and Facilities Plan outlines the boundaries of Munson’s medical campus on Sixth Street, and the existing and proposed buildings. Development sites C3, C2, and C3 are along Medical Campus Drive on the current campus, nearby the Grand Traverse Pavilions. Development sites 1, C4, 2, 3, 4, 4a, 5, and 6 are adjacent or connecting to the main Munson Medical Center building, on existing hospital parking lots. The pedestrian and vehicular circulation plan shows existing parking and streets on the Munson campus. The Wetlands, Easements, Storm-Water Features and Impervious Surface Calcs show existing ecologically sensitive areas on the Munson campus, and impervious surfaces (Munson has an impervious surface area of 44% of its campus, under its maximum of 60%).



# Northwestern Michigan College Master Plan (2016)

Northwestern Michigan College’s Facilities Plan shows the vehicular circulation, parking, current and proposed buildings, existing and proposed pedestrian circulation, and proposed vehicular circulation and parking. The proposed buildings at the time include the Innovation Center, additional housing and drop-off lane at North Hall, and additional housing on North College Drive.



# Infrastructure Strategy Policy (2014)

The [Infrastructure Strategy Policy](#) states that all infrastructure projects must be managed “as a system,” with underground and above-ground components managed together; they should use the Urban Street Design Guide and “Context Sensitive Solutions in Designing Major Urban Thoroughfares for Walkable Communities” as technical resources for infrastructure projects.

Projects are identified with an asset management plan for prioritization. Sidewalks and bikeways (prioritizing safety of existing network, then infill), local streets, major streets, special assessments (an identification by citizens that their area needs attention more quickly than scheduled), and residential or commercial alleys are areas of identified focus.

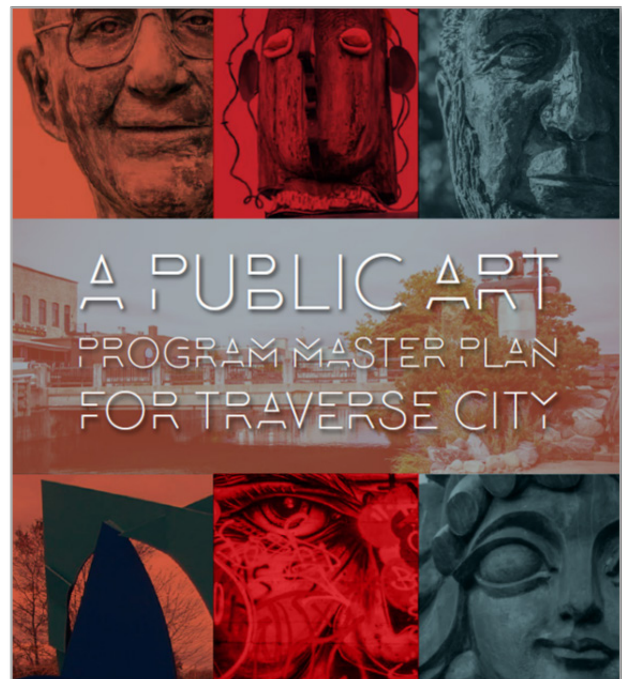
## Water System Reliability Study (2014)

The [Water System Reliability Study](#) evaluates the source water system and water treatment plant, the water distribution system, and the storage requirements; it found that the water supply met regulations for contaminants within the previous five years (with one exception in treatment technique violation). The 2014 projected maximum daily demand of 14.8 million gallons per day is within the water treatment plant's capacity. Through the year 2034, the plant is expected to reach 85% of its capacity (expansion plans are required at 80% of capacity). Water supply is adequate for non-emergency situations, and system pressures and fire flows are also adequate. The study inventories upgrades to the system between 2008 and 2014.

There are five storage tanks and a ground storage reservoir at the treatment plant, with clear wells. The City owns two of the storage tanks, including 5.3 million gallons of ground storage; this is adequate through 2034 and beyond. Pressure within the system is adequate (except the Cass Road Booster Station during high demand, and the top floors of taller buildings downtown, which supplement with additional booster pumps). Replacement of older mains to on Webster, Eighth Street, Franklin Street, Lake Avenue, Seventh Street, and Spruce Street to create system redundancy is important. More than two-thirds of the system is more than 40 years old, and sections need to be replaced systematically.

## A Public Art Program Master Plan for Traverse City (2014)

The Public Art Program Master Plan aims to continue to provide public cultural resources and contribute to dialogue with the provision of public art that is inclusive, diverse, and "aesthetic[ally] excellen[t]." The Public Art Program, established in 2014, is administered by the Traverse City Arts Commission, which appoints five members to the Art Selection Panel. The master plan reviews the process of project selection and administration. Selection criteria include that the project "enhance[s] and enliven[s] the selected public space," fits with community character, takes into account potential liability issues, and is durable given potential elemental exposure, theft, or vandalism. After a project is defined, a competition for artists will occur. An artist will then form an agreement with the city regarding scope of services, timeline, and ownership by the City. The plan's Appendix B also delineates priority areas for public art.



# City of Traverse City Corridors Master Plan (East Front, West Front, Eighth, Fourteenth, Garfield) (2013)

This master plan addresses placemaking in five main thoroughfares in the City of Traverse City.

It first highlights Front Street as one of the 10 “Greatest Streets” in America, as defined by the American Planning Association, specifically for its orientation to users, balance of competing needs of the street, capitalization on natural features, variety of interesting activities, exemplary user design, encouragement of contact and social activities, safety, sustainability, and memorability.

Given the success of Front Street, the areas of focus of the plan are meant for revitalization. These areas must navigate right-of-way challenges, traffic congestion versus street widening and the potential imposition of the modern roundabout. Community surveys, including interviews with key persons, led to a prioritization of factors for each street, as well as a visual preference survey to identify images perceived as “most appropriate.”

Recommendations for building character, façade improvements, landscaping, and low-impact development are included.

## » East Front Street

- » Most important issues: pedestrian orientation, bicycle orientation, traffic, mix of uses, overall appearance.
- » Desired uses: civic/public, retail, restaurants.
- » Undesired uses: industrial/manufacturing, residential, offices.

## » West Front Street

- » Most important issues: parking, traffic, pedestrian orientation, bicycle orientation, mix of uses.
- » Desired uses: restaurants, civic/public, retail.
- » Undesired uses: industrial/manufacturing, entertainment, services.

## » Garfield Avenue

- » Most important issues: overall appearance, pedestrian orientation, bicycle orientation, mix of uses, traffic.
- » Desired uses: industrial/manufacturing, services, offices.
- » Undesired uses: residential, mixed commercial-residential, industrial/manufacturing.

## » Eighth Street

- » Most important issues: bicycle orientation, overall appearance, need for new development, undesirable uses, pedestrian orientation.
- » Desired uses: mixed commercial/residential, civic/public, offices.
- » Undesired uses: restaurants, industrial/manufacturing, entertainment.

## » Fourteenth Street

- » Most important issues: traffic, bicycle orientation, pedestrian orientation, overall appearance, undesirable uses.
- » Desired uses: retail, offices, services.
- » Undesired uses: mixed commercial-residential, industrial/manufacturing, residential.



# Boardman River Plan (2013)

The Boardman River Plan aims to connect the Boardman River with downtown Traverse City, from which it has been disconnected in the past despite running behind Front Street. The plan outlines a connected pedestrian network to interact with the Boardman River in downtown.

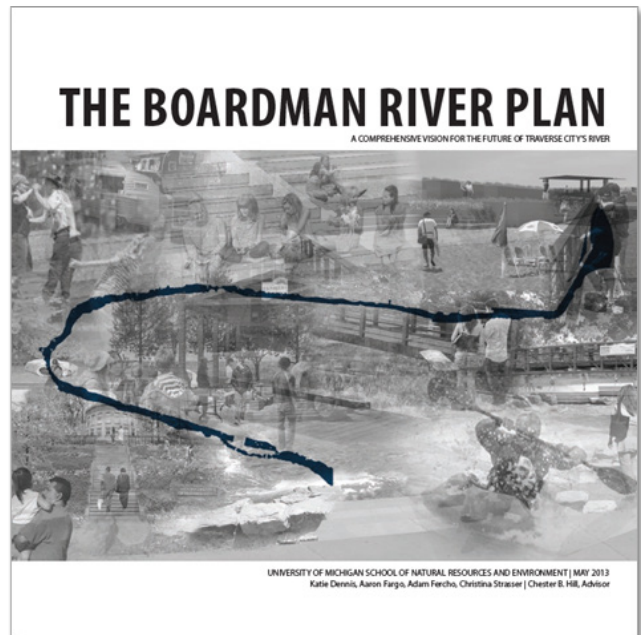
The first area of focus is on social and cultural connectivity and legibility: the ability for pedestrians to comfortably engage with the river and move along the river. The plan recommends 10 foot wide pedestrian paths, universally accessible, and seating elements conducive to the surrounding neighborhoods, as well as outdoor recreation and gathering spaces such as a Traverse City Whitewater Park and flexible plaza space in the Warehouse District.

There are six main impacts outlined in the plan. The plan also recommends ecological improvements to combat “Urban Stream Syndrome”; a phenomenon affecting urban rivers including the Boardman River, caused by stormwater systems’ design to move stormwater away from streets (which leads to untreated water flowing into rivers). The Boardman River’s proximity to Front Street and surrounding parking contributes to this effect. These improvements include the use of permeable pavers to promote infiltration rather than runoff, a stormwater park, and rain gardens. Rain gardens and revegetation will also help to stabilize eroding banks, and boulder placement on the Lower Boardman can create an “aquatic travel corridor” and areas of shelter for fish.

The plan also recommends the use of the space behind the 200 block of Front Street as a pedestrian corridor in lieu of the existing 69 parking spaces (potentially revisited with the reconstruction of the “distressed” retaining wall). This can also include downtown terraces.

## Boardman River Plan Impacts

- » Vegetation as a driver for ecological health
- » Public gathering spaces
- » Iconic urban destination
- » Urban recreation
- » Enhanced riparian habitat
- » Linkage (pedestrian circulation)



Additionally, the plan recommends development standards for downtown riverfront vacant lots near Front Street (such as the lot at 124 West Front Street; the other vacant lot mentioned has since been developed); including increased vegetation for stabilization (50% landscaping within 100 feet of the Boardman River), capture of polluted stormwater runoff, accommodating a public riverwalk, and structural fit with the existing downtown streetscape.



# Traverse City Environmental Stewardship Assessment (2012)

This plan, from the Northwest Michigan Council of Governments, discusses the current state of sustainability in the City of Traverse City. It features an environmental stewardship dashboard, with the only areas of concern in wellhead protection, pollutant releases, and the lack of a certified clean marina.

The community water system has a history of being highly safe, despite a source water assessment by MDEQ in 2002 establishing that the city had a moderately high vulnerability. Wastewater treatment can handle a peak flow of 17 million gallons per day, with a current operating rate of 8.5 million gallons per day. The solid waste program in the City includes recycling.

Traverse City Light and Power also incorporates energy saving programs, with the City's energy efficiency goals based off of the 2011 Climate Action Plan and the TC Saves program for residents marked as impactful. TCL&P incorporates wind energy, being the first Michigan municipality to install a utility-scale wind turbine in 1996. The Solar Up North (SUN) Alliance program also allows residential and business customers to invest in solar energy in exchange for a bill credit.

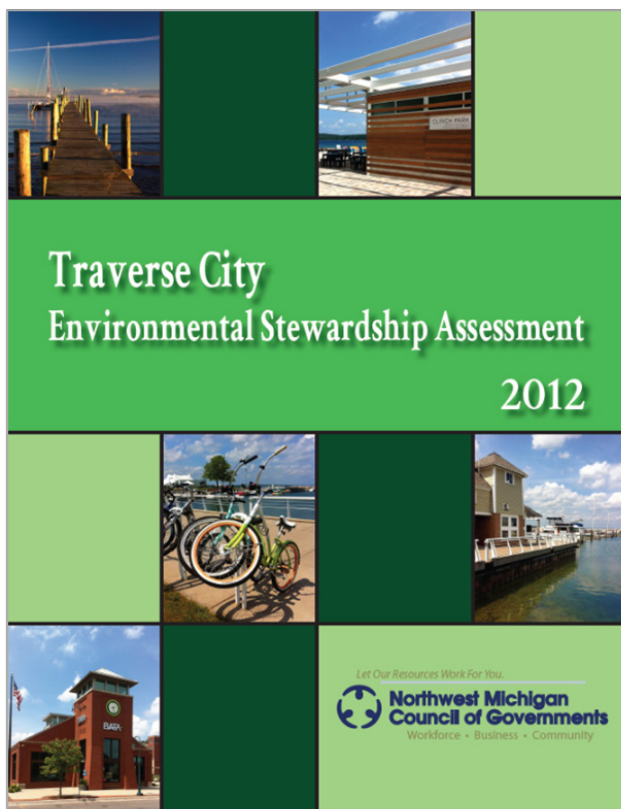
A stormwater public utility requires a sustainable funding source; Traverse City has also been undertaking initiatives such as stormwater treatment at East Bay Park and runoff filtering at Bryant Park to mitigate problem areas for runoff.

With regard to transportation, the area has a focus on complete streets and street cleaning; the City has 76 miles of sidewalk, with 5.1 miles of the TART Trails within city limits at the time. BATA provides public transportation within the City. Infrastructure strategy has been developed, with a need to manage as a system, including underground components.

The assessment summarizes current master plans and subsections, as well as the zoning ordinance.

An inventory of recreational resources and their management is included. The assessment inventories current stewardship efforts, which include the Boardman River Restoration (more than 250 acres of wetlands restored), Kids Creek Restoration, Traverse Area Association of Realtors' Green Solutions to develop green building criteria on the MLS, the Grand Traverse Stewardship Initiative (place-based education, school-community partnerships, and sustained professional development), and the Grand Traverse Baykeeper.

Lastly, the Traverse City Area Chamber of Commerce distributed a sustainable business practices survey, finding that the majority of businesses had replaced lighting bulbs, purchased energy-efficient equipment and reduced heating for energy efficiency, but had not had an energy audit performed or created an energy operations and maintenance plan.



# Infrastructure Report (2012)

The 2012 Infrastructure Report identifies City resources in need of maintenance; specifically streets, sidewalks, alleys, trails, traffic signals and signs, water main, sanitary sewer, water service connections, meters, fire hydrants, and manholes.

The report then identifies priorities; for streets, there is a “worst first” strategy for replacement (based on PASER ratings, with repairs in a 20-year cycle), with the intention of working on streets and underground components in concert.

Streets can be reconstructed (totally replaced), rehabilitated, preventatively maintained (for example, with a seal), or maintained with patches. Underground utilities must be funded sufficiently to keep pace with street reconstruction; however, despite the high economic and environmental impacts of stormwater, at the time of the report, there was no dedicated revenue stream to address it.

# City of Traverse City Climate Action Plan (2011)

This document, a partnership with Traverse City nonprofit SEEDS, discusses the City of Traverse City’s sustainability plan through “resource conservation, responsible consumption, and energy efficiency.” The majority of City emissions came from wastewater facilities, followed by buildings and facilities. Energy expenditures and waste management are identified as areas easy to reduce waste; these also contribute air pollution risks. The plan shows that out of the City’s buildings and facilities, in 2009, the highest-emitting facilities were the auto park system, Traverse City Light and Power, the DPS Truck Barn, and the Governmental Center. Between 2005 and 2009, the wastewater treatment plant saw a 21% reduction in electricity and a 74% reduction in natural gas usage – this dramatic change accounted for more than two-thirds of the City’s emissions reduction.

The Climate Action Plan outlines economic and environmental reasons why taking action is necessary; creating an increased return on tax expenditures, decreasing reliance on energy sources with unpredictable prices, and creating independence given varied energy security over time. The plan is comprised of sequence and reinvestment; prioritizing efficiency measures, and using those savings for future purchases towards energy efficiency. The strategies of action in the plan are highlighted in the box to the right.

These strategies were then prioritized by economic and environmental beneficency: those that were no-cost, or would pay for themselves most quickly, were prioritized. No- or low-cost measures include

energy efficient computer settings, a lights-out policy, reducing hours of exterior lighting, efficient driving training, water conservation, smaller fleet vehicles, 20% increase in recycling, and bicycle usage. These measures would save \$23,960 per year. Actions requiring investment include programmable thermostats, reducing electrical loads, continued purchase of energy-efficient equipment, occupancy sensors, hybrid vehicles, upgrading exterior lighting, high-efficiency water heaters, retrocommissioning of the HVAC system, upgrading all traffic signals and street lights, solar hot water, and electric vehicles. These changes would save \$112,945 per year, of which, \$63,725 would be from streetlight upgrades.

## Strategies of Action

1. Reducing unnecessary electrical loads.
2. Purchasing energy efficient equipment.
3. Resource conservation policies or initiatives.
4. Optimizing interior lighting.
5. Optimizing HVAC performance.
6. Optimizing exterior lighting.
7. Water system upgrades and conservation measures.
8. Utilizing renewable energy.
9. Promoting smart transportation options.

# City of Traverse Complete Streets Policy (Resolution) (2011)

This resolution by the city clerk supports the design framework of complete streets; “safe and convenient access for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and drivers of all ages and abilities,” which is consistent with the City of Traverse City’s Infrastructure Strategy Policy. The Michigan Legislature passed legislation requiring MDOT and local governments to consider all forms of transportation in their decision-making. The resolution states that streets with multiple uses are “more conducive to the public life” and move traffic more efficiently, and promotes public and environmental health. Lastly, this resolution promotes the development of a non-motorized transportation plan to support the inclusion of non-motorized transportation in ongoing transportation planning policies.



## Traverse City Bayfront (2010)

The [Bayfront Preliminary Engineering design project](#) summarizes prospective changes to the bayfront in response to public opinion and past planning initiatives. Goals of the initiative include crosswalks and gateways to improve pedestrian connection between the bayfront and downtown districts and residential neighborhoods, public spaces on the bayfront, endorsement from stakeholders, and transparency and community involvement.

On the east end, a fishing pier from Murchie Bridge is proposed, along with stair and accessible ramps to the TART Trail. Sunset Park recommendations include increased accessibility, a curb wall to separate the beach from the lawn, and enhanced pedestrian crossings of Front Street. Access easements with the Holiday Inn (now the Delamar) and public beach space are also desired. A new sidewalk is proposed for increased connectivity to the Senior Center from NMC’s Great Lakes Campus, and increased crossings from Front Street.

Within the core area, numerous improvements to Clinch Park are proposed: including a roundabout to calm traffic upon entrance and increase pedestrian accessibility, non-motorized throughways, a new bathhouse and bathroom

facility, Splash Pad, and fish cleaning station. The Con Foster Commons and boat launch area would also be an addition. The Open Space would remain as-is, except for the proposed addition of amphitheater areas embedded into the hill side.

At the Hall Street beach area, a playground and widening of the TART Trail are proposed. A desire to relocate parking south of Grandview Parkway allows for more bayfront recreation space, and the parking lot is reconfigured for drop-off and handicap-only parking. A new bathhouse for ADA compliance, as well as a reconstruction of the TART Trail along the north side of the parking lot, are proposed for West End Beach. At Slabtown Beach, a new pedestrian crossing would allow for easier access across Grandview Parkway.

Throughout all sites, habitat restoration and protection, as well as permeable pavements where necessary and low-impact landscaping. Universal Accessibility Design, a supplement to ADA requirements, will increase accessibility. Lastly, a “promenade” along the bay, separate from the TART Trail (marked as the designated bike route), is noted along the bay, parallel with the bike route at many places as part of the widened TART Trail.

# Grand Traverse Commons Master Plan (2010)

The Grand Traverse Commons Master Plan outlines the continued revitalization of the Grand Traverse Commons area, a historic district within the City since 1978 and on the National Register of Historic Places.

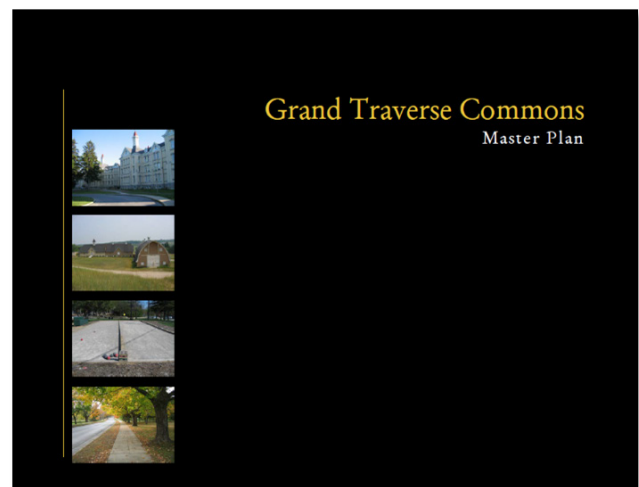
At the time of the Master Plan, there were 61 current residential units, with another 38 affordable workforce residential units planned and an additional 28 market-rate housing units. There were 61 businesses in the Commons at the time of the master plan (including healthcare practitioners, nonprofit and educational offices, restaurants, and retail stores).

The National Park Service's standards for revitalizing places on the National Register of Historic Places apply to the Grand Traverse Commons through rehabilitation (repairing a building while maintaining its historic character and original materials).

The Master Plan outlines a "vibrant close-knit village atmosphere" for the campus, used for events throughout the community, as well as outdoor recreation to explore the natural area. The plan also emphasizes the pedestrian orientation of the Grand Traverse Commons, with well-designed vehicular access (one main vehicle path through the campus) and parking areas designed to minimize environmental impact. The plan also discusses the Eleventh Street and Division Street intersection,

which had large traffic backups and limited pedestrian crossings. At the time of the Master Plan, the Commons' entrance from Silver Lake Road was being planned.

The plan also outlines a future land use and zoning plan with varied districts: conservation/recreation/open space, mixed-use medical (including the Grand Traverse Pavilions), mixed-use village (including the Mercado, with all new buildings compatible with Building 50), mixed-use cultivation (such as the Botanical Gardens and Historic Barns area), and mixed-use institutional (such as the TBAISD building area). Architectural standards for these areas are also outlined.



# Designing Walkable Urban Thoroughfares: A Context Sensitive Approach (2010)

This document, provided by the Institute of Transportation Engineers and the Congress for the New Urbanism, outlines best practices for walkability given “context sensitive solutions” (CSS); those that meet the needs of users while being compatible in design with their setting (and aesthetic, historic, and environmental resources) and community objectives.

They identify walkable communities as “accommodating pedestrians, bicyclists, transit, freight, and motor vehicles” proportionally given the context of the area, advancing transportation capacity, and providing a “compact and mixed-use environment” to access resources. This includes a mix of densities, a lack of parking separating buildings from sidewalks, and “pedestrian-scale” design.

When planning a transportation corridor, considerations include alignment, spacing, functional classifications, access control, number of lanes, and whether the street is a major freight or transit route.

The plan also highlights tension between residents’ desire for greater walkability and the desire of transportation planning agencies to maximize regional traffic demand.

It differentiates transportation networks into two main design types: a traditional grid (which allows more alternative routes, and encourage walking and biking), or conventional networks (which minimize traffic through neighborhoods and concentrate traffic on a few routes). Site design elements that impact context include building orientation and setbacks, parking type, and block length.

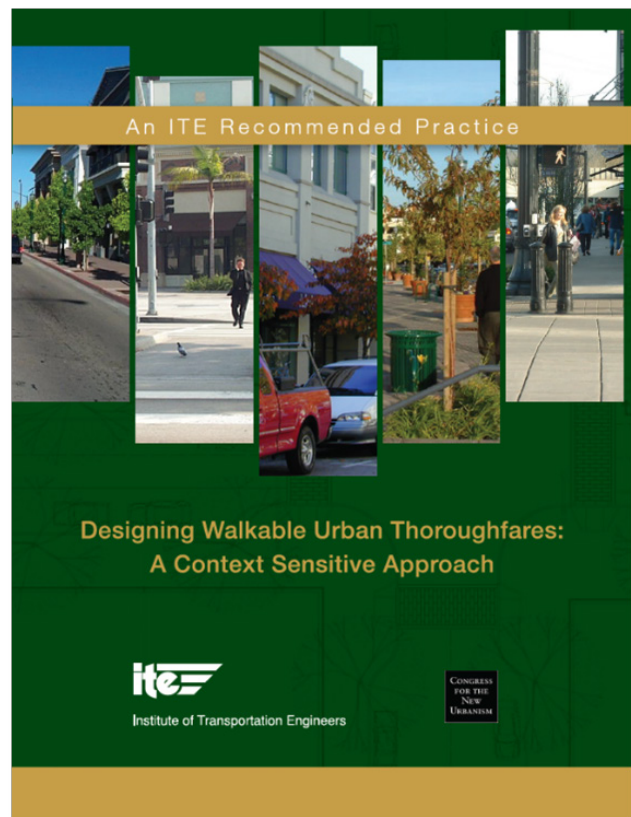
Building design and use itself also impacts pedestrian friendliness; height scales of 1:3 to 1:2 ratio in a dense urban environment impact walkability, as well as uses conducive to pedestrians (like retail).

The City of Traverse City’s Infrastructure Strategy Policy recommends using this guide as a technical basis in all street design projects.

## Goals of Context-Sensitive Solutions

The principles of [context-sensitive solutions] promote a collaborative, multidisciplinary process that involves all stakeholders in planning and designing transportation facilities that:

- » Meet the needs of users and stakeholders,
- » Are compatible with their setting and preserve scenic, aesthetic, historic and environmental resources,
- » Respect design objectives for safety, efficiency, multimodal mobility, capacity and maintenance, and
- » Integrate community objectives and values relating to compatibility, livability, sense of place, urban design, cost and environmental impact.



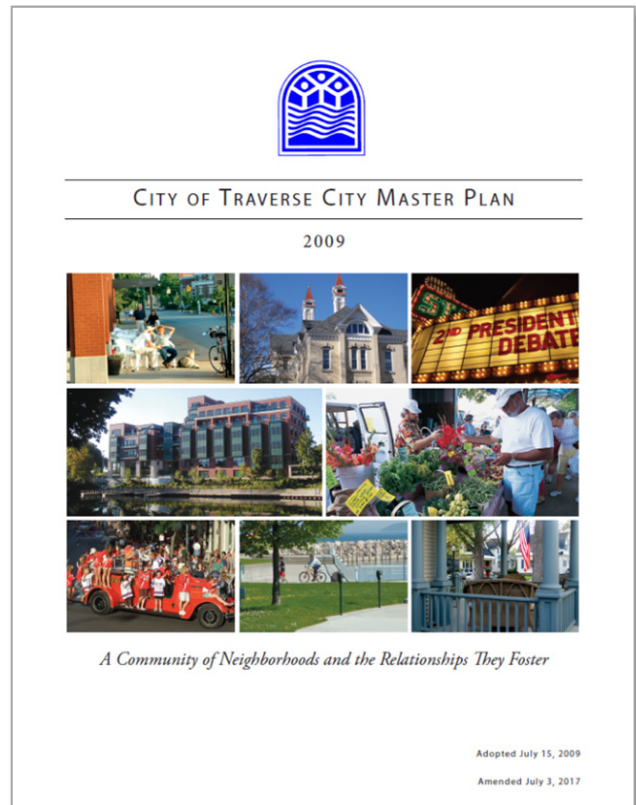
# City of Traverse City Master Plan (2009)

The City of Traverse City's previous master plan summarizes its work with several tenets: remembering the past (preserving historic districts and identifying priorities for the future), balancing the past and present (working to move to an intensity-based distinction of allowable uses in neighborhoods, rather than distinctions between commercial or residential uses), envisioning our future in TC neighborhoods (managing intensity based on hours of operation, motorized and non-motorized traffic, building mass, and emissions). These broad categories fit with seven goals of the plan.

1. The intensity of any land use should be the focus of land use decisions.
2. Social, economic, and residential diversity and stability are key to the future.
3. Neighborhoods need to be preserved and protected as they evolve.
4. Natural and historic resources are limited and need to be protected.
5. Services should be conveniently located.
6. Transportation choices are important to our vitality and environmental health.
7. Maintaining a healthy and vibrant city is important to the region.

Neighborhood types are described by intensity within the master plan:

- » The least-intensely developed neighborhood, the TC-1 Conservation Neighborhood, has daytime operating hours, a pedestrian orientation (including infrastructure such as sidewalks, trailheads, and boardwalks), small and informal buildings that are not the primary focus of the land, preservation of natural landscapes, and low emissions.
- » The TC-2 Conventional Neighborhood is the less developed of the two primarily residential neighborhoods, operating hours are typically daytime, the land is accessible by automobile with "informal" pedestrian or non-motorized vehicles, with small-scale residential buildings, and there are increased emissions during the day.
- » The TC-3 Traditional Neighborhood, a "moderate intensity" residential neighborhood,



focuses "on historic patterns," with closely-spaced single-family dwellings where hours are primarily daytime, and streets are on Traverse City's historic grid. Emissions are "typical residential."

- » The TC-4 Corridor Neighborhood is a less-intense commercial neighborhood, with a "wide range" of hours. It is designed primarily for automobiles (leading to moderate to high emissions), with deliberate pedestrian connections like sidewalks, and contains a wide range and scale of building types.
- » Lastly, the TC-5 Downtown Neighborhood is the highest-intensity use in the master plan, with daytime and nighttime activities, and a pedestrian-focused environment. Buildings here have a greater mass and create a sense of enclosure; high emission levels are "carefully managed with design and architectural solutions." The TC-5 Downtown Neighborhood is seen as a cultural center, with a trail system and public transportation for connection.
- » The TC-C Neighborhood denotes any campus outside of the purview of this master plan:

Munson Medical Center, Northwestern Michigan College, the waterfront, Cherry Capital Airport, and city- or county-owned properties, such as Oakwood Cemetery, the Governmental Center, and the Grand Traverse County Civic Center.

There are also nine Plan Elements addressing sub-topics for the City of Traverse City:

1. Capital Improvement: describes the prioritization of projects in the City's Capital Improvement Plan schedule, and standards such as energy efficiency. The element also describes spending, with grants and regional partnerships identified for funding

2. Economic: describes the City's strategy for business investment, coordinating with local and regional institutions, and allowing processes to prioritize economic goals of elements of the Master Plan. This section also describes encouraging development that "protects and promotes the character of distinctive neighborhoods.

3. Historic Resource: describes the need for identification of buildings with historic value, and developing preservation strategies for those buildings. Buildings must be older than 50 years, with other factors determinative including design/materials, historic style, significant location or origin, and an effect on public or private life (including being the site of historically significant acts or activities).

4. Natural Resource: sets specific standards for environmental preservation, such as the use of setbacks and vegetated buffers, as well as

encouraging hillside development to prevent erosion, and flexible building standards to conserve woodlands.

5. Parks and Recreation: describes specific areas dedicated to use as an open space and recreational resource, including the bayfront and Boardman Lake and River, and encourages "safe and attractive pedestrian access." Upgrades to existing parks and facilities are also noted, as well as working with schools to educate students about recreation facilities.

6. Public Utilities: describes water and electricity conservation, service improvements to areas with increased density, coordination of utility repairs with other master plan elements, and schedules to provide improved service.

7. Transportation: describes the intersection of transportation with the built environment, including compact development and business accessibility. The plan also discusses the coordination of regional and local transportation options, as well as a requirement for all Campus Neighborhood Master Plans and the DDA to develop and implement transportation management plans.

8. Urban Design: describes design standards for new development that will "emphasize, retain, or enhance the City's identity" (and accessibility and outdoor comfort), as well as protecting and enhancing viewsheds.

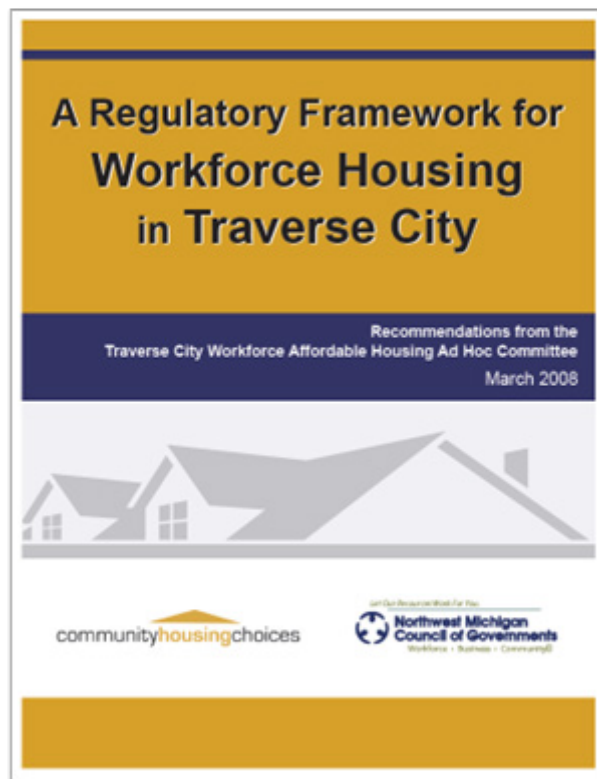
9. Zoning: describes the consideration of intensity when evaluating zoning map amendments, and that adjoining uses match in scale and intensity.

# A Regulatory Framework for Workforce Housing in Traverse City (2008)

The workforce housing framework addresses concerns with an imbalance in wages and workforce housing, given the benefits of affordability of working people living near their workplaces. Regulatory barriers to development can limit supply, and the City of Traverse City joined HUD's National Call to Action to examine regulations and policies for affordable housing. The study outlines a substantial shortage of affordable ownership housing, and a mismatch between the average home price (at the time, \$163,000) and an affordable home for a family earning 80% AMI (\$125,000). This leads to cost overburdening and an increase in foreclosures. The study also reflected that there was a proportional mismatch of income for rental units; with an excess of mid-income units and a shortage of luxury and low-income units. The study projects an additional 2,200 housing units needed through the year 2035.

However, the study also outlines barriers to development: specifically, limited land supplies and development opportunities, meaning that 2,200 additional units could only be constructed when there is a significant amount of residential redevelopment in commercial and multi-family residential districts. Taxes also serve as a barrier, with higher amounts within the city. Restrictions on residential development, specifically, single-family to duplex conversions, temporary accessory dwellings, and clustered single family developments also serve as a barrier to the additional housing needed. Uncertainty in review and approval processes, sometimes with subjective criteria, discourage developers from planning in the City of Traverse City. Planned unit developments are also only allowed on pieces of land at least three acres; unlikely to be possible given the low availability of land within the City of Traverse City. Low-density zoning, specifically in R-1A and residential conservation districts is seen as a barrier. There is also limited public awareness of options that could help more individuals purchase homes, and varying public viewpoints on (sometimes strong opposition to) affordable housing due to current perceptions.

The plan then outlines goals for workforce housing within the City of Traverse City: encouragement of new housing that is "affordable, well-designed, and compatible with the character of surrounding neighborhoods." The goals outline criteria for affordable housing, and partnership opportunities, as well as a requirement that affordable housing be included in any project seeking City support (whether financial or with physical improvements). Residential projects will also be placed in specific areas: those with higher-density zoning, redevelopment opportunities, infrastructure availability, access to amenities, and potential for economic incentives. Specific recommendations include regulatory flexibility, a housing trust fund, neighborhood enterprise zones, an inclusionary zoning dimensional initiative, increased housing program awareness, ADUs as a special use, streamlined review for affordable housing options, and a zoning option for cottage housing developments.





## Key Recommendations: Traverse City's Waterfront Plan, "Your Bay, Your Say" (2007)

The bayfront plan presents a variety of options: the "big move" with a land bridge over the Parkway and expanded beachfront, the "string of pearls" with roundabouts, and the "green scheme" with shifting the Grandview Parkway and moving the TART Trail (removing Bay Street was unpopular). There are several recommendations of the plan: connecting the downtown and neighborhoods to the waterfront with bicycle connections, creating a "town square" on the water and promoting public uses, promoting mixed-use infill along the edges of the park, provide a variety of activities and public spaces along the waterfront, and respecting the natural beauty and ecological integrity of the bay and Boardman River with open views and sustainable design.



## Traverse City Ground-Water Protection and Storm-Water Control Ordinance (2004)

This [ordinance](#) defines standards for groundwater protection, and stormwater runoff control. Groundwater protection focuses on the drainage of byproducts to contained tanks, particularly with hazardous substances, with out-of-service tanks disposed of in accordance with the State of Michigan's rules. Stormwater runoff control states that facilities to protect water quality is required on all sites; including the kinds of low-impact development discussed in the Stormwater Management Plan (swales, infiltration basins, and retention ponds). Infiltration basins are also meant

to have a vegetative cover to filter out sediment before reaching the facility. Retention basins are earmarked for importance given potential increases in runoff volumes with undersized sewers. Any basin with a depth greater than three feet must also have safety features. Stormwater runoff should primarily be conveyed through land features, however, if sewers are necessary, a mitigation of harmful water quality impact is required. Within site construction, a minimization of earth movement is required, with erosion controls before any grading or filling.

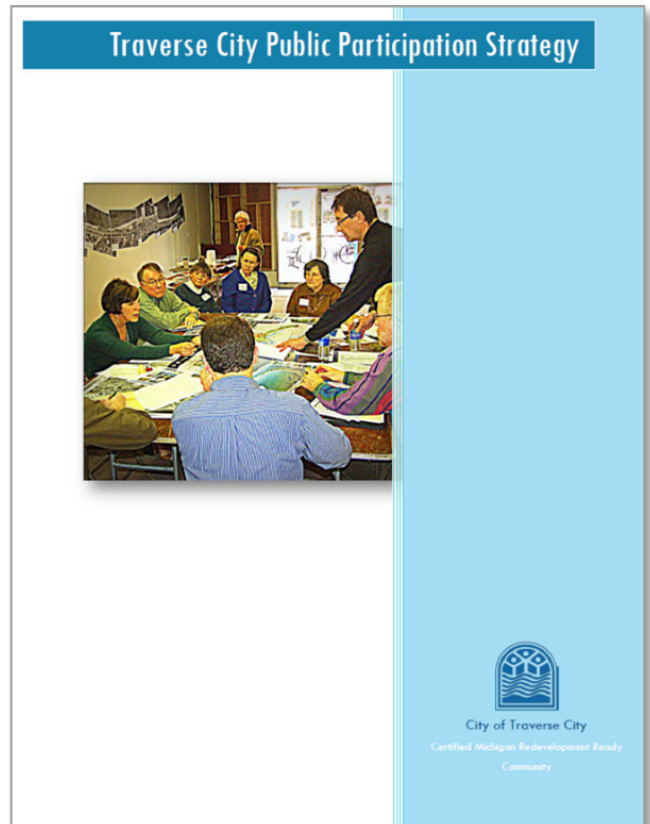
# Traverse City Public Participation Strategy

In the Traverse City Public Participation Strategy plan, a process is outlined for ensuring the public has an appropriate opportunity for feedback on local decisions and planning processes given state regulations (including the Michigan Open Meetings Act and Michigan Planning Enabling Act) and a desire to keep key stakeholders informed. The plan states the processes for public input on a draft master plan, distribution of a notice of intent to plan, zoning ordinance amendments, and special land uses including Planned Unit Developments.

The plan states that stakeholders will be classified into four main categories: those affected (audiences most frequently communicated with, including property owners directly affected), impacted (audiences surrounding the project area), interested (those interested but not necessarily affected), and aware (audiences to target with information, such as media organizations). It also provides a list of communication tools (depending on an audience goal) tools for information (e.g. press releases), consultation and listening (e.g. surveys), involvement (e.g. public workshops), collaboration (e.g. charrettes), and empowerment (e.g. ballot measures). The use of these tools will depend on the level of public engagement required for a project; the more impactful and/or risky the project, the greater involvement required.

The plan also gives suggested public communication processes for city planning projects, large private development projects, and public infrastructure projects. It additionally states ways

to frame and efficiently distribute the results of public communication at each state of the project, as well as specific methods in which the City of Traverse City can improve its communication. These include ongoing town hall meetings, a Citizen Academy, communication training for staff, a communications director position, and changing the style of notices.



# East Bay Charter Township Master Plan (2023)

The East Bay Charter Township Master Plan summarizes priorities and challenges of the township. The plan also summarizes feedback from focus groups of families with children, senior citizens, and businesses: specifically, that pedestrian infrastructure, community gathering amenities, and increased housing for all income levels is in the township. All groups stated that new development should be evaluated transparently and in concert with surrounding traffic amenities and natural resources (e.g. woodlands, open spaces, and inland lakes).

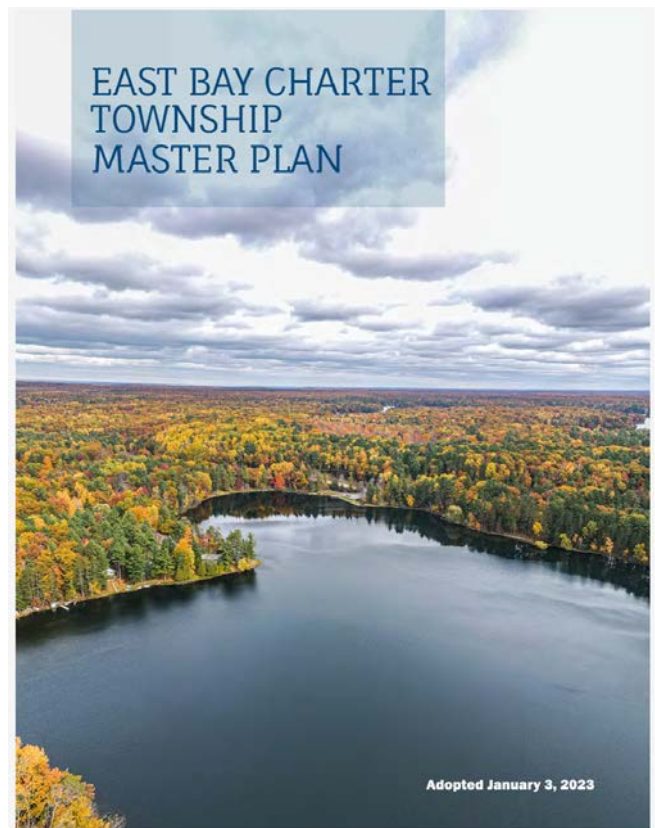
Focus groups also asked individuals to identify their vision statement for the township; results reflected a desire to support growth and development while preserving rural character. Traffic patterns were also of large concern to respondents; specifically, prospective roundabouts at Hammond.

The US-31 corridor, which sees 36,000 cars per day, was identified as a location prime for increased placemaking, with a recommendation of a "Beach District." The township is projected to continue to grow economically, given the identification of Traverse City as a "growth and investment area" in Networks Northwest's 2019 study; East Bay Township is also enrolled in the Redevelopment Ready Communities program.

The plan also outlines environmental concerns: specifically, flooding potential from East Bay, which in both "lucky" (minimal risk) and "perfect storm" (maximum risk) situations encompasses a large portion of the US-31 business district corridor.

The plan also outlines wellhead protection areas surrounding public water supply wells (within the Cherry Ridge and English Woods Water Systems); since groundwater is the primary drinking water source for township residents, quality is important. The plan recommends a continuation of low-impact development strategies for stormwater management (for example, constructed wetlands and pervious surfaces).

East Bay Township also maintains a growth boundary, established by the township's 1999



Comprehensive Plan: a 7,900-acre area bordering the City of Traverse City, within which, growth is prioritized. Outside of this boundary, there is a prioritization of natural resources and preservation.

As identified in the housing and neighborhoods inventory, East Bay Township's homes are mostly single-family, detached, owner-occupied, and a less diverse mix than surrounding townships; this leads to a suburban character in the north and a rural character in the south of the township. These homes are valued, generally, higher than Garfield Township (East Bay's median = \$195,000, Garfield Township's median = \$190,300) and lower than Acme Township (median = \$258,800) and Traverse City (\$263,800). Networks Northwest's 2019 study projects an increase in demand for rental housing, outpacing the demand for owner-occupied units. The township has a strong preference for detached units in line with current housing stock; balanced with a smaller footprint and lower cost.

# Elmwood Township Master Plan (2018)

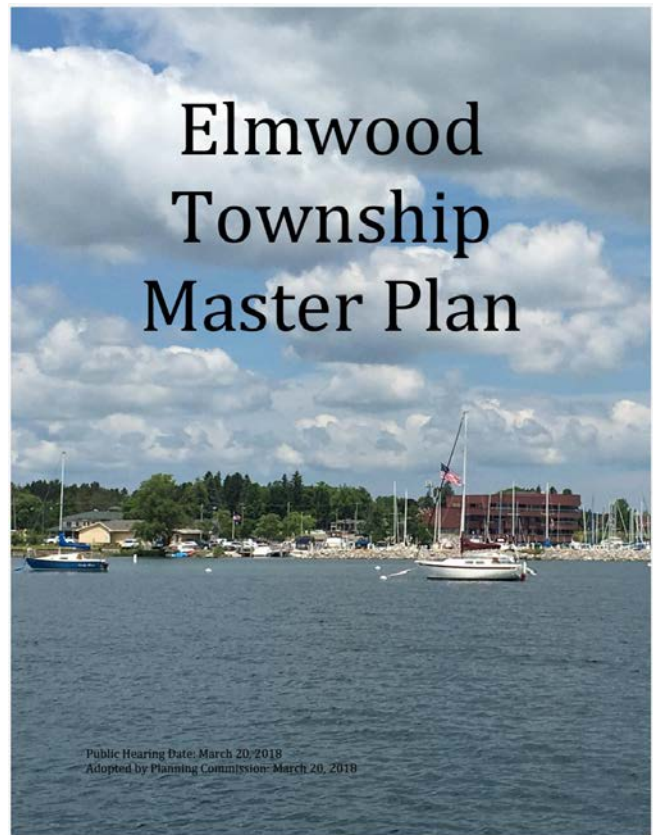
The Elmwood Township Master Plan, last updated in 2018, outlines the growth plan of Elmwood Township (directly to the west of the City; within Leelanau County) in its “transition from an agriculturally based community to a suburban community.”

There are four distinct sub-areas within Elmwood Township: Greilickville, the M-22 corridor, the Timberlee Resort area, and the remainder of rural land. Greilickville is most densely populated, and includes the Cherry Bend commercial area (with small stores available for grocery shopping, as well as medical and other offices). The M-22 corridor is primarily residential, with the exception of the Pathfinder School and small motel and cottage rentals, and M-22 (the primary north-south road and a popular scenic route) running along the bay. The Timberlee Resort area includes condominiums, an event center, and single-family homes, and the resort (now a ski hill). Lastly, the rural remainder of the township has a primarily agricultural use (with the exception of forested areas and some minimal subdivision development).

The master plan lists community resources in the township: specifically, the Discovery Center and Pier, the former Norris School building (now Leelanau Studios) and the Great Lakes Children’s Museum (part of Greilickville Harbor Park).

The plan also addresses environmental concerns within the township: specifically, given Elmwood Township’s hilly topography, erosion and drainage hazards are of large concern. Wetlands are also not clearly delineated in the township, which means property must be surveyed before development. Water quality near the boundary with Traverse City is also of concern, as well as a “severe problem” with air pollution from automobiles.

One of the plan’s specific goals is to guide new development to conserve natural features; this goal includes reducing urban sprawl and increasing infill and redevelopment of existing land use. The plan



also names a goal of increased use of open space and farmland agreements, including stewardship programs and conservation easements. The use of buffer zones between incompatible uses (e.g. ensuring residential development does not negatively impact farming) is also discussed.

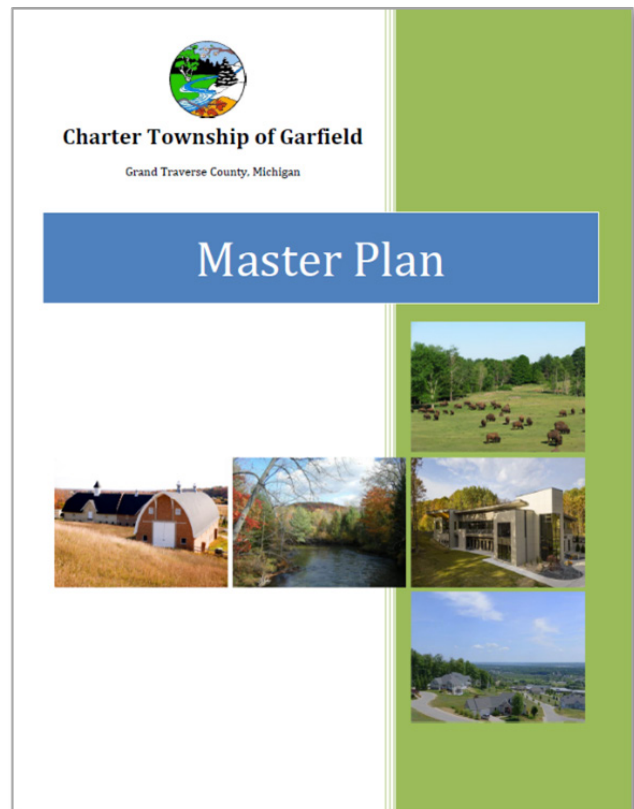
The township’s future land use plan is built to accommodate continued “spillover” from Traverse City and to limit land available for new development. The majority of land dedicated to High Density Residential use is developed already. Density is differentiated by lot size, with High Density lots smaller in size (a maximum of twelve units by acre) than Medium Density Residential and Rural Low Density lots. The Greilickville Service Area is specifically designated for commercial use – for example, convenience grocery stores and personal services.

# Garfield Township Master Plan (2024)

The Garfield Township Master Plan discusses a continued plan for the residential, commercial, and industrial growth that Garfield Township is undergoing. Garfield Township has a higher proportion of commercial property than either Traverse City or East Bay Township, which faces issues as it ages (for example, the properties along South Airport, including the Cherryland Center). There has also been renewed interest in industrial use, including high-tech manufacturing, in recent years: specifically along the Cass Road corridor. Garfield Township also has several large roads that face increased congestion: South Airport Road, Keystone Road, and West Silver Lake Road. These roads were identified by the Traverse Transportation Coordinating Initiative as overburdened and in need of an access management program.

The township identified the protection of Silver Lake, Boardman Lake, and Boardman River. Garfield Township has many popular township-owned and managed parks: the Grand Traverse Commons (a partnership with the City of Traverse City), Silver Lake Recreation Area, and the Boardman Valley Nature Preserve. The plan also recommends the adoption of a septic system inspection ordinance to ensure the integrity of systems for those not on municipal sewer.

Although the township has a lower median home value than the surrounding area, a higher proportion of households with lower income means there is an affordability gap in housing. Housing availability is a top priority in considering rezonings; changes to increase density in low-density areas are tentative due to the desire for more single-family homes, but a rezoning of farmland to residential uses can be appropriate in certain areas. Housing goals encourage the use of subsidized units for development.

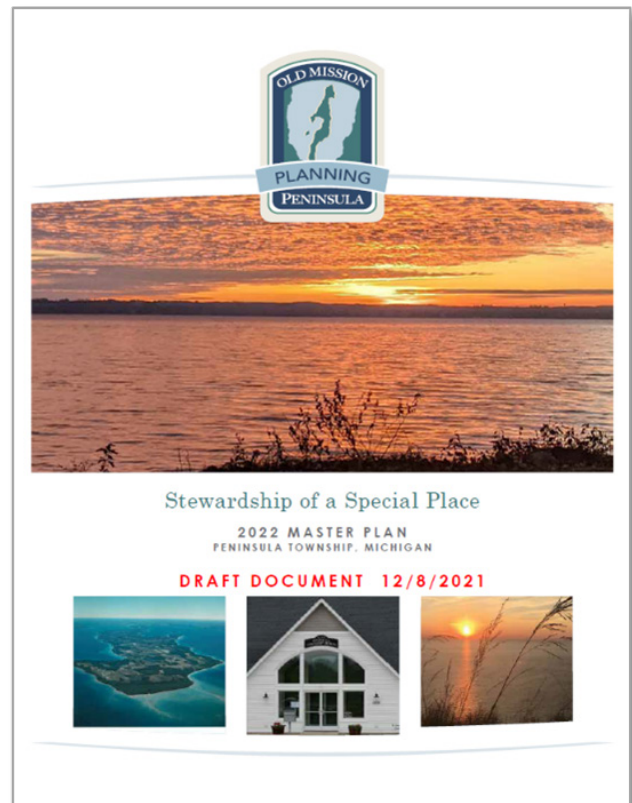


The plan also incorporates a sub-plan for the Barlow-Garfield neighborhood, aiming to help guide infill development while incorporating existing amenities such as the Cherry Capital Airport and major roadways, as well as areas in need of redevelopment such as Cherryland Center; parts of the Barlow-Garfield Neighborhood are located in an Opportunity Zone (to spur private investment in economically distressed communities). The plan recommends integrated mixed-use developments, public spaces, connectivity (the addition of new sidewalks is a top priority), appropriateness of scale of new development, new housing stock, and improvements to public infrastructure.

# Penninsula Township Master Plan (2022)

The draft Peninsula Township Master Plan, as available in December 2021, prioritizes land use and farmland preservation. The master plan states that property values have continued to increase in the area, with the total assessed value recently passing \$1 billion. Home sale prices have, additionally, doubled in the area, leading to increased development pressure with the area's popularity. The master plan highlights scenic and natural resources: including M-37, which has been designated as a Scenic Byway (the Old Mission Peninsula Scenic Heritage Route), and the viewsheds designated in its Prime Scenic Views map. The Old Mission Peninsula was also designated as an American Viticultural Area in 1987, and has a strong wine industry due to its unique microclimate. The Peninsula Township Master Plan also discusses community resources, including the newly independent Old Mission Peninsula School and new branch of the Peninsula Community Library. The township is primarily agricultural, with an increased concentration of single-family homes near the base of the peninsula (the only area in which public sewer and water is provided).

Additionally, Peninsula Township's Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) program has protected 53% of the agriculturally important land designated in the Agricultural Preservation Area, with over 110 farmland agreements. This complements the community attitudes and insights shown in the surveying process. The majority of residents say they like living in Peninsula Township



because of the rurality and scenery of the area, and disapprove of perceived overdevelopment. Residents are, generally, content with the status quo in the township. However, there is a large degree of interests in updates to a nonmotorized transportation plan (including momentum towards complete streets and safe routes to school).



*Bridge Rehabilitation.*  
Source: City of Traverse City







Traverse City Master Plan | Mobility Action Plan

# Community Engagement Report

Fall 2022



CITY OF  
TRAVERSE CITY

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Beckett&Raeder

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## INTRODUCTION

The City of Traverse City has recently completed the first round of community exercises to inform the Master Plan and Mobility Action Plan. This report summarizes the emerging themes from the feedback received via the following activities and audiences:

- 400+ people interacted with planning staff and volunteers at 24 pop-up events hosted in Traverse City between August and October 2022.
- 1,910 community members took an online survey from September 12, 2022, to October 9, 2022.
- 89 stakeholders participated in small group listening sessions on September 29, September 30, and October 7, 2022.
- 134 community members attended an open house on October 26, 2022.
- 676 community members took an online survey from November 10, 2022, to November 22, 2022.

## HOW TO USE THIS REPORT

This report contains high level themes based on the community participation listed above, and it is important to note that these themes are based on the experiences, ideas, and opinions of the many people who have engaged in the process thus far, but do not represent the experience, ideas, and opinions of everyone in the city of Traverse City.

The City is grateful to all individuals who participated in the activities above and will continue to invite as many community members as possible to engage in the Master Plan and Mobility Action Plan projects, via local media, the Bay Brief, email campaigns, and social media.

This report attempts to find patterns and themes between the individual ideas expressed by each community member who participated. Complete and original datasets generated from each of the activities summarized herein are provided as appendices attached to this report. Summaries of each engagement activity are provide in the report as follows:

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

|  |    |
|--|----|
| <a href="#">Section 1: Pop-Up Events Summary</a> .....                 | 3  |
| <a href="#">Section 2: Stakeholder Listening Session Summary</a> ..... | 4  |
| <a href="#">Section 3: October Online Survey Results</a> .....         | 9  |
| <a href="#">Section 4: Open House Results</a> .....                    | 21 |
| <a href="#">Section 5: November Online Survey Results</a> .....        | 47 |
| <a href="#">Section 6: Next Steps</a> .....                            | 53 |

The engagement activities listed above are summarized in this report. Click any link above if you would like to jump to a particular section.

## ABOUT THE MASTER PLAN AND MOBILITY ACTION PLAN

The Master Plan provides a comprehensive vision for the future land use in Traverse City, identifying how land use patterns, trends, and decisions can support our community's goals related to topics like housing, transportation, infrastructure, natural resources, and wellbeing.

Just as the Master Plan establishes the land use vision for Traverse City's future, the Mobility Action Plan provides a vision for how people will get around. This represents a "deeper dive" into the topic of transportation with the intent of improving the city's mobility network through street and safety improvements.



## SECTION 1: POP-UP EVENTS SUMMARY

Between August and October 2022, members of the City Planning Commission, Master Plan Leadership Team, and City Staff hosted 24 pop-up events around the city to raise awareness of the Master Plan and Mobility Action Plan processes and invite community members to sign up for project updates.

Pop-ups were held at various locations and times, including Central Grade School, Sara Hardy Farmers Market, Hickory Hills, TC New Tech, Little Fleet, Northwestern Michigan College, the library, summer street sale, Porch Fest, and TC Patriot Game at Thirlby Field, in order to reach people where they live, work, learn, and play in Traverse City. The intent of this exercise was to provide an inclusive, accessible, and easy way for the community to learn more about the planning process.

Pop-up team members estimate they interacted with over 400 community members and over 1,000 individuals signed up for project updates.

3



## SECTION 2: STAKEHOLDER LISTENING SESSION SUMMARY

65 stakeholders from the following organizations participated in small group listening sessions at Hickory Hills lodge on September 29 and 30, 2022.

- Northern Michigan E3
- Grand Traverse Regional Community Foundation
- Goodwill Industries of Northern Michigan
- Rotary Charities
- TART Trails
- MDOT
- Downtown Development Authority
- City of Traverse City
- Bay Area Transportation Authority
- Cherry Capital Airport
- SEEDS
- City of Traverse City Green Team
- City Opera House
- Northwestern Michigan College
- Commission on Aging
- Grand Traverse County
- The Watershed Center Grand Traverse Bay
- FLOW
- Traverse Connect
- Commongrounds Cooperative
- Rec Authority (Traverse City and Garfield Township)

Representatives of these organizations attended based on an invitation sent to a broad list of 90 community organizations operating in/around Traverse City.

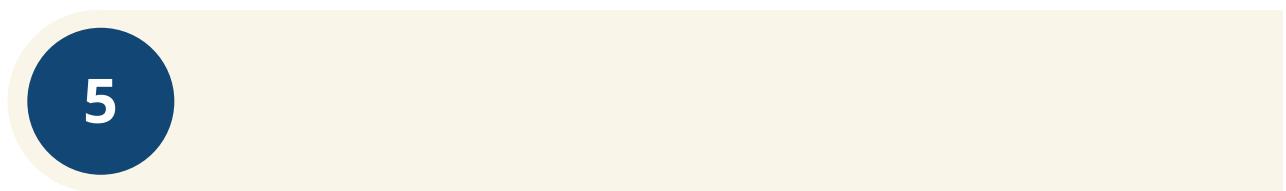
Stakeholders were asked to consider the following guiding principles (also posed to the community via the October online survey).

- A. We are investing in multimodal transportation infrastructure so that individuals of all ages abilities and income have a network of complete safe and year-round access to our community's amenities and basic needs.
- B. We are increasing opportunities for more year-round housing stock.
- C. We are addressing climate change within all our city priorities, goal, policies, and actions.
- D. Traverse City is inclusive to all people of all ages, incomes, backgrounds, ethnicities, race, and abilities.
- E. Our neighborhoods provide a high quality of life and meet the daily needs of our residents.
- F. Natural resources in Traverse City are respected and protected.
- G. Historic and cultural resources in Traverse City are respected and protected.
- H. We are investing in facilities and amenities to create vibrant city spaces that connect all people to nature and each other.
- I. We are proactively and consistently managing water sanitary and storm infrastructure systems for continued and improved public health and safety.
- J. We are proactively and consistently managing street and non-motorized infrastructure.
- K. We are guiding Traverse City's evolution based on community values and vision.

### *Top 3 priorities that align with existing work*

Stakeholders were next asked to identify the top three statements that align with their work. The top 3 statements selected most often are:

- 1** *We are investing in facilities and amenities to create vibrant city spaces that connect all people to nature and each other.*
- 2** *We are increasing opportunities for more year-round housing stock.*
- 3** *We are investing in multimodal transportation infrastructure so that individuals of all ages abilities and income have a network of complete safe and year-round access to our community's amenities and basic needs.*



## *What is improving and why?*

Stakeholders were next asked to rate each statement as better, worse, or the same than 5 years ago. If better, stakeholders were asked to cite local actions they felt have improved things. Every statement was marked better by multiple stakeholders. The reasons for this are transcribed below.

### *A. We are investing in multimodal transportation infrastructure so that individuals of all ages abilities and income have a network of complete safe and year-round access to our community's amenities and basic needs.*

- Improved non-motorized and public transit options like Safe Routes to School (SRTS), TART, mobility task force, expanded BATA routes including free routes, shelters and their new transit center.
- Snow removal on sidewalks and trails has been outstanding along with sidewalk installations. Investments in bike lanes and shelters, as well as continued partnership and investment with TART.
- Development of trails with improved road crossings for pedestrians and cyclist safety.
- Expansion of area trails like TART's Boardman Lake Loop, and Buffalo Ridge
- Signal timing infrastructure and investment including the reconstruction of Grandview Parkway.

### *B. We are increasing opportunities for more year-round housing stock.*

- New housing added to spaces and more grants becoming available.
- Investment in social infrastructure and advocacy for community needs like year-round housing is becoming more noticeable but needs to address senior housing.
- Development is ongoing for new homes that are being built but are they affordable.
- Neighborhood infrastructure has improved along with mobility.

### *C. We are addressing climate change within all our city's priorities, goals, policies, and actions.*

- City's climate plan is being implemented. Renewable initiatives, lighting, and alternative energy through Traverse City Light and Power.
- Have seen explicit language and actions around climate change goals in the city. Regarding climate it is an issue of importance and included in goals and priorities, but also need to address flooding as that issue has been elevated.

### *D. Traverse City is inclusive to all people of all ages, incomes, backgrounds, ethnicities, race, and abilities.*

- DDA is doing a respectable job with downtown mix, promoting inclusivity of events better and encouraging sidewalks in central neighborhood.
- Bringing youth on DDA board.
- Recognizing there is a need to be more inclusive and identifying events for everyone.
- Some areas are the same and some are better. Traverse City is getting more inclusive and helping with diversity.

***E. Our neighborhoods provide a high quality of life and meet the daily needs of our residents.***

- Neighborhoods are stable, Traverse Heights is improving.

***F. Natural resources in Traverse City are respected and protected.***

- Redevelopment of waterfront, Clinch Park.
- Protect natural resources along Boardman River and Lake Michigan conservation, preservation, and trail access.
- Actions along the Boardman River have increased conservation efforts.
- Hickory Meadows and Hills.

***G. Historic resources in Traverse City are respected and protected.***

- Historic structures being restored downtown in the neighborhoods.
- Indigenous tribes being recognized/honored to preserve historic and cultural resources.

***H. We are investing in facilities and amenities to create vibrant city spaces that connect all people to nature and each other.***

- Civic square and alley development.
- Active stormwater management plan.
- 8th Street design.

***I. We are proactively and consistently managing water, sanitary, and storm infrastructure systems for continued and improved public health and safety.***

- Comprehensive assessment and forecasting.
- ad hoc is working toward dedicated stormwater management strategies.
- Increased use of LID(?) in urban design and project implementation.
- Acknowledging the need.
- Better water- continuous maintenance and improvements at the water treatment plant.

***J. We are proactively and consistently managing street and non-motorized infrastructure.***

- Bridge improvements in 2022.
- Streetscape improvements and place making.
- Riverwalk plans and using parking lots better.
- Purchasing land instead of renting or leasing.
- Collaborative efforts are stronger and shared vision.

***K. We are guiding Traverse City's evolution based on community values and vision.***

- The City seems more conscious and proactive providing this survey
- Coordinated planning processes more comprehensive with citizen engagement and surveys.
- Engagement from the community about where they live and work
- New master plan process and inclusivity.
- Diversity and partnerships with like-minded organizations with similar goals
- Listening sessions like this are the backbone of the planning process within the city and surrounding jurisdictions.





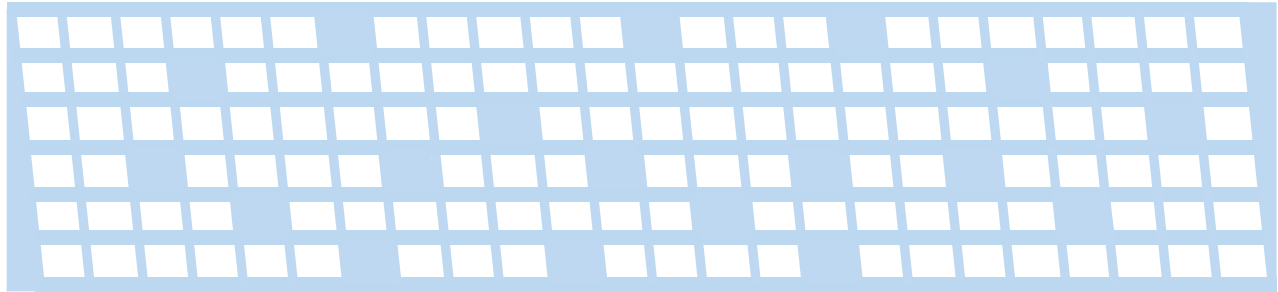
### *Top 3 priorities that align with existing work*

Stakeholders were then asked to share their top priorities over the next 5 years. These include:

- Transportation/mobility infrastructure (air, road, bike trails, bus, regional planning)
- Community collaboration and engagement
- Clean energy
- Senior citizen care
- Diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging
- Climate change
- Natural resources protection
- Transit-oriented development

Finally, stakeholders were asked to share who is missing from these types of discussions. They offered:

- There were multiple responses about youth, college student aged people in their early 20's, and young professionals being underrepresented.
- ALICE and low-income populations.
- People who work here but must commute into Traverse City due to housing costs and wages.
- Native American community.
- Seniors because one out of every four Grand Traverse County residents will be 60 and older by 2030. We need to think about senior citizens and their growing trend.
- People with mental health issues, people of color, people with disabilities.



## SECTION 3: OCTOBER ONLINE SURVEY RESULTS

1,910 individuals took the first online survey from September 12, 2022 to October 9, 2022 to inform the Master Plan and Mobility Action Plan projects. Results are summarized below.

**Question 1:** *Of the following, which describes your experience with the City of Traverse City? For reference a map of the City of Traverse City is shown below. Select all that apply.*

|                                |     |   |     |
|--------------------------------|-----|---|-----|
| I live in the city, year-round | 59% | I live in the city, seasonally  | 5%  |
| I own a business in the city   | 7%  | I go to school in the city  | 9%  |
| I live outside of the city     | 33% | I visit and/or recreate in the city (for vacation, church, event, activity, etc.) | 25% |
| I own property in the city     | 25% |   |     |
| I work in the city             | 27% |   |     |
| None of the above              | 0%  |   |     |

The majority of survey respondents (64%) live in the City of Traverse City either year-round or seasonally. An additional 27% work in the city, 25% own property in the city, and 25% visit or recreate in the city. This is a healthy balance of residents and non-residents. As Traverse City is a regional hub it is important to capture the views of those who may not live in the city but rely on and/or support the goods, services, and amenities within city boundaries.

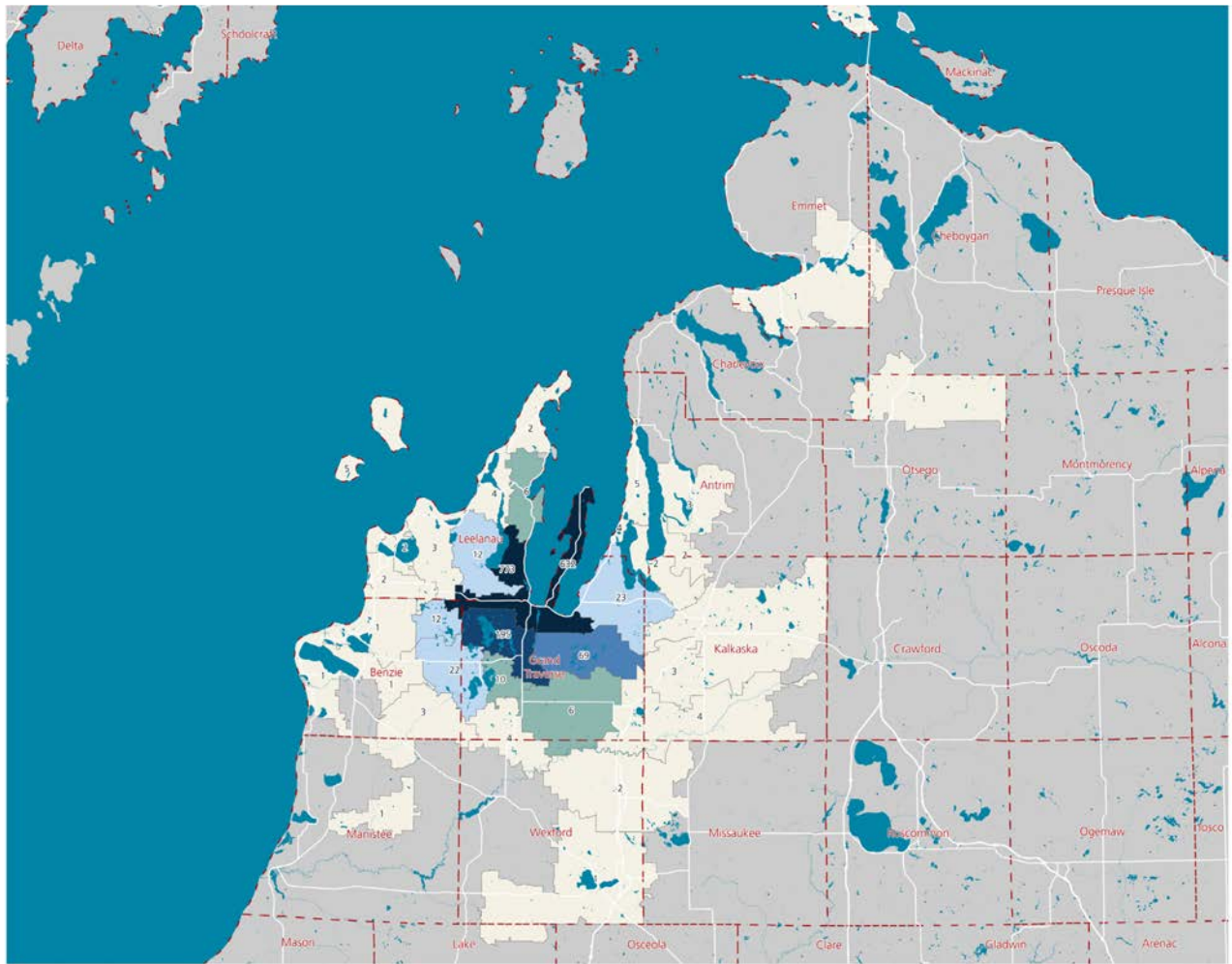
**Question 2:** *How long have you lived in the City of Traverse City, either year-round or seasonally?*

|                                |     |                                 |     |
|--------------------------------|-----|---------------------------------|-----|
| I've lived here for 0-2 years  | 8%  | I've lived here for 11-20 years | 21% |
| I've lived here for 3-5 years  | 12% | I've lived here for 21+ years   | 30% |
| I've lived here for 6-10 years | 13% | I do not live in TC             | 17% |

Length of tenure ranged with the majority of respondents living in Traverse City for more than 11 years. It is important to note that recent arrivals (those who moved to the city 0 – 2 years ago) account for 8% for respondents, a strong representation from a group that is challenging to engage.



**Question 3:** *What is the five-digit zip code for your primary residence?*



## Home Zip Code

Sources: Michigan Open Data Portal, City of Traverse City



### Survey Respondents

|  |         |  |           |
|--|---------|--|-----------|
|  | 1 - 5   |  | 26 - 75   |
|  | 6 - 10  |  | 76 - 200  |
|  | 11 - 25 |  | 201 - 773 |

### Zip Codes Not Shown:

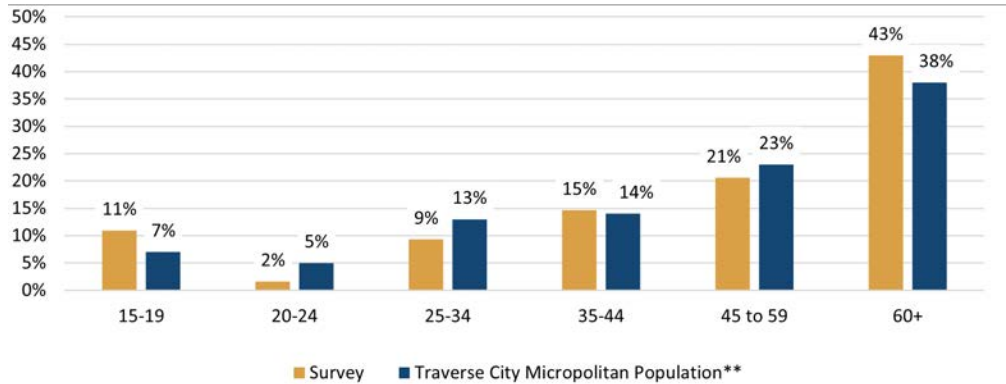
|           |                |
|-----------|----------------|
| 48603 - 3 | 48703 - 2      |
| 49456 - 2 | 48640 - 2      |
| 48114 - 2 | All other - 48 |

The majority of survey responses come directly from the surrounding region and out lying areas. There were 59 responses from zip codes not shown on the map but these account for roughly 3% of total survey responses. These are likely second homeowners who live in the city seasonally but show primary place of residence is elsewhere.

### Question 4: What is your age?

|                    |     |                    |     |
|--------------------|-----|--------------------|-----|
| 0 to 14 years old  | 1%  | 35 to 44 years old | 14% |
| 15 to 19 years old | 11% | 45 to 59 years old | 20% |
| 20 to 24 years old | 2%  | 60+ years old      | 42% |
| 25 to 34 years old | 9%  |                    |     |

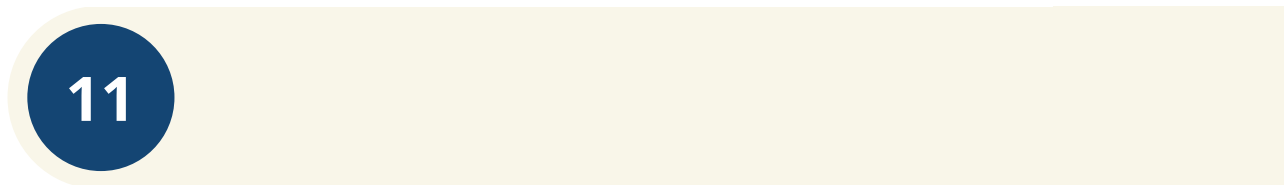
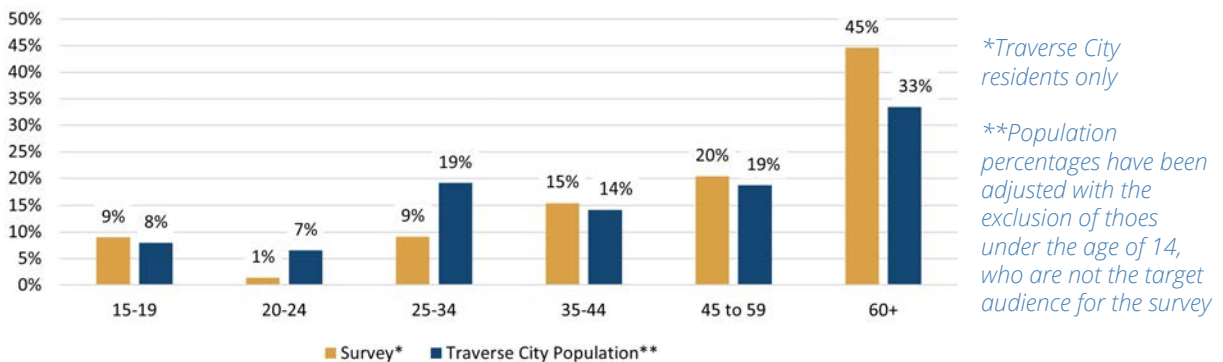
#### Age of survey respondents compared to regional age demographics.



This chart shows who took the survey (yellow bars) versus the Traverse City micropolitan population (blue bars). For example, 11% of the survey respondents were aged 15-19, while only 7% of the Traverse City micropolitan population is aged 15-19. This means, this demographic was slightly over represented in the survey results.

Of the 1,898 respondents, 43% are over the age of 60 – the highest participation among all age groups. Compared to the population of the Traverse City Micropolitan area, those over the age of 60 are slightly overrepresented in the survey (43% of the survey and 38% of the micropolitan population). Those aged 35 – 44 and 15 – 19 are also slightly overrepresented in the survey. The age group with the lowest participation in the survey are those aged 20 – 24, who account for 2% of the survey respondents but 5% of the micropolitan population.

#### Age of survey respondents who are Traverse City residents (filtered in Question 1)



When analyzing only Traverse City residents (those who indicated they reside in Traverse City in Q1), participation levels among age groups changes slightly. Those over the age of 60+ had the highest level of participation and are overrepresented in the survey (45% of the survey\* and 33% of the city population). The only age groups that are underrepresented in the survey results are those aged 20 – 24 and 25 – 34, which combined account for 26% of the population and 10% of the survey results.

**Question 5: Which of the following most accurately describes your gender? (Please select all that apply)**

|                           |      |             |      |
|---------------------------|------|-------------|------|
| I prefer not to say       | 2%   | Male        | 43%  |
| Let me type (open-ended)* | 0.5% | Non-Binary  | 1%   |
| Female                    | 53%  | Transgender | 0.3% |

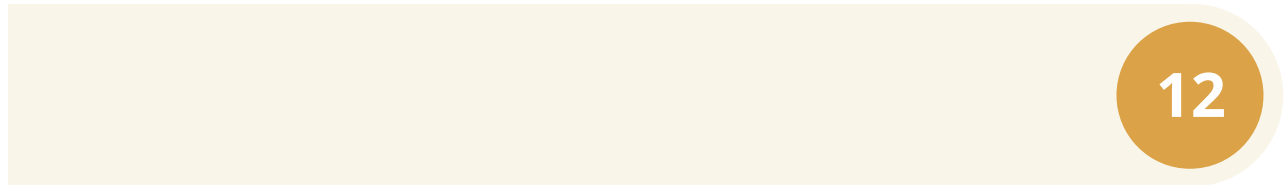
*\*There were five responses in this space and all of them question the validity of this response option.*

Respondents skewed slightly female compared to the other genders. Male accounted for 43% of respondents, non-binary individuals accounted for 1%, and transgender 0.3%. Those who self-described their gender did not answer the question and instead commented on the validity of self-describing one’s gender. Cisgender individuals account for 94.9% of the State of Michigan’s population according to the United States Census indicating that cisgender individuals are slightly over represented in the survey.

**Question 6: What is your race/ethnic background? Select all that apply.**

|                  |      |                                 |      |
|------------------|------|---------------------------------|------|
| Asian            | 0.8% | Middle Eastern                  | 0.3% |
| Black/African    | 0.3% | Native American/American Indian | 1%   |
| Caribbean        | 0.1% | Pacific Islander                | 0.3% |
| Caucasian/White  | 92%  | Other                           | 0.8% |
| Hispanic/Latin-x | 2%   | I prefer not to say             | 6%   |

Caucasian/white is the most commonly selected racial/ethnic background – 92% of survey respondents. The Traverse City Micropolitan population is 92% white indicating that white respondents are not overrepresented in the survey. The remaining racial/ethnic backgrounds are Hispanic/Latin-x (2%), Native American/American Indian (1%), Asian (1%), Black/African (<1%), Middle Eastern (<1%), Pacific Islander (<1%), and Carribean (<1%). Notably, 5% of respondents selected not to identify their racial/ethnic background and 1% self described their racial/ethnic background. None of the self-described responses are racial/ethnic categories not represented in the question response options.



**Question 7: How many children (0-18 years old) reside in your household?**

0 children - 66%      1 child - 10%      2 children - 16%      3+ children - 8%

Overall, 34% of survey respondents have at least one person under the age of 18 residing in their household. Comparitively, 22% of households in the micropolitan region have at least one child. When filtering for only Traverse City residents, 33% of the respondents have at least one person under the age of 18 in their household. In Traverse City, 21% of households have at least one person under the age of 18.

**Question 8: How many members of your household have a disability (hearing, vision, cognitive, ambulatory, self-care, independent living)?**

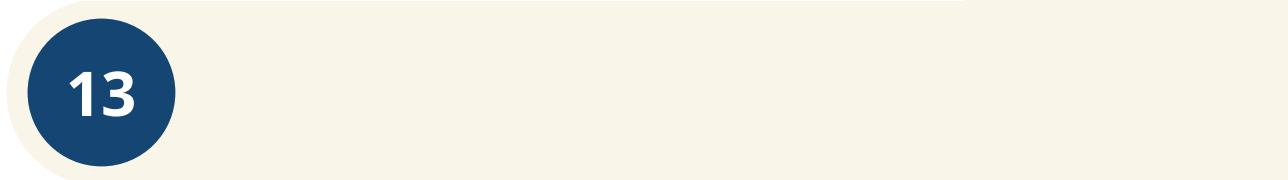
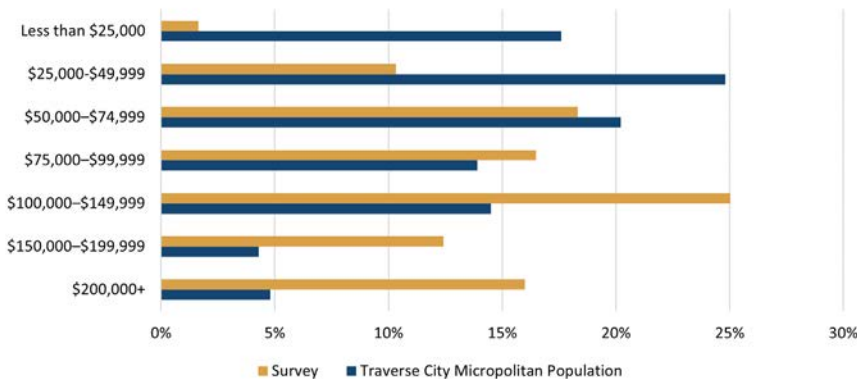
0 members - 87%      1 member - 11%      2 members - 2%      3+ members - >1%

Of the 1,901 respondents who completed this question, 14% live in a household where at least one member has a disability – 13% of the micropolitan area have a disability. For Traverse City residents only, 12% of respondents live in a household where one or more members have a disability – 11% of Traverse City’s population have a disability.

**Question 9: Approximately what is your household’s total annual income, before taxes? Consider all sources (salary, bonuses, investment income, etc.) of every working member of your household.**

|                       |     |                       |     |
|-----------------------|-----|-----------------------|-----|
| Less than \$25,000    | 1%  | \$150,000 - \$199,999 | 10% |
| \$25,000 - \$49,999   | 9%  | \$200,000 - 299,999   | 7%  |
| \$50,000 - \$74,999   | 15% | \$300,000 or more     | 6%  |
| \$75,000 - \$99,999   | 14% | I prefer not to say   | 17% |
| \$100,000 - \$149,999 | 21% |                       |     |

*Income of survey respondents compared to regional income demographics.*



Respondents skewed wealthier than the micropolitan population, 70% of respondents indicated that their household incomes were above \$75,000 compared to 38% of micropolitan households earning more than \$75,000. The wealthiest respondents (those earning more than \$200,000) were the most overrepresented in the survey.

*Income of survey respondents who are Traverse City residents (filtered in Question 1)*

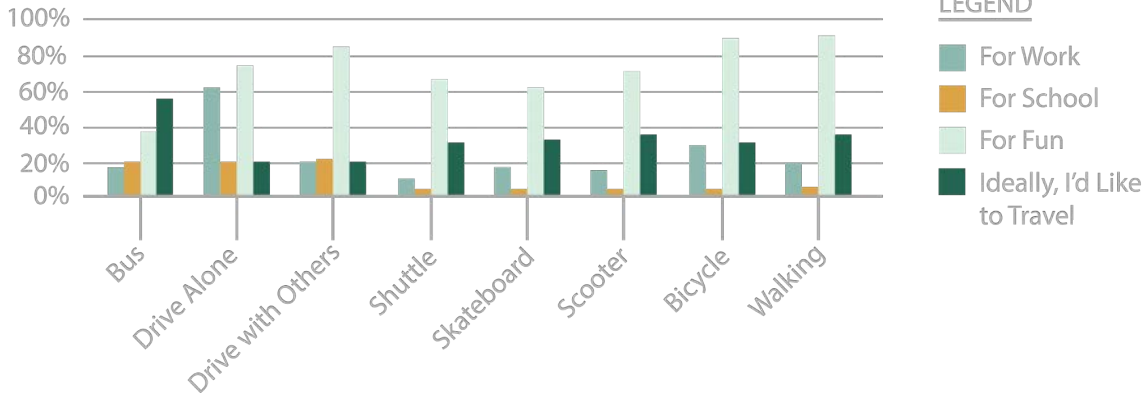


Results for Traverse City residents only, followed a similar trend. Survey respondents from households earning more than \$75,000 account for 69% of total respondents, compared to 36% of the Traverse City’s households earning over \$75,000.

**Question 10:** *How do you transport yourself on a daily basis? Fill out the chart below and provide your daily mode of transportation for work, school, fun, and/or in your ideal world.*

|                                      | For Work | For School | For Fun | Ideally, I'd like to travel | Total responses |
|--------------------------------------|----------|------------|---------|-----------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>By car, alone</b>                 | 62%      | 18%        | 74%     | 18%                         | 1,706           |
| <b>By walking</b>                    | 19%      | 6%         | 92%     | 23%                         | 1,293           |
| <b>By bicycle</b>                    | 29%      | 5%         | 90%     | 30%                         | 854             |
| <b>By car, with others (carpool)</b> | 18%      | 22%        | 85%     | 19%                         | 326             |
| <b>By bus</b>                        | 17%      | 20%        | 37%     | 55%                         | 177             |
| <b>By shuttle or ride-sharing</b>    | 10%      | 5%         | 67%     | 31%                         | 103             |
| <b>By scooter</b>                    | 16%      | 5%         | 72%     | 36%                         | 63              |
| <b>By wheelchair</b>                 | 10%      | 0%         | 45%     | 50%                         | 20              |

*Daily transportation mode of survey respondents.*

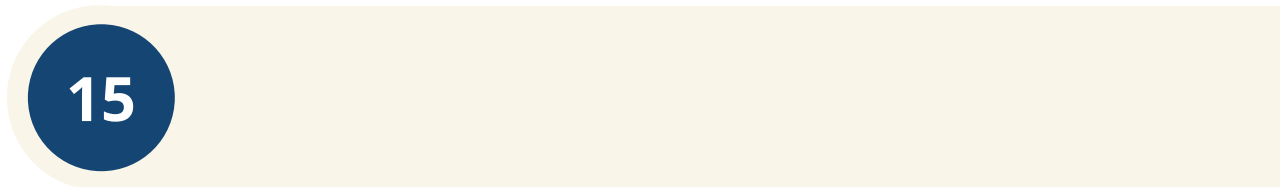


Respondents indicated they travel primarily by car alone but desire to use alternative transportation modes. Respondents typically walk and ride their bicycles for recreation purposes as opposed to transportation.

**Question 11:** *Using a scale of 1 = not at all important to 5 = very important, rate your level of agreement with the following statements.*

Consider the “we” in these statements to mean the Traverse City community as a whole, including the city, partners, residents, and stakeholders. Statements are ordered in the table below according to each statement’s weighted average, from highest to lowest. Each statement is numbered 1—11 and the exact weighted average is shown in parenthesis. The table columns organize the analysis by all survey respondents (first column), then respondents’ residency status, age, and household income.

|  | Complete Survey | Traverse City Residents | Non Residents | Under 19     | 20 - 24      | 25 - 34      | 35 - 59      | 60+          | Under \$50k  | \$50k - \$74k | \$75k - \$99k | \$100k - \$199k | \$200k +     |
|--|-----------------|-------------------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|-----------------|--------------|
| We should proactively and consistently manage water, sanitary, and storm infrastructure systems for continued and improved public health and safety. | #1<br>(4.76)    | #1<br>(4.79)            | #1<br>(4.74)  | #2<br>(4.36) | #1<br>(4.83) | #1<br>(4.76) | #1<br>(4.79) | #1<br>(4.85) | #2<br>(4.79) | #1<br>(4.71)  | #1<br>(4.79)  | #1<br>(4.78)    | #1<br>(4.81) |
| Natural resources in Traverse City need to be respected and protected.   | #2<br>(4.73)    | #2<br>(4.74)            | #2<br>(4.72)  | #1<br>(4.49) | #2<br>(4.80) | #2<br>(4.75) | #2<br>(4.71) | #2<br>(4.80) | #1<br>(4.83) | #2<br>(4.61)  | #2<br>(4.73)  | #2<br>(4.74)    | #2<br>(4.75) |





|   | Complete Survey | Traverse City Residents | Non Residents | Under 19      | 20 - 24       | 25 - 34       | 35 - 59      | 60+          | Under \$50k   | \$50k - \$74k | \$75k - \$99k | \$100k - \$199k | \$200k +      |
|---|-----------------|-------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Our neighborhoods should provide a high quality of life and meet the daily needs of our residents.  | #3<br>(4.52)    | #3<br>(4.60)            | #3<br>(4.48)  | #5<br>(3.88)  | #4<br>(4.60)  | #3<br>(4.61)  | #3<br>(4.55) | #3<br>(4.65) | #3<br>(4.57)  | #3<br>(4.51)  | #3<br>(4.58)  | #3<br>(4.54)    | #3<br>(4.52)  |
| We should proactively and consistently manage street and non-motorized infrastructure.  | #4<br>(4.37)    | #4<br>(4.43)            | #4<br>(4.32)  | #9<br>(3.67)  | #7<br>(4.33)  | #5<br>(4.42)  | #4<br>(4.41) | #5<br>(4.52) | #5<br>(4.45)  | #4<br>(4.35)  | #4<br>(4.40)  | #4<br>(4.39)    | #4<br>(4.51)  |
| Historic and cultural resources in Traverse City need to be respected and protected.  | #5<br>(4.32)    | #5<br>(4.31)            | #5<br>(4.32)  | #4<br>(3.89)  | #10<br>(4.10) | #10<br>(4.23) | #6<br>(4.23) | #4<br>(4.55) | #4<br>(4.47)  | #5<br>(4.31)  | #5<br>(4.34)  | #6<br>(4.25)    | #6<br>(4.26)  |
| We should guide Traverse City's evolution based on community values and vision.   | #6<br>(4.20)    | #6<br>(4.23)            | #6<br>(4.17)  | #6<br>(3.87)  | #8<br>(4.23)  | #7<br>(4.33)  | #8<br>(4.14) | #6<br>(4.31) | #8<br>(4.28)  | #7<br>(4.19)  | #9<br>(4.19)  | #5<br>(4.25)    | #7<br>(4.17)  |
| We should invest in facilities and amenities in order to create vibrant city spaces that connect all people to nature and to each other.  | #7<br>(4.14)    | #7<br>(4.21)            | #7<br>(4.10)  | #7<br>(3.81)  | #9<br>(4.20)  | #6<br>(4.39)  | #7<br>(4.16) | #8<br>(4.17) | #10<br>(4.14) | #9<br>(4.09)  | #7<br>(4.22)  | #7<br>(4.22)    | #5<br>(4.27)  |
| We should increase opportunities for more year-round housing stock.   | #8<br>(4.11)    | #9<br>(4.13)            | #8<br>(4.09)  | #11<br>(3.37) | #5<br>(4.59)  | #4<br>(4.49)  | #5<br>(4.27) | #9<br>(4.07) | #7<br>(4.29)  | #6<br>(4.22)  | #6<br>(4.22)  | #8<br>(4.16)    | #8<br>(4.04)  |
| We should invest in multi-modal transportation infrastructure so that individuals of all ages, abilities and income have a network of complete, safe, and year-round access to our community's amenities and basic needs. | #9<br>(4.08)    | #8<br>(4.17)            | #9<br>(4.05)  | #10<br>(3.51) | #3<br>(4.63)  | #8<br>(4.30)  | #9<br>(4.09) | #7<br>(4.17) | #6<br>(4.40)  | #8<br>(4.18)  | #10<br>(4.17) | #9<br>(4.11)    | #10<br>(3.97) |

|  | Complete Survey | Traverse City Residents | Non Residents | Under 19     | 20 - 24       | 25 - 34       | 35 - 59       | 60+           | Under \$50k   | \$50k - \$74k | \$75k - \$99k | \$100k - \$199k | \$200k +      |
|--|-----------------|-------------------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Having people of all ages, incomes, backgrounds, ethnicities, race, and abilities, is key to the future of the city. | #10<br>(4.03)   | #10<br>(4.11)           | #10<br>(3.99) | #3<br>(3.96) | #6<br>(4.34)  | #9<br>(4.25)  | #10<br>(4.01) | #10<br>(4.01) | #9<br>(4.26)  | #10<br>(4.07) | #8<br>(4.20)  | #10<br>(4.06)   | #9<br>(3.97)  |
| We should address climate within all of our city priorities, goals, policies, and actions.                           | #11<br>(3.85)   | #11<br>(3.94)           | #11<br>(3.83) | #8<br>(3.78) | #10<br>(4.10) | #11<br>(4.10) | #11<br>(3.82) | #11<br>(3.84) | #11<br>(4.07) | #11<br>(3.95) | #11<br>(4.04) | #11<br>(3.90)   | #11<br>(3.79) |

It's important to note that the weighted average does not differ significantly between the first and last statements, across demographics. This implies that survey respondents generally agreed that all statements presented were important, or at worst, neutral, with the following statements marked as most important no matter whether the respondent lives in the city proper or outside of the city, their age, or their household income.

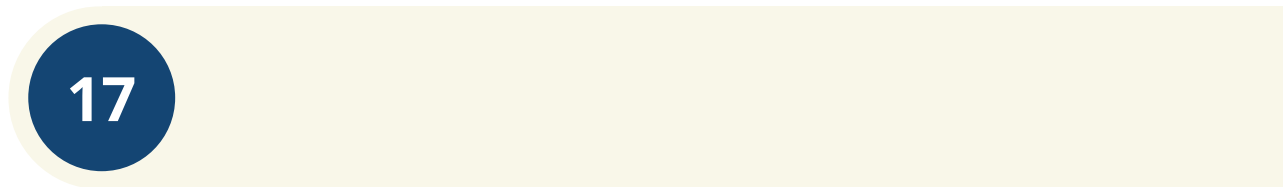
- We should proactively and consistently manage water, sanitary, and storm infrastructure systems for continued and improved public health and safety.
- Natural resources in Traverse City need to be respected and protected.

Additionally, not every statement contains the same level of detail and it is possible that more vaguely worded statements were difficult to understand or get excited about and therefore perceived as more neutral or not important.

**Question 12:** *Using a scale of 1 = not happening effectively to 5 = happening very effectively, rate the following statements.*

Consider how these outcomes are occurring in Traverse City today. Consider the “we” in these statements to mean the Traverse City community as a whole, including the city, partners, residents, and stakeholders.

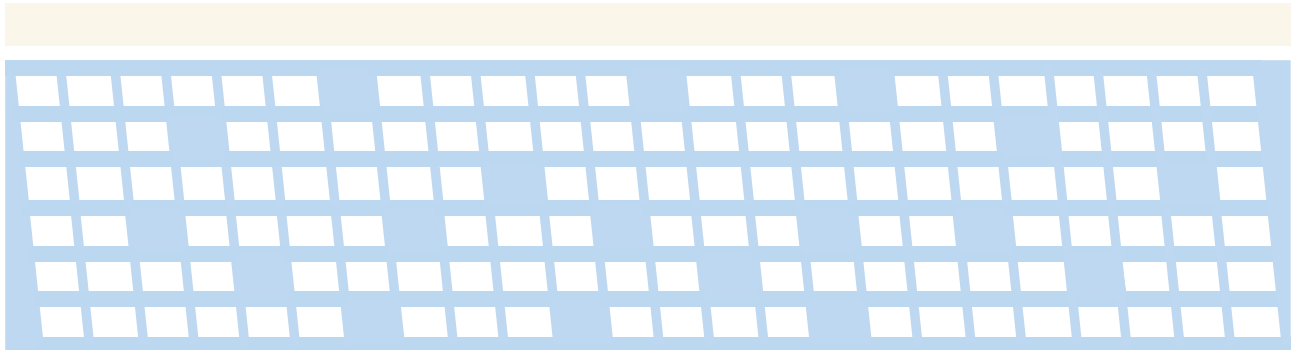
Statements are ordered in the table below according to each statement’s weighted average, from highest to lowest. Each statement is numbered 1—11 and the exact weighted average is shown in parenthesis. The table columns organize the analysis by all survey respondents (first column), then respondents’ residency status, age, and household income.



|   | Complete Survey | Traverse City Residents | Non Residents | Under 19     | 20 - 24      | 25 - 34      | 35 - 59      | 60+           | Under \$50k  | \$50k - \$74k | \$75k - \$99k | \$100k - \$199k | \$200k +     |
|---|-----------------|-------------------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|-----------------|--------------|
| Our neighborhoods provide a high quality of life and meet the daily needs of our residents.   | #1<br>(3.57)    | #1<br>(3.58)            | #1<br>(3.56)  | #1<br>(3.39) | #3<br>(3.38) | #3<br>(3.48) | #1<br>(3.55) | #1<br>(3.65)  | #2<br>(3.39) | #3<br>(3.48)  | #1<br>(3.58)  | #1<br>(3.61)    | #1<br>(3.71) |
| Historic and cultural resources in Traverse City are respected and protected.   | #2<br>(3.52)    | #2<br>(3.53)            | #2<br>(3.52)  | #3<br>(3.37) | #1<br>(3.74) | #2<br>(3.58) | #2<br>(3.51) | #3<br>(3.56)  | #1<br>(3.40) | #1<br>(3.50)  | #2<br>(3.53)  | #3<br>(3.51)    | #2<br>(3.65) |
| Natural resources in Traverse City are respected and protected.   | #3<br>(3.51)    | #3<br>(3.53)            | #3<br>(3.49)  | #5<br>(3.34) | #2<br>(3.41) | #1<br>(3.58) | #3<br>(3.47) | #2<br>(3.56)  | #3<br>(3.37) | #2<br>(3.50)  | #3<br>(3.45)  | #2<br>(3.54)    | #3<br>(3.64) |
| We are investing in facilities and amenities in order to create vibrant city spaces that connect all people to nature and to each other.  | #4<br>(3.39)    | #4<br>(3.40)            | #4<br>(3.38)  | #6<br>(3.26) | #4<br>(3.14) | #4<br>(3.43) | #4<br>(3.33) | #4<br>(3.48)  | #4<br>(3.17) | #4<br>(3.35)  | #4<br>(3.41)  | #4<br>(3.46)    | #4<br>(3.48) |
| We are guiding Traverse City's evolution based on community values and vision.  | #5<br>(3.02)    | #6<br>(3.01)            | #5<br>(3.05)  | #7<br>(3.23) | #5<br>(3.00) | #5<br>(3.01) | #5<br>(3.00) | #10<br>(2.99) | #8<br>(2.83) | #7<br>(2.95)  | #7<br>(3.01)  | #5<br>(3.10)    | #5<br>(3.18) |
| We are investing in multi-modal transportation infrastructure so that individuals of all ages, abilities and income have a network of complete, safe, and year round access to our community's amenities and basic needs. | #6<br>(3.01)    | #5<br>(3.04)            | #7<br>(3.03)  | #8<br>(3.02) | #8<br>(2.79) | #6<br>(2.99) | #7<br>(2.92) | #5<br>(3.10)  | #6<br>(2.94) | #5<br>(3.04)  | #5<br>(3.03)  | #7<br>(3.01)    | #6<br>(3.06) |
| We are proactively and consistently managing street and non-motorized infrastructure.   | #7<br>(3.00)    | #8<br>(2.99)            | #6<br>(3.03)  | #9<br>(2.89) | #6<br>(2.88) | #7<br>(2.91) | #6<br>(2.95) | #6<br>(3.07)  | #5<br>(2.94) | #6<br>(2.98)  | #6<br>(3.01)  | #6<br>(3.03)    | #8<br>(2.95) |

|   | Complete Survey | Traverse City Residents | Non Residents | Under 19      | 20 - 24       | 25 - 34       | 35 - 59       | 60+           | Under \$50k   | \$50k - \$74k | \$75k - \$99k | \$100k - \$199k | \$200k +      |
|---|-----------------|-------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|
| We are proactively and consistently managing water, sanitary, and storm infrastructure systems for continued and improved public health and safety. | #8<br>(2.96)    | #7<br>(2.99)            | #8<br>(2.98)  | #2<br>(3.37)  | #7<br>(2.83)  | #9<br>(2.76)  | #10<br>(2.77) | #7<br>(3.06)  | #7<br>(2.89)  | #8<br>(2.91)  | #8<br>(2.93)  | #8<br>(2.98)    | #10<br>(2.94) |
| Traverse City is inclusive to people of all ages, incomes, backgrounds, ethnicities, race, and abilities.   | #9<br>(2.93)    | #10<br>(2.90)           | #9<br>(2.96)  | #4<br>(3.34)  | #10<br>(2.59) | #10<br>(2.59) | #9<br>(2.79)  | #9<br>(3.00)  | #10<br>(2.68) | #10<br>(2.82) | #10<br>(2.85) | #10<br>(2.91)   | #7<br>(3.02)  |
| We are addressing climate within all of our city priorities, goals, policies, and actions.  | #10<br>(2.91)   | #9<br>(2.93)            | #10<br>(2.91) | #10<br>(2.83) | #9<br>(2.78)  | #8<br>(2.80)  | #8<br>(2.84)  | #8<br>(3.01)  | #9<br>(2.80)  | #9<br>(2.90)  | #9<br>(2.91)  | #9<br>(2.95)    | #9<br>(2.95)  |
| We are increasing opportunities for more year-round housing stock.  | #11<br>(2.51)   | #11<br>(2.51)           | #11<br>(2.52) | #11<br>(2.75) | #11<br>(2.07) | #11<br>(2.27) | #11<br>(2.38) | #11<br>(2.63) | #11<br>(2.36) | #11<br>(2.45) | #11<br>(2.47) | #11<br>(2.52)   | #11<br>(2.57) |

Comparing the results of questions 11 and 12 further emphasizes the importance of the statement we are proactively and consistently managing water, sanitary, and storm infrastructure. This is the most important statement based on respondents of all residency status, age, and income (question 11) and scores relatively low when respondents were asked to indicate if they thought this was happening effectively in Traverse City today (question 12).



19

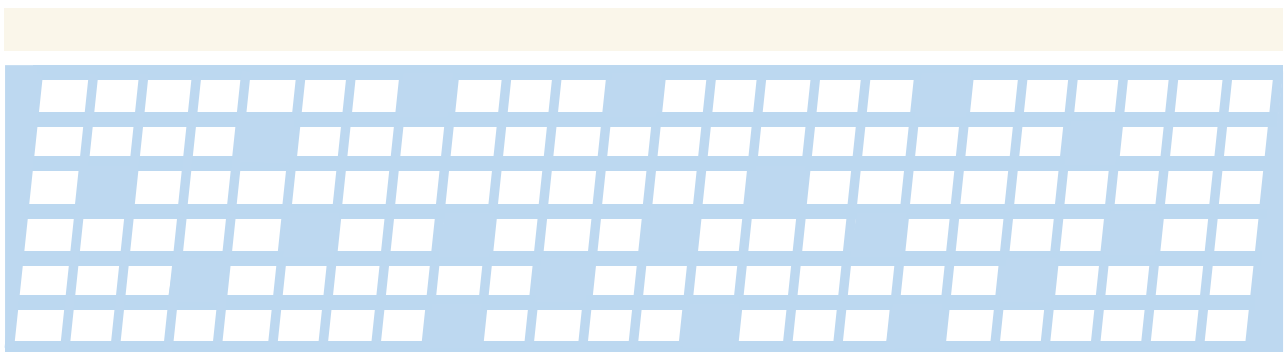
**Question 13:** What modes of transportation should Traverse City prioritize moving forward? Rank from highest (#1) to lowest (#8) the following transportation modes.

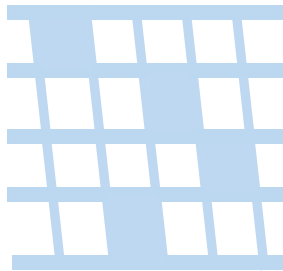
|  | <b>Rank</b> |
|--|-------------|
| Walking (pedestrian-oriented for people of all ages and abilities) | 2.8         |
| Bus (public transit-oriented)                                      | 3.2         |
| Cycling (bike-oriented)  | 3.4         |
| Car (auto-oriented)  | 3.5         |
| Shuttles or ride-sharing (Lyft/Uber)                               | 5.3         |
| Freight (accommodating for delivery vehicles)                      | 5.5         |
| Rail   | 6.0         |
| Skateboard/Scooter   | 6.3         |

Respondents rated walking and public transit-oriented uses as more important priorities than other modes. Skateboard/scooter and rail infrastructure was listed as a lower priority than other modes.

**Question 14:** We are trying to reach as many voices as possible in this engagement process. That means yours! Which of the following activities are you most likely to participate in? (Select all that apply)

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| In-person large-group events                                | 19% |
| In-person small-group events                                | 28% |
| Pop-up events in neighborhoods, businesses, and around town | 35% |
| Online survey (like the one you're taking now)              | 78% |
| Virtual discussion  | 22% |





## SECTION 4: OPEN HOUSE RESULTS

On Wednesday, October 26, 2022, Traverse City residents, business-owners, property-owners, workers, and others interested in land use and transportation issues were encouraged to attend the joint Master Plan + Mobility Action Plan Community Open House at the Hagerty Center from 3pm – 7pm. Over 200 people participated and offered their vision for the future of Traverse City. As both projects seek to identify the community's future vision and implement it over time, the event featured numerous activities and exercises designed to gather information and foster thoughtful discussions with attendees. These modules were crafted with maximum inclusivity in mind – ensuring that all attendees could offer their thoughts and experiences, regardless of age or ability.

The participation throughout the evening and the energy in the room was a testament to attendee's interest in the future of Traverse City. Attendees not only participated at multiple modules; they lingered and held discussions with City staff and the planning teams – many staying for more than an hour. While the “open house” format contributed to this energetic environment, we especially want to thank City staff, the Hagerty Center, and the numerous volunteers who helped make this event a success.

Included on the following pages are summaries of each module along with key themes and feedback received throughout the evening.

## Module 1: Online Survey Recap

**Activity:** Attendees were encouraged to review results from the first online survey to orient them to the ideas shared thus far and provide them an opportunity to ask questions and share their reactions, if any.

**Results and Key Themes:** Most attendees spent a few minutes viewing the survey results and sharing their questions and ideas verbally, with the staffers at the station. Some attendees wrote down an idea; these are listed verbatim by topic below.

### Housing

- Increase attainable housing stock!
- Work force housing in City proper is a must.
- Build “affordable” housing outside city limit. Lots of property within 5 mi from center of town
- Wish there was a way to deed restrict my house to only full-time occupation...like Charlevoix
- Preserve year-round rentals & Housing
- Need affordable year-round full time resident housing
- With the higher cost of land within the city... Are there better options for affordable housing in the County?
- City Commission, DDA, Econ Dev, any similar. Stop authorizing short term rental- all new development zero. All housing stock! No STR!
- Work more on inclusivity. Esp Housing

### Development/Density

- Build up, not out
- Sprawl kills both our #1 Tourism and out #2 agriculture economy. Both economies are symbolic

### Survey Design/Results

- Please add a 7-13 age group
- Not a lot of young people responded. Where are they?
- 28 people who?
- Consider input from children. They can be brutally honest. I think it could be helpful. They are apart of the city too
- Framing of topics was not equivalent, so respondents may have evaluated unevenly
- How can we close gap income wise between census data and survey participation?
- I’m surprised by the difference in salary distribution for survey vs. TC proper
- Service providers can reach/help reach the people with less than \$25K income
- Need to show chart of “Importance” v “How well we are doing” to emphasize the areas that need attention
- Would like to see breakdown in responses of City residents & community residents

## Natural Resources

- Hopefully protecting natural resources includes addressing climate change. More affordable housing needed. Less luxury condos.

## Transportation

- Trans system airport (TVC) to town/hotels. Create mall area park to union on front
- Fast mass rail transit from outlying areas (EBCT & beyond) on current rail system into/out of city to serve locals and tourists
- Protect bike lanes. Light rail. More density/mixed use buildings
- Prioritize & make user friendly the bus system public transit
- Madison's new build and other roads do not have bike lanes in plan
- Focus on public transit

## Other

- Focus more on neighborhoods- we already own parks- much neglected-with no play areas- it is a community gathering area for neighbors
- There is strong support for historic resources. What is happening to the Con Foster Collection?
- Infrastructure repairs
- The old guard has create exclusive zoning w/ Prop 3
- T.C. residents, business owners, should be given priority- this is a TC plan, not a regional plan
- All TIF 97- I believe- to expire- bring the income into the City budget vs. DDA. Then get our priorities of land for the entire needs infrastructure- natural resources- climate

## Module 2: Neighborhood Mapping

**Activity:** Attendees were asked to consider three maps of different geographic areas within the city (note: some of these areas follow designated neighborhood boundaries but many were created specifically for this exercise) and identify which areas they wished to preserve, enhance, and transform.

### Preserve

Places with desirable characteristics that should be maintained

### Enhance

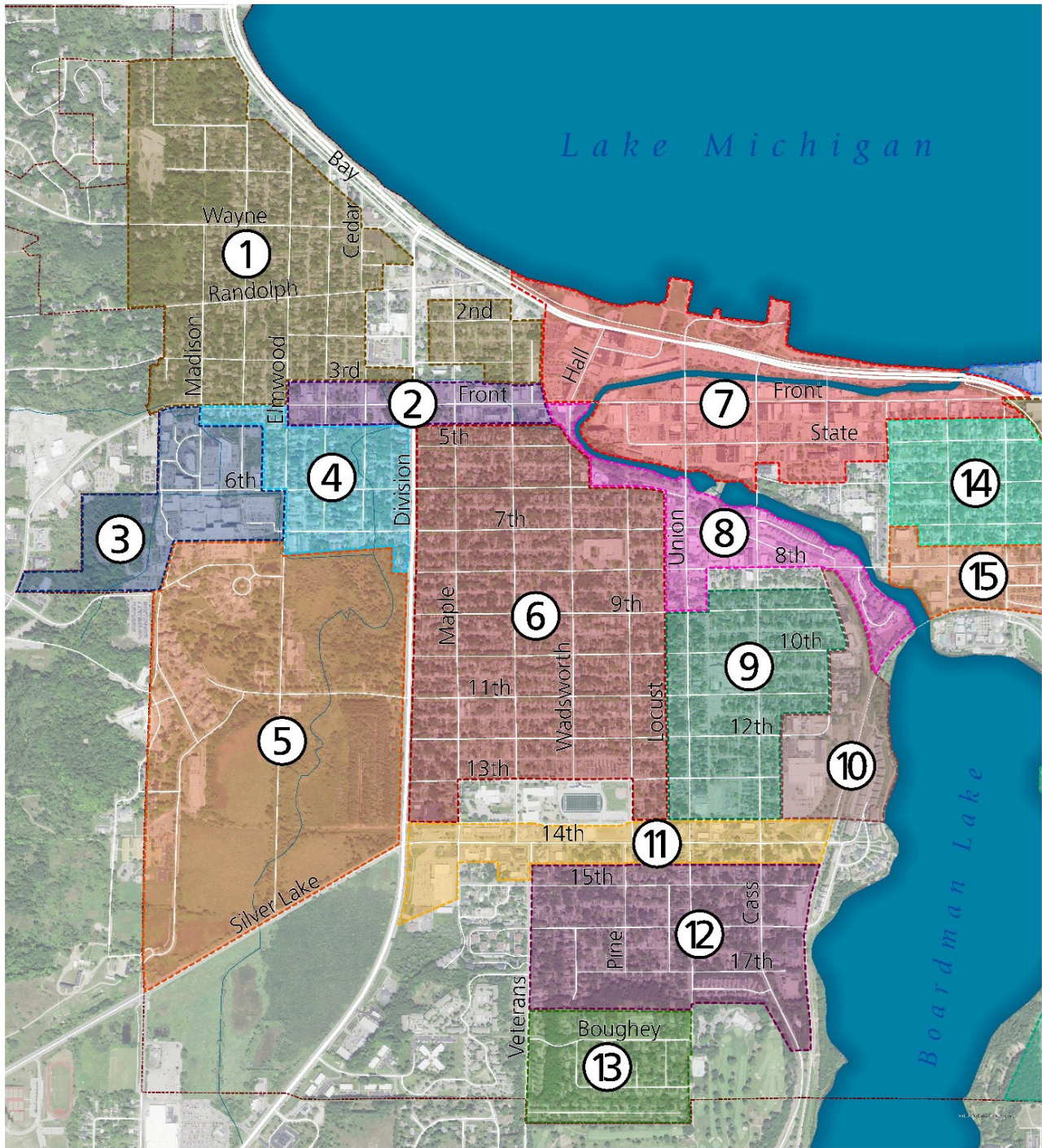
Places with ideal improvement opportunities

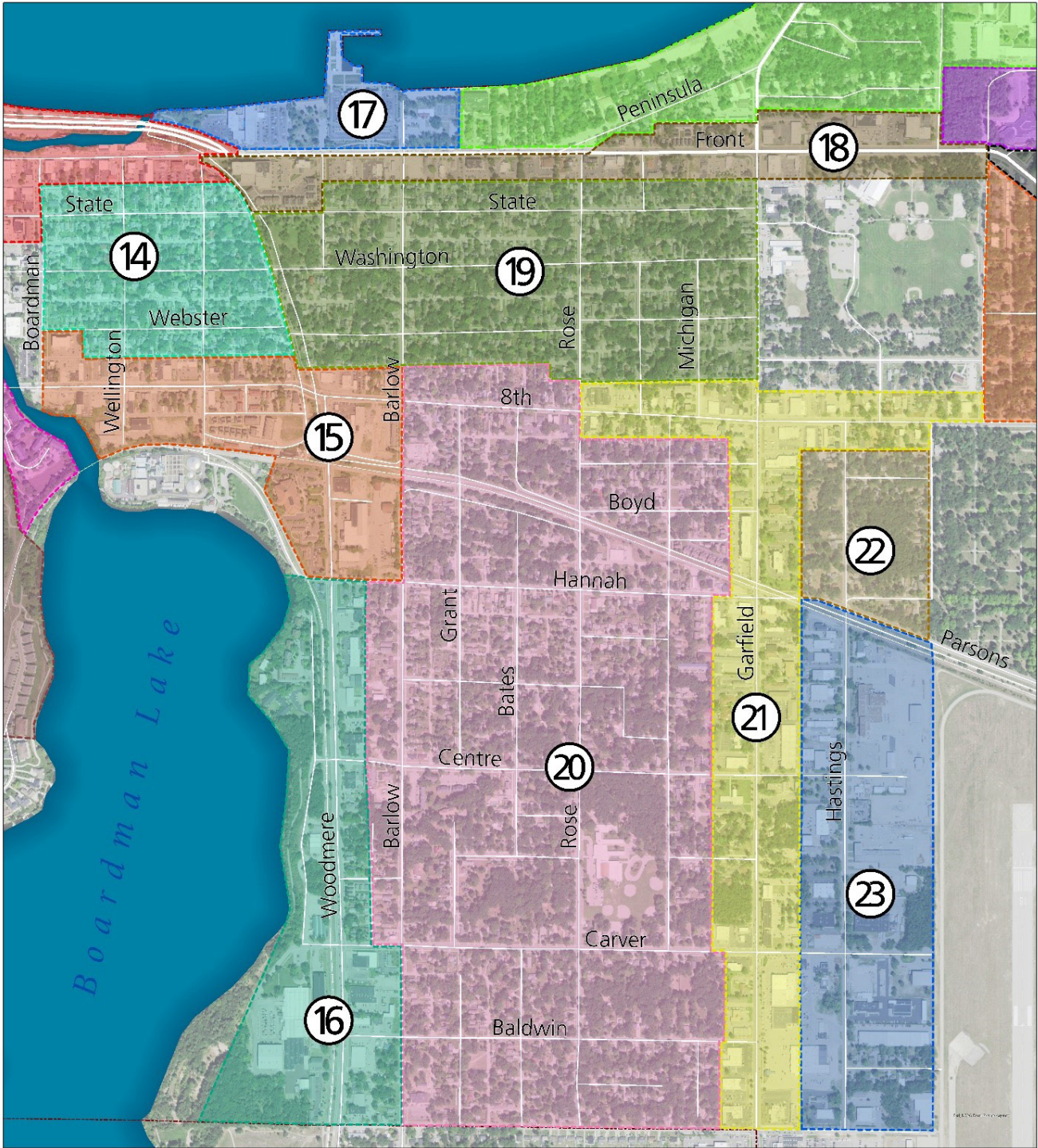
### Transform

Places that are ideal for dramatic change in its function and design

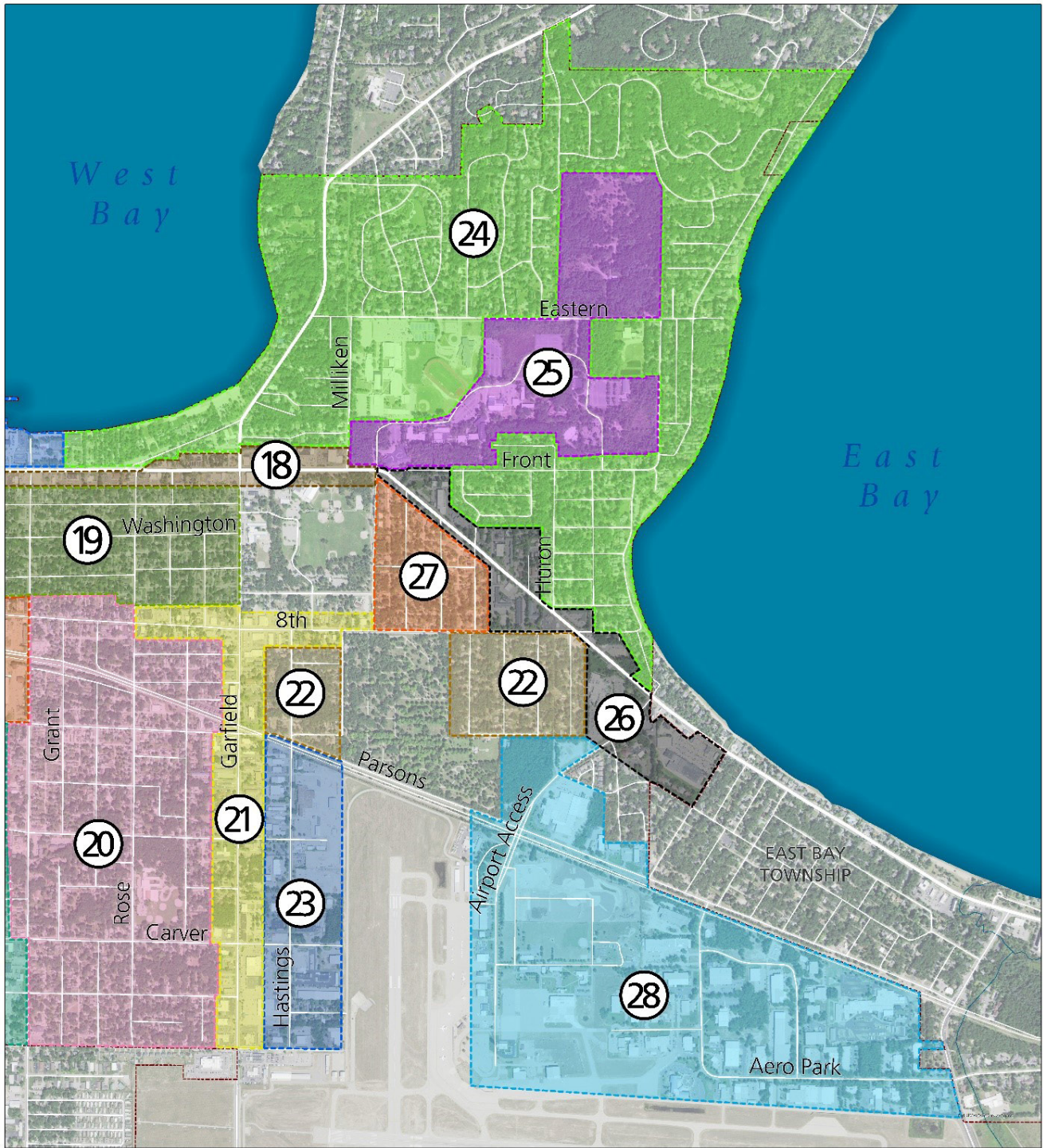




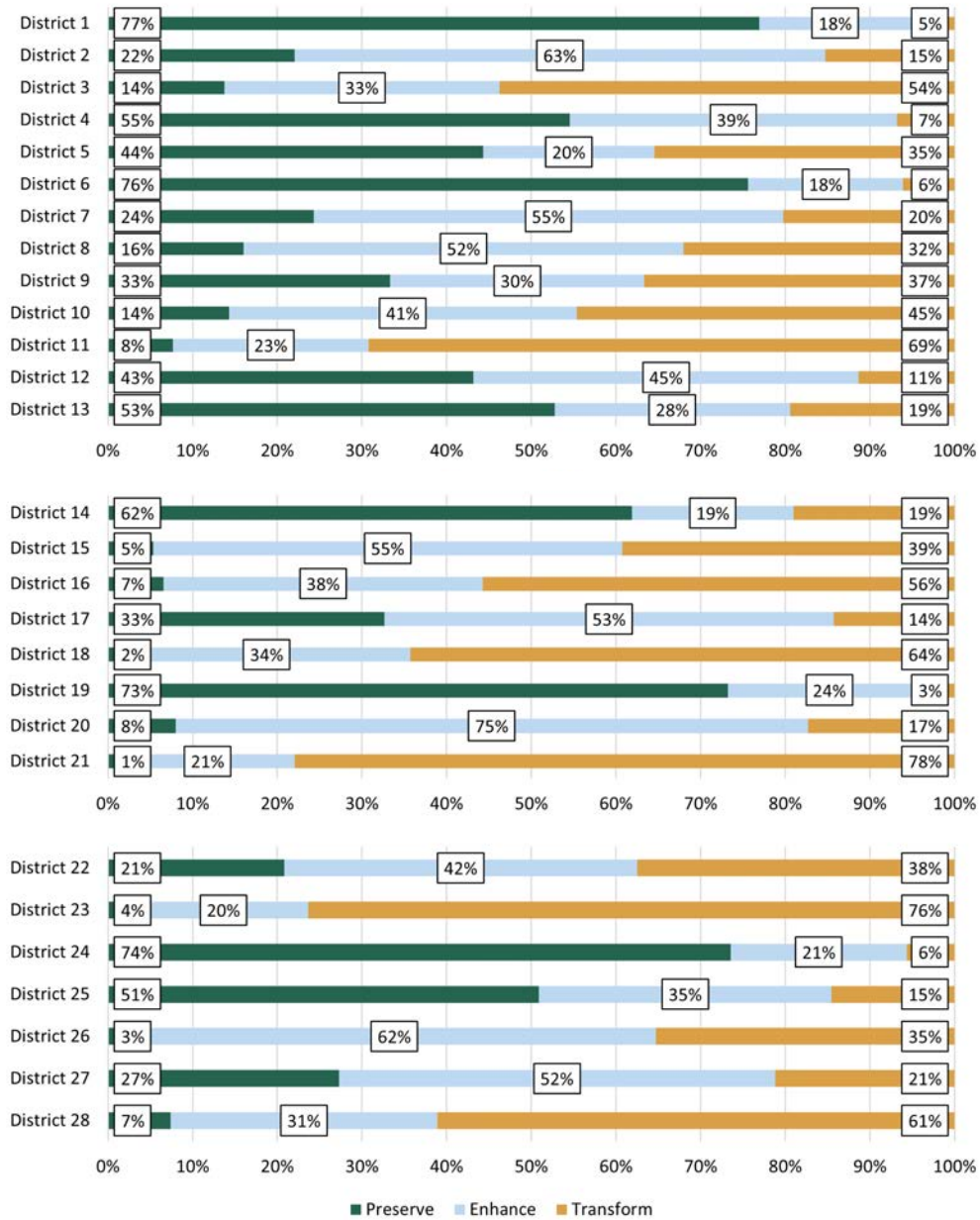




**25**



## Results of Neighborhood Mapping Module.



## Module 3: Guiding Principles

**Activity:** Attendees were asked to view the list of five guiding principles that resulted from the online survey and note what they liked about each principle, along with what was missing or confusing.

**Results and Key Themes:** Each guiding principle received a number of “like” comments, indicating that attendees found value in each principle. Below is a list of content attendees felt was missing or confusing for each principle.



**1. We should proactively and consistently manage water, sanitary, and storm infrastructure systems for continued and improved public health and safety.**

### Missing:

- We need to prioritize green water infrastructure over grey water, need composting and food waste systems, need more community gardens and biodiverse green spaces
- Make systems holistic with natural systems. Living machines and natural waste water management
- Storm water should be handled in as a green a way as possible - more natural, unmowed areas to absorb water with natural plantings
- Clean water free of PFAS pipes replaced
- Needs to be inclusive of conserving resources, energy efficiency and reducing impact on climate change

### Confusing:

(No feedback offered)

## *2. Natural, historic, and cultural resources in Traverse City need to be respected and protected.*

### **Missing:**

- Add “will proactively protect” not that they need to be. Take ownership!
- Consider the look of the city character of the structures and historical appearance, avoid the mish-mash
- We need to recognize that this was once a settlement of the Anishinaabe called Weqnetong, to decolonize Traverse City, and acknowledge the erasure and displacement of indigenous people and history
- Historical preservation, list of buildings?
- The depth of history should be defined in more detail. If history and culture is defined by settlement, then this should be rethought to dig deeper into pre-settlement context

### **Confusing:**

- Whose history?
- Whose history are we respecting?
- Need definition - what history? What is a cultural resource?

## *3. Our neighborhoods should provide a high quality of life, including housing and transportation options, to meet the daily needs of our residents of all abilities, backgrounds, and ages.*

### **Missing:**

- Form based planning
- Affordable housing is the key to a more diverse and vibrant town. A young and educated worker cannot live in TC
- all income groups
- Traverse city cannot solve regional housing needs. Do not destroy traditional neighborhoods in attempt!
- Missing income (abilities, backgrounds, ages)
- Housing and transportation needs to be accessible to all groups
- Income is missing
- Can't happen without housing for year round residents

### **Confusing:**

- Preserve neighborhoods they already provide housing and are occupied - we can't solve the entire housing problem by changing the land use and zoning
- I don't see anything about protecting the character of the neighborhoods. We have a lot of pressure from all side and no support

*4. We should proactively and consistently manage street and multi-modal transportation infrastructure.*

**Missing:**

- Important to keep it safe for bikes and walkers
- Prioritize public transit
- Bike lanes on all streets are needed
- Need much more planning of lots for E-Bikes especially to avoid conflicts with pedestrians
- Motorized vehicles should not be allowed to go over 5-10 mph - too dangerous

**Confusing:**

- Is so general [dt] to be meaningless
- Be realistic that bicycles are rarely used in the winter

*5. We should invest in creating vibrant city spaces that connect all people to nature and each other.*

**Missing:**

- Should be carefully managed to balance housing with the creation of more parks
- Pop-up spaces/plaza etc. that each new development builds into their plans that is open to the public. Seattle does this downtown - lots of "secret" spaces/gardens

**Confusing:**

(No feedback offered)

## **Module 4: Challenges**

**Activity:** Attendees were asked to record the most important challenge facing Traverse City in the next 10-15 years.

**Results and Key Themes:** 142 responses were recorded with the following topics mentioned most often:

- Affordable housing
- Climate change
- Traffic calming
- Mobility
- Protecting community character
- Tourism
- Becoming a town for only the wealthy

## Module 5: Mapping Mobility Infrastructure

**Activity:** Attendees were encouraged to provide their comments on the city's transportation network by interacting with a 6ft x 9ft map of Traverse City. Attendees were given dots that signified the following:

- Green Dots - I Like Walking or Biking Here
- Yellow Dots - This is a Place for Improvements
- Red Dots - I Avoid Walking or Biking Here
- Blue Dots - This is a Destination

Attendees would then place these dots on areas of the city they associate with good or bad mobility infrastructure or places identified as key destinations. Sticky notes were also provided so attendees could provide more information if they wanted.

The desired outcome of this activity was to glean information on the city's current mobility network and identify impediments from those who ride, walk, or drive on city streets every day. This exercise taps into the lived experience of residents and can illustrate areas of the city that are mobility "places of interest" as identified by a high dot density.

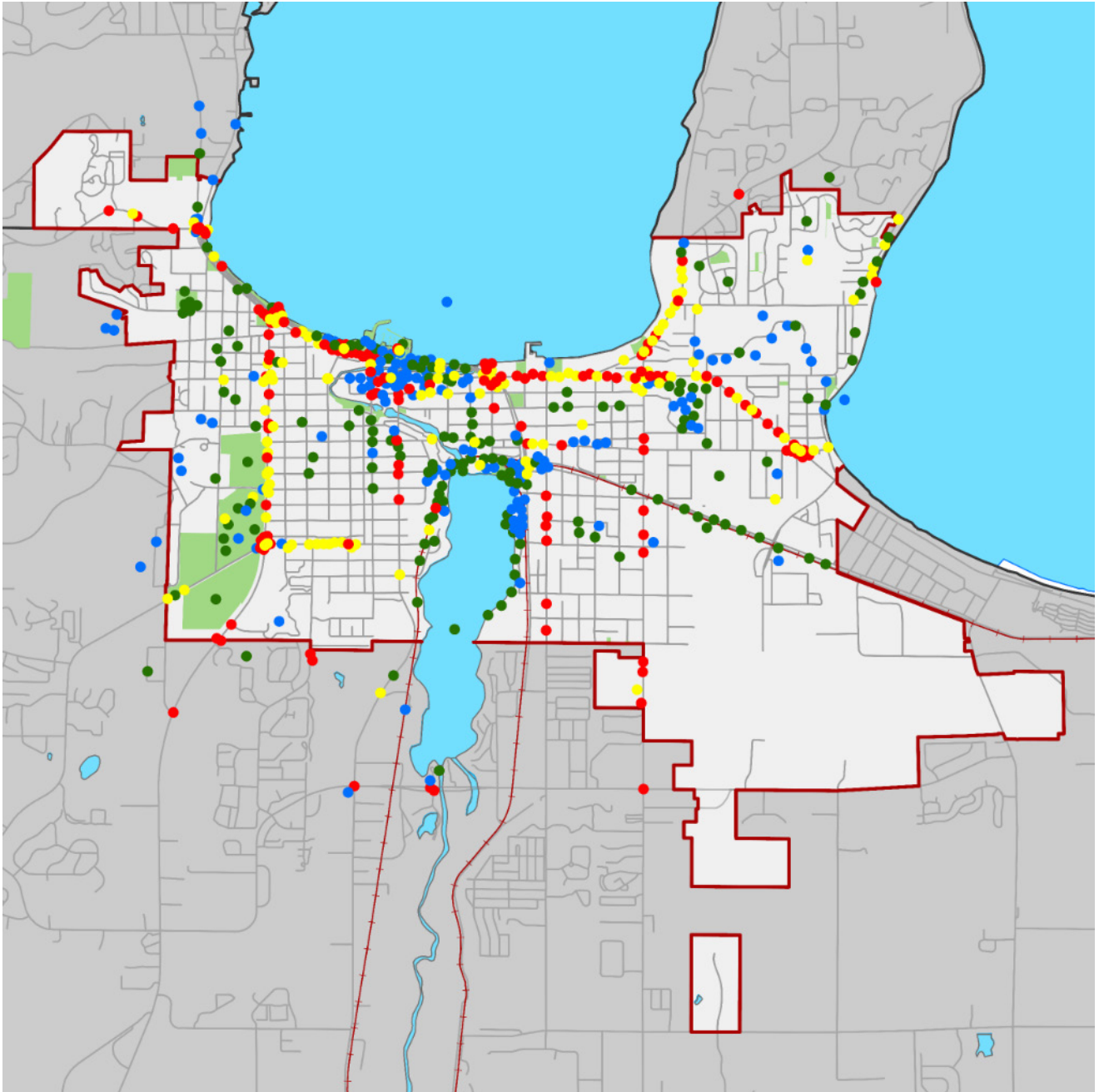
The information gathered in the activity was converted to spatial data for mapping applications. The maps on the following pages illustrate the nearly 600 dots and comments received during this exercise.





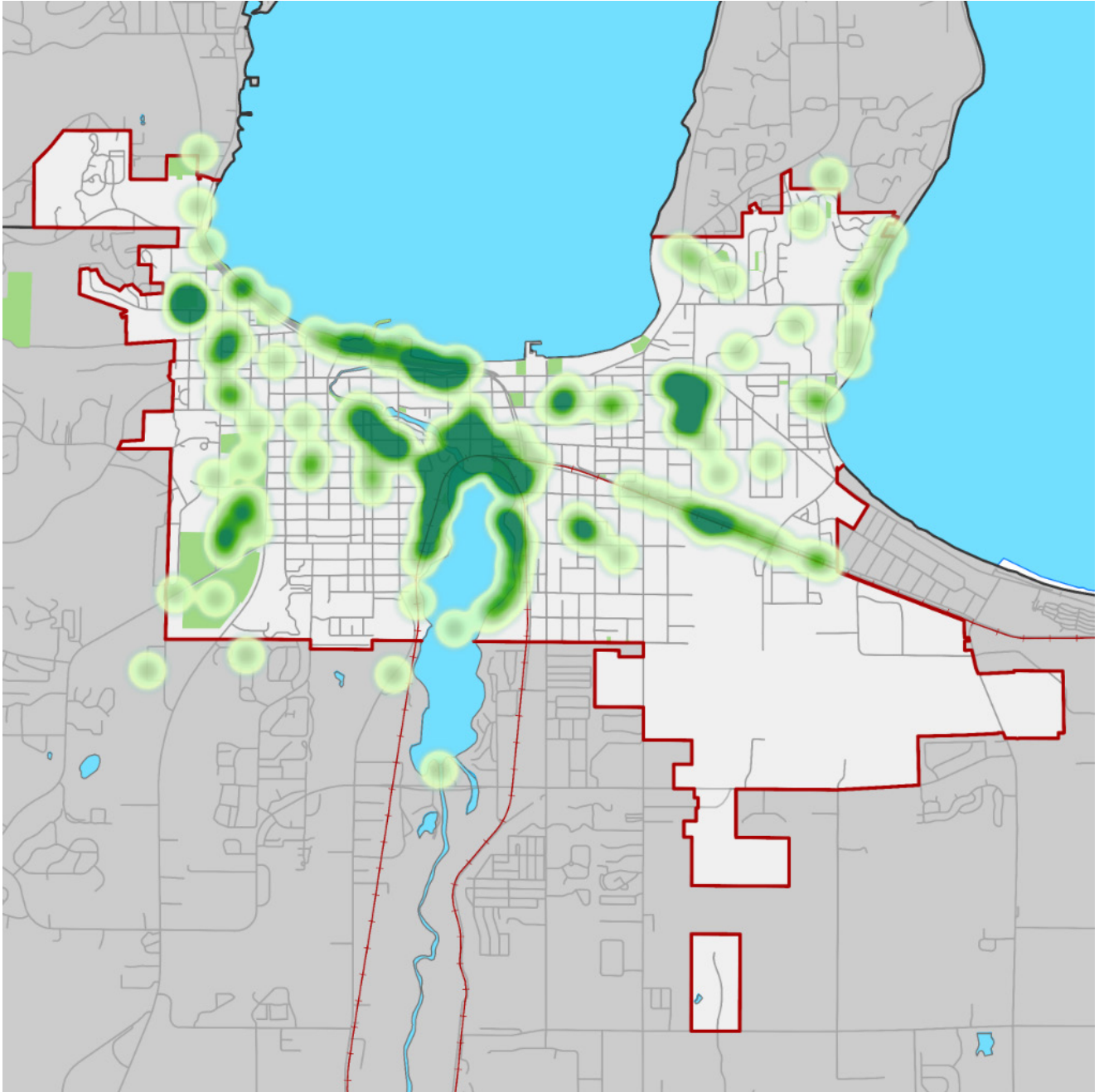
**Map #1:** All dots gathered from Mobility Billboard Map

Green dots = I like walking or biking here; Yellow dots = this is a place for improvements; Red dots = I avoid walking or biking here; Blue dots = this is a destination



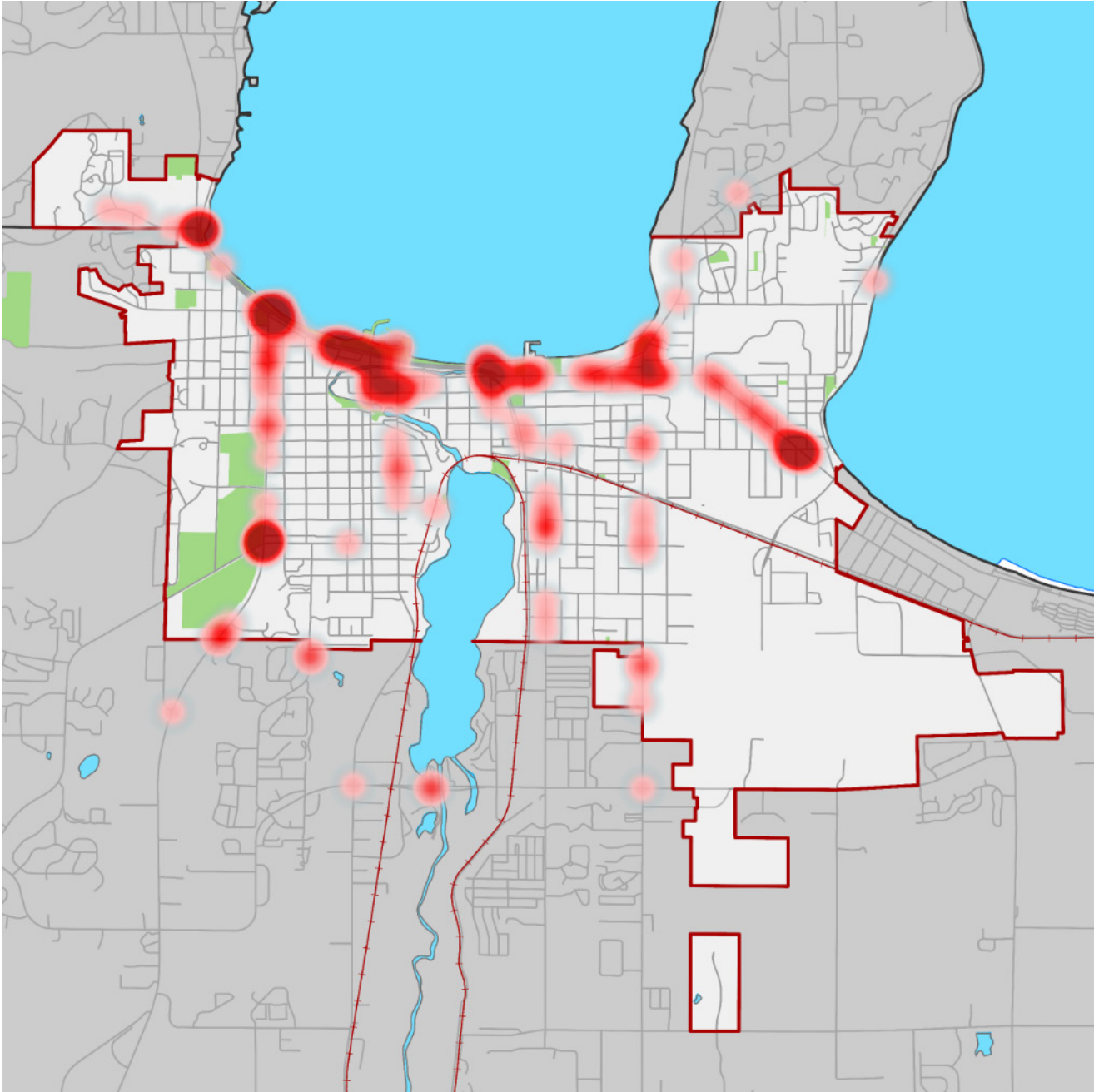
**Map #2: Heatmap - I Like Walking and Biking Here**

Clusters of green indicate places people enjoy walking or cycling.



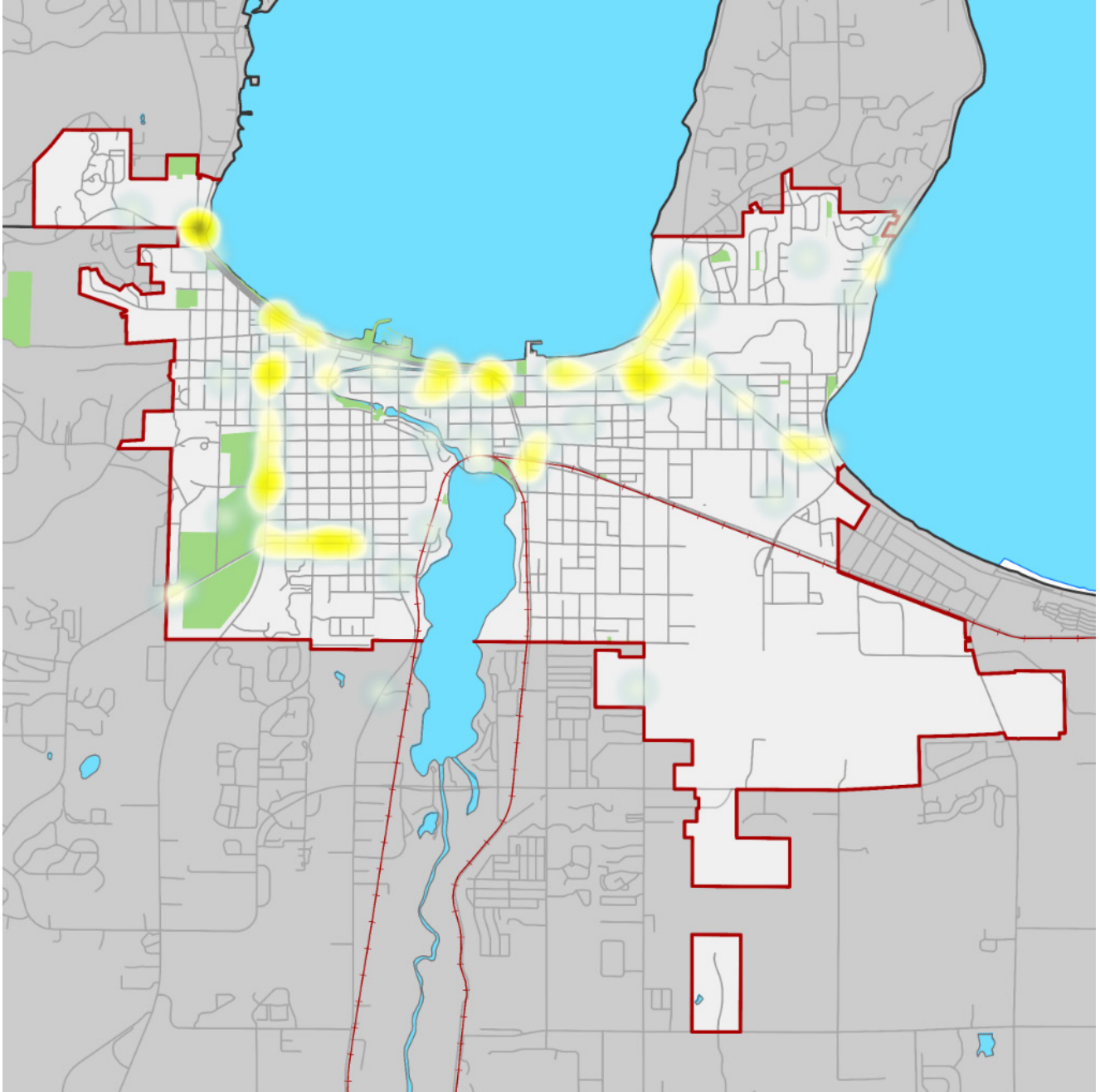
**Map #3: Heatmap - I Avoid Walking and Cycling Here**

Clusters of red indicate places people avoid walking or cycling.



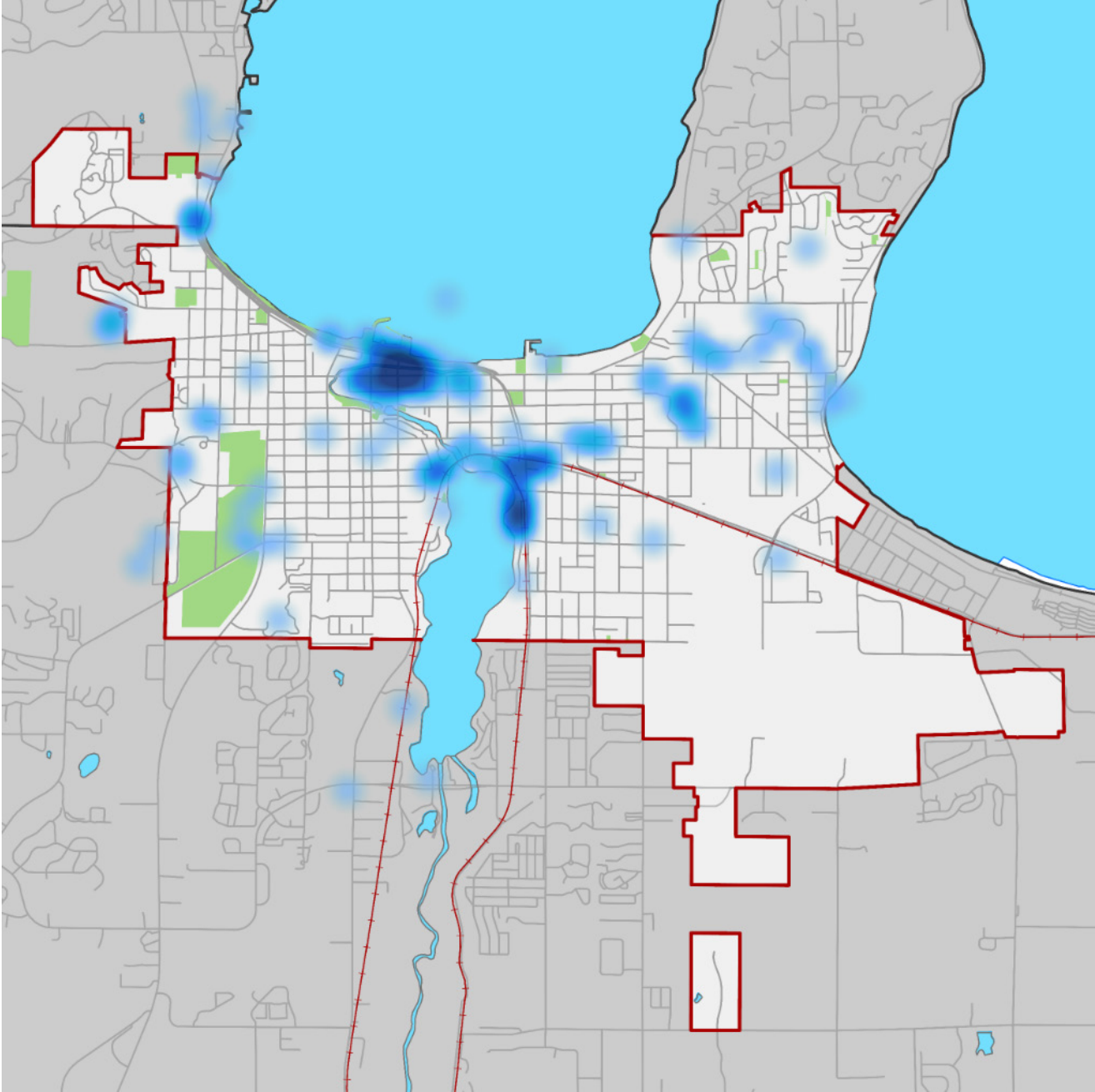
**Map #4: Heatmap - This is a Place for Improvements**

Clusters of yellow indicate places where people would like improvements.



**Map #5: Heatmap - These are Destinations**

Clusters of blue indicate places people identify as destinations.



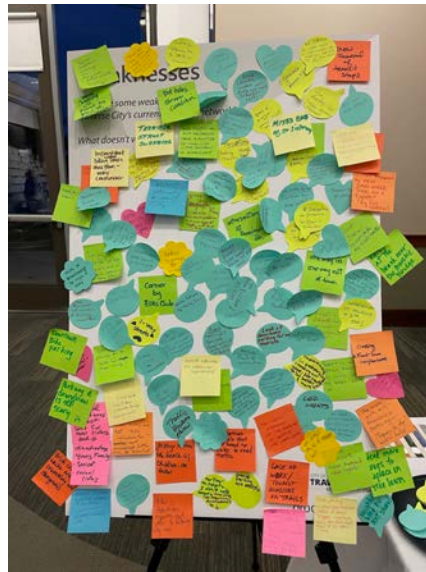
**Results and Key Themes:** with nearly 600 dots and comments collected, a number of key themes emerged. These include:

- **Enjoyment of Regional Trails and Residential Streets** – Attendees placed numerous green dots on areas with dedicated cycling and mobility infrastructure – namely the Boardman Lake Loop Trail, the Traverse Area Regional Trail near downtown and the Parsons Road area, the Eighth Street corridor, and the Grand Traverse County Civic Center. Attendees also identified lower-speed residential neighborhoods as pleasant environments for walking and cycling.
- **Key Corridors Offer Improvement Opportunities** – Attendees identified corridors such as Peninsula Drive, Fourteenth Street, and Division Street as areas that would benefit from increased mobility access. The M-72 / Grandview Parkway intersection was also identified as a key place for improvement.
- **High-Traffic Intersections are Major Mobility Barriers** – Attendees placed many red dots on the region’s busiest intersections. These include the Division Street/Fourteenth Street intersection, the Division Street/Grandview Parkway intersection, intersections connecting downtown Traverse City to the waterfront such as Union Street and Hall Street, the East Front Street/Grandview Parkway split, the Garfield Avenue/Front Street intersection, and the Munson Street/Eighth Street intersection.
- **Key Destinations are Dispersed** – While many attendees identified downtown Traverse City as a major destination, other destinations include Woodmere Avenue east of Boardman Lake, the Grand Traverse County Civic Center, Traverse City High School and the



## Module 6: Developing a Mobility Vision

**Activity:** Attendees were encouraged to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges of Traverse City's current mobility network by placing sticky notes on four corresponding boards. They were also prompted to identify their overall vision for the network on a separate board. This exercise fostered discussions on the priorities of attendees and what mobility changes they desired in the city.



**Top Left:** Strengths Board  
**Top Middle:** Weaknesses Board  
**Top Right:** Opportunities Board  
**Bottom Left:** Challenges Board  
**Bottom Right:** Vision Board

**Results and Key Themes:** Attendees placed 469 sticky notes across the five boards. Key themes for each of the boards is included in the following sections:

- **Strengths** – This board prompted attendees to identify the strengths of Traverse City's current mobility network. Attendees specifically cited the TART Trail, access to BATA, and the Eighth Street redesign as positives. They also mentioned the city's current bike network and grid pattern of slow, residential streets and alleys as positive.
- **Weaknesses** – This board prompted attendees to identify the weaknesses of Traverse City's current mobility network. Many comments pertained to dangerous street crossings and lack of snow removal in many areas. Other comments mentioned high seasonal traffic patterns and the topic of parking – some thinking there is too little and others thinking there is too much of it within the city. Electric bicycles were also mentioned as some comments stated they create conflict with other trail users.
- **Opportunities** – This board prompted attendees to identify the mobility opportunities for Traverse City's future. Comments mentioned greater public transportation opportunities and improved cycling infrastructure. Other comments mentioned prioritizing pedestrian travel over cars and improving the city's wayfinding signage.
- **Challenges** – This board prompted attendees to identify potential challenges to the city's mobility network. Many comments focused on accommodating high-speed traffic, lack of public transportation, and lack of driver education surrounding HAWK signals. Other comments mentioned cyclists failing to follow traffic rules and the need to account for electric bikes and scooters.
- **Vision** – This board prompted attendees to “dream big” and identify their vision for the city's mobility network. Many comments coalesced around the theme of safer streets accounting for multiple transportation modes. Other comments were mixed on the topic of one-way street conversions – some comments supported their conversion while others opposed them. Other comments desired an expansive transit system and rail network. Some comments mentioned a potential highway bypass that would eventually reduce the need for Grandview Parkway.





## Module 7: 103.2 Mobility FM: Radio Booth

**Activity:** Attendees were encouraged to sit down and share their thoughts and observations of Traverse City's mobility network in a podcast-style interview format. Staff erected a table with a microphone and audio processing software and recorded conversations with attendees. Attendees were asked questions on how long they have lived in Traverse City, how they typically travel within the city, and what changes they would like to see in the city's mobility network. Most attendees spoke between 2-5 minutes, while others had more comments to share. The podcast-style format lent itself to informal conversations and allowed attendees to speak "off the cuff" and share their thoughts in an anonymous and unfiltered format.

**Results and Key Themes:** Following the event, the recordings were transcribed and input into a spreadsheet. Listed below are a few comments offered during the activity. These examples are illustrative, offering a glimpse into "the mobility radio studio" and are not necessarily representative of all comments received.



*"We have so many [trails] that still aren't quite connected, so you know like down [near] Manistee, Thompsonville they're working on getting trails connected."*

*"I walk and I drive my car. I no longer ride my bike because it's taking my life in my own hands. I've given that up."*

*"One thing to realize is that everyone does not ride a bike anymore, and that if you do ride a bike that you should follow the rules because I certainly notice bicyclists not stopping or not looking for another car or something like that."*

*"I like to ride my bike through the city. We take walks often, that's why we live in town is to be close to these things close to the bay, close to downtown commerce."*

*"I think biking is definitely a part of it, but if we're being realistic, you know we do have winter here in Northern Michigan."*

*"I like the bump outs they do and the little islands of trees in the middle of the roads and stuff to just slow things down. And add spots for native plants and pollinators and all that stuff too. Just greens it up a lot."*

*"I guess more traffic calming measures would be nice too. Slower speeds and maybe more - I don't know what it takes - more patrol or more speed bumps - calming the traffic."*

*"Well, right now the system of bike lanes in the town are disjointed. I think it would help if it was more cohesive, more consistent from one area to the next."*

*"I'd like to see Division Street up to 14th Street just go away. I think it's a terrible thing. It's like the Cross Bronx Expressway in the Bronx. It just cuts the neighborhood - you can't get across it except at the traffic light."*

*"Every day we do get out to run or bike, so that counts too and we try to do that for errands. We're lucky where we live right now where we can bike to restaurants, downtown bike to the bar, bike to the grocery store."*

*"I recently took a trip up from Cass and Eighth roughly to the Sutton Bay Trail and I found it pretty difficult to negotiate the crossing at Grandview Parkway and to get up to where the trail started."*

*"We particularly appreciate the pedestrian crosswalks in the downtown areas and how they've expanded to other streets other than just downtown."*

*"I bike as much as I can. I live downtown. But I also drive a lot because unfortunately most of the things I need aren't within biking distance."*

*"I think it's really important that I think if we want to see more families cycle and also more women cycle, you have to create those protected spaces."*

*"It is extremely difficult [to get around] during the summertime. For you know, eight to ten weeks, it's a pain. But other than that, the city in itself is fairly easy to get around. There are some routes to take to avoid some of the bottlenecks."*

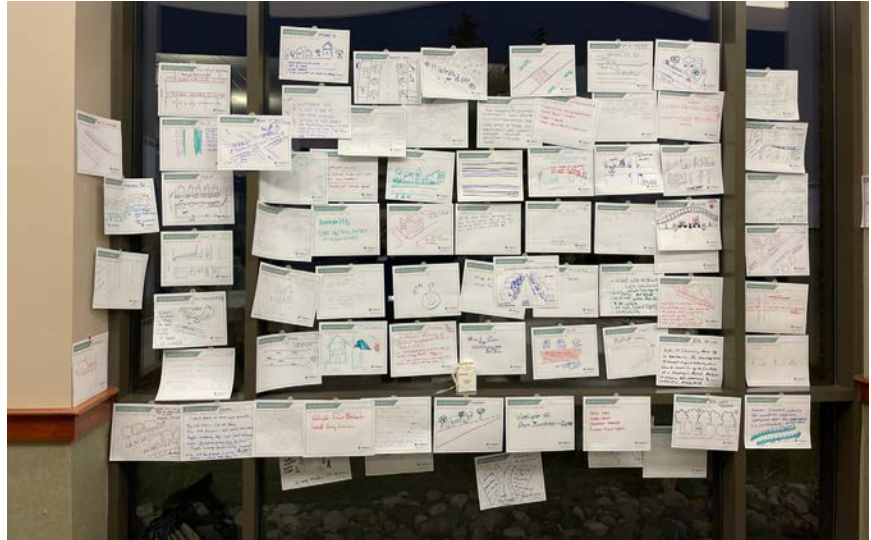
*"It would be nice to have more consistent lighting in the evenings throughout the city. Because sometimes it gets pretty dark and it is hard to see bicyclists."*

Over forty attendees participated in the module, offering their thoughts and daily experiences with the city's transportation network. Some key themes are listed below:

- **Desire for Increased Safety on City Streets and Trails** – Many attendees wanted safer streets – stating a desire for slower traffic and improved pedestrian and non-motorized crossings. Attendees also mentioned safety on trails, especially in regards to electric bicycles and conflicts between pedestrians and cyclists. Other attendees stated that cyclists should follow traffic rules when riding in the street, as safety is a shared responsibility between all street users.
- **Desire for Separated Facilities and Regional Trails** – Attendees mentioned their discomfort of riding with high-speed traffic and mentioned their favorite places to ride as either being low-speed neighborhoods or on separated trails. Regional trails were also highlighted as important, as many attendees mentioned riding to destinations outside of the city for
- **Traveling in Traverse City is Relatively Convenient** – Although attendees mentioned the congestion during the summer months, most attendees stated that getting around town is still relatively easy. Many long-time residents cited the increased congestion and traffic in the region while others mentioned that the city is doing a good job increasing mobility access in certain areas.

## Module 8: Your Favorite Street: A Drawing Exercise

**Activity:** Attendees sat at round tables supplied with paper and drawing supplies and were encouraged to draw their favorite streets. This exercise sought to identify what residents viewed as the “right ingredients” for successful streets and the key features that made them desirable. Upon completion of their drawing, attendees were encouraged to post their drawing on the wall along with other drawings, creating an exhibit of street illustrations. This exercise added a creative element to the open house, as attendees could convey their vision and priorities in a graphic format.



**Results and Key Themes:** Original graphics from residents are a rich resource for inclusion in planning efforts, as they represent an honest and unfiltered vision for the community’s future. These images were collected and scanned for future use, some of these images are included



My favorite street is...

And this is what it looks like!

- speed bumps to slow traffic on high use streets
- wide sidewalks away from street curb
- tall, mature trees in park strip
- slow auto speeds
- room for bikes in road
- stop signs to slow traffic and safer ped crossing

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Mobility Action Plan  
progressive|ae

My favorite street is...

And this is what it looks like!

transit  
vehicles  
Bikes  
etc.

Parking

Bike Lane

Bus Stop

TRAVERSE CITY  
Mobility Action Plan  
progressive|ae

My favorite street is... **W. 9th / W. 8th**

And this is what it looks like!

Narrow Streets

Side-walks both sides

Lots of Trees

CANOPY Trees !!!

2-way traffic !!!

TRAVERSE CITY  
Mobility Action Plan  
progressive|ae

My favorite street is... **Webster #1**

And this is what it looks like!

TRAVERSE CITY  
Mobility Action Plan  
progressive|ae

My favorite street is... **RESIDENTIAL**

And this is what it looks like!

NO CYCLE PUBS FULL OF DRUNKS IN A.M. ON RESIDENTIAL STREETS

4-WAY STOPS AT EVERY INTERSECTION

25 MPH ENFORCED!

TRAVERSE CITY  
Mobility Action Plan  
progressive|ae

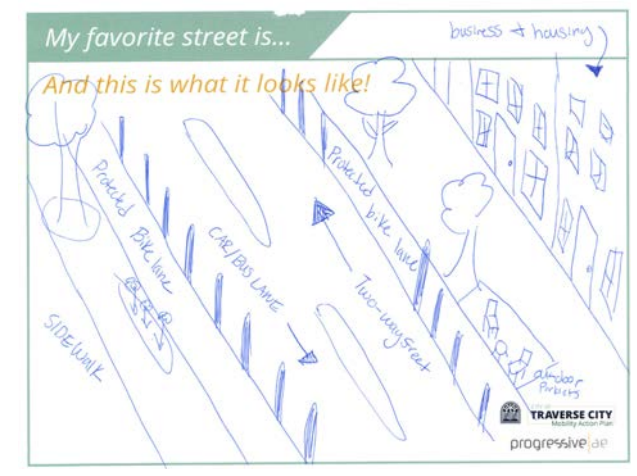
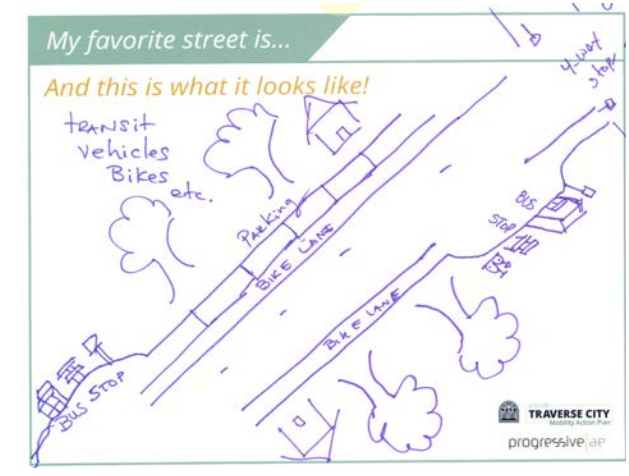
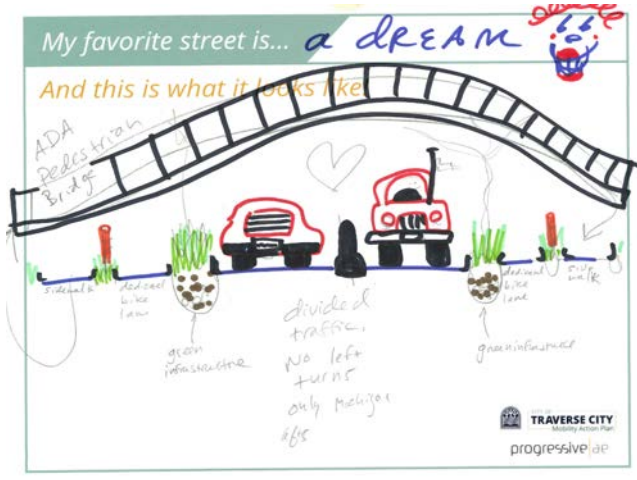
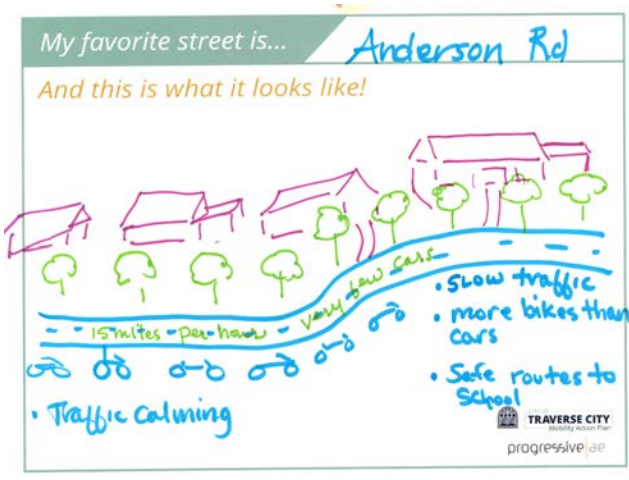
My favorite street is... **ISBARD Street**

And this is what it looks like!

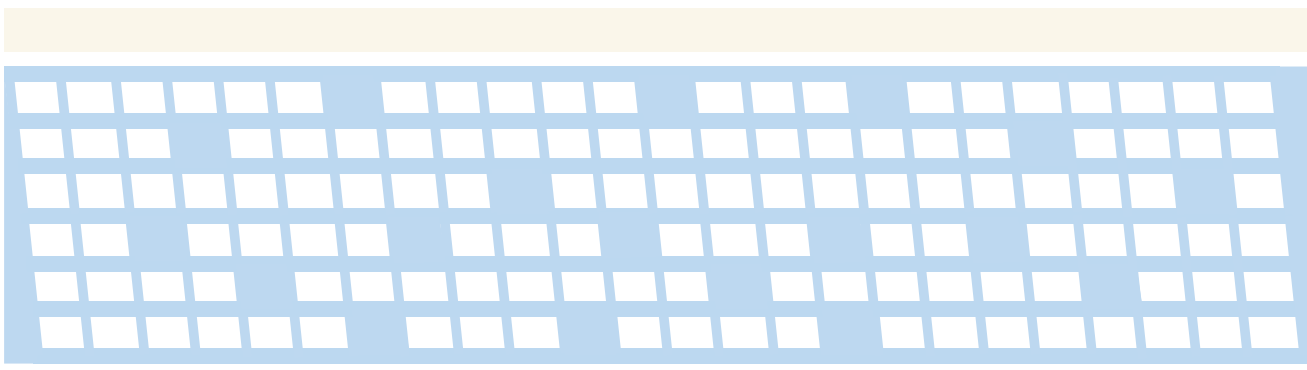
Integrated Access & Inclusion

Rain Garden (& other green infrastructure)

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Mobility Action Plan  
progressive|ae



In total, 83 attendees provided their drawings. Many illustrations include wide sidewalks and abundant tree canopies. Others include bike lanes and pedestrian islands. Another common theme was the desirability of downtown’s pedestrian environment as well as the low-stress streets of the residential neighborhoods. Some attendees emphasized the appeal of brick streets and others included speed bumps and other traffic calming devices in their drawings.



## *Summary of Key Mobility Themes*

While each module engaged attendees in unique ways, a number of key themes and reoccurring comments stood out. These are discussed below.

### *Importance of Safety and Education*

Across all modules, attendees mentioned safety as a primary concern. Many mentioned the difficulty they have walking, cycling, or riding transit across the city and stated a desire for improved pedestrian facilities such as cross-walks, HAWK signals, pedestrian islands, and protected bike lanes. Others mentioned concerns over cyclist/driver education as well as pedestrian/cyclist conflicts along trails. Electric bikes were mentioned numerous times and many attendees desired safety training and better education to reduce conflicts.

### *Desire for Protected Pedestrian Facilities and Trails*

The Mobility Map indicates that attendees felt most comfortable walking and cycling on areas removed from vehicular traffic. This was reaffirmed in other modules as attendees mentioned the TART Trail along with the Eighth Street reconstruction as ideal examples of good mobility infrastructure in the region. Many drawings indicate the importance of sidewalks and dedicated bicycle facilities.

### *High-Traffic Streets and Intersections as Barriers*

Referencing the importance of safety, many attendees mentioned the difficulty of crossing major streets and intersections. Streets such as Grandview Parkway, Division Street, Garfield Street, and intersections such as Grandview Parkway/M-72 and Fourteenth Street/Division Street were all cited as major barriers to non-motorized travel. In contrast to these, many attendees cited the city's network of low-speed residential streets as ideal environments for walking and cycling.

### *Traverse City's Connection to Nature*

Throughout the evening, attendees mentioned the importance of accessing Traverse City's natural features - including access to city parks, access to Grand Traverse Bay, and trail connections to undeveloped open space outside the city. Many attendees bike, walk, or run for recreational purposes and mentioned traveling between the City and the peninsulas. Water access was a primary theme, as many attendees mentioned boating and kayaking as enjoyable activities and desired easier access to Grand Traverse Bay and the Boardman River.

## SECTION 5: NOVEMBER OPEN HOUSE ONLINE SURVEY

676 community members took an online survey from November 10, 2022, to November 22, 2022, as a follow-up activity to the open house on October 26, 2022. Results are summarized below. Results that are more complicated to analyze include written framing and results that are relatively straightforward are presented as they were in the survey.

**Question 1:** *Did you attend the Traverse City Open House at the Hagerty Center on Wednesday October 26th from 3p.m. to 7p.m.?*

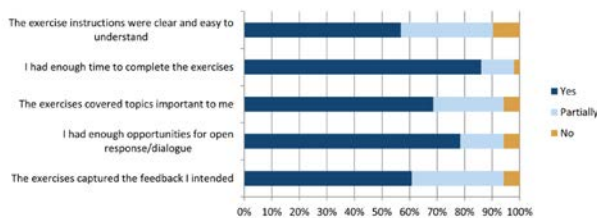
|     |                       |
|-----|-----------------------|
| Yes | 66 responses (9.8%)   |
| No  | 610 responses (90.2%) |

Respondents who marked “yes” to question 1 were directed to questions 2—8 below. Respondents who marked “no” to question 2 were directed to questions 9—22 below.

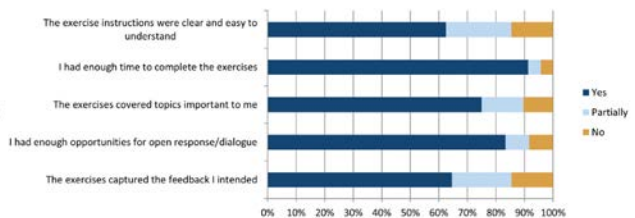
**Question 2 - 3:** *Asked respondents to mark “yes”, “partially”, or “no” to the following statements regarding the Master Plan and Mobility Action Plan components of the open house.*

- The exercises captured the feedback I intended
- I had enough opportunities for open response/dialogue
- The exercises covered topics important to me
- I had enough time to complete the exercises
- The exercise instructions were clear and easy to understand

*Question 2: Please provide feedback for the Master Plan Section of the Open House.*

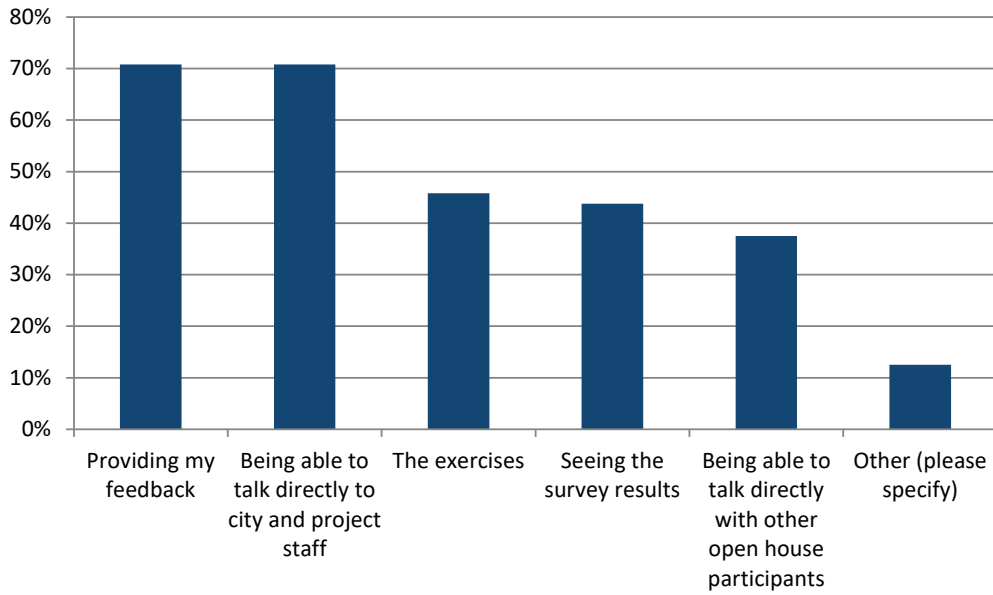


*Question 3: Please provide feedback for the Mobility Action Plan Section of the Open House.*

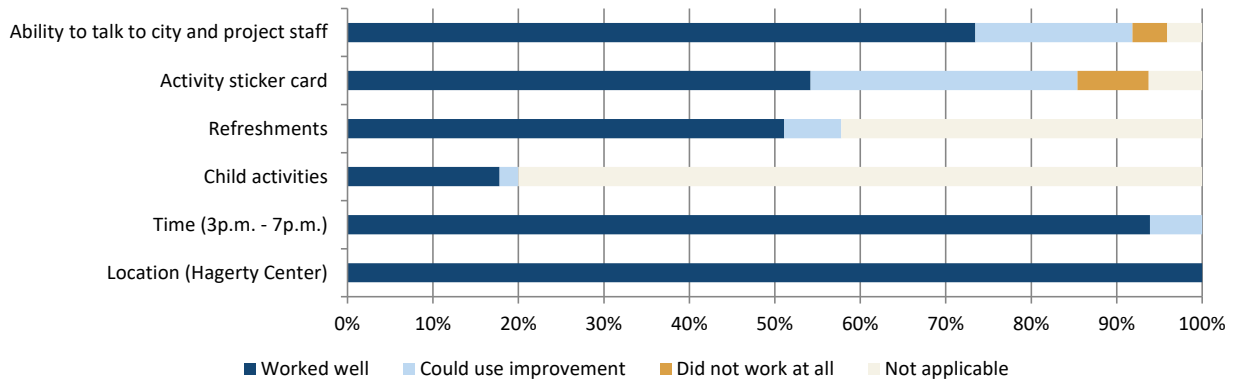




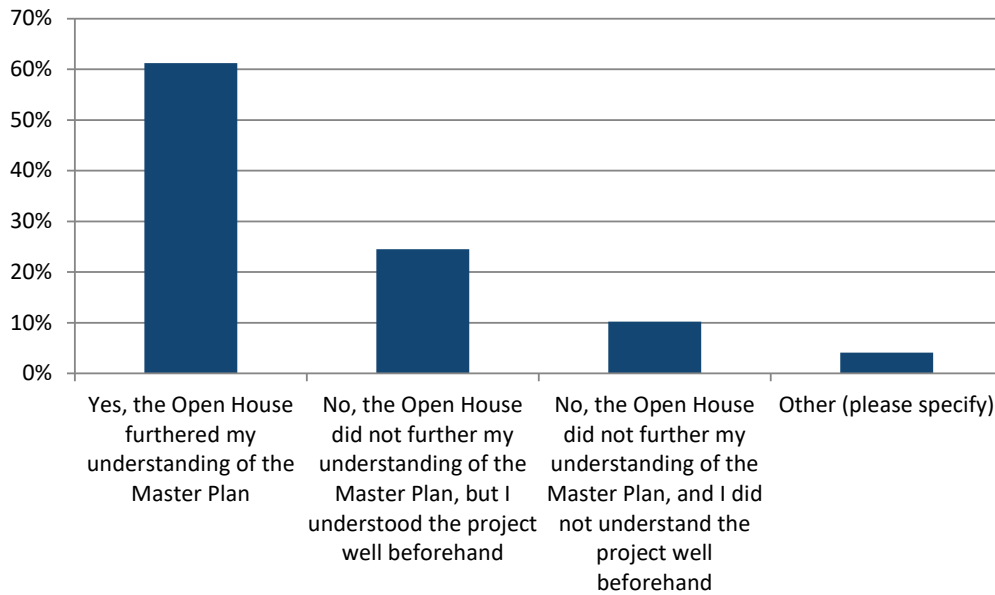
**Question 4:** What did you enjoy most about the Open House? (Check all that apply)



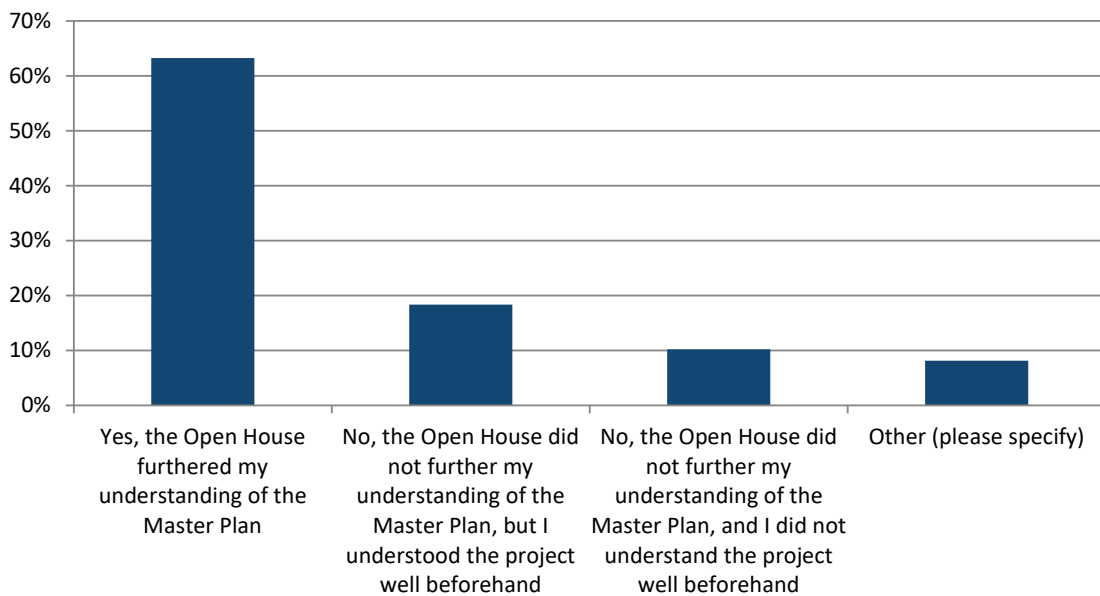
**Question 5:** Which of these elements of the Open House worked well for you/ your family?



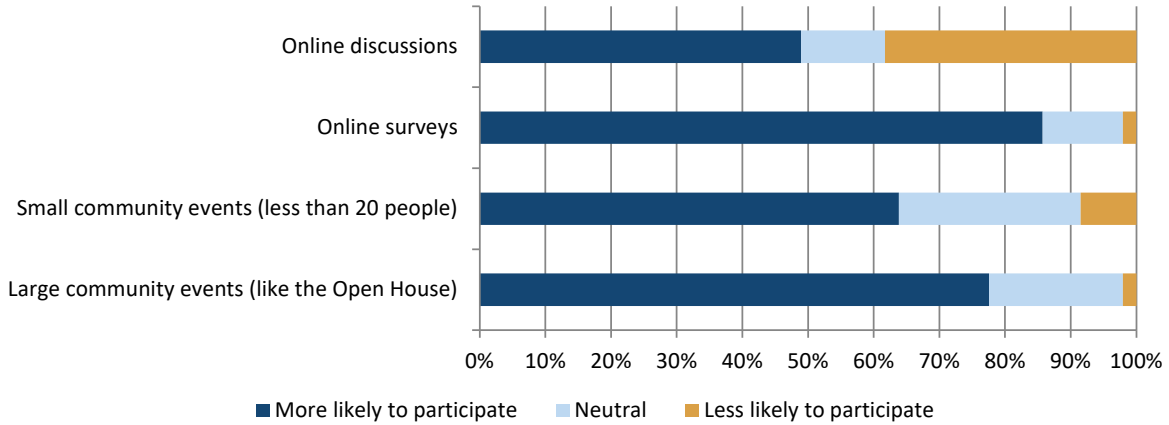
**Question 6:** *Did the open house further your understanding of the Master Plan?*



**Question 7:** *Did the open house further your understanding of the Mobility Action Plan?*

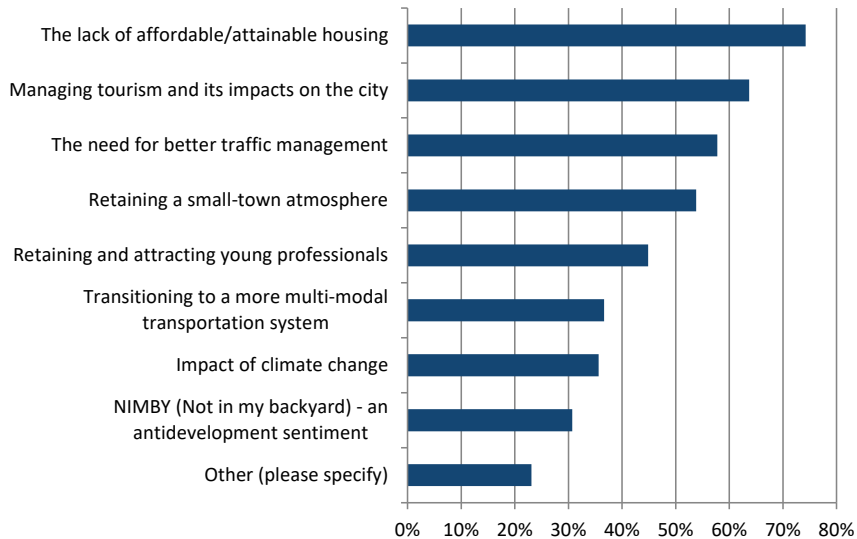


**Question 8:** Are you more likely to engage in the Master Plan and Mobility Action Plan after participation in the Open House? (Check all that apply)



Questions 9 - 22 were only posed to survey respondents who did not attend the open house and build off the feedback received at the open house.

**Question 9:** What are the challenges facing Traverse City over the next 10-15 years? (Check all that apply)



**Question 10 - 24:** Asked respondents to consider the same five guiding principles presented at the open house and identify what they liked, what they found confusing, or felt was missing from each principle.

The list of comments for each principle and each category is robust! A full list can be found in Appendix D of this report and oft-repeated themes for each like, missing, and confusing category are summarized below:

*1. We should proactively and consistently manage water, sanitary, and storm infrastructure systems for continued and improved public health and safety.*

**Like:** Very important, common sense, no-brainer, expected

**Missing:** Timeframe, specifics, care for health of environment as a whole

**Confusing:** Vaguely worded, terms not defined

*2. Natural, historic, and cultural resources in Traverse City need to be respected and protected.*

**Like:** Respect and protect, inclusivity, historical resources

**Missing:** Vaguely worded, terms not defined

**Confusing:** Whose history?, resources not defined

*3. Our neighborhoods should provide a high quality of life, including housing and transportation options, to meet the daily needs of our residents of all abilities, backgrounds, and ages.*

**Like:** inclusive, residents, high quality, positive

**Missing:** Vaguely worded, different people have different needs

**Confusing:** How will this be implemented?, terms not defined and mean different things to different people

*4. We should proactively and consistently manage street and multi-modal transportation infrastructure.*

**Like:** proactively, consistently, multi-modal

**Missing:** terms not defined, how to implement

**Confusing:** vaguely worded, terms not defined, steps to implement

*5. We should invest in creating vibrant city spaces that connect all people to nature and each other.*

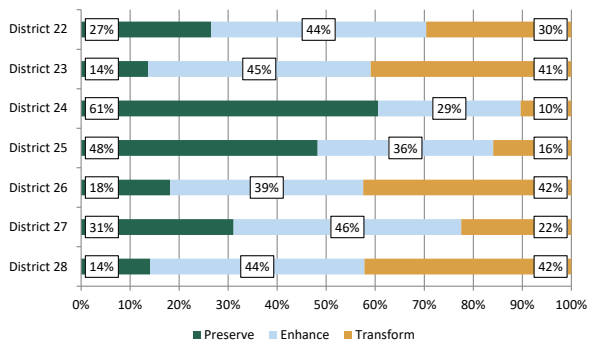
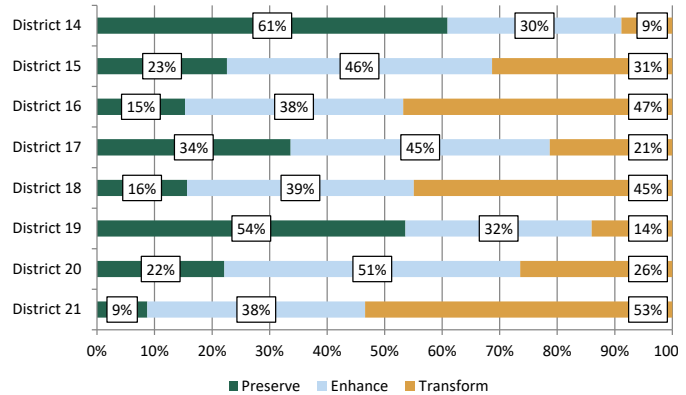
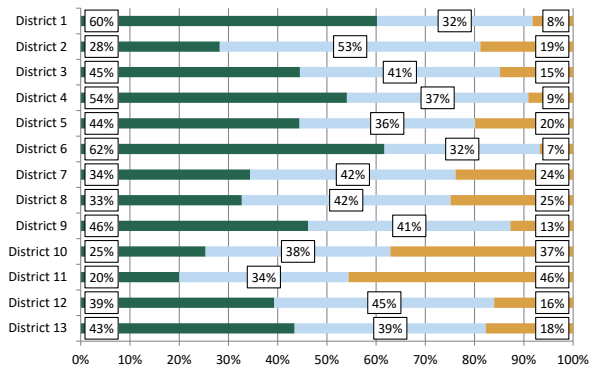
**Like:** connecting people, green spaces, vibrant

**Missing:** maintaining existing spaces, terms not defined, how to implement

**Confusing:** terms not defined how to implement

**Question 24 - 27:** Asked respondents to consider three maps of different geographic areas within the city (note: some of these areas follow designated neighborhood boundaries but many were created specifically for this exercise) and identify which areas they wished to preserve, enhance, and transform.

This is the same exercise that was completed at the open house.



**Top Left:** Districts 1 - 13  
**Top Right:** Districts 14 - 21  
**Bottom Left:** District 22 - 28

## SECTION 6: NEXT STEPS

The Master Plan and Mobility Action Plan projects will continue to engage the community in 2023. To learn more, view project timelines, and/or sign up for updates, please visit the project websites at [www.tcmasterplan.org](http://www.tcmasterplan.org) or [www.tcmobility.org](http://www.tcmobility.org).

## APPENDICES

- A. Original Survey Raw Responses
- B. Open House Raw Responses
- C. Open House Survey Raw Responses



# CITY OF **TRAVERSE CITY** Master Plan

## Traverse City Master Plan Planning for Tourism Community Workshops

### Discussion Summary

The Master Plan consultants, Beckett & Raeder and Placecraft, facilitated two sessions regarding how Traverse City can plan for tourism to support the community of Traverse City. One session was held virtually via Zoom (42 people attended) and one session was held at the Traverse Area District Library (19 people attended). At each session, we:

- Explored the impacts of tourism on local community infrastructure, natural resources, housing, economy, employment, geography, and transportation.
- Explored the concept of “sustainable tourism”, a term that is born out of eco-tourism movement in South/Central America and which is gaining popularity in master planning work.
- Explored how other communities like Traverse City are planning for sustainable tourism.
- Reviewed Traverse City tourism data and trends.
- Discussed what “sustainable tourism” could/should look like in Traverse City, based on the perspectives and experiences of those in attendance, and their ideas for how the city can support this vision.

### Discussion Themes: What does “sustainable tourism” mean?

The following high-level themes emerged when folks responded to the prompt *What does the term “sustainable tourism” mean to you?*

- Balance exists between promotion and preservation of natural and cultural assets.
- Resident quality of life is prioritized along with tourist quality of experience.
- Year-round housing, employment, recreation, and tourism opportunities.
- Reliable and robust transportation systems.
- Part of a diverse economy.
- Requires regional collaboration between units of government, businesses, nonprofits, and residents.

**Discussion Themes: How can the City support sustainable tourism?**

The following suggestions were proposed by participants responding to the prompt *How can the city support sustainable tourism in Traverse City?* These are based on the ideas provided at the workshop and rewritten to tie directly to a program and/or service over which the city has current agency (i.e. planning, infrastructure, zoning, etc.).

- Work regionally with local units of government, businesses, nonprofits, and NGOs to plan for sustainable tourism.
- Ensure public infrastructure is planned and maintained appropriately.
- Maintain connected transportation network.
- Encourage and support public transportation use.
- Explore and leverage funding opportunities to support year-round community needs with seasonal influx of dollars.
- Protect natural resources.
- Consider best practices from similar communities.
- Regulate short-term rentals in the city, particularly density of rentals to prevent clustering in neighborhoods.
- Define quality of life metrics for Traverse City residents and assess on a regular basis.
- Work with large event organizations to minimize disruptions to residents and disburse utilization of city property across the city.





# Traverse City Neighborhoods: What should be preserved, enhanced, or transformed?

April 2023

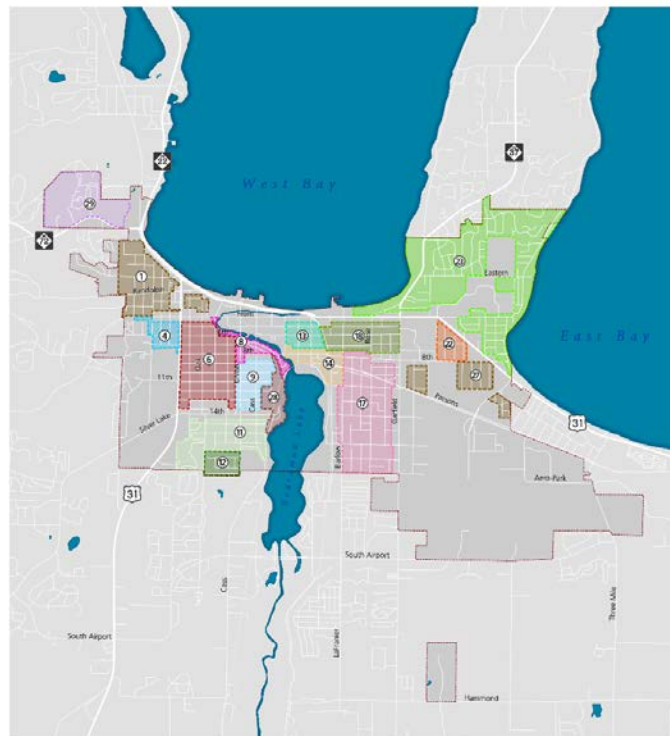
## Introduction

This document presents the responses to questions asked during Neighborhood Listening Sessions conducted this spring to inform the City of Traverse City Master Plan rewrite process.

The city conducted 9 listening sessions with every official and unofficial geographic neighborhood in the city, to understand what residents hope to preserve, enhance, or transform in their neighborhood. Neighborhoods were grouped geographically, as follows:

1. Morgan Farms neighborhood
2. Central neighborhood
3. SoFo, Fernwood, Top of the Hill\* neighborhoods
4. Old Towne, Midtown, Lake Ridge neighborhoods
5. Slabtown, Kids Creek neighborhoods
6. Boardman, Oak Park neighborhoods
7. BOOM, Base of the Peninsula\* neighborhoods
8. Oakwood, Triangle\* neighborhoods
9. NoBo, Traverse Heights neighborhoods

*\*Note: these neighborhoods do not have a formal association and are called this for organizational purposes for this activity only.*



### Neighborhood Respondents

Sources: Michigan Open Data Portal, City of Traverse City

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1: Slab Town Neighborhood: 12.5%        | 18: Oak Park Neighborhood: 3.9%         |
| 4: Kids Creek Neighborhood: 3.3%        | 22: Triangle Neighborhood: 1.5%         |
| 6: Central Neighborhood: 12.7%          | 23: BOOM/Base of the Peninsula: 13.4%   |
| 8: Midtown Neighborhood: 2.6%           | 27: Oakwood Neighborhoods: 4.6%         |
| 9: Old Towne: 7.4%                      | 28: Lake Ridge/West Boardman Lake: 0.9% |
| 11: SoFo/Fernwood Neighborhood: 3.3%    | 29: Morgan Farms: 1.8%                  |
| 12: Hilltop Neighborhood: 0.4%          | *I live outside the city*: 10.5%        |
| 13: Boardman Neighborhood: 3.5%         | *Other*: 6.8%                           |
| 14: North Boardman: 0.6%                |   |
| 17: Traverse Heights Neighborhood: 9.9% |   |

*Pictured at right: Map of online survey respondents (survey only) by neighborhood.*



These sessions were held in local coffee shops, churches, café’s, schools, and meeting rooms that are in and/or near the neighborhood(s) participating in each session. The City felt it important to hold these sessions in locations rooted in the community fabric of each neighborhood.

In addition to the in-person/in-neighborhood listening sessions, the City held two virtual weekend sessions, open to all residents. The City also shared an online survey, with the same questions posed in the listening sessions, to provide a convenient option for people who were unable to participate in either the in-person or virtual session options provided.

In total, the city 702 people participated. 124 people participated in an in-person listening session, 34 people participated in the virtual listening sessions, and 544 people took the online survey.

This document summarizes participants’ ideas regarding what should be preserved, enhanced, and transformed in Traverse City neighborhoods, as defined below:

- **Preserve:** What elements of your neighborhood do you hope remain the same as they are today, even if/as conditions change around them?
- **Enhance:** What elements of your neighborhood do you hope are improved in the future?
- **Transform:** What elements of your neighborhood do you hope are transformed in the future, meaning totally reimagined and/or rebuilt?



*Pictured above: Postcard mailed to every city resident marketing the listening sessions (along with email, social media, and paid media advertising).*



## Overall Takeaways

This report summarizes the overall themes that emerged from the listening sessions and online survey regarding what should be preserved, enhanced, and transformed in Traverse City neighborhoods.

The appendices of this report (listed on page 5) include feedback organized by neighborhood from the listening sessions and survey. While some feedback varies by neighborhood, depending on the age, location, density, etc. of each neighborhood, common themes emerged for what neighborhood elements Traverse City residents are preserved, enhanced, or transformed, no matter where they live in the city. These are summarized below.

What would participants like to preserve in Traverse City neighborhoods overall?

- Trees and tree-lined streets.
- Walkability and bikeability.
- Historic buildings, homes, and streets.
- Quiet and peaceful neighborhoods.
- Parks and green spaces.
- Limiting short-term rentals like Airbnb.
- Neighborhood schools.
- Low housing density.
- Pedestrian-friendly lighting.
- Access to water and beaches.



*Pictured above: listening session with SoFo, Fernwood, and Top of the Hill (not an official designation) neighborhoods at Grand Traverse Circuit (left) and listening session with Oakwood and Triangle (not an official designation) neighborhoods (right).*



### What would participants like to enhance in Traverse City neighborhoods overall?

- Availability of local businesses, such as grocery stores and specialty shops.
- Public art installations.
- Safe and convenient crossings for pedestrians and cyclists.
- More appealing bus stops with shelters and lighting.
- Upgraded park amenities, such as playground equipment and pickleball courts.
- More trees and plantings in the street lawn.
- More ADUs (Accessory Dwelling Units) that are proportionate to the scale of homes.
- Better street lighting and maintenance of roads and curbs.
- Beautification of deteriorated properties and corridors.
- More homeless care and shelter options.
- More stop signs to control traffic flow.



*Pictured above: listening session with Boardman and Oak Park neighborhoods at Raduno (left) and listening session with Morgan Farms neighborhood at Hickory Hills (right).*

### What would participants like to transform in Traverse City neighborhoods overall?

- Access to affordable housing, childcare, and schools.
- More sidewalks and pedestrian crossings.
- Traffic calming measures, such as narrowing streets and adding 4-way stops.
- Buried utility lines.
- Resurfacing and improving roads.
- Improved drainage and stormwater management.
- Improved neighbor relations with City of Traverse City.



## Appendices

Appendices are found at the link below or on the project website.

Project website: [www.tcmasterplan.org](http://www.tcmasterplan.org)

- 1a [Boardman Neighborhood Session Results](#)
- 1b [Boardman Neighborhood Survey Results](#)
- 2a [BOOM Neighborhood Session Results](#)
- 2b [BOOM Neighborhood Survey Results](#)
- 3a [Central Neighborhood Session Results](#)
- 3b [Central Neighborhood Survey Results](#)
- 4a [Hilltop Neighborhood Session Results](#)
- 4b [Hilltop Neighborhood Survey Results](#)
- 5a [Kids Creek Neighborhood Session Results](#)
- 5b [Kids Creek Neighborhood Survey Results](#)
- 6a [Lake Ridge Neighborhood Session Results](#)
- 6b [Lake Ridge Neighborhood Survey Results](#)
- 7a [Midtown Neighborhood Session Results](#)
- 7b [Midtown Neighborhood Survey Results](#)
- 8a [Morgan Farms Neighborhood Session Results](#)
- 8b [Morgan Farms Neighborhood Survey Results](#)
- 9a [NoBo Neighborhood Session Results](#)
- 9b [NoBo Neighborhood Survey Results](#)
- 10a [Oak Park Neighborhood Session Results](#)
- 10b [Oak Park Neighborhood Survey Results](#)
- 11a [Oakwood Neighborhood Session Results](#)
- 11b [Oakwood Neighborhood Survey Results](#)
- 12a [Old Towne Neighborhood Session Results](#)
- 12b [Old Towne Neighborhood Survey Results](#)
- 13a [Slab Town Neighborhood Session Results](#)
- 13b [Slab Town Neighborhood Survey Results](#)
- 14a [SoFo Neighborhood Session Results](#)
- 14b [SoFo Neighborhood Survey Results](#)
- 15a [Traverse Heights Neighborhood Session Results](#)
- 15b [Traverse Heights Neighborhood Survey Results](#)
- 16a [Triangle Neighborhood Session Results](#)
- 16b [Triangle Neighborhood Survey Results](#)
- 17 [Survey Results: Don't know which neighborhood I live in](#)
- 18 [Survey Results: Live outside the city](#)
- 19 [Survey Results: Other](#)

# City of Traverse City Master Plan

Spring 2023 Engagement Summary

## Key Corridor/Areas Design Workshop

The city hosted a public workshop and online survey in April 2023 to inform the design and transformation of these key locations within the city:

- Munson Avenue corridor, between the college and city limits
- 14<sup>th</sup> Street corridor
- Garfield Avenue corridor
- Garfield Avenue and Eighth Street intersection

Workshop and survey participants were asked to identify what is currently working well and not working at these locations, and what is possible for these locations in the future.

Results from both the workshop and online survey are summarized in this document. It is important to note that this summary does not and cannot include every perspective shared at the workshop or via the survey, nor does this summary align with the perspectives of all community members who live, work, play, and/or learn in Traverse City.

Some readers of this report might find the summary to be very aligned with their experience and perspective (“that’s exactly how I feel!”) while some readers might find the summary to be missing a key perspective or wrong (“this isn’t how I feel at all”). Most readers will find an idea similar to their perspective in the raw comments/feedback on which this report is based. These are provided in original, unedited form in appendices to this report as follows:

### Appendix A—Evaluation Comments

Raw comments submitted for *what is working well*, *what is not working*, and *what is possible* for each location.

### Appendix B—Visual Preference Comments

Vote tallies for each photo evaluated for each location and raw comments provided on sticky notes.

All readers are encouraged to engage in the City of Traverse City Master Planning process and ensure their perspectives are collected. Learn more at the project website:  
[www.tcmasterplan.org](http://www.tcmasterplan.org).

## MUNSON AVENUE CORRIDOR EVALUATION

### What is working well along Munson Avenue?

- **Commercial offerings and variety:** Participants noted a variety of commercial offerings and businesses along the corridor, including food establishments and retail centers.
- **Residential neighborhoods:** Participants noted a mix of residential areas along the corridor, at relatively affordable price points compared to other parts of Traverse City and relatively fewer short-term rentals.
- **Traffic flow and access:** Participants noted that traffic flows relatively well along the corridor and that maintaining access to businesses and amenities is important.
- **Parking availability:** Participants noted ample parking being available for commercial and office land uses along the corridor.
- **Recreation attraction:** Participants noted nearby recreation destinations like the State Park, public waterfront, TART Trail, and local nature preserves.
- **Land use and aesthetics:** Participants noted well-maintained properties and green spaces along the corridor, including mention of trees, grass, and newer sidewalks contributing to a pleasing corridor aesthetic.
- **Public facilities:** Participants noted the presence of public facilities like the Denno's Museum, Maritime Center, Senior Center, and open spaces as positive assets to the corridor.

### What is not working well along Munson Avenue?

- **Lack of design standards:** Participants noted the lack of design standards along the corridor and the need for more appealing and cohesive design elements.
- **Traffic congestion and speed:** Participants noted heavy traffic and high speeds along Munson Avenue, especially during peak times and the summer season.
- **Pedestrian safety and crossings:** Participants noted the need for improved pedestrian facilities, including more sidewalks, safer road crossings, and better access for walking, biking, and rolling.
- **Lack of left turn lanes:** Participants noted difficulties associated with making left turns onto or off Munson Avenue, particularly at intersections and business entrances.
- **Connectivity and accessibility:** Participants noted that Munson Avenue is lacking connectivity between different parts, including the north and south sections of the corridor, and limited access from bordering residential areas.
- **Infrastructure and road conditions:** Participants noted issues with road quality, narrow sidewalks, sloped driveways, curb cuts, and long distances between crossings.
- **Tourism-oriented land uses:** Participants noted perception about the corridor being too focused on tourism land uses, including hotels, motels, and chain retail, with limited amenities and land uses for locals to access.

What is possible along Munson Avenue?

### **1. Improve Safety and Connectivity**

The following ideas were shared by participants to improve safety and connectivity along Munson Avenue:

- Enhance pedestrian safety through better lighting, refuge islands, and safe crossing options.
- Install wider sidewalks, protected bike lanes, and pedestrian paths with barriers.
- Implement traffic calming measures and prioritize non-motorized transportation.
- Improve pedestrian and bike connectivity to key destinations.

### **2. Maintain Residential Character**

The following ideas were shared by participants to maintain residential character along Munson Avenue:

- Preserve single-family homes and proposed zoning.
- Maintain the charm of the area with nice sidewalks and green spaces.
- Limit building heights and prioritize setbacks from the street.
- Preserve existing trees and enhance greenery.

### **3. Encourage Diverse Commercial and Housing Options.**

The following ideas were shared by participants to encourage diverse commercial and housing options along Munson Avenue:

- Avoid an overabundance of hotels and prioritize retail diversity.
- Consider mixed-use buildings with ground-floor retail and upper-floor housing.

### **4. Improve Transportation Flow and Infrastructure.**

The following ideas were shared by participants to improve traffic flow and infrastructure along Munson Avenue:

- Explore Michigan turns and roundabouts to keep traffic flowing.
- Consider dedicated turn lanes and medians with greenery.
- Upgrade roads and improve infrastructure, including signage and signals.
- Enhance public transit options, including bus routes and covered transit stops.
- Improve access to businesses on both sides of Munson for pedestrians.
- Explore the expansion of the Bayline or other public transit solutions.
- Consider creating alternative access streets for hotels and retail.

### **5. Prioritize Environmental Considerations**

The following ideas were shared by participants to prioritize the natural environment along Munson Avenue:

- Prioritize environmental sustainability in development plans.
- Include green infrastructure, such as curb/median gardens and tree-lined boulevards.
- Address stormwater runoff and protect rivers and the bay.



## MUNSON AVENUE CORRIDOR VISUAL DESIGN PREFERENCE

Participants were presented with a series of images that could represent the look and feel of the Munson Avenue corridor in the future. Specific feedback provided for each image shared at both the in-person workshop and online survey is provided below. Participants were asked to vote on different aspects that they liked about each image, as well as vote if they felt the building form pictured could work well on the corridor.

*What do you like about this image?*



|  |                 |
|--|-----------------|
| Ground floor retail                        | 92 votes        |
| Mix of materials on building face          | 75 votes        |
| Step-back after first floor                | 73 votes        |
| <b>Overall, would work well on Munson?</b> | <b>63 votes</b> |

*What do you like about this image?*



|  |                 |
|--|-----------------|
| 4 stories                                  | 41 votes        |
| Flat building face                         | 26 votes        |
| Zero lot line (built to sidewalk)          | 12 votes        |
| <b>Overall, would work well on Munson?</b> | <b>25 votes</b> |

*What do you like about this image?*



|  |                 |
|--|-----------------|
| Ground floor retail                        | 92 votes        |
| Step-back after 1 story                    | 79 votes        |
| 5 stories                                  | 31 votes        |
| <b>Overall, would work well on Munson?</b> | <b>49 votes</b> |

*What do you like about this image?*



|  |                 |
|--|-----------------|
| Neutral color/materials                    | 69 votes        |
| High transparency (glass)                  | 41 votes        |
| 8 stories                                  | 29 votes        |
| <b>Overall, would work well on Munson?</b> | <b>33 votes</b> |

## 14<sup>th</sup> STREET CORRIDOR

What is working well along 14<sup>th</sup> Street?

- **Locally owned/small businesses:** Participants noted the corridor offers a variety of small-scale and locally owned businesses with easy parking access.
- **Access to amenities and services:** Participants noted the corridor provides convenient access to grocery stores, convenience stores, pharmacies, gas stations, car washes, fast-food restaurants, schools, and other important facilities.
- **Proximity to the Boardman Lake Trail:** Participants noted that the 14<sup>th</sup> Street corridor benefits from its proximity to the recently completed Boardman Lake Loop Trail.
- **Connection to downtown Traverse City, Garfield Township, and residential neighborhoods:** Participants noted the corridor serves as a connector to various commercial and residential neighborhoods and downtown Traverse City via the adjoining street network, including Division, Veterans Drive, Cass Street, and Union Street.

What is not working well along 14<sup>th</sup> Street?

- **Traffic congestion:** Participants noted there is a significant amount of vehicular traffic throughout the day, particularly during peak hours in the morning and afternoon, resulting in congestion and backups.
- **Need for bike lanes:** Participants noted the need for dedicated bike lanes on 14th Street to make it safer and more accessible for cyclists.
- **Pedestrian safety and access:** Participants noted the lack of visible, maintained, and comfortable crossings and sidewalks for pedestrians.
- **Inadequate turn lanes:** Participants noted the need for turn lanes along the entire stretch of 14th Street to facilitate smoother traffic flow and reduce congestion.
- **Lack of community vibrancy:** Participants noted the aesthetics of 14<sup>th</sup> Street are not vibrant or attractive, citing missing street trees, vacant yards, and parking lots close to the street, which results in a lack of community vibrancy.
- **Road conditions and infrastructure:** Participants noted that the corridor could use better maintenance and road repair to correct potholes and insufficient road width for the volume of traffic.
- **Traffic signal issues:** Participants noted long wait times at intersections along the Corridor, including Veterans Drive and Division Street signals.
- **Inadequate transit options:** Participants noted the need for improved multi-modal transit options to alleviate congestion and promote alternative modes of transportation and increase corridor vibrancy.

What is possible along 14<sup>th</sup> Street?

**1. Calm Traffic**

The following ideas were shared by participants to better manage traffic along 14<sup>th</sup> Street.

- Add pedestrian crosswalks and sidewalks.
- Add bike lanes.
- Optimize traffic signal timing.
- Add turn lanes.
- Maintain the road surface.
- Improve the streetscape with lighting, landscaping, trees, and other features.

**2. Encourage Mixed-Use Development and Housing**

The following ideas were shared by participants to encourage mixed-use development along 14<sup>th</sup> Street.

- Ensure zoning allows for development that combines retail and housing options to create a vibrant and diverse neighborhood.
- Ensure zoning allows for more dense housing to be developed at a variety of price points, including affordable housing.

**3. Create Community Vibrancy**

The following ideas were shared by participants to create vibrancy along 14<sup>th</sup> Street.

- Support locally owned businesses along the corridor.
- Ensure zoning allows for commercial and retail uses that support surrounding residential neighborhoods.
- Foster a walkable and welcoming corridor aesthetic.
- Enhance existing connections to the Boardman Lake Loop Trail and surrounding neighborhoods.
- Add public art to the corridor.

## 14<sup>th</sup> STREET CORRIDOR VISUAL DESIGN PREFERENCE

Participants were presented with a series of images that could represent the look and feel of the 14<sup>th</sup> Street corridor in the future. Specific feedback provided for each image shared at both the in-person workshop and online survey is provided below. Participants were asked to vote on different aspects that they liked about each image, as well as vote if they felt the building form pictured could work well on the corridor.

*What do you like about this image?*



|  |                  |
|--|------------------|
| Ground floor retail  | 155 votes        |
| Colorful/varied appearance                                 | 149 votes        |
| 3 stories  | 117 votes        |
| <b>Overall, would work well on 14<sup>th</sup> Street?</b> | <b>115 votes</b> |

*What do you like about this image?*



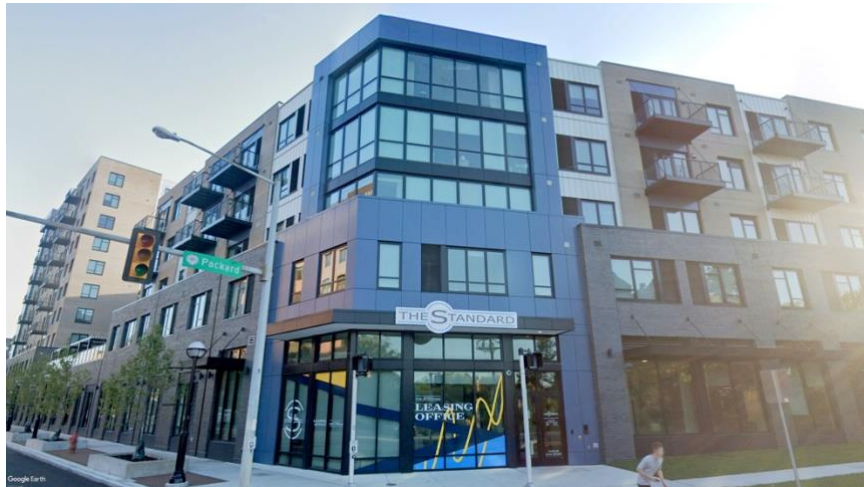
|  |                 |
|--|-----------------|
| Ground floor retail  | 139 votes       |
| Step-back after 1 story                                    | 100 votes       |
| 5 stories  | 51 votes        |
| <b>Overall, would work well on 14<sup>th</sup> Street?</b> | <b>66 votes</b> |

*What do you like about this image?*



|  |                 |
|--|-----------------|
| Ground floor retail  | 139 votes       |
| Neutral/solid façade materials                             | 78 votes        |
| Step-backs at multiple heights                             | 74 votes        |
| <b>Overall, would work well on 14<sup>th</sup> Street?</b> | <b>60 votes</b> |

*What do you like about this image?*



|  |                 |
|--|-----------------|
| Mix of materials on façade                                 | 92 votes        |
| Step-back after 2 stories                                  | 56 votes        |
| High transparency (glass)                                  | 44 votes        |
| <b>Overall, would work well on 14<sup>th</sup> Street?</b> | <b>47 votes</b> |

## GARFIELD AVENUE

What is working well along Garfield Avenue?

- **Mix of commercial and residential.** Participants noted the variety of businesses, including retail, restaurants, grocery, and goods/services, adjacent to residential neighborhoods along the corridor.
- **Sidewalks.** Participants noted the presence of sidewalks, along with pedestrian crosswalks, as a positive aspect of the corridor.
- **Higher density housing along the corridor.** Participants noted the form of recent higher-density residential development as appropriate for the corridor though expressed concerns about preventing new housing developments from becoming short-term rentals (e.g. Trilside 45).
- **Key corridor for accessing city/surrounding areas.** Participants noted that Garfield Avenue provides a key access point to the city and surrounding areas, including East Bay Township and South Airport Road.

What is not working well along Garfield Avenue?

- **Traffic congestion, flow, and intersections:** Participants noted traffic issues, including congestion, backups, and poor traffic light timing. Some specific areas of concern are intersections, lane configurations, and transitions from multiple lanes to single lanes along the corridor. Participants noted a lack of visibility for traffic turning left or right, particularly at the Garfield and Eighth Street intersection.
- **Lack of bike friendliness:** Participants noted dissatisfaction with bike infrastructure, including the need for better bike lanes and separated pathways to make Garfield Avenue a safer place to bike.
- **Aesthetics and visual appeal:** Several comments mention the unattractive or run-down appearance of the corridor, including outdated or mismatched buildings, lack of green space, and a general lack of visual appeal.
- **Inconsistency and lack of a cohesive vision:** Participants noted that the corridor is disjointed, hodgepodge, or lacking a cohesive plan. Comments highlight issues such as varied building types, strip malls, and mixed-use developments that do not seem to fit together harmoniously.
- **Road conditions and infrastructure:** Participants noted that the corridor contains potholes, poor surface road quality, lack of turn lanes, and confusing lane configurations. Some comments also mention the need for better signage and improved street lighting.
- **Streetscaping.** Participants noted the lack of green space, trees, and street lights along the corridor.
- **Speeding and enforcement:** Participants noted high vehicle speeds and lack of speed limit enforcement along the corridor.

## What is possible along Garfield Avenue?

### **1. Safe and Diverse Transportation Options**

The following ideas were shared by participants to create more opportunities to safely utilize Garfield Avenue via car, bike, foot, or wheels.

- Add bike lanes or separate cycle tracks.
- Improve sidewalk conditions and ensure consistent sidewalks along the entire corridor.
- Improve pedestrian street crossings and ensure high visibility for motorists.
- Implement traffic calming measures to slow vehicle speeds along the corridor.
- Improve turn lanes and signage at intersections to improve safety and visibility of traffic turning off and onto the corridor.

### **2. Vibrant Neighborhood Character**

The following ideas were shared by participants to encourage vibrant neighborhood character along the Garfield Avenue corridor.

- Ensure zoning allows for a mix of residential and commercial buildings, with commercial uses on the ground floor and residential above, and at consistent scale and form relative to the roadway.
- Require and/or implement attractive native landscaping, trees, and street lighting along the corridor.
- Engage the community to identify the right building density, height, and design standards for the corridor to result in a corridor form that is interesting and welcoming but not overwhelming to surrounding residential neighborhoods.
- Create small green spaces along the corridor for pedestrians, families, and users to rest and gather.
- Encourage redevelopment of existing properties, including vacant or underutilized lots and shopping centers.



GARFIELD AVENUE CORRIDOR VISUAL DESIGN PREFERENCE

Participants were presented with a series of images that could represent the look and feel of the Garfield Avenue corridor in the future. Specific feedback provided for each image shared at both the in-person workshop and online survey is provided below. Participants were asked to vote on different aspects that they liked about each image, as well as vote if they felt the building form pictured could work well on the corridor.

*What do you like about this image?*



- Ground floor retail 131 votes
- Mix of materials on building face 100 votes
- Step-back after first floor 90 votes
- Overall, would work well on Garfield Avenue? 78 votes**

*What do you like about this image?*



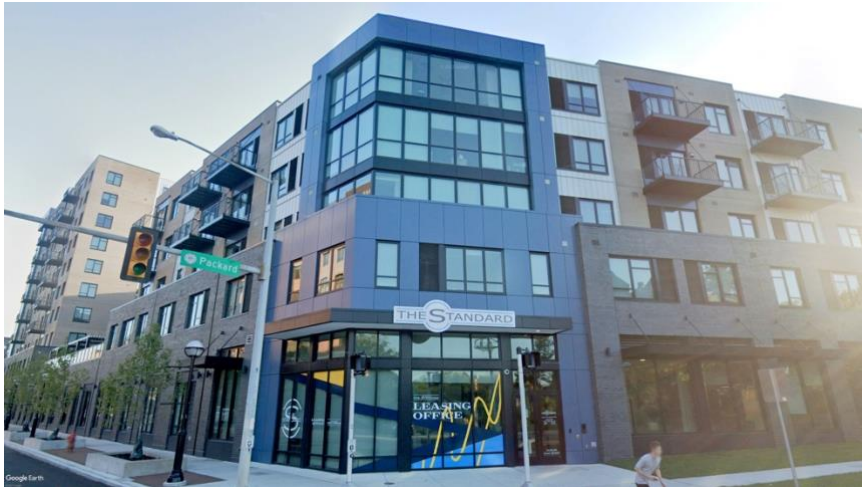
- 4 stories 62 votes
- Flat building face 37 votes
- Zero lot line (built to sidewalk) 25 votes
- Overall, would work well on Garfield Avenue? 41 votes**

*What do you like about this image?*



|   |                 |
|---|-----------------|
| Neutral color/materials                             | 80 votes        |
| 8 stories   | 48 votes        |
| High transparency (glass)                           | 39 votes        |
| <b>Overall, would work well on Garfield Avenue?</b> | <b>43 votes</b> |

*What do you like about this image?*



|   |                 |
|---|-----------------|
| Mix of materials on façade                          | 88 votes        |
| Step-back after 2 stories                           | 75 votes        |
| High transparency (glass)                           | 50 votes        |
| <b>Overall, would work well on Garfield Avenue?</b> | <b>71 votes</b> |

## GARFIELD AVENUE AND EIGHTH STREET INTERSECTION

What is working well at the Garfield Avenue + Eighth Street Intersection?

- **Access to goods and services:** Participants noted that the mix of retail, food, and service businesses at this intersection create vibrancy and provide convenient access to goods and services for surrounding neighborhoods.
- **Parking availability:** Participants noted parking availability and proximity to surrounding businesses as a favorable feature of this intersection.

What is not working well at the Garfield Avenue + Eighth Street Intersection?

- **Traffic and congestion:** Participants noted concerns about traffic flow, congestion, and the need for additional lanes, especially for turning movements.
- **Confusing for pedestrians and bikes:** Participants noted that it is confusing and unsafe to navigate service drives in front of commercial businesses at this intersection.
- **Unattractive appearance:** Participants noted that the lack of landscaping, green spaces, street trees, outdoor patio spaces, and buildings of differing scales and forms make for an unattractive and uninviting aesthetic at this intersection.
- **Parking:** Participants noted that there appears to be more parking than is necessary at this intersection and in confusing and disjointed configurations.
- **Inefficient and inconsistent land use:** Participants noted that the current land uses at this intersection feel disjointed and inconsistent, and that the intersection could support mixed-use and residential land uses.

What is possible at the Garfield Avenue + Eighth Street Intersection?

### **1. Redevelopment**

The following ideas were shared by participants to redevelop the Garfield Avenue + Eighth Street intersection.

- Support storefront and façade improvements for existing businesses.
- Encourage a mix of commercial uses that cater to the needs of surrounding neighborhoods.
- Encourage mixed-use developments that create a neighborhood feel, increase density, and maintain an environment to scale with surrounding neighborhoods.
- Improve pedestrian and bike infrastructure and connectivity.
- Improve streetscape aesthetics, including landscaping, green spaces, trees, street lights, and street furniture.

### **2. Improve Connectivity for all Transportation Modes**

The following ideas were shared by participants to improve connectivity and accessibility for all users of this intersection, in cars, on foot, by bus, on wheels, or by bike.

- Add turn lanes and optimize signal timing.
- Add bike lanes and/or cycle tracks.
- Improve sidewalk network.
- Add signage in areas where pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles are sharing the road/crossings.
- Improve access to public transportation.

## GARFIELD AVENUE + EIGHTH STREET INTERSECTION VISUAL DESIGN PREFERENCE

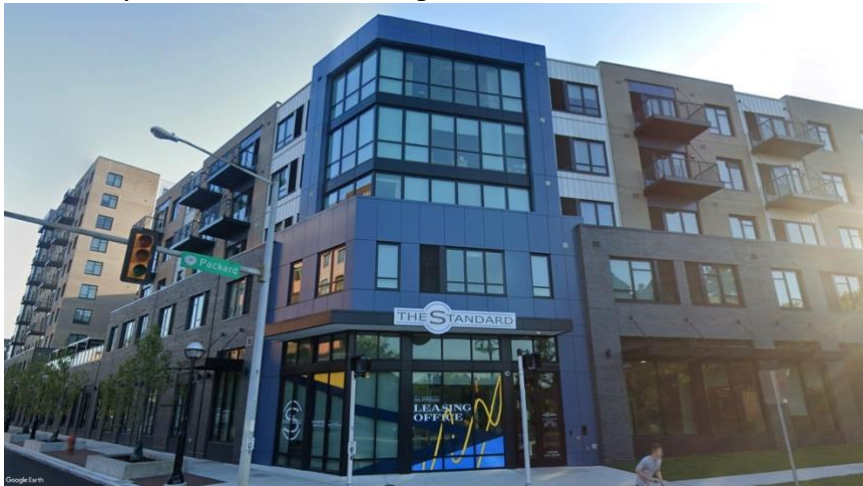
Participants were presented with a series of images that could represent the look and feel of the Garfield Avenue and Eighth Street intersection in the future. Specific feedback provided for each image shared at both the in-person workshop and online survey is provided below. Participants were asked to vote on different aspects that they liked about each image, as well as vote if they felt the building form pictured could work well at the intersection.

*What do you like about this image?*



|  |                 |
|--|-----------------|
| Ground floor retail  | 127 votes       |
| Exposure to both sides   | 119 votes       |
| 3 stories  | 92 votes        |
| <b>Overall, would work well at Garfield + Eighth Intersection?</b> | <b>91 votes</b> |

*What do you like about this image?*



|  |                 |
|--|-----------------|
| Mix of materials on facade   | 72 votes        |
| Stepback after 2 stories   | 67 votes        |
| High transparency (glass)  | 38 votes        |
| <b>Overall, would work well at Garfield + Eighth Intersection?</b> | <b>47 votes</b> |

*What do you like about this image?*



|  |                 |
|--|-----------------|
| Ground floor retail  | 124 votes       |
| Exposure to both sides   | 109 votes       |
| 3 stories  | 87 votes        |
| <b>Overall, would work well at Garfield + Eighth Intersection?</b> | <b>79 votes</b> |

*What do you like about this image?*



|  |                 |
|--|-----------------|
| Exposure to both sides   | 91 votes        |
| 5-6 stories  | 42 votes        |
| High transparency (glass)  | 41 votes        |
| <b>Overall, would work well at Garfield + Eighth Intersection?</b> | <b>49 votes</b> |

# Appendix A: Evaluation Comments

## Key Areas/Design Workshop Report

The following original, unedited comments were provided in response to the prompts *what is working well*, *what is not working*, and *what is possible* at each corridor/intersection.

### Munson Avenue Corridor

#### What is working well here?

- Keep mix of residential, even on corridors. We need it.
- Easy travel via vehicles.
- Residential Neighborhoods- w/o STR
- Commercial corridor
- moving cars
- Turn lane
- Variety in commercial offerings
- Good traffic flow
- It moves cars quickly and efficiently.
- No opinion.
- Nothing
- Overall traffic flows well
- General flow of traffic
- Not a lot of tall buildings blocking the view which gives visitors and residents that small town feel. They come here to escape the big city and tall buildings
- Tourist haven
- Multiple lanes and center turn lane
- Getting to and from downtown and M 72.
- Nice and wide open for free flow of traffic
- Traffic flow is fine
- It gets cars in and out.
- Motor vehicle traffic moves efficiently
- Development of corner triangle could /would be WAY TOO MUCH Congestion . Best to cater to walk-in traffic from nearby motels, Condos and neighborhoods. Coffee shops, small retail etc.
- So-so
- traffic is never too heavy through this section
- Keep it close to what it is now.....a corridor into the city.
- Traffic seems to flow well
- Not much.
- Lots of parking available for shopping.
- Lots of businesses. Sidewalks have improved but still need to be added.

- Works for cars.
- Traffic moves well from Eighth to 3 Mile & the road is in great condition.
- Centralization of tourists.
- Not sure
- Views of the water.
- Very little. Beach access at the State Park if you can find parking.
- Parking in the middle, shops on the perimeter
- Traffic flows when there isn't road work
- TART Trail, Hotels, motels, food establishments. State Park.
- Traffic flow except in summer
- Traffic flow is good, while retaining access to businesses via left turn lane. Left turn signals needed at N/S crossings.
- The newly renovated park in Acme, tart trail,
- Large mix of businesses
- Not a single thing
- Traffic is working well. Munson from the college to 8th St. is acceptable to me -- it certainly doesn't need as much attention as some other parts of town.
- It creates a good access pathway across town
- Nice sidewalks and access to amenities.
- MCHC was smart to do separate entrance and no exit onto Munson Ave. The intensity is a good level around the curve by Cambria but not sure once whatever is being built by the NMC campus is up and running.
- Seems to be adequate parking
- Local resources like the state park and Munson.
- The green arrow allowing traffic to flow along Munson Ave where it meets east Front Street is 'unique Traverse City character' and prevents traffic backup -- keep it.
- nothing
- Unimpeded traffic flow
- Bus stops
- It's a US highway, so I guess speed limits. Nice wide space once you get to E. Bay.
- --
- Placement of traffic signals, even if they're not timed well.
- Retail Centers and Services such as Foster Family and Tom's Center. Public Uses such as Denno's, Maritime, Senior Center, Open Space
- Traffic moves along but much much too fast
- it goes east-west
- As a passage way...but needs a roundabout at Garfield (& Division) & Munson
- Vehicle travel, as stated previously, not always good as drivers tend to travel fast.
- access to facilities
- Generally properties are kept up and are not eyesores.
- Not an area I go to often, so not sure.
- Not much
- 5 lanes
- That space as a hotel/visitation area is good.



- The Civic Center, NMC, and MCHC (Foster Family Care) properties are a plus--nice to look at, a welcome respite from business buildings and parking lots.
- Not much
- some consistent land use, with increasing housing
- Nothing! Stop this! We don't want these large buildings.
- "Traffic flows
- Well."
- Not much
- Moves traffic along
- The types of businesses located along this corridor are well-suited to a larger, busier street that has less foot traffic.
- Traffic seems to move smoothly
- traffic flow
- The speed limit allows quick drive through, but not in the summer
- Funneling traffic as quickly as possible east/west
- Tom's and new gas station
- Nothing
- Not much.
- It's intended design, for cars to move quickly and efficiently across town.
- Traffic flow seems good.
- It works well November through May!
- trees and newer sidewalks
- Like it as it is now
- Turn lanes
- Abundant Lodging
- Nothing
- Smooth, appropriate speed
- Lots of retail
- Traffic flows. The trees and grass along the street are calming
- Not much

## Munson Avenue Corridor

### What is not working well here?

- Lack of design stnds. And tiny set backs.
- Summertime west-bound traffic backs up past E. Front, sometimes Davis St @ College Ave. Light
- Pedestrian crossings- 8th/munson airport access/munson
- Parking too tight at Rite Aid. Entrance on to Munson too narrow (not in this node, but shouldn't be repeated)
- Sidewalks (lack of)
- High speed traffic- better crossings

- Southern portions feel cut off from Northern portions. No good ways for bike, walk, roll to set across (1 dots)
- sidewalks are uncomfortable along Munson
- Munson intersections
- needs left hand turn lights at 8th/Munson
- Access (both east + west) from bordering residential areas
- Poor pedestrian facilities
- safe clear sidewalks pedestrian crossings
- Rapid cycle time at Munson/8th for 8th st. users (1 dot)
- Bikeability, traffic flow. Soooo many lights.
- not pedestrian / bike friendly. parking lots facing street. not enough housing. too many short-term-rentals
- Light timing
- c3 STRs should be capped (same for Garfield)
- Too much traffic, need the Hartman Hammond throughway
- Too much traffic. The entire city needs a bypass running behind it so that traffic headed west to Leelanau can go around.
- Long distances between pedestrians crossings
- Pedestrian and safe bicycle paths.
- Desperate need of crossings preferably underground
- Minimal pedestrian paths. Due to tourism there is a lot of foot traffic and minimal options for these folks to cross safely that have resulted in deaths in the past.
- Needs a center turn lane
- It's is cheap and ugly-looking.
- No issues
- Constant lane closures and cars able to make left turns wherever
- Volume, construction, overcrowding in summer
- Corner of Munson and 8th I impossible to safely cross as a pedestrian/bike. I have to ride my bike on the sidewalk and then Cross 8th to head west
- Everything else.
- It's not messed up like 8th or Front with traffic calming/narrowing features
- Need sidewalks and separate bike Lanes. The fact that the sidewalk stops in front of old hospital is ridiculous. The redevelopment of the Tom's East Bay Plaza is nice.
- Lack of continuity in pedestrian walkway along the corridor
- Turning in and out of this is dicey at times. The speed limit changes throughout
- Traffic speed is excessive for an urban environment. Biking on the street feels unsafe. Too many driveways, not enough pedestrian crosswalks.
- Drive-in customers!!!
- Small and junky shops like the cannabis shops. Plus the junky motels.
- dangerous for biking/pedestrians; too many curb cuts; tired, unattractive buildings; too many hotels; more of a transitional space in our city, especially for locals; does not feel like it's TC, feels more like East Bay Township
- Speeding cars

- The green light is too short when trying to turn left from 8th street onto Munson Ave from the East Bay side.
- Having buildings too close to the road can be of concern for pedestrians and bike riders as cars exit parking lots . Example Rite Aid parking lot into Font street. Accident waiting to happen.
- Sidewalks are too narrow and right next to speeding traffic with sloped drive entries. No speed enforcement. Long stretches between crosswalks. No fence along the Civic Center, especially where the Norte building is.
- Gets congested.
- Traffic is a nightmare. Smart traffic signals would help. Enforcement of noise ordinances as it relates to vehicles. Slowing traffic to reduce noise and calm things in general would be good. Lots of low single story buildings. Not enough safe street crossings.
- Not many safe opportunities to turn left out of hotels, restaurants, and activities.
- I see tourists and visa workers walking/biking in ways that are unsafe because they have no other choice. The sidewalks are not maintained and it's very difficult to cross. Sidewalk is way too close to the road. It's lethal. Crossing at Eighth and Munson is scary, too.
- Not having a left turn lane from Garfield to Front St is a nightmare.
- Heavy traffic
- The traffic is so bad in the summer I almost never use Munson (or even travel to the east side of town). Aside from hotels, very little in terms of food or services in East Bay Township, so tourists really need to be able to get into downtown TC.
- "Limited views and access to the water. Monolithic resorts make it feel like you have to pay-to-play. M.C. Beach is hammered by road noise and crowded thanks to the campground, and lack of other access points.
  
- Services are spread out, and grocery options very limited. Making it very challenging for those without a car. "
- The Toms shopping structure recently got painted the worst blue and it looks awful, sticks out like a sore thumb and simply doesn't belong in Traverse City in terms of the look and feel. Such a shame
- Rush hour traffic is pretty bad.
- The traffic is atrocious.
- Walkability, no amenities for locals or for visitors within walking distance, impossible to cross the road or make a left hand turn out of businesses.
- "Allowing left turns becomes a real problem. Turning onto Peninsula Drive at the blue goat should be eliminated. Turn that into a cul-de-sac and force drivers to go to the light at Garfield. Or make it one-way, only, leaving the peninsula, but disallowed drivers to turn left there.
- "
- Heavy heavy traffic. When I work in the area I plan the route to not include any left hand turns
- Too fast traffic.

- To much traffic, dangerous situation trying to cross the road on foot, or trying to make left hand turns.
- Summer traffic
- Traffic! Too fast, not enough sidewalks or pedestrian crossings, too difficult to turn left out of businesses. Also, not enough restaurants to service the hotels.
- Left turn signals needed at N/S crossings. I imagine pedestrian crossing is poor, but I do not attempt in this area.
- Vacant properties, few restaurants, few parks, too focused on tourist and not local, year-round interests.
- Congestion
- All of it
- Munson from 8th to the City border is too commercial, but is under tremendous change and most of that will soon be set in stone. I wish there was something that could be done to insure a more cohesive, and pleasing look to this area. It is probably too late.
- Congestion, left turns stopping traffic, no center turn lane
- Narrow roads, broken road structure - needs to be repaved badly.
- Mostly everything- East Bay Plaza is a nightmare. Parking at any of the businesses is difficult because it is so tight. Entrance/Exit is almost impossible not to scrape your car or slow down enough to hold up traffic and cause road rage. The light at E 8th and Munson is terrible and people run it all the time. Very difficult to make a left turn onto Munson Ave when headed away from East Bay. Wenonah/East 8th intersection is too close to Munson/East 8th intersection. Entrance/exit of the old Victorian Inn and the BP gas station add to the mess.
- Sidewalk too narrow too close to road. Unsafe for bikes.
- Road crossing. Lack of non-fast food options.
- Speed limit enforcement.
- more sidewalks/ bike paths
- Munson/8th intersection
- Many of the strip malls are outdated and need a serious overhaul. We need a left hand turn lane all the way down Munson, not just part of the way.
- Pedestrian crossing, speeding traffic, pedestrian protection at crossings, pot holes, ability to turn left
- "Lack of center turn lane in sections, turns into hotels on the North side are s#! show as are turns into businesses & side streets on the south side.
- Blue Goat/ Old Mission turnoff
- Too many access points for the speed limit"
- traffic going as fast as they can to get into the city. no easy crosswalks with access to the beach
- Not enough pedestrian crossings. Very uncomfortable to cross at 8th and Munson. Speeds too fast along Munson. Not a complete street! Where should bikes go?
- Not sufficiently familiar with this area to have an informed opinion.
- No center lane
- Single Family residential, small scale strip commercial, left turns--access to small scale residential--lack of turn-around opportunity, poor pedestrian and bike access

- Too many in and out access drives
- super unsafe for nonmotorized persons in many many places. also loud and unfun to be on for any period of time
- Some area appears disjointed & ugly. My husband , I and many of my friends can't stand that row of houses across from Burger King. They're packed in like sardines with very little greenery. Please consider this when you grant contracts.
- The sidewalk is practically in the travel lane and there is no dedicated space for bikes. Hard to cross north to south and vice versa. It is very noisy. There are a lot of curb cuts and wide crossings at intersections where city streets meet Munson, Davis Street is a good example of this. The intersection of Eighth street is not great for anyone but drivers. The sweeping curve where it changes from Front into Munson is terrible to cross. Cars frequently drive through the light at Fair/Front & Munson.
- No left turn lane between East Front and Eighth
- Traffic backs up, need streetscape and trees/shade.
- Road and sidewalk conditions. Terrible pedestrian/bike connectivity across Munson where front intersects. It would be nice to increase density (i.e. multiple fast food in one short plaza vs. standalone.
- It's difficult that if you need to get from the west side to Williamsburg or farther, there's no other way around and the bottlenecks get bad.
- Turn lanes on Munson between 8th and Fair Streets
- Road surface. Turn lane
- Could be 55mph, it's always a bottleneck in summer construction
- "Traffic speed is dangerous
- People trying to safely cross is a nightmare"
- Need some traffic calming at Fair/Munson ave intersection. Many people run red lights, speed through the area and a lot of drunk drivers. The light and NMC's sign have been damaged on multiple occasions in the last five years sometimes more than once in a single year.
- Munson is a barrier to locals. It's almost impossible to cross safely. (I have lived on both sides.) The corner of 8th and Munson is particularly hazardous--especially on foot or by bicycle. There is a big lack of sidewalks--particularly on the north side. Existing sidewalks are often impassable in the winter.
- It is difficult and unsafe for pedestrians to cross (not enough crosswalks). Lack of turning lane in some parts is dangerous.
- Too many pot shops
- Everything. Keep our neighborhoods!
- Heavy traffic, dangerous for pedestrians
- Traffic is close to peds and bikes, very noisy, exhaust unpleasant
- Making a left turn onto 8th Street is dangerous as the little hill means you can't see oncoming traffic. So hard to get out of businesses onto Munson.
- this intersection needs to be straightened out so one doesnt have to twist their head around to see south bound towards acme
- Difficult to make left hand turns, timeline of traffic lights at 3 mile and 4 miles makes traffic slow way down in summer, no place for pedestrians to cross

- Road quality, easy of access to businesses and residential units. Alley between State and Munson needs work
- Unsafe for cyclists and pedestrians. Hideous development
- People cut to Munson from Peninsula drive via Rose st. behind Blue Goat causing traffic flow issues for cars driving onto Munson from Peninsula drive. Left turn traffic from Munson onto Oak street impedes westbound traffic and is at times dangerous. Indigo is too close to the road and sidewalk along this building is scary!
- Backs up at rush hour
- Too much traffic, no dedicated turn lane, no buffer between sidewalk and busy, fast moving traffic, road conditions are abysmal,
- Speeding, unattractive
- Pedestrian friendly design and access.
- Major deaths along this area because there is not appropriate crossing areas. Turning left out of businesses.
- Mixed uses,... not much can be done at this time.
- Few safe crossings for pedestrians between lights at Eighth and Fair/College. Summertime traffic westbound backs up from College/Fair light almost to Davis St. Timing of light at Eighth and Munson often allows only one or no vehicles to access eastbound Munson from the north.
- Dangerous left turns in and out of businesses. Lack of pedestrian crosswalks leads to people darting in and out of high-speed traffic. Lack of connection to the water. Sometimes the Culver's drive through line spills into the road- same at some hotels. Not walkable due to curb cuts and high speed traffic.
- no cycling facilities, incomplete sidewalks?
- Strip malls, lack of sidewalks. Difficult to turn left onto 31 resulting in cutting through neighborhoods.
- Lots of traffic.
- Pedestrian access
- No sense of community. Disconnected pedestrian access from retail and lodging
- No biking, no walking, only hotels and chains.
- Traffic is fast and dangerous for pedestrians (especially tourist visitors who might otherwise be interested in walking/biking into town)
- No left turn lane, intersection at 8th bad
- Interruption in left turn lane. Flow of traffic
- Starting to look like Anywhere USA.
- Too busy, with fast traffic and little pedestrian cross walks
- I generally enjoy the drive along Munson Ave. except during heavy traffic

## Munson Avenue Corridor

### What is possible here?

- Keep single family homes w/ proposed zoning v. commercial zoned that allows partial STRs. (1 dot)
- Yes (arrow pointing to the above)
- Better intersections for walk, bike, run
- Pedestrian safety
- Enhance the "museum district" add more public art.
- Pedestrian/bike connectivity to Tom's/East Bay Plaza
- Realign 8th & Munson intersection- improve safety (1 dot)
- Re-configure 8th + munson intersection
- Refuge islands along Munson for better crossing
- Pedestrian lighting
- Safety for all mobility add bus pull offs (1 dot)
- more housing. more building height. better non-motorized transpo lanes.
- See above
- Diverse commercial and housing variety
- Need to keep it residential for some and create nice sidewalks
- More retail, and not just the ridiculous flood of dispensaries.
- Road diet similar to 8th street
- Wide sidewalks and protected bike lanes.
- Underground crossings
- Wider sidewalks, pedestrian paths, safe bike lanes with barriers from traffic.
- Pretty crowded already... Maybe bus cutouts to keep things moving
- none of the above, your survey is flawed
- Fix the roads and curb/median gardens!!!!
- It's fine as is. Being most of Munson runs by the bay with MANY RESIDENTIAL properties on either side, it needs to stay small and charming.
- The traffic patterns should prioritize uninterrupted east/west flow and force limited left turn opportunities
- Right turn lanes for westbound traffic at intersections. also needs pedestrian bridge crossings (above traffic) - bridges to get over from new hotels. It also needs a very large restaurant/ bar or two. More volume dining options near hotels.
- I think your questions are backwards. You are asking about which buildings might work where, but the first question should be what will the corridor be used for? Munson should not have the same use as 14th, but some of the building choices overlap. Decide the use and the buildings will follow.
- We must have free flow of traffic continued
- More pedestrian overpass walkways like at the State Park. Don't tell me they're too expensive and you can't make them universally accessible. That is a cop out. Don't be lame.
- Add sidewalks that connect to each other

- A larger protected sidewalk/bike lane out of the road. Maybe more trees or something to make it look nicer.
- Big canopy trees, decorative, pedestrian scaled lighting. Frequent well marked crosswalks.
- Not as bad as Garfield and 8th St. near and east of Garfield.
- Housing; more gateway features; multimodal possibilities
- All kinds of buildings
- Sidewalks moved back from the road with space for bikers. Speed enforcement. No pot holes.
- Resort area.
- Taller but not tall buildings. More landscaping.
- I think we should consider adopting the traffic pattern that Grand Rapids uses with the Michigan Turnarounds on this road. I think it would reduce accidents from people trying to turn left across 5 lanes of traffic.
- Please get the sidewalk away from the road and make it much wider and keep it maintained. Somehow there needs to be safe crossings... bridge over Munson? Also seems underutilized for multifamily housing.
- public transit options between the hotel strip in east bay township into downtown. More retail/restaurant/entertainment options near the hotels themselves.
- "Stop beachfront building. Period.
  
- Require any current single-story properties to remain so in the future, and on the same building footprint. Wherever possible, add and improve public access points to the beach AND the Tart trail. The Tart trail feels under advertised and underutilized in the East Bay Area. "
- Let's keep the trees! Let's add more green! VERY concerned about this becoming a "hotel and restaurant row" with not enough green area. Also would be nice if it was walkable. But mainly- let's be SO careful about this becoming a hotel row without any green areas or charm.
- Not a lot. The water needs to be prioritized and there's already too much traffic. The only thing I would be happy to see added is more space for children and families, whether that's retail space (in already constructed buildings), or something like a splash pad that easily accessible to locals (as the yacht club has successfully taken all of our parking at Clinch).
- Increase walkability and thoughtful development - not just more hotels!
- This is the main Corredor into Traverse City, yet, it is the most frustrating entryway due to traffic and poor traffic management.
- I think it is fully actualized unless there is a future public transit option.
- Unless TC creates a bypass this is the closest we will ever have to one. It's simply a means of getting from A to B.
- More retail and restaurants would be nice. Speed limit is too high for this busy area. No businesses above 3 stories please!
- Limit road access by having limited or shared driveway access to the highway.
- More pedestrian bridges for safety



- A tree lined boulevard with Michigan lefts and pedestrian crossings. Speed limit 35 mph. Buildings with restaurants and retail on main floor with hotel on upper floors.
- More hotels, perhaps?
- Widen the road consistently
- More car lanes, bike lanes, lighting, walkability, zoning should mandate ground floor retail.
- Make sure that Munson from NMC to 8th remains a pleasant area to drive in -- add trees and pretty low lights. Don't allow any buildings taller than the hotels, like Cambria. Make sure that the buildings are set back from the street, with green space in front. Make this a pleasant drive into town.
- Wider lanes, middle turning lane
- New road, wider road, turn lanes, pedestrian friendly walk ways to cross the road
- None of your big buildings will work here. The intensity is already too great along this corridor. Certainly, angled street parking is a terrible idea. Maybe a taller building by NMC if it could be controlled by lights and turn lanes.
- "Should be room here for multiple covered transit stops that would serve both business, medical, and neighborhoods on both sides.
- Existing Bayline is a great idea, please extend at both ends, and enhance with more frequent busses and more covered stops"
- A seasonal traffic light at Delamar to allow left turns onto eastbound Munson during peak tourist season.
- less building
- A corridor that slows the cars and serves all users
- Not sure since it would require investment by owners of the mini mall buildings to update them. Also whether a left hand turn lane is possible or not is questionable as some building has been allowed to occur very close to Munson road already.
- Michigan turns, pedestrian bridges and tunnels, left turn arrows at all lights
- Center turn lane for hotels & businesses, Old Mission & side streets.
- look up Sedona's scenic road system with roundabouts and bike lanes. also: we could be a Dark Sky City <https://www.flagstaffdarkskies.org/international-dark-sky-city/>
- Unsure
- Better traffic flow
- parkway like character, defined left-turns, setbacks, more services and public uses
- Center median and slow the damn traffic down
- "FIX 8th & MUNSON intersection. TOOOOOOOO BIG! get a roundabout!
- more vegetation. chunk this corridor up and give very different vibes for each segment."
- Would love to see more of the 8th St Health area format on Munson as feasible. And of course keeping Climate Change in top of mind! Contracted new buildings required to put solar on the roof, all electric appliances, furnace, & air conditioning in the condos or apartments. Plus make them all affordable forever for young people & workers in town. First floor retail with 2nd & 3rd floors for rental or sale. The buildings setback with trees our bushes & seating. When there is only sidewalk between the condo & street, it is ugly.

- Narrower vehicle lane width would allow for better sidewalks and bike lanes. Narrower crossings at city streets meeting Munson ave will create better walking conditions but also re-configuring them will force drivers to make a proper turn rather sweeping turns when they see a gap. Reduce the amount of curb cuts along Munson. The Munson and Eighth street intersection needs to be redesigned to narrow crossings and less sweeping turns for drivers. Multi-use buildings with height and housing. Less seas of parking. Refuge islands or HAWK signals. Space for trees in the ROW would reduce noise in the neighborhoods and protect pedestrians.
- Having a median with cut outs for left turn throughout this corridor would improve the appearance and traffic flow
- Need to widen the road or enhance traffic signalling to reduce backup. This is a main artery for tourists it should be a beautiful road with landscaping and outdoor dining areas as well as enhanced sidewalks and bike lanes.
- Pocket park? Better sidewalks and road crossings!
- Roundabouts would keep traffic flowing better.
- Above improvement
- Dig a trench, put the road in it. A tunnel or lowered walled road would remove the eyesore of traffic along the bay
- It could be so much more bike and pedestrian friendly for visitors and residents alike. I would love to see the college more open and visible from the street. Additionally, there could be more mixed use space along the street as you get into the hotel area.
- The City has a unique opportunity to improve the Munson/8th St intersection as businesses on both the north and south sides are for sale. Perhaps purchasing these properties would allow for a drastic improvement to traffic flow and safety. Add MANY more sidewalks connecting neighborhoods and business locals would want to frequent (medical facilities, doctors' offices, grocery, Civic Center, etc.).
- The planners in this town just keep saying more density, more roundabouts. I'm calling BS on this. You need to take care of all of the current infrastructure before adding anymore strain to the current system. Use you head!
- as with other areas with increasing housing, more attention to pedestrian and bike access. and e-bike consideration.
- Fewer hotels, safer crossings, better views
- Left turn arrow at 8th. Slow traffic down; some of that is residential!
- straighten it to make it safer for all
- More pedestrian bridges across
- Prioritize non motorized, add greenery and runoff areas to protect rivers and bay. Add trees to cool pavement and concrete.
- Decades of poor planning limit the possibilities along this corridor (and E Front east of downtown) but with enough redevelopment this could be a dense and bustling part of town.
- Close section of Rose Street behind the Blue Goat; no left turns onto Oak street from Munson. No more zero lot lines allowed anywhere in the city!
- Need to expand the width of the road to allow for dedicated turn lanes, need to place emphasis on pedestrian infrastructure

- Add median with greenery, crosswalks,
- More traffic calming and pedestrian safety options.
- Areas to make Michigan lefts would make it much less dangerous. Safe crossing areas for pedestrians & signs encouraging pedestrians not to cross.
- "Allow safe access for all from the north to businesses on the south side of Munson.
- Why were the 2-3 story colorful building options shown at Hickory Hills eliminated from the building options below???"
- ?
- Slow down traffic. Hotel and retail access street behind them instead of only accessing from Munson. Streetcar or light rail from downtown all the way to 4 mile so there are fewer cars.
- protected bike lanes or cycle tracks
- More hotel and businesses.
- Larger sidewalks and additional trees
- Slower speeds and pedestrian friendly
- Having a 5 lane highway as the only point of access doesn't work. Visitors have no options but to drive to everything.
- Safe roadway that allows people to pass through while also incorporating safe bike/pedestrian infrastructure to allow hotel guests to safely travel into downtown.
- Continuous flow of traffic. Stop lights working together like big cities where the traffic keeps flowing.
- "Crosswalks
- More trees"
- Boulevard and lower speed limit

## Munson Avenue Corridor

### Additional ideas (Sticky notes)

- Please consider an attractive welcome to traverse city w/ trees- not a tall building on the edge of town
- Be mindful of the commercial and it's impact on the neighborhoods should fit
- Open space + green is still a good thing! (1 dot)
- Add bus stop amenities and pull offs
- More retail
- Reframe area as "gateway" to TC
- Why do none of the visual options show tree lawns? (1 dot)
- Ugh! As bad as Rite Aid! (1 dot)
- Good spot for new apartment buildings -right on bus line to downtown
- This munson corridor has major assets- the museum and the civic center. Have those places remain the center of the area. (1 dot)

## Garfield Avenue Corridor

### What is working well here?

- Civic ctr.
- Keep mixed residential, even single fam. Homes, rather than commercial that includes STRs
- 2 lanes of traffic
- Civic Center (two stickies have these)
- Civic Center is a gem (2 dots)
- Crossing is ok could be better
- Sidewalks
- moving cars north & south
- Not much
- Traffic flows okay
- Sidewalks, traffic seems to move steady
- Good traffic flow
- I guess it's ok if you're a business that loves strip malls, or a dealership.
- Not much
- Bike lane north of Parsons, but traffic is dangerous.
- Overall traffic flows well
- 4 lanes
- Not much
- Traffic moves along except at Hannah
- Nothing
- I like Garfield north of 8th Street
- Traffic flows much better here than on 14th Street!
- Not much, the new lane shifts create tourist choke points that are not intuitive and although bike traffic has its own lane drivers are too distracted turning into retail places for it to be a safe setup.
- Two lanes and a center lane works well from Hammond into town.
- Great alternative corridor to get from east side to west side avoiding downtown. Mixed use with lots of businesses and plenty of free parking is nice.
- Overall traffic flows well until the bottlenecks and confusing turn lanes at Hannah and 8th streets.
- Nothing. I avoid Garfield as much as possible.
- Bardons.
- Limited traffic flow prevention barriers
- Not much.
- 2 traffic lanes for most of the road
- It is wide enough.
- The many lanes, and it gets cars to and from the city
- The recent narrowing of the street from 4 to 3 lanes.
- Center turn Lane

- Not much, because of the way it is bring developed in a way that I consider to be junky, kitsch, trashy.
- Traffic moves fairly well; there is a mix of buildings/architectures; most buildings are set back from the road
- Garfield is used by motorists to get from south of town to downtown, it is part of the "square" that commuters/tourists/ workers use to drive into TC. avoiding congested intown streets.
- variety of business types, traffic is not too bad along this corridor
- Limited number of curb cuts for driveways into business areas keeps traffic moving fairly well.
- Lane reductions have worked well.
- traffic flows well south of 8th
- Most buildings of lower height. Some accommodations for crossing of bikes and walkers. Speeds are not too awful north of 8th street.
- Decent traffic flow. Access to TART and parks, close to neighborhoods.
- Good flow
- There are side walks now all the way down. Has some interesting businesses.
- Traffic lights holding longer
- Gets people in and out nicely
- I think the traffic flows well south of 8th street on Garfield Ave.
- Not much..
- The crosswalk in front of the school is clearly marked. When I'm driving I always stop for others, but when I'm on my bike it seems like drivers don't understand they're supposed to stop.
- The traffic moves pretty well.
- Handles lots of traffic
- Everything south of Parsons seems to work well.
- good throughway headed OUT of town
- Relatively easy to drive, wide lanes, can see business names.
- n/a
- Variety of businesses.
- Variety of businesses
- Smooth Flow of traffic.
- Not much!
- North/South roads
- I use this daily. Besides some rough patches the updates to the road have been great and considering the amount of traffic it has held up well
- No tall buildings.
- Where there is a center lane, it helps traffic flow. Variety of businesses, road setback with businesses' having parking in front. Traffic lights control traffic flow and speeds. Major north and south corridor.
- Easy to travel 4 lanes of traffic, well timed lights
- Apartments near the TART trail
- Traffic South from Hannah

- Lights are timed well.
- The amount of lanes
- 4 lane portion is ok
- Traffic is working well along Garfield, although some have questioned the latest configuration south of the corner of 8th and Garfield, and whether it was better before. There are lots of businesses and offices that are convenient to nearby property owners; one can obtain groceries, dental care, auto supplies, and many other things easily in this neighborhood.
- Lots of businesses
- The new pavement at the bottom of Garfield. - much smoother and nicer on vehicles.
- Newer small homes and businesses. Building access with parking adjacent.
- It is a pretty good north south route
- Not much, except that most businesses have enough parking, and the parking lots are usually enough connote each other and side streets to make driving ok.
- Mix of residential and commercial.
- nothing
- High speeds and few interruptions for cars entering and exiting the city
- It is fine most of the year, excluding fall and summer.
- Even with heavy traffic it's relatively easy to drive and get where you need
- access to some amenities
- Good improvements from Front St south to Hannah.
- Slowly improving traffic flow but a lot of work still needs to be done, especially between 8th and Front.
- Traffic flow
- "Traffic generally moves well until reach 8th street.
- Airport causes large gap in development which reduces congestion.
- In truth, Hastings has become a major traffic corridor, which unloads some of Garfield traffic."
- Major corridor
- In town retail, link from bay to S. Airport. Smaller scale 'round the corner' uses like Pine Hills, O'Leary's, DeWeese provide character
- South of 8 th traffic moves along although much too fast
- Some bike lanes, general timing of lights
- lots of services
- Vehicle travel but as stated regarding 14th street that isn't necessarily good in that they tend to travel fast or attempt to travel fast. The new bike lanes are amazing to get north or south rapidly. The reduction in vehicle lanes is also nice for crossing east or west.
- As a passage way it works well.
- I like the lane reduction between Hannah and US-31 that was completed a few years ago.
- Businesses set back from street
- Redevelopment closer in to town seems to be going well and is a mix of commercial/retail/residential
- Not sure

- Multiple lanes
- Mix of businesses and residential areas is good. In general traffic flows well.
- "Flow of traffic
- "
- Road updates have made it better for traffic flow and pedestrians.
- I like the variety of different types of stores and retailers. Good sidewalks. Traffic flow seems to be good too.
- The little malls are old and dates they need facelifts for sure. Many of them present a run down , not thriving image.
- Going from 5 lanes in Garfield Township to 3 lanes in TC slows/calms traffic. I LIKE it. During the winter, sidewalks are generally not passable due to snow plowed up from the street. The pedestrian island at Washington is VERY helpful.
- Traffic usually doesn't get backed up.
- It's okay as it is
- It is a reasonably effective north-south vehicular route.
- Nothing. I don't like any of these for 14th. That is a neighborhood.
- Four lanes with turn lane from Hannah south.
- Traffic flow.
- Stable set of businesses
- Doesn't work well
- Traffic moves along, not many stops
- I believe the left only lane at Parsons/Hannah was an improvement.
- Lane usage in good. Traffic seems to flow well.
- Not much
- Narrows to two lanes for oak Park neighborhood
- leave it alone
- Fairly good traffic flow with timed lights
- Not much
- The addition of more residential units
- South of Eighth it serves as a thriving commercial corridor with a variety of business types and construction styles. The traffic transition from 4+ lanes and high speed limits near South Airport to 2 lanes and a 25 mph limit at Hannah actually seems to work, most of the time.
- Important route
- Protected bike lanes now extending to TART
- Traffic flow south of Parsons moves well most times.
- Good mix of retail and residential
- Funneling cars as quickly as possible north/south.
- Creating more traffic
- Multiple lanes, multiple lights to slow people down.
- Effective road to travel on but honestly I do not drive on it often
- Most of the pavement is in good shape.
- Nothing really works well, but especially the congestion between E. Front and Eighth St., after reducing the number of traffic lanes.

- speed of travel
- Slower traffic closer to town.
- 4 lanes
- Decent traffic flow south of 8th and Garfield
- Moving vehicle traffic North South
- Five lanes until town
- Business mix is good
- Traffic flow
- Lots of retail. Traffic moves.
- 45 MPH crossing the airport zone. Left turn lane.
- In spite of the confusing lane changes at Parsons Rd. traffic seems to flow during the winter.
- Traveling N/S from S. Airport to 14th
- pretty good traffic flow

## Munson Avenue Corridor

### What is not working well here?

- No strip malls (no new ones) YES!
- Too many driveways
- Tiny setbacks and over-crowded lot (starbucks and now Rite Aid) (1 dot)
- Bike lanes
- Need sidewalks all the way to S. Airport (reality that goes beyond city limits)
- Garfield and Front
- Bike lanes (1 dot)
- Light at carver and garfield
- bike lanes/walkability
- safe biking
- All the ugly parking on the roadway- hide it (1 dot)
- Too many different types of buildings eg strip mall next to pole barn, next to stand-alone house-type bldg.
- Bike lanes 8th-airport
- not pedestrian or bike friendly. lack of human scale
- The fact that you narrowed Garfield to 3 lanes
- There could be more density south of Hannah. Large parking lots, smaller buildings.
- Ugly street Side
- The complete lack of a cohesive vision for the area.
- Too auto focused
- Merge before left turn on 8th St.
- Traffic
- Sidewalks and bike lanes are needed. There is a ton of foot traffic on Garfield that isn't being taken care of. Pedestrians need more safety in this area.
- It looks run down, not inviting a poor reflection of what we should be representing



- Too many cars. Not enough lanes/too congested.
- The intersection at Hannah/Parsons... Was better before.
- Speed limits.
- Reducing the number of lanes caused unnecessary confusion, particularly at the Hannah/Parsons intersection. The entrance of bike lanes there is also dangerous.
- Very generic and blah.
- Speed limit enforcement. Specifically; North of South-Airport to 8th Street.
- See above
- Two lane road from Hammond out to Kingsley during high volume times and summer traffic. The more rural setting in this area without retail/commercial is nice however.
- Where it narrows to two lanes, it gets pretty congested. The aesthetics of the mixed uses could be updated to have more common elements, signage, etc.
- Confusing turn lanes at Hannah and 8th streets. Traffic backup at Front.
- Not enough left or right turn lanes.
- Traffic north of 8th street is a mess and has to be corrected.
- Buildings close to street make it difficult for retail as they look closed
- Bad pedestrian experience. There needs to be better sidewalks and bike pathways that are divided and separate from traffic.
- "No center turn lane
- No bike lane
- "
- Ugly
- It's kind of a depressing and only friendly to people whizzing by in cars, and not any other kind of mobility.
- Skinny sidewalks. Incomplete bikelanes
- No trees=no shade! Not pedestrian friendly or visually interesting
- "The strip malls, the old mall, and those awful box-like buildings (called ""condos"" or ""townhouses"", that are going up everywhere, downtown, on Garfield, and even on 8th St. near Garfield. Very ugly IMO.
- "
- Businesses on northeast corner at Carver are too close to the road with parking in back which gives the appearance of being closed or not busy. Every street doesn't have to look like Front St! Keep some green space between buildings. Add left turn arrows for northbound traffic.
- Busy, heavy traffic corridor
- unattractive, disconnected parcels, too many curb cuts, not bike or pedestrian friendly, underutilized in terms of housing potential
- Some of the traffic signals could be timed better for north traffic flow.
- Not having a center turn lane can be an issue at times.
- "dumps traffic at busy intersection base of peninsula
- "
- Transition to Peninsula Dr. by Bryant Pk.
- Lack of sidewalks. No bike lanes south of 8th street. Newer buildings built too close to the street.

- Needs more visual appeal. Needs updating.
- Speeding traffic is unpleasant for pedestrians and bicyclists. Road is poor condition. Not an attractive corridor.
- Too many going thru red lights at Munson and Peninsula Dr. too much risk taking from drivers entering the “main” portion of Pen. Dr. From the cut off by Bryant Park
- Garfield/31 intersection is like off roading and destroys my car
- "Lots of accidents at Garfield and South Airport.
  
- The merge of traffic in the left lane between Hannah St and 8th st can only turn left at the light and right can only go straight. Tends to have a lot of people who don't realize it's that way causing problems closer to the light with people trying to merge."
- The traffic lanes are confusing and changing constantly, there are not enough trees and vegetation, designated needs a left turn lane, needs a protected bike lane, more housing along it with mixed use, more trees!
- Cars almost always drive in the bike lanes, or pull into the bike lanes to stop at intersections, blocking bike traffic. There's really no safe way to ride a bike on Garfield. And the sidewalks suck.
- Has a very suburban feel.
- Broken roads
- As a major corridor into/out of the city, Garfield needs to be wider/have more lanes (for cars, not bikes). I would focus on increasing walkability and automobile traffic issues over bikeability.
- The pinch down to two lanes heading North.
- The traffic light at front street and Garfield- WOW- it's so so so long most of the day.
- "Trail side 45 and business on NE corner at Carver. They're set too close to the road. As a driver, hard to quickly discern how to get into the businesses. If more buildings are placed like this it will make the corridor feel claustrophobic and even more industrial than it already does.
  
- Transition from 4-lanes to 2+ center at Hannah. There is not enough warning for northbound travelers. So many cars are cutting off others at the last second when they get to the light. "
- It is unattractive and traffic doesn't flow. The speed limit changes every 5 feet.
- Needs a grocery store (although Edson is great!) And again, it's not a walkable area.
- Pedestrian and bike access is limited, few grocery stores, big transition at the Garfield Township/Traverse City line, so much wasted space at Cherryland Center.
- "North corner of eighth and railroad by the doctors office. Turning right from railroad onto eighth street is so tight, especially if you're in a truck. Not sure why is has to be so tight.
- Signage about no left turn off of eighth street onto railroad and also no lefty turn from railroad, not very visible. Overhead signage seemed to work better and it only took one overhead sign to accomplish the job. "
- "Traffic lights not synchronized. No sidewalk. No gas stations. All of Garfield just seems very hodgepodge.

- "
- Too many driveways
- East/West (taking a left).
- Speeding on section between Hammond and S Airport. More of an enforcement issue but shocked more accidents don't happen..... signage at Hannah Ave and Garfield. It has been months now and i still see people veer over last second to go straight through the intersection.... Garfield north of 8th street is too slow.
- Lots of traffic congestion, particularly near front street.
- areas that don't have a turn lane.
- Hannah and 8th Street northbound intersections are left turn only lanes and can be difficult to navigate.
- Nothing
- It's not a particularly attractive area. Cars are too big and fast, so using the new bike lanes still seems too dangerous.
- It's not a pretty drive through the city. Still many old buildings.
- Constricted traffic North of Hannah
- The road quality is absolute shit, especially between Grandview and 8th.
- Narrow lanes with a lot of bottle necking at Eighth St, at Munson Ave, and again at Hannah due to not enough lanes to accommodate turning traffic, updates needed to businesses/store fronts, lack of gas stations, lack of restaurants
- Varied with/lanes
- Not walkable enough for those that live nearby
- Garfield and Parson intersection. Particularly heading north on Garfield through the intersection. I have almost gotten in to two car accidents there because the warning the left lane can't go straight is almost non existent.
- It's visually unpleasant
- Changing away from 4 lanes.
- The buildings on Garfield south of 8th St. are a combination of office and commercial buildings, shopping centers and car dealers in no particular pattern; it is pretty chopped up. The Trailside development is far too close to the street, and too tall. It should not have been approved. Please no more of these tall buildings crowding the street. Further, it did not work as affordable housing, and is now fairly pricy condos. It was a bait and switch; don't let it happen again.
- Congested and unsightly, it's a hodgepodge and not visually appealing at all
- The removed turn lane on Garfield near 8th Street.
- Traffic and potholes.
- It's kinda ugly in some spots
- Sidewalks are insufficient, uncomfortable, and and often too close to the road to be comfortable for pedestrians, especially when bikers ride on the sidewalk, which I don't blame them for, because the bike lanes are a dangerous joke.
- The lane configuration between 8th and Parsons - is it one lane or two?
- no sidewalks
- Speed limit enforcement is nonexistent.
- Access for people on foot/bike/wheelchair

- At certain times of the year it is very congested at the light where it comes to US31, something to allow traffic to flow better would help. The mini malls are very dated and some are very shabby looking.
- Pedestrian and bike access, lots of pavement/parking lots with bad drivers crisscrossing the lots, no real traffic flow
- When they made Garfield one lane from front Street to Hannah. The traffic is too congested and another example of bike lanes that could easily be put on the sidewalk instead of the road like they did on eighth Street in North Boardman area.
- Sections with no middle turn lane, signage for abrupt turn lanes, having to go over bike lanes to go thru intersections
- way too busy, way too fast, no easy bike access
- The 4 lane sections are not needed.
- Traffic lights! Better timing. In this day and age there's really no excuse!
- "Eighth and Garfield intersection.
- East bound on eighth street to Garfield has an unofficial right turn lane. People often squeeze to create right turn lane. Need to widen slightly and stripe 3 official lanes.
- Crazy idea to have allowed a Rite Aid behind Bordens further complicating a hugely difficult intersection at Munson and Garfield."
- Retail areas all strip centers
- Left turns into retail, old time auto oriented strip retail
- North of 8 th constant bottleneck and road is in bad shape. Drivers disregard the crosswalk. Also lots and lots of speeding cut thru traffic on Hastings, Steele/Hannah.
- Some signage isn't obvious enough (thinking Parsons intersection going north)
- unfriendly and periodically unsafe for non motorized transport
- Vehicle lanes not lining up. Width of the vehicle lanes feels really wide. This could be a good corridor for another raised bike lake. The crossing at the TART and Garfield can be confusing at times for cyclists.
- "Seems disjointed. Mixed use makes it look somewhat ugly.
- "
- No left turn lane between Hannah and Carver causes traffic problems
- No trees, not very inviting streetscape
- The two lane to one lane transitions are still confusing to drivers. Garfield is not pedestrian friendly. I live at Garfield and Birmley and would love to be able to run or bike to downtown (I realize this requires partnership with Garfield Twp). Obviously not pedestrian/bike-friendly. Agave plaza could be redeveloped.
- Intersection of Front and Garfield
- Landscaping and potholes. Median divide on busy 4-5 lane road
- "Road conditions. Traffic lights
- Turning lanes"
- It's ugly.
- "Pedestrians can't safely walk any distance
- Parking "
- 8th street intersection back ups

- Could use more curb appeal. Feels very siloed on each side and doesn't offer a lot to want to explore other business or restaurants along the corridor. Not very walkable.
- Trailside 45 is big and ugly.
- The narrowing down of the street to one lane each way
- Traffic flows poorly down this corridor.
- Bike lane heading south near the 8th St intersection is largely occupied by cars waiting for the light to change. Traffic heading south backs up at 8th St light. Traffic heading north backs up at E Front St light. Add pedestrian island at Webster. I would not want to live across the street or alley from the commercial zone...this transition zone does not make for a pleasant living situation...especially with increased short term rentals in these areas.
- Lane shifts and bike lanes are confusing. Walking along Garfield is not pleasant and is unsafe in some places.
- It gets too congested as nothing else is/was planned out as well
- lack of consistent and safe walking and cycling paths;
- 14th isn't downtown...let's not make it that.
- No speed enforcement Needs to be as wide as the portion from Hannah south.
- Sidewalks are narrow, lack of safe, pedestrian crossings
- Making any type of left turn except at traffic signals
- Too much traffic and lanes too small
- Hard to get out of side streets left on Garfield
- Too many driveways, service drives or requiring business to connect parking lots to each other.
- Not sure
- Traffic flow, road conditions, poor access to businesses.
- Garfield and front one of the most dangerous intersections especially for pedestrian. Garfield and 8th not much better. Tart trail crossing poorly situated by a busy intersection. Garfield and South airport ridiculously dangerous
- narrowing traffic, causing congestion
- Intersection of Munson and Garfield gets too congested
- "The crossing at the tart trail. There is a serious lack of trees, pavement and concrete cover most of developmented land areas, there's no area for runoff to settle.
  
- No pleasant or easy to go from end to end on bike or foot. Lack of public transport options. There's a lot of wasted sprawl. Most of this is past the city limits but even the area within TC is very poorly laid out, ugly and not good for anyone who isn't in a car. "
- Light timing (all of Garfield Rd) is utterly terrible. Most of the corridor is car dealerships.
- The intersection at Garfield and East Front Street is unpleasant and intimidating to people on foot and bikes. The connection to the Civic Center, a major urban amenity, is minimal.
- Trail side 45 is too close to the road, too many trees were removed, unattractive architecture
- Bad timing of traffic signals north to south and east to west

- Traffic flow between 8th and Anderson RD gets congested- traffic from coffee shops on both SW and SE corners creates significant problems with traffic flow. Drivers heading North on Garfield to Peninsula speed up significantly at curve - this area should not be more than 25mph and should be policed better
- Speeding, lane use confusion
- Unsafe for cyclists and pedestrians. Hideous scenery.
- Pedestrian safety
- Two lanes until it become one. Why?
- It gets backed up at eighth street quite far, as well as at Munson.
- No center turn lane.
- See above.
- One story strip-mall style buildings
- not a very pretty street
- Aesthetic. This is an ugly corridor. Not bike-friendly. Too many curb cuts. Dated business signage.
- No cycling facilities. Poor or no sidewalks
- Need better, more aggressive pedestrian crossings. Development is sprawl like, many curb cuts, not tied together in any design etc. it's even difficult to find store when driving, because there is so much.
- Traffic lights are not timed properly for good flow of traffic.
- Traffic buildup at 8th and Garfield.
- Bike lanes are a waste and dangerous as currently designed
- Not pedestrian or cyclist friendly!
- Two lanes at very north before Munson, left turns holding up traffic
- It is only for cars. Bike lanes don't exist. Doesn't allow for any non-car to access it.
- Need left turn lanes all the way down. Two lane traffic all the way down.
- Pedestrian access
- Ugly. Could be any city USA.
- Lack of setback above first floor for multi-story buildings. Too many marijuana stores near each other. Business access mid block can be difficult to exit depending on time of day.
- As traffic increases during the summer, narrowing traffic to one lane at Parsons and 8th St. will create congestion.
- Traveling from 14th to Munson only one lane
- there could be much more diversity, housing

## Munson Avenue Corridor

### What is possible here?

- Big picture, what is possible here?
- Bayline/Better bus stops
- Bike lanes for safe travel
- Much better bike walk lanes, pedestrian scene lighting, landscaping
- 2 lanes of traffic better connections to west/east
- Garfield & Front better bike, walk, run connection to Bryant
- Pedestrian lighting
- TIF district for Garfield
- Cycle track, safe crossings, increased commerce
- consider this: Add this area for development woodmere along Tart Trail south of 8th  
West side of woodmere (1 dot)
- Roundabouts!
- more walk-ability & bike friendly. more housing
- Put it back to four lanes and turn lanes
- A vibrant commercial corridor with housing and commercial variety with more density
- Nicer buildings
- “Possible?” It could become a walkable extension of downtown. At least until you get to the airport.
- Better building frontage towards street
- I would consider a roundabout at Parsons and Garfield.
- Allow tall buildings
- There's some vacant lots/empty buildings that could be filled.
- No roundabouts.
- It's probably too late. The buildings are right at curb edge which negates the possibility of widening the road.
- Sidewalks, more trees.
- Reduce zoning on Garfield to Residential/Apartment/Condo to long-term lease/own only.
- We need more crosswalks. Maybe a divided street with a green median
- Garfield needs to decide if it's going to be an artery into TC or transition into something like 8th street north of the airport.
- Multiple lanes, expansion and the Hammond bridge to take you west over the boardman river to access the west side of TC
- Anything!
- Unless you are willing to knock out housing to add a lane, it seems pretty limited.
- Huge opportunity for housing.
- Keep it open to good flow
- It is what it is.
- Needs a center turn lane and bike lanes

- Modernize stores. Make Cherryland Center an updated mall space with shared areas for eating outside, smaller stores, more boutiques.
- More trees and maybe traffic calming measures.
- Plenty of street trees. Eliminate duplicative driveways. Break up super blocks with new east/west streets. Install dark sky friendly, pedestrian scaled street lights.
- Ask the airport BEFORE making Plan!!! If the airport were relocated this would be prime mixed use property!!!!
- Create an architectural committee to create a new perspective that includes trees, sculpture, small parks, and classical architecture for buildings, Not the trash you see going up all over TC and spoiling the character of our city - cheap, fast, and ugly boxes.
- Some more infill; improving access to parking lot to (former) Agave (it's too steep);
- Not sure
- more density, safer for multimodal transport (walking/biking/etc)
- More multiple family housing, apartments, no more businesses from 8th street south to the City limits.
- disperse traffic at 8th street intersection , make it the major north outlet and bypass base of peninsula
- Old mission peninsula ( Peninsula Dr. B decommissioned as a HIGHWAY and handed over to the County and City . Local control so safety rules can be instituted.
- keeping cars moving at reasonable speed with accommodations for bikers and pedestrians. Buildings not so close to the street with retail and residential.
- Potential for multiple housing units.
- More planting of native shrubs and trees. Traffic calming or patrolling to slow cars down. Smart street lights to improve traffic flow.
- Eliminate a left turn from Munson by the Blue Goat.
- More pot shops
- Add a sign above the road showing that straight and right only in right lane and left only in left lane much sooner than the old CVS area.
- See previous answer
- Separate bike and foot traffic from car traffic entirely, have a large path, and put nice landscaping/trees in between cars and pedestrian/bike path.
- More density.
- Fixing appearances
- Something to re-energize that side of town. We've lost a lot of businesses, and it feels a little dead/abandoned.
- Needs to be more biker/pedestrian friendly.
- Better architecture! Let's get newer building designs in, it looks so dated in parts.
- "Green spaces. As this area is improved, keep the easy flow of traffic and wide lanes, but start relocating all the parking and asphalt adjacent to the road. Pedestrians are essentially forced to walk in parking lots all along here. Add more green space walking corridors similar to civic center.
  
- At Garfield and Front, force east bound travelers on Front to turn left at Garfield. Too many turn left onto Peninsula at the Blue Goat causing unnecessary backups on Front.



Turn that small section of Peninsula into a one-way exit west bound onto Front. Restructure the Garfield intersection to accommodate more traffic exchanges onto/off of the peninsula.

- As Garfield and 8th grow, intersections particularly at Front, 8th, S Airport, and Hammond need to be over planned with future-proofing in mind so we don't have to do this again in 20 years. Future-proofing not only in design, but thinking about maintenance funding as well."
- "Small housing options (not rentals since these seem to exploit transient remote workers and price out local hospitality workers. Affordable housing as a concept no longer works in Traverse City. Would love to see Studio, 1 & 2 bed condos instead).
- It would also be wonderful to see more open, family friendly spaces that encourage learning through play and businesses that cater to children. We need more options in this area akin to The Great Lakes Children's Museum, Busy Bodies Bounce House (RIP), and Handz On Art. "
- Redevelop the Cherryland Center with an anchor grocery store and improve pedestrian access and bike access.
- Again please do not turn us into Grand Rapids. Keep our neighborhoods neighborhoods not downtown. Again do not like buildings that could shadow homes behind from sun. Feels closed in to me.
- So much. New building construction, a congruent feel from the bed to Airport Road. Living working dining.
- adding a parking destination for people to stay at and come into downtown. Much like Meijer.
- Better signage. North of 8th should be widened with a designated turn lane and increased speed limit. Get rid of bike lanes, I use a bike sometimes but couldn't pay me enough to ride with traffic!
- No more than 3 stories or it will hurt the aesthetic of the area.
- This can fit larger/taller spt buildings that do not obstruct others or cause congestion
- Make it more like the NOBO district where there is some separation between traffic and bikers. Taller buildings (residential up top with commercial below). Each TC district should be self sustaining with amenities like a grocery store, bank, and restaurants. Don't forget outdoor seating for the restaurants.
- Please do not consider Garfield Ave for streetside parking as pictured below. Also, please do not limit development to the "looks" or "feel" of a building. Traverse City needs retail, needs residential units, and needs parking - but also needs to deliver tourism and goods via roads. Please leave room for residents, visitors, and cargo to access the city.
- Better mix of businesses, restaurants, updated storefronts, wider/more traffic lanes,
- Widen it out to at least Hammond
- This area could benefit from more thoughtful and community based businesses, better traffic safety, pedestrian consideration
- Better light pattern
- Larger buildings, better zoning for retail(no funeral homes!)

- 4 lanes with more left turn lanes or totally 5 lanes. Left turn arrows.
- It will take a lot of changes to a lot of properties over a very long period to make Garfield Ave south of 8th St look at all cohesive. The best approach would be to simply advise developers as new project come along. Keep the buildings to only 2-3 stories and do not set them on the property line. There should be green space and sidewalks in front of the buildings. And, if you want bike paths, don't put them in the road ; the traffic is too much and too fast. Put bike paths up in front of the buildings. (of course, given the bad planning, there is not enough space in front of Trailside). In advising developers, make sure enough space is left for greenery and paths; it is not necessary for developers to use all of the property and increase density to the maximum.
- Better walkability, better access into businesses
- Additional lane added, more nature along the sides of the road- so industrial we have lost all the natural environment. Implement more trees or bushes.
- I don't like any of your renderings for this area. 8 stories is ridiculous. Street parking at an angle is a nightmare. Maybe a couple 3-4 story buildings in different blocks couple be appropriate.
- "Give it the 8th Street bike and pedestrian treatment, and the same islands and multiple pedestrian crossings. Lower speed limit to 25 south to Carver at least, maybe even Boon. And enforce it!
- Increase setbacks. Build to lot line is unacceptable "
- sidewalks
- If medians will help keep traffic moving within the speed limit, put 'em in -- they'll add a lot in terms of aesthetics as well.
- N/S protected bike infra
- Could you widen Garfield to allow for 2 left hand turn lanes towards downtown? Can you require mini malls facades to be updated to a certain standard, would the owners invest?
- More green space
- 2 lanes for better traffic flow with a bike lane on the side walk like 8 th. I think there will be a real traffic problem with the new developments on Garfield in traffic coming and going from these new high density apartment buildings.
- Loosen up narrowing when it get to the city,middle turn lane thru out, better signage
- protected bike lanes. traffic slowing
- Complete street similar to 8th, with housing, and retail.
- Try to reduce visual clutter. Less wires overhead. Larger road signs so it's easier for drivers to navigate.
- "Develop light traffic commercial.
- "
- Better retail
- Mixed use, but not downtown urban
- Roundabout
- Curb appeal and biking paths
- more safe crossings. more consistent sidewalks & bike paths. just nicer overall, less stripmall shithole vibe

- Better multi modal traveling. More buildings closer to the street but set far enough back that it is comfortable, unlike the Rite Aid and Starbucks along Front Street. Less surface parking. Better sidewalk crossings at all intersections and possibly refuge islands. This would create an area of 15 minute walkability for the surrounding neighborhoods. More housing on upper levels of multi-story buildings as well.
- "Whatever buildings are proposed, they need to be stepped back from the curb with bushes or trees. Best would be retail on the first floor with affordable rental (again not switched to higher prices later forcing folks out.) But affordable forever.
- Could there possibly be a roundabout at Munson & Garfield? It would help traffic flow. It is too long a wait there now.
- Also, meant to say for 14th & Division: needs a permeable roundabout for good traffic flow. Right now, the light here is way too long."
- Encourage more multi-residential construction without set backs as well as more small retail.
- Trees, bike lanes, bus stop cutouts, better building presence, wider areas in front of buildings for outdoor dining
- Again, I look to NOBO as an example. I think higher density infill development with mixed income housing would fill a huge need. Green space/pocket parks? More grocery options (not big box though). \*\*\* note for below- I would want parking behind, NOT diagonal or parallel in front. The more patio opportunity out front, the better.
- Round-a-bout
- Traffic circle around main intersections that allow Garfield traffic to pass through the center
- Improve above
- Not sure. I'm not in that region frequently - only go when necessary.
- Accessing shops from alternate roads west and east of Garfield so flow of traffic remains smooth
- Roundabout
- Better sidewalks and pedestrian crossing could help people spend time from place to place or make several stops along the way.
- In other states there are requirements/ standards on what such mall areas must look like. I believe South Carolina has ordinances that govern the looks of such buildings. It would be nice to see upgrades to these mini malls.
- I think that there is potential to line Garfield with businesses that people want to travel to. The addition of Mundos on Boon and Garfield was very important. People want to go to businesses like coffee shops and restaurants but don't want to deal with parking downtown. Being able to build up some of these empty lots and put restaurants or other small businesses could take stress off of downtown and make Garfield Avenue a destination as well.
- Perhaps traffic circles would improve traffic flow and eliminate back up at intersections...but would need to ensure walkers and cyclists could cross those intersections safely.
- There really isn't any place to add more buildings within the city limits on Garfield and if you decide to no TIF or PILOT!

- Safe and hospitable bike paths and bus stops
- Tree canopy, green spaces
- Increase lane size
- I'm not sure. It is pretty well developed and it might be difficult to do much, because it's already built out, for the most part.
- More apartment type buildings would work here.
- Which part of Garfield ? There are different issues depending on the area.
- Slow traffic down coming into town on Munson; make it clear they're coming into residential. Slow down South Airport, make it less desirable.
- full traffic flow from hammond to front street
- Don't know
- "Add trees and green space for runoff and native insect/pollinator/plant/wildlife habitat.
  
- Non motorized lane or trail with a barrier from cars.
  
- Require green building methods, like what I mentioned on 14th. Require green roof or solar panels on rooftop.
  
- Parking lots surrounded by greenery and covered by tree canopy.
  
- Breaks between buildings for green space and to allow for natural air flow."
- Garfield is possibly the most diverse street in the city. North of Eighth it has a very residential character, including a school. There's low-key commercial such as dentists offices, and more major businesses, like Save-A-Lot and the car dealerships. Plus it has connection to the TART trail, the bay, and the airport.
- More apartments/housing and bus stop with bump out
- Further expansion focused to the south
- No entry/exit to coffee shops off of Garfield. Reduce speed limit to 25mph on Garfield north of US 31. Add center islands like on the Parkway to slow speeding.
- Lane re-design, improved signage, crosswalks, medians with greenery
- More walkable and bikeable amenities for safe pedestrian access.
- Garfield between Front and Eighth and particularly right there at Eighth could be like another little downtown with taller buildings, shops, and restaurants.
- Better use if the old cherryland mall; more restaurants and social spaces. Hopefully, more affordable places to live
- Making a center turn lane would greatly improve the flow of traffic.
- Please don't treat this road as a single unit ... consider the variety of existing contexts, from residential to retail to commercial.
- Multi-use, multi- story, diverse occupancy
- so much
- Bikeability. Many more apartment buildings like the one on Garfield and the TART (but actually keep it affordable instead of only having it be affordable for a limited time).
- protected bike lanes

- "Design standards with incentives for rehab. Overall plan to decrease curb cuts and slow traffic.
- With regard to the pictures, I feel higher density development is not recommended because it will bring even more cars. It would be possible to make it more pedestrian friendly. "
- More lower income apartments.
- Desperately need traffic circle here
- Better pedestrian connections along the roadway
- I would love to see accessible, affordable housing in this corridor. Additionally, more bike lanes and sidewalks that allow mobility for all.
- Add left turn lane
- Create offshoots that are not car centric and are not strip malls. An increase in quality restaurants (like common food or Oakwood) vs. fast food.
- Wider sidewalks with bike lanes
- Sidewalks, placemaking, housing
- "Smart" traffic signals at 8th, Hannah, and South Airport. (Smarter than current if they are supposedly smart now). Setbacks above the first story for future buildings above 2 floors tall. NO zero lot line construction.
- My favorite part of Garfield is a little north and south of Center St. There are (were) a lot of trees between the street and buildings, at least on one side. Now new buildings are going up and the trees are coming down.
- Safer pedestrian crosswalks, bike lanes, and public transportation
- This might be a great place for additional housing to meet the needs of workers

## Munson Avenue Corridor

### Additional ideas (Sticky notes)

- Parking? Retail is good and tall is O.K. but where is parking?
- This corridor would accomate a tram. This is a vienna style opportunity. Would be so cool!
- Taller buildings ok here but need to be shorter near 8th and Munson by walkability. Human scale
- Parking? All this development and where is parking where is green space?
- Prioritize more on 8th for Mixed use walkable development
- Parking in back?
- More large multi-family housing- important area for development
- Like the idea of the look as many buildings when it is just one
- Any developments that will encourage mixed use- retail and housing
- Include Boardman lake loop woodmere ave market place with workforce housing (2 dots)
- Hate building out to sidewalk. Alley-access parking rarely serves traffic from multiple directions

## 14<sup>th</sup> Street Corridor

### What is working well here?

- Like the mix of dining and retail
- Residential development on lake ridge and completion of boardman lake trail are big positives
- Transition from end to end works well
- Mix of commercial and residential
- Variety of small-scale, locally-owned businesses w/ easy parking
- The alternative entry into downtown from Front or S. Airport
- access to 14th from Division is good.
- Nothing other than the turn lane down 14th
- Traffic flows well except during high traffic times but even that goes pretty quickly.
- The corridor serves purpose for commercial offerings
- Supports some good small businesses
- Light at division
- Almost, nothing
- The waterfront, with major open areas, is nice.
- Not much.
- No opinion.
- The downtown area, we need to keep it as is with the small, boutique atmosphere. I own a building on front street. We want to make sure that it doesn't become tacky tourist atmosphere.
- Nothing
- Many lanes. Having traffic lights.
- Adding two left turn lanes to Division was a big help.
- The stretch between Veteran's and out to Silver Lake
- Access to: grocery, convenience store, pharmacy, gas, car wash, fast food, local sports (Thirlby Field), schools, etc.
- Businesses are open and accessible.
- Interesting mix of businesses.
- Narrow road reduces speed. Large pedestrian friendly sidewalks.
- Nothing, it's always busy and backed up
- The widening of the road to allow more lanes at Division.
- The creation of tumultuous driving conditions, and breeding zone for the great-northern pot-hole.
- The timing of the lights seem OK.
- Good east/west option for lighter traffic.
- Double left turn lanes onto division are working.
- Leaving main corridors open for free flow of traffic. Expanding main corridors to keep free flow of traffic.
- It is a good way to get to Union and Cass from Division. That is about it.

- There is a sidewalk. Most businesses are accessible from the sidewalk. The crosswalk and signal that allows you to go from 14th Street, across Division and access the paved pathway on the bioswale into the Commons is great. I live on Frankie Road and that is my preferred way to get across Division. I can bike here from my house on Frankie Road and take care of packages at the UPS store and I used to do my copies at Copy Queen. I can also go into 7-Eleven or one of the gas stations and get a snack. I could also grab groceries at Tom's and go back home along the Mall Trail to Meijer. These are real working class simple pleasures. I don't need a Lululemon store or whatever bougie retail nonsense is happening on Front Street.
- 2 lanes of traffic going each way
- Stoplights
- The street allows traffic to flow
- Motorist don't speed when during busy travel times.
- New signal and added lanes at 14/Division are BIG improvement
- 14th St. seems reasonably fine to me.
- Buildings are not built right up to sidewalk (except for gas station on corner of Veterans), there is a sense of space unlike other areas in town that are too crowded and overbuilt.
- Fourteenth Street connects downtown TC to areas west, south west and south.... shopping, schools, residential neighborhoods
- diversity of business types. convenient access to many important things for the neighborhood. convenient connector.
- Center left turn lane
- Nothing
- Traffic generally is moving without the terrifically long wait lines of cars at intersection lights. A sidewalk is on one side. Buildings are of lower height.
- Traffic flows better as you go farther east.
- It flows well to get people East to West.
- Nothing jumps out at me. It does have some interesting businesses.
- Two lanes to turn left from 14th onto 31S.
- Same as it ever was.
- The connection to multiple roads, close to grocery store, close to boardman lake and trail system,
- Works well for cars
- There are some nice businesses in the corridor.
- Not much
- Cass and Union street light timing is good.
- Feels like a good shortcut around town.
- Nothing, really.
- The cluster of businesses between Maple and Veterans. Places are all quick stops, never have trouble finding parking. I like they are close together.
- The inclusion of businesses like Common Good, the Asian market, access to grocery/drugstore (Tom's, Rite Aid).
- An existing mix of businesses
- Seems to flow well.

- It's fine
- Double lefts turn lanes
- Its not street repair or maintenance.
- Smooth traffic for most of the day
- Na
- Ok flow of traffic except for congestion near us-31.
- controlled traffic speeds with lights and stop signs. Varity of businesses and feeder roads for residential areas into the corridor area.
- Traffic flows relatively well
- 14th and division light
- West route. Two turn lanes onto Division
- Traffic lights are better than stop signs.
- Common goods
- Access to businesses w/ left turn lane
- Nothing
- Traffic lights at major intersections , sidewalks
- Double left turn lanes 14th to division. It clears congestion better.
- Short waits at lights.
- Theres a gas station....
- Nothing
- Nothing
- Connections to Silver Lake Rd, US-31, Veterans Dr, Union St., Cass St.; Thirlby Field; State Police Post; Businesses
- It's very existence. It's a great cut through to get from Meijer area to downtown
- 2 turns lanes onto Division. Improve flow on that end of the street.
- It much- I avoid the area
- The little "strip malls" don't look great, but they do make it possible to park once and then accomplish multiple errands on foot.
- Adding a second turn lane (to turn south from 14th) is much appreciated.
- it's connected to other roads
- The wait at each of the traffic lights at 14th/Veterans, 14th/Union and 14th/Cass is relatively short and keeps traffic moving.
- Frankly very little. Suburban stroad and strip mall land use serves only commercial property owners on this corridor.
- I think it is not a bad area, but as the crowds increase we could use a wider corridor here. In the winter I do not think its a problem but come fall and summer, its a bit conjested.
- Nothing
- Nothing
- Easy way to get to the events at the stadium. Stop lights are helpful.
- easy access to a few businesses like UPS etc
- For car drivers traffic flows
- Pretty much nothing.
- "Turn lanes when they are available



- "
- Few accidents
- Traffic generally moves well until reach the corner of fifteenth and US 31. So East bound direction moves well.
- Traffic light timing good
- In town retail, public facilities like the school
- Traffic moves
- relatively narrow road. mix of active uses
- Vehicle travel which isn't always for the best as vehicles will travel at speed or try to travel at speed. The sidewalks are nice and the proximity to the Boardman loop is great.
- As a passage way it works well.
- Not sure if it is working well, except that traffic moves adequately.
- "not much, bad road surface not pleasant to walk
- convenient to cut accross town"
- I have no issues with 14th
- Light timing at division, veterans, Cass & union
- Nothing
- Traffic flow is okay certain times of the day.
- Not the CCP infiltrating our country and specifically our state:  
<https://twitter.com/i/status/1654176656318136324>
- In general, it's ok but I wouldn't say anything particularly positive about it.
- Flow of traffic
- There's a lot of potential for it to be a mixed use space. We already have housing and retail coexisting in the area.
- I guess the availability of a sidewalk?
- I think 14th street works pretty well, it would be nice to make it four lanes instead of 2 east of Division but that is only an issue in the summer
- It's a good east/west connector
- Good mix of businesses.
- Not much
- Easy vehicular route with a mix of useful businesses
- Traffic moves fine.
- Traffic seems to be flowing well.
- Healthy mix of stable businesses
- Not sure
- Gets you across town without tons of stop sign
- Not much
- Nothing that I can see. The street is to small for the amount of traffic.
- Not much
- Best way to cross or turn onto division. Going west, a beautiful view of the hills. Low profile buildings retains small town feel. Can see community activities at thirlby field
- widen it....
- The access to Cass and Veterans Drive
- Relatively good traffic flow

- Can't think of anything, it's ugly!
- Main route; great view looking west into the hills
- Small businesses
- Traffic moves well without speeding
- Surprisingly, traffic flow is pretty good except in summer months
- This corridor is completely auto depended. Cars speed thru the area, especially people dropping children off at schools who have little regarded for pedestrians traversing this are.
- Not much
- The MDOT rework of the intersection at Division (31) and Fourteenth keeps traffic moving.
- Easy access to downtown and other shopping. Need more shops and esthetic beauty with more green landscapes.
- It works well for N/S division. Cass intersection is OK.
- A solid connection point to get to other places
- The connections seem appropriate.
- the lights are good for controlling traffic
- Its role as an efficient connection to West Silver Lake Rd.
- Recreation amenities
- Signal lights to slow down traffic.
- Many businesses are accessible here.
- speed, accessibility, variety of services
- Successful businesses that many residents go to.
- Good thoroughfare across the city
- Not much, way too much traffic on 14th. Three o'clock all the schools are letting out and at 5 o'clock people getting off work. People in Central Neighborhood cannot access 14th during these times because traffic is bumper to bumper and cars will not let you move into 14th to go anywhere.
- It's an east - west option but not ideal; too congested. Road itself is in terrible condition
- East West passage for vehicles
- Connections to the major transportation routes
- Slow speed, lights/stops
- General good mix of commercial, community, and residential space.
- Center turn lanes
- Traffic moves
- The intersection at 14th St. and Division
- Traffic flows once you are on it
- Easy to get to US31
- not much

## 14<sup>th</sup> Street Corridor

### What is not working well here?

- Traffic & lights
- Huge amount of traffic on 14th most of the day: 8 to 10 am, 2 to 6pm
- Bike lanes needed
- no bike lane need sidewalk
- pedestrian access along 14th needs beautification (1 dot)
- Need a turn lane the whole way
- Unappealing pedestrian corridor & not bike friendly
- No sidewalk on North side of 14th east of Cass
- Intersection of Cass & 14th needs left turn lanes in each direction (currently not marked east bound)
- Look- no flow or consistency
- No safe crossings for pedestrians, even at light on veterans. No bike lane (1 dot)
- Number of accesses vs. traffic is an issue also poor pedestrian/bike accommodation
- No park for residents, no lighting for pedestrians to walk at night (1 dot)
- too much traffic, not enough bike lanes
- School release times seem to create traffic back-ups around 3:30
- 14th West at Division get's backed up in heavy traffic times. Pedestrians are not safe. Cars speeding. Lack of trees. No bike lanes
- traffic back ups. The street has little visual interest - very broken up
- Signal flow, speeds, road width road condition.
- Turning into Huntington Bank and Tom's maybe close the entrance and have everybody use the side street just east of the entrance.
- multi-modal transit needs improvement in the area. Near grid lock at peak times of the day.
- Doesn't promote pedestrians
- Light at veterans
- Tall buildings and the push for cheap housing right downtown. Downtown should be expensive, with cheaper housing radiating outwards - supported by regional mass transit.
- Vacant lots, road conditions, very auto focused as opposed to multimodal.
- No opinion.
- Need more lanes
- Intersection at maple and 14th. Side walks and bike lanes are needed down 14th.
- Traffic and Parking in downtown we need to have solutions that don't change the atmosphere that we already have. See above.
- Traffic, there is no community feel
- Traffic light at 14th and division.
- Always a lot of traffic, I try to avoid this street at all costs.
- Need more lanes for traffic.

- The stretch East of Veteran's, I avoid it and cut through residential to get to Union and Cass to go South due to road conditions
- Traffic flow is highly congested.
- Traffic lights cause backups and confusion.
- Traffic congestion. Not an attractive area.
- Too many cars
- Congestion. From Union to Maple it is too congested, especially on weekday rush hour
- The efficient movement of traffic.
- It is a bit disconnected for bike traffic and the sidewalks are skinny and not great for bikes.
- Not wide enough to support the volume of traffic it Carrie's
- Too narrow to turn in and out of some business parking lots, turning lanes for Division back up traffic.
- Preventing free flow of traffic with narrowing of main corridors like 14th street, 8th street, and Front St
- Almost everything else. It feels like there was never a real plan for it. It has a few mini-strip malls, the grocery store plus whatever disaster is across the street, Thirlby with a bunch of parking, etc. 14th is only used to get other places, there is nothing there to go to.
- There is not a good way to cross 14th Street between Division and Veterans. The intersection at 14th Street and Cass is kind of a hot mess.
- No safe way to bike or walk beside traffic lanes
- Not wide enough. Need more lanes towards Division. Hard to get on to 14th from any of the businesses near Division.
- It's hard to turn left sometimes, the cars go too fast, it's not enjoyable to walk along it. It's impossible to bike in the roadway.
- Lacking street trees. Bicycling on the street feels unsafe. Buildings are pushed back too far from the street. Parking in front is unsightly.
- Visually unattractive . No trees =no shade . Very hot for pedestrians, neighbors and the Universe! Strip malls handy by uninteresting!
- N/A
- Rough pavement; eastbound lane at Veterans needs widening to allow safe right hand turns; shabby homes and junky yards (how about implementing a NEZ?); stores don't look well utilized
- "the amount of traffic traveling on 14th has increased a great deal over the past few years. 14th is a two lane road.
- I do not feel comfortable riding my bike along 14th"
- traffic, condition of the road, too many curb cuts, not bike-friendly, uncomfortable to traverse as a pedestrian, ugly
- No bike lanes. Not aesthetically pleasing.
- Biking, traffic
- No bike lane. No pedestrian walk between Veterans Dr. and Union Streets.
- Traffic can get jammed from Veterans to U.S. 31. Difficult to turn left out of businesses. Not easy/convenient for pedestrians.

- It is only two lanes. Right turn lanes should be added at business entrances. At the Division/14th street light westbound, the right lane should be right turn only.
- Poor road quality. Kind of dingy and rundown. Not a particularly attractive area. Poorly landscaped.
- Road is worse than many dirt roads I travel
- Traffic between 2:30-6pm is garbage because the elementary school pickup congests the road. The timing on the lights is also weird so the Veterans and 14th junction is always backed up because the Division and 14th is one a different time schedule.
- No protected bike lane, blighted houses and unused space on many lots that could be infilled with housing or mixed used multifamily housing, the public transit system (you can't get anywhere from 14th street outside of the city and the city interior is walkable from here), need a coffee shop on this side of town that is walkable, not enough trees and planted areas, too much single family housing - need more density
- Dangerous for bicycles and pedestrians
- Traffic flow at some times of day is very congested. Not visually pleasing like the 8th street area now is.
- It's an ugly stretch of road with often chaotic traffic because of all of the parking lots and cars turning.
- Street full of potholes, too much traffic, no left turn arrow coming from 14th to turn left onto veterans, angry/aggressive drivers and kids that walk across 14th to and from school daily as well as bike for fun
- Traffic back-ups (esp at intersection w Division), hard to turn out of parking lots, lack of walkability
- No middle turn lane causing frequent traffic back ups both directions.
- Pedestrian crossing by Munson, backups at light
- Just feels dusty and old. Traffic to turn left from 31 seems a bit big for the road.
- The condition of the road is bad, and traffic doesn't flow well. The corridor is also just plain ugly. Redmond Automotive, Team One Credit Union, and the gas station across are huge eyesores. Speed limit is not enforced. I see people crossing on foot all the time near 7/11.
- Crossing 14th or turning left out of any parking lot. If I have trouble in a car, walking must be a challenge.
- "I'm concerned that too much development is affecting the wildlife in this area (down the road is the new Montessori which is so disappointing. That was an area rich in wildlife).
  
- Also, 14th is not very walkable."
- The flow of traffic and ability to access businesses
- Condition of roads
- The light on the vision gets backed up frequently
- Conjestion
- Street repair and maintenance. Too much emphasis on keeping the tourists happy. Affordable housing.

- Traffic congestion during lunch, before and after work hours, during which time west traffic can be extremely backed up often through the veterans intersection. Very difficult to make left turns, lanes can feel very narrow when people are sitting in the turn lane. Lanes not marked very well at the 14th/veterans traffic light
- Na
- Driving congestion near US-31 from traffic exiting and entering to local business parking lots.
- Road Capacity. During rush hour traffic, traffic backs up at the various intersections. Hard to turn into the traffic flow from the area businesses, schools etc.
- Area around football stadium should be developed ... parking lot and surrounding area is run down
- Cannot turn left easily out of businesses due to congested traffic, poorly timed lights
- Tight traffic space at 14th & Division. High traffic at 3 pm. Limited parking or parking overflows into residential areas.
- It's not appealing to the eye. I don't see many pedestrians, when there are several amenities that could be walked to.
- traffic
- The old commercial buildings... all or most need to be updated
- No left turn arrow for South on Veteran's Drive
- Timing of lights. Traffic in and out of businesses, school, etc.
- Narrow lanes, lacking clear turn lanes (especially at Cass and 14th), major traffic back ups as schools let out in the afternoon, narrow streets at Teddy Bear Daycare with street drop offs and lots of u-turns by parents leaving, roads need paving.
- 14th and Cass could have better defined left turn lanes, it's somewhat a free for all down that way.
- Seems fine.
- Limited lanes
- Traffic. Moronic light time sequences. NO Sidewalk.... again NO sidewalks
- Extremely congested with traffic
- All of it
- Too few traffic lanes
- Generally, everything works well. There are a few traffic back-ups but they don't last long. They simply require a little patience, which we all need. Putting more mixed use developments with businesses in the lower level would be a mistake without substantial parking in the back, which is probably not feasible given the depth of the lots. There cannot be parking on the street -- not enough space with the traffic. It is also not a good place for bicycle traffic, so don't encourage it.
- The stoplight by the Speedway is long and feels awkwardly placed. Too many pot holes.
- Traffic congestion several times a day. While the 2 turn lanes onto Division are great, the rest of the street is still not functioning as well. Trying to run left to go towards the bay can be very difficult.
- traffic seems to back up quite a bit the closer one gets to US 31
- All of the driveways. The turn lanes are confusing- people trying to get in/out of the “strip malls” at the same time people are trying to turn left onto US 31.

- Dangerous to get across 14th between Veterans and Division. Very fast driving, especially of westbound traffic. This directly contradicts the 15 minute city when the store I want to go to is 2 minutes away, but I can't get across the street!
- There are a lot of driveways that could be closed to promote a better flow.
- too narrow
- Speed limit enforcement.
- "Access for people walking or rolling
- Crossing 14th is VERY unsafe and uncomfortable
- Unpleasant aesthetic "
- Where it narrows down to one lane, it would be nice if it could continue as two lanes, so traffic can still flow when turning left. I think some of the mini malls are very dated and need a facelift. I noticed while traveling through the south specifically, South Carolina that all of the malls seem to have a somewhat identical looks or features and they seem to be very well kept, none of them looking older or out of date.
- Heavy traffic, I try to avoid, hard to turn left
- Not great traffic flow
- Narrow street, visually not attractive, too many access points
- No easy left turns onto 14th Street by Redmonds.
- Too much traffic, too busy, too many sketchy looking businesses. Doesn't feel like the rest of the neighboring blocks at all.
- It does not function as a complete. There are no accommodations for bicyclists.
- Pretty much everything.
- People don't always turn all the way into the turn lane and make people have to stop who are going in the same direction. Too many people have tried to use the turning lane and almost ran into each other head-on.
- Road condition, no speed enforcement, need a turn light at major intersections for busy times,
- "Traffic back-ups on west bound 14th due to back-up at US 31 intersection.
- Adding a dedicated right turn lane for west bound 14th street traffic turning right onto 31 would unload the straight ahead lane going straight onto Silver Lake road and reduce back-ups.0"
- School traffic in afternoon can be very congested
- Single family residential
- Road is in bad shap
- City has not cared for the boulevards on the N and S side of 8th Street. Numerous potholes and trip hazards. Traffic heading E toward Munson races way too fast. More tree lawn would be nice with on street parking. We need slower speed limits and a potential stop sign at Fair and 8th. Crosswalk that was put in does not have proper lines painted.
- "Traffic backup eastward leading up to the light at 14th and Division
- Bike lanes, or lack thereof"
- safe bike routes. crossing division at 14th.

- Bicycle travel and walking can be uncomfortable. No designated bike lane and traffic noise is bothersome when walking. The dirt parking owned by TCAPS leaves a major gap that doesn't give incentive to walkers to continue going.
- Seems disjointed. Mixed use makes it look somewhat ugly.
- Unsafe for biking and hazardous for pedestrian or bike crossing at Pine and 14th
- road surface
- Could use some streetscaping, maybe a bike line for connectivity
- Potholes, manhole covers at angles, lack of bike lane/tart access. Thirlby field is a TC mainstay, and great off-site parking in the summer for downtown access, it'd be great to park there then bike into town.
- Road conditions. Traffic lights.
- Too many turn-arounds at the intersection of 14th and Lake Ridge Drive. Drivers think that 14th street conitues to the east side of Traverse City.
- Not open borders and the invasion of the CCP<https://www.naturalnews.com/2023-05-03-chinese-troops-invited-into-america-execute-patriots.html>
- "Traffic. Ability to cross on foot or by bike.
- Sprawl appearance "
- Roads are in bad shape, there's no easy way around it and I'm sure the 11th/12th/13th street residents dislike people cutting through. Traffic back ups are awful during "rush hour" times. 14th & US 31 REALLY needs a round about!
- "Crosswalks to protect children walking biking
- Continuous sidewalks"
- Light at Veterans long waits. Too many curb cuts near Division.
- Street is too wide so folks speed a lot. Roads need work. A lot of unused or underused space.
- Traffic becomes very congested at busy times of the day; especially at the intersection of 14th and US-31. I wish there was a right-turn only lane going on to Division from 14th. That may help a little bit.
- In the summer it can get congested at the light at division. Also west of Division on the north side of the road there is a rather unsightly tent area that needs to be seriously cleaned up.
- It's really hard to get out of the businesses, especially if you have to cross traffic in a car or on bike/foot.
- "Neither 14th St nor the connectioning streets you mention above are very bikeable. True, the TART/Boardman and Mall trails are nearby but they doesn't necessarily get us to the places we want to go: medical offices, banks, Interlochen, Grawn, Chum's Corner (the new Weight Watchers location), Crossings Mall etc.
  
- Motorized traffic moves faster than 25 mph.
  
- I wouldn't want to live across the street or alley from the commercially zoned properties...not a pleasant living environment."
- The road is rough. It can be difficult to turn in and out of business driveways near the US31 intersection.



- As you stated it is a busy corridor that was not built for the traffic it had
- Seems thrown together
- Condition of road
- There are no, or very limited trees and it is not at all pedestrian friendly. It has very limited crosswalks and areas for pedestrians to cross.
- In the first two blocks east of Division St, traffic gets clogged so that it impedes traffic coming through the traffic signal at Division
- Very congested and lights can be confusing
- Dangerous to use as a bike route
- The road is too narrow and it's a hodgepodge of retail, office and residential dwellings. It is also in bad shape.
- Traffic light at Us 31 is not timed correctly for the amount of traffic at different hours.
- The condition of the road and the safety of those that may need to walk or bike to school .
- Ability to leave businesses or side streets into fourteenth
- traffic congestion
- Too much traffic when school lets out. Hard to make turns back onto 14th
- It's not pleasant to walk, bike or drive. There's a serious lack of trees, green space and natural run off containment areas. It's basically a lot of heat storing concrete and pavement.
- A nearly unusable road surface. Lack of amenities.
- The corridor is unattractive and empty. It's difficult for people on foot or on bikes to cross and difficult for cars to turn left. There are frequent traffic backups at the intersection with US-31.
- I wouldn't want to buy a home on that street
- Poor road conditions, no center turn lanes
- Many intersections and driveways. Not a pleasant appearance
- Needs more trees lining the street. Businesses and home with direct access impedes traffic flow.
- School traffic. Parents speeding thru the corridor ignoring traffic safety and pedestrians traversing this area. The lack of mixed use development is needed and traffic calming measures should be implemented.
- Unsafe for cyclists and pedestrians. Not enough street trees. Underdeveloped.
- The road is in disrepair.
- Traffic light at Veterans has a left turn lane headed West, but no left turn light signal. Traffic backs up here. Many businesses between Division and Union mean lots turning in mid block. Could use a middle turn lane all the way down this stretch.
- See above.
- E/W at Division, turning onto/off every side road and business along 14th.
- Accessing businesses by car & even walking or biking.
- The road would probably be better if it was gravel. The pavement is so bad, why not just rip it out.
- maybe add turning lights where there are none. The intersection at Veterans Dr. and Oak St. is difficult at best.

- Difficult to break into traffic flow from the north
- Property and landscape development...looks vacant and slightly blighted.
- Only one lane of thru traffic going east or west. Significant traffic backups at certain times of the day.
- Too many curb cuts - I would be afraid to walk down 14th. The light at Division is dangerous and also one of the longest lights to sit through in the city.
- appearance
- Poor sidewalks, no cycling facilities.
- Not pedestrian , bike friendly. Signals could be more coordinated. 14th and Division crossing is extremely intimidating for pedestrians and bikers. 31 to Division could use slower seeds. There is no neighborhood feel.
- See above.
- Congested traffic flow and difficult ingress and egress entry and exit of retail
- Horrible pedestrian or bike infrastructure. Unappealing area to visit
- "High traffic in and out of division St
- Unsafe for bicycles"
- Not friendly to pedestrians, cyclists, or anyone not in a car. Speeds are too high, crossings are difficult. It's unattractive with parking lots as the primary thing lining the road
- No left turn lane towards East, potholes
- Not well connected.
- Pedestrian mobility, aesthetics
- It's a pass through only for me.
- The potholes
- Street alignment for cross streets is poor, not currently inviting for pedestrians
- Fourteen does go all the way to Garfield
- traffic can be impossible

## 14<sup>th</sup> Street Corridor

### What is possible here?

- Create traffic calming, pedestrian and bike routes along entire length of 14th- similar to 8th st.
- add lighting and more crossing/crosswalks
- Better connect to Tart along Boardman
- Many elements of earlier plan are still viable
- traffic calming crosswalks bike lanes similar to 8th st (1 dot)
- Make a "locals down-town" no on street parking- bikes & foot only sidewalks & bike lanes. Medians w/native plants
- Less parking lot activate street front
- pedestrian lighting
- Traffic calming and additional pedestrian crossings

- need to address traffic flows
- add pedestrian crossings add boulevard island
- Mixed use retail and affordable housing options.
- more pedestrian / bike friendly would be good. more trees. better traffic mgmt at Division. Traffic calming
- development similar to Union Street. On street parking, mixed use zoning
- Finish the bypass so everyone does come this far into town, time the lights to keep traffic moving
- Perhaps a blvd, similar to Woodmere would work? More density is possible. 14th is a more affordable option for housing variety
- Nice sidewalks, biking lane
- Anything that is allowed
- It's possible to maintain the small town feel of the downtown, while still growing. It's also possible to clutter downtown with large unattractive, "glass box" buildings and too many parking structures.
- Infill buildings, better scale (more human scale), eliminate parking in front of buildings.
- No opinion.
- More turn lanes
- Making downtown more pedestrian, maybe block off streets have off site parking with public, handicap accessible public transportation. Also the metered parking is HORRIBLE! Last time I was there I never could get the meters to work, so frustrating!
- LOCAL restaurants, shops a downtown like feel
- Turn into a 4-5 lane road and remove some driveways (like they did on 8th street)
- 4 lane road.
- Resurface roads and make it more pedestrian friendly
- Roundabout at Cass, and maybe Union.
- Since very little is built at curbside, perhaps a roundabout or two.
- Better landscaping.
- More restaurant. Give it a small downtown feel
- Another corridor
- It could look nicer, cleaned up, nice buildings and property AS LONG AS LANDMARKS AREN'T DESTROYED- the city planners and commissioners have a history of placing dollars over legacy and history of our town beyond the main block of Front St.
- If a round-about is even considered anywhere... please, for the love of god, look to some of Ireland's roundabouts. They are considerably larger than the feeble traffic moving circles we have employed in Northern Michigan.
- Encourage bike and pedestrian traffic by hooking it up to the Boardman trail and having a wider path to Division
- Center turn bays, widen where possible.
- To protect neighborhoods from extra traffic by keeping a system of main corridors open
- How big are you willing to think? The parking for Thirlby is a huge waste of space and an eyesore. Moving Thirlby elsewhere will open up a lot of very underutilized space. Give people reasons to go to 14th street more often than Friday and Saturday in the fall.

- It honestly reminds me of the street I lived on in South Philly 15 years ago. There was a mix of older row houses and then convenience stores and little strip malls or auto repair shops. It reminds me of when Firestone used to be on Front Street. Let's keep it a real working class next use street and not turn it into the bougie nonsense retail nightmare that front Street has become by eliminating things like gas stations, oil change places etc. I don't even own a car and I realize those things are necessary. I like the 7-Eleven gas station, UPS store vibe.
- Bike lanes needed
- "Add more lanes, at least until Veteran's "
- Something like 8th st with traffic calming measures, a better bike traffic and foot traffic plan that connects to the state hospital and the TART.
- This could be converted into a village-like Main Street with wide sidewalks and on street parking to support neighborhood shops with residences on upper floors. At the very minimum, plant canopy trees now.
- Multi Family housing !!!! Businesses to cater to neighborhood! Postal branch!!!
- Needs a little love
- Better visual - street scapes, lighting bike paths.
- more housing density, more multimodal options/safety, gateway feature/beautification for the city
- A well built road with attractive lighting, a nice tree line, wide sidewalks and non motorized transportation given some room.
- same zoning as the North Boardman section of 8th st.
- Greater safety for bikes and people.
- Area needs an identity. Appearance should be improved. Needs the ability to walk about better. Some destination businesses or shops. Condos. Wider corridor to handle traffic.
- Wider corridor, ease of access to 14th St businesses. Improved traffic flow.
- Obviously improve the road. Planting native trees and or shrubs might help.
- Nothing really
- I think we should add another lane heading West between Division and Union
- 14th St could be redone with a protected bike and pedestrian lane, separated from the street by a tree lined median with more trees planted on either side of the street. Lots of vegetation and lots of transportation in many forms. More trees! We could introduce rain garden water catchment systems along the street to divert our rain water from the sewer system and process it on site. there could also be a lot of densities housing that lines the street with some areas for small coffee shops or restaurants or businesses to rent mixed within the residential uses. Thirlby fields park lot needs attention and needs to include planted areas and rain gardens if it will be paved eventually.
- Biking and pedestrian separation from traffic like Eighth St, and safer crossings.
- Bike lanes added, turn it into a boulevard
- More density; fewer curb cuts.
- Safer intersection at 14th and veterans

- More retail, restaurants (esp fast casual could do well here), improved sidewalks and street lighting. New residential options.
- Same thing when we reimagined 8th street corridor with added housing, retail on bottom, affordable housing on top.
- Expansion while keeping a small town feel
- It could have more curb appeal, but also worried about parking/ cars/ traffic. Since you've got Toms, it could definitely become a shopping hub if done right, traffic patterns kept in mind.
- "Though I understand that Fourteenth is necessarily a thoroughfare, it would be nice if it was more integrated with the neighborhoods to the north and south of it. Nice streetscaping could make the area look less sketchy. We need a mid-block pedestrian crossing between Veterans and Division. The commercial/strip-mall driveways should be consolidated.
  
- I wish the corridor was a walkable commercial district, with buildings on the street and parking in back. "
- Change the timing of lights at Union and Veterans to better sync with 31 to provide larger gaps in traffic. Time with improved crosswalks. Add crosswalk at Maple for foot access between strip malls. Restructure left turn lanes from 14th onto 31. Many cars merge into those before Hunting bank causing backups. Consider moving Tom's and Huntington driveways out of the intersection and resign easier defined access on Maple. There's a ton of pavement in this area that's inefficiently used.
- Better walkability, for those coming from the downtown side to cross over to the businesses on the opposite end of 14th.
- A more walkable corridor with varied commercial development and easy access for bikes, cars, and pedestrians.
- Looking at buildings below make me feel closed in. To me fourteenth st is a neighborhood street on at downtown street. Eighth street is beginning to get that closed in feeling also with larger buildings. Please do not turn us into Grand Rapids. People come for a reason and it isn't big city life.
- Widen the road, build taller buildings, create more of a city atmosphere.
- The reconstruction terrifies me because of road closures but being a main east-west corridor the day might come to embrace that and create a roadway like downstate. Widened street, medians all the way down broken up with a few "Michigan Lefts" to access the other side of the street.
- Na
- Could be more attractive and would be good to add more lanes for traffic.
- Removing by pass traffic out of the local road usage. Need to move it out and away from the city. Need new traffic corridor. Construct walking and bike lanes or paths.
- Unsure
- Demo school building to accommodate parking at the sports field. Expand skating rink in the winter.

- I'd like to see more density (commercial main floor and residence up top) and more walkability. It's proximity to the hospital and grocery store make it a perfect area to have graduated senior living communities.
- "Is there room for wider street? There is room for bike/pedestrian traffic on nearby neighborhood streets.
  
- Ground floor retail is great, but should not be required for residential development."
- Nothing, honestly. You're looking to improve and expand, there should be retractions. Scale back the businesses, redirect school traffic.
- Wider or more traffic lanes, updated business storefronts, updated entrance and parking for football stadium,
- A thriving area of TC more affordable to smaller business compared to downtown. A better connection of bike trails between Toms 14th street and the Boardman Lake Trail would be a cool addition.
- Should have run it on a bridge over Boardman lake about 20 years ago.
- 5 lanes
- Better lights. Complete Sidewalks. Maybe some lines on the roads...
- Expand the road to 5 lanes, add sidewalks, bike lanes, upgrade lighting.
- More traffic lanes. Bikes on sidewalks
- it should be left as 1-2 story buildings. It is fairly far out of the city, and thus would not be a destination for walking and biking for groceries, drugs, healthcare, etc. It is more of a transition area from inside to outside the City.
- Widen the street?
- can you add some roundabouts?
- I don't like any of the choices below. The building is not appropriate for the area.
- "There is a good mix of retail and services from Veterans to Division on both sides of the street, bakery, grocery, hair salon, print shop, take-out, etc, and this could be a key 15 min city area, but the street is a serious drawback for everyone. The vehicular traffic to too much volume, too fast, and many drivers seem to be in "get there fast" attitude and do not appreciate pedestrians.
- Put in a pedestrian activated stop light, and enforce the speed limit within a 2mph tolerance.
- Change the speed to 20 is plenty if necessary to make drivers behave "
- "widen the street
- "
- Eighth St
- Not sure if widening is possible, given the development already in place. Certainly, updating the mini mall is possible, if owners are willing to invest in the community.
- Wider, fewer access points, clean up businesses along 14th (nicer bldgs), more pedestrian friendly
- City should consider purchasing Redmonds or available lots for City services or housing.
- Traffic slowing. Protected bike lanes. Roundabouts.
- A complete street with more housing along it.

- "The city needs to work with current landowners to create "affordable housing", especially on the south side of the street. Redesign the street similar to 8th. Make this into a mini neighborhood. Needs coffee shop, deli, etc.
- Also, start incorporating residences above commercial space. For example the strip mall where the UPS store is located could have one or two floors above. Rethink parking requirements!"
- Reduce the number of entrances and exits to the retail strips/parking lots
- Pushing "downtown feel" further towards city limits. It's a busy area that would support development.
- "Because it is such a major transportation route. Should keep from adding business that require a large volume of auto traffic, like fast food restaurants or drive through coffee etc.
- or develop alternative entry to those businesses from back streets."
- Nicer retail establishments
- Bikeway/Bike Lanes, deeper setbacks
- "Roundabout
- "
- A more activated neighborhood corridor that invites a variety of businesses.
- Widening or creating space?
- how about a parking deck at 14th & division + great transit options and get everyone out of their cars before they head into the City?
- Create a sort of downtown space for locals. This would help to alleviate the stress felt by locals when trying to get to a restaurant or shop. It would also alleviate some of the pressure on Front to be our main corridor of commerce. Disallow surface parking and limit the amount of on street parking. This would create a walk, bike and roll friendly area of commerce. Let's work to meet the needs of those in walking distance to fourteenth street before we meet the needs of drivers. It might help to create a more fine grained plan for the lots, creating smaller store fronts would give rise to smaller shops that wouldn't be able to make a go of it in a larger footprint.
- Whatever buildings are proposed, they need to be stepped back from the curb with bushes or trees. Best would be retail on the first floor with affordable rental (again not switched to higher prices later forcing folks out. But affordable forever.
- "This is largely a blighted and congested corridor. I would like to see some improvements such as those completed on Woodmere Ave, which would provide for bike lanes, pedestrian crossings, and aesthetic improvements that might be a catalyst for residential and commercial improvements that we are starting to see on 8th St
- "
- Trees, pleasant sidewalks and better design for parking. Bike lane
- I think NOBO 8th street looks great, if that could be replicated
- Faster traffic, start connecting boardman loop to division. Kids park on boardman start
- Resurface. Time traffic lights.
- Increase signage letting drivers understand that 14th Street does not connect to the east side of town.
- Since you are so corrupted, why not build a massive internment camp for us citizen sheeple?

- 14th & US 31 REALLY needs a round about! It would eliminate traffic backups.
- Parking at Thirlby and winter skate area protected
- Mixed used retail and housing. Creating almost a second downtown area.
- With the city established it difficult to bring real change like widening the street. Maybe impossible.
- It needs more traffic calming and easier places for people to cross the street when on foot/bike.
- It would be wonderful if it was more like the new section of 8th St...slower traffic, better pedestrian/cycling facilities, beautiful plantings.
- The only way to fix it would be to widen the road, this would displace homes and businesses. There is no place to add any type of residential buildings with the added traffic without widening the road
- I think that Eighth Street improvements may be an example of tying things together a bit more than currently. Given, though, that this street seems primarily for vehicular use.
- Add a right turn only lane at the corner across from Tom's.
- "Pedestrian cross walks, trees, service drives to help
- With the multiple driveways/stop and starts."
- Thirlby Field parking that takes several acres is only in high use a few weeks of the year (for sporting events). It also looks pretty shoddy. Can there be a multiple use of this land?
- Maybe a roundabout
- Safe bike lane
- Something similar to 8th Street would be great.
- More traffic enforcement is needed in the area. It's sad how many violations are committed at any given time.
- Roadway improvements and improvements to businesses!
- Funnel parking lots onto side streets instead of 14th. A light at Pine
- "14th st...across the river to 3 mile
- "
- An 8th St corridor type approach would help promote foot traffic, bicycle traffic and help promote local businesses
- "A large trail, separated from the road, that connects the commons on the West to the Boardman River Trail on the East with some routes shooting North to downtown on another street or trail that is closed to motorized traffic.
- Trees lining corridor with green areas to absorb and filter runoff and provide habitat for insects, plants and wildlife that are cut off from natural areas to the East and West.
- Keep car traffic at a slow pace, add charging stations near businesses.
- Add greenery around parking lots and between street, sidewalks and businesses.



- Require the highest efficiency standards for construction: heatpumps, insulation above current code, green/ sustainable/locally sourced materials, thermal mass engineering, passive heating/cooling, green roof, etc.
- Prioritize walking/biking over driving."
- A higher level of density than the neighborhoods to the north and south, providing commercial amenities to the city and offers a wider variety of housing options.
- Better use of Glenn Loomis now that it's empty
- Multi-use transportation that will not slow traffic (e.g. protected bike lanes)
- Nicer streetscape
- Get rid of poorly maintained structures (both homes and businesses) and build townhouses or apartments with sidewalks and trees - a great opportunity for affordable housing!
- Design as a truly multi use corridor that provides safe walkable and bikeable retail resources to the neighborhoods.
- The 14th St corridor has the potential to be another downtown-like area with the right investment and development.
- More housing! Encourage developers to build here--still close enough to downtown for workers to commute via bike or bus. Maybe re-route the Bayline to sweep 14th street on the way.
- A dedicated turn lane all the way down. A reroute of left turns to a light/roundabout at veterans.
- I think a smaller scale of what is going on with 8th street, not the big apartment complexes but more businesses and a better walk and bike connection to the boardman lake tart trail.
- Better pavement.
- "Keeping setbacks back from the road at least 10 feet would be great for visibility.
- "
- Please don't create permanent back-ups onto feeder streets, as you did with Eighth St. (at Woodmere).
- Add traffic calming and robust crosswalks to connect neighborhoods to the South.
- Two lanes of traffic each way with a left turn lane.
- Can it be transformed like 8th st was? Needs bike lanes.
- so much! improvement of TCAPS property appearance would help substantially
- Protected bike lane for bikes, electric bikes, and other micromobility
- "I believe the area from Boardman lake to Division could become a 15 minute city with better pedestrian access, signals etc. There is a grocery, drugstore, some restaurants and other services. Perhaps a bus line that goes north and south on a regular basis to Front Street would be helpful.(like the one that runs along Front Street.
- It would be nice if there were better connections to the area west of Division, where there are several schools and the Y, Copper Ridge etc (bike and walk)
- "
- Need to route all these schools in town for better traffic flow. You have Greenspire, West Middle, Central, St. Francis and Willow Hill Schools all in one general area.

- Either widen 14 th St with a designated turn lane or traffic circle at division and 14th.
- Pedestrian friendly between businesses and school
- "Bike routes on 14th
- ? Widen 14th "
- I'm really disappointed that the city didn't allow TCAPS to build the new Montessori school in this corridor. I think that that would have been amazing. I would love to see 14th street as a pedestrian-focused, treed and landscaped, corridor that cohesively connects the Boardman Lake loop to the Commons. I would love to see parking lots deemphasized.
- Widening
- Replacement of small, old homes with multi-unit structures could add housing. Park space would need to be improved.
- Bigger sidewalks with bike lanes and lighting, center isles, more like the new section of 8th St
- Additional housing stock.
- This corridor is a good place to encourage infill development
- Improved lighting for pedestrians, not sure if any cross streets are able to be aligned but it would be nice. I think cleaning it up like Eighth St will create desire for retail accessible to pedestrians
- Extent 14th to Garfield
- good question

## 14<sup>th</sup> Street Corridor

### **Additional ideas (Sticky notes)**

- Consider a small park on city property east of TC whiskey
- Please keep this corridor limited to 2-story commercial/mixed used buildings these are 2 residential neighborhoods that wish to not be broken up. (1 dot)
- Separated bike lane similar to 8th st (another sticky below pointing to this one saying 'this')
- add a public park w/ play equipment near state police building (1 dot)
- 14th has residents what happens to the housing on 14th st? How is 15th st affected by commercial bldg?
- Allow for taller bldgs but require reasonable transition from one-story to multi-story not abrupt change
- Add more cross walks connectivity is essential for central + fernwood (3 dots)
- Native plant meadows no on street parking- use space for bike lanes and wider sidewalk
- Art district w sculptures along street
- Buildings should look cohesive & not too tall (1 dot)
- Allow buildings above 60 ft. can be designed to not be a large box (two stickies pointing to this one: not this and this)

## Garfield Avenue + Eighth Street Intersection

What is working well here?

- Proximity to neighborhoods & more neighbor-like "corridor" (1 dot)
- Easy travel for vehicles- not idea promotes high speed
- Cemetery
- NE Corner
- Traffic flow, visibility
- Good burgers.
- Nothing
- Organic investment with locally owned businesses that bring an authentic feel to TC.
- Supports some small businesses
- It seems to be a great place for weed shops.
- Nothing
- Bike lane north of Parsons.
- Clear intersection
- It's good.
- New businesses are adding vitality and variety.
- Everything
- Unbelievably, I feel traffic actually flows here... most of the time.
- Flow of traffic is good. It's a nice transition from the "city" to the bay and historic parts of town
- The new restaurants on the east side of Garfield help make the corner.
- The repaving helped a little
- Nothing
- Not too restricted
- Nothing.
- Not much
- Traffic flow is fine.
- I like the timing of the traffic light, and all the sides gets a protected left.
- Motor vehicle traffic flows well.
- Center turn Lane, Bicycle lane where present Signal at Munson/US 31 works well except for driveway entering East Front from former "motel" on bayside of the Highway.
- Nothing
- Good connection point
- Some of the businesses have been in this area for many years
- great local businesses
- Few curb cuts
- north and south access
- Left turn signals at light for cars. 25 mph. Buildings not right on the sidewalk.
- Part of downtown. Lots to offer.
- Some thriving businesses and a good mix too. Close to multiple neighborhoods. Sidewalk infill has been improved.
- Traffic light holding longer...dedicated left turn lanes

- Speed limit
- Oak wood Burger!!
- Nice mix of businesses and restaurants with plenty of parking.
- There are a couple of good restaurants.
- Traffic light
- 2+ center lanes. Statistically it lessens traffic issues and give more ped/bike space. Open feel to the corridor, makes it feel more like a neighborhood.
- Oakwood burgers
- Round's is great and is an architectural gem.
- A variety of businesses. A full service bakery, a funeral home, AND a laundromat?! There is also new housing that's gone in.
- Redeveloping the NoBo neighborhood, affordable housing developments, walkability, variety of businesses
- Traffics flows well.
- That seems to look more organized now
- Nothing, it isn't optimized at all
- No tall buildings above 2-3 feet.
- Traffic light calming. Mixed businesses/
- Not much
- Traffic flow is decent for such a small intersection. Curb cuts and access to businesses are unique, but functional.
- Green arrow turn signals, Common Good Bakery and Prout Financial have made the corner look nicer and have more conveniences.
- Not much
- Nothing
- Not much
- Garfield Ave. north of 8th St. is presentable with houses that are cared for and only one lane of traffic. The south side of this corner is more chopped up with office and commercial buildings in no particular pattern -- see below. Traffic in this area is generally good. This area is close to day-to-day necessities like groceries, laundry, bakery, dental care, auto supplies and service, restaurants, etc. All that makes it a convenient place to live.
- Nothing
- Traffic flow is fine.
- Light times work well.
- Not much.
- It has a good mix of services without such high intensity that it makes one avoid the area.
- "Works ok for cars that are strictly on the streets and passing through.
- The little access road in front of Oakwood and the laundromat is very helpful"
- There's no longer as many empty buildings.
- "nothing
- "
- Vehicular mobility

- I cannot really say, I believe it works ok during most of the year, excluding summers and falls.
- traffic flow
- Not much. Limited visibility in the intersection, people getting “trapped” into a left turn.
- --
- Some nice retail is trying to make a go of it.
- Currently nothing.
- Good traffic signals
- Neighborhood retail, food, services, scale
- New business like Oakwood burgers and Common good are a welcome addition
- General ease of traffic flow
- pretty safe intersection, all things considered. lots of diverse commercial things going on
- New businesses. Oakwood and Common good bakery seem to be doing well. Quick pick up at these businesses. can be nice with the "drive-thru" areas. The laundry mat provides eyes on the streets at varying times of the day which can make it feel safer.
- As a passage way it works well.
- Seems to be well designed, given the space constraints
- traffic signaling
- It's starting to look really good. I definitely would like to move into this area because I think it's the next vibrant node. I love the proximity to TART network and civic center.
- Depending on the time of day things are fairly smooth.
- I like the direction it's going. New businesses have improved it a lot.
- Not much
- There's a lot of newer development happening in the wares which is great for east side residents. Would love to see more.
- I like the historic charm it has to offer, like Rounds Restaurant being there.
- Motorized raffic flows pretty well going west on 8th, from what I can see.
- Newer businesses (Common Good and Oakwood Proper) provide good food options.
- It is fine as is, do not add as it would cause unneeded congestion. Would have to redo the entire intersection
- Nothing for north of Hannah! South of 8th there is a lot of potential.
- The little bohemian businesses.
- Growing number of entrepreneurial businesses
- Flow is pretty good.
- Left turn lanes
- The level of traffic seems manageable, and the intersection adequately (barely) provides for people on foot and bikes.
- Traffic is slowed, in and out of businesses is easy. Low profile buildings, feels like Traverse City, not Grand rapids. Interesting mix of useful businesses, not just chain clothing stores like downtown
- it was working well before it was narrowed....
- Design of traffic lanes
- Not much, it's an uncomfortable intersection.
- Many local businesses are opening here and thriving(Oakwood, Common Good)

- Retail
- Traffic moves well
- Not much.
- Turn lanes with turn signals.
- Nothing.
- Human scale of existing buildings, plus parking close to retail businesses.
- Not much.
- Rounds.
- not much
- New restaurant, bakery, financial instruction, funeral home
- Generally mostly commercial are.
- Lighting
- On northeast corner, buildings put parking behind and off street
- Works well for cars
- Local businesses
- Traffic seems to flow. Is it ironic to say that the new funeral home is bringing some life to the corridor?
- Easy east/west travel
- not much

## Garfield Avenue + Eighth Street Intersection

### **What is not working well here?**

- Heading east on 8th, widen to allow 2 lanes for straight and right turn
- Service drive in front of Proper Burgers & eastfield party store creates poor connectivity for pedestrians and motorists (2 dots)
- Would like to see two lanes of Garfield extend the whole way to the parking
- Service drive in front of common good bakery creates poor connectivity for pedestrians & motorists (2 dots)
- Feels very congested, hard to slow down to find the business I want to visit
- Too narrow @ garfield/8th only 1 lane to go straight
- Reduce lanes from 3
- "bagline" for 8th st- better public transport
- degraded pavement especially in parking areas along street
- A lot of traffic. Hide parking
- traffic flow going south trying to left turn (lane placement)
- Back ups on smaller feeder streets
- too much parking lot. lack of trees. not bike friendly
- Road conditions, amount of lanes
- multi modal transit is challenging, especially the pedestrian experience. zoning should reflect a gentle transition to the boarding neighborhoods.
- Congested

- It seems to be a great place for weed shops and not much else.
- Large parking areas at intersections, no buildings really embrace corner condition
- Left turn merge.
- Always backed up
- Too congested with traffic. Long waits at the light often due to traffic heading north to the OM peninsula. More attention is needed for the pedestrian traffic. Wider sidewalks, bike lanes.
- Should be a designated right turn lane on eastbound Eighth Street to Garfield.
- 4 lanes of traffic needed
- you need a none of the above option in your surveys . because none of the options work for any of the corridors
- Not much.
- The Trailside 45 "hotel". This should have never been converted from apartments.
- July... July does not work well for this area. Actually, pretty much all of GT county.
- What's up with the funeral home and crematorium on the corner?! That lot looks horrid.
- The strip mall funeral home next to the print shop is weird as hell
- Crowded, narrow, confusing for out of towners, bike lane takes too much space at the intersection.
- Poor traffic flow, tiny businesses on high visibility corner locations (but at least no CVS or Walgreens), buildings from the 60s or earlier.
- Traffic gets backed up needs two lanes of traffic
- Not good for pedestrians or people on a bike.
- This intersection is dangerous for both bikes and cars and causes lots of backed up cars
- It's fine. Storefronts need updates.
- The sidewalks and crosswalks are bad, the weird side roads into the businesses on the north and south are not great.
- Corner parking lots make for a drab intersection. Buildings are setback from the street too far. One story buildings do not anchor the intersection very well.
- "Not pedestrian friendly
- Need sidewalks ALL the way from Garfield to US 31. Need Wider tree Lawns, overhanging tree canopy, crosswalks "
- Trashy architecture, especially the new ugly box houses on 8th St. heading east.
- Not enough goods and services for the neighborhoods
- not hospitable at all for biking/walking, very ugly, road is not in good shape. this is a key gateway north/south and east/west into the city and it is comically unattractive.
- 2 story buildings could add more residential or business space.
- Parking is difficult at times. I like the downtown feel and shops.
- Traffic is bad. Lots of low buildings. Road conditions are poor.
- Idk
- See previous comments on Garfield Ave problems
- The crematorium..
- Cars drive in bike lane going South, trying to make Garfield into two lanes.
- The left turn lane going south on Garfield to east on Eighth is vary difficult to get into. Traffic going straight tends to hog both lanes. Left turn lights are too long.

- It's unattractive and the parking lots/curb cuts are janky.
- Not sure
- Needs to be widened each way for more opportunities to turn left.
- The bland storefronts and inefficient parking lots, pavement everywhere.
- Not walking-friendly, it looks depressed, it needs some pep.
- Everything except Round's is pretty ugly.
- Walkability. Again, need better crossings (pedestrian bridge? Like the ones that go up and OVER the road).
- The smell of the waste water treatment plant, inconsistent redevelopment along the corridor.
- Residential homes along eighths dream seem out of place.
- Traffic does not flow well here, there is a ton of back up from North going South
- Too slow north of 8th.
- Flow of traffic—congested even in off season
- Extra traffic that could be moved off this corridor and around the city.
- Confusing traffic, narrow lanes, old buildings
- Bike lanes are a joke.
- Traffic is loud, hurried, and lacking attention for pedestrians. I walk with kids and a dog to Civic Center from SW corner frequently. Crosswalks with lights away from major intersections allow traffic to flow freely through the intersection, while pedestrians can cross safely at straight-aways. Please add another like Oak Park at Titus Ave. Sidewalks w/ signals at busy intersections are great for foot access to multiple businesses, but poor for vehicle movement and pedestrian safety.
- Traffic coming from Munson Ave/Eight at often bottlenecks at Eight St due to no right turn lane and only one through lane.
- Not large enough
- This area is not attractive
- A busy intersection that needs better timed signal lights
- Pretty much all of it
- Businesses at the corner need "refreshing" or redevelopment. The new, tiny houses just east of the corner of Garfield and 8th are AWFUL-- they look bad, are cheap, are STRs which does not encourage being well-cared for, etc. etc. Approving such developments was an awful decision by the City Planning Department. Homestretch put in a presentable development even further east, but those tiny, odd-ball houses on 8th at Hastings spoil the whole neighborhood. The intersection needs a traffic signal that varies its timing depending on the traffic volume -- something promised 15 years ago, but to the best of my knowledge has still not been done. Consumers Power decimated the look of Garfield when they removed all the trees; it should never have been allowed. Don't let utilities destroy the look of our corridors.
- Traffic light
- It can get congested with southbound traffic
- The removal of the turn lane.
- That Eighth St. turn only lane needs to go! It is a confusing transition from two lanes and people constantly changing lanes at last minute.



- "The strange narrowing of lanes near Hannah.
- The weird side roads parallel to E 8th."
- "Difficult to get out of most driveways. Vehicle traffic is very noisy, dirty and smelly, which is unfortunate for the restaurants and pedestrians.
- Intersection very dangerous for cyclists and pedestrians because of lack of proper infrastructure and controls of motorists. "
- Small, varied commercial buildings with a lack of consistency in parking/building appearance.
- too narrow
- Enforcing the 25mph speed limit -- which is quite appropriate for this area.
- Pedestrian mobility
- I think its one left turn lane and one through lane, it needs to add another through lane.
- Pedestrian access
- See above
- too much traffic.
- Sidewalks are not comfortable or safe for pedestrians. Infrastructure is in need of some love.
- "Poor road design/width.
- Mishmash of building styles."
- Convoluted parking
- Congestion
- Bike lanes
- lack of bike lanes.
- The intersection of Eighth and Garfield isn't great for pedestrians or bikers. The crossing distances can feel very long at the intersection. The configuration of the sidewalk can be confusing with the way it disappears at times like when crossing a driveway near TC Sauce CO. The "drive-thru" areas on both the North and South side of the street create a cramped feeling with the sidewalks being between that and the buildings. It's also not a great experience for riders as it can be confusing what is allowed for them. I've ridden in the street and drivers are displeased with me, so I ride in the "Drive thru" areas and those parking or leaving aren't happy either. On the northern side of Eighth street there are four curb cuts for driveways. All of them are very close to each other.
- Areas of disjointed use appears somewhat ugly.
- unappealing, no trees, no bike lane
- Two lane to one lane setup is still confusing drivers.
- Need additional right turn lanes at the four corners of the intersection.
- Road conditions. Right turn lanes.
- Intersection needs dedicated left turn lane going north. Having to switch lanes at the intersection causes slowdowns
- Roads could be improved and some efforts to make it more walkable & bike-able would be nice.
- Need more lanes for turning. Bike lanes screwed this whole thing up. And I'm a cyclist.
- I still think there could be bump outs for pedestrians crossing the intersection. Would love to see some more outdoor patio space along 8th for common good and other

restaurants in the area. Lot of parking lots which feels like a waste of space in the area and could be better used for housing or retail.

- The businesses/buildings look run down; especially on 8th Street east of Garfield. It looks vacant and in need of restoration. This space could be used for so much more. Taller buildings with housing and retail?
- Motorized traffic backs up going east on 8th and in both directions on Garfield. Almost impossible to ride bicycle through this intersection in any direction without getting in line with the cars--exhaust is nasty. Aesthetically, there is nothing beautiful about this intersection.
- The intersection is confusing - cars often drive in bike lanes and the left turn lanes aren't always easy to identify. Southbound traffic on Garfield gets backed up before the intersection and makes the left turn lane inaccessible. The no right turn on red when going west on 8th doesn't make sense. The buildings are a hodgepodge of different styles and there are a lot of unsightly parking lots.
- You are trying to turn Garfield into a terrible high building area...that is my neighborhood. Let's keep single living.
- Not pedestrian friendly at all.
- It looks like 1970. It's reasonably far away from most neighborhoods in town that walking/biking here seems less doable
- No bike, sidewalks similar to further w on Eighth, no ped crossing buttons at intersection
- The businesses directly on the corner don't do much to add to the ambiance of the area. There's a lot of blacktop surrounding the intersection.
- Some business buildings and signs look a little shabby. Otherwise it's great. I love it
- narrowing
- "I know Hannah is slightly south of this spot but the tart trail crossing would be number 1. I feel like I'm going to get hit even when the light is green for 8th to cross Garfield.
  
- I love that we have a train here (can't wait for the passenger route to Ann Arbor starts!) but this crossing is really awkward. There's also a lot of opportunities to green up along the tracks without causing a hazard. Currently there's some dusty barron stretches through Traverse Heights.
  
- At 8th and Garfield specifically, I think there's too much concrete and not enough green.
- The large crematorium/funeral home does not fit a developing community and frankly was a very strange choice. Intersection needs repaved.
- Seems unsafe for bikes
- "No left turn lane on garfield until south of Carver
- No Bike Lane on Eight between Garfield and Railroad ave"
- Not attractive
- Way to auto centric w/o many safe pedestrians features.
- One lane traffic
- No right on red (pointless). Pedestrian crossing.
- The entire layout: traffic lanes, buildings,...

- Dangerously degraded paving in parking areas ... backups in southbound traffic on Garfield.
- Pedestrian/automobile interchange. The entire corner is kind of a mess.
- Ugly, dated retail frontage.
- appearance
- The corners are ugly and with businesses that don't get people excited about having arrived in town.
- Poor pedestrian amenities, no cycling facilities
- Mix of old outdated commercial structures and rehabbed ones
- "Homes still on this avenue.
- Speed limit of 25 mph."
- Signal needs sensors, pedestrian friendly
- "Too many curb cuts. Bike lanes merge with traffic lanes. Not appropriate for this level of traffic
- "
- Bike lanes don't exist. Walking is unpleasant. It's a bit ugly.
- Hard to navigate as a pedestrian, unsafe for cyclists
- The Garfield left turn lanes don't line up, hard to see to turn
- The road narrowing to "calm traffic" makes a bottleneck for future growth. The elementary school is poorly placed on a major traffic artery.
- Needs streetscaping
- With the exception of the northeast corner the intersection looks old and run down
- Neighborhood parks
- The intersection is congested and the buildings are old and need updates

## Garfield Avenue + Eighth Street Intersection

### What is possible here?

- Cafes + neighbor-friendly businesses (2 dots)
- Pedestrian lighting
- Cafes extension of diverse housing a tram is possible
- become more walker friendly & car flow
- Proper bike lanes is sidewalk on 8th st. (road diet) (1 dot)
- Placemaking like 8th downtown (lights, walk/bike lane, landscaping, etc)
- Cycle track ped crossings increased commerce
- table top crossings
- better connection to cemetery
- desperate need for better bike transport linked to downtown and civic center and tart on 8th
- Roundabout! Could be a smaller "outpost" of TC, with more foot traffic-based retail
- more walk-able, bike friendly. more housing.
- 4 lanes with turn lane, no bike lanes in the roadway

- A vibrant corridor with a mix of commercial offerings that is inviting and walkable from the surrounding neighborhoods. Outdoor vibrancy.
- Updated sidewalks
- It's possible to overcrowd the area in a mad dash to build as many hodge-podge mixed material eyesores. Classic architecture will elevate it and fit surrounding neighborhoods
- Better pedestrian scale
- Roundabout should be considered if there is room given the private property.
- Tall buildings, better traffic mgt
- Another area that should be inviting as you are approaching the water. It should not look like a commercial city block, No high rise building it should look like a cute walkable downtown area
- Overall a good intersection
- More small businesses.
- Move marketing dollars in the budget from tourist promotions, towards fixing our ugly, "detroit-style" medians and curb lawns. There should be native grasses, flowers, and bushes.
- Some updates but we don't want to lose the Rounds, or Oakwood Burgers buildings. Again, legacy is more important than money to most traverse city natives. We don't want to be Grand Rapids.
- I don't know how much one would want to build up this corner of Garfield is going to be a main traffic artery.
- Adding a right turn lane for both north and south bound traffic would help
- Like much if Traverse City outside the core, this is an area that developed without a lot of thought and the result is a mess. This could become the core of the eastern side of the city. By the way, 20 and 21 below are conceptually the same - you even put the same bullet points below them.
- Return 8th to two lanes each direction
- More build up/landscaping, better sidewalks and crosswalks, connecting to the tart trail, the civic center, with an actual bike lane in the street.
- Raised intersection to make pedestrians crossing more visible. Use colorful pavement with an artful design.
- Plant trees!
- Stop what is being done throughout the city by developers who have Zero aesthetics, and total disregard for the overall environment including landscaping.
- extending the great bikeability and walkability elsewhere on eighth st to this section of the corridor; housing; additional local retailers
- Taller buildings with affordable housing. Retail and restaurants on ground level. Entrances to businesses off from the alleys
- increase the traffic north south at this corner, limit access toward peninsula, maybe a round about
- Wide sidewalks with 2 story buildings for business and residential. Accommodations for bikers and walkers. Room for a bus stop.
- Make it a vital part of downtown. Offer what Front Street does. Help TC be less of a "one main street" town.

- Some taller buildings. More planting of native shrubs or trees.
- Different commercial use on SW corner
- Tax breaks
- Opportunities for multifamily dwellings built above businesses, with restaurant patios and foot traffic. All the photos below have too much of an urban feel... this could be a great neighborhood gathering spot, don't build so close to the sidewalk!
- "More density.
- "
- Slower traffic for increased safety
- "Keep this area's neighborhood feel. Spruce up storefronts. Just because this isn't a flashy part of town, doesn't mean it is undeserving of some character, charm, and attention.
  
- The intersection needs a personality. When traveling north, I often mistake the intersection for Front street, as both are similarly bland. Consider making 8th more of a green space/single story feel, while building taller (not too tall) modern buildings at the Front intersection. "
- Walkable, more to stop and do other than Oakwood Burgers.
- I don't know if we need \*more\* traffic through here.
- Another grocery option (Family Fare is a good one but down a bit from this corridor). It's also possible to make this a safer area. The Civic Center and nearby neighborhoods that were once a family friendly area are now pretty notorious for drug deals. More small housing options - studio, 1 & 2 bedroom condos with a small footprint/price tag.
- Create consistency along the entire corridor and improve the water treatment plant to reduce the smell and address capacity for further growth.
- I think taller buildings are for downtown other areas should stay to 2-3 stories high.
- Living, dining, shopping. Like sixth Street in Austin, Texas. Get people out of the city, into new neighborhoods
- Parking for people to get downtown.
- Area feels like it's changed piece by piece and been hodge-podged together. Spruced up intersection with a congruent feel could help the area businesses. They unfortunately sit at an intersection of two roads that 95% of drivers are just going from Point A to Point B.
- Would be nice to improve landscaping and flow of traffic. No tall buildings above 2-3 stories or it will hurt the overall aesthetic.
- Mixed business area.
- a lot
- Make this a district hub, grocery, restaurants, bank, etc. Make it something that people can walk to/bike to.
- If sidewalks can be added to Michigan Ave and removed from Garfield for more vehicle traffic, I would prefer to walk on neighborhood streets.
- Larger intersection with set backs at the corners
- You put housing on this corner where do you put parking and access points to Eighth street and Garfield, both busy streets?
- Better zoning geared towards retail space and pedestrian friendly traffic

- Redevelop the corner with 2 story buildings, not taller than the houses. Don't put up 4-5 story buildings like Trailside, another bad project. Make sure the buildings are set back from the street with green space and walkways in front of them. Parking in the back could be done on the south side of the street east of Garfield, but not on all of the north side -- again there is not enough space. 8th St west of Garfield could also be developed at least halfway down the first block (before the houses), with parking in the back. Add shorter, antique-looking street lights on the east side of Garfield from 8th to Front (like the west side), so that it is clear you are entering a neighborhood. Consider using the street lights as part of re-developing the corner. Add trees along Garfield from 8th to Front to again designate that you are entering the Oak Park neighborhood.
- Fix traffic lights
- Adding a new lane for turning to keep traffic flowing.
- Redesign to mirror improvements done on Eighth St.
- "This area needs to be treated very carefully. There is a school nearby, residential, Civic Center, etc. It is highly traveled and a busy intersection. Intensity of commercial uses should remain low/medium.
  
- Again, your building renderings are out of scale with Traverse City"
- "Tons of potential, especially with the restaurant scene starting here, but the whole road needs to be scrapped and completely changed for non motorized and transit priority. The volume and behaviour of vehicular traffic right now ensure that nothing here is pleasant or enjoyable. I don't go here unless I need something specific.
- This corner could be a significant asset to 3-4 huge neighborhoods if you would finally recognize that excessive and misbehaving vehicle traffic makes a lot of our city gross, and then do something about it. You already have a lot of tools."
- Destination vs. random errands
- less buildings
- A node that serves all users, not just those in a motor vehicle
- Given current developments in place not sure that widening is possible.
- Wide intersection, warnings above lanes & on pavement for left turns
- protected bike lanes and roundabout
- Vibrant retail. People walking and biking comfortably to access the area.
- A unified corner with proper road design and sidewalks/bike lanes. Multi-story buildings up to 3 floors.
- Prepare for more traffic as population increases
- Neighborhood scale node, mixed use
- Space!
- more neighborhood-y vibe. replacing parking with infill
- Street side cafes for businesses to use. Building height and multi-use buildings would work well also, housing, retail, restaurants and so forth. A social district would be great as well.
- Love the health area with the islands in the middle & greenery & trees. Makes me feel calmer. Would love to see more of that format on 8th Street, as well as Garfield & 14th whenever feasible. And of course keeping Climate Change in top of the mind!

Contracted new buildings required to put solar on the roof, all electric appliances, furnace, & air conditioning in the condos or apartments. Plus make them all affordable forever for young people & workers in town. First floor retail with 2nd & 3rd floors for rental or sale. The buildings would need to be setback with trees or bushes & seating.

- More multi-residential housing and small retail, without setbacks, and parking behind
- buildings set back from sidewalk, add trees and landscape, room for outdoor dining, widen sidewalk
- Redevelopment of SE corner would be good. Overall I'd like to just see where it goes, looks like we are on the right path.
- Round-a-bout
- Road surface
- Faster intersection
- I think it could be like another nice neighborhood similar to west Front. But it needs some aesthetic improvements to make it more comfortable for walking and spending time at the businesses.
- More turn lanes. Roundabout?
- Answered above. Want to see more mixed spaces. More density.
- I think this area could be transformed into a more usable and desirable place to want to visit.
- A traffic circle might work here if walkers and cyclists were accommodated. Add plantings. Move the road closer to the buildings and add more islands for pedestrians and plantings.
- This could be a really vibrant mixed use area with more restaurants, retail, office space, and residential.
- LEAVE IT ALONE!
- If more housing is developed in the area, significant improvements are needed for pedestrian and cycle use. Increasing use of e-bikes calls for thoughtful design.
- Bike trails. More green space, trees.
- Create a pedestrian friendly / outdoor village vibe with parking in back
- roundabout
- I'm a little skeptical of the idea of increasing the density of goods/services provided immediately next to the intersection. There is a lot of traffic flowing through here and while there's opportunity to provide more services here, if those bring more traffic or slow the traffic by adding lots of turning interactions, it could start to create a bottleneck.
- Stays a little neighborhood shopping center, small, intimate. A place to shop and meet away from downtown where parking is open and free.
- smoother traffic flow...
- "I think this is a very difficult intersection to plan out, there's a lot going on here. Thank you for asking the community for input.
  
- I would like to see the non motorized aspects prioritized over motorized here. It feels like an intersection in a city that allows sprawl.

- Connect to TART trail more easily along here. Add greenery!"
- Surrounding neighborhoods are very up and coming, and local businesses in the area are thriving. It would be great to see this continue.
- It is very walkable to a lot of residents and could have multi-use centers focused on pedestrian traffic
- Add some greenery
- More pedestrians safety features.
- Another downtown
- Make East bound eighth wider so cars can turn right. Make West bound eighth allowed to turn right on red. Better pedestrian crosswalks and continuous sidewalks.
- Everything. Improve the intersection with appropriate turn lanes. Limit access to corner lots.
- Enhanced crosswalks, retail parking of alleyways
- so much
- Mixed use buildings with affordable housing and retail. Underground parking or behind the buildings.
- Protected bike lanes with safe crossings
- Could make a neat 15 minute city. Family Fare is close by, Oakwood Cemetary as a walking destination. Garfield !8th intersection could be more pedestrian friendly.
- What the heck is a STEPBACK. Could not find definition anywhere.
- More efficient intersection that is inviting to pedestrians
- Pedestrian friendly with better walk ability. Remove all driveways as business transitions to more retail (non-auto repair)
- Create small corridors of retail that are walkable.
- Great pedestrian connections between the Civic Center and the neighborhoods.
- Roundabouts!
- Not sure
- Perhaps less parking and some landscaping near the streets
- Public transportation, from Union to Garfield
- Could be a major chopping and living area close to downtown

## Garfield Avenue + Eighth Street Intersection

### **Additional ideas (Sticky notes)**

- Improve this intersection w/ proper setbacks to accommodate higher buildings w/ lower floor market place space
- I like the mix of residential along eighth. Therefore I prefer the 2 and 3 story esp at intersection (1 dot)
- Consider expanded focus area to include woodmere next to Tart trail for affordable housing (1 dot)



- The tall buildings (5-6 stories) will fit well in these corridors. They will accommodate diverse housing opportunities. Now... All we need is a tram for all these main corridors! This is a vienna-style opportunity (2 dots)
- Tall buildings
- Push these bldgs farther from road- may need to demolish existing
- tall buildings next to residents could be overwhelming. No taller than 2-3 stories
- Building setback off the sidewalk. The city is becoming too dark we need green space! (1 dot)
- Add street parking- add bike facilities
- Café style seating in front of common good and proper burger
- Parking for businesses- not just parallel parking in front- no parking meters
- Social district on 8th
- City should do a plan for Boardman Lake Loop that creates/supports higher density mixed use at specific strategic areas to create great wellness space w/ people living on it & accessible for family, arts, wellness business and activity

# Appendix B: Visual Preference Comments

Key Areas/Design Workshop Report

The following original, unedited comments were provided in response to the visual preference photo prompts for each corridor/intersection.

## Munson Avenue

Blue photos were shown to in-person workshop participants only; yellow photos were shown to both in-person workshop and online survey participants.



|                              | Workshop Votes | Workshop Sticky Notes |
|------------------------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| 4-5 stories                  | 3              |                       |
| High transparency            | 0              |                       |
| Overall would work on Munson | 3              |                       |



|  | Workshop Votes | Workshop Sticky Notes |
|--|----------------|-----------------------|
|--|----------------|-----------------------|

|                             |   |                                  |
|-----------------------------|---|----------------------------------|
| Flat building face          | 0 |                                  |
| Ground -floor retail/office | 8 |                                  |
| 4 stories                   | 2 |                                  |
| Overall would work well     | 1 | <i>Walk/Bike lanes on Munson</i> |



|  | Workshop Votes | Workshop Sticky Notes | Survey Votes | Total votes |
|--|----------------|-----------------------|--------------|-------------|
|--|----------------|-----------------------|--------------|-------------|

|                                   |   |  |    |    |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|----|----|
| Stepback after 1 story            | 4 |  | 69 | 73 |
| Ground-floor retail               | 6 |  | 86 | 92 |
| Mix of Materials on Building face | 7 |  | 68 | 75 |
| Overall would work on Munson      | 4 | <i>Positives:--Residential above --diagonal parking adjacent to retail</i> | 59 | 63 |



Workshop Votes      Workshop Sticky Notes

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Flat Building Face                                 | 0 |
| Mix of materials on building face                  | 3 |
| Exclusively multi-family (no retail or commercial) | 1 |
| Overall would work on Munson                       | 3 |



Workshop Votes      Workshop Sticky Notes      Survey Votes      Total votes

|                                   |   |    |    |
|-----------------------------------|---|----|----|
| Flat Building Face                | 0 | 26 | 26 |
| Zero Lot line (built to sidewalk) | 1 | 11 | 12 |
| 4 Stories                         | 1 | 40 | 41 |
| Overall would work on Munson      | 0 | 25 | 25 |



|  | Workshop Votes | Workshop Sticky Notes | Survey Votes | Total votes |
|--|----------------|-----------------------|--------------|-------------|
|--|----------------|-----------------------|--------------|-------------|

|                              |   |  |    |    |
|------------------------------|---|--|----|----|
| Stepback after 1 story       | 6 |  | 73 | 79 |
| ground-floor retail          | 8 |  | 84 | 92 |
| 5 stories                    | 2 |  | 29 | 31 |
| Overall would work on Munson | 2 |  | 47 | 49 |



|  | Workshop Votes | Workshop Sticky Notes |
|--|----------------|-----------------------|
|--|----------------|-----------------------|

|                              |    |  |
|------------------------------|----|--|
| Colorful/varied appearance   | 14 |  |
| Ground-Floor retail          | 9  |  |
| 3 stories                    | 6  |  |
| Overall would work on Munson | 5  | <i>This is the only one that is interesting and attractive, setback on 2nd story for variation</i> |



| Workshop Votes | Workshop Sticky Notes | Survey Votes | Total votes |
|----------------|-----------------------|--------------|-------------|
|----------------|-----------------------|--------------|-------------|

|                              |   |   |    |    |
|------------------------------|---|---|----|----|
| 8 stories                    | 3 | <i>comment on the 8 stories: Heck No!</i> | 26 | 29 |
| high transparency (glass)    | 3 |   | 38 | 41 |
| neutral color/materials      | 1 |   | 68 | 69 |
| Overall would work on Munson | 4 |   | 29 | 33 |



| Workshop Votes | Workshop Sticky Notes |
|----------------|-----------------------|
|----------------|-----------------------|

|                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| Stepback after 2 stories     | 4 |
| Mix of materials on façade   | 4 |
| High Transparency (Glass)    | 3 |
| Overall would work on Munson | 3 |



|  | Workshop Votes | Workshop Sticky Notes |
|--|----------------|-----------------------|
|--|----------------|-----------------------|

|                                |   |  |
|--------------------------------|---|--|
| Stepbacks at multiple heights  | 5 |  |
| Ground-floor retail            | 9 |  |
| Neutral/solid façade materials | 4 |  |
| Overall would work on Munson   | 3 |  |

## Garfield Avenue

Blue photos were shown to in-person workshop participants only; yellow photos were shown to both in-person workshop and online survey participants.



| Workshop Votes | Workshop Sticky Notes |
|----------------|-----------------------|
|----------------|-----------------------|

|                                   |   |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| 4-5 Stories                       | 6 |
| Zero Lot Line (built to sidewalk) | 4 |
| High transparency (glass)         | 2 |
| Overall would work well           | 2 |



| Workshop Votes | Workshop Sticky Notes |
|----------------|-----------------------|
|----------------|-----------------------|

|                                   |   |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| 4-5 Stories                       | 4 |
| Zero Lot Line (built to sidewalk) | 2 |
| High transparency (glass)         | 3 |
| Overall would work well           | 3 |





| Workshop Votes | Workshop Sticky Notes |
|----------------|-----------------------|
|----------------|-----------------------|

|                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| Flat building face         | 0 |
| Ground-floor retail/office | 4 |
| 4 stories                  | 2 |
| Overall would work well    | 3 |



| Workshop Votes | Workshop Sticky Notes | Survey Votes | Total votes |
|----------------|-----------------------|--------------|-------------|
|----------------|-----------------------|--------------|-------------|

|                                   |   |     |     |
|-----------------------------------|---|-----|-----|
| Stepback after 1 story            | 4 | 86  | 90  |
| Ground-floor retail               | 8 | 123 | 131 |
| Mix of Materials on building face | 3 | 97  | 100 |
| Overall would work well           | 5 | 73  | 78  |



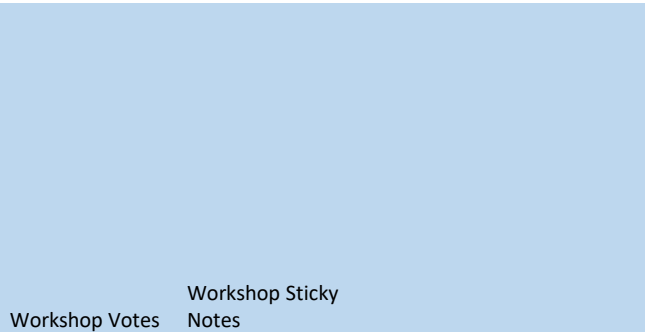
|  | Workshop Votes | Workshop Sticky Notes | Survey Votes | Total votes |
|--|----------------|-----------------------|--------------|-------------|
|--|----------------|-----------------------|--------------|-------------|

|                                   |   |  |    |    |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|----|----|
| Flat building face                | 0 |  | 37 | 37 |
| Zero Lot Line (built to sidewalk) | 3 |  | 22 | 25 |
| 4 stories                         | 3 |  | 59 | 62 |
| Overall would work well           | 4 |  | 37 | 41 |

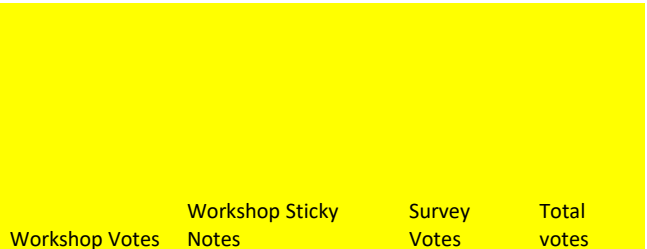


|  | Workshop Votes | Workshop Sticky Notes |
|--|----------------|-----------------------|
|--|----------------|-----------------------|

|                         |   |  |
|-------------------------|---|--|
| Stepback after 1 story  | 3 |  |
| Ground-floor retail     | 9 |  |
| 5 stories               | 4 |  |
| Overall would work well | 5 |  |



|  | Workshop Votes | Workshop Sticky Notes |
|--|----------------|-----------------------|
| Flat building face                                 | 2              |                       |
| Mix of Materials on building face                  | 3              |                       |
| Exclusively multi-family (no retail or commercial) | 0              |                       |
| Overall would work well                            | 5              |                       |



|                           | Workshop Votes | Workshop Sticky Notes | Survey Votes | Total votes |
|---------------------------|----------------|-----------------------|--------------|-------------|
| 8 stories                 | 9              |                       | 39           | 48          |
| High transparency (glass) | 2              |                       | 37           | 39          |
| Neutral color/materials   | 4              |                       | 76           | 80          |
| Overall would work well   | 5              |                       | 38           | 43          |



| Workshop Votes | Workshop Sticky Notes | Survey Votes | Total votes |
|----------------|-----------------------|--------------|-------------|
|----------------|-----------------------|--------------|-------------|

|                            |   |    |    |
|----------------------------|---|----|----|
| Stepback after 2 stories   | 3 | 72 | 75 |
| Mix of materials on façade | 1 | 87 | 88 |
| High transparency (glass)  | 1 | 49 | 50 |
| Overall would work well    | 1 | 70 | 71 |

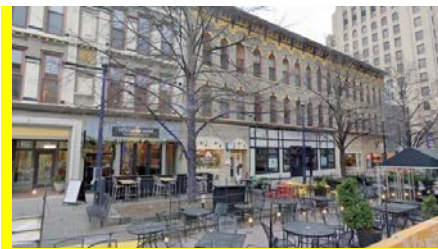


| Workshop Votes | Workshop Sticky Notes |
|----------------|-----------------------|
|----------------|-----------------------|

|                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Stepbacks at multiple heights  | 9 |
| Ground-floor retail            | 6 |
| Neutral/solid façade materials | 3 |
| Overall would work well        |   |

## 14<sup>th</sup> Street

Blue photos were shown to in-person workshop participants only; yellow photos were shown to both in-person workshop and online survey participants.



|                              | Workshop<br>Votes | Workshop Sticky Notes | Survey<br>Votes | Total<br>votes |
|------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Colorful/Varied appearance   | 10                |                       | 139             | 149            |
| Ground-floor retail          | 14                |                       | 141             | 155            |
| 3 stories                    | 6                 |                       | 111             | 117            |
| Overall this would work well | 9                 |                       | 106             | 115            |



|                              | Workshop<br>Votes | Workshop Sticky Notes | Survey<br>Votes | Total<br>votes |
|------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Stepback after 1 story       | 0                 |                       | 100             | 100            |
| Ground-floor retail          | 4                 |                       | 135             | 139            |
| 5 stories                    | 5                 |                       | 46              | 51             |
| Overall this would work well | 1                 |                       | 65              | 66             |



| Workshop Votes | Workshop Sticky Notes | Survey Votes | Total votes |
|----------------|-----------------------|--------------|-------------|
|----------------|-----------------------|--------------|-------------|

|                                |    |     |     |
|--------------------------------|----|-----|-----|
| Stepbacks at multiple heights  | 11 | 63  | 74  |
| Ground-floor retail            | 10 | 129 | 139 |
| Neutral/solid façade materials | 3  | 75  | 78  |
| Overall would work well        | 6  | 54  | 60  |



| Workshop Votes | Workshop Sticky Notes |
|----------------|-----------------------|
|----------------|-----------------------|

|                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| Flat building face         | 0 |
| Ground-floor retail/office | 6 |
| 4 stories                  | 2 |
| Overall would work well    | 3 |



| Workshop Votes | Workshop Sticky Notes | Survey Votes | Total votes |
|----------------|-----------------------|--------------|-------------|
|----------------|-----------------------|--------------|-------------|

|                            |   |    |    |
|----------------------------|---|----|----|
| Stepback after 2 stories   | 2 | 54 | 56 |
| Mix of materials on façade | 3 | 89 | 92 |
| High transparency (glass)  | 4 | 40 | 44 |
| Overall would work well    | 1 | 46 | 47 |



| Workshop Votes | Workshop Sticky Notes |
|----------------|-----------------------|
|----------------|-----------------------|

|                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| Flat building face         | 1 |
| Ground-floor retail        | 6 |
| Colorful/Varied appearance | 7 |
| Overall would work well    | 6 |



| Workshop Votes | Workshop Sticky Notes |
|----------------|-----------------------|
|----------------|-----------------------|

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Flat building face                                 | 0 |
| Mix of Materials on building face                  | 1 |
| Exclusively multi-family (no retail or commercial) | 0 |
| Overall would work well                            | 0 |



| Workshop Votes | Workshop Sticky Notes |
|----------------|-----------------------|
|----------------|-----------------------|

|                            |    |
|----------------------------|----|
| Colorful/Varied appearance | 11 |
| Ground-floor retail        | 9  |
| 3 stories                  | 9  |

Overall would work well 11 *Sticky: may need upper story step back on 14th (1 dot)*





Workshop  
Votes

Workshop Sticky Notes

|                                   |    |
|-----------------------------------|----|
| Ground-floor retail               | 5  |
| 2 stories                         | 7  |
| Neutral façade w/ mixed materials | 3  |
| Overall would work well           | 10 |



Workshop  
Votes

Workshop Sticky Notes

|                                   |   |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Stepback after 1 story            | 3 |
| Ground-floor retail               | 5 |
| Mix of Materials on building face | 3 |
| Overall would work well           | 1 |

### Garfield Avenue + Eighth Street Intersection

Blue photos were shown to in-person workshop participants only; yellow photos were shown to both in-person workshop and online survey participants.



| Workshop Votes | Workshop Sticky Notes |
|----------------|-----------------------|
|----------------|-----------------------|

|                                   |   |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| 2 Stories                         | 6 |
| Exposure to both sides            | 5 |
| Zero lot line (built to sidewalk) | 3 |
| Overall would work well           | 4 |



| Workshop Votes | Workshop Sticky Notes | Survey Votes | Total votes |
|----------------|-----------------------|--------------|-------------|
|----------------|-----------------------|--------------|-------------|

|                        |   |     |     |
|------------------------|---|-----|-----|
| 3 Stories              | 2 | 90  | 92  |
| Ground-floor retail    | 9 | 118 | 127 |
| Exposure to both sides | 4 | 115 | 119 |

Overall would work well 5 *Sticky: I like the curved portion 2 stories* 86 91



| Workshop Votes | Workshop Sticky Notes | Survey Votes | Total votes |
|----------------|-----------------------|--------------|-------------|
|----------------|-----------------------|--------------|-------------|

|                            |   |    |    |
|----------------------------|---|----|----|
| Stepback after 2 stories   | 7 | 60 | 67 |
| Mix of materials on façade | 6 | 66 | 72 |
| High transparency (glass)  | 4 | 34 | 38 |
| Overall would work well    | 3 | 44 | 47 |



| Workshop Votes | Workshop Sticky Notes |
|----------------|-----------------------|
|----------------|-----------------------|

|                            |    |
|----------------------------|----|
| Flat building face         | 2  |
| Ground-floor retail        | 10 |
| Colorful/Varied appearance | 10 |
| Overall would work well    | 7  |



|  | Workshop Votes | Workshop Sticky Notes | Survey Votes | Total votes |
|--|----------------|-----------------------|--------------|-------------|
|--|----------------|-----------------------|--------------|-------------|

|                         |   |  |     |     |
|-------------------------|---|--|-----|-----|
| 3 Stories               | 5 |  | 82  | 87  |
| Ground-floor retail     | 9 |  | 115 | 124 |
| Exposure to both sides  | 4 |  | 105 | 109 |
| Overall would work well | 2 |  | 77  | 79  |



|  | Workshop Votes | Workshop Sticky Notes |
|--|----------------|-----------------------|
|--|----------------|-----------------------|

|                                   |    |  |
|-----------------------------------|----|--|
| Ground-floor retail               | 10 |  |
| 2 stories                         | 6  |  |
| Neutral façade w/ mixed materials | 4  |  |
| Overall would work well           | 7  |  |



| Workshop Votes | Workshop Sticky Notes |
|----------------|-----------------------|
|----------------|-----------------------|

|  |   |
|--|---|
| 4 stories                                  | 7 |
| Recesses in building face (i.e. balconies) | 4 |
| Mix of building materials                  | 4 |
| Overall would work well                    | 3 |



| Workshop Votes | Workshop Sticky Notes | Survey Votes | Total votes |
|----------------|-----------------------|--------------|-------------|
|----------------|-----------------------|--------------|-------------|

|                           |    |    |    |
|---------------------------|----|----|----|
| 5-6 Stories               | 11 | 31 | 42 |
| High transparency (glass) | 7  | 34 | 41 |
| Exposure to both sides    | 4  | 87 | 91 |
| Overall would work well   | 12 | 37 | 49 |

## JULY 2024 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OPEN HOUSE FOR PUBLIC FEEDBACK

Under the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, the City is required to present a draft of a Master Plan for public input for a minimum of 63 days. After the 63-day timeframe has elapsed, the Planning Commission must hold a public hearing prior to making any recommendation regarding adoption of the Plan to the City Commission. The public hearing on the Master Plan is scheduled for the August 7<sup>th</sup> Planning Commission meeting.

In addition to upfront community surveys, many neighborhood listening sessions, and other outreach to the public, the City held a day-long public open house on June 18<sup>th</sup>. The open house was designed to present the components of the draft Master Plan to the public, to answer questions one-on-one with the public, and to get additional feedback. Approximately 100 individuals attended the public open house.

The input received from the open house was in the form of sticky notes left by attendees, informal input given to the Planning Commissioners and staff in attendance, and via an on-line opinion survey. The input is summarized in the following discussion. The more detailed responses are reproduced in full and will become part of the Master Plan document, incorporated into Chapter 13.

The Planning Commission is encouraged to carefully review this input and determine what, if any, changes or refinements are needed to the Master Plan draft prior to taking action on the Plan.

### General Impressions of Survey Responses

**Housing:** Housing affordability and homelessness remain big issues to people, but there is not much support for low quality housing projects, densification efforts, or housing built just for STR use. Regional growth was an issue to several people; with recommendations to work more with our neighboring communities to coordinate growth and to share in addressing the need for more housing and especially affordable housing. Others feel that the City has not done enough to encourage more housing and thus have added to the regional traffic issues for those who work in the City. Many challenge the City to take on the issue of affordability more directly in order to support the overall economy and future of the City.

**Growth:** Overall, this broad issue is important to many of the respondents. While many are concerned about growth and its inevitable impacts, several embrace allowing growth and densification. Some caution the City to institute the changes that would allow densification slowly and to gain incremental support.

**Tourism:** it is clear that the influx of tourists is impacting the quality of life for locals who feel that they are expected to pay for public improvements to benefit tourism or seasonal populations and also are expected to endure the impacts of this influx. The respondents expressed frustration with

the City's perceived push to promote tourism. Again, there is little support for the expansion and prevalence of STRs.

Parking: There seem to be a lot of opinions on parking – from we need more parking decks, to remove some on street parking, to generally that we need more parking. Several were concerned that parking is being forced into the neighborhoods without more parking decks.

Biking/Walkability/MAP: This is clearly a big issue. People love the TART trail system and to a lesser extent the 8<sup>th</sup> Street cycle track but have concerns about unsafe users, especially e-bikes. People are less enthused about on-street bike lanes because the lanes aren't clearly painted and vehicle drivers are not aware of bikes around them. Many people think there should be more enforcement for unsafe bikers, drunk biking, those not following the rules of the road, and e-bikes operating dangerously. Many people are concerned about unsafe crossings and would like to see more HAWK/signalized crossings. Others note that the increase in e-bikes changes the possible range for biking for everyday activities and that the bike infrastructure should continue to be enhanced to prepare for this change. Some respondents are not supportive of enhancing the walkability of the City overall because the winter weather and due to a large and growing elderly population. Several people noted that the MAP does not address pedestrians and instead focuses on bike infrastructure; that the plan is not actionable; and that the MAP does not address the financial means to implement.

EV stations: This topic seemed to promote a lot of comment. Some were concerned about the use of EV for City services because of the challenges with winter weather and similar issues. Some think that this needs more thought and wonder about how to provide charging stations within existing developments.

Neighborhoods: Many people are concerned with maintaining the existing neighborhoods as they are and to recognize the unique character of each neighborhood. In-fill of higher density buildings is a concern as is the implementation of the planned transitional zones. Some expressed surprise about the newly identified neighborhoods. Many feel that the small town character of the City is being lost with development. Some do embrace change within neighborhoods.

Safety: Many respondents noted that they no longer feel safe walking around town, especially during early or late hours. Some shared their personal experiences with incidents.

Architecture: Many people felt that newer buildings in the City, especially large-scale housing developments, are of low-quality materials and design. Some noted that modern style buildings are an expected necessity to address housing shortages but hope that they will be designed to better complement the existing historic buildings. There is support for architectural guidelines both for commercial and residential buildings.

Traffic: Speeds and cut through traffic is a concern to many residents. Several feel that there are elements of the proposed Plan that will contribute to these traffic issues.

Infrastructure and Maintenance: Needed street repairs, especially within the residential neighborhoods (Seventh and Fourteenth Streets especially) was mentioned by many respondents. The lack of general maintenance of city-owned facilities was a common concern of respondents – medians, roundabouts, sidewalks, some parks (including West End Beach/parking/restrooms), Rotary Square, CBD maintenance, trash removal, upkeep of painted traffic lane and bike lane markings, stormwater updates, potholes, and graffiti removal were all noted. There were concerns about the future of the waste water treatment plant capacity in light of expected growth.

Transitional Plan Areas: Several respondents expressed a concern about the planned Transitional Areas. Of specific concern was the impact the Plan recommendations along Bay Street may have on the Slabtown neighborhood. Others questioned how the Transitional zones and corresponding rezoning recommendations will be implemented on Union and Division Streets.

Environment and Climate Change: Several respondents expressed support for planning for environmental protections and to address climate change. It was noted that the guiding principles do not directly reflect these priorities. Noise pollution was a concern, especially in regards to air traffic. There is a lack of understanding or skepticism regarding the riparian buffer standards.

Open Space Preservation: Woven throughout the responses was a strong concern to maintain tree cover, protect undeveloped public lands, and to maintain as much pervious green spaces on individual properties as possible. Several were concerned that the FLU map does not provide for enough perseveration of conservation or recreation areas.

Arts and Culture: Many noted that the City should more actively support and enhance the arts in the City.

Format and Plan Details: Several people noted that the document is large and hard to digest. Several people noted that some of the housing data and economic data is becoming out of date and does not reflect the more recent drastic increases in housing costs. Some questioned how the action plan items were prioritized. Many felt that the survey is too difficult to take/too much to read through and take in. Many were skeptical of the process and whether the residents will be heard. There were many who encourage more public engagement during the implementation of some of the elements of the Plan.



# City of Traverse City Master Plan | Mobility Action Plan

## July 2024 Community Engagement Open House Public Feedback

**The following original, unedited comments were provided by in-person attendees in response to the information presented on the Master Plan and Mobility Action Plan Boards at the Open House held on Thursday, July 18<sup>th</sup>, 2024.**

Master Plan Introductory Information:



# WHAT IS A MASTER PLAN?

## WHAT IS A MASTER PLAN?

A Master Plan is a long-term policy document that sets goals for how the City of Traverse City will develop in the next 5-10 years. It is used by local elected officials, city staff, city residents, and others to guide decision-making about how land is used, where new development occurs, where and when new infrastructure is provided in the city, how streets are designed for different types of transportation, and more. The information contained in the Master Plan will shape the future of your city, including your neighborhoods, local business districts, parks, downtown, and streets.

## HOW IS THE NEW MASTER PLAN ORGANIZED?

- » Shorter “magazine” style document that summarizes the plan and includes recommended actions and future land use.
- » Longer “supplemental” document that contains all community data referenced to build the plan

### MAGAZINE CONTENT

- Executive Summary
- Action Plan
- Future Land Use
- Community Engagement Overview



### SUPPLEMENTAL CONTENT

1. Demographics
2. Housing
3. Neighborhoods
4. Transportation & Mobility
5. Infrastructure & Energy
6. Existing Land Use
7. Sustainability, Resiliency, & Natural Systems
8. Health, Safety, & Wellness
9. Arts, Culture, & Recreation
10. Economic Development
11. Sustainable Tourism
12. Existing/Older Plan Review
13. Community Engagement Report

- No feedback was given for this board.

## Master Plan Guiding Principles 1-6:



# GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The following guiding principles are the community's priorities for the future development and management of Traverse City. They were used as the basis for the formation of the Master Plan.

- 

**1 Steward and cherish our natural resources and green spaces.**  
Traverse City's natural assets, which include the shores of Lake Michigan, the Boardman-Ottaway River, Kids Creek, and the quality of the trees, parks, water and air are vital to the character and well-being of everyone in the community.
- 

**Honor our community heritage and create a welcoming environment for all people.**  
The area, which the City of Traverse City now encompasses, has a rich historical and cultural heritage. This heritage dates back millennia as the homeland and waters of Indigenous Nations that were settled by European immigrants in the early 1800s. Our community's challenges and successes are the result of the sacrifice, work, and ingenuity of individuals from all walks of life and with diverse experiences. City policy should respect, preserve, and incorporate this heritage into our community fabric and provide opportunity for people of all backgrounds, abilities, and experiences to live here and help make Traverse City the wonderful community that it is.
- 

**3 Encourage development and vibrancy in our commercial districts and corridors.**  
The City of Traverse City is an economic and cultural asset to the Grand Traverse region and is where public infrastructure is most densely available. City land policy should encourage development and infill/redevelopment in commercial areas of the city to support businesses, provide additional housing, increase the city tax base, and maximize the use of existing public infrastructure. This will encourage community vibrancy and connection, preserve the provision of high-quality public services within our city, and provide opportunity for healthy and balanced growth within our commercial core.
- 

**4 Maintain and connect our neighborhoods.**  
City land use policy should encourage well maintained properties and infrastructure in residential neighborhoods as well as easy access within and between neighborhoods to goods, services, and city amenities. City leaders should regularly seek feedback from neighborhoods regarding what is needed and/or desired within their unique area.
- 

**5 Encourage quality housing in locations of the city with access to nonmotorized and public transportation.**  
City land use policy should encourage a variety of quality housing types that local workers, young families, and retirees can afford, in locations which are easily accessible by foot, bike, wheels, or bus.
- 

**6 Create safe and enjoyable transportation and recreation options year-round.**  
People of all ages and abilities move around Traverse City for work, shopping, school, recreation, and exercise during all four seasons. Traverse City land use and transportation policy should promote safe, convenient, and enjoyable connections for all modes of transportation and recreation year-round.

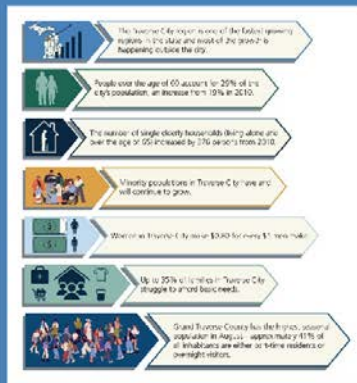
- RENT CONTROL to limit price gouging caused by seasonal-only rentals in downtown neighborhoods! How can TC be walkable if you can't live near where you work?
- ADUs benefit the homeowner and reduce the value of the neighbor next door (depending on where they are located). On the alley is ok, but not in the backyard overlooking the neighbor's backyard.



# SUPPLEMENTAL CHAPTERS SUMMARY

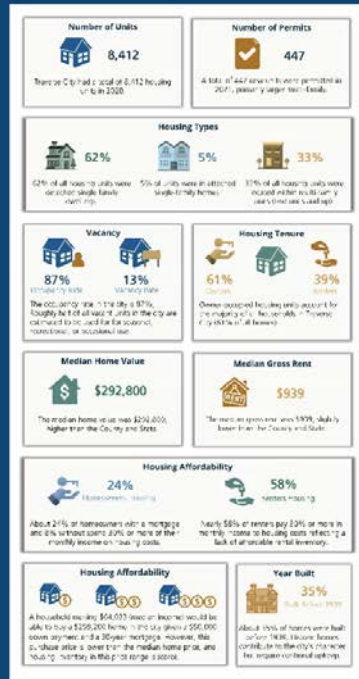
## DEMOGRAPHICS

- » **Growing:** City's population grew by nearly 8% between 2010-2020.
- » **Aging:** 29% of people over 60 years old.
- » **Seasonal:** 41% of population in August is seasonal.



## HOUSING

- » **Need more:** all prices, types, own/rent.
- » **Zoning doesn't match use:** 83% of residentially zoned land is for single-family, but actual use is 62% dwellings are single-family and 33% are multiple-family.
- » **Relatively expensive:** highest median home values in region, 1/3 of residents (owners & renters) have unaffordable housing costs.
- » **More owner-occupied:** 61% own dwelling, 39% rent dwelling.



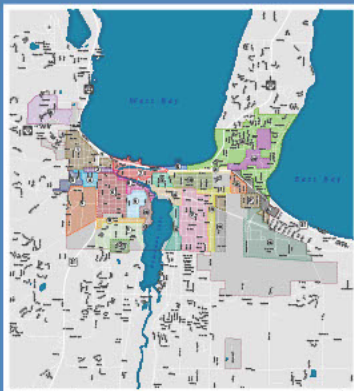
- No feedback was given for this board.



# SUPPLEMENTAL CHAPTERS SUMMARY

## NEIGHBORHOODS

- » **Preserve:** Quiet environment, greenspace, parks, safety, walkability, proximity to amenities, housing styles, public art, social connections.
- » **Enhance:** Transportation access, pedestrian/bike infrastructure, parks, sidewalk repairs, regulate short-term rentals, street lighting, traffic calming, unhoused population support, neighborhood-scale businesses.
- » **Seasonal:** Traffic flow, unused vacant lots, unnecessary parking lots, too few public spaces, too few crosswalks.

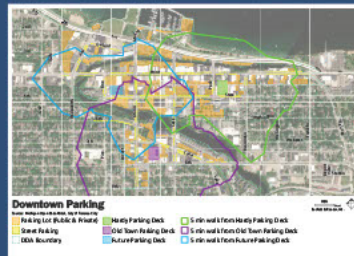


### Neighborhoods

- |                       |                 |                        |
|-----------------------|-----------------|------------------------|
| 1. Downtown           | 11. Old Village | 21. S. Kenton Corridor |
| 2. N. Kenton Corridor | 12. Hilltop     | 22. Westside           |
| 3. Midtown            | 13. Grand Haven | 23. Hilltop            |
| 4. Grand Haven        | 14. Grand Haven | 24. Hilltop            |
| 5. Grand Haven        | 15. Grand Haven | 25. Hilltop            |
| 6. Grand Haven        | 16. Grand Haven | 26. Hilltop            |
| 7. Grand Haven        | 17. Grand Haven | 27. Hilltop            |
| 8. Grand Haven        | 18. Grand Haven | 28. Hilltop            |
| 9. Grand Haven        | 19. Grand Haven | 29. Hilltop            |
| 10. Grand Haven       | 20. Grand Haven | 30. Hilltop            |

## TRANSPORTATION & MOBILITY

- » Parking = 15% of land area downtown.
- » Traverse City is now a Metropolitan Planning Organization, which requires regional transportation planning.
- » See Mobility Action Plan stations for more details.



- Downtown Parking**
- Public Parking
  - Private Parking
  - Multi-Parking Deck
  - Old Town Parking Deck
  - 5th and 11th Street Parking Deck
  - 5th and 11th Street East Side Parking Deck
  - 5th and 11th Street West Side Parking Deck
  - 5th and 11th Street North Side Parking Deck



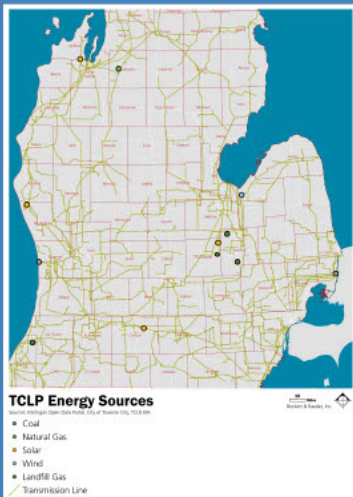
- Protect integrity of neighborhoods so young families will want to live downtown & maintain old houses on small lots



# SUPPLEMENTAL CHAPTERS SUMMARY

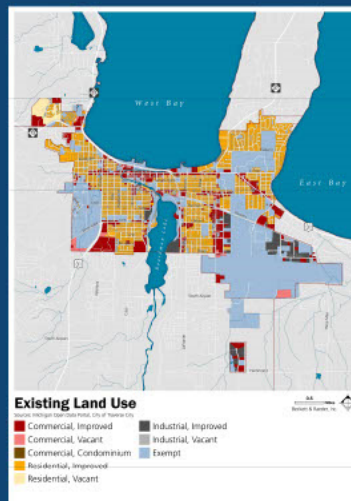
## INFRASTRUCTURE & ENERGY

- » **Investment priority:** Aging systems require maintenance, prioritization, and funding.
- » **Green Infrastructure:** The city's stormwater ordinance supports the implementation of various green infrastructure techniques.
- » **Room for growth:** The regional wastewater treatment plant at 50% capacity.
- » **Renewables on track:** TCLP fully sourced by renewables by 2040.



## EXISTING LAND USE

- » 43% of land in the city is tax-exempt, owned by regionally significant institutions like Munson, TCAPS, NMC, government, parks, nonprofits, & churches.
- » Roughly 100 acres of vacant residential land are left in the city.
- » Commercial land use patterns include the city core, neighborhood commercial areas, and commercial corridors.
- » 78 acres of commercially-zoned land is vacant.



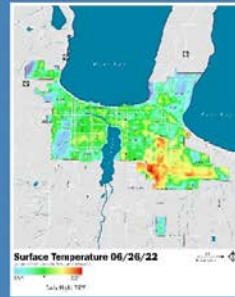
- Require new housing developments to be at least wired for electric cars
- Also existing condos--can they get support for installing charging stations for EVs/PHEVs?
- (Under Existing Land Use) How much of 100 acres is left after this portion is taken out? It seems like the leftover is very small and 100 acres is deceptive
- Look into setting data from EIA to place Power Plants on a map. [maps.EIA.gov](https://maps.eia.gov)



# SUPPLEMENTAL CHAPTERS SUMMARY

## SUSTAINABILITY, RESILIENCY, & NATURAL SYSTEMS

- » **Climate Change:** Climate change has and will continue to impact the city/region. "Climate refugees" in-migration anticipated.
- » **Urban heat island:** Building mass, pavement and asphalt, and lack of vegetation all contribute to higher temperatures, which is why many of the commercial corridors and shopping centers have higher temperatures.
- » **Priorities:** protect wetlands, strengthen city tree canopy, increase density to discourage vehicular miles driven, follow the Climate Action Plan.



## HEALTH, SAFETY, & WELLNESS

- » **Walkability:** Traverse City boasts walkability with many sidewalks and a relatively small land area that allows residents to reach many destinations by foot.
- » **Priorities:** Maintaining and increasing walkability, allowing low intensity health-related land uses and food retail uses in or near residential areas to increase access to healthcare and food access.



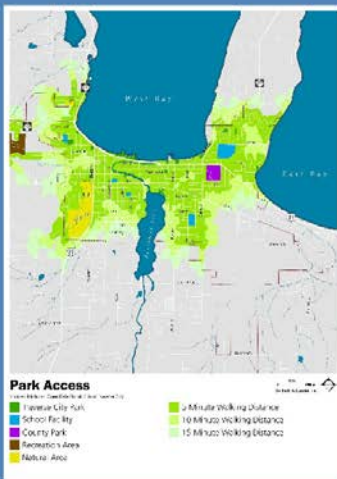
- Look for opportunities to "fill gaps" in the sidewalk and trail system.
- Give incentives for SOLAR on roof tops.
- Bikeability & Trail Access is critical too. Support TART
- Walkability + Bikeability and general non-motorized transportation investment- expanding and supporting the TRAIL NETWORK!



# SUPPLEMENTAL CHAPTERS SUMMARY

## ARTS, CULTURE, & RECREATION

- » The city has robust arts landscape.
- » Parks and recreational spaces are summarized, but the City Parks & Recreation Plan has detailed data and goals.
- » **Priorities** Continue support of TC Arts Commission, public art programming, and commitment to preserving, recognizing, and celebrating local indigenous history and future.



## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

**Traverse City is a regional economic & employment hub.**

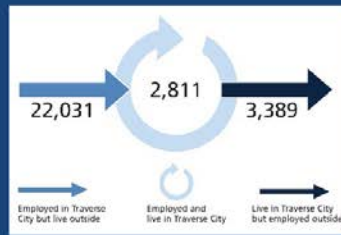
- » 24,842 daily employees, 89% commuting from outside the city
- » 3,389 city residents commute somewhere else for work
- » 4% of Traverse City workers work remotely from home

### Top industries

- » Hospitals
- » Finance, insurance, and real estate
- » Physicians

### Priority redevelopment sites (see accompanying board):

- » Thirby Field Area
- » Fourteenth Street
- » Woodmere Avenue
- » Eighth & Garfield Area



- (In response to a statistic stating that 89% of employees commute from outside of the city) This is not a startling fact. Look at other huge cities—where more than half commute.
- (Placed under Economic Development section, next to priority redevelopment sites) Prioritize Day Care and bus facilities to support workers





# SUPPLEMENTAL CHAPTERS SUMMARY

## SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

- › 6.4 million overnight stays in the region, 16% of state totals.
- › Tourism represents 26.2% of the regional economy.
- › Industries most dependent on tourism: independent artists, writers and performers, photographers, wineries, and sightseeing transportation.
- › Transportation systems highly impacted by tourism industry.

**July Tourists**  
Map data © OpenStreetMap contributors, Imagery © Mapbox



## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

### PHASE 1: INITIATION

- **POP-UPS**  
August – October 2022
- **COMMUNITY WIDE SURVEY**  
September – October 2022
- **STAKEHOLDER SESSIONS**  
September 2022
- **OPEN HOUSE**  
October 2022

### PHASE 2: INVESTIGATION

- **SUSTAINABLE TOURISM WORKSHOP**  
February 2023
- **NEIGHBORHOOD LISTENING SESSIONS**  
April 2023
- **DESIGN WORKSHOP**  
April 2023

### PHASE 3: EVALUATION

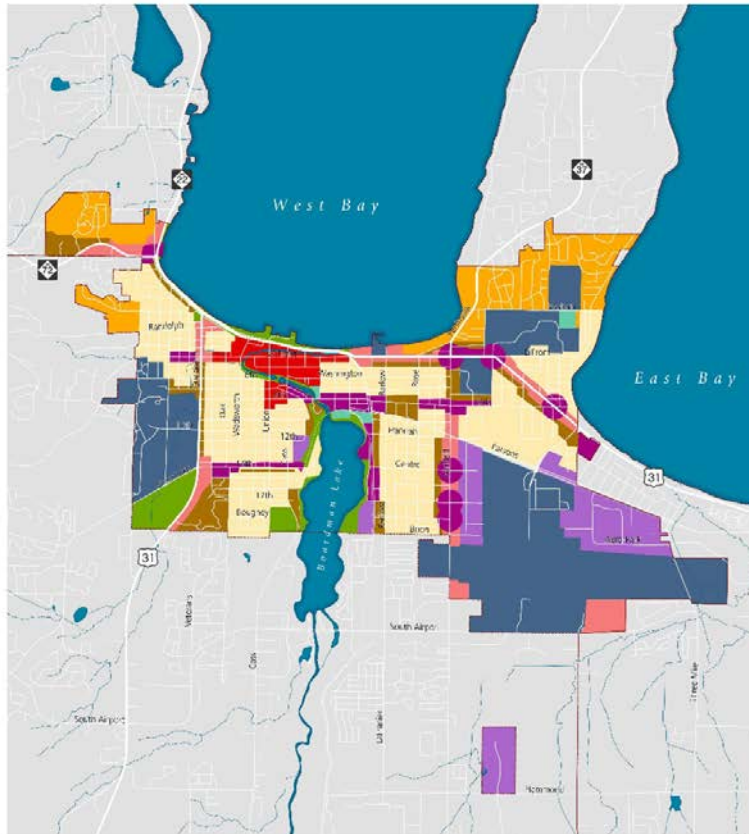
- **STAKEHOLDER SESSIONS**  
August 2023
- **OPEN HOUSE**  
July 2024

- I would think the upscale restaurants and DT boutiques are tourist dependent as well.
- SUPPORT the rest of the 80ish% of the economy too! We are often at risk of the "Harbor Springs" winter--where the community vacates

Master Plan Future Land Use Framework Map:

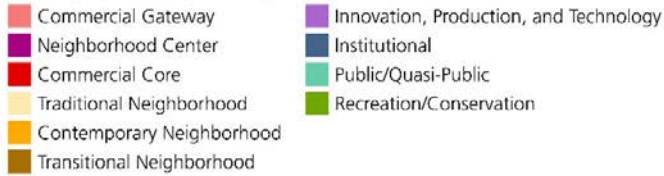


# FUTURE LAND USE FRAMEWORK



## Future Land Use Framework

Sources: Michigan Open Data Portal, City of Traverse City



0.5 Miles  
Beckett & Raeder, Inc.

- Where is the protected urban green space? Heat Island Effect? Where is F+M and other public parks?

## Master Plan Future Land Use Framework Description:



# FUTURE LAND USE FRAMEWORK

| Category                             | Description  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Commercial Gateway                   | As Traverse City grew and expanded beyond the downtown, strip commercial development became ubiquitous along the major corridors of the city. Currently, the existing sprawl strip development is not functioning at its highest and best use. However, these Commercial Gateways provide value as regional commercial destinations and act as entryways into the denser parts of Traverse City. The Commercial Gateways are primarily located along the major corridors in Traverse City, US-31 from the city boundary to the Parkway, Division Street from the city boundary to the 14th Street intersection, Division Street from the West Front Street intersection to the Parkway, and along M-71 and M-22. The Commercial Gateways are intended to function as regional commercial destinations with uses that generate higher volumes of automotive traffic than local commercial business. The Commercial Gateways also provide the opportunity for dense development as moderate- to high-rise commercial and mixed-use development are well suited for this future land use designation. While this future land use designation accommodates uses that generate higher volumes of automotive traffic, these areas are intended to support all modes of transportation. |
| Neighborhood Center                  | One of the major land use recommendations of this Master Plan is the development of distinct Neighborhood Centers. Neighborhood Centers are nodes of local activity with businesses, services, and community spaces that are intended to serve the immediate surrounding neighborhoods. Unlike the other commercial-oriented future land use designations which serve a more regional audience, the Neighborhood Centers are inherently local-oriented spaces. By allowing for a mix of uses and services, Neighborhood Centers provide essential goods and services within a 15-minute walking distance of most residential neighborhoods in the city. Neighborhood Centers also alleviate pressure on the commercial core by providing retail and entertainment options outside of the downtown.   |
| Commercial Core                      | Downtown is the unquestioned center of Traverse City as the City's retail, entertainment, and social atmosphere are all centered around downtown Traverse City. The Commercial Core not only includes downtown Traverse City, but also extensions down East and West Front Street and into the warehouse district. Additionally, the Commercial Core is uniquely suited to support high-density mixed-use development at a scale not possible nor intended for other future land use designations. The intended function of the Commercial Core is to be a social and economic center by providing a mix of commercial, office, residential, and public uses. The Commercial Core is highly walkable and designed at the pedestrian scale with a focus on creating a lively street atmosphere. The Commercial Core should also serve as a transportation center where users can access the Commercial Core through a range of transportation options.  |
| Traditional Neighborhood             | The Traditional Neighborhood future land use designation encompasses Traverse City's historic neighborhoods. This area is defined by gridded streets, smaller lots, high walkability, and street-facing residential design. The function of the Traditional Neighborhood is to support neighborhood-scale living, with predominately residential uses with a mix of local commercial, public/quasi-public, and recreational uses throughout the neighborhood. Traditional Neighborhoods are aligned with the concept of the 15-minute city in which most everyday goods and services can be accessed within a 15-minute walk of an individual's residence. To promote the function of the Traditional Neighborhood, future land use planning and city policies should support these Traditional Neighborhoods as accessible to all people regardless of income, age, ability, or household composition.  |
| Contemporary Neighborhood            | The Contemporary Neighborhood land use designation is intended to capture the residential areas of Traverse City that have larger lots, lower-density residential development, curvilinear streets, and suburban development patterns. While these neighborhoods are walkable, they do not have the same degree of connection to the amenities and assets of the Core Neighborhoods. The Contemporary Neighborhoods are intended to function as more suburban neighborhoods while maintaining proximity to the urban amenities of the Commercial Core and Core Neighborhood designation.   |
| Transitional Neighborhood            | Transitional Neighborhoods are intended to function as a mixing between the more defined residential areas and the non-residential areas. This mixing is achieved through a varied composition of residential types, local commercial uses, and offices. Transitional Neighborhoods are intended to provide a gradual scaling down from the higher intensity of commercial areas and the low-intensity residential areas. Additionally, the Transitional Neighborhoods support commercial uses that may not be appropriate on the high-trafficked streets of the Commercial Gateways and benefit from a more moderate-intensity environment (bakeries, coffee shops, bookstores, thrift stores, etc.).   |
| Innovation, Production, & Technology | While industrial and manufacturing are not the prime industries of Traverse City, they are essential businesses that provide needed services and jobs to residents. The Innovation, Production, and Technology future land use designation is intended to accommodate existing industrial land uses and expand on the emergence of technology and science in the City.   |
| Institutional                        | The Institutional future land use designation is intended to capture the areas in Traverse City that are governed by a governmental or quasi-governmental agency, or by entities that have their own land use plans. These areas include the Munson Medical Campus, Grand Traverse Commons, Cherry Capital Airport, Northwestern Michigan College, and the Grand Traverse Civic Center. The City has little influence over the management or direction of these spaces, but they are essential parts of its urban fabric.  |
| Public / Quasi-Public                | The Public/Quasi-Public future land use designation is intended to encompass the core city and other public properties that are essential for the function and operation of Traverse City. Not all city or publicly owned properties are included in the Public/Quasi-Public designation as not all city-owned properties are essential for the function of the City.  |
| Recreation / Conservation            | Green spaces, parks, and conservation areas are some of the most loved parts of Traverse City. They operate as a necessary space for recreation, environmental protection, wildlife refuge, and community health. Recreation/Conservation spaces are more defined than other future land use categories as the parks and natural areas of the City have defined boundaries. The largest Recreation/Conservation space in the City is the wetland at the southwestern corner of Division Street and 14th Street. Boardman Lake is also surrounded by Recreation/Conservation space. Future land use planning for these areas should be consistent with Traverse City's Parks and Recreation Master Plan and the environmental goals of the city.  |

- **No feedback was given for this board.**

## Master Plan Action Plan Overview:



# ACTION PLAN



The intent of the Action Plan is to be a guiding document that details items for the City to accomplish over the next five years. While there may be action items that are accomplished many years in advance, it is important to create a list that is feasible with the current capacity of the various departments and commissions.

The Action Plan should be reviewed every five years with the required Master Plan review under the Michigan Planning Enabling Act. At the review, items that have been accomplished should be removed, and remaining items should be evaluated to determine if they are still relevant. New items should be added to the list that will further the implementation of the Master Plan.

The development of the Action Plan was an iterative process, based on community engagement with key stakeholders. It is important to ensure that the proper partners are involved to ensure completion of action items. Staff generated an initial Action Plan considering items that would implement the goals and objectives of the Master Plan. This list was then reviewed by stakeholders at various meetings organized by topic. Stakeholders were asked to rank the action items and add items that may be missing. Stakeholders also offered where they could partner with the City to move action items forward. Following the stakeholder meetings, the Planning Department met with City Staff to determine if items were consistent with other City Plans and feasible under current funding and operational plans.

A draft Action Plan was presented to the Leadership Team for consideration and refinement before the Planning Commission and City Commission reviewed the items during the approval process of the Plan.

## ON-GOING PLANNING DEPARTMENT ACTIVITIES

- 1 Continue to support the objectives of City Departments by providing necessary funding and staff capacity.
- 2 Continue to staff and support the Grand Traverse Commons Joint Planning Commission, Traverse City Planning Commission, Traverse City Commission, Traverse City Board of Zoning Appeals, and Historic Districts Commission.
- 3 Continue to perform timely review of city applications.
- 4 Provide an exceptional level of service in the maintenance of all city infrastructure.
- 5 Continue to be responsive to public and citizen questions and concerns regarding planning, zoning, land use, and community development in Traverse City.
- 6 Continue to provide staff liaisons to city neighborhood associations.

- **No feedback was given for this board.**

Master Plan Action Plan Items 1-2B:



# ACTION PLAN

● Action items marked with a blue circle relate to equity. ● Action items marked with a green circle relate to climate change.

| Action   | Timeframe | Category | Responsible Party                                  | Supporting Parties  | Guiding Principle(s) |
|--|-----------|----------|--|---|----------------------|
| 1 Explore zoning amendments related to a thru f below. |           |          |  |   |                      |
| a  | 1-3 years | Zoning   | Planning & Zoning Department, Planning Commission  | DDA, City Administration  |                      |
| b  | 1-3 years | Zoning   | Planning & Zoning Department, Planning Commission  | DDA, City Administration, Housing North, Homestretch, TC Housing Commission |                      |
| c  | 1-3 years | Zoning   | Planning & Zoning Department, Planning Commission  | DDA, City Administration, Engineering, Public Services                      |                      |
| d  | 1-3 years | Zoning   | Planning & Zoning Department, Planning Commission  | DDA, City Administration  |                      |
| e  | 1-3 years | Zoning   | Planning & Zoning Department, Planning Commission  | DDA, City Administration  |                      |
| f  | 1-3 years | Planning | Planning & Zoning Department, Planning Commission  | DDA, City Administration, Engineering                                       |                      |
| 2 Implement the Mobility Action Plan:                  |           |          |  |   |                      |
| a  | 1-3 years | Planning | Engineering and Planning & Zoning Departments, DDA | City Administration, Departments of Public Services and Municipal Utilities |                      |
| b  | 1-3 years | Planning | Engineering and Planning & Zoning Departments, DDA | City Administration, Departments of Public Services and Municipal Utilities |                      |

- Should have annual VHR licensing
- Highest architectural design standards for the pre-approved plans. Worth it to engage experts in trad. architecture who know Victorian, Classical, arts & crafts, etc. :) :)
- Beautiful buildings=Nimby Killers!
- Slabtown residents (on North-South Streets) are clearly eager for *all* the traffic-calming tricks in the book (bulbous corners, elevated intersections, encouraging on-street parking (even tho there may need to be an explainer on how this would be a benefit--b/c it calms traffic)...hoping there's a PlanB at the ready if the M-22/M-72/Bay St. circle doesn't function as planned? Oh woe is Bay Street... :)

Master Plan Action Plan Items 2C-8:



# ACTION PLAN

● Action items marked with a blue circle relate to equity. ● Action items marked with a green circle relate to climate change.

| Action   | Timeframe | Category         | Responsible Party                                  | Supporting Parties  | Guiding Principle(s) |
|--|-----------|------------------|--|---|----------------------|
| c<br>● Identify funding to begin implementing the "low-hanging fruit" recommendations from the Mobility Action Plan, independent of street projects.   | 1-3 years | Planning         | Engineering and Planning & Zoning Departments, DDA | City Administration, Departments of Public Services and Municipal Utilities |                      |
| 3<br>● Audit, prioritize and address existing city infrastructure with the Public Rights of Way Accessibility Guidelines to ensure accessibility for all.  | 1-3 years | Planning         | Department of Public Services                      | Engineering, City Administration, DDA                                       |                      |
| 4<br>● Create a street improvement plan based on annual asset management evaluation and community engagement.  | 1-3 years | Planning         | Departments of Public Services, Engineering        | City Administration   |                      |
| 5<br>● Support redevelopment of public property for affordable housing and commercial infill development.  | 1-3 years | Special Projects | DDA, Planning & Zoning Department                  | Engineering, City Administration, Planning Commission                       |                      |
| 6<br>● Create a proactive plan for utilizing tools and tax incentives to support additional single and multi-family housing supply, including identifying available tax incentives and their purpose/application; where specific incentives are appropriate; criteria to approve or deny incentives; and metrics to quantify incentives' impact. | 1-3 years | Special Projects | City Administration, Planning & Zoning Department  | DDA, Treasury and Assessing Departments                                     |                      |
| 7<br>● Create a development dashboard to publicly track new development progress.  | 1-3 years | Special Projects | GIS, Planning & Zoning                             | City Administration, Engineering  |                      |
| 8<br>● Continue the discussion of establishing a funding mechanism for stormwater infrastructure development and maintenance and prioritize use of green and nature-based infrastructure in stormwater management.   | 1-3 years | Funding          | City Administration                                | City Attorney, Engineering, Municipal Utilities, Treasury                   |                      |

- No feedback was given for this board.

Master Plan Action Plan Items 9-15:



# ACTION PLAN

● Action items marked with a blue circle relate to equity. ● Action items marked with a green circle relate to climate change.

| Action   | Timeframe | Category                    | Responsible Party                                 | Supporting Parties  | Guiding Principle(s) |
|--|-----------|-----------------------------|---|---|----------------------|
| 9 ● Identify and prioritize opportunities that support decarbonization (e.g. purchase of electric vehicles, building electrification, solar infrastructure on public buildings, etc.) into the design and review of projects for the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). | 1-3 years | Funding                     | Planning & Zoning, TCLP                           | DDA, City Administration, Engineering, Public Services, Municipal Utilities, Green Team |                      |
| 10 ● Continue to inform and engage the public on existing/current zoning and enforcement policy and process to prevent blight, deterioration, and other nuisance issues in the city to help educate the community around the existing safeguards in place.           | 1-3 years | Communications & Engagement | Planning & Zoning, Clerk's Office                 | City Administration, Planning Commission  |                      |
| 11 ● Use inclusive language when discussing the housing crisis in Traverse City and actively counter narratives that are not inclusive, for example, statements/assumptions about home renters vs. home owners.  | 1-3 years | Communications & Engagement | Planning & Zoning, Clerk's Office                 | City Administration, Planning Commission  |                      |
| 12 ● Research and articulate the difference between affordable, workforce, and market rate housing within the Traverse City market.  | 1-3 years | Communications & Engagement | Planning & Zoning Department                      | TC Housing Commission, City Administration, Planning & Zoning                           |                      |
| 13 ● Promote the Traverse City Tree Fund, which can receive donations from the public.   | 1-3 years | Communications & Engagement | Clerk's Office, Public Services                   | City Commission   |                      |
| 14 ● Prioritize subsequent tree planting in areas to reduce urban heat islands in the city.  | 1-3 years | Communications & Engagement | Clerk's Office, Public Services                   | City Commission   |                      |
| 15 ● Identify locations on existing or future public property for EV charging stations.  | 1-3 years | Special Projects            | Planning & Zoning Department, Planning Commission | DDA, City Administration, TCLP  |                      |

- (In response to Item 14—Tree Planting)  
Yay!!!! <3 <3 <3

Master Plan Action Plan Items 16-18:



# ACTION PLAN

● Action Items marked with a blue circle relate to equity. ● Action Items marked with a green circle relate to climate change.

| Action | Timeframe  | Category  | Responsible Party | Supporting Parties                          | Guiding Principle(s)     |     |
|--------|--|-----------|-------------------|---|--------------------------|-----|
| 16     | Explore zoning amendments related to:  |           |                   |   |                          |     |
| ● a    | Implementing the Master Plan   | 3-5 years | Zoning            | Planning & Zoning, Planning Commission      | City Commission, DDA     | ALL |
| ● b    | Evaluate zoning districts and uses allowed to determine if they continue to meet the needs of the community  | 3-5 years | Zoning            | Planning & Zoning, Planning Commission      | City Commission, DDA     |     |
| ● c    | Increase neighborhood-scale healthcare and food-related goods and services to provide a 15 minute walking radius for neighborhoods.  | 3-5 years | Zoning            | Planning & Zoning, Planning Commission      | City Commission, DDA     |     |
| ● d    | Rezone the 300, 400, and 500 blocks of S. Union St. to C-4a to better reflect the existing development pattern and to create a stronger connection downtown.   | 3-5 years | Zoning            | Planning & Zoning, Planning Commission, DDA | City Commission          |     |
| ● e    | Rezone the West Front Street (west of front to Division, Not currently zoned D) to C-4a  | 3-5 years | Zoning            | Planning & Zoning, Planning Commission      | City Commission          |     |
| ● f    | Establish a Development (D) Zone along Fourteenth St. allow for more vibrant development and redevelopment opportunities.  | 3-5 years | Zoning            | Planning & Zoning, Planning Commission      | City Commission          |     |
| ● g    | Explore creating building design standards for new commercial development.   | 3-5 years | Zoning            | Planning & Zoning, Planning Commission      | DDA                      |     |
| ● 17   | Establish locations for community and economic hubs along corridors and/or intersections to better meet the day-to-day needs of residents in adjacent neighborhoods.                                     | 3-5 years | Planning          | Planning & Zoning, Planning Commission      | City Administration, DDA |     |
| ● 18   | Explore implementation of the community land trust model in Traverse City. Local examples include The Frankfort Area Community Land Trust in Frankfort, MI and Peninsula Housing in Leelanau County, MI. | 3-5 years | Special Projects  | Planning & Zoning, City Administration      | TC Housing Commission    |     |

- Explore Ann Arbor's Master Plan, where goals are time-bound and correlated with \$\$\$ projections...nothing needs to be a surprise.
- Consider # of story limits instead of height limits.



Master Plan Action Plan Items 19-23:



# ACTION PLAN

● Action items marked with a blue circle relate to equity. ● Action items marked with a green circle relate to climate change.

| Action   | Timeframe  | Category                    | Responsible Party                      | Supporting Parties                               | Guiding Principle(s) |
|--|------------|-----------------------------|--|--|----------------------|
| 19 ●<br>Develop a climate progress dashboard to educate the public about the City's climate initiatives, strategies, and metrics, including related to waste water processing, EV infrastructure, electrification of city fleet and buildings, urban heat islands, and related topics.             | 3-5 years  | Special Projects            | Planning & Zoning, TCLP                | GIS/IT, City Administration, Green Team          |                      |
| 20 ●<br>Increase annual financial support for Arts Commission (currently at 30k per year, split evenly between the City and DDA).  | 3-5 years  | Funding                     | City Commission, DDA                   | City Administration                              |                      |
| 21 ●<br>Audit the city's public participation plan to ensure diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging best practices are included.  | 3-5 years  | Communications & Engagement | Planning & Zoning                      | Clerk's Office                                   |                      |
| 22 ●<br>Create an overlay district applicable to specific legacy redevelopment sites, which would eliminate the Planning Commission site plan approval process and allow for staff administrative review for uses permitted in the underlying zoning district if development/redevelopment occurs. | 5-10 years | Zoning                      | Planning & Zoning, Planning Commission |  |                      |
| 23 ●<br>Explore amending the City Charter to create a proactive rental safety inspection program to ensure one- and two-family residential rental properties are safe and well-maintained for the welfare of occupants. Michigan examples include Bay City, Ludington, and Midland.                | 5-10 years | Zoning                      | Planning & Zoning                      | Planning & Zoning, Clerk's Office, City Attorney |                      |

- (In response to Item 20) Yes!!
- (Under 20) DDA responsibility not planners
- Rather than audit, the Planning Department needs to start following the City Public Participation Plan
- (Under 22) NO! NO! NO
- (Response to comment above) THIS!!!

Master Plan Action Plan Community Input:



## COMMUNITY INPUT

**DO YOU HAVE ANY REACTIONS,  
IDEAS, OR QUESTIONS TO SHARE?**

Please note them on a sticky note and post them here.

- Do not touch Bay Street.
- Please include a Design Review process in the Master Plan. Thanks –Richmond
- Design Review for ALL new buildings ...a formal process
- DO NOT REZONE BAY ST. PLENTY OF WALKABLE ENTITIES ALREADY EXIST

## Master Plan Action Plan Community Input—Continued:

- While prioritizing green spaces, I want to see appropriate residential in-fill! Urban is urban for a reason!
- Provide directions standards for new construction  
re: architecture etc. (no more boxes)
- Overlays on the drawings would help visualize the old--->new addresses aren't helpful
- Post its are not an adequate means of public input.
- Building Design Standards should be a much higher and faster priority especially with the zoning changes proposed to ensure high density solutions don't lead to cheap/ugly solutions
- Do not rezone Bay street. No more commercial.
- Commit to managing the style/height/material of construction and tree cover for the commercial properties adjacent to residential areas. This has been poorly executed in Slabtown.
- DON'T REZONE BAY STREET. PAY ATTENTION TO LISTENING SESSION RESULTS.
- Higher design standards enforceable.
- Please provide parking so that people don't park in neighborhoods (e.g. State Street complexes)
- Where is the Master Plan element that seeks to increase the percentage of taxable property? Homeowners & SMBR can't continue to support the hospital, schools, GTC, etc. Are there other revenue sources?
- HOPE THE CITY COMM. & PLANNER WILL BE LESS CONFRONTATIONAL & MORE RESPECTFUL TO NEIGHBORHOODS THAN DURING THE "INFILL" PROCESS. THAT WAS UNPROFESSIONAL. DISAPPOINTING
- Recognize the pressure traditional neighborhoods are under. From traffic and commercial core  
How to protect it?
- Need simple incentive process for new workforce or affordable housing projects within the city. Currently, based on correct zoning developers can't make a profit on providing new housing.
- Close alley between city square + Boardman river/Fishpass: let flow into great green space!
- One of the proposed action steps of the Master Plan should specifically state that a Building Design Standards Committee be established to develop design questions + standards for residential + commercial areas.
- TOO MUCH  
TOO DETAILED  
Resident Input is usually ignored.
- I live in Slabtown- Please change Bay Street! More walk + bike. Less car!
- Line Item Remove  
Bay Street Transition Neighborhood- Not Desired  
Slabtown has access to all amenities currently (coffee shop, Bread, RX, drugstore, Hardware)  
(Keep Residential)
- Action 16-g - Please modify the language to make it more definitive: "create a building design standards committee to develop guidelines & standards for commercial & residential areas.  
- Please change timeline to 1-2 years.
- (Response to comment above) So please explain 219 Boardman Ave. to me! House is on alley

### Master Plan Action Plan Community Input—Continued:

- Please do not change zoning for Bay St. from residential to Transitional neighborhood. Current commercial buildings in this area are grandfathered changes to these structures can be by case by case! We do not need more commercial property in Slabtown or TC. Many vacant/unleased properties available!
- Close Front St. (downtown 2-3 blocks) Memorial Day to Labor Day to pedestrian only! (Bike lane in center?) We want more space for eating/shopping/walking. :)
- Require architects' stamps for ALL new residential construction in the city...and maybe consider an incentive\* to use pre-approved architects (who understand the UGLY should no longer cut it) --> the established character of the neighborhoods is a community asset. \*through permitting or arch. review process?

Master Plan/Mobility Action Plan Conceptual Illustrations:

THIRLBY FIELD CONCEPTUAL ILLUSTRATION



713/725 EAST EIGHTH STREET CONCEPTUAL ILLUSTRATION



950 WOODMERE AVENUE CONCEPTUAL ILLUSTRATION



1101/1137 SOUTH GARFIELD AVENUE CONCEPTUAL ILLUSTRATION



- Unrealistic! Give me a break. TCAPS is not giving up Thirlby Field
- (In response to the illustration of Thirlby Field)  
Leave our green space alone. Why develop every speck of green space? <3 \* 1
- Bike Lanes?
- Provide Guaranteed Bike Lanes! DON'T WAIT!
- (In response to the 713/725 East Eighth Street Conceptual Illustration) This was designed and tried in the 1990s--and it didn't fly. The Master Plan is regulating old ideas.
- (In response to the 1101/1137 South Garfield illustration)  
These 'conceptual' designs are confusing--which intersection? Which street is garfield?
- Put solar above larger parking lots w/ snow melt plan. See MSU
- Include SOLAR where possible...Flat roof south-facing
- Why use so much land as parking for personal autos? Why 4 lanes of traffic? Trolley or cable cars instead--we need public transit--not more parking
- Appears to still be major emphasis on personal autos--were are trolley cars or buses?
- (In response to 713/725 East Eighth Street conceptual illustration) Roundabouts are great on M-72 or busy roads. But not pedestrian friendly in town! Traffic never stops!
- No (decorative brick crosswalks) like downtown--just crumbles & are dangerous
- Absolutely ridiculous concept!
- \*Wish\*: Pedestrian desire paths would be prioritized (first), then bikes, then cars, putting hyper-local residents first in their own neighborhoods
- (Response to comment above) YES! Bikes are pushing pedestrians off normal sidewalks! (Not trails)

## Mobility Action Plan Facility Types—Sharrows and Paved Shoulders:



Example of Shared Lane or Sharrow

### Shared Lane or Sharrow

**Design Speed:** Under 25mph

**Treatment Width:** Depends on road width

**Average Cost per Mile:** \$

**Maintenance:** Street sweeping, snow plowing, restriping

**Parking Interactions:** Parking not impacted

Used to connect cyclists to destinations while offering cyclists the right-of-way in places where space is limited.

#### Pros

- Inexpensive to implement
- Full lane to cycle in
- Cyclists have the right-of-way
- Minimal pavement markings and construction

#### Cons

- Cyclist must share road with cars
- Cyclists and drivers must interact to avoid crashes
- Can create driver confusion
- May prevent less confident users from bicycling



Example of Paved Shoulder

### Paved Shoulders

**Design Speed:** 35-55mph

**Treatment Width:** 4 feet to 6 feet from edge line

**Average Cost per Mile:** \$

**Maintenance:** Street sweeping, snow plowing

**Parking Interactions:** Parking not impacted

Mainly used in suburban or rural areas to allow space for cyclists.

#### Pros

- Offers space for cyclists that vehicles don't use
- Minimal changes to existing roads
- Allows cyclists to be visible to vehicles

#### Cons

- Left turns are difficult for cyclists
- Not a dedicated bicycling lane
- Often has debris that has blown off the road
- Not identifiable as a bicycling facility

- (In response to the pro listed under Sharrows stating that Cyclists have the right-of-way) Since When???

## Mobility Action Plan Facility Types—Bicycle Boulevards & Bike Lanes:



Example of Bicycle Boulevard

### Bicycle Boulevard

**Design Speed:** Under 25mph

**Treatment Width:** Depends on road width

**Average Cost per Mile:** \$\$

**Maintenance:** Street sweeping, snow plowing, wayfinding sign replacement

**Parking Interactions:** Parking not impacted

Used in residential areas to connect cyclists to destinations while offering cyclists the right-of-way in places where space is limited while reducing vehicle through traffic via traffic calming and occasionally diverting vehicles to adjacent streets.

#### Pros

- Only local traffic is allowed with the cyclist
- The cyclist has the right-of-way
- More space for groups of cyclists
- Utilizes existing infrastructure

#### Cons

- Cyclist must share the road with cars
- Cars make exiting driveways difficult for residents
- Must ensure the road isn't used as motor vehicle cut-through to avoid traffic congestion



Example of Bike Lanes

### Bike Lanes

**Design Speed:** 25mph - 35mph

**Treatment Width:** 5 feet to 7 feet from curb or gutter pan if present

**Average Cost per Mile:** \$\$

**Maintenance:** Street sweeping, snow plowing, restriping

**Parking Interactions:** Must be located outside of door zone, may require parking space removal

Used to create dedicated routes for cyclists on striped roads to destinations.

#### Pros

- Create an easily identifiable lane for cyclist
- Can be paired with on-street parking
- Easy to add to most existing roads, space-permitted
- Familiar to public

#### Cons

- May require on-street parking to be removed
- Must be cleaned to remove debris from road

- (Under Bicycle Boulevard, next to "Pros, only local traffic is allowed with the cyclist") How is this enforced??? Good Luck!!
- (Under Bike Lanes)  
Look at safety improvements at intersections to prevent sight distance issues (i.e. no parking at intersections)
- (Under Bike Lanes)  
on street parking needs to be removed and kept clear of snow+ice in the winter (and broken glass and dead animals!)

Mobility Action Plan Facility Types—Buffered Bike Lanes & Separated Bike Lanes:



Example of Buffered Bike Lanes

**Buffered Bike Lanes**

**Design Speed:** Greater than 25mph

**Treatment Width:** 1.5 feet to 3 foot buffer, 5 feet to 7 foot lane

**Average Cost per Mile:** \$\$

**Maintenance:** Street sweeping, snow plowing, restriping

**Parking Interactions:** May require parking space removal

Used to create dedicated routes for cyclists on striped roads to destinations. Offer greater separation from vehicle traffic than regular bike lanes.

**Pros**

- More separation from vehicles
- More definition of the bike lane for people driving to see
- Can be made large enough to have cycle passing lanes or be multi-directional

**Cons**

- Left turns can be difficult for cyclists
- May require on-street parking to be removed
- Must be kept clean of debris



Example of Separated Bike Lanes

**Separated Bike Lanes**

**Design Speed:** Greater than 25mph

**Treatment Width:** 1.5 feet to 3 foot buffer, 5 foot to 7 foot lane, although larger lanes can be used where there are very high volumes of bicyclists

**Average Cost per Mile:** \$\$\$

**Maintenance:** Street sweeping, snow plowing, restriping, seasonal bollard removal/installation, bollard replacement

**Parking Interactions:** May require parking space removal

Used to create dedicated space for people bicycling. Provides a physical barrier separating bicycle traffic from vehicular traffic, offering an additional level of comfort for people bicycling.

**Pros**

- Semi-permanent barriers provide more safety from vehicles
- Better defined bike lane for drivers
- Can be made large enough to have cycle passing lanes or be bi-directional (two-way)

**Cons**

- Left turns can be difficult for cyclists
- May require on-street parking to be removed
- Barriers may need to be replaced over time
- Must be kept clean of debris
- Winter maintenance can be difficult with plow trucks

- (Under Buffered Bike Lanes)  
Might be good to get faster e-bikes off the regular TART
- (Under Separated Bike Lanes)  
Seems so much safer!



## Mobility Action Plan Facility Types—Multi-Use Paths & Cycle Tracks:



Example of Multi-Use Path

### Multi-Use Paths

**Design Speed:** Greater than 25mph

**Treatment Width:** 10 foot minimum, 12 feet to 16 feet preferred

**Average Cost per Mile:** \$\$\$\$

**Maintenance:** Snow plowing, striping at intersections, repaving separate from street improvements

**Parking Interactions:** Parking not impacted

Used to create dedicated shared routes for cyclists and pedestrians, these facilities are often recreational in nature and are separated from the roadway.

#### Pros

- Fully separated pathways for cyclists and pedestrians
- Grass or other buffer located between path and roadway
- Often a recreational destination

#### Cons

- Large space requirements
- Requires enhanced road crossings or grade-separation for connections



Example of Cycle Track

### Cycle Tracks

**Design Speed:** Greater than 25mph

**Treatment Width:** 5 feet to 7 foot buffer, 8 foot to 12 foot lane

**Average Cost per Mile:** \$\$\$\$

**Maintenance:** Snow plowing, restriping, seasonal bollard removal/installation, bollard replacement

**Parking Interactions:** May require parking space removal

Used to create dedicated routes for cyclists on striped roads to destinations. These facilities provide a fully-separated place for cyclists that is often parallel and grade-separated from the roadway.

#### Pros

- Permanent barriers separating cyclists from traffic
- Can be constructed at a different grade than the roadway

#### Cons

- Likely will require on-street parking to be removed
- Best for long, un-interrupted stretches with little to no driveways

- (Under Multi-Use Paths)  
This is great information to gather from Madison, WI and MSP!
- (Under Cycle Tracks) Do we know WHY people aren't using the 2 new cycle tracks on 8th? Can we learn something here?

## Mobility Action Plan Street Facility Matrix:

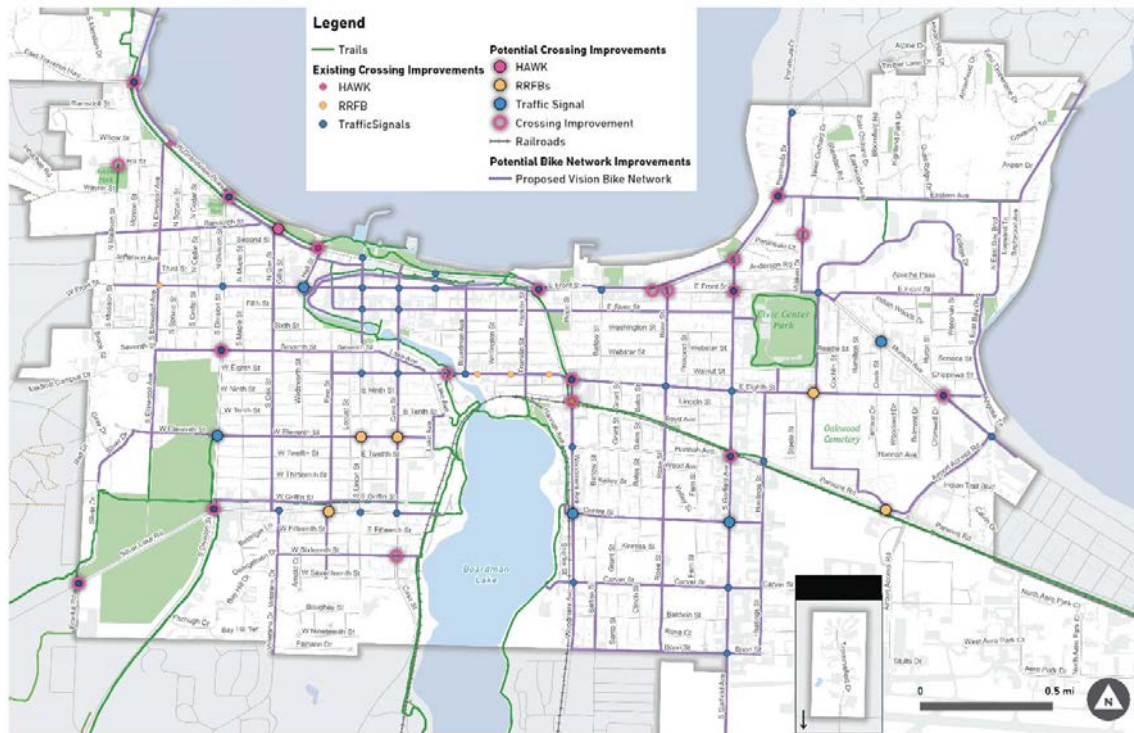
**Street Facility Matrix**

|                       | Shared Lane (Sharrow)                     | Paved Shoulders               | Bicycle Boulevard  | Bike Lanes  | Buffered Bike Lanes                       | Separated Bike Lanes   | Multi-Use Paths  | Cycle Tracks   |
|-----------------------|---|-------------------------------|--|---|---|--|--|--|
| Design Speed          | Under 25 mph                              | 35 - 55 mph                   | Under 25 mph   | 25 - 35 mph   | Over 25 mph                               | Over 25 mph  | Over 25 mph  | Over 25 mph  |
| Treatment Width       | Depends on road width                     | 4 ft - 6 ft from edge line    | Depends on road width                                      | 5 ft - 7 ft from curb to gutter pan if present                    | 1.5 ft - 3 ft buffer, 5 ft - 7 ft lane    | 1.5 ft - 3 ft buffer, 5 ft - 7 ft lane, larger lanes can be used                   | 10 ft minimum, 12 ft - 16 ft preferred                                 | 5 ft - 7 ft buffer, 8 ft - 12 ft lane  |
| Average Cost Per Mile | \$  | \$                            | \$\$   | \$\$  | \$\$                                      | \$\$\$   | \$\$\$\$   | \$\$\$\$   |
| Maintenance           | Street sweeping, snow plowing, restriping | Street sweeping, snow plowing | Street sweeping, snow plowing, wayfinding sign replacement | Street sweeping, snow plowing, restriping                         | Street sweeping, snow plowing, restriping | Street sweeping, snow plowing, restriping, seasonal bollard removal / installation | Snow plowing, striping at intersections, repaving separate from street | Street sweeping, snow plowing, restriping, seasonal bollard removal / installation |
| Parking Interaction   | Parking not impacted                      | Parking not impacted          | Parking not impacted                                       | Must be located outside of door zone, may require parking removal | May require parking space removal         | May require parking space removal  | Parking not impacted   | May require parking space removal  |

- **No feedback was given for this board.**

Mobility Action Plan Proposed Mobility Network Map:

**Proposed Mobility Network Map**



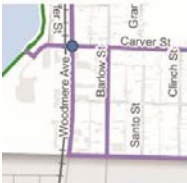
- (on corner of N Madison and Hill St.)  
Pedestrian Ramp Please
- Slabtown resident request/recommendation  
Signal @ Randolph+ Division
- (In response to comment above)  
Yes, this is a bad intersection
- NO ROUNDABOUT on East Traverse Hwy+ W Grandview Pkwy  
No more traffic through Slabtown!
- Hey! Want to bury the power lines @ Bay St. while the area is under construction for the Parkway? \*especially if you'll be replanting trees....
- Some funny takes on on-street parking happening in Slabtown that curbs may help resolve (in these places)  
TRUE
- Put pressure/Eminent domain on Delamar for access W. of Hotel  
SO DANGEROUS where businesses are  
+1!

## Mobility Action Plan Mobility Network Implementation Process:

### Implementing the Mobility Network Map

#### STEP 1

In this hypothetical scenario, the City's Capital Improvement Program (CIP) identifies a street segment for repaving + restriping in the future. This segment was identified in the Mobility Network Map to include a mobility facility. Therefore, this segment **WILL** be designed to incorporate a mobility facility in the design.



The Mobility Network Map establishes that...

This segment **WILL** be designed to incorporate a mobility facility



#### STEP 2

Great! Now that the Mobility Network Map establishes that there **WILL** be a mobility facility on this segment, we need to identify what facility is most appropriate. There are many considerations to ensure we're constructing the right solution at the right time...

Some of these considerations include:



#### STEP 3

After studying this segment and understanding its current conditions and constraints, the City will reference the Mobility Action Plan and choose a facility type to construct based on these factors.



**"Based on all of these factors, X facility type is best suited for this segment."**



- No feedback was given for this board.

## Mobility Action Plan Community Input:

### Do You Have Any Thoughts or Comments on the Mobility Action Plan?

*Please write them on a sticky note and place them on this board below!*

- "TC boasts walkability with many sidewalks and a relatively small land area that allows residents to reach many destinations by foot"
  - TC Master Plan
  - Land Use and mobility go hand-in-hand! I would like more emphasis on
  - Pedestrian-oriented Land Use (1/4 mile walkable zones)
  - Transit-oriented land use hubs
- Bicycle boulevard seems workable.
- Hey! Hey. Bikes > cars, for sure. Are pedestrians sufficiently represented & considered here? Everyone is passing through...the ghost of (my friend) Gary Howe... :D \*photo of Ghost riding a bicycle\*
- Take out 3 of every 4 lights in a row on W. Front St. between division and Oak etc.
  - Save 75% electricity
  - TOO Bright :)
- We need TCPD ENFORCEMENT of traffic laws in highly populated pedestrian areas \*or other methods
- - spaa Bike Camp- 100%
  - Discover on-street parking
  - Pedestrian Experience is precarious all over town- How to Address that?

### Mobility Action Plan Community Input—Continued:

- Planning Commission/Commissioners seem to want to fill every nook and cranny w/ housing not everyone can/needs to live in the city!!!
- CAN WE TALK FUNDING? Are we just ideating with no \$\$ in place?
- City needs to be consistent with its bike lanes. Currently there are various types in place (& sometimes the bike lanes disappear suddenly.)
- More Green Space Please! <3
- Would be nice to name Alleys such as between Front and State, Wellington and Franklin--NO NAME?
- Action Plan #1a--Hard to Police--happens in my neighborhood-report it, not much done Ongoing Planning Department Activities--staff Liaisons to the city associations are hard to schedule--many too busy  
You want to increase tree promotion, but fill every green space with housing!
- There needs to be more focus and recognition of the seasonal aspect of personal mobility in TC. As a citizen that literally walks or runs 2,000 miles/yr IN this town, I can confidently state that there are significant and frequent instances of sidewalks, pathways, and trails that become hazardous from weather events. The city needs to be more proactive in addressing violations of ordinances regarding private property owners to meet the written standards, (not strictly waiting for a "complaint")

# City of Traverse City Master Plan | Mobility Action Plan

## July 2024 Community Engagement Open House Public Feedback

The following original unedited comments were provided by survey respondents regarding the Master Plan and Mobility Action Plan Boards that were at the Open House held on Thursday, July 18th, 2024.



## WHAT IS A MASTER PLAN?

**WHAT IS A MASTER PLAN?**

A Master Plan is a long-term policy document that sets goals for how the City of Traverse City will develop in the next 5-10 years. It is used by local elected officials, city staff, city residents, and others to guide decision-making about how land is used, where new development occurs, where and when new infrastructure is provided in the city, how streets are designed for different types of transportation, and more. The information contained in the Master Plan will shape the future of your city, including your neighborhoods, local business districts, parks, downtown, and streets.

**HOW IS THE NEW MASTER PLAN ORGANIZED?**

- Shorter "magazine" style document that summarizes the plan and includes recommended actions and future land use.
- Longer "supplemental" document that contains all community data referenced to build the plan

| MAGAZINE CONTENT              | SUPPLEMENTAL CONTENT                             |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Executive Summary             | 1. Demographics                                  |
| Action Plan                   | 2. Housing                                       |
| Future Land Use               | 3. Neighborhoods                                 |
| Community Engagement Overview | 4. Transportation & Mobility                     |
|                               | 5. Infrastructure & Energy                       |
|                               | 6. Existing Land Use                             |
|                               | 7. Sustainability, Resiliency, & Natural Systems |
|                               | 8. Health, Safety, & Wellness                    |
|                               | 9. Arts, Culture, & Recreation                   |
|                               | 10. Economic Development                         |
|                               | 11. Sustainable Tourism                          |
|                               | 12. Existing/Older Plan Review                   |
|                               | 13. Community Engagement Report                  |




## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The following guiding principles are the community's priorities for the future development and management of Traverse City. They were used as the basis for the formation of the Master Plan.

- 1 Steward and cherish our natural resources and green spaces.**

Traverse City's natural assets, which include the shores of Lake Michigan, the Boardman-Ottaway River, Kids Creek, and the quality of the trees, parks, water and air are vital to the character and well-being of everyone in the community.
- 2 Honor our community heritage and create a welcoming environment for all people.**

The area, which the City of Traverse City now encompasses, has a rich historical and cultural heritage. This heritage dates back millennia as the homeland and waters of Indigenous Nations that were settled by European immigrants in the early 1800s. Our community's challenges and successes are the result of the sacrifice, work, and ingenuity of individuals from all walks of life and with diverse experiences. City policy should respect, preserve, and incorporate this heritage into our community fabric and provide opportunity for people of all backgrounds, abilities, and experiences to live here and help make Traverse City the wonderful community that it is.
- 3 Encourage development and vibrancy in our commercial districts and corridors.**

The City of Traverse City is an economic and cultural asset to the Grand Traverse region and is where public infrastructure is most densely available. City land policy should encourage development and infill/redevelopment in commercial areas of the city to support businesses, provide additional housing, increase the city tax base, and maximize the use of existing public infrastructure. This will encourage community vibrancy and connection, preserve the provision of high-quality public services within our city, and provide opportunity for healthy and balanced growth within our commercial core.
- 4 Maintain and connect our neighborhoods.**

City land use policy should encourage well maintained properties and infrastructure in residential neighborhoods as well as easy access within and between neighborhoods to goods, services, and city amenities. City leaders should regularly seek feedback from neighborhoods regarding what is needed and/or desired within their unique area.
- 5 Encourage quality housing in locations of the city with access to nonmotorized and public transportation.**

City land use policy should encourage a variety of quality housing types that local workers, young families, and retirees can afford, in locations which are easily accessible by foot, bike, wheels, or bus.
- 6 Create safe and enjoyable transportation and recreation options year-round.**

People of all ages and abilities move around Traverse City for work, shopping, school, recreation, and exercise during all four seasons. Traverse City land use and transportation policy should promote safe, convenient, and enjoyable connections for all modes of transportation and recreation year-round.

### 1. Based on the information you've seen so far, do you have any reactions, ideas, or questions to share?

|   |
|---|
| The guiding principles are consistent with the values I understand the TC community to hold.  |
| yes - could've done/can do a better job to create a long-term bikable, walkable infrastructure. There has been the minimum done and I think in 5+ years we will have wished we did better.  |
| Why must the city grow? Is growth for growth's sake? Instead, why not emphasize making a better place to live for those already here? Then, by default, others will want to join the community.   |
| Please include a focus on infrastructure. And some taxes aimed at tourists.   |
| no  |
| I am a single parent, single income, mother with two young adult children, and have lived in TC for 30+ years. I look forward to contributing my input and bettering TC!  |
| High density will destroy the character of Traverse City. We need to not focus so on walkable and bike able as it only serve a small percentage of the population. We need to actually spread out our population as there is a lot of land surrounding Traverse City and add more road infrastructure to get around better. We have very few crossing roads and need to add additional corridors. |



"As someone who has lived in Traverse city for my whole life (20 years), I feel that guiding principals number 1 and 3 are being poorly neglected and ignored.

1.) Roundabout and meridian landscaping in downtown areas is terrible. They are completely neglected and not taken care of. There are constant weeds, crumbling cement, and overgrown grass. An easy and positive solution would be to just plant natural grasses, and pollinator friendly plants like Thyme or Lavender. These plants need little to no upkeep, are environmentally friendly, and are cheap to buy. Areas like Hammond and Chums Corners are doing a better job than our city is, it's very disappointing.

2.) I am seeing constant new builds and land plotting where multiple, if not dozens, of trees are being taken down. Where is our city's commitment to being environmentally friendly and replacing the trees? I drive past the build cites and months to years later there are still no new planted trees.

3.) All over town, especially along West Bay parks, the lawns are constantly overgrown with grass and weeds. It looks messy and poorly kept. Again, another simple and easy solution is to just plant native and no upkeep plants like native grasses, lavender, thyme, clover, etc. Work with local gardening places/groups to get the plants in the ground!

4.) Parking on both sides of the downtown side streets should not be allowed. I mean come on, traffic is bad enough as is. Every year for the last 20 years I have seen how badly people park and fill in along the sidewalks to the point where only one car can drive along the street at a time. It's a two way street. The city needs to make it so that parking is only allowed on one side of the street, period.

5.) West End Beach is pathetic and embarrassing right now. It has been sitting in shambles ever since Covid and the city has done literally nothing to change it. The parking lot needs to be fixed and repaved. The public restrooms desperately need to be redone, especially since there are not any on that side of downtown. And the landscaping needs to be better. This should be a no-brainer, and the fact that no action has been taken is so disappointing.

6.) Clinch Park's swimming boundary needs to be extended. Boats are coming up and parking right on the shoreline close to little children and blocking people from more swimming room. I have seen so much trash and dirt come from the boaters on the beach. The buoys need to be made to cover more of the water.

7.) The town has named the Rotary Square the new town center. One, that doesn't make a lot of sense considering that all major events take place at the Open Space and have been for years. For us locals the Open Space is our town square/center. Two, Rotary Square is a sad excuse for a ""town square."" There are no benches, walkways, landscaping, etc. There isn't even a fountain or focal point. If that is what is supposed to be viewed as the town square, then Traverse City needs to do better and make it look nice and town square worthy. Right now it is just grass.

8.) I have worked as a downtown employee for five years, my sister has worked downtown for three. The lack of downtown employee parking is ridiculous. Our downtown employees are who keep downtown afloat all year round, including during the rough winter months. We are the ones who live here all year and pay taxes. And yet we are not taken care of in the slightest. Why is there not a designated space where we can park free of charge? The lot across from Mundos Front St should be turned into a parking garage where the first few levels are designated for downtown employees, free of charge.

9.) To add on to point number 8, Traverse City has an issue of a lack of parking. Again, the lot across from Mundos Front St should be turned into a parking garage. Right now it is just a slab of cement with little to no use. We need to think about parking accessibility for our elderly, special needs, and families with small children and strollers.

10.) My sister and I are both young adult women who work early in the morning and don't clock out until after close. We walk to and from work together because of safety. The amount of unstable, roaming people we encounter is unsettling. I will never forget my little sister calling me in tears the one day she had to walk to work alone and was chased multiple blocks by a mentally unstable individual and nothing was done to stop them. That is unbelievably unacceptable. I live in downtown Chicago for school, and there are times I feel safer there than I do in Traverse City. Our Police Department needs to do a better job of watching out for unstable individuals and actually doing something when someone calls that one is harassing them.

11.) We have fifty million different trash cans around downtown that are constantly overflowing and smelly. And yet it's almost impossible to find a single recycling can/bin. Again, for a town that has environmentalism as a founding principle, it's being far from upheld. In another Michigan town, I encountered trash cans that were neatly set next to recycling bins, as well as a bin marked for returnable bottles and cans only."

Yes. Traverse city planners and commissioners need to acknowledge residential wishes and expectations with a greater level than investor/developer. Residing in s neighborhood was, and continues to be, the reason I choose my homestead location. I do not want the plan updated to multiple commercial options, including those without any and/or adequate parking.

The "Guiding Principles" provide a great framework for TC if we can hold to them.

|  |
|--|
| Blatant residential zoning by wealth !!! Giving the zoning department Cart blanche in approving new construction and development in "transitional" neighborhoods is outrageous !   |
| "This is encouraging. It would be nice to see an emphasis placed on small or locally owned business development for the purpose of regional capital retention. Additionally there should be an Emphasis on City logistics. Supply chains are radically changing and will continue to do so for the coming decade as there is a reordering of the industrial base.  |
| no   |
| looks good   |
| Would prefer more emphasis on #4, less on #2. Overall this seems like an idealistic wish list.   |
| No. Fits the themes we have discussed for years.   |
| So much of the housing built over the last five years is poor quality (bad layouts, low sound insulation, and ugly) but quite expensive and targeted at part-time residents or for short-term rental. It's great to include a desire to encourage development of housing that could be affordable for locals, but what sorts of policies could be effective? House prices in the Central neighborhood are up 60+% since 2019.  |
| Good so far.   |
| No   |
| I know this work is concentrated on the city, but people see the entire region as part of the greater Traverse City area and there needs to be better connectivity to the vision of the city with the surrounding townships and communities. As someone who was born and raised in Traverse City, it has been sad to see the uncoordinated development of East Bay Township and Garfield Township in relation to TC. It has become all big box and commercial development and looks little like the beautiful downtown and waterfront community it could be. I am most proud of the recreation and non-motorized transportation options and love all that the area has to provide. |
| There should be a recognition that what happens outside city borders has a profound impact inside the city. Perhaps this should be addressed in 5. The city alone can't solve housing affordability because the housing market extends well beyond its borders.  |
| What you say and do is very different. Protect the environment. Look what you let Kevin Klein do removing all those trees. How about rerouting kids creek multiple times for munsons purposes, building literally over the river, and finally a lack green space. You've built on top of the sidewalk, but you want to protect our natural resources!! Pathetic and laughable  |
| A plan is a great start.<br>Be realistic on investments.<br>Making it all a win-win is key to success.<br>Maintain well kept and inviting landscaping.<br>Lower traffic speeds.<br>Consistent traffic light patterns at intersections throughout.<br>Proper and clear signage.<br>Archecture & design set a standard, be mindful of cause and effect of opting for lower standards.  |
| While the 6 statements sound great, I think their implementation would be very, very varied depending on an individual's personal priorities.  |
| #4 - preserve and protect residential neighborhoods. Be careful of creeping encroachment on the edges of neighborhoods ( ie transitional zones ). Continue No STRs. Enforce where they are illegally being done. Roll back the increased density and footprint zoning recently passed in residential areas as that flies in the face of preserving green space and has potential to alter the character of residential neighborhoods   |
| None yet.  |
| Stop the development   |
| "Traverse City should not become Grand Rapids. People come for the relaxed, quaint small town feel not big city. We should make sure we keep it that way. Short term rentals threaten our neighborhood families because vacationers aren't vested in our normal life functions. They aren't concerned with schools, churches , neighborhood connections, etc. They come to enjoy our beautiful area but don't always respect it.<br>Love all of our trails and alternate ways to get around town. "  |
| Would like to see much more direction for action on a Mobility Action Plan. To vague. Lacks a solid plan.  |

|  |
|--|
| Stop short term rentals. They are destroying neighborhoods   |
| So glad green spaces is number 1 on the list   |
| No   |
| I agree so far with the 5 defining principles, and I'm interested to see how they will be explored.  |
| I do not believe you cherish "green" spaces. Over the years views of the Boardman (river, lake) have diminished greatly. Housing has increased by the thousands in the last ten years but the population has not increased nearly as much. Population density is worthless in an area like ours where there is lots of room so don't cram so many people downtown when parking is already a problem. Also, why live in the Historic District when the smell of sewage is so frequent? No, I am not a fan of DT or the GOP.   |
| No   |
| Please, please, please, preserve the charm that makes Traverse City so special. Our city is starting to look trashy and dirty. The Pines area is out of control. The horrible structures that are going up are ugly and un appealing and of low quality. Isn't there some type of oversite committee that oversees the architecture of public housing within the city limits? I have so much to say.   |
| No   |
| I like the guiding principles. I do not like the format of this survey.  |
| The principles are good. 5 and 6 are the most important to me. Doing those well will make following the other principles easier.   |
| Looks encouraging  |
| What addition to number 3, we want development in our corridors because it helps subsidize neighborhoods and increased density along them can create borders for neighborhoods.  |
| We need to limit STRs. Housing frequently listed as affordable are far from it. Value local residents as much as visitors. Bike riders often don't follow road rules which is a great hazard to all. Could we get cameras at lights to issue ticket, saving law enforcement time and resulting in greater safety.  |
| The city is trying to make a large city act like a small town. The city is way beyond that. Any master plan they come up with is already 10 years out of date. They should be planning for 15 years from now. Instead of a plan that should have been done 5 years ago. But keep studying and surveying. That always helps slow the process.   |
| "To #3: Stop encouraging development. Development will happen organically and incrementally. Not every airy or leafy block with some elbow room needs to be " "infilled" " with these bland cookie-cutter 4-over-1 urban conglomerations. Just let things be a while. Stop forcing " "vibrancy. " " It's tacky and gauche. And why is it so important to increase the tax base? Are tax revenues not high enough to support the sewer and transportation infrastructure or what? Because the DDA constantly invents new ways to burn millions in tax revenue. 1, 2, 4, and 5 are all good."  |
| "Encourage more regional collaborations between environmental Non-profits (conservancies, watershed preservationists) and local units of government to continue stormwater management and improvements. Traverse City's heritage includes humane principals for addressing unhoused and indigent populations. "Kindness, Exposure to Beauty, and Voluntary Work"<br>Please include Traffic Calming in the Social District pilot project on 8th Street.<br>Please make ADUs a natural right of property ownership. Expand build by right opportunities for diverse housing occupancy in all public neighborhoods.<br>Continue expanding pedestrian networks and safe schools infrastructure.<br>THANK YOU |
| Include and involve the people that use the facilities, not some "advisory" company that has no idea of what is going on. You will get far better ideas and the facilities will be actually used.  |
| When will more affordable housing be available and when will you move the homeless shelter out of residential neighborhoods (for safety)   |
| Too many resources are being put into walking and biking...  |
| Great work. Appears to be a good vision of the future of TC  |
| The city is made up of numerous unique neighborhoods. This plan is structured as a one-size-fits-all that doesn't make sense for every neighborhood.   |

|  |
|--|
| Bullet #4 should be #2 behind taking care of our resources. The natural resources and our residents should be the highest priority. The businesses are important but not more so than those who live here.   |
| I was triggered by the mention of green spaces. It is an undefined term and is often used by people to prevent increased density. I'm interested in protecting natural social spaces.  |
| I am glad that the city is prioritizing infrastructure upgrades that are complete re-dos of the pipes, fiber and roads.  |
| "I am impressed by the layout. I believe #5 should be point #1 in priority.<br>I would add-facilities for the homeless, drug addicted and mentally ill. We desperately need to separate this non-homogeneous group into appropriate housing and not all of them need to be or should be in town. "   |
| This all seems fine. My concern is that a lot of what ails Traverse City is outside of city government's control or influence. For example, the City housing stock being consumed by well-off retirees and seasonal people.  |
| "I visited the Open House last week and here are my comments-<br>* In addition to encouraging new builds to install EV charging stations, how can we help existing public buildings and condos (older condos have nowhere to plug in EVs or PHEVs.<br>* pedestrian crossings are generally very poorly marked in neighborhoods, e.g. in Old Towne on Lake Ave and 10th and near Oryana, the recently painted crossings faded to almost invisible in a few months. Drivers don't even know there's crossings and pedestrians are taking their lives in their hands trying to use them.<br>*I am all for encouraging more use of bikes but pedestrians get deprioritized. Many cyclists assume they have priority on sidewalks and I have almost been hit several times by cyclists who have forced me off the sidewalk (NOT a designated bike lane) and into bushes. No one has bells on their bikes - unlike nearly everywhere I've lived before There needs to be more education around pedestrian safety because many cyclists don't care.<br>*given the dire housing needs, modern multi-family new build/repurposed housing is ok in "historic" neighborhoods. Modern design is ok as long as it's sensitive to the existing built landscapes. We can't afford to have just single family homes! |
| #3 appears to imply you intend to build housing on city owned land? And #5 too? This to me is in direct conflict with #1, city residents need green space, other than sidewalks! Yikes! Does every square foot of TC need to be commercialized?  |
| Improve the road infrastructure and promote public transportation. Preserve the neighborhoods for LOCALS and not for investment from outside sources that raise the rent to for capitalism while pricing families out of access to our neighborhoods. Less % of sales to holding companies within the city limits. More focus on rental subsidies that can actually be rented to low income residents/locals. Invest in the betterment of the lives if year-long residents instead of so heavily on tourism.   |
| Why don't you focus on housing and not green spaces? You do realize we are surrounded by agricultural land? Housing prices are a function of supply and demand, and when you restrict supply, prices increase. Also, this focus on biking on major roads is just plain dumb. I rarely see people bike on 8th, but it is annoying when they do because there is a wide trail that was built specifically for bikes.   |
| We've been talking about affordable and workforce housing needs for years, however, with very little progress in the City of Traverse City, what action plan is there around "encourage"?  |
| "Guiding Principle # 4. (Hopeful these are used and followed)<br>""City Leaders should regularly seek feedback from neighborhood regarding what is need and/or desired within their unique Area""<br>Not only seek feedback but then use this information to make adjustments and revisions. The SlabTown neighborhood was well represented at the July 12, 2024 City Commission meeting. numerous citizens and residents (including a SlabTown City Commissioner) spoke against the proposed Transitional Neighborhood Along Bay Street. SlabTown has all the local amenities it needs within walking distance - including but not limited to a bakery, coffee shop, drugstore, party store, Hardware store, grocery store.<br>PLEASE LISTEN and ACT to revise - SlabTown does not need a Transitional Neighborhood along Bay Street.   |
| Zoning rules for commercial buildings don't align with this. They can take 100% of property - build too close to water. Not enough scenic easements .  |
| I'm encouraged!  |
| Keep the farmers market in one location accross from the visitor center. Not accross the street from the post office.  |
| I like this format. I would like to see more focus and higher priority on affordable housing.  |

Recently moved to the area - lots to like - plan seems reasonable - seems like there are some infrastructure issues - neighborhood street repairs, though you're working on it; drainage to east bay, though it appears you're working on it; and the waste water treatment facility on boardman lake - which appears to be in the works too. Just like everywhere else - including where we moved from - funding of course is an issue

#4. Maintain neighborhood. Do Not rezone to commercial and multifamily.

how are these 6 guiding principles different (maybe they're not) from the guiding principles of our previous masterplan?

Quality housing for all should be the top priority at this time.

These are all valid guiding principles, and shouldn't there be one that is underlying all of them? Treading more carefully on this planet, using less of everything, and considering climate change and the environment in every step.

Hey friends! You're doing good work, probably rather thankless at times, so thank you for the effort. Bravo on the graphics. :) I noticed at the Open House that a \*lot\* of neighbors are particularly fired up about the proposed Bay Street designation. Consider me a (noisy?) stakeholder, because my elderly mother owns one of the \*4\* houses on Bay Street between Division & M-72 (I don't count the Ramsdell house: they've already partitioned off properties onto Bay). Mom (and indirectly, \*I\*) could stand to make millions of dollars if her house were sold to a commercial developer. Which is why I am here to make a few observations. Firstly, one of my favorite people in Traverse City is an ex-commissioner friend who has had a lot to do with the build-out of the physical environment of Traverse City over recent years and has shared with me that he essentially has an ax to grind with Slabtown residents because of their past history (he didn't say he was speaking off the record, hey)... which is \*interesting,\* here... anyway, my friend had such a strong opinion on Bay Street when I brought it up to him (akin to, "they don't know what's good for them so you have to shove it down their throats") that it would be surprising to learn Bay Street was receiving particular attention from Planners for any other reason... (?) so - \*my\* personal potential profit from a zoning change aside - with my urban design professional hat on, instead (Master's degree, big city design firm that does precisely this work and everything), I humbly ask you consider the following: to enframe gridded traditional American neighborhoods with higher-density - typically commercial or mixed-use - buildings and their higher-volume collector/arterial roads is indeed standard, conventional practice... in the abstract. In \*this\* particular situation however, there are a few factors I worry aren't receiving sufficient consideration (and maybe our neighbors haven't yet sufficiently articulated).

1. Most houses for the first block off Bay Street have some sort of view to the Bay. Bigger buildings, more density on Bay would end that wonderful prospect for many.
2. There is already a TON of tension between the need/want to increase traffic flow (vehicular, bike, whatever) along the little strip of land initially \*only\* occupied by Bay Street, now sandwiched between the waterfront and Slabtown, and the 1/2-mile-wide \*pedestrian\* desire path from the neighborhood to the waterfront (& future new TART Trail). To allow/encourage further \*commercial\* development (& resultant end-point car trips) to this stretch is, like, \*so\* unnecessary at this juncture. Slabtown is effectively 5 medium sized blocks by 5 short blocks at its broadest, bordered by Division & Front; no "15-minute City" criteria would deem that Bay Street warrants a mixed-use upgrade; n.b. one of the classic New Urbanist blunders of the last 30 years is to overbuild commercial that can't actually be supported by the residential w/in its relative walking distance. This would especially be the case on Bay Street, since it's an edge with an only 180-degree walking catchment area, rather than one that's 360-degrees... so any commercial that would work on Bay Street would need to be something supported by the \*region,\* and hence would draw even more car trips to this already-choked choke-point, yeah? Wouldn't it be well enough to let whatever new regulations are to govern the rest of Slabtown govern Bay Street? And for the record: multifamily "missing middle" buildings that are sensitive to the scale of the context (and have bike racks in lieu of parking minimums!) are \*awesome\* and should be allowed everywhere houses are allowed in town. If you are kind-of sort-of moving toward a form-based code, perhaps consider codifying forms like the \*larger\* houses on the north/west end of Bay (they could be multifamily, or even Bed and Breakfasts: think US-31 between Lakeview & Encampment in Petoskey, yeah?), rather than a continuation of what's marching toward Slabtown down Bay Street from the east (yuck!). That is what the neighbors are reacting to & fearing. For the planners: maybe consider a special district and form-code it to big Victorian bed & breakfast-type buildings. Another example: Lakeshore Drive on Mackinac. If you make the graphics pretty & convincing enough I think the neighbors would actually buy in enthusiastically - you might need to subcontract some specialist architects for this to get it right, nudge nudge wink. If I were ever to "improve" what's on Mom's lot in the coming decades, I think that would be the sensitive & crowd-pleasing way to go. :)

the strategies are strong - in the end, it will be all about the city prioritizes and invests in - as we cannot do it all. I would encourage that we FOCUS on doing a few things extremely well - best in class.

Yes, where are you? Preserving green space on each property

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| <p>I believe we need to be bolder in encouraging bike and pedestrian traffic into downtown over motorized vehicle traffic. Remove parking spaces along State Street near Union and put in a dedicated left turn lanes and signals for traffic on State turning onto Union. Make Front Street pedestrian only from Park to Union. Offer discounted parking in the existing decks if people get their parking ticket endorsed by a downtown vendor. Hopefully this can change behavior around using the decks and set the stage for the long-awaited west side parking deck.</p>  |
| <p>Mive homeless shelters out of residential areas</p>  |
| <p>Overall, these seem like solid principles. But how do you reconcile objective 1 with objective 3...that is, how do you balance development with preservation? Of course, the infrastructure issues raised in objective 6 also need to be reconciled with the objectives above.</p>   |
| <p>None</p>   |
| <p>I have read parts of the plan and attended the open house. My reaction is "whose fantasy is this plan". It appears to be someone's master thesis in planning. It is way too long. It is completely unrealistic about what can be accomplished in the next 5 years, or even 10 years. It seeks transformation change when the best change is incremental. And, it fails to understand economic reality -- e.g., It wants to establish grocery and drug stores within a 15 minute walk. Grocery stores cannot compete today in that environment; they are all getting bigger and out in the County. And, we just lost Rite Aid, so now we are down to 1 drug store in the City. This Plan needs someone with economic expertise to review and filter it</p>  |
| <p>"Do not rezone Bay Street. R2 is the only possible rezoning that fits this neighborhood. The city should continue with spot or parcel zoning variance so the community can discuss or vote on those variances and the neighborhood should not be one individual R2,R3,C1,C2 zoning throughout. The community, neighborhood doesn't want it. From your posted supplement chapters summary.</p> <p>NEIGHBORHOODS</p> <p>Preserve: Quiet environment, greenspace, parks, safety, walkability, proximity to amenities, housing styles, public art, social connections.</p> <p>Enhance: Transportation access, pedestrian/bike infrastructure, parks, sidewalk repairs, regulate short-term rentals, street lighting, traffic calming, unhoused population support, neighborhood-scale businesses.</p> <p>Seasonal: Traffic flow, unused vacant lots, unnecessary parking lots, too few public spaces, too few crosswalks. We have coffee, restaurants, convenience store, grocery, hair salon, and many other businesses that represent a great area.</p> <p>If you want to increase housing growth and inexpensive housing and ownership please think of south and east. If you seek to create business, focus on the businesses and empty spaces that are currently struggling with year round operations. Create employment tax credits, employment vouchers, fiscal loan assistance, develop a strong base community instead of growing things to a greater sprawl. East and west. Develop the core central and south. And I implore you to count the vacancy and turn over outside of the direct downtown district. "</p> |
| <p>No</p>   |

My number 1 reaction here is to shake my head. There is nothing here about the quality of life being destroyed by the excessive and incessant noise from the airport. I've lived in Traverse Heights for 30 years and have never had a problem with the airport until this year 2024. There are suddenly back to back take-offs of very large and extremely loud commercial passenger jets. They are causing pain in ears, kids are holding their ears and dogs are howling it has become so bad. It's continuing into the night and people can't have their windows open or get any relief from this constant very loud noise. You want a tax base, well the values of homes and property here are going to decrease. This was the biggest mistake the city has made giving away this airport to a board that neither lives here nor cares about the quality of life here. It's also interesting you claim to be concerned about environmental pollution when all planes run on leaded fuel and dump tons of it into the air over the city as they take off. There is so much soot in the air now from these jets that the filter fans I run in my house turn black before a month is up. The airport is making plans for MAJOR expansion on the terminal to allow for more and more flights. The construction hasn't even started yet and the flights they've brought in this summer are completely unbearable and ruining the quality of life in a large swath of the city and the neighborhoods just outside the city. They have cut down all the trees there, removed 2 public parks and put up an giant ugly fence. We can't enjoy the boardman lake loop, hull park, the tart trails anywhere around this area anymore. The planes taking off are 1 to 5 minutes apart and they are ear splitting. My friend told me yesterday he was riding on the tart behind Oryana and was nearly deafened by a jet plane taking off. I've had the same experiend numerous times in that area. Absolutely none of these points listed above matter anymore because the airport's departure traffic has become so loud and excessive. This is not what I would call safe and enjoyable recreation. It causes damage to the ears and other health and mental health issues. People are not going to want to visit or live here. It will just be those who are least able to move who will be stuck here. That's not inclusive either. As for some of the other points, Traverse City has always been racist, xenophobic, homophobic and it's just becoming worse now with other types of hatred moving in like anti-transgender. This is expecially apparent with how Munson treats transgender people which is absolutely terrible. I realize the city doesn't have much power over what Munson does, but everyone needs health care at some time or other and Munson's hatefulness does not make people feel welcome here. And people are going to need a lot of health care with all the negative health effects that are going to come from living under a major international airport, which TVC has stated is their goal. The didn't ask for or consider any input from residents and community. We seems to be nothing to them.

Yes serious considerations need to be made regarding street and outdoor lighting that is dark night sky protective and protects neighborhoods from intrusive lighting in accordance with the city light ordinance, down shielding , 500 lumens and less, etc.

We need more parking.

Is there any plans for parking for vehicles?

"Repairing and maintaining crumbling infrastructure is the #1 job of the city, and should be a priority moving forward.  
In item #5, I agree that downtown workers and families should be able to afford to live in the city. " "Retirees," " however, is a group that includes many wealthy and part-time residents. I'm not sure they should be a priority."

I'd like to see #2 be more explicitly a land acknowledgement. It feels like a weak attempt to acknowledge that TC sits on unceded Odawa territory.

This plan will be the death of affordable middle class home ownership. We will no longer have the important people to support our businesses and economy. This plan will force these workers to live outside the city and commute to work increasing traffic.

"N Cedar from W Front to Second St could use curbs for aesthetics and keeping people from parking on yards. But more so sidewalks and curbs need to be put on Third Street from N Cedar to Elmwood. There is a fair amount of pedestrian walking going to the businesses on W Front and no sidewalk on either side of the street. Throughout town continuing to add better bike options through safer road plans that allow for bikers in their own lanes and/or increasing the size (width) of the TART trail that will accommodate the mixed use of walkers/runners/ bikers/etc."

The six principles seem more opposed than aligned. I suppose that's the work of a master plan, to align competing priorities, but yikes.

"I'd like specific examples of what are described as " "neighborhood centers." " I live near the corner of Munson and 8th St. How can we make that intersection pedestrian friendly for a walkable without completely upending the traffic flow?

No

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| <p>“How does the city plan to address homelessness in its master plan?<br/>What is the true potential of the 4 proposed city housing expansions?”</p>   |
| <p>It feels to fluffy. Lacks substance.</p>   |
| <p>“#5 is in conflict with #1<br/>The planners what to densify our neighborhoods (it won’t be affordable housing) thus covering more permeable surfaces, over taxing the stormwater system and making the overburdened ‘Treatment Facility’ spill into the lakes, closing the beaches.<br/>Top priority should be, build a new Treatment Plant”</p>   |
| <p>“If there is going to be a larger increase in bike riders on the roads then those that are riding bikes must start following laws of the roads and enforcement of people riding bikes need to start getting tickets. Also, those that are riding bikes all over need to start paying for a license for the bike and yearly registration fees as well and carry insurance.<br/>Cost of housing for the true working service industry people needs to be way lower and affordable and NOT rent or mortgage payments to be set at rate that does NOT allow them to save any money.<br/>If the people of Traverse City want to keep distroying the historical buildings or areas, then they need to STOP saying they are “preserving” when in fact that is a lie!<br/>Also, if busing for transportation is going to be involved then it needs to be free for the people that reside in Grand Traverse County since we are the ones paying Traverse City taxes!<br/>Learn to take the buildings we have in our town and fix them rather than tear them down. STOP building over priced condos!!! “</p> |
| <p>I would love to see time-bound and financial impact anticipated with each proposed projects! And also prioritizing urban green spaces. And also encouraging urban in-fill to prevent sprawl!!</p>  |
| <p>Why is it so large?</p>  |



**TRAVERSE CITY MASTER PLAN**  
Shaping Our Future

## SUPPLEMENTAL CHAPTERS SUMMARY

### DEMOGRAPHICS

- Growing: City's population grew by nearly 8% between 2010-2020
- Aging: 26% of people over 60 years old
- Seasonal: 41% of population in August is seasonal

### HOUSING

- Need more:** all prices, types, consistent
- Zoning doesn't match use:** 83% of residentially zoned land is for single-family, but actual use is 62% dwellings are single-family and 33% are multiple-family
- Relatively expensive:** highest median home values in region, 12 of riders (owners & renters) have unaffordable housing costs
- More over-occupied:** 61% own dwelling, 39% rent dwelling

**TRAVERSE CITY MASTER PLAN**  
Shaping Our Future

## SUPPLEMENTAL CHAPTERS SUMMARY

### NEIGHBORHOODS

- Preserve:** Quiet environment, greenways, parks, safety, walkability, proximity to amenities, housing styles, public art, social connections
- Enhance:** Transportation access, pedestrian/bike infrastructure, parks, sidewalk repairs, regulate short-term rentals, street lighting, traffic calming, unhoused population support, neighborhood-scale businesses
- Seasonal:** Traffic flow, unused vacant lots, unnecessary parking lots, too few public spaces, too few crosswalks

### TRANSPORTATION & MOBILITY

- Parking = 15% of land area downtown
- Traverse City is now a Metropolitan Planning Organization, which requires regional transportation planning
- See Mobility Action Plan stations for more details

**TRAVERSE CITY MASTER PLAN**  
Shaping Our Future

## SUPPLEMENTAL CHAPTERS SUMMARY

### INFRASTRUCTURE & ENERGY

- Investment priority:** Aging systems require maintenance, prioritization, and funding
- Green Infrastructure:** The city's stormwater ordinance supports the implementation of various green infrastructure techniques
- Room for growth:** The regional wastewater treatment plant at 50% capacity
- Renewables on track:** TCEP fully sourced by renewables by 2040

### EXISTING LAND USE

- 43% of land in the city is tax-exempt, owned by regionally significant institutions like Mason, TCEP, MAC, government, parks, nonprofits, & churches
- Roughly 100 acres of vacant residential land are left in the city
- Commercial land use patterns include the city core, neighborhood commercial areas, and commercial corridor
- 28 acres of commercially-zoned land is vacant

**TRAVERSE CITY MASTER PLAN**  
Shaping Our Future

## SUPPLEMENTAL CHAPTERS SUMMARY

### SUSTAINABILITY, RESILIENCY, & NATURAL SYSTEMS

- Climate Change:** Climate change has and will continue to impact the region. "Climate refugees" in migration anticipated
- Urban heat island:** Building mass, pavement and asphalt, and lack of vegetation all contribute to higher temperatures, which is only made up of the commercial corridors and shopping centers have higher temperatures
- Priorities:** protect wetlands, strengthen city tree canopy, increase density to discourage vehicular miles driven, follow the Climate Action Plan

### HEALTH, SAFETY, & WELLNESS

- Walkability:** Traverse City boasts walkability with many sidewalks and a relatively small land area that allows residents to reach many destinations by foot
- Priorities:** Maintaining and increasing walkability, allowing low intensity health-related land uses and food retail uses in or near residential areas to increase access to healthcare and food access

**TRAVERSE CITY MASTER PLAN**  
Shaping Our Future

## SUPPLEMENTAL CHAPTERS SUMMARY

### ARTS, CULTURE, & RECREATION

- The city has robust arts landscape
- Parks and recreational spaces are summarized, but the City Parks & Recreation Plan has detailed data and goals
- Priorities:** Continue support of TC Arts Commission, public art programming, and commitment to preserving, recognizing, and celebrating local Indigenous history and future

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Traverse City is a regional economic & employment hub**
- 26,842 daily employees, 89% commuting from outside the city
- 3,389 city residents commute somewhere else for work
- 4% of Traverse City workers work remotely from home

**Top industries**

- Hospitality
- Finance, insurance, and real estate
- Physicians

**Priority redevelopment sites (see accompanying board):**

- Hooley Field Area
- Fourteenth Street
- Woodmere Avenue
- Eighth & Garfield Area

**TRAVERSE CITY MASTER PLAN**  
Shaping Our Future

## SUPPLEMENTAL CHAPTERS SUMMARY

### SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

- 6.4 million overnight stays in the region, 16% of state total
- Tourism represents 26.2% of the regional economy
- Industries most dependent on tourism: Independent artists, writers and performers, photographers, wineries, and sightseeing transportation
- Transportation systems highly impacted by tourism industry

### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

**PHASE 1: INITIATION**

- POP-UPS August - October 2022
- COMMUNITY WIDE SURVEY September - October 2022
- STAKEHOLDER SESSIONS September 2022
- OPEN HOUSE October 2022

**PHASE 2: INVESTIGATION**

- SUSTAINABLE TOURISM WORKSHOP February 2023
- NEIGHBORHOOD LISTENING SESSIONS April 2023
- DESIGN WORKSHOP April 2023

**PHASE 3: EVALUATION**

- STAKEHOLDER SESSIONS August 2023
- OPEN HOUSE July 2024

2. Based on the information shared on this page, do you have any reactions, ideas, or questions to share?

A very detailed, well-informed overview of community data.

"- Roundabout and meridians in TC need better landscaping. Instead of constant overgrown weeds and grass, we could be planting low maintenance pollinator plants, such as clove or thyme.

- West Bay park needs to be prioritized. The parking lot and public restrooms need to be redone.

- We need more trees planted in downtown areas. We have lost so much tree cover over the last ten years, it's extremely disheartening and does not follow guiding principle number 1.

- Clinch park needs a larger swimming boundary to keep boaters at bay.

- Rotary Square needs benches, walkways, landscaping, and more trees planted if it is to be considered our "town square."

- We have a serious lack of recycling bins downtown. That also does not follow the guiding principle number 1."

Spread out the housing and add more crossing corridors

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| <p>“*See original comments on Pg.1<br/>Thoughts from this page:<br/>- I am deeply disappointed to see that on average women make 20% less than men do, we need to do better Traverse City.<br/>- There was little to no dark green on the map that broke down park space in the city areas. That needs to drastically change.<br/>- I am curious where the average rent number came from? Over the last few months I have been looking for apartments to rent and the average monthly rent has been around \$1,500. That is how much I pay for rent in suburban Chicago.<br/>- I am also curious how the numbers add up that a \$64,800 household income can sustain a house purchase of over \$200,500.00. Was food, gas, monthly bills such as insurances, and childcare taken into account?”</p>   |
| <p>Why aren't the residents a priority?</p>   |
| <p>Keep priorities on people and environment over pure profit.</p>  |
| <p>“The information on housing is inaccurate. Did you get your number from 30 years ago. The average home cost \$475,000 in Traverse City. Most long term residence cannot afford this price.<br/>STOP SUPPORTING TOURISM!<br/>Start to support local long term residence!!!! The master plan has always favored tourist and tourism and hated the locals.”</p>   |
| <p>Source for numbers cited in Econ Development section should be identified, as these numbers are fluid. Priority redevelopment sites are a joke.</p>  |
| <p>Until there is affordable housing for all, lack of young families, school funding, and quality, long term employees will continue to be a major problem.</p>   |
| <p>I am concerned that the area is developing into an unsustainable model of reliance on tourism, allowance of people to rent their homes year-round, expensive housing, and the list goes on. As someone who would like to move back to the area one day, I don't know if I will be able to afford it or if there will be year-round housing available with all of the second home owners and increased competition for housing given climate change. I would like to see the area become more reliant on year-round residents and create opportunities for younger people to live and come back to the area through housing and job opportunities.</p>  |
| <p>Our waste water system has been a failure and needs millions in repair yet you say it's only at 50% capacity. Climate change will happen regardless, but I agree we need less concrete and more green. TC is only able to be walkable a few months of the year. Cars are needed and are not going away. Quit wanting more. We do not want , need, or handle any more folks here</p>  |
| <p>Worker bees can't afford to live here</p>  |
| <p>“Lower the marijuana &amp; alcohol sales.<br/>Inforce bicycle rules, regulation and safety.<br/>Provide Tourist bridge crossings along M72 East Bay”</p>   |
| <p>I wonder about the statistics in 10 years for % of population over 60 years of age. How many deaths in that age group, or moved elsewhere for living assistance, will be replaced by those over 60. How large is the present 50-60 year olds? Will they be staying in the area? Who will be inhabiting the houses vacated by the 60+ who are no longer here?</p>   |
| <p>“Sounds like you would like more people to live with the city boundaries on affordable housing. Won't happen. Because of how high the price of housing has gone, we wouldn't be able to buy the home we live in now. It's pretty scary. We live our neighborhood and bought our small 1890's built story and a half back in 1986. We have never moved. Our kids had the joy of growing up in beautiful Traverse City. Our block had many rentals when we bought, but over the years the families who bought the rentals have stayed and improved their homes because we love it here. We live in the Railroad district and yes it's gotten busier and noisier but we all still love it here.<br/>I'm not in favor of increasing density by adding more multi family building. We seem to have enough. We have reasonable busing for families to get into town.<br/>We need to keep our green space and parks. F&amp;M park was our go to and continues to be a go to for families. So many things rushing through my head. Let's not loose TC to BIG city ideas. Then it won't be TC any more. “</p> |
| <p>It is sickening how we serve visitors and retired people with wealth but cannot afford to</p>  |
| <p>Please continue to restrict short term rentals to maintain neighborhood integrity.</p>   |

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| Mobility Action Plan gets lost in all of the chapters  |
| TC has grown in the 40 years I've lived here. I miss the small hometown feel. We are getting TOO big. Resulting in homeless roaming our streets and rent that is way to high for anyone to pay. How can we fix this? Make us bigger and the problem is going get worse.  |
| The heat island effect is very compelling. Let's plant trees   |
| No   |
| Housing prices are high because of supply/demand. Petoskey is even worse. Stop giving big breaks to greedy developers.   |
| New studies released just this week confirm that building more housing is an effective way to maintain or even lower housing costs.  |
| The format of this survey leaves so much to be desired. I don't like the amount of information you need to ingest before you even get to these vague open ended questions. That timeline is confusing to me and while these goals are great, should I at this point in my reading here understand how some of these things are intended to be accomplished?  |
| Decisions should be made for locals, not tourists. We Don't need anymore. Locals often feel like they can't go downtown, go to restaurants, use the lakes even outside their own houses because of the influx of tourists. Short term rentals need to be regulated more.   |
| All housing, all the time, for everyone. If it isn't built in the city, it will be built in the region and create even more car traffic.   |
| By restricting diverse occupancy including travelers, vacationers, and the entry level workforce, TC has inadvertently encouraged an auto-transit development pattern. Workers and tourists occupy residential space outside the city, and then daily commute in and out of the downtown core.   |
| Tiny houses should be allowed within the city and surrounding townships.   |
| "Indeed the people of the city do support and sustain a robust cultural landscape of arts, entertainment, sports, food&drink, and other creative and recreational endeavors. Because these cultural engines are indeed so strong and self-sustaining, there is truly no need to spend one dime of the taxpayers' money on cultural amenities. Restore the tree canopy. Do better at maintaining healthy mature trees (and removing the dead unsightly ones). Force the DDA and/or public works department to do better with trash collection and weeding and removal of graffiti and other eyesore. The downtown and other prominent areas (medians, sidewalks, etc.) are a mess. The tree lighting on Front is a jumbled up random mess. All these things need to look tidier and more cohesive." |
| Too many neighborhoods that are acting like HOA's. Too much concern for tourism. And little consideration for locals and local traffic   |
| Realize that tourists are only using the city facilities for three months of the year and residents use them for the entire twelve months. Stop trying to make the tourists happy and concentrate on the residents   |
| When will limits be placed on the number of AirB&B type establishments so locals can utilize them for long term housing?   |
| All properties within the city should be taxed!...They all use the infrastructure.   |
| Housing shouldn't strictly be a city issue. There is nothing wrong with living outside of the city limits. Putting up larger multiple story condominiums or apartments within established neighborhoods is an eye sore and decreases the value of the surrounding homes. Also, whoever stated that there aren't enough cross walks needs to get more exercise. There are tons of them in the business districts.   |
| We need a master plan that addresses how we pay for things. We have high hopes and dreams as a city, but when it comes to embracing the growth to pay for it, they go all NIMBY  |
| I believe that the energy source map should updated so that residents understand where the energy are being used and where they are. Its very concerning how far our energy is away, in addition how much is coming from where.  |
| We are a small city. When is there enough tourism? We need housing for existing residents before we need more hotels and short term rental units. We need to maintain what we have. The downtown is looking a bit dingy. Repaint the lines on the roads all around downtown, make sure the bike lanes are more prominent. The homeless population is the elephant in the room, we need facilities to remove the addicted and mentally ill from the street and to help those that really want help become secure.   |

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| Tourists, and people living outside but working in the city, and major nonprofit employers put a lot of wear and tear on our infrastructure, but do not share the cost of maintaining it. That's not fair to city residents.  |
| "Love that climate is a big focus, including walking/biking plans and increasing tree cover. How about less area mowed and more native pollinator spaces?<br>I'd love to see more housing options for the unhoused. I'll give up leaf pick up (and other services) to help cover it. We should all be composting our leaves onsite anyways. "   |
| Thirlby Field - I have been photographing football and events there for 15 years. Where will people park? At some high school games the streets down to 10th street are full.   |
| Please see my response to the first page (it was not clear that I could enter more comments so I entered them all in the first box)   |
| Nice charts, but the rezoning decisions made last year leave me doubting your interest in anything other than giving lip service to residents needs. All the decisions appear to focus on maximizing tourism...NOT "sustainable tourism"  |
| Greater commitment to walkability and preserving our neighborhoods. We really don't need more "McMansions" that don't blend in with the charm of the existing homes. Make housing available for those who need to work downtown. Take the air-bnb out of our neighborhood communities. Focus on other means that tourists for revenue.  |
| This appears to be a done deal. Why am I taking this survey? Just so you can say a survey was completed? I'm already regretting starting this dog and pony show.  |
| 89% of employees commuting from outside the city, obviously need more workforce housing, however, with zoning and height limitations, developers can't make a profit, what is the city doing to provide incentives to make a business model work?   |
| no comment  |
| Requiring owner occ single home neighborhoods is critical so as not to become a town full of condos & apts.   |
| The planting of flowers in the divided highway area is unkept and a safety hazard for anyone to weed. Not a good idea. Concrete that over or plant something that chokes out grass and weeds  |
| Dr  |
| Add me in as another remote worker - I'm a lawyer in Illinois but with covid found myself working remote most of the time - and even after covid - got licensed in Michigan (didn't need to) - and it's working out well - even occasional court appearances via zoom in Daley Center in Chicago!   |
| "Increasing density, more buildings = less green space. Seems like cross purposes to trying to reduce heat islands. Listening sessions-- great idea. Ignoring results of listening sessions--terrible idea"   |
| "when you refer to regional economy - what defines the region?<br>is 8% (roughly 1000 people) population growth - too much? too little? how much should we grow by 2030?<br>we don't need a tourism chapter (we don't have a healthcare or finance or education chapter)- put it in the economic development<br>will we keep buying parkland (expanding brown bridge) with our oil money that we have to drive to in wealthy townships?<br>is 11% of Traverse City workers living in Traverse City low? high? average for a town like ours?<br>why do we have public parks that aren't managed by the parks department (new park at state/union)? " |
| Continued emphasis on connecting people without cars. More green space next to waterways.   |

"I'm just going to keep posting this, in case you skipped through the first time (just imagine being married to me!): Hey friends! You're doing good work, probably rather thankless at times, so thank you for the effort. Bravo on the graphics. :) I noticed at the Open House that a \*lot\* of neighbors are particularly fired up about the proposed Bay Street designation. Consider me a (noisy?) stakeholder, because my elderly mother owns one of the \*4\* houses on Bay Street between Division & M-72 (I don't count the Ramsdell house: they've already partitioned off properties onto Bay). Mom (and indirectly, \*I\*) could stand to make millions of dollars if her house were sold to a commercial developer. Which is why I am here to make a few observations. Firstly, one of my favorite people in Traverse City is an ex-commissioner friend who has had a lot to do with the build-out of the physical environment of Traverse City over recent years and has shared with me that he essentially has an ax to grind with Slabtown residents because of their past history (he didn't say he was speaking off the record, heyo)... which is \*interesting,\* here... anyway, my friend had such a strong opinion on Bay Street when I brought it up to him (akin to, ""they don't know what's good for them so you have to shove it down their throats"" ) that it would be surprising to learn Bay Street was receiving particular attention from Planners for any other reason... (?) so - \*my\* personal potential profit from a zoning change aside - with my urban design professional hat on, instead (Master's degree, big city design firm that does precisely this work and everything), I humbly ask you consider the following: to enframe gridded traditional American neighborhoods with higher-density - typically commercial or mixed-use - buildings and their higher-volume collector/arterial roads is indeed standard, conventional practice... in the abstract. In \*this\* particular situation however, there are a few factors I worry aren't receiving sufficient consideration (and maybe our neighbors haven't yet sufficiently articulated). 1. Most houses for the first block off Bay Street have some sort of view to the Bay. Bigger buildings, more density on Bay would end that wonderful prospect for many. 2. There is already a TON of tension between the need/want to increase traffic flow (vehicular, bike, whatever) along the little strip of land initially \*only\* occupied by Bay Street, now sandwiched between the waterfront and Slabtown, and the 1/2-mile-wide \*pedestrian\* desire path from the neighborhood to the waterfront (& future new TART Trail). To allow/encourage further \*commercial\* development (& resultant end-point car trips) to this stretch is, like, \*so\* unnecessary at this juncture. Slabtown is effectively 5 medium sized blocks by 5 short blocks at its broadest, bordered by Division & Front; no ""15-minute City"" criteria would deem that Bay Street warrants a mixed-use upgrade; n.b. one of the classic New Urbanist blunders of the last 30 years is to overbuild commercial that can't actually be supported by the residential w/in its relative walking distance. This would especially be the case on Bay Street, since it's an edge with an only 180-degree walking catchment area, rather than one that's 360-degrees... so any commercial that would work on Bay Street would need to be something supported by the \*region,\* and hence would draw even more car trips to this already-choked choke-point, yeah? Wouldn't it be well enough to let whatever new regulations are to govern the rest of Slabtown govern Bay Street? And for the record: multifamily ""missing middle"" buildings that are sensitive to the scale of the context (and have bike racks in lieu of parking minimums!) are \*awesome\* and should be allowed everywhere houses are allowed in town. If you are kind-of sort-of moving toward a form-based code, perhaps consider codifying forms like the \*larger\* houses on the north/west end of Bay (they could be multifamily, or even Bed and Breakfasts: think US-31 between Lakeview & Encampment in Petoskey, yeah?), rather than a continuation of what's marching toward Slabtown down Bay Street from the east (yuck!). That is what the neighbors are reacting to & fearing. For the planners: maybe consider a special district and form-code it to big Victorian bed & breakfast-type buildings. Another example: Lakeshore Drive on Mackinac. If you make the graphics pretty & convincing enough I think the neighbors would actually buy in enthusiastically - you might need to subcontract some specialist architects for this to get it right, nudge nudge wink. If I were ever to ""improve"" what's on Mom's lot in the coming decades, I think that would be the sensitive & crowd-pleasing way to go. :) "

What I do not see here is the relative number of rental units in downtown to whats available to year round residents /workers to rent/buy - based on some data seen in the DDA stratgic plan, it appears that TC has a higher rental property inventory . In addition, we are allowing developers to keep building apartments made for rentals in downtown. WE need to support tourists BUT we need more to support year round businesses and provide year round reasonable apartment rents for people who want to live here all year long #2- The tax structure in MI on property taxes discourages anyone from selling - why downside if you have to buy something with a much higher property tax - so no one sells their properties - thus contributing to the lack of housing. lastly - if we do not fix this, we cannot attract new businesses and year round workers to TC. AND if we plan to build all of these new apartments and there is no parking for them on the west side, it will fail in the end. People will not spend \$3000 in rent to lug their groceries 5 blocks in the winter - or even the summer - not going to happen. We need to incentive developers to build their own parking as part of their new developments or come up with a different solution.

Your demographics are off what happened to Grant Travers County being the highest per capita in the country a millennial millionaires

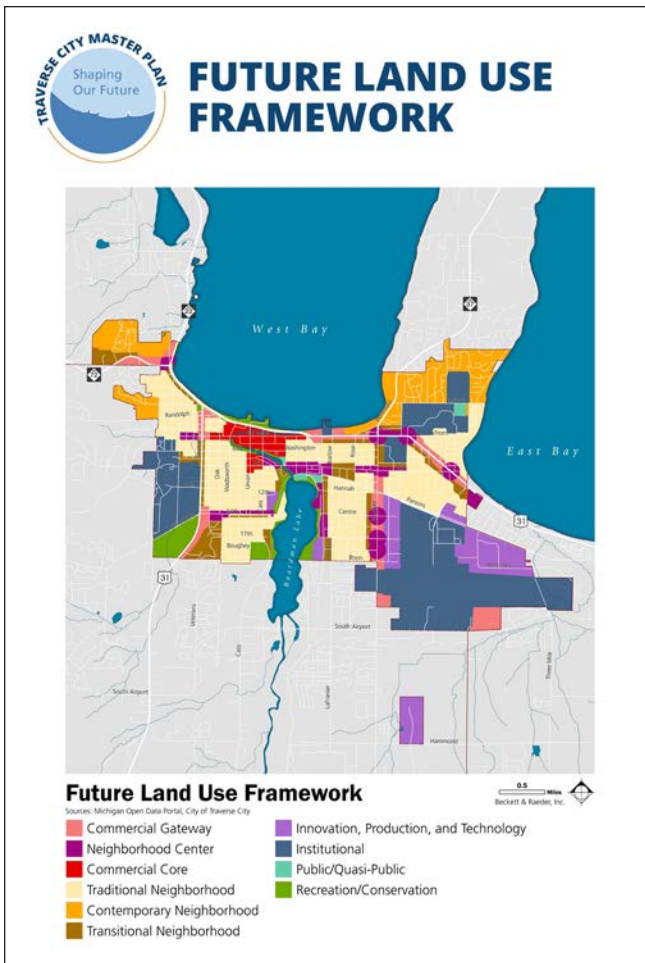
|  |
|--|
| <p>Wow, I didn't realize available acres of land were so low. Why in the world are you approving so many crappy, poorly designed new buildings for short term rentals? It's really degrading the quality of the city. For instance, the STR building—white stucco, modern, at the corner of Randolph and Division—looks like crap and adds no value to the community. Why do you approve buildings like this?</p>  |
| <p>I am having a very difficult time understanding the sustainable tourism graph. The graphic with the people who live/work in/out of TC is impactful</p>  |
| <p>"I doubt that population has grown by 8%; we have been around 15,000 for many years. Priority redevelopment sites are unrealistic. TCAPS is not going to give up Thirlby Field and neither is the community. A roundabout at 8th and Woodmere was proposed in the 1990s and didn't fly. Why would it now? I don't understand the point of ""Zoning doesn't match use"". It appears to compare 2 different statistics, but they are not related. Housing North estimates are way overestimated. I don't believe them. We need to preserve the neighborhoods. Increasing density downtown is ok, but it is not ok in the neighborhoods."</p>  |
| <p>This isn't easy to decipher.</p>  |
| <p>Here you are stating you want to preserve a quiet environment in neighborhoods. Well, you have destroyed that by letting the airport run itself with its only concern being driving it to greater and greater use at the expense of quiet neighborhoods. It's no longer quiet here. Look at the airport on the map, it is to the East of the city. These planes are taking off to the West and making ear splitting, panic inducing noise in our neighborhoods. I'm in the middle of Traverse Heights a mile from the airport and I now have to wear earplugs 24/7 because of the unbearable noise. We also now have problems with trains blasting horns through the neighborhood at wee hours of the morning 1am, 2am etc. What exactly are you preserving here? The peace and quiet of the neighborhood has been ruined because you gave away the airport rather than keeping control of it. As for housing, you won't have to wait much longer as the values are going to fall due to this insufferable airport noise. But of course that will put the poorest people in the position of severe health risks. So either way you've ruined the city giving away the airport and it blows my mind that its not even contributing to the tax base. You gave it away to people who don't live in the city, don't pay taxes in the city and aren't accountable to city voters. You've stated health safety and wellness yet all of this is now greatly compromised because of the expanding airport. Living under major airports are well known for serious health effects including hearing loss and severe metabolic health risks affecting many body systems and mental health. We can't even get out and walk or bike in peace anymore. These planes are everywhere over our neighborhoods, parks and trails. I dont see what else you think you're going to do to improve health and wellness while this airport is allowed to run wild over the city. I'm sorry that my focus is so entirely on this one facet, it's just that it's a major thing that has made me look at how I can escape this city which now has an unbearable living environment. There's no peace and quiet at all anymore. This is extrememely unhealthy.</p> |
| <p>Median home value of \$292,000 seems off, unless you mean taxable value. In the last two years, about 35 houses under \$300k sold in the City, compared to almost 200 above \$300k.</p>   |
| <p>So much lip service to affordable housing. But let's face it. Housing cannot be affordable within the city limits. Our tax base is too high and getting higher every year. We need to look at better transportation that is electric or cable cars to get people from out in the county into the city without increasing traffic, and it being affordable for people working in the city. It might very well be too late for such a system, but certainly supporting the bus system and keeping it well affordable for our lowest income People would help greatly. also partnering with the next-door townships and cities for more viable, walkable, bikable, safe ways into the city, such as something along Lafranier Would be a solution.</p>   |
| <p>We need more parking.</p>   |
| <p>I still have concerns that too much emphasis is placed on supporting tourism (low paying jobs) rather than trying to retain or attract better paying jobs.</p>  |
| <p>It doesn't matter what city residents have to say. The city planner has already decided our future.</p>   |
| <p>I'm not sure where the median dollar amounts came from in regard to home values or rent, they seem extremely low. My daughter is looking to buy and there are only a few options that you see under \$300K, in the city or on the outskirts. Housing options is definitely something that is an issue, particularly for younger adults.</p>   |
| <p>none</p>  |

Short term rental permits need to be audited and enforced. Are there options to annex township land to have a real plan for growth? Because they these plans are limited to TC proper they don't resolve the true issues of the actual city-area we use "mall, large stores, commercial and industrial areas, etc". Generally, zoning is too overbearing. It creates more problems than it solves. Allow people to be creative with land use, collectively society is smarter than who ever is "planning"

"The Planner is having 'LISTENING' " sessions.  
The planner doesn't care what we want, he wants us to listen to what he wants"

Shared on sticky notes!

If the magazine is what the planning commission is going to be working from, why was so much time given to the supplemental portion of it? How is the supplemental portion going to be implemented?



| Category                             | Description  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Commercial Gateway                   | As Traverse City grew and expanded beyond the downtown, strip commercial development became ubiquitous along the major corridors of the city. Currently, the existing sprawl strip development is not functioning at its highest and best use. However, these Commercial Gateways provide value as regional commercial destinations and act as entryways into the denser parts of Traverse City. The Commercial Gateways are primarily located along the major corridors in Traverse City, US-31 from the city boundary to the Parkway, Division Street from the city boundary to the 14th Street intersection, Division Street from the West Front Street intersection to the Parkway, and along M-71 and M-22. The Commercial Gateways are intended to function as regional commercial destinations with uses that generate higher volumes of automotive traffic than local commercial business. The Commercial Gateways also provide the opportunity for dense development as moderate- to high-rise commercial and mixed-use development are well suited for this future land use designation. While this future land use designation accommodates uses that generate higher volumes of automotive traffic, these areas are intended to support all modes of transportation. |
| Neighborhood Center                  | One of the major land use recommendations of this Master Plan is the development of distinct Neighborhood Centers. Neighborhood Centers are nodes of local activity with businesses, services, and community spaces that are intended to serve the immediate surrounding neighborhoods. Unlike the other commercial-oriented future land use designations which serve a more regional audience, the Neighborhood Centers are inherently local-oriented spaces. By allowing for a mix of uses and services, Neighborhood Centers provide essential goods and services within a 15-minute walking distance of most residential neighborhoods in the city. Neighborhood Centers also alleviate pressure on the commercial core by providing retail and entertainment options outside of the downtown.   |
| Commercial Core                      | Downtown is the unquestioned center of Traverse City as the City's retail, entertainment, and social atmosphere are all centered around downtown Traverse City. The Commercial Core not only includes downtown Traverse City, but also extends down East and West Front Street and into the warehouse district. Additionally, the Commercial Core is uniquely suited to support high-density mixed-use development at a scale not possible nor intended for other future land use designations. The intended function of the Commercial Core is to be a social and economic center by providing a mix of commercial, office, residential, and public uses. The Commercial Core is highly walkable and designed at the pedestrian scale with a focus on creating a lively street atmosphere. The Commercial Core should also serve as a transportation center where users can access the Commercial Core through a range of transportation options.   |
| Traditional Neighborhood             | The Traditional Neighborhood future land use designation encompasses Traverse City's historic neighborhoods. This area is defined by gridded streets, smaller lots, high walkability, and street-facing residential design. The function of the Traditional Neighborhood is to support neighborhood-scale living, with predominantly residential uses with a mix of local commercial, public/quasi-public, and recreational uses throughout the neighborhood. Traditional Neighborhoods are aligned with the concept of the 15-minute city in which most everyday goods and services can be accessed within a 15-minute walk of an individual's residence. To promote the function of the Traditional Neighborhood, future land use planning and city policies should support these Traditional Neighborhoods as accessible to all people regardless of income, age, ability, or household composition.  |
| Contemporary Neighborhood            | The Contemporary Neighborhood land use designation is intended to capture the residential areas of Traverse City that have larger lots, lower-density residential development, curvilinear streets, and suburban development patterns. While these neighborhoods are walkable, they do not have the same degree of connection to the amenities and assets of the Core Neighborhoods. The Contemporary Neighborhoods are intended to function as more suburban neighborhoods while maintaining proximity to the urban amenities of the Commercial Core and Core Neighborhood designation.   |
| Transitional Neighborhood            | Transitional Neighborhoods are intended to function as a mixing between the more defined residential areas and the non-residential areas. This mixing is achieved through a varied composition of residential types, local commercial uses, and offices. Transitional Neighborhoods are intended to provide a gradual scaling down from the higher intensity of commercial areas and the low-intensity residential areas. Additionally, the Transitional Neighborhoods support commercial uses that may not be appropriate on the high-trafficked streets of the Commercial Gateways and benefit from a more moderate-intensity environment (bakeries, coffee shops, bookstores, thrift stores, etc.).   |
| Innovation, Production, & Technology | While industrial and manufacturing are not the prime industries of Traverse City, they are essential businesses that provide needed services and jobs to residents. The Innovation, Production, and Technology future land use designation is intended to accommodate existing industrial land uses and expand on the emergence of technology and science in the City.   |
| Institutional                        | The Institutional future land use designation is intended to capture the areas in Traverse City that are governed by a governmental or quasi-governmental agency, or by entities that have their own land use plans. These areas include the Munson Medical Campus, Grand Traverse Commons, Cherry Capital Airport, Northwestern Michigan College, and the Grand Traverse Civic Center. The City has little influence over the management or direction of these spaces, but they are essential parts of its urban fabric.  |
| Public / Quasi-Public                | The Public/Quasi-Public future land use designation is intended to encompass the core city and other public properties that are essential for the function and operation of Traverse City. Not all city or publicly owned properties are included in the Public/Quasi-Public designation as not all city-owned properties are essential for the function of the City.  |
| Recreation / Conservation            | Green spaces, parks, and conservation areas are some of the most loved parts of Traverse City. They operate as a necessary space for recreation, environmental protection, wildlife refuge, and community health. Recreation/Conservation spaces are more defined than other future land use categories as the parks and natural areas of the City have defined boundaries. The largest Recreation/Conservation space in the City is the wetland at the southwestern corner of Division Street and 14th Street. Boardman Lake is also surrounded by Recreation/Conservation space. Future land use planning for these areas should be consistent with Traverse City's Parks and Recreation Master Plan and the environmental goals of the City.  |

### 3. Based on the information shared on this page, do you have any reactions, ideas, or questions to share?

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| The future land use plan shows a thoughtful vision for how the city can adapt to future change while maintaining the very assets we value in the community.  |
| - There is a serious lack of map space for recreation/conservation. Part of the reason I chose to raise my children in TC was because of the beauty in our area. I want to make sure we are upholding and protecting our natural resources.  |
| Need to move more of these areas to outside the city limits  |
| " *See comments made on Pg. 1<br>Thoughts on this page:<br>- I am disheartened to see that recreation/conservation is one of the smallest sections on the map. We need to find a way to better conserve our local resources that makes Traverse City so special."  |
| Strip malls are an example of previous, less than ideal, urban planning which allowed for a nearly exclusive emphasis on automobile transportation. I am happy to see and fully embrace providing for multiple modes of transit including walking and biking, even if automobiles need to be "inconvenienced." I am encouraged and happy to see where "missing" sidewalk sections have been filled in and I love the flashing pedestrian crossings and the pedestrian crossings with a median. |
| "More affordable housing for locals only!"   |
| Best idea: 3 bedroom 2 bathroom home with a 2 stall garage and unfurnished basement for \$290,000"   |
| Yes, this is way too much information for people to read when taking a survey. Probably by design, as public input has been difficult in this long drawn out process.  |



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| No   |
| These land uses do not seem to be much different from what exists today. There has been a densification of the downtown, which stands to help some of the housing issues, but none of the high quality and in-town developments are affordable for most people. I am also concerned that with a community that relies on a large service industry that we still have people who cannot live in TC and must commute in for work. The land uses should better account for the ability for people to live and work in the same community. |
| Don't agree with Division south of Front being a transitional neighborhood.  |
| Going to need more sidewalks. But in this area you have been doing well. It is appreciated   |
| Purchase and cleanup existing vacant run down commercial properties that could be productive.  |
| Good to know the definitions   |
| Public areas need to be increased and protected as we expand   |
| No   |
| What use is a commercial core when you have removed some of the already inadequate parking?  |
| The land use framework looks sensible  |
| I'm not a huge fan of neighborhood protection as a goal. There's nothing attacking our neighborhoods and overly protective zoning only increases costs, creating a city preserved for wealthy retirees. Neighborhoods need to be alive and change.   |
| Too many categories in the framework. Simplify and integrate more uses and activity.   |
| "Yes, this all checks out.<br>It's a shame to give up so much pristine recreational/conservation land to an illegal encampment of the homeless. The city need to return that land to the proper (safe!) public use.  |
| Developments should stop having commercial on the first level and change it to residential even if it's on Downtown Street. We need to keep commercial strips consolidated.  |
| Saving neighborhoods is a great idea, but there are too many seasonal residents and too many air bnb. Back to no consideration for locals.   |
| No   |
| Build the parking deck and quit taking parking from downtown , and the neighborhoods.  |
| Stop trying to turn the Garfield corridor into a transitional neighborhood when large portions of it north of 8th street are more a traditional neighborhood. Also, the city planner needs to go. He is going to destroy the small town charm that TC used to possess. He and the city manager need to go back downstate where they came from. They seem to want to cater to business but not take care of the existing neighborhoods.   |
| Full support to simplify land use regulations. It's no longer 1920 or even 1970. We should have more freedom to expand our homes or start businesses in neighborhoods  |
| I am concerned that transitional neighborhoods will become high intensity commercial areas. What protections are there to ensure this doesn't happen?  |
| With e-bike technology, people can travel farther and need safe lanes to do so, we have to add safe non-motorized travel lanes from any neighborhood to services to reduce motorized traffic especially in the summer. Front street should not have cars at this point. Take it from the Europeans and make it a walkable square.  |
| So, "The city has little influence over the management or direction of these spaces" applies to The Pines?   |
| Please see my comments in first response box   |
| If you really want input try having "listening sessions" again...seems like this is a done deal  |
| Protect traditional neighborhoods from becoming Contemporary!! The City is already failing to do that with the corridors of condos in Slabtown next to the Dairy Lodge!!!  |
| The talk about putting a permanent homeless shelter next to a residential neighborhood is, excuse my french, retarded. Central neighborhood doesn't want the Pines, and Boardman neighborhood is annoyed about the bait-and-switch of making an "emergency" shelter permanent. This needs to be outside town. I'm sick of seeing strung out people all over downtown. If you build it, they will come.   |

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| <p>“The SlabTown Neighbor has made its voice clear.<br/> Slabtown does not support the proposed Transitional Neighborhood along Bay Street.<br/> The SlabTown neighbor hood was well represented at the July 12, 2024 City Commission meeting. numerous citizens and residents (including a SlabTown City Commissioner) spoke against the proposed Transitional Neighborhood Along Bay Street. SlabTown has all the local amenities it needs within walking distance - including but not limited to a bakery, coffee shop, drugstore, party store, Hardware store, grocery store.<br/> PLEASE LISTEN and ACT to revise - SlabTown does not need a Transitional Neighborhood along Bay Street.<br/> There is a need for housing. Retain Bay street residential with the grandfathered exception of three non-conforming properties.<br/> Do not change zoning for majority of properties based on a minority of three grandfathered properties.</p> |
| <p>“The permanent structure outside of 811 Union street that sells bake goods and beverages should not be allowed. This takes away from a residential feel .<br/> Parking of cars on the residential streets need to be monitored. Cars are parking the wrong direction, travel trailers &amp; boats are being unhooked and parked for days or weeks at a time. “</p>  |
| <p>Seems consistent with what exists</p>   |
| <p>Do not transition Bay St</p>  |
| <p>what are the main differences in this map vs our current one?</p>   |
| <p>Same comments as earlier.</p>   |

“Haha I’m also going to send this right to Shawn - I took 2 hours to compose it! I’m so annoying! But if you read all this send me an email and I will treat you to a Happy Hour in August:  
 Hey friends! You’re doing good work, probably rather thankless at times, so thank you for the effort. Bravo on the graphics. :) I noticed at the Open House that a \*lot\* of neighbors are particularly fired up about the proposed Bay Street designation. Consider me a (noisy?) stakeholder, because my elderly mother owns one of the \*4\* houses on Bay Street between Division & M-72 (I don’t count the Ramsdell house: they’ve already partitioned off properties onto Bay). Mom (and indirectly, \*I\*) could stand to make millions of dollars if her house were sold to a commercial developer. Which is why I am here to make a few observations. Firstly, one of my favorite people in Traverse City is an ex-commissioner friend who has had a lot to do with the build-out of the physical environment of Traverse City over recent years and has shared with me that he essentially has an ax to grind with Slabtown residents because of their past history (he didn’t say he was speaking off the record, heyo)... which is \*interesting,\* here... anyway, my friend had such a strong opinion on Bay Street when I brought it up to him (akin to, “they don’t know what’s good for them so you have to shove it down their throats”) that it would be surprising to learn Bay Street was receiving particular attention from Planners for any other reason... (?) so - \*my\* personal potential profit from a zoning change aside - with my urban design professional hat on, instead (Master’s degree, big city design firm that does precisely this work and everything), I humbly ask you consider the following: to enframe gridded traditional American neighborhoods with higher-density - typically commercial or mixed-use - buildings and their higher-volume collector/arterial roads is indeed standard, conventional practice... in the abstract. In \*this\* particular situation however, there are a few factors I worry aren’t receiving sufficient consideration (and maybe our neighbors haven’t yet sufficiently articulated). 1. Most houses for the first block off Bay Street have some sort of view to the Bay. Bigger buildings, more density on Bay would end that wonderful prospect for many. 2. There is already a TON of tension between the need/want to increase traffic flow (vehicular, bike, whatever) along the little strip of land initially \*only\* occupied by Bay Street, now sandwiched between the waterfront and Slabtown, and the ½-mile-wide \*pedestrian\* desire path from the neighborhood to the waterfront (& future new TART Trail). To allow/encourage further \*commercial\* development (& resultant end-point car trips) to this stretch is, like, \*so\* unnecessary at this juncture. Slabtown is effectively 5 medium sized blocks by 5 short blocks at its broadest, bordered by Division & Front; no “15-minute City” criteria would deem that Bay Street warrants a mixed-use upgrade; n.b. one of the classic New Urbanist blunders of the last 30 years is to overbuild commercial that can’t actually be supported by the residential w/in its relative walking distance. This would especially be the case on Bay Street, since it’s an edge with an only 180-degree walking catchment area, rather than one that’s 360-degrees... so any commercial that would work on Bay Street would need to be something supported by the \*region,\* and hence would draw even more car trips to this already-choked choke-point, yeah? Wouldn’t it be well enough to let whatever new regulations are to govern the rest of Slabtown govern Bay Street? And for the record: multifamily “missing middle” buildings that are sensitive to the scale of the context (and have bike racks in lieu of parking minimums!) are \*awesome\* and should be allowed everywhere houses are allowed in town. If you are kind-of sort-of moving toward a form-based code, perhaps consider codifying forms like the \*larger\* houses on the north/west end of Bay (they could be multifamily, or even Bed and Breakfasts: think US-31 between Lakeview & Encampment in Petoskey, yeah?), rather than a continuation of what’s marching toward Slabtown down Bay Street from the east (yuck!). That is what the neighbors are reacting to & fearing. For the planners: maybe consider a special district and form-code it to big Victorian bed & breakfast-type buildings. Another example: Lakeshore Drive on Mackinac. If you make the graphics pretty & convincing enough I think the neighbors would actually buy in enthusiastically – you might need to subcontract some specialist architects for this to get it right, nudge nudge wink. If I were ever to “improve” what’s on Mom’s lot in the coming decades, I think that would be the sensitive & crowd-pleasing way to go. :)”

A significant component missing from all of this is - what is our towns ‘brand/identity’ which would then inform some architectural consistency. Successful small towns have a differentiated personality which you can immediately feel when you enter the town - a consistent look - architecture/building design/signage - what is TC’s - its all over the place - we need to define that for the future. Branding matters.

Again, green space should be for every piece of property

This looks accurate—and I’m relieved to see that we live in a Traditional Neighborhood. Please limit or eliminate STRs, particularly in Traditional Neighborhoods, and put more focus on building “connections” between neighborhoods unrelated to the 40% part time residents and, more importantly, STRs.

No

The Future Land use framework seems to focus on the corridors. The Plan envisions many zoning changes to these corridors and appears to lay out some in the action steps. I strongly recommend that these zoning changes need to be well vetted within each of the “corridor areas” and the community.

|   |
|---|
| Can you provide this in a printed format for taxpayers to examine more carefully? This format isn't conducive to study and learning   |
| You're stating that recreation/conservation operate as necessary space for recreation, environmental protection, wildlife refuge and community health. Now look at where these green spaces are in relation to the airport and note that the vast majority of planes taking off are doing so to the west over these recreational places. When it was a few small regional jets per day, no big deal, but these are much larger and louder jets now taking off back to back all day long. These spaces have been ruined by the airport. Did you not think of that when you let the airport take over itself with an appointed board that doesn't care in the least about these recreational spaces or the quality of life of life within them? How about the fact that when jets take off they are dumping significant amount of lead based soots and other pollutants over these spaces? Why would anyone want to spend time in these places covered in jet and plane soot? Lead? |
| Confused by the land between Division and Elmwood being labeled "Institutional." Are you saying The Commons or Munson manage The Pine encampment?   |
| We need more green space within the city limits. And protecting it the open space should remain open and not be taken up by sculptures and artwork. It's good to have just plain open space there should be more of an effort to plant more trees. This is "tree city" and yet our largest trees are disappearing quickly. We are losing our canopy and we need to act now to have it in the future perhaps a library of Discount trees for purchase that people living in the city could buy and put in. Workshops on how to tend/ care for young Trees . And education about what trees thrive best in the city of Traverse City. A workshop? A place on the City website we can look at this up.?  |
| We need more parking.   |
| I live in the Slabtown area and enjoy that options are moving that way more for places to eat/coffee/grab a drink that are closer. We need to be careful to maintain the neighborhood feel but utilizing W Front St down through Madison for adding additional opportunities is nice.   |
| How would Gateway Centers spanning major arteries of traffic work? Would we be adding elevated pedestrian crossings or tunnels like Murchie Bridge?   |
| Just shuffling the deck of the same cards.  |
| no Qs   |
| More green!!  |
| I understand the future land-use portion/ideas came from the planning department. Seems like a lot of time and effort was spent on coming up with suggestions that have nothing to do with the responses from the neighborhoods and what they wanted to see happen.   |

## TRAVERSE CITY MASTER PLAN Shaping Our Future ACTION PLAN



The intent of the Action Plan is to be a guiding document that details items for the City to accomplish over the next five years. While there may be action items that are accomplished from year to year in advance, it is important to create a list that is feasible with the current capacity of the various departments and commissions.

The Action Plan should be reviewed every five years with the required Master Plan review under the Midterm Planning Inventory Act. As the inventory items that have been accomplished should be removed, and remaining items should be evaluated to determine if they are still relevant. New items should be added to the list that will further the implementation of the Master Plan.

The development of the Action Plan was an iterative process, based on community engagement with key stakeholders. It is important to ensure that the proper partners are involved to ensure completion of action items. Staff presented an initial Action Plan consisting of items that would represent the goals and objectives of the Master Plan. This list was then reviewed by stakeholders at various meetings organized by DDA. Stakeholders were asked to rank the action items and add items that they were missing. Stakeholders also offered ways they could partner with the City to move action items forward. Following the stakeholder meetings, the Planning Department met with City staff to determine if items were consistent with other City Plans and feasible under current funding and operational plans.

A draft Action Plan was presented to the Leadership Team for consideration and approval before the Planning Commission and City Commission reviewed the items during the approval process of the Plan.

### ON-GOING PLANNING DEPARTMENT ACTIVITIES

- Continue to support the objectives of City Department by providing necessary funding and staff capacity.
- Continue to staff and support the Grand Traverse Commons Joint Planning Commission, Traverse City Planning Commission, Traverse City Commission, Traverse City Board of Zoning Appeals, and Historic District Commission.
- Continue to perform timely review of city applications.
- Provide an exceptional level of service in the maintenance of all city infrastructure, and staff capacity.
- Continue to be responsive to public and citizen questions and concerns regarding planning, zoning, land use, and community development in Traverse City.
- Continue to provide staff assistance to city applications.

## TRAVERSE CITY MASTER PLAN Shaping Our Future ACTION PLAN

● Action items marked with a blue circle relate to equity ● Action items marked with a green circle relate to climate change

| Action  | Timeframe | Category | Responsible Party   | Supporting Parties  | Guiding Principles |
|---|-----------|----------|---|---|--------------------|
| 1. Explore zoning amendments related to a transit facility  | 1-3 years | Zoning   | Planning & Zoning Department, Planning Commission   | DDA, City Administration  | Equity             |
| 2. Allow tripless, quadbikes, and AUVs with a trailer in the R-2 zoning district through non-permitted use (i.e. permit book homes)               | 1-3 years | Zoning   | Planning & Zoning Department, Planning Commission   | DDA, City Administration, Housing Board, HomeWatch, TC Housing Commission   | Equity             |
| 3. Expand the current water's edge riparian buffer zone to all portions of the city, potentially using police power ordinance                     | 1-3 years | Zoning   | Planning & Zoning Department, Planning Commission   | DDA, City Administration, Engineering, Public Services                      | Equity             |
| 4. Consider electric vehicle infrastructure in private lot plan approval process  | 1-3 years | Zoning   | Planning & Zoning Department, Planning Commission   | DDA, City Administration  | Equity             |
| 5. Create zoning standards that require parking areas for new commercial and multiple family developments to be EV ready                          | 1-3 years | Zoning   | Planning & Zoning Department, Planning Commission   | DDA, City Administration  | Equity             |
| 6. Establish current standards for drive thru and other additional uses to determine if uses in a proper zoning district with appropriate signage | 1-3 years | Planning | Planning & Zoning Department, Planning Commission   | DDA, City Administration, Engineering                                       | Equity             |
| 7. Implement the Mobility Action Plan   | 1-3 years | Planning | Engineering and Planning & Zoning Departments, City Administration, Public Services and Municipal Utilities | City Administration, Departments of Public Services and Municipal Utilities | Equity             |
| 8. Recommendations related to accessibility, land use policy, traffic calming, engineering, design, trees, and recreation facility improvements   | 1-3 years | Planning | Engineering and Planning & Zoning Departments, DDA  | City Administration, Departments of Public Services and Municipal Utilities | Equity             |
| 9. Coordinate recommendations from the Mobility Action Plan with other construction and maintenance projects                                      | 1-3 years | Planning | Engineering and Planning & Zoning Departments, DDA  | City Administration, Departments of Public Services and Municipal Utilities | Equity             |

## TRAVERSE CITY MASTER PLAN Shaping Our Future ACTION PLAN

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| Action  | Timeframe | Category         | Responsible Party                                  | Supporting Parties  | Guiding Principles |
|---|-----------|------------------|--|---|--------------------|
| 1. Identify funding to begin implementing the "low-hanging fruit" recommendations from the Mobility Action Plan, independent of other projects  | 1-3 years | Planning         | Engineering and Planning & Zoning Departments, DDA | City Administration, Departments of Public Services and Municipal Utilities | Equity             |
| 2. Audit, prioritize and address existing city infrastructure with the Public Rights of Way Accessibility Guidelines to ensure accessibility for all  | 1-3 years | Planning         | Department of Public Services                      | Engineering, City Administration, DDA                                       | Equity             |
| 3. Create a street improvement plan based on annual asset management evaluation and community engagement  | 1-3 years | Planning         | Department of Public Services, Engineering         | City Administration   | Equity             |
| 4. Support redevelopment of public property for affordable housing and commercial add development   | 1-3 years | Special Projects | DDA, Planning & Zoning Department                  | Engineering, City Administration, Planning Commission                       | Equity             |
| 5. Create a proactive plan for addressing and addressing additional single and multiple family housing, including identifying suitable locations and their purpose/eligibility, such as specific incentives, an appropriate, criteria to appear on the inventory, and metrics to quantify resident impact | 1-3 years | Special Projects | City Administration, Planning & Zoning Department  | DDA, Treasury and Assessing Departments                                     | Equity             |
| 6. Create a development plan to address public park new development projects  | 1-3 years | Special Projects | City Administration, Planning & Zoning Department  | City Administration, Engineering  | Equity             |
| 7. Continue the discussion of establishing a funding mechanism for stormwater infrastructure that prioritizes care of green and urban based infrastructure in stormwater management   | 1-3 years | Funding          | City Administration                                | City Attorney, Engineering, Municipal Utilities, Treasury                   | Equity             |

## TRAVERSE CITY MASTER PLAN Shaping Our Future ACTION PLAN

● Action items marked with a blue circle relate to equity ● Action items marked with a green circle relate to climate change

| Action  | Timeframe | Category                    | Responsible Party                      | Supporting Parties  | Guiding Principles |
|---|-----------|-----------------------------|--|---|--------------------|
| 9. Identify and prioritize opportunities that support decarbonization for (a) purchase of electric vehicles, building electrification, solar infrastructure on public buildings, etc.) into the design and review of projects for the Capital Investment Plan (CIP) | 1-3 years | Funding                     | Planning & Zoning, TCIP                | DDA, City Administration, Engineering, Public Services, Municipal Utilities, Green Team | Equity             |
| 10. Continue to inform and engage the public on existing/budgeting and enforcement policy and process to prevent blight, deterioration, and other nuisance issues in the city to help educate the community around the existing safeguards in place                 | 1-3 years | Communications & Engagement | Planning & Zoning, Clerk's Office      | City Administration, Planning Commission  | Equity             |
| 11. Use inclusive language when discussing the housing crisis in Traverse City and actively counter narratives that are not inclusive, for example, stigmatization of about home renters vs. home owners  | 1-3 years | Communications & Engagement | Planning & Zoning, Clerk's Office      | City Administration, Planning Commission  | Equity             |
| 12. Research and articulate the difference between affordable, workforce, and market rate housing within the Traverse City market   | 1-3 years | Communications & Engagement | Planning & Zoning Department           | TC Housing Commission, City Administration, Planning & Zoning                           | Equity             |
| 13. Promote the Traverse City Tree Fund, which can receive donations from the public  | 1-3 years | Communications & Engagement | Clerk's Office, Public Services        | City Commission   | Equity             |
| 14. Promote subsequent tree planting in areas to reduce urban heat islands, in the city   | 1-3 years | Communications & Engagement | Clerk's Office, Public Services        | City Commission   | Equity             |
| 15. Identify locations on existing or future public property for EV charging stations   | 1-3 years | Special Projects            | Planning & Zoning, City Administration | DDA, City Administration, TCIP  | Equity             |

## TRAVERSE CITY MASTER PLAN Shaping Our Future ACTION PLAN

● Action items marked with a blue circle relate to equity ● Action items marked with a green circle relate to climate change

| Action  | Timeframe | Category         | Responsible Party                      | Supporting Parties       | Guiding Principles |
|---|-----------|------------------|--|--------------------------|--------------------|
| 16. Explore zoning amendments related to implementing the Master Plan   | 3-5 years | Zoning           | Planning & Zoning, Planning Commission | City Commission, DDA     | Equity             |
| 17. Evaluate zoning districts and use allowed to determine if they continue to meet the needs of the community  | 3-5 years | Zoning           | Planning & Zoning, Planning Commission | City Commission, DDA     | Equity             |
| 18. Increase neighborhood scale healthcare and food related uses and services to provide a 15 minute walking radius for neighborhood  | 3-5 years | Zoning           | Planning & Zoning, Planning Commission | City Commission, DDA     | Equity             |
| 19. Review the 300, 400, and 500 blocks of S. Union St. to 1-1/2 to 1-3/4 to better reflect the existing development pattern and to create a proper connection distribution                               | 3-5 years | Zoning           | Planning & Zoning, Planning Commission | City Commission          | Equity             |
| 20. Review the West Front Street (west of Hart to Division, North currently owned by C-4)   | 3-5 years | Zoning           | Planning & Zoning, Planning Commission | City Commission          | Equity             |
| 21. Establish a Development (D) Zone along fourteenth street to encourage vibrant development and redevelopment opportunities   | 3-5 years | Zoning           | Planning & Zoning, Planning Commission | City Commission          | Equity             |
| 22. Explore creating building design standards for new commercial development   | 3-5 years | Planning         | Planning & Zoning, Planning Commission | DDA                      | Equity             |
| 23. Establish locations for central city and appropriate hubs around corridors and over the day-to-day needs of the city and neighborhood   | 3-5 years | Planning         | Planning & Zoning, Planning Commission | City Administration, DDA | Equity             |
| 24. Explore implementation of the currently land trust model in Traverse City. Local examples include the Harbor Area Community Land Trust in Mackinac Island and Peninsula Housing in Lenawee County, MI | 3-5 years | Special Projects | Planning & Zoning, City Administration | TC Housing Commission    | Equity             |

## TRAVERSE CITY MASTER PLAN Shaping Our Future ACTION PLAN

● Action items marked with a blue circle relate to equity ● Action items marked with a green circle relate to climate change

| Action  | Timeframe  | Category                    | Responsible Party                      | Supporting Parties                               | Guiding Principles |
|---|------------|-----------------------------|--|--|--------------------|
| 25. Develop a climate resiliency plan to reduce the public impact of the City's climate initiatives, strategies, and metrics, including related to water processing, EV infrastructure, electrification of city fleet and buildings, urban heat islands, and related topics                 | 3-5 years  | Special Projects            | Planning & Zoning, TCIP                | TCIP, City Administration, Green Team            | Equity             |
| 26. Increase annual financial support for Arts Commission Quarterly of \$3K per year, split evenly between the City and DDA   | 3-5 years  | Funding                     | City Commission, DDA                   | City Administration                              | Equity             |
| 27. Audit the city's public participation plan to ensure diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging in the best practices are  | 3-5 years  | Communications & Engagement | Planning & Zoning                      | Clerk's Office                                   | Equity             |
| 28. Create an overlay district applicable to specific legacy redevelopment sites, which would eliminate the Planning Commission site plan appeal process and allow for staff administrative review for uses permitted in the underlying zoning district if development/redevelopment occurs | 5-10 years | Zoning                      | Planning & Zoning, Planning Commission | City Commission                                  | Equity             |
| 29. Explore amending the City Charter to create a protection rental safety inspection program to ensure one and two-family residential rental properties are safe and well-maintained for the welfare of occupants. Multiple examples include Bay City, Ludington, and Midland              | 5-10 years | Zoning                      | Planning & Zoning                      | Planning & Zoning, Clerk's Office, City Attorney | Equity             |

### 4. Based on the information shared on this page, do you have any reactions, ideas, or questions to share?

It is still ambitious, but I like that it is manageable if there is political will and the available resources.

Dont forget to fill the potholes in the streets...

"- I work on the 500 block on S. Union St. What does the rezoning look like? How will that change/effect the area?  
 - I agree with section 16G.  
 - We need to focus less on building more affordable housing. Instead we need to prioritize what we already have readily available and find ways to make that affordable. TC does not need more apartment buildings.  
 - How does multiple unit lots work with tree zoning? "

Good idea to cap vacation rentals. Our winter climate is not good for EVs and not the best for walkable and biking

|   |
|---|
| <p>“*See comments made on Pg.1<br/>Thoughts on this page:<br/>- Why is there such a focus on electric vehicles? As clearly seen in my comment, climate change and environmentalism is top priority for me. My issue with electric cars that isn’t being taken into account is that they are just short term bandaids on a larger issue. They need charging stations that draw electricity, they still produce carbon emissions when made in factories, and ultimately their batteries just end up in landfills where it will take eons for them to decompose, and as they do that they will release carbon emissions into the air as all trash does. We should instead be focusing more/prioritizing our public transit and walkways of TC. Create biking incentives, maybe tax breaks for those bike or walk more. Just some ideas:)<br/>- what does “vibrant development” mean?<br/>- Strongly agree with 16G<br/>- What does section 17 mean?<br/>- How can members of the community get involved and allow their voices to be heard and positively impact section 19?<br/>- I do not think we should be supporting redevelopment of public property for affordable housing and commercial infill development. Instead TC needs to work at lowering the cost of what we already have available to rent/own. And we need to become stricter on our short term rentals, such as Air BnB’s.<br/>- We need to make sure there isn’t an over saturation of healthcare and food-related goods in areas. Maybe it’s a 20 minute walk somewhere, to many places to close isn’t good for the local businesses who have to kind of compete with one another as is. Also, what sore of food-related goods? We already have an overabundance of fast food places in TC, we need to focus on healthier and local options.<br/>- What does “rezone the 300, 400, and 500 blocks of S. Union St.” look like? What does it mean? ”</p> |
| <p>If housing options are expanded to allow quad, tri, duplexes and ADU’s...how will the rules be enforced? The current regulations for parking and allowable units are not enforced.</p>   |
| <p>As a 30+ year resident of TC, I am heartened to see our community embrace a thoughtful approach to our inevitable growth. Please continue and hold to the ideals of this TC Master Plan.</p>   |
| <p>Per the master plan guiding principles 3, 4 and 5, I think it is imperative that action item 16g should be revised to read “explore building standards for commercial AND also RESIDENTIAL developments.” I think the timeframe should be changed from 3-5 years to 1-2 years.</p>   |
| <p>Ridiculous amount of information to digest, especially at one sitting when asked to take a “survey.”</p>   |
| <p>Looks good. Always include City residents in decision making</p>   |
| <p>I’d love to see a commitment to helping people stay in their homes, the rising property taxes are forcing some older citizens to sell their homes which also changes community dynamics. Two homes in my neighborhood are examples of this and both are now used as second homes and STRs</p>  |
| <p>“So much info! While 23 sounds good, I’m skeptical about the need. #22 leaves me with questions about sidestepping the planning commission: is it just for the sake of efficiency??<br/>As to #1a, vacation home rentals absolutely need to be controlled. The market will never be able to bring satisfaction to all parties.<br/>While I don’t own an EV, 1e and #15 seem good foresight.<br/>Community engagement in #4 seems very wise.<br/>#8 is so important. It’s the background functions that we need to address, otherwise we’re just reacting to serious problems.<br/>Have been concerned about the tree issue for 25 years for so many reasons. Glad to see it here.<br/>All of #16 needs to be addressed for bests practices.</p>  |
| <p>Take care of renters</p>   |
| <p>“Be honest, realistic and mindful about financial waste when planning.<br/>21.)When hiring, provide training for the employee’s. A simple “thank you” goes a long way when money/services are exchanged.”</p>  |
| <p>Let’s build up</p>   |
| <p>“The #1 priority should be making it easier for more people--residents and visitors--to get around without a car. Ensure that EV charging requirements (and other carbon emission related actions) do not contribute to increased housing costs.”</p>  |

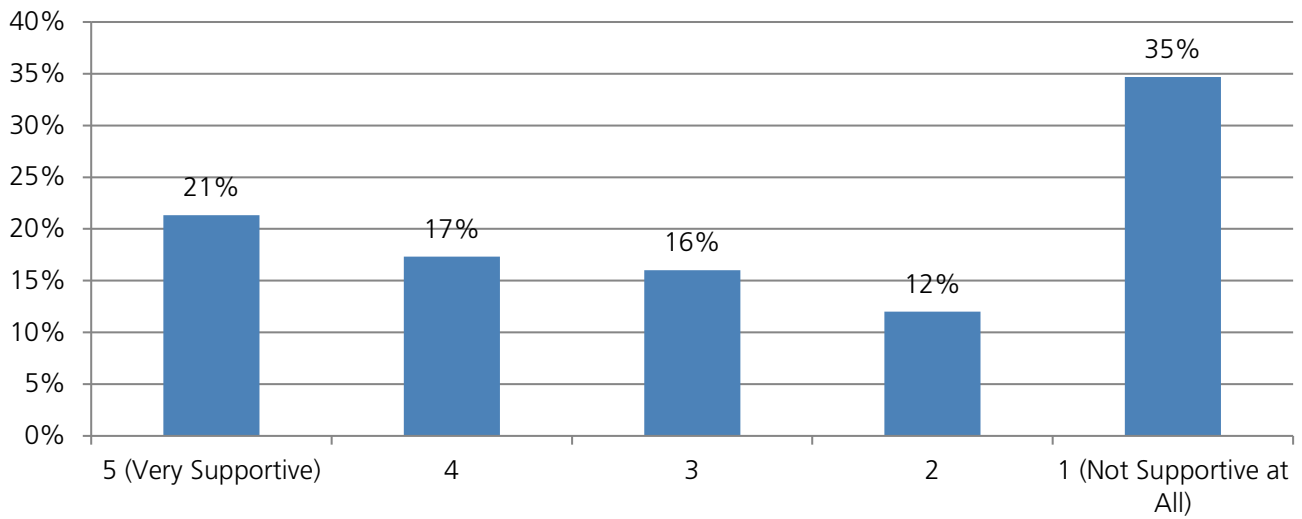
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|---|
| <p>Yes - my initial thought here is that there's an awful lot here talked to the DDA when certain city commissioners still think that body and TIF capture is unnecessary. I would sincerely like that explained by those commissioners.</p>  |
| <p>We should set a goal to increase year round population to 22, 000 by 2035.</p>   |
| <p>“(1.a.) This is top importance. Planners, be as restrictive as you want on STRs. The majority of residents will support you.<br/> (1.b.) Also top importance. But neighborhood residents need to be persuaded on an almost block-by-block basis. Ramming through omnibus ordinance rewrites will not fly politically. The backlash may even be counterproductive.<br/> (1.d.) Do not mandate.<br/> (1.e.) Do not mandate.<br/> (3) Tread carefully. Devils in the details.<br/> (5) Eliminate this altogether. Don't let TC become a slum.<br/> (7) Unnecessary busywork. Eliminate.<br/> (9) Only if these carbon-cutting plans are cost-effective. Don't burden 15,000 taxpayers of a small Michigan city for unilateral carbon reductions that are extremely negligible the global scheme.<br/> (12) Unnecessary word games. Don't bother. Let the market sort it out. TC can afford to be an expensive community of high-earners. And it will be a better place for it. “Affordable housing” is not needed in TC. There will be enough in Garfield, East Bay, Kingsley and other parts of the TC metro area connected by BATA routes.<br/> (13) A fine idea!<br/> (14) Yes!<br/> (17) No. Let neighbors build these places organically. Don't spend taxpayers' money creating artificial places for the benefit of the few. Do not subsidize small businesses, building them patios and other amenities and calling it a “social district” at taxpayer expense.<br/> (18) Excellent!<br/> (19) No. No. No. This is labor-intensive and nigh-on-useless paperwork, remembering that the city government tinkering in a small Michigan city of 15,000 will have next to zero effect on global climate change.<br/> (20) Abolish the wasteful redundant cronyist Arts Commission. It shouldn't exist.<br/> (21) No. Just no. DEI is unnecessary and tendentious nonsense that can only lead to trouble (not to mention backlash)<br/> (22) Absolutely not. Decisions should be made by planners and commissioners—must be accountable to voters. Do not give staff a free reign.”</p> |
| <p>GOOD LUCK!</p>   |
| <p>Property taxes need to stop going up so much every year. With houses selling it such high prices and kept being released, it's baffling. All these committees and departments need to work within their budgets as they are already getting a lot of money.</p>  |
| <p>Ev's and parking and infrastructure have been prioritized wrong. Less parking and out of date infrastructure are serious concerns for the city. Ev's should be the bottom of concern.</p>  |
| <p>Why not stop looking into providing EVERYTHING and allow the private workplace to provide as needed. Step aside and let it happen</p>  |
| <p>When will limits be placed on the number of vacation rentals be placed in the city? Where is parking, specifically handicapped parking? When will State Street return to one way, if not when will pedestrian crossings be placed on State Street. Currently no safe crossing for pedestrians between Boardman and Cass (no pedestrian crossing lights, or signage)</p>  |
| <p>Fix the numbered streets...especially 14th...your turning our neighborhoods into hotels, motels....Vac. rentals.....we need parking downtown, if you want to be all inclusive for citizens,workers and shoppers.....</p>   |
| <p>The city planner needs to go. When bullet #1 is about resourcing and staff and not about what services will be provided there is something wrong. The number one item should always be the service that is going to be provided to the community. Instead, that is bullet #4. Also, keep the multiplexing out of already established neighborhoods.</p>  |
| <p>Vacation homes are not a boogie man. I wish it wasn't a priority to stop them or likit them. The answer to housing is more homes. That's it. They need to be allowed to be built.</p>  |
| <p>I would like to understand the rental safety inspection program. Moreover, I want to know how much resources we are going to allocate to ensure the rules are kept in.</p>   |
| <p>Nice balance of ideas.</p>   |

|  |
|--|
| <p>I support more commercial development on S. Union / Old Town, and green infrastructure and stormwater management. I also support more community engagement on street project priorities. This year, the city fixed Maple Street, which is great, but Maple was NOT the worst street in our neighborhood.</p>  |
| <p>Fixing the damn roads, stormwater infrastructure, and tree canopy should be at the top of the to-do list. Streets like 7th, 10th, and 14th are embarrassing and should not have been allowed to get as bad as they are. I don't see anything in the plan about help for the homeless.</p>   |
| <p>Looking at the zoning item in first block/ previous slide on cost of living and unaffordable housing: Given the high cost of living, there are opportunities for single family homes to host/ rent out a room or section of home to help cover costs, while also not creating more independent short term vacation rentals (and taking over single family homes that are so needed). However, current zoning only allows for one 'high intensity' rental per 1000ft... not trying to create more chaos/ short term rentals and quick turnover, but rather a hosting experience to introduce tourists to Traverse and allowing the homeowner to utilize their property in a beneficial way for all.</p>  |
| <p>Pls see my previous response</p>  |
| <p>Nicely done charts....Hopefully the DDA will be gone soon</p>   |
| <p>A cap on vacation homes is a high priority. Prohibit commercial construction of buildings that detract from Traverse City's historic architecture! Please STOP allowing construction adjacent to the sidewalk like the Hotel Indigo!!! Focus on safer walking and bike paths. With regard to the housing crisis: continue positive programs for the "Pines" area along 11th St with the goal to eliminate that encampment for individuals with housing fragility. More support for what Robin Grubbs' effort is currently achieving. More greenery and landscaping required IN parking lots.</p>  |
| <p>"On-Going Planning Department Activities<br/> #5 – "Continue to be responsive to public and citizen questions and concerns regarding planning zoning, land use, and community development in Traverse City"<br/> Being RESPONSIVE is interrupted as incorporating feedback in a useful manner. Using citizen feedback to make revisions and adjustment. Reminder: just over a year ago, there was public outrage regarding how the Planning Commission pushed forward and rubber-stamped zoning density proposals while not listening or addressing public requests to slow the process down. Two Planning Commissioners resigned during this turbulent time.<br/> I am hopeful that the RESPONSIVENESS of the Planning Commission will be much improved from a year ago.<br/> Suggest that all the Public Comments are tabulated, documented and presented in a transparent fashion. (i.e There were 12 comments in opposition. There are 3 comments in support of the proposed action. Thus, there is four to one ratio in opposition of the proposed action as recorded during public input. Please do not simply summarize and wash over the important detail with a statement like "there were comments for and against the proposed action". This is an insult to those citizens that took the time to attend the Open House or Listening Session and write a comment.<br/> Btw – Multiple public comments regarding the proposed Bay Street rezoning to Transitional Neighborhood were in opposition. No public comment to support (zero public support) . This information should ring a loud signal as to if the proposed change is representing the desire of the citizens and residents of the immediate neighborhood.</p> |
| <p>I'm skeptical that any of this will be done. What I expect is a new city manager in ~5 years and then a new visioning process and master plan. It is absurd how long anything takes to get done in TC. Tart trail is great....but it took 20 years to do a boardman loop? Come on. This is all amateur hour shit.</p>   |
| <p>Doesn't seem like anything in the 1 - 3 year timeframe addresses workforce or affordable housing in the city or any concrete incentives for redevelopment</p>   |
| <p>"Don't purchase electric vehicles for the city. For the cost...the battery life in our col climate and battery replacement make it too expensive.<br/> Need to address, educate and or enforce electric bike use . I have been forced off of sidewalks by them. Scared on the tart trails as they buzz pass me on my mountain bike. They think traffic signs don't apply to them"</p>   |
| <p>Seems like quite a lot - wonder if you have adequate resources- whether pairing it down would be more realistic (but what do I know - just got here); clearly affordable housing is an issue; homelessness- including the encampment by the commons (not just an issue here - it was an issue where we just moved from too)</p>   |
| <p>Too much to respond to</p>  |
| <p>How do things get on the CIP—like the widening of the bayfront recreational path? And what does not make it onto the CIP, like the remaining 2020 Safe Routes To School improvements and Franklin promenade from 8th Street charette?</p>   |



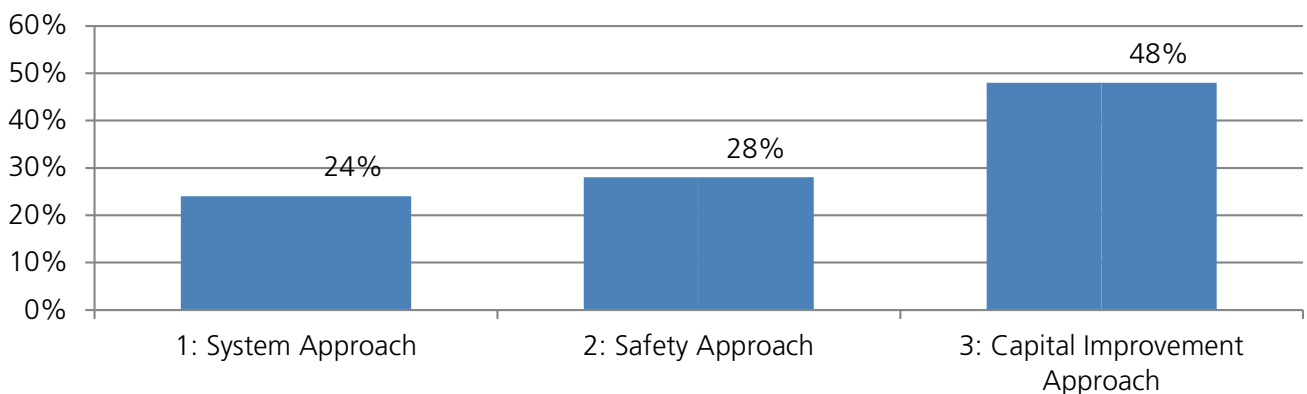
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| <p>There is ALOT here - I would focus on the underlying , big rocks that will drive transformational change to some of the biggest issues - which is too many rentals - not enough full year housing in downtown. Creating an identity/ tax incentives that encourage new businesses to come to downtown TC. Continuing to focus on transformational projects like rotary park and the boardman riverfront concept that will further elevate the appeal of TC to both visitors and locals.</p>   |
| <p>I think this is still too long? Could use a GANTT Chart format, eh?</p>   |
| <p>All of this is very disappointing. I did not move to Traverse City 40 years ago to live in another Grand Rapids.</p>  |
| <p>This looks pretty generic, but mostly fine. I'd like to see WAY more emphasis, however, on art and cultural objectives and WAY less emphasis on building. You seem infatuated with building and expansion and need to be more concerned with culture and quality of life.</p>   |
| <p>" 1b was tried last year and rejected by the City Commission; you are going to try it again?<br/> This is basically the Planning Dept. work plan for the next 5-10 years. It is overly ambitious and not realistic. Furthermore, in some cases, the Planning Dept is going beyond their area of responsibility and expertise, and getting into areas that are more rightly the purview of other departments or organizations. They have a lot to do already; these items should be eliminated from the plan.<br/> 16 is rezoning the corridors and part of Union St. This need extensive vetting with the property owners and the community. Such transformative change may not be acceptable.<br/> 22 suggests Administrative Review of certain site plans. This should not be an administrative decision, but rather should go to the Planning Commission."</p>   |
| <p>Well I think you know my issues with the airport. I would just add that you are making it difficult for residents to support themselves with the zoning around home occupations. Why can't artists sell their art out of their homes, for instance? You want to promote art but turn around and make it difficult for artists to sell their work. It's not reasonable to expect people in this field to have to rent a commercial building just to sell things they produce at home. You are allowing some places to operate as home work spaces but not others. Why does a small building on Centre Street allow this but not the rest of that neighborhood? Other noise issues include barking dogs which are actually louder in terms of decibels than crowing roosters yet roosters are banned. You call this a 5 year action plan, but 5 years is going to be the start of the more obvious decline in the city because of the airport you've allowed to destroy everything.</p> |
| <p>Eighth Street is an excellent model for future streets. Excellent low lighting that's adequate excellent pedestrian and bike lanes, protected from traffic and not right next to parking on street. Elevated crosswalks these things need to be incorporated in our neighborhood streets cut through traffic is too much, and too fast, year-round. We need more speed, humps and tabletops to slow traffic in neighborhoods, especially at crosswalks and mid- block. Also need to consider more ways of crossing Division street, This street still divides Our city in two.</p>  |
| <p>We need more parking.</p>   |
| <p>There is no plan for improving/increasing emergency services. You are increasing density, population and EV infrastructure which all pose challenges to emergency services. At the same time you are making roads smaller with more volume and traffic calming obstacles that impede emergency services response. We were sold on getting new fire stations but that story has changed to wasting money on remodeling after your own commissioned study said to build new. We need a plan for effectively placed fire stations that are looking out to 2050-60 time frame. Not 2026. These facilities are critical infrastructure that must be able to operate at full capacity under any circumstance.</p>   |
| <p>As I mentioned previously, I am concerned about government overreach in 1.c. because I don't understand it. However, it sounds like an attack on property rights which I oppose.</p>  |
| <p>"Many good points and a few not so good.<br/> The Green dot points are well thought out.<br/> However, one Green point has not been addressed. Treatment Plant<br/> Thus, point 1b is in conflict with point 8"</p>   |
| <p>Most of these lack specificity to have an opinion. What is a a riparian zone? Any line item that starts with consider, evaluate, or recommend isn't a real action. Lacks true action.</p>   |
| <p>Shared on sticky notes.</p>   |
| <p>Once again, the wishes of the planning department compared to the wishes of the residentsDon't lineup.</p>  |

5. Would you be supportive of paying more each year to fund city-wide mobility infrastructure improvements? (5 = very supportive and 1 = not supportive at all)



6. There are different approaches in building the Mobility Network over time. Please select the strategy you'd like to see implemented below:

- 1: System Approach** – This represents smaller-scale improvements being made across the city, representing a more immediate approach to building the network. An example can include installing signage, adding striped bike lanes, or other infrastructure that can be deployed relatively quickly.
- 2: Safety Approach** – This addresses larger-scale, higher-visibility projects that have the greatest safety or mobility concerns. This approach represents capital-intensive projects like street reconstruction, constructing off-street bicycle facilities, or intersection improvements. While this approach results in high-quality mobility improvements, the number of projects capable of being constructed is fewer due to the planning, design, and construction required for each project.
- 3: Capital Improvement Approach** – This pairs mobility improvements to the City's existing capital improvements program – ensuring that mobility improvements are made in the most cost-effective manner. This approach ensures mobility improvements are made annually, although these improvements may be viewed as not immediately connecting to each other due to the nature of street programming.



## 7. Is there anything else you would like to share about the Master Plan or Mobility Action Plan?

"- TC needs more parking garages, especially for downtown employees. I would suggest the lot across from the downtown Mundos Coffee Shop.  
- We need to do a better job of prioritizing safety. There has been so many times that neighbors, clients, and myself have had bad encounters with unstable individuals in our downtown area and the police have done nothing to stop the encounter or keep us safe. This is no longer a town I feel safe enough to raise children in.  
- Less street bike lanes and instead more focus on our amazing Tart Trail. However, I do think more safety precautions need to be put in place to help young families and women feel safer riding the tart trail.  
- Tickets/fines should be put in place for unsafe bikers.  
- The city needs more roundabouts and less stoplights. Roundabouts are safer, better for the flow of traffic, and more environmentally friendly!  
Thank you for putting this survey out there! I hope you really take into account what the locals have to say and how we feel our town, our home, and can be improved. Thanks! "

We have a large population of older folks and winters. These folks bring in the most money to our city and they are not in favor of walkable and biking for the most part, especially in the winter.

"\*See comments made on Pg. 1

Thoughts on this page:

- As a fellow biker I use the tart trail constantly (love it!) because it feels a lot safer than using the bike lanes. Cars frequently edge over their lines and come too close, drivers become angry, and the lanes are inconsistent. I think instead of prioritizing street bike lanes, more funding needs to be funneled into our beautiful tart trail and maintaining its upkeep, as well as providing better lighting.  
- I live near Airport Access and absolutely love the recently added roundabout. I fully support the idea of adding more in to Traverse City and replacing some of the stoplights. Roundabouts are so much safer, better for the environment, and help calm the flow of traffic. We need more roundabouts!  
- I think the signage for bikers needs to be more consistent. There is a crosswalk with constant flashing lights on eighth street which is confusing for drivers and makes it more unsafe for bikers to cross. Whereas, on Woodmere there is the crosswalk where a biker hits a button and the signs light up when someone is actually trying to cross. That system feels so much safer and more consistent/less confusing.  
- Electric bikes and drunk bikers have become a serious issue on the tart trail. People using the electric bikes consistently speed and cut bikers/walkers off. Drunk bikers coming from places like Kayak Bike & Brew bike unsafely, cuss out other bikers, and are spatially unaware. For example, I was biking to work one day and was coming around a bend near the water treatment center when a drunk biker was giggling and riding with their eyes closed thinking it was funny. She ended up crashing into me, spilling her drink on my clothes, and damaging a part of my bike. If drivers are expected to drive safe or get a ticket; then I think we need to enforce the same thing on the Tart Trail. If you are biking past a certain speed limit or biking unsafely then you will receive a fine/ticket.  
- An article written in 2018 said that Traverse City had lost over 400,000 acres of tree cover since 2001. Which we know has a serious impact on air quality, shore lines, property values, climate control, reduction of homes for our wildlife, and loss of historic trees. Replanting trees throughout the city and downtown areas needs to become a priority.  
- My closing note is that as a city, we need to look out for our locals. We are the ones living here year round, buying our groceries local, supporting local stores, running the businesses, toughing it out through the rough winter months, paying the taxes, etc. We need to shift our focus away from those who come and stay for a few nights or live here short term, and instead really prioritize our locals. Let's do better together Traverse City!"

Stay the course!

"Stop wasting money on tourism and tourists. If tourism were illegal in Traverse City for 2 years. It would give the city time to make real improvements and changes.  
I do not support giving the current city government a single penny more until they learn to use their current budget wisely. No more wasting money towards tourism.  
If the government wants more money they can tax the tourists and tourism industry. "

The mobility action plan needs to be funded to be effective. We need to identify priorities and low hanging fruit. How else will it truly be implemented without these items?

|   |
|---|
| Too detailed, too much, appears to be the product of city staff more than a true reflection of what city residents desire. This process should have been more concise and completed in less time than it did.   |
| No  |
| Love it and support it, but simply cannot pay for it with increased taxes   |
| As someone who grew up in TC and visit as often as I can, and someone who was previously an urban planner, I am proud of what you are doing and want to see the city continue to grow in a sustainable (all sense of the word) way and be a place that my friends and can come back to and live if we so choose. Work and life have taken many of us away from TC but we all want to come back at some point and long for a progressive community that always holds onto its roots. |
| Be mindful.   |
| "Please continue to improve vehicular travel to allow efficient travel in our city. This is paramount to our business success. Do not restrict vehicular travel to allow for bike travel.<br>Ensure city neighborhoods do not allow short term rentals. "   |
| Put some concrete plans on paper for safer, better cycling mobility in the City limits. No credit should be given for bike lanes on Front or State as they invite hazards by design. They should be removed until protected corridors are built for safe mobility East and West, North and South.   |
| We need a green belt around the city or we're going to end up urban sprawled  |
| PAINT IS NOT PROTECTION! Physical separation or concrete barriers are the only way to make a bike lane or sidewalk safe.  |
| This is an incredibly ambitious plan for a community whose local governmental entities are siloed, contentious and uncooperative. I am in my 40s and find the division in our community wildly inefficient and driven in large part by our elected commissioners, which I don't have time or tolerance for.   |
| I'm supportive of multimodal spending, but we should be increasing taxes for it. We need to invest in our commercial districts and earmark the greater ROI of increased taxable value of increased density in projects like this.   |
| Thank you and God bless. It's important that the city stays up on all this.   |
| Thanks again  |
| Keep the costs low, build in future maintenance cost into your equations, and have foresight for any new projects as this is completely lacking to date. Oh, and demand warranties for everything that comes with a cost. This will help ensure higher quality.   |
| Get with the times and plan for 15 in advance. This city is growing beyond anyone's control. Stop trying to hold it back  |
| Stop and listen to the residents.   |
| Bike lane on State Street needs to be repainted   |
| "Too much emphasis on Biking/walking, and zero time on making better/more/safer east-west corridors...<br>Too much emphasis on drinking.<br>Enforce the traffic laws for bikers/walkers....-they dont stop at stop signs....Ive noted, most the offenders are adults...."   |
| This document could be disastrous for TC. The city wants to ramp up commercial items and slap up cheap housing in established neighborhoods. Lifelong residents shouldn't have to face depressed housing values and over commercialization because a few city employees have some ideas.  |
| I believe that the City Commission should reach out to all of the neighborhoods for comment before adopting the master plan.  |
| We have to think 20 years into the future regarding types of vehicles, methods of transportation, population growth and tourism. We need to focus on making our streets safer for non-motorized vehicles and reduce car and truck traffic. Our city is small but growing in population. The traffic will only get worse.  |

The costs of maintaining and improving city infrastructure is being paid by too few. The City needs to get creative and figure out how to democratize this (e.g. a city income tax, as many other localities in Michigan have.) A city sales tax would be great but I understand not permitted by Michigan law. When I look at the City, and especially the DDA, I see organizations that don't always focus on the meat-and-potatoes of having a nice, functional city. We're talking about spending money on a new parking deck, a pedestrian bridge over the parkway, and endless consultants (e.g. Rotary Square) when we have streets and intersections falling apart, people living in squalor on city park land, and unswimmable beaches every time it rains too hard.

I appreciate the improvements made to the 8th Street corridor, but would like to see more development of the State Street corridor. It's like a dead zone between Front and 8th. The 14th Street corridor is also not a point of pride and needs a better street, more trees, better walkability, and fewer panhandlers.

The Mobility Action Plan has to consider pedestrian safety which seems to be deprioritized currently

Focus on the housing crisis as a major priority and preserving traditional neighborhoods!!

"I commend the City Manager to hold city employees accountable and to ensure that the public comments and survey results are transparently presented in detail. The public is should be pro-actively provided this detail. Survey result detail and public comment detail was not previously provided during the 2023 density zoning amendments. Proposals were pushed through against public request to slow the process down. This led to the loss of public trust, public outrage, the resignation of two Planning Commissioners and multiple Record Eagle editorials.

When it is all said and done, there is a lot more said than done. How much are we paying for this? No shit my taxes are high. Also, I don't give a snot about TIF. And the DDA and Traverse Connect somehow get city funds to do stuff the city should be doing anyway? I used to care more but now I just realize that it is all a bunch of jokers with their hands out and that not really doing anything is fine because if they did do things, they would just mess them up.

"As far as the mobility plan goes - I like the idea - but if there's limited resources- it seems you have to prioritize. We have noticed side streets are generally in worse condition than where we came from - though that appears to be improving. We live near east bay and understand the 8th street drain is a problem, especially with east bay being a drinking water source; drainage district appears to be a solution but slow going; not sure why it's taken so long. Interesting to see TC is now part of a regional transportation district; we were on the western fringe of Chicago metro area - and there was a lot of coordination and joint planning. It helped. It seems with all the growth you need it. We have noticed major traffic/retail areas don't seem quite as safe as what we had in our former area - with more turn lanes and lights; the developers in our area had to coordinate with county planners and pay impact fees. South airport road and 31 are of concern.

Good to see you are seeking input.

Chicago spent a lot of money on bike lanes - but bikers were still getting hit far too often.

Snow plows were knocking over the bike barriers.

We like the tart trail and are happy to see the improvements.

Lots of controversy over the DDA - not sure we understand it all yet.

"sidewalk infill in Traverse Heights, Safe Routes To School infrastructure improvements, are contraflow bike lane on 7th/Division are great. thank you.

Given what we were sold, how much it cost and the opportunities missed - the once-in-a-generation chance to improve access and connection to our bay with the Parkway redesign is massively disappointing (unsafe crossing at Rose, no other crossings built, sidewalks/path right on the highway, paths where you have to walk your bike).

Suggestion:

For the next MDOT project:

- don't use private nonprofits that do business with MDOT to negotiate on behalf of the safety, health, and wellbeing of the people who live here.
- don't use private nonprofits as proxies for resident voice
- if we're going to continue with our active transportation committee - don't require affiliation with a private nonprofit to be appointed
- if private nonprofits are invited to meetings with staff where a city commissioner is also invited, hold those meetings in public"

|  |
|--|
| <p>Pedestrians first, if you're thinking in terms of "sense of place," because they're the ones *existing in* x-y-z places/ locations, rather than passing through. It's the least-"able-ist" approach. Granny can't drive, Granny also can't bike. If you have a patch of sidewalk, if it can support a cafe, that is better than a bike lane... and maybe it's okay to make people sitting on their butts in their cars wait at stop lights. And maybe you need a tunnel bypass under Hickory Meadows from M-72 to Front Street at the ye olde Concrete Plant (or thereabouts) to solve the Bay Street (&amp; Slabtown) conundrum, especially as Munson grows - that is 1000% what they would do in a civilized country like Norway (check it out). Anyone know a Secretary of Transportation we could ask to fund a pilot program?</p>  |
| <p>Everything is a trade off - identify the 2-3 BIG items that can make the biggest difference for the future - forget small /loud groups pet projects.</p>  |
| <p>I'm pleased with road improvements under way—short term pain, but so necessary. I also support a vibrant, growing TC. However, you need to do a much better job of considering the quality of development and it's cultural impact.</p>   |
| <p>"The document is way too long. It will not be useful and used.<br/> Second the document doesn't seem to reflect the input of the community. It is a Planner's vision of what the community should be, and not the community's vision.<br/> There is already significant distrust and dislike of the Planning Dept and Planning Commission -- for many reasons; pushing this document out will only add to that distrust."</p>   |
| <p>Please provide materials in a printed format for those who cannot make the meetings</p>   |
| <p>I've been very passionate about having good walkability and biking infrastructure in the city. I've enjoyed what we have for many years and would have liked to see it improved. It's become hard for me to care much at this point because it's no longer enjoyable to be outside walking and biking under the oppressive noise of airport traffic. It's hard to care about improving things in the city when I'm seriously investigating leaving and feeling like I'm being forced out of here toward places that have to sidewalks or bikeable streets, basically having to move to a car dependent area in order to escape the airport noise and pollution. I don't think this master plan is realistic at all given what you've done with the airport. The airport is going to be the ruin of this city. Give it 5 to 7 years for it to really be noticable. Within a decade this city will be ruined if something isn't done and soon about this airport traffic.</p> |
| <p>"We have City ordinances in place. We need to ensure that all new building is compliant prior to occupation and certification. And this includes all new Street designs, especially lighting.<br/> I am concerned about the changing view of our city. All new construction seems to be square boxes. It is not pretty and not like the "character" of our city. We are fast becoming Traverse "Salt Box" City. It is ugly."</p>  |
| <p>We need more parking.</p>   |
| <p>More consideration has to be given that Traverse City is remote. We get all of goods by truck over 2 lanes roads. Tractor trailers are approx. 70' long with the typical trailer being 53'. What is being done to ensure effective efficient movement of these vehicles to Traverse City and around the city to ensure cost-effective and timely delivers? I used to operate these vehicles. Personally I would not deliver to Traverse City because of current road designs and I would encourage higher deliver fees because of requiring more time to deliver here and potential or incurred damage to vehicles from roads that do not accommodate tractor trailer combinations. Transferring loads to smaller vehicles is time consuming and expensive.</p>   |
| <p>Nice work overall. Keep it up!</p>  |
| <p>The proposed enhanced safety street crossings seem to already be in place. There is confusion for motorists when approaching a variety of safety enhancements. A uniform approach to safe crossings would provide a more improved safe crossing system. Failure to yield is endemic for motorists in the city, even a crosswalks with crossing lights.</p>  |
| <p>no but thank you</p>  |
| <p>I would pay more money if the plan was more actionable.</p>   |
| <p>LETS DO IT!</p>   |
| <p>With over 600 pages I find the language could be more upbeat and focus on the positive aspects instead of the "sky is falling" type of approach. This plan was not meant for resident ease-of-use which has me concerned that there are things buried with in it, that we will not know about until it's too late.</p>  |

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# 14



*T.A.R.T. Trail*  
Traverse City Tourism

## MOBILITY ACTION PLAN

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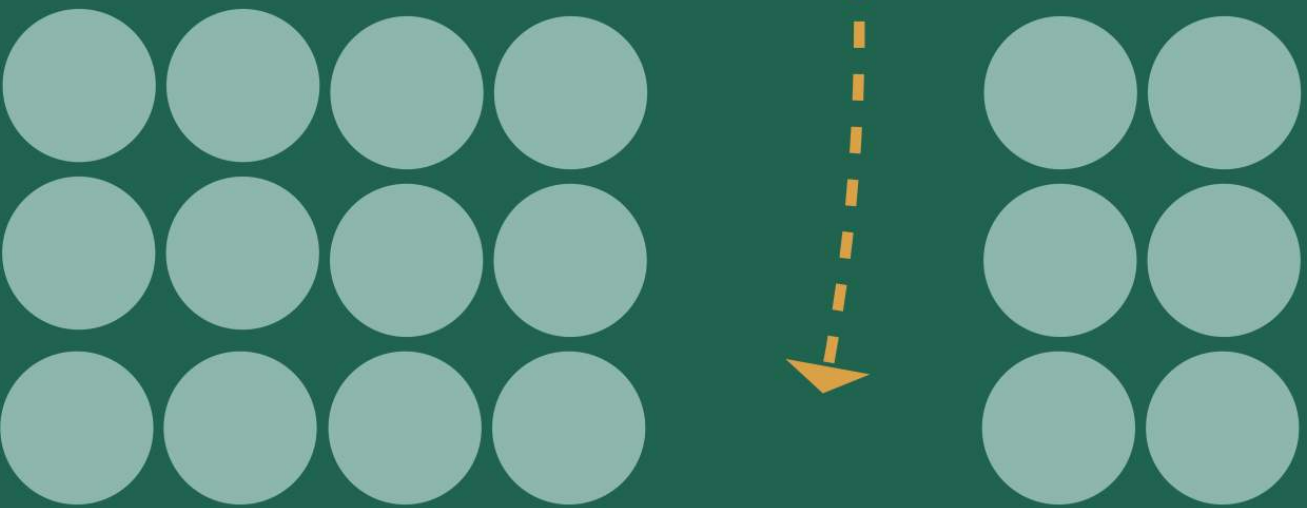


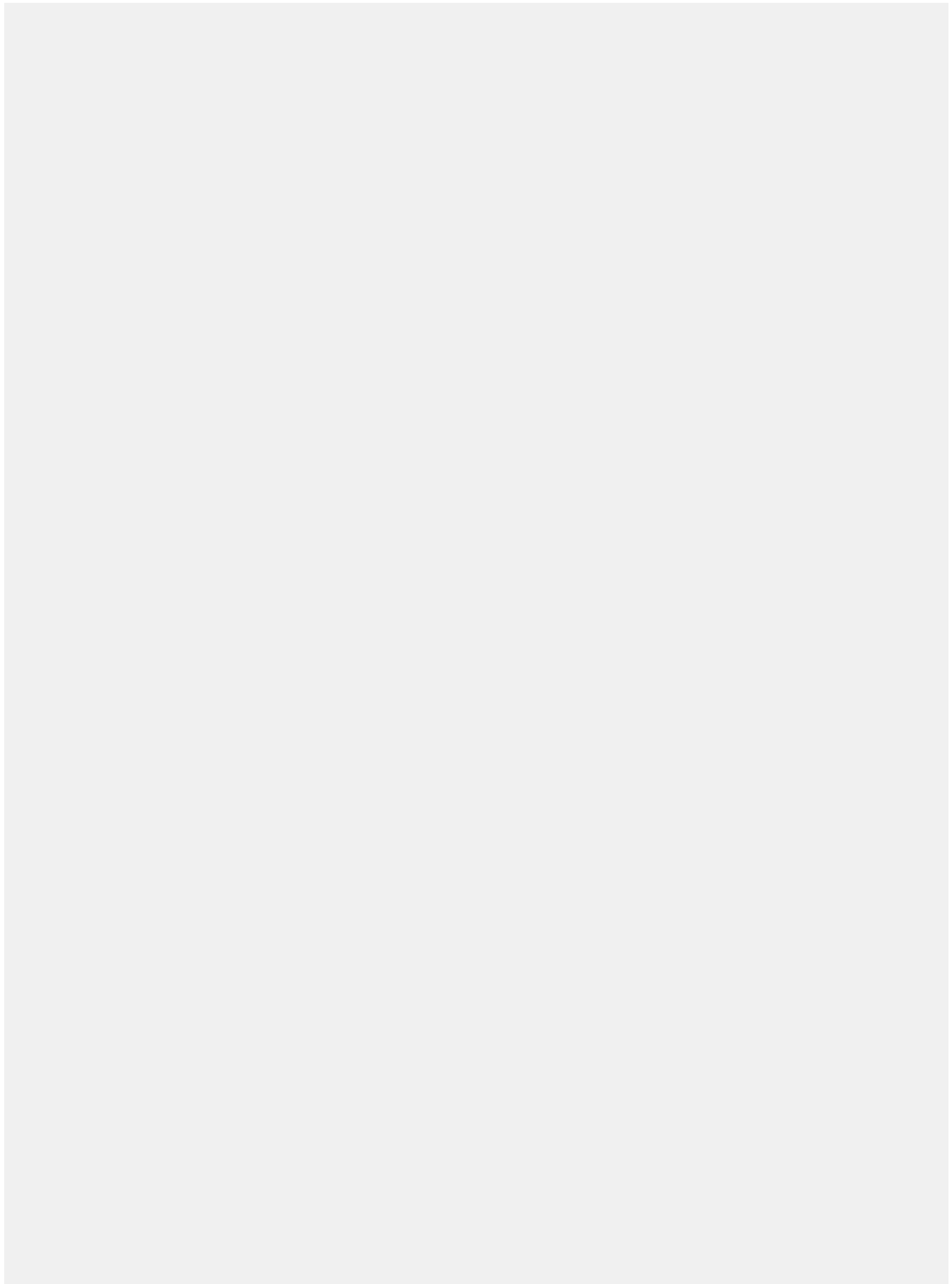
T R A V E R S E  
C I T Y

# Mobility Action Plan



Summer 2024





## SPECIAL ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Representing the work of City staff, a dedicated and active Leadership Committee, and the extensive engagement of Traverse City residents and stakeholders, the Mobility Action Plan embodies Traverse City’s mobility vision for the future. We want to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of the following groups and individuals through this process.

### CITY COMMISSION

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Mi Stanley  
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Linda Koebert  
Tim Werner  
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Frank Dituri  
Kyle Kobylski



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## Chapter 1: Background and Purpose

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Introduction                                 | 1 |
| Previous Transportation Planning Initiatives | 4 |
| How to Use This Plan                         | 7 |

## Chapter 2: Mobility Vision

|                            |    |
|----------------------------|----|
| Vision Statement           | 9  |
| Values                     | 9  |
| Infrastructure and Culture | 11 |

## Chapter 3: Community Engagement

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Community Survey                           | 14 |
| Community Events                           | 15 |
| Leadership Team and Other Important Groups | 18 |

## Chapter 4: Mobility Culture

|                               |    |
|-------------------------------|----|
| Existing Mobility Perceptions | 20 |
| Creating a Mobility Culture   | 23 |

## Chapter 5: Existing Conditions and Network

|                              |    |
|------------------------------|----|
| Existing Bicycle Network     | 30 |
| Existing Sidewalks           | 32 |
| Existing Traffic Volumes     | 35 |
| Level of Traffic Stress      | 37 |
| Distance to Nearest Crossing | 40 |

## **Chapter 6: Mobility Network**

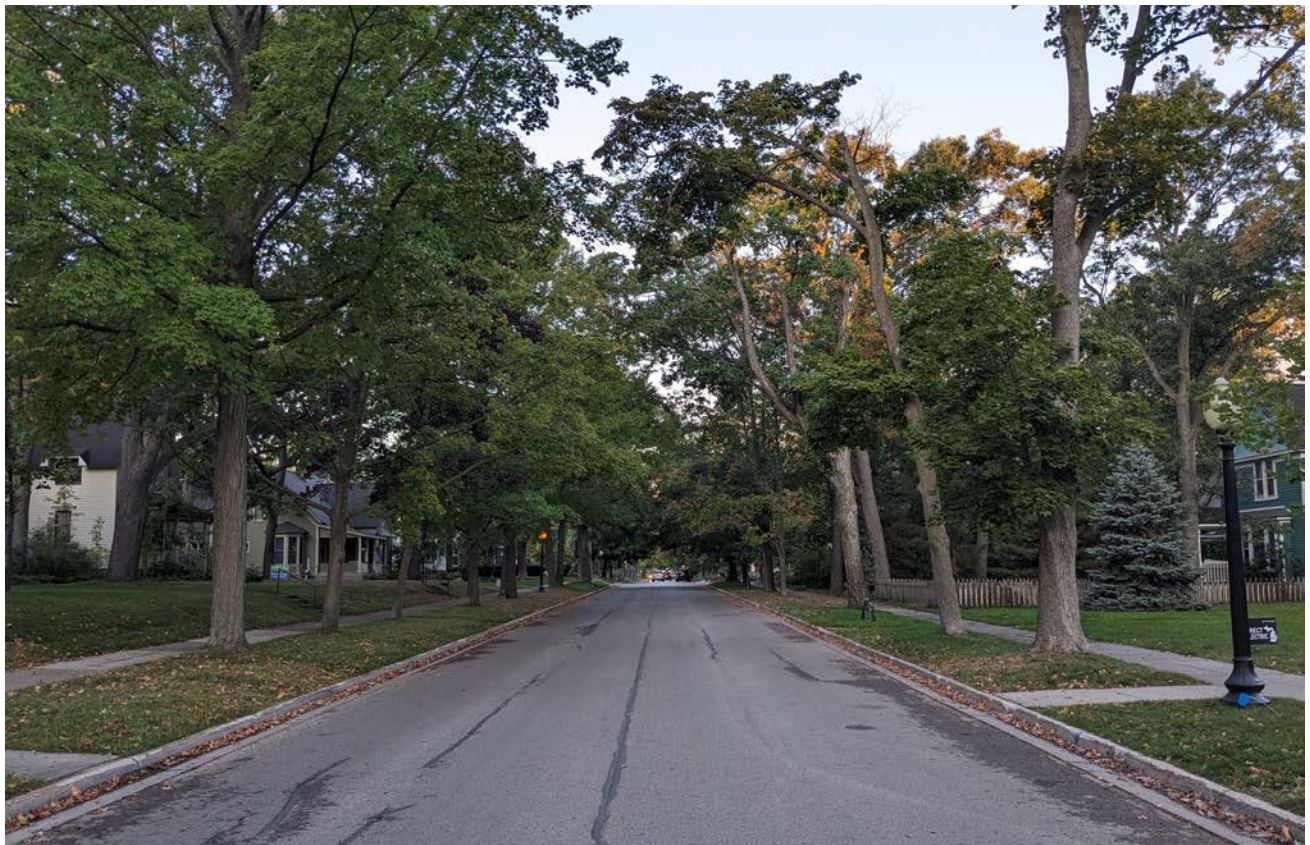
|                                 |    |
|---------------------------------|----|
| <b>Development Methodology</b>  | 43 |
| <b>Mobility Network Map</b>     | 46 |
| <b>Facility Treatment Types</b> | 50 |

## **Chapter 7: Implementation**

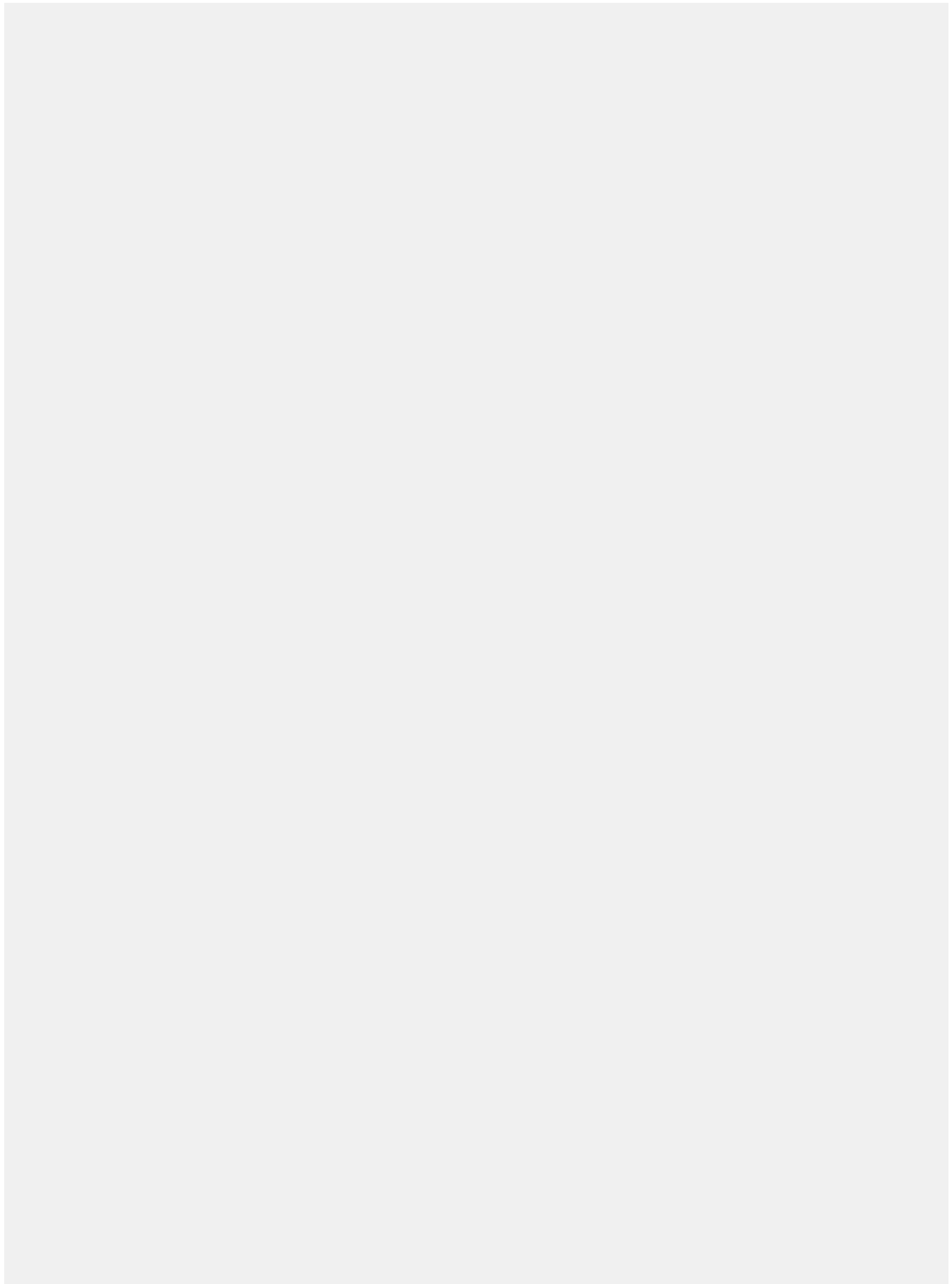
|   |    |
|---|----|
| <b>Background and Approach</b>                    | 63 |
| <b>Current Approach</b>                           | 65 |
| <b>Recommended Approach</b>                       | 69 |
| <b>Current Challenges and Potential Solutions</b> | 69 |
| <b>Proposed Policy Recommendations</b>            | 78 |

## **Chapter 8: Measures of Progress**

|                           |    |
|---------------------------|----|
| <b>Monitoring Metrics</b> | 83 |
|---------------------------|----|



*Example of Low-Volume Residential Street (Washington Street)*



# 1

## Background and Purpose



*E Eighth Street Cycletrack and Sidewalk*

### Introduction

Traverse City is an active city and has been heralded as one of the most bikeable cities in Michigan. Located in the four-season beauty of Northwestern Michigan, people love spending time walking and bicycling throughout the community. From summer rides in the bay breeze to family rides to the library on crisp autumn days to coffee shop commutes on a snowy winter evening – the natural beauty of Traverse City drives people outdoors for recreation.

Residents of Traverse City are also conscious of their environmental footprint. Many seek sustainable transportation alternatives that reduce their carbon footprint while encouraging an active and healthy lifestyle. In fact, 10% of Traverse City households do not own a car compared to 7% statewide<sup>1</sup>. In this sense, bicycling and walking represent a lifestyle shift that reduces one's dependency on cars while promoting personal health and care for the earth.

1.) Data gathered from United States Census Table B08201: Household Size by Vehicle Available.

Bicycling and walking also represent an empowering transportation choice for those who have few. While Traverse City's population swells during the summer with tourists, many of the city's full-time residents lack the ability to own or operate a vehicle, as one in ten households don't have access to a car<sup>2</sup>. One in five residents are also older than 65<sup>3</sup> – a demographic that often represents a decline in one's ability to get around. With the region's current infrastructure oriented around the movement of cars, shifting street design towards increased mobility and access for people walking and bicycling represents a great equalizing of people's ability to get around, regardless of age, income, race, ethnicity, or ability.



Understanding these factors, there is a unique groundswell of support towards making Traverse City a leading bicycling and walking community not only here in Michigan but also nationally. This vision of bicycling is one where everyone feels comfortable riding on city streets and trails; it's a vision of Traverse City as a vibrant community that is in tune with nature and accessible via bicycle. This vision reflects residents' values and desires to see continued, relentless momentum to improve non-motorized facilities.

However, accomplishing this vision requires more than pavement striping and protective bollards. It requires a fundamental culture shift in how we view and discuss mobility in Traverse City. It requires the combination of good infrastructure design, high levels of maintenance, education, and training to create shared understanding between cyclists, pedestrians, and motorists. This represents a long, incremental process but the end result is a community that truly embodies its mobility values and lives them out on a daily basis. This is the ultimate vision of the Traverse City Mobility Action Plan.

2

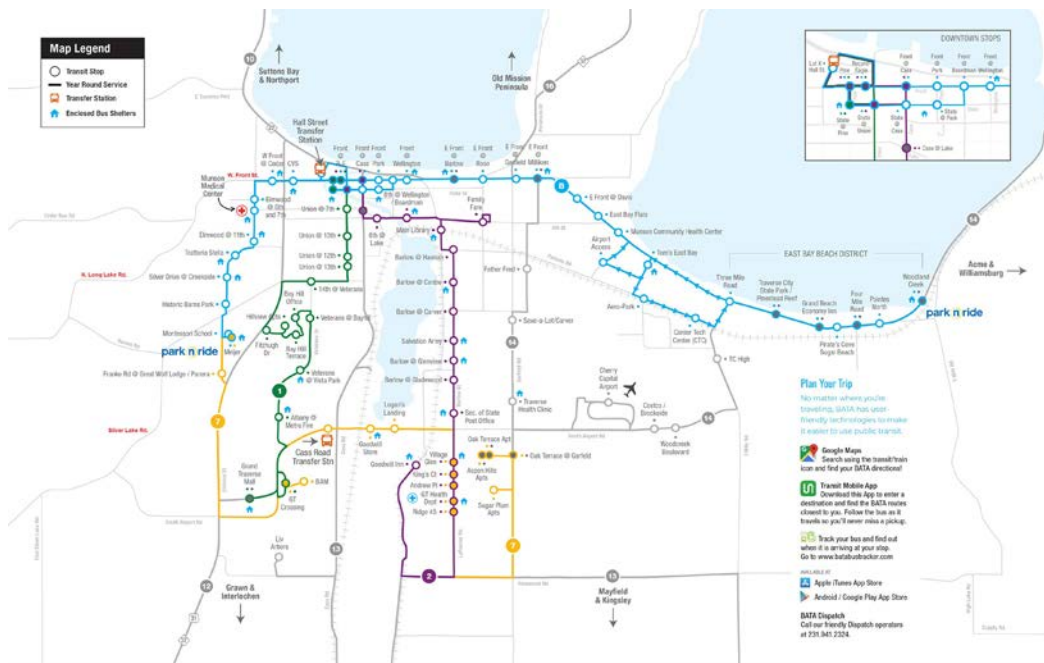
2.) Data gathered from United States Census Table B08201: Household Size by Vehicle Available.  
3.) Data gathered from United States Census Table S0101: Age and Sex.



Although the Traverse City Mobility Action Plan provides a number of specific recommendations, it primarily acts as a methodology for integrating bike and pedestrian infrastructure into the City's existing capital improvements process. It also provides suggestions towards shifting thinking and perceptions about transportation modes and their operations for City staff, community stakeholders, and the general public.

While the Mobility Action Plan emphasizes non-motorized travel with a particular emphasis on bicycling infrastructure, this Plan also acknowledges the importance of pedestrian infrastructure along with access to public transit. BATA has been an active partner throughout the Mobility Action Plan process, participating as a member of the Leadership Committee and sharing valuable insights on the system's function and relationship with other modes. Sidewalk and streetscape environments play a crucial role in Traverse City's mobility network, as they encourage walkability through its many neighborhoods and business districts. While there remains room for general improvement, the sidewalk network features extensive coverage – a testament to the City's emphasis on walkability over time. Sidewalks, crosswalks, and other pedestrian infrastructure improvements are included in the Mobility Action Plan; however since the bicycle network has historically been more lacking than the pedestrian network, the primary focus of the Plan is to enhance the City's bicycle infrastructure to achieve the community's vision of a balanced and complete mobility network.

...  
*will be designed with all users in mind, regardless of how they choose to travel.*

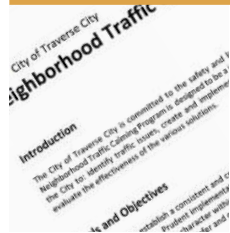


Above: BATA Transit Map

## Previous Transportation Planning Initiatives

Traverse City has long focused on improving the city's mobility network – this is evidenced in the number of city policies and transportation-oriented plans, and street reconstruction and improvement projects the City has undertaken over the past decade. Although not comprehensive, a number of those pertinent to the Mobility Action Plan are discussed below:

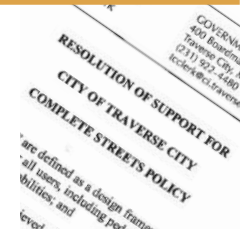
### 2011



**Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program (2011)** – Adopted by the City Commission in April 2011, this program outlined the community's desire for lower-speed streets through street calming treatments. It outlined a process where residents could contact the City and request traffic calming devices to be installed on their streets. City staff would then analyze the area and determine whether these devices were appropriate. Over the years, this program was underutilized due to a lack of dedicated resources.

### 2011

**Complete Streets Resolution (2011)** – Adopted by the City Commission in October 2011, this resolution outlined the City's commitment towards a street network that "provides convenient access for all users." This resolution also stated the City's intent to develop a non-motorized transportation plan that is ultimately integrated into the street improvement program.



### 2013



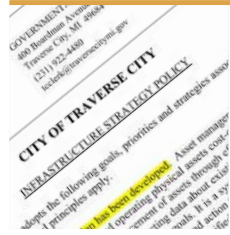
**Corridors Master Plan (2013)** – This plan focused on streetscape improvements and land use recommendations along East Front Street, West Front Street, Eighth Street, Fourteenth Street, and Garfield Avenue. Although the plan considered the city's transportation network, this plan was largely oriented towards changing building development and streetscape standards along these corridors.

### 2014

**Active Transportation Plan (2014)\* Not Formally Adopted** – Developed by the Active Transportation Committee (a sub-committee of the Planning Commission), this document recommended changes to the City's transportation policies and identified specific infrastructure improvements. While not formally adopted, this plan envisioned "a complete, well-maintained, active transportation network that encourages a healthy mix of transportation choices."



## 2014



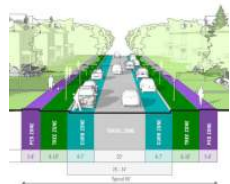
**Infrastructure Strategy Resolution (2014)** - An amendment to the City's Infrastructure Strategy adopted in 2009, this resolution stated that the City' infrastructure process would follow a developed asset management plan, reference design guides developed by the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and be managed as a system, including underground and aboveground infrastructure. The resolution also prioritized infrastructure expenditures, with sidewalks and local streets being the highest priority for maintenance and repair.

## 2017

**Envision Eighth Street Plan (2017)** - Providing a vision for Eighth Street as a mixed-use district, this plan proposed the cycle track configuration currently existing on Eighth Street. The plan also provided landscape and streetscape features to incorporate within the proposed North Boardman Lake District (NBLD).



## 2018



**Street Design Manual (2018)** - This plan provides a toolkit for desired street characteristics based on their context. This manual classified all streets in Traverse City and provided a preferred street design for each street classification. While useful in identifying components of successful streets, this manual is a high-level design guide that does not address implementation from a city-wide standpoint.

*\*The Street Design Manual is intended to work in tandem with the Mobility Action Plan*

## 2022

**Transportation Demand Management Study (2022)** - Adopted by the Traverse City Downtown Development Authority (DDA), this report provides "quick-win" opportunities, short-term priorities, and recommendations for further study. These recommendations are oriented towards improving mobility within the downtown district.



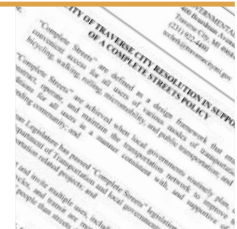
## 2022



**BATA Transit Master Plan (2022)** – Developed to guide the regional transit agency over the next ten (10) years, this report outlined the system’s operations after the COVID-19 pandemic and identified steps to address ridership and staffing shortages to meet demand. Some steps involved concentrating service in higher-density, higher-demand areas as well as increasing frequency to areas outside of Traverse City. This plan integrates with mobility in Traverse City by extending the reach of those walking or cycling, as a regional transit system complements the City’s mobility network.

## 2022

**Complete Streets Resolution (2022)** - Adopted by the City Commission in December 2022, this resolution reaffirmed Traverse City’s Complete Streets Policy from 2011, restating its commitment towards complete streets and a balanced mobility network. This resolution was adopted as a means to support the on-going work of the Mobility Action Plan while also informing development of a future Complete Streets Policy.



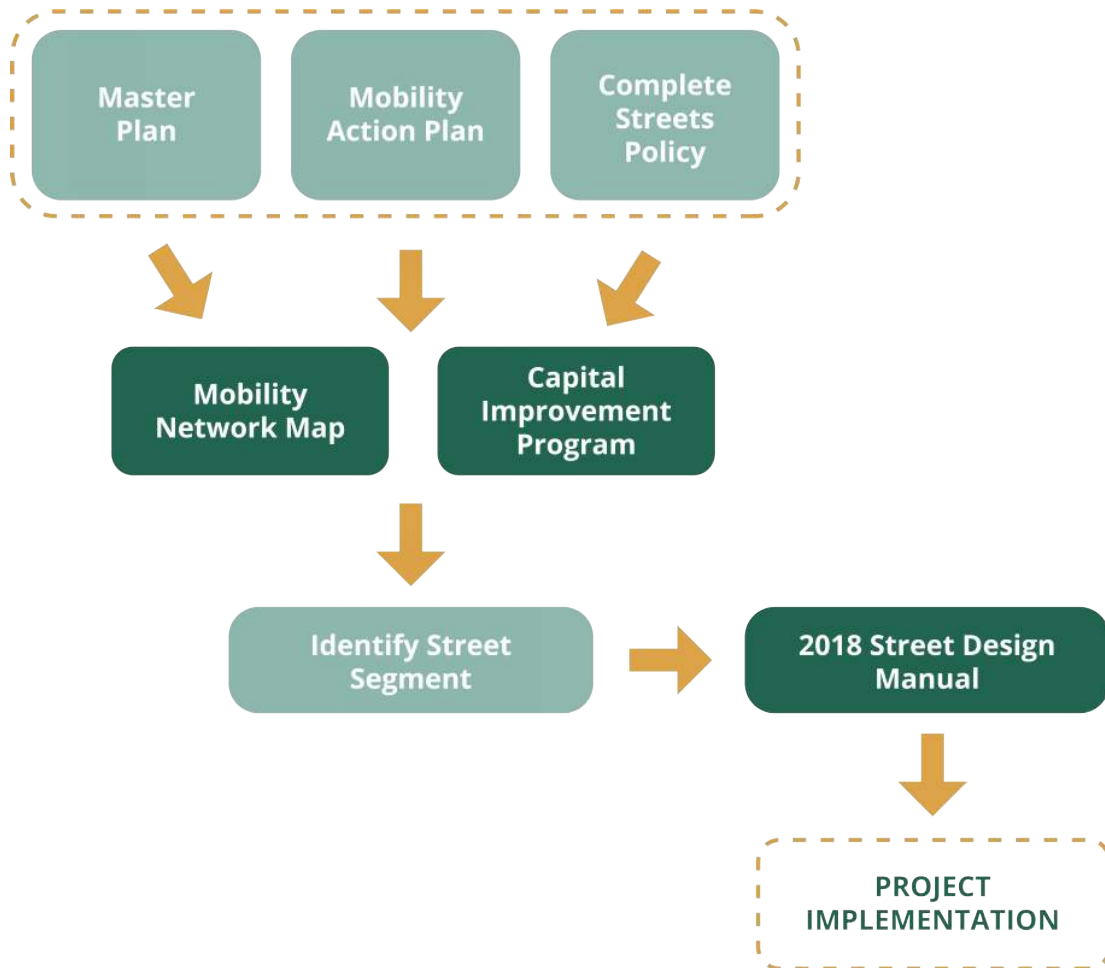
These past studies, reports, and resolutions indicate Traverse City’s commitment towards making the city a more welcoming place to walk and ride a bike. While representing the City’s mobility values, these various plans have not provided a unified citywide bicycle network plan while providing a framework for city staff to incrementally work towards its completion. With this in mind, the Mobility Action Plan was developed to meet this need and serve as a critical policy document that assigns modal hierarchy to Traverse City’s street network and provides guidance to City staff in a way that allows the network to be nimbler and evolve to meet community needs.

### *What is Mobility?*

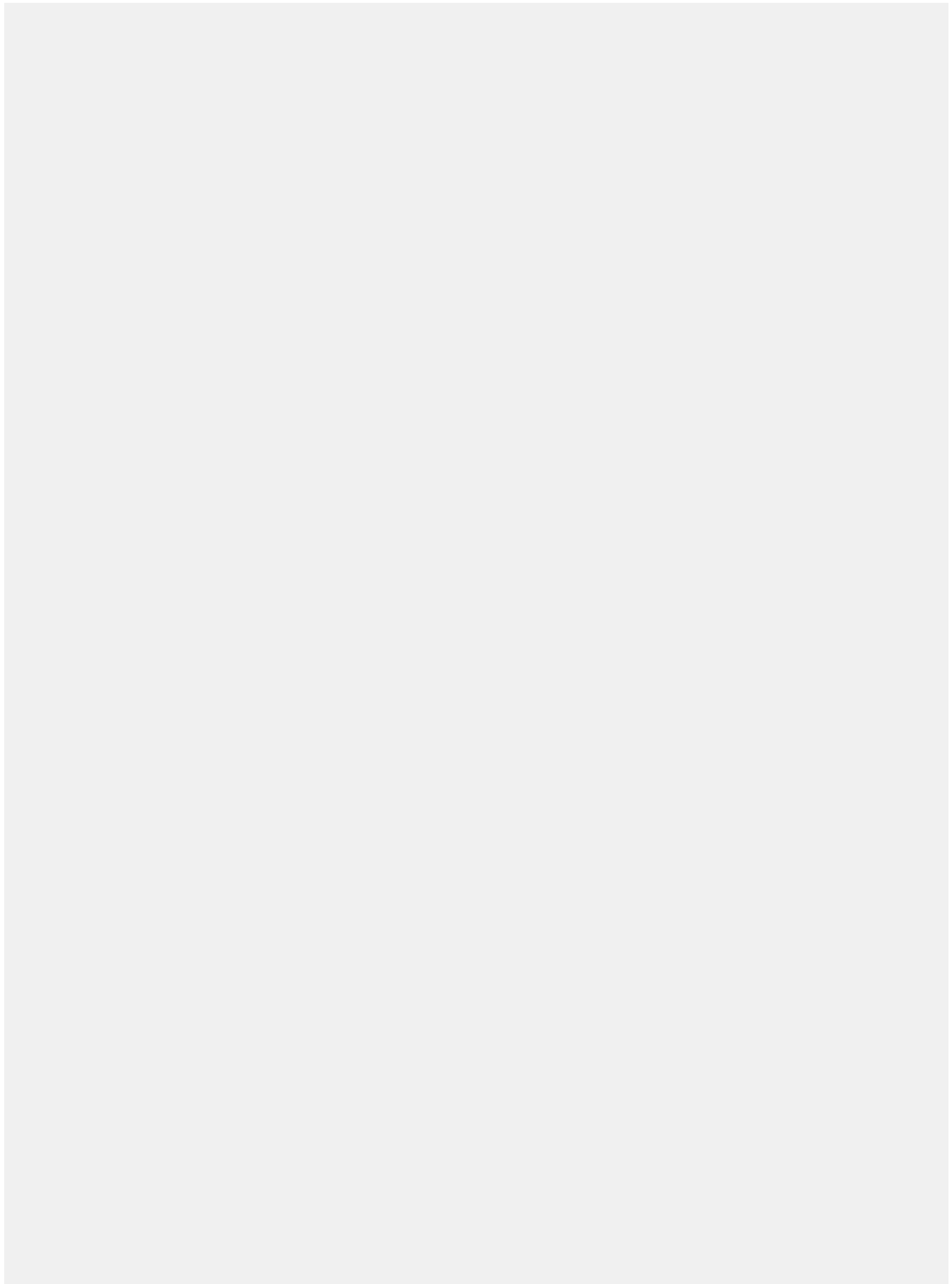
*“Mobility” refers to a person’s ability to move freely and easily. It’s not just about how fast people can travel, but how easily they can access desired destinations, such as jobs, services, and social interactions. In the context of getting around Traverse City, mobility implies a transportation network that empowers people of all ages and physical abilities to travel safely to all parts of the city by walking, bicycling, or through other non-motorized transportation methods.*

## How To Use This Plan

The Mobility Action Plan is a component of the City's Master Plan; it is tasked with taking a "deeper dive" into the topic of mobility and how the vision of this plan will be incorporated into the City's capital infrastructure and maintenance process. Oriented around action, this document outlines steps to be taken by City staff and provides the basis for allocating resources towards developing the City's mobility network as well as improving City operations for the ongoing maintenance of infrastructure. This process is discussed further in Chapter 7: Implementation.



As the City's overarching, long-range mobility plan, the Mobility Action Plan will inform the policies that ultimately guide the amendment and development of infrastructure ordinances. This structure also works in tandem with the 2018 Street Design Manual, as the Mobility Action Plan provides a framework towards the incremental development of the City's mobility network while the Street Design Manual offers design guidelines for what Traverse City's streets can look like. This mobility infrastructure suite – from the long-range plan to the guiding policies to the ordinances and design guides – all of these work towards making Traverse City a better place for all mobility users.



# 2

## Mobility Vision

Traverse City is a community with high mobility aspirations. Not content with simply being “good enough,” there is widespread desire for the City to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with not only the premier bicycling communities here in Michigan but those across the nation. This bold and progressive goal envisions a place where residents live their daily lives walking and bicycling, no longer dependent on an car in a way that aligns with community values. This vision is encompassed in the Mobility Action Plan’s vision statement.

### *Vision Statement*

*“Traverse City will be a place where people can access jobs, housing, amenities, and natural features using a safe and balanced mobility network that reduces the region’s carbon footprint.”*

### Values

To achieve this vision, five guiding themes were identified through the development of the Mobility Action Plan. These are discussed below.



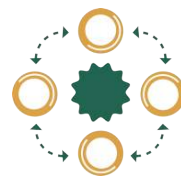
**People**



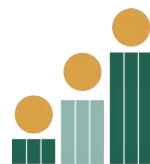
**Environmental Stewardship**



**Connectivity**



**Adaptability**



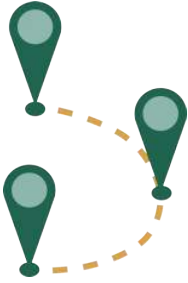
**Prosperity**



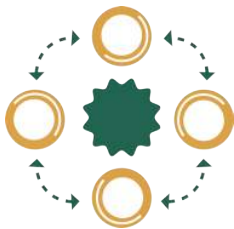
**People** – Traverse City is a city of people spanning all abilities, ages, and stages of life – each with unique transportation needs in their lives. Traverse City desires for its mobility network to provide equitable access to community assets for everyone, empowering them to travel with dignity and comfort. This value recognizes that mobility infrastructure is inherently people-focused. A successful mobility network creates an environment where all people can travel and participate in daily life regardless of life circumstance.



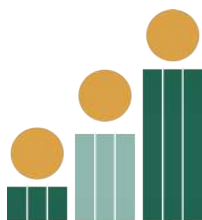
**Environmental Stewardship** – Traverse City follows a stewardship mindset regarding its infrastructure, recognizing that investments in mobility improvements have long-lasting impacts on the City’s overall sustainability and quality of life. This value demonstrates respect for Traverse City’s unique natural environment and infrastructure’s role in encouraging an active and healthy lifestyle.



**Connectivity** - Traverse City desires to be a place where people can access all parts of the city and region using a safe, convenient, and comfortable mobility network. This value emphasizes the importance of connections; to work and school, across busy high-volume roadways, to recreation opportunities, over the Boardman-Ottaway River, to places to shop and receive services, between all neighborhoods throughout the city, and to other modes such as transit. This value conveys a connectivity commitment, pulling all parts of the city closer together.



**Adaptability** – Traverse City desires to be a community responsive to change and views its streets as an asset to be managed and modified in response to changing conditions over time. While addressing the anticipated conditions brought by climate change, this value also focuses on how street design can evolve incrementally over time. Streets designed fifty-plus years ago fail to account for today’s complexities, just as streets designed today will likely be rendered obsolete by future conditions. Humbly acknowledging this reality along with a posture of incremental change can create an adaptable mobility network that best meets current and foreseeable future needs.



**Prosperity** – Traverse City views its mobility network as an economic driver. Increased mobility options knit the local business and employment ecosystem closer together and create a welcoming environment for all types of people. This value recognizes that places conducive to people walking and bicycling support strong business districts, livable neighborhoods, and provide opportunities to access hubs of employment and commerce – all generating economic value to the broader community.



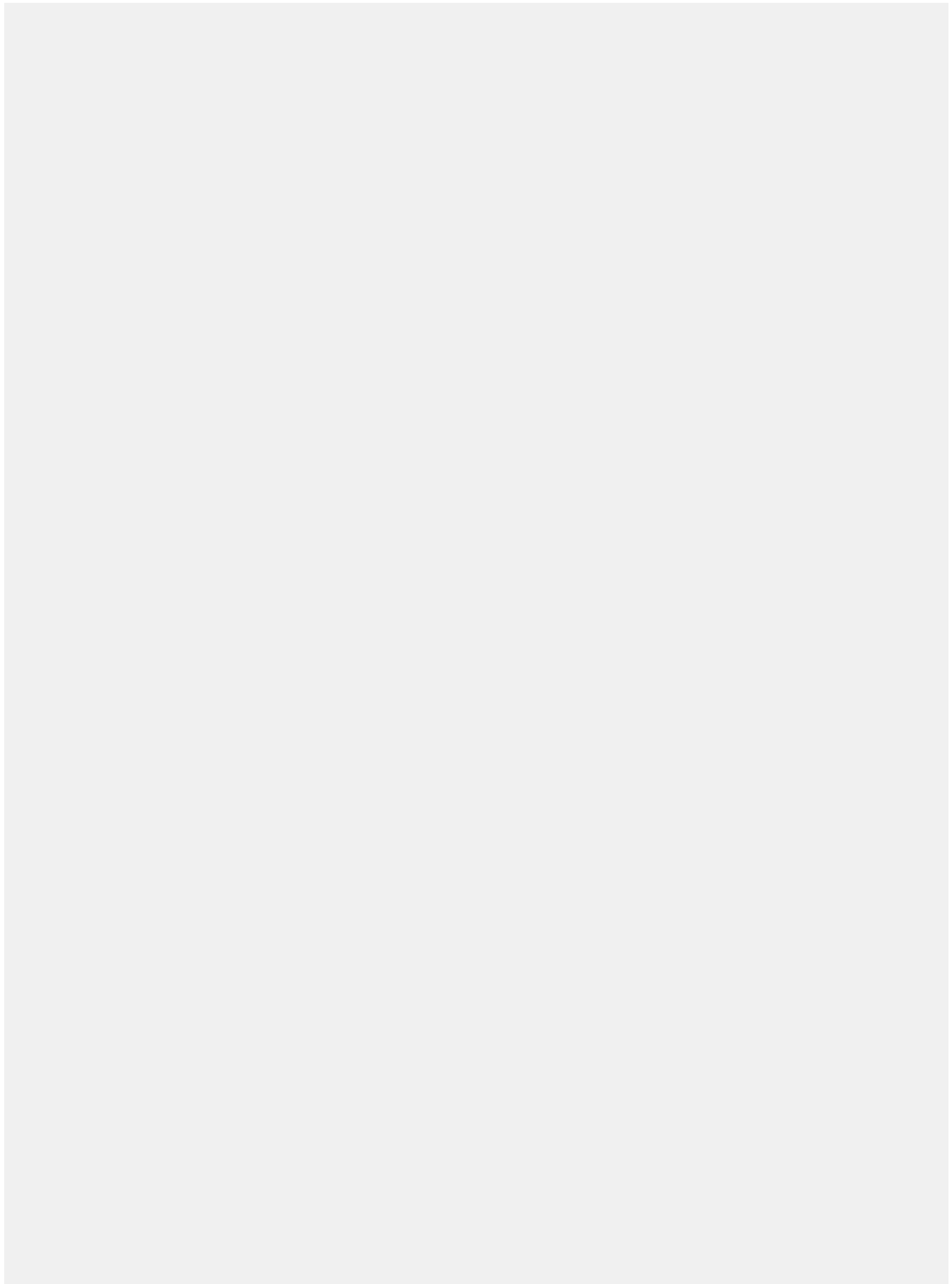
## Infrastructure & Culture: Ingredients for Shifting the Mobility Paradigm

While many non-motorized plans focus solely on physical infrastructure, this is only half of the story. A community's mobility culture – its understanding and interactions between all mobility users – ultimately shapes how welcoming it is towards pedestrians, cyclists, and transit riders. A healthy mobility culture is one of shared responsibility and respect; it's one where people walking, biking, waiting for the bus, or driving a car/SUV/truck interact safely and predictably. In contrast, an unhealthy mobility culture is where people walking, biking, riding transit, or driving a car/SUV/truck are antagonistic towards one another; it's characterized by an environment that is hostile, unpredictable, and unsafe for all mobility users.

In this sense, even the best mobility infrastructure can only go so far in shaping a community's posture towards mobility. Because of this, changing mobility infrastructure must be paired with changing mobility culture. While less visible than a protected bicycling facility or a striped crosswalk, mobility culture is nonetheless a foundational component in creating a welcoming bicycling and walking community. Fostering a culture change takes time, but its rewards are evident in the way mobility users interact with one another. Chapter 4 describes how culture can begin to shift towards one of shared safety, predictability, and hospitality.



*Children's Cycling Class Minneapolis, MN*



# 3

## Community Engagement



*October 26, 2022 Community Open House*

The overall vision of the Mobility Action Plan was established through rigorous public engagement over a year-long period. Due to its simultaneous development with the Master Plan, public engagement efforts for the Mobility Action Plan were largely coordinated with the Master Plan Team. This process intended to reach as many residents and stakeholders as possible, as participants could offer feedback on both plans shaping Traverse City's future.

Beginning in the fall of 2022, the planning team engaged the public through community surveys followed by a Master Plan + Mobility Action Plan Community Open House event on October 26, 2022. Information from the open house and survey results shaped the development of the Mobility Action Plan's overarching themes, values, and the first draft of the City's proposed mobility network. These were then brought before the public at the March 15, 2023 Open House for further feedback and refinement. This feedback guided the final development of the Mobility Action Plan.

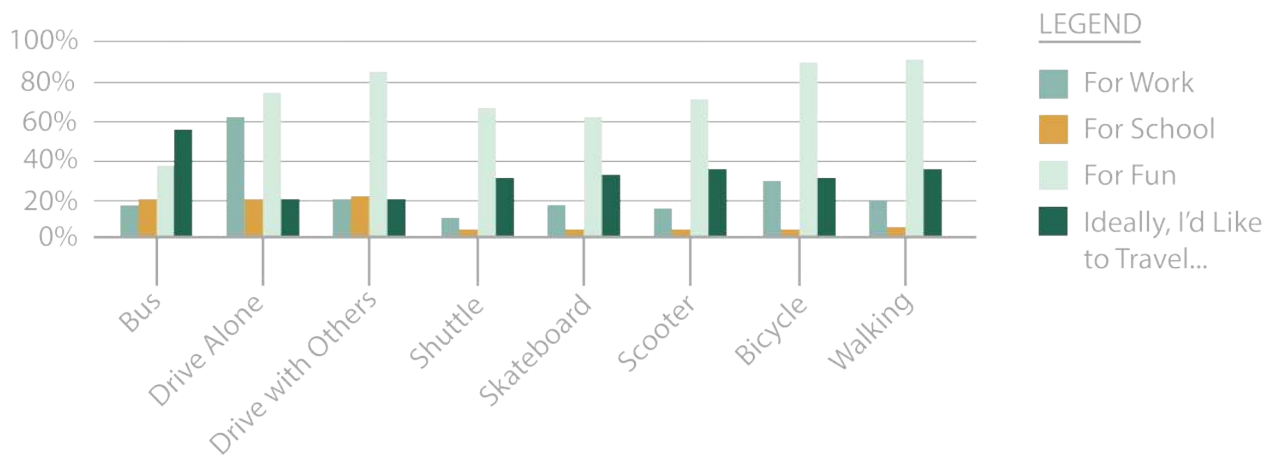
Throughout this process, development of the Mobility Action Plan was guided by the Mobility Action Plan Leadership Team. Comprised of elected and appointed officials, City staff, and mobility stakeholders, this group dedicated their time, energy, and expertise towards shaping this Plan.

Summaries of how community engagement shaped the Mobility Action Plan are described on the following pages.

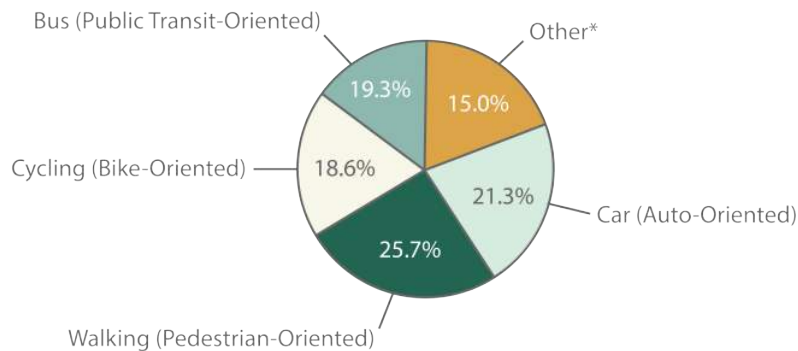
## Community Survey

**First Community Survey** - Developed in partnership with the Master Plan Team, the first community survey was released in September 2022 and closed in October 2022. This survey largely focused on respondent’s demographic information, however a number of questions identified how residents travel around Traverse City as well as their future mobility preferences. An astonishing 1,910 people participated in this survey, offering a large pool of information to pull from. Results on mobility-related questions are included below:

**Question 10:** How do you transport yourself on a daily basis? Select all that apply.



**Question 13:** What modes of transportation should Traverse City prioritize going forward? Rank from highest (#1) to lowest (#8) the following transportation modes.



|                               | Choice #1  |       | Choice #2  |       | Combined   |       |
|-------------------------------|------------|-------|------------|-------|------------|-------|
|                               | Percentage | Count | Percentage | Count | Percentage | Count |
| Bus (Public Transit-Oriented) | 19.52%     | 351   | 20.08%     | 361   | 19.3%      | 712   |
| Car (Auto-Oriented)           | 31.77%     | 577   | 11.56%     | 210   | 21.3%      | 787   |
| Walking (Pedestrian-Oriented) | 24.92%     | 451   | 27.40%     | 496   | 25.7%      | 947   |
| Cycling (Bike-Oriented)       | 13.49%     | 246   | 24.23%     | 442   | 18.6%      | 688   |
| Other*                        | 12.87%     | 234   | 17.75%     | 322   | 15.0%      | 556   |

\*Other category includes freight, skateboard/scooter, shuttles or ride-sharing, and rail

These survey results indicate that residents travel primarily by car alone but desire to use alternative transportation modes. Participants typically walk and ride their bicycles for recreation purposes as opposed to transportation. Participants also desire the City to prioritize pedestrian transportation modes over other modes. Due to the City's relatively extensive pedestrian network in comparison to its bicycle network, these desires for better street crossings and non-motorized infrastructure aligns with the Mobility Action Plan's goal to enhance alternative transportation modes across the city.

**Second Community Survey** – Released in November 2022, this survey acted as a follow-up from the Open House held on October 26, 2022. In total, 676 people participated in the survey and offered further feedback on their mobility values. These responses indicated support for the City's transition to a multi-modal mobility network as well as identified improved traffic management during summer months as a priority.

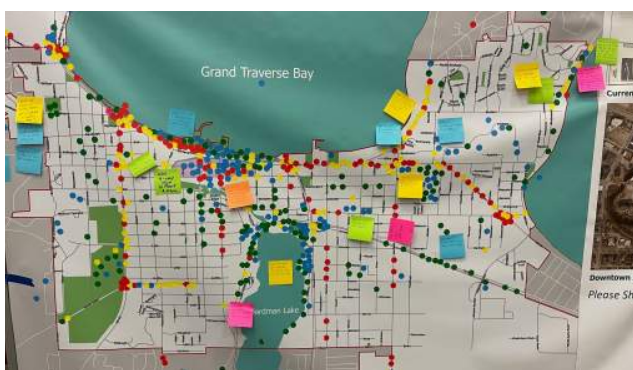
## Community Events

To achieve this vision, five guiding themes were identified through the development of the Mobility Action Plan. These are discussed below.

**Community Event #1** – Hosted at the Hagerty Center on October 26, 2022, this was a joint open house-style event held with the Master Plan Team. Over 200 people participated in the event throughout the evening, offering their thoughts for both the Master Plan and Mobility Action Plan. Event exercises were crafted with maximum inclusivity in mind – ensuring that attendees of all ages and abilities could offer their feedback and engage in thoughtful conversations about the City's future mobility network.

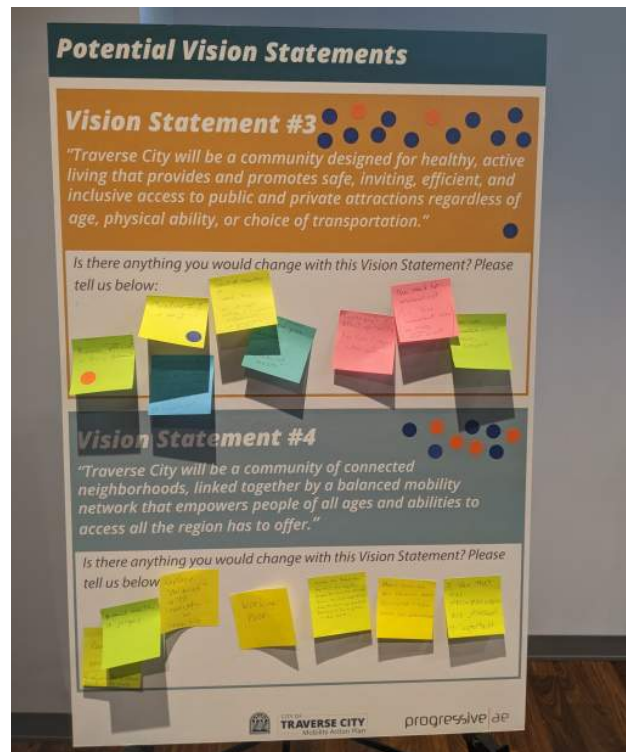
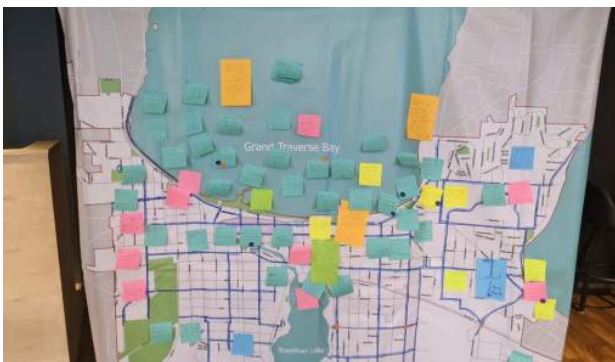


Images and Feedback from October 26, 2022 Community Open House



Images and Feedback from October 26, 2022 Community Open House

**Community Event #2** – Hosted at The Alluvion in the Commongrounds Building, this open house-style event was held on March 15, 2023 and provided a casual environment to engage and converse with participants. The primary focus of this event was discussing proposed themes, values, and vision statements as well as presenting the first draft of the mobility network. Participants were asked to vote on which themes, values, and vision statements most resonated with their future mobility vision in Traverse City. Participants were also asked to “brand their streets,” or develop a brand that identifies their desired street design unique to Traverse City. They were also asked to provide feedback on the draft mobility network map, placing notes and drawing lines on areas they felt should be included in the network. Interactive street pieces were also laid out on a table for participants to manipulate, offering them an opportunity to envision their preferred street designs given what is feasible in relation to limited rights-of-way and trade-offs.



These events indicated the strong emphasis that Traverse City residents place on mobility. Some key takeaways included the importance of safety and education, a widespread desire for protected pedestrian facilities and trails, maintaining the city’s connection to nature, and increasing connectivity across high-speed, high-volume streets.

Images from March 15, 2023 Community Open House



*Mobility Action Plan Leadership Committee Bike Tour (October 2022)*

## **Mobility Action Plan Leadership Team**

Development of the Plan was guided by the Mobility Action Plan Leadership Team – a group of City leaders, City staff, and mobility stakeholders that met monthly throughout the planning process. This group provided insight into city operations, including planning, infrastructure maintenance, engineering, and parking management. Along with feedback heard from public participation, the Leadership Team was crucial in developing the Plan’s overall vision and mobility network and ultimately act as “ambassadors” of the Mobility Action Plan.

## **Planning Commission + City Commission**

The Mobility Action Plan Team also presented and sought feedback from the Planning Commission and City Commission in joint workshops throughout the process. Held on October 24, 2022, January 9, 2023, and March 13, 2023, these meetings summarized public feedback, discussed street design, highlighted proposed tactical engagement projects, and presented the proposed mobility network. These sessions ensured City leadership was involved in the process and contributed to the decision-making guiding the plan’s development.

## **Downtown Development Authority (DDA) Board**

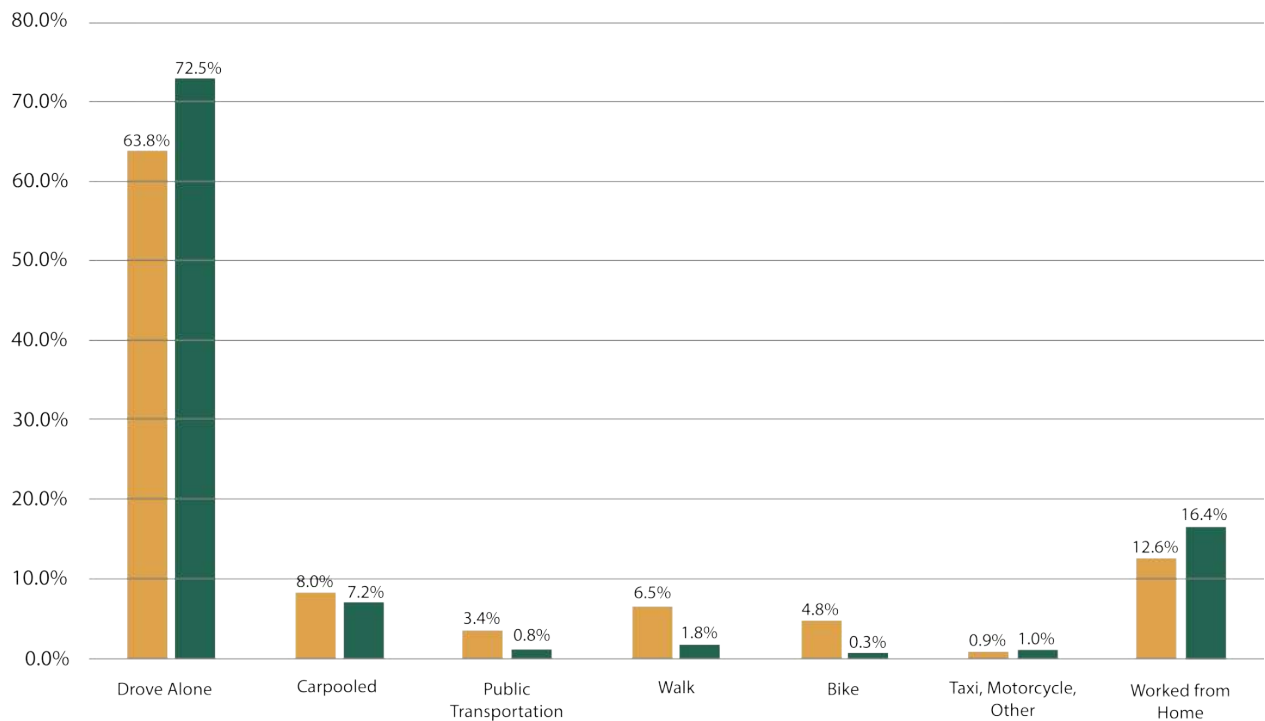
Regular updates were made to the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) Board. These presentations kept downtown leaders apprised of the planning process and offered them a venue to provide feedback. Due to downtown’s unique characteristics, these meetings provided information that informed development of the proposed mobility network.



# 4

## Mobility Culture

Shifting a community's culture surrounding transportation does not occur overnight. The way people get around – the driving and bicycling habits they develop, how they interact with other mobility users, how they handle incidents of unpredictability – are engrained through lived experiences and reinforced by existing infrastructure. For decades, Traverse City's mobility culture has been oriented around motorized vehicles. While slowly changing, this perception viewed streets as belonging solely to cars – pedestrians and cyclists were tolerated as long as they remained out of the street. Today, Traverse City features one of the highest shares of bike and walking commuters in Michigan and has experienced declining rates of single-occupancy vehicle usage over the past 10 years. While representing change, continuing to shift the perspective surrounding mobility is a momentous undertaking; however, it is required if the tenets of this Plan are to be acted out and fully realized.



- Traverse City (2021)
- Michigan Statewide (2021)

### Means of Transportation to Work (2021)

*Data Gathered from United States Census Bureau, 2015-2022, ACS 5-Year Estimates.*

## Existing Mobility Perceptions

Before we envision the mobility culture we desire, we must first acknowledge existing perceptions surrounding transportation in Traverse City. The October 26, 2022 Community Open House offered a candid view into how residents perceive walking, bicycling, and driving around the city. Listed below are a number of quotes from residents that speak on the city's current mobility culture.

"I'd like to see Division Street up to 14th Street just go away. I think it's a terrible thing. It's like the Cross Bronx Expressway in the Bronx. It just cuts the neighborhood - you can't get across it except at the traffic light."

"I think biking is definitely a part of it, but if we're being realistic, you know we do have winter here in Northern Michigan."

"I guess more traffic calming measures would be nice too. Slower speeds and maybe more - I don't know what it takes - more patrol or more speed bumps - calming the traffic."

"I bike as much as I can. I live downtown. But I also drive a lot because unfortunately most of the things I need aren't within biking distance."

"It would be nice to have more consistent lighting in the evenings throughout the city. Because sometimes it gets pretty dark and it is hard to see bicyclists."

"Well, right now the system of bike lanes in the town are disjointed. I think it would help if it was more cohesive, more consistent from one area to the next."

"I recently took a trip up from Cass and Eighth roughly to the Sutton Bay Trail and I found it pretty difficult to negotiate the crossing at Grandview Parkway and to get up to where the trail started."

"It is extremely difficult [to get around] during the summertime. For you know, eight to ten weeks, it's a pain. But other than that, the city in itself is fairly easy to get around. There are some routes to take to avoid some of the bottlenecks."

"I walk and I drive my car. I no longer ride my bike because it's taking my life in my own hands. I've given that up."

"I think it's really important that I think if we want to see more families cycle and also more women cycle, you have to create those protected spaces."

"One thing to realize is that everyone does not ride a bike anymore, and that if you do ride a bike that you should follow the rules because I certainly notice bicyclists not stopping or not looking for another car or something like that."

"Every day we do get out to run or bike, so that counts too and we try to do that for errands. We're lucky where we live right now where we can bike to restaurants, downtown bike to the bar, bike to the grocery store."

These quotes demonstrate an apprehension towards walking and bicycling – largely formed from a perceived lack of safety. This perception seemingly accepts the existing transportation system as built around cars, with cyclists and pedestrians sacrificing their safety and comfort in efforts to navigate it. Residents choosing to walk or bicycle around town gravitate towards slower-speed routes that seem “less risky” - only interacting with high-speed and high-traffic streets when absolutely necessary. For others though, this perceived lack of safety is enough of a deterrent to prevent them from riding their bike or walking altogether.



**Above:** Woodmere Avenue



**Above Top:** Division Street and Grandview Parkway



**Above Bottom:** Division Street north of Fourteenth Street

Existing perceptions surrounding public transit are also met with skepticism. Although transit is an important component of Traverse City’s mobility network, stigmas regarding its usage unfortunately persist. Like many communities, “riding the bus” is viewed as a last-resort option that is inconvenient and carries an unfortunate perception of being “lower-class.” Changing this perception is key to addressing traffic congestion, achieving the City’s ambitious climate goals, and breaking down barriers for people with limited mobility options.

These existing perceptions on walking, bicycling, and riding transit reinforce the belief that the mobility network is made solely for vehicles, resulting in fewer people that are comfortable interacting with traffic. This leads to infrequent and unpredictable behavior between bicyclists and motorists, increasing frustration and distrust among mobility users.

## Different Places, Different Mobility Experiences

Just as no two cities are alike, mobility culture is unique to each place. We all have unique experiences that inform our perception of a community's mobility culture – both good and bad. Some of these stories we have experienced in the past are:

1

**Chicago** – Like schools of fish, the volume of people walking in downtown Chicago requires patience and a keen awareness from people driving downtown. Due to the “strength in numbers” mentality, this can embolden some people walking or cycling to take more aggressive actions such as jumping into crosswalks or weaving between cars on bicycles. This in turn creates conflict and unpredictability among people driving which results in Chicago's constant drone of car horns.

4

**Atlanta** – People driving cars stop and give ample room for people walking in the crosswalks – perhaps as an acknowledgement of Georgia's heat or a perception that people outdoors in the summer need to get to their destinations quickly.

7

**Houston** – Vast and sprawling, Houston is an environment of freeways and high-speed roads. While the city's infrastructure sets the stage, a culture of fast driving and lax enforcement creates a “wild west” environment where people walking and bicycling are taking their lives into their own hands. Because of this, bicyclists commonly ride on sidewalks, creating conflicts with people walking as well as drivers turning into parking lots.

2

**Minneapolis** – A city that takes bicycling seriously, people on bikes follow the rules of the road to a point. People cycling at night are reminded by others to turn on their bike lights and bicyclists stay in the directional lanes on the city's many two-way cycle tracks. In response, people driving give ample room to bicyclists, embodying a culture of shared street safety in the Twin Cities.

5

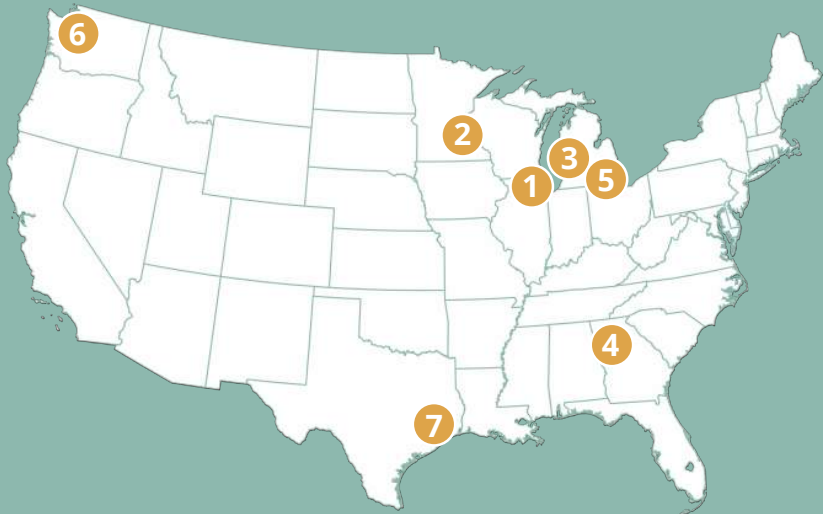
**Ann Arbor** – Although home to the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor's bicycling culture extends far past the university's campus. Known for its politically engaged and climate-focused populace, “The People's Republic of Ann Arbor” features some of the boldest bicycle infrastructure in the state, including two-way cycle tracks on downtown streets. The City has also passed ordinances protecting pedestrians in crosswalks, representing the City's emphasis on mobility.

3

**East Grand Rapids** – A community oriented around walkability, East Grand Rapids residents value mobility highly and are vocal about desiring improvements. Identified as one of the most walkable communities in Michigan, residents have pushed the city to continue expanding its pedestrian network in recent years, culminating in new crosswalks, bike lanes, and sidewalk improvements. Large crowds walking around Reeds Lake, visiting Gaslight Village, and riding bikes through town are a testament to resident's commitment towards pedestrian infrastructure.

6

**Seattle** – With numerous tourists visiting the Emerald City, there are opportunities for conflict between people walking, bicycling, and driving. Residents remind people to follow pavement markings and walk and bicycle in designated lanes, reducing the potential for crashes.



Changing this negative feedback loop is necessary in improving the relationship between motorists, cyclists, transit riders, and pedestrians. This moves these interactions from antagonistic in nature towards cooperative, as all mobility users have a shared interest in a predictable and safe transportation system. Provided below are the “Five E’s” for shifting mobility culture (Encouragement, Education, Enforcement, Engineering, and Empathy). These pursue a mobility network that is equitable and accessible for all people.



Traffic on Divison Street

***Equity** in the context of walking and biking ensures that all transportation projects and policies prioritize the diverse needs of every community member, emphasizing the inclusion of historically underserved or marginalized groups. It is imperative that we strive for a transportation landscape where opportunities, benefits, and resources are distributed fairly across all demographics, addressing and rectifying any disparities in transportation access.*

***Access** emphasizes the importance of creating a transportation environment where all residents, irrespective of their background, age, or physical abilities, can easily reach their desired destinations. This involves not just physical infrastructure but also considers the affordability, safety, and convenience of transportation options. In Traverse City, integrating Equity and Access into our transportation planning ensures a truly inclusive community, where walking and biking are viable, enjoyable, and equitable choices for all.*

## Encouragement

Unsurprisingly, how people discuss mobility impacts other people’s perceptions of it. Recognizing this, a successful communications strategy that conveys the benefits of a balanced mobility network can shift the conversation towards a better balance across all transportation modes. Although messaging and education are often joined together, encouragement refers to the packaging and format that information is conveyed.

As topics of mobility and transportation often elicit strong emotions, how this information is packaged and presented is extremely important. It should be noted that the current paradigm of transportation planning has been in place for decades; entire generations have grown up and become accustomed to seemingly ever-increasing car-oriented infrastructure investments. Because of this, prospects of change may be viewed as an unnecessary deviation of “what proper infrastructure is” and may represent an attack on what they have become familiar with over their lifetimes. In this sense, messaging needs to acknowledge this while also conveying the values of proposed changes (the “Why”) and how everyone ultimately benefits from a diversified mobility network.

Effective messaging campaigns often mimic Aristotle’s method of rhetorical persuasion. Understanding that we are more open to viewpoints that touch our hearts (*pathos*), minds (*logos*), and lived experiences (*ethos*) – this messaging device can create a sensible story of why mobility is important in Traverse City while bolstering it with supporting data. Summaries of how this is commonly achieved in other messaging campaigns are included on the following page.

**Appeal to Emotion (Pathos)** – This device is oriented towards evoking emotions such as curiosity or empathy. This is typically achieved by introducing a character, person, or story that the audience relates with and feels a connection towards. By telling this story, the audience puts themselves in the character’s shoes – offering a snapshot of how they live and what factors influence their lives.

## Planning for Raven



**RAVEN** is eight years old and lives with her mom, brother, and sister in Southwest Detroit. Our challenge is to ask how we can support people like Raven each time we make decisions about our transportation system.

**TODAY**, Raven can’t do all the things she wants. There are few safe crossings on busy streets around her home, speeding drivers, not many street trees, and inconsistent bikeways that she is comfortable using with her mom. Investing in our streets is an investment in Raven and others like her.

Achieving the Streets for People vision will make it easier for Raven to walk with her mom to school at Maybury Elementary, safer to bike to Riverside Park or take the bus to visit her grandparents at Livernois and Outer Drive, and give the people in her network more ways to stay connected.



Example of an Emotional Appeal (Pathos). Detroit Streets for People Plan (2022). Page 4.

**Appeal to Logic (Logos)** – This device is focused on providing a rational conclusion that is supported by relevant data. The conclusion must be easy for the audience to follow and any supporting data must be accurate. Using this device allows the audience to follow the message’s rationale, understand the reasoning behind the viewpoint, and process the tangible data that supports the message.

**One in three Americans is age 50 or older**  
**Is your community a great place for people of all ages?**  
**By 2030, one out of every five people in the United States will be 65 or older**  
**Will your community be ready?**

---

Visit us often at [AARP.org/livable](https://www.aarp.org/livable)  
**Information and inspiration for local leaders**

The logo is circular with a red border and the text 'AARP LIVABLE COMMUNITIES' around the top. Inside the circle, there are icons representing a house, a tree, a person walking, a person on a bicycle, and a bus.

Example of a Logical Appeal (Logos). American Association of Retired Persons: Public Policy Institute. (2022).

**Appeal to Character (Ethos)** – This device is used to bolster the credibility of the message’s source; the audience is more receptive to messages coming from reliable and trustworthy individuals, entities, and organizations. Employing this device assures the audience the message comes from a reputable and reasonable source. One way of bolstering this appeal is to build partnerships with reputable organizations within the area to share the message. This builds credibility as it shows that numerous organizations endorse the message, indicating it has broad support and is a meaningful endeavor.

Tying these together, an example of mobility messaging that utilizes all three rhetorical devices (*pathos, logos, ethos*) is included below.

*“For years, Cynthia has wanted to bike to school with her two young children, but her discomfort with riding in the street along with fears of her children interacting with high-speed traffic have deterred her from doing so (**pathos**). A recent survey has shown that Cynthia is not alone; of X total number of participants, Y participants indicated a desire to walk or bike with their children to school. This indicates widespread support for better mobility facilities connecting neighborhoods to nearby schools (**logos**). As an active partner with our local schools (**ethos**), the City will continue to pursue opportunities to better connect people like Cynthia and her children to school.”*



Examples of bike advocacy billboards.

**Far Left:** Bike BloNo (Bloomington-Normal, IL) Educational Billboard.

**Left:** BIKE FM (Fargo, ND Moorhead, MN) Educational Billboard.

## Education

Although messaging introduces the concept and merits of a multi-modal mobility network, education provides the “rulebook” on how it is intended to operate. With new infrastructure comes new behavioral expectations; education sets the stage by informing mobility users of these expectations. As more people use different mobility choices to get around, ensuring they understand the “rules of the road” is crucial in fostering shared safety among all users. This can be accomplished through a messaging campaign that is highly visible in the community. This messaging indicates Traverse City’s mobility values to both residents and tourists alike, conveying the expected mobility behaviors they are expected to abide by.

Like encouragement, education requires public-facing materials that engage the public in their day-to-day lives. This can be as simple as posters or billboards in public spaces or sharing posts via social media. Other opportunities include creating a character or icon that immediately conjures a connection to these educational efforts. Two examples include “McGruff the Crime Dog” developed by the Advertising Council in 1980 to raise awareness of police outreach efforts among children as well as “Smokey Bear” developed in 1944 by the United States Forest Service to provide education on natural conservation practices. Both of these characters embody each campaign’s educational message and become familiar messaging advocates over time.



*Examples of characters developed for public education efforts.*

**Above:** McGruff the Crime Dog (Advertising Council).

**Right:** Smokey the Bear (United States Forest Service).

Mobility education campaigns have successfully been implemented in other communities. Examples from Grand Rapids, MI and Fort Collins, CO demonstrate how campaigns can provide information on expected norms for road users. Both campaigns provided information on how mobility groups are expected to interact with one another, creating predictable transportation environments where safety, courtesy, and respect are shared among all street users.

### Grand Rapids - Driving Change

In response to an increase in cyclist/motorist incidents, the City of Grand Rapids partnered with the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) to both promote the City’s mobility network as well as provide education on how cyclists and motorists interact. Completed in 2017, the “Driving Change” campaign featured handouts, videos, and other resources oriented towards improving safety and increasing predictability between all mobility users. The campaign also features a webpage ([grdrivingchange.org](http://grdrivingchange.org)) that contains this content.

Geared towards accessing the broadest audience, these resources were printed in English and Spanish and were promoted through partnerships with neighboring local governments and institutions, non-profits, and other community entities. “Driving Change” is an example of how a community can craft messaging in an educational format that is accessible to all members of the public.



**Driving Change**  
[GRDrivingChange.org](http://GRDrivingChange.org) - Grand Rapids, Michigan, USA





## Fort Collins - Ride Smart, Drive Smart

Developed by the Fort Collins Police Services and the City's FC Bikes program in 2018, the "Ride Smart, Drive Smart" campaign outlined how cyclists and motorists are expected to interact with each other on the roads. This campaign included a van that traveled around town for pop-up educational events as well as brochures outlining traffic laws and expectations in a graphically-rich format. Combined, these provide visible reminders of mobility expectations within the community.



## Enforcement

Like other traffic laws, once street users are educated on expectations or the "rules of the road," traffic enforcement must be implemented to ensure these rules are followed. This reflects Traverse City's commitment to taking safety seriously and creating a culture that values all mobility users. As part of this, however, all mobility users need to follow the rules – whether driving, walking, bicycling, or using other methods of transportation. Signaling that these rules are for everyone reinforces the perception of safety being a shared responsibility and that all mobility users have an equal right to the street network.

While enforcement represents a direct manner in which the City prunes bad mobility behaviors, it would be needed rarely in an ideal world, as a healthy mobility culture grows from a mutual respect and courtesy of other mobility users coupled with street design that encourages safe driving habits. In healthy mobility cultures, enforcement represents maintaining a baseline of mobility expectations – penalizing the worst instances of bad behavior while encouraging compliance with each mobility group's expectations. Although enforcement is an important tool in maintaining the safety of the mobility network, it is insufficient in fostering a healthy mobility culture on its own. Recognizing that bad mobility behavior is driven by a lack of respect and courtesy for other users, healthy mobility cultures focus on cultivating this sense of shared responsibility before enforcement becomes the only tool used to maintain the network's safety.

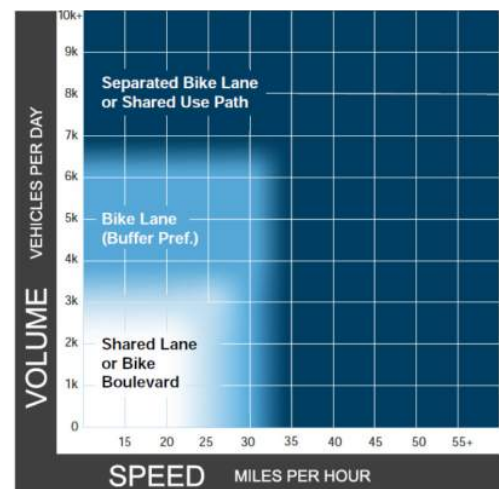
## Engineering

Street design impacts our driving and walking habits, thereby influencing Traverse City's overall mobility culture. People's perception of danger influences how they drive; wide streets with few buildings and trees induce people to drive faster. Narrow streets with lots of trees, high levels of pedestrian activity, and buildings close to the curb encourage people to drive slower. Understanding this unique human behavior can be used to engineer our roads in a way to make them safer for people driving, bicycling, and walking. In this context, engineering refers to how the City's physical environment – its roads, bridges, intersections, and mobility infrastructure – all influence how people interact with other people getting around town.



**Above:** Lancaster Boulevard (Lancaster, CA) before road diet (Left) and after road diet (Right). Image accessed from Project for Public Spaces. **Below:** Preferred Bikeway Types Graphic. Image accessed from Ohio Department of Transportation.

While other ingredients of mobility culture heavily influence residents and those who spend time regularly within the community, engineering impacts behavior for all road users – regardless of whether they live in Traverse City or visit only once a year. Because of this, engineering is the physical representation of the community's values, as narrow roads, tight road geometries, and other traffic calming features require visitors to adhere to the community's mobility expectations.



## Empathy

Mobility is ultimately about connections between people and places; it's a facet of life that is shared by everyone. With this in mind, creating a healthy mobility culture is a human-focused endeavor concerned with how mobility users interact with one another. While mobility users can be labeled as motorists, cyclists, pedestrians, transit riders, and others – they are all people, whether they choose to drive a vehicle or get around on their own two feet. This is where empathy plays a key role in “humanizing” mobility users, as each mobility user is simply another person trying to get around.

*No matter how people travel throughout the day, their journeys begin as pedestrians.*



Empathy refers to an ability to understand another person's feelings or perspectives. This is especially relevant in the realm of transportation, as driving, bicycling, and walking in our current environment of construction, traffic, and bad mobility behavior is commonly a cause of stress and aggravation. Simply put, our times in transportation often don't reflect us at our best moments. This is where empathy towards other mobility users is crucial in creating a healthy mobility culture. If we acknowledge that people we share the roads with have bad days too, whether it's a long day at work or visiting relatives at the hospital – we can extend grace to other users and share streets more generously.

Although empathy is likely the most nebulous ingredient of a healthy mobility culture, it embodies a philosophy of shared safety and common courtesy. By “putting themselves in other's shoes,” mobility users can understand the perspectives of others, regardless of whether they're behind a windshield or a pair of handlebars. For example, understanding that motorists desire predictable behavior from cyclists or that cyclists often avoid bike lanes with road debris in them – understanding where mobility users are coming from and the underlying reasons for their actions helps create empathy among these groups. This aspect of mobility culture is important for making people feel comfortable on Traverse City's streets, regardless of their choice in transportation.

# Existing Mobility Network



# 5

## Existing Conditions and Network

Within Traverse City's 8.6 square miles, there are 80 miles of local and major streets, 7 miles of MDOT-controlled state highways, 23 miles of alleys, and 99 miles of sidewalks. These features form the basis of Traverse City's existing mobility network which is comprised of non-motorized trails (such as the Traverse Area Recreation Trail), dedicated cycle tracks (such as the one on Eighth Street), on-street bicycle lanes, and signed sharrows (such as TART in Town).

There are roughly 31 miles of existing dedicated bicycle facilities in Traverse City, excluding streets that are marked with shared lane markings (aka "sharrows") which do not provide dedicated space for bicycling. The breakdown by facility type is included below:

### *Traverse City Bicycle Facility Types*

|                         |                   |
|-------------------------|-------------------|
| Non-Motorized Trails    | 14.6 Miles        |
| Dedicated Cycle Tracks  | 1.0 Mile          |
| On-Street Bicycle Lanes | 15.4 Miles        |
|                         | <b>31.0 Miles</b> |



**Left:** TART Trail along the waterfront

**Right:** Garfield Avenue and Hannah Street Intersection

Although not formally illustrated in this map, Traverse City’s extensive residential street network represents a comfortable bicycling environment. Characterized by low-speed and low-volume streets, these “shared streets” are often quiet tree-lined environments where cyclists ranging in all ages and abilities can feel comfortable bicycling in. Even though these streets lack painted travel lanes or any form of bicycling infrastructure, they are a vital component of the city’s mobility network because they are naturally calm, include frequent stops, and discourage long-distance high-speed motor vehicle traffic. These streets are also connected in a strong grid pattern, providing resiliency and multiple connectivity options for people riding bikes and walking. Please see page 58 for further definition of “low-stress streets.”

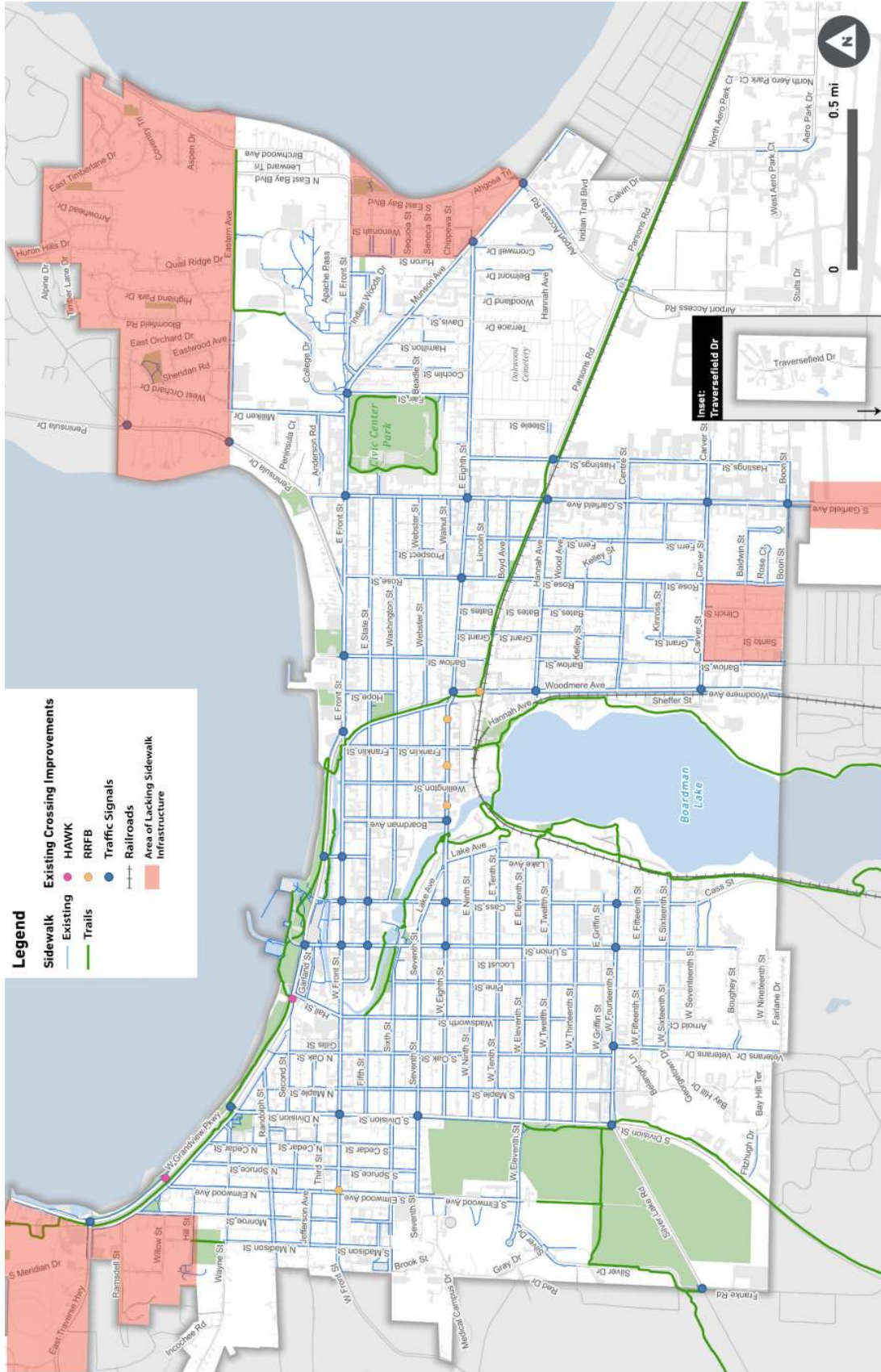


*Examples of low-volume residential streets in Traverse City.*

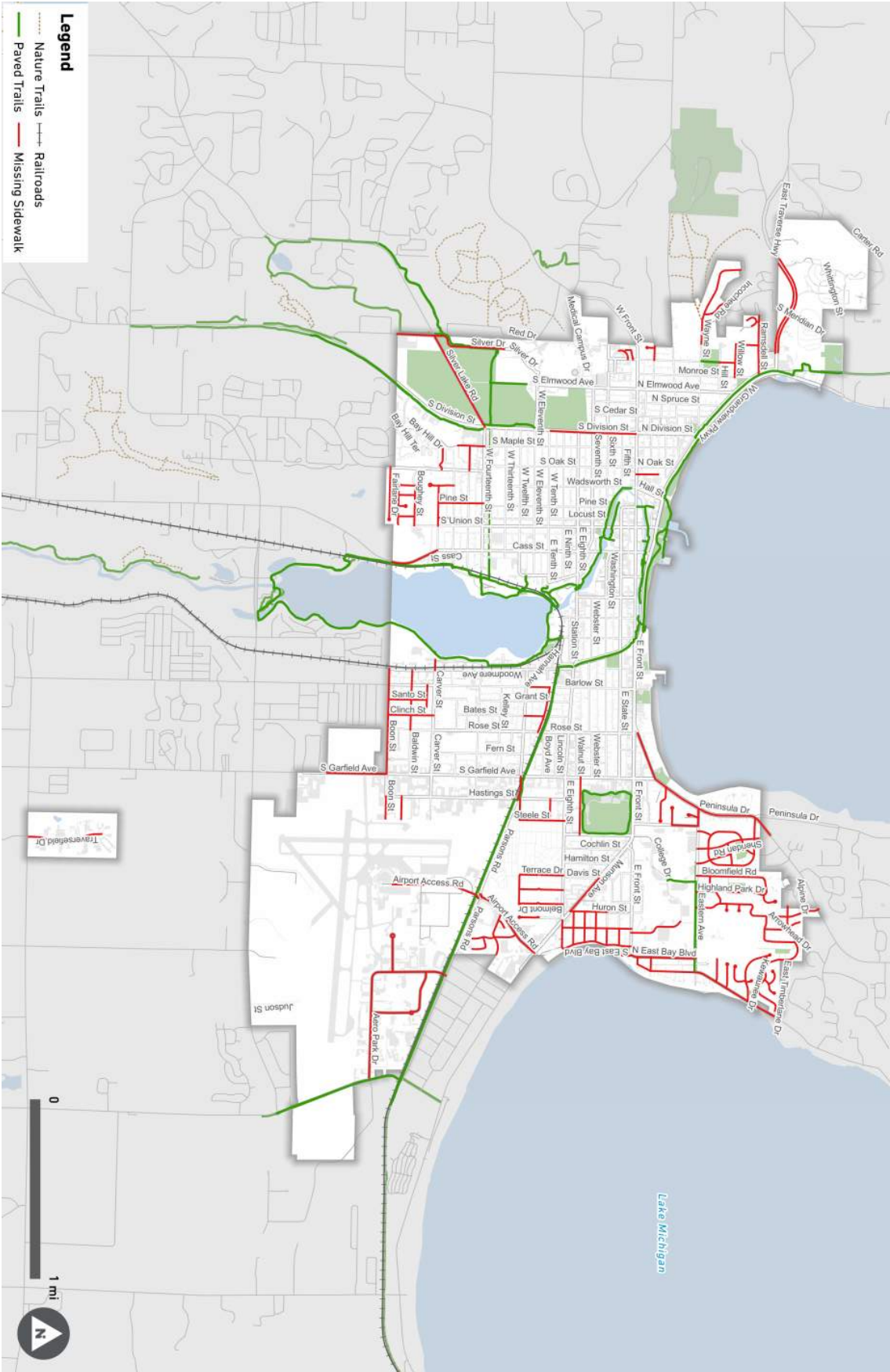
## Existing Sidewalks

Traverse City features abundant sidewalk coverage – nearly every traditional residential street features sidewalks on both sides of the street. While the city has a strong sidewalk network, there are concentrated areas where they are lacking. These include the neighborhoods north of Eastern Avenue (base of Old Mission Peninsula), areas close to East Bay Park, neighborhoods around East Traverse Highway, some streets south of Fourteenth Street and Carver Street, and areas around the airport. The east side of Division Street between Front Street and Tenth Street lacks a sidewalk, likely due to constrained space within the road right-of-way. Garfield Avenue adjacent to the airport lacks sidewalks on both sides of the road – yet there are significant signs of “desire paths” that indicate people walk this corridor regularly. Although located within the “runway protection zone” which is closely regulated by the Federal Aviation Administration, this represents a quarter-mile gap in the City’s sidewalk network which inhibits north-south pedestrian movement along Garfield Avenue. Although “desire paths” are not a formal segment of the City’s current sidewalk network, they represent important connections for those using them regularly. Since many exist on private property, their incorporation and maintenance as part of the City’s mobility network would require easements or land acquisitions.

# Existing Sidewalk Network



# Missing Sidewalks







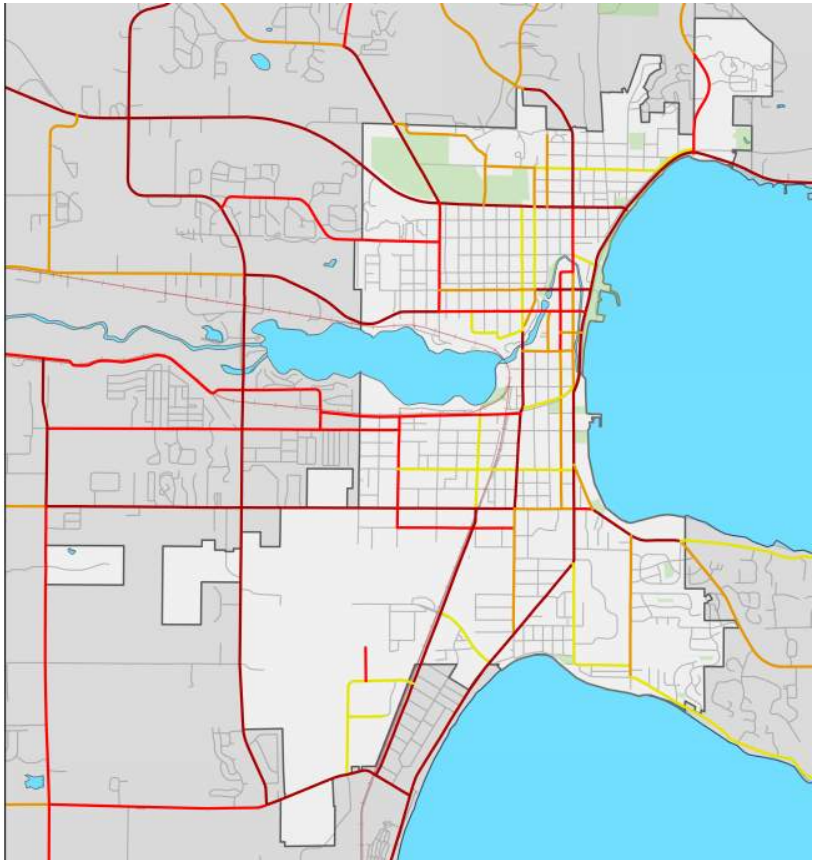
*Garfield Avenue and Hannah Street Intersection*

## Existing Traffic Volumes

Because of its status as a key summer destination and its central role within the region, Traverse City's major arterials carry high volumes of traffic. Unsurprisingly, State and U.S. highways feature the highest traffic volumes, such as US-31, M-22, and M-37. Eighth Street also experiences heavy traffic, as it offers one of the few connections across the Boardman-Ottaway River. Major corridors within the city also feature moderate traffic volumes, such as West Front Street, Fourteenth Street, and Garfield Avenue. While neighborhood streets are not measured for Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT), it can be assumed they feature limited traffic volumes as they service nearby residences and are often inefficient for through vehicle travel.

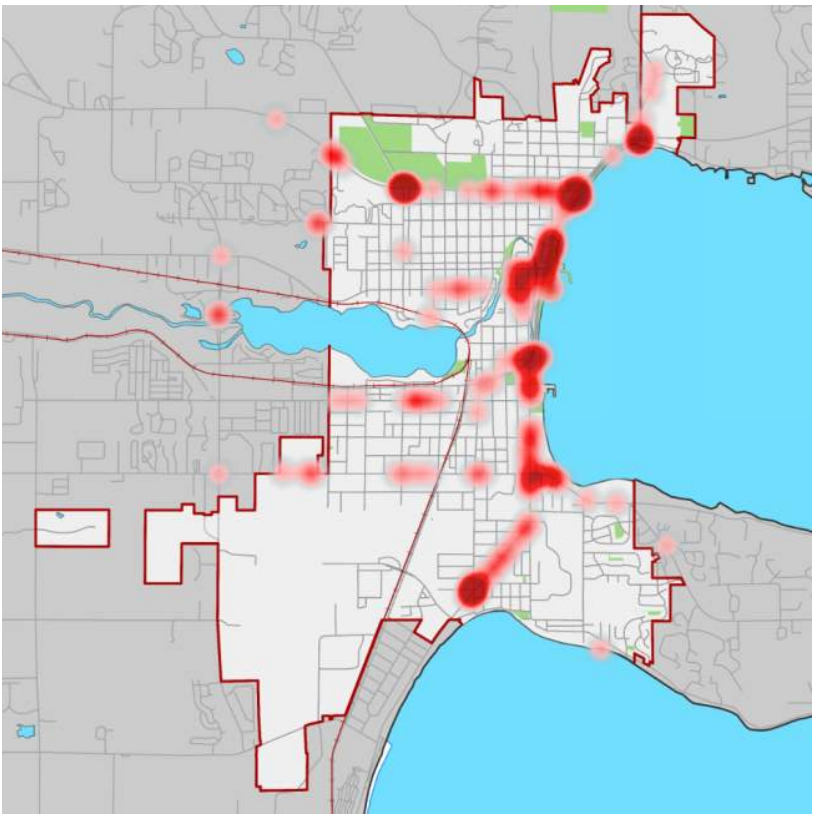
Traffic volumes are an important consideration in developing a mobility network, as they correspond to how stressful a street is to bike or walk along. Because of Traverse City's seasonality - with summer seasons experiencing higher traffic volumes, there are different ways to gather traffic data. Average annual daily traffic (AADT) is a measure of a roadway's average number of cars traveling on a street (traffic volumes). AADT is calculated over the span of a year, with total traffic volumes gathered and divided by 365 to illustrate the daily average traffic volumes. Average Daily Traffic (ADT) which observes traffic volumes over a shorter period of time, such as a few weeks or a month. Regardless of the manner in calculating volume, higher speed and higher volume roadways are less pleasant and more dangerous for pedestrians and cyclists than lower speed and lower volume roadways. Unsurprisingly, the location of these high-speed high-volume roadways had an overwhelming correlation with the streets residents stated they avoid at the October 26 Community Open House. Streets most frequently noted as places to avoid included Grandview Parkway (AADT 29,000) Division Street (AADT 22,000), and Peninsula Drive (AADT 12,000).

Because of this, traffic volumes are a key determinant in identifying a roadway's level of traffic stress (LTS), or a measure that identifies how easy a roadway is to navigate for pedestrians and bicyclists.



**Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) Volumes**

- LEGEND**
- Less Than 4000 AADT
  - 4001 - 8000 AADT
  - 8001 - 14000 AADT
  - More Than 14000



**Locations People Avoid Walking and Cycling  
(Identified at October 26, 2022 Community  
Open House)**

- LEGEND**
- Location identified as Place to Avoid

## Level of Traffic Stress

As mentioned above, a roadway’s level of traffic stress (LTS) quantifies how comfortable it is to use for cyclists and pedestrians. While there are numerous inputs such as proximity to traffic, traffic speeds, traffic volumes, and others – levels of traffic stress indicate which streets and intersections are easiest to navigate for the greatest number of cyclists and pedestrians and which streets and intersections are the most difficult and uncomfortable.

Bicycle Level of Traffic Stress (BLTS) measures how stressful it might be to bicycle on streets.

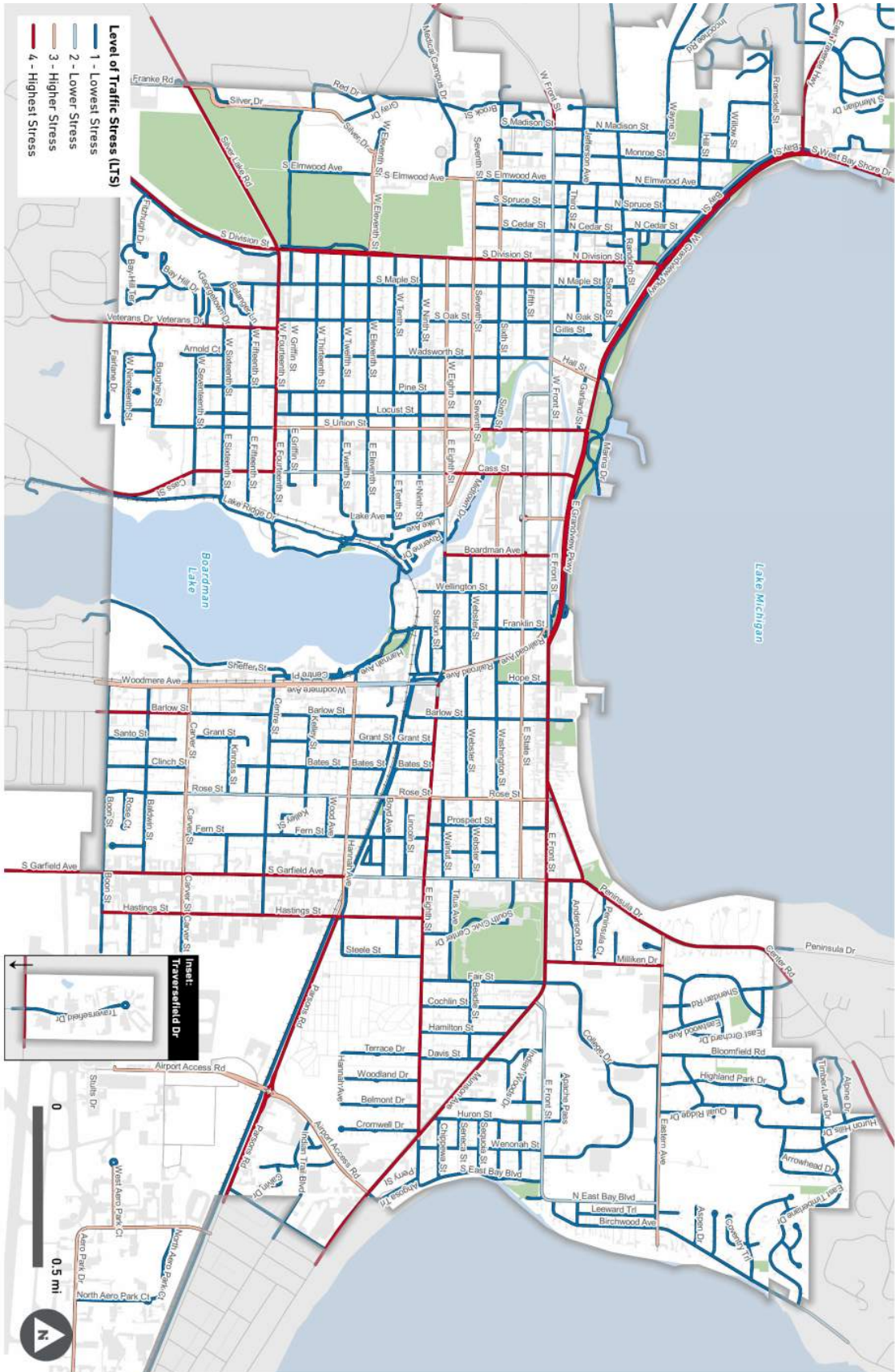
The method uses roadway and traffic conditions to assign a score from 1-4. The data used to conduct this analysis includes:

- Traffic Speed
- Traffic Volumes
- Number of Motor Vehicle Travel Lanes
- Existing Bicycle Facility (if present)

The table below shows examples of streets in cities around the world and how each scores on BLTS.

|  |  | Shared Lanes                       | Bike Lanes                                     | Intersections                                   | Trails                                   | Separated Bike Lanes                        |
|--|--|------------------------------------|--|---|--|---|
| <b>TRAFFIC STRESS</b><br><br>LOW<br>HIGH | <b>Level of Traffic Stress</b><br><b>1</b> | <br>Low Traffic<br>< 20 mph        | <br>Medium/High Traffic<br>< 25 mph, 2-3 Lanes | <br>Medium/High Traffic<br>Protected            | <br>Trail                                | <br>Low/High Traffic<br>Separated Bike Lane |
|  | <b>2</b>                                   | <br>Low Traffic<br>30 mph          | <br>Low/Medium Traffic<br>30 mph, 2-3 Lanes    | <br>Low/Medium Traffic<br>Short Right Turn Lane | <br>Shared Use Path<br>(Low Ped Volume)  |   |
|  | <b>3</b>                                   | <br>Low Traffic<br>35 mph          | <br>Medium/High Traffic<br>35 mph, 3-4 Lanes   | <br>Medium/High Traffic<br>Long Right Turn Lane | <br>Shared Use Path<br>(High Ped Volume) |   |
|  | <b>4</b>                                   | <br>Low/Medium Traffic<br>> 35 mph | <br>Medium/High Traffic<br>> 4 Lanes           | <br>Medium/High Traffic<br>Bike Lane Drop       |  |   |

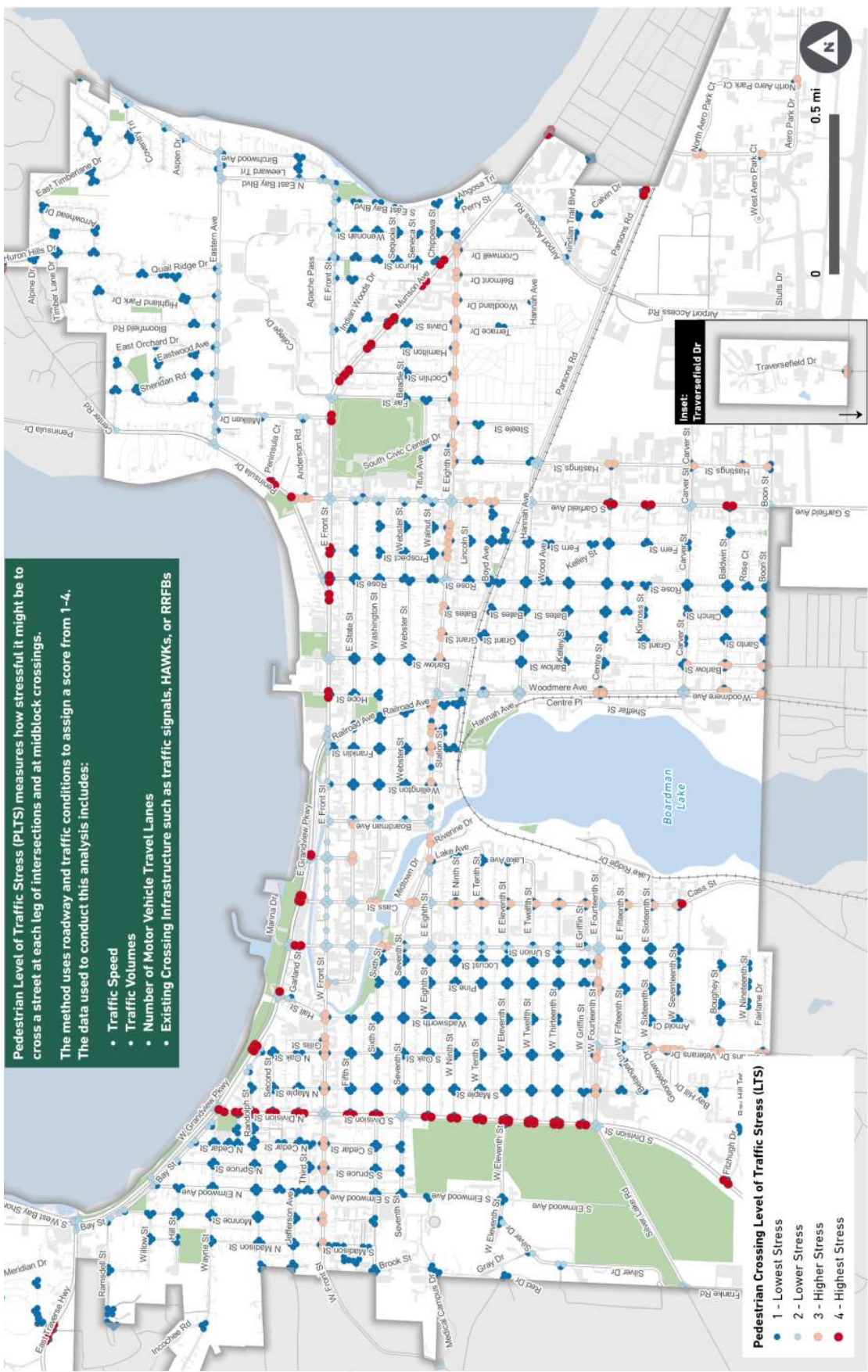
# Bicycle Level of Traffic Stress



# Pedestrian Level of Traffic Stress

Pedestrian Level of Traffic Stress (PLTS) measures how stressful it might be to cross a street at each leg of intersections and at midblock crossings. The method uses roadway and traffic conditions to assign a score from 1-4. The data used to conduct this analysis includes:

- Traffic Speed
- Traffic Volumes
- Number of Motor Vehicle Travel Lanes
- Existing Crossing Infrastructure such as traffic signals, HAWKS, or RRPBs



According to these maps, high-speed and high-volume corridors are the most challenging environments for cyclists and pedestrians to navigate. These include all stretches of US-31 through Traverse City as well as Silver Lake Road, Peninsula Drive, East Traverse Highway, and Garfield Avenue. In contrast to these roadways, neighborhood streets with lower speeds and lower traffic volumes feature lower levels of traffic stress. Recognizing that roads exist on a spectrum of safety and comfort for all mobility users – from quiet residential streets to high-speed arterial corridors – indicates there is no “one-size fits all” approach to mobility infrastructure. Understanding levels of traffic stress allows the right infrastructure to be tailored towards each roadway.

## Distance to Nearest Crossing

Comfortable connectivity across high-traffic corridors is a key element of creating bikeable and walkable environments. Because of this, the location of traffic signals and other crossing infrastructure is a component of the existing mobility network. Traverse City features a number of crossing infrastructure types, these are discussed below.



**Traffic Signal** – The typical intersection traffic light, these signaling devices indicate when motorists, cyclists, and pedestrians are permitted to proceed.

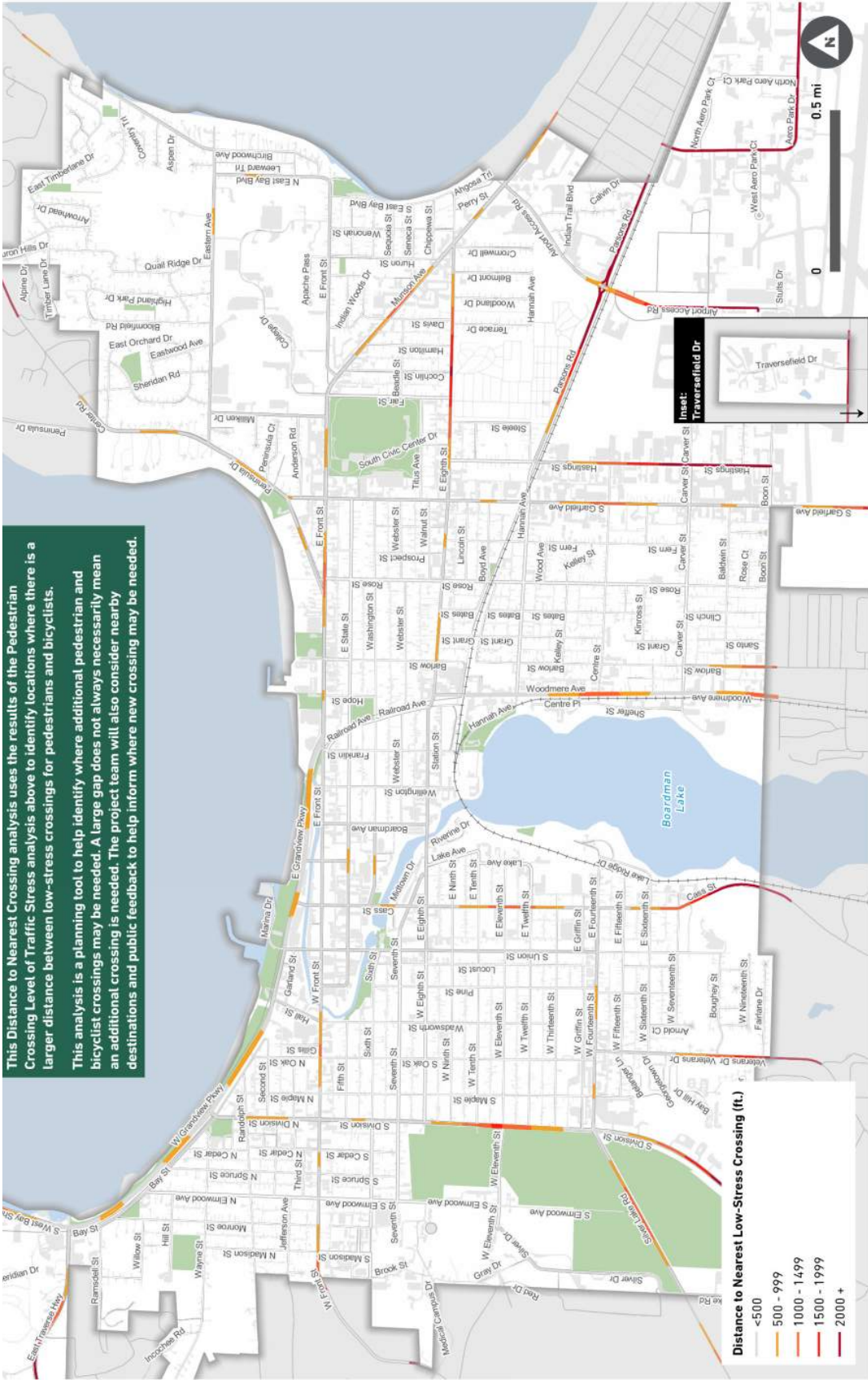
**High-Intensity Activated Crosswalk (HAWK) or Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon (or Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon or PHB)** – This overhead signaling device is used to stop traffic only when pedestrians activate the beacon. Once activated, the beacon lights up, indicating that traffic is to stop and allow the pedestrians to cross.



**Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB)** – This signaling device is a highlighted pedestrian crossing warning sign that lights up when a pedestrian activates it. This encourages traffic to stop and yield to the pedestrian, allowing them to cross the street.

# Distance to Nearest Crossing

This Distance to Nearest Crossing analysis uses the results of the Pedestrian Crossing Level of Traffic Stress analysis above to identify locations where there is a larger distance between low-stress crossings for pedestrians and bicyclists. This analysis is a planning tool to help identify where additional pedestrian and bicyclist crossings may be needed. A large gap does not always necessarily mean an additional crossing is needed. The project team will also consider nearby destinations and public feedback to help inform where new crossing may be needed.



Although these devices provide good connection points within the city, there are roadway segments that lack adequate crossing infrastructure, forcing cyclists and pedestrians to travel long distances to a protected crossing signal.

According to this map, Division Street (US-31) both at Eleventh Street and south of Fourteenth Street feature limited access to signaled east-west crossing opportunities. Portions of Grandview Parkway (US-31) also lack adequate locations to cross – namely from Clinch Park to West End Park. Other areas of limited connectivity include Cass Street south of Sixteenth Street, Woodmere Avenue and Hastings Street south of Hannah Avenue, Parsons Road near the airport, and East Eighth Street. These limited crossing locations present cyclists and pedestrians with difficult choices such as walking or bicycling long distances to designated signals or simply attempt to cross at uncontrolled crossing locations, posing safety hazards for them and increasing unpredictability for motorists.



*E Eighth Street and Boardman Avenue Intersection*



# 6

## Mobility Network

In pursuing this Plan’s vision for a mobility network, Toole Design gathered community feedback, guidance from the Mobility Action Plan Leadership Team, and numerous traffic, crash, and infrastructure data points that inform the development of a comprehensive mobility system. In addition to the qualitative data provided from residents and the technical expertise of the Mobility Action Plan Leadership Team and City staff, Toole Design analyzed quantitative data that informed the creation of the mobility network.

### Mobility Network Intent

The intent of this network plan is not to prescribe modal facility types for each proposed network segment, but instead to identify the segments needed for the incremental build-out of this comprehensive mobility system. Identification of facility types should be cross-referenced with the 2018 Street Design Manual, as some street typologies are more conducive with certain facility types than others. It should also be noted that some streets are not designated for dedicated mobility facilities. This simply indicates they currently operate as adequate shared streets and should not be prioritized over streets where bicycling and walking are more stressful and dangerous. Because situations change over time – overhead power lines can be moved underground, curb cuts can be removed, streets and bridges can be reconstructed, the importance or desire for on-street parking, and a plethora of other factors influencing street design – this approach gives the City flexibility in prescribing the right infrastructure treatment at the right time. It should be noted that all mobility improvements will adhere to modern safety design standards, namely the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Public Right-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines (PROWAG). Some of these facility treatments are included on the following pages.

### Qualitative Methodology

Toole Design used feedback gathered from the October 26, 2022 and the March 15, 2023 community events, multiple online public surveys, and feedback from the Mobility Action Plan Leadership Team. Conversations with residents and stakeholders often corroborated what the data indicated – lending credence to notions of feeling “unsafe” or “uncomfortable” on certain sections of the City’s existing network.

## Quantitative Methodology

Quantitative data that was collected includes the following:

**Existing Traffic Volumes** – This data indicates traffic volumes on major City streets. This data was gathered in 2019 before the COVID-19 pandemic and is used to represent the latest representation of how busy Traverse City streets are on a regular basis.

**Bicyclist Crash Data** – Gathered between 2017-2021, this data indicates the location and severity of bicycle/vehicle crashes within Traverse City.

**Bicyclist Crash Density** – Generated from the same bicyclist crash dataset, this observed bicycle crashes on specific segments of roadway within Traverse City, assigning each segment a rating based on the frequency of bicycle crashes, with more severe crashes that resulted in serious injuries or fatalities being weighted higher than property damage only crashes.

**Pedestrian Crash Data** – Gathered between 2017-2021, this data indicates the location and severity of pedestrian/vehicle crashes within Traverse City.

**Pedestrian Crash Density** - Generated from the same pedestrian crash dataset, this observed pedestrian crashes on specific segments of roadway within Traverse City, assigning each segment a rating based on the frequency of pedestrian crashes, with more severe crashes that resulted in serious injuries or fatalities being weighted higher than property damage only crashes.

**Bicycle Level of Traffic Stress** – This data was generated by observing factors such as roadway widths, roadway traffic speeds, and average daily traffic volumes. Roadway segments were assigned a value based on these factors which indicates the roadway's Level of Traffic Stress (LTS).

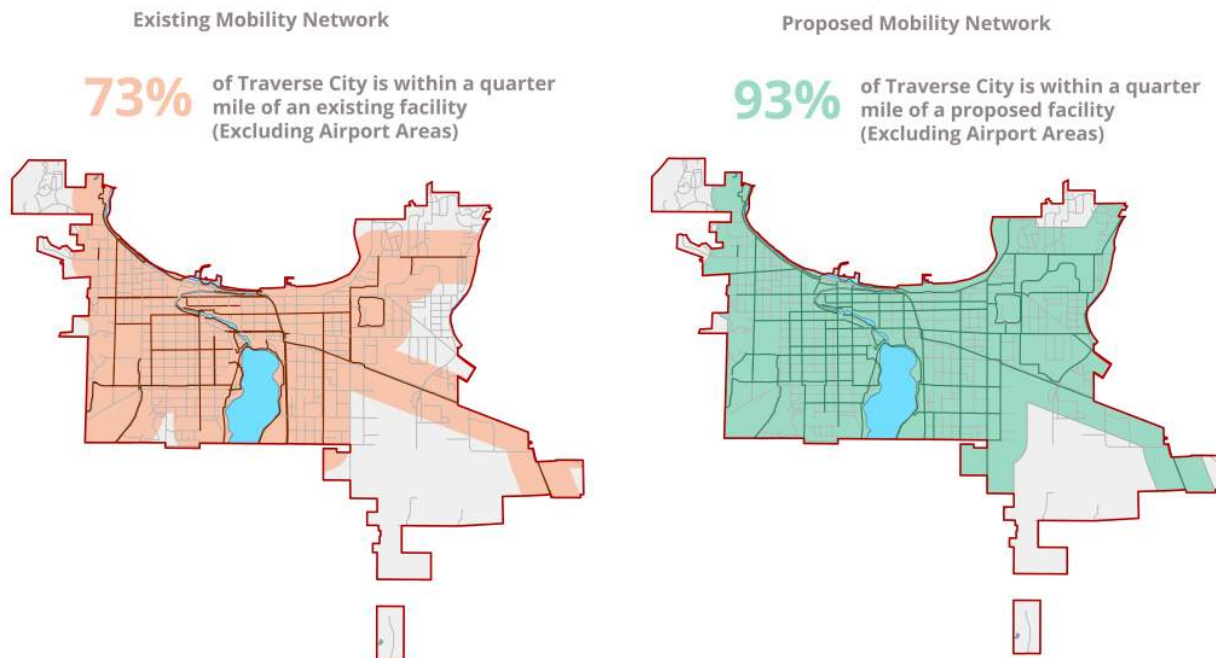
**Pedestrian Level of Traffic Stress (PLTS)** – Similar to the Bicycle Level of Traffic Stress, this data was generated by observing roadway widths, roadway traffic speeds, average daily traffic volumes, and what type of intersection control or improvement was included at each intersection (including traffic signals, HAWK signals, or RRFBs). This data was aggregated at intersections to illustrate high-stress crossing locations.

**Distance to Nearest Low-Stress Crossing** – This data was created using the results of the Pedestrian Level of Traffic Stress analysis and locating where there were gaps of 500 feet or more between PLTS 1 and PLTS 2 crossings (the lowest stress crossing scores).

## Mobility Network

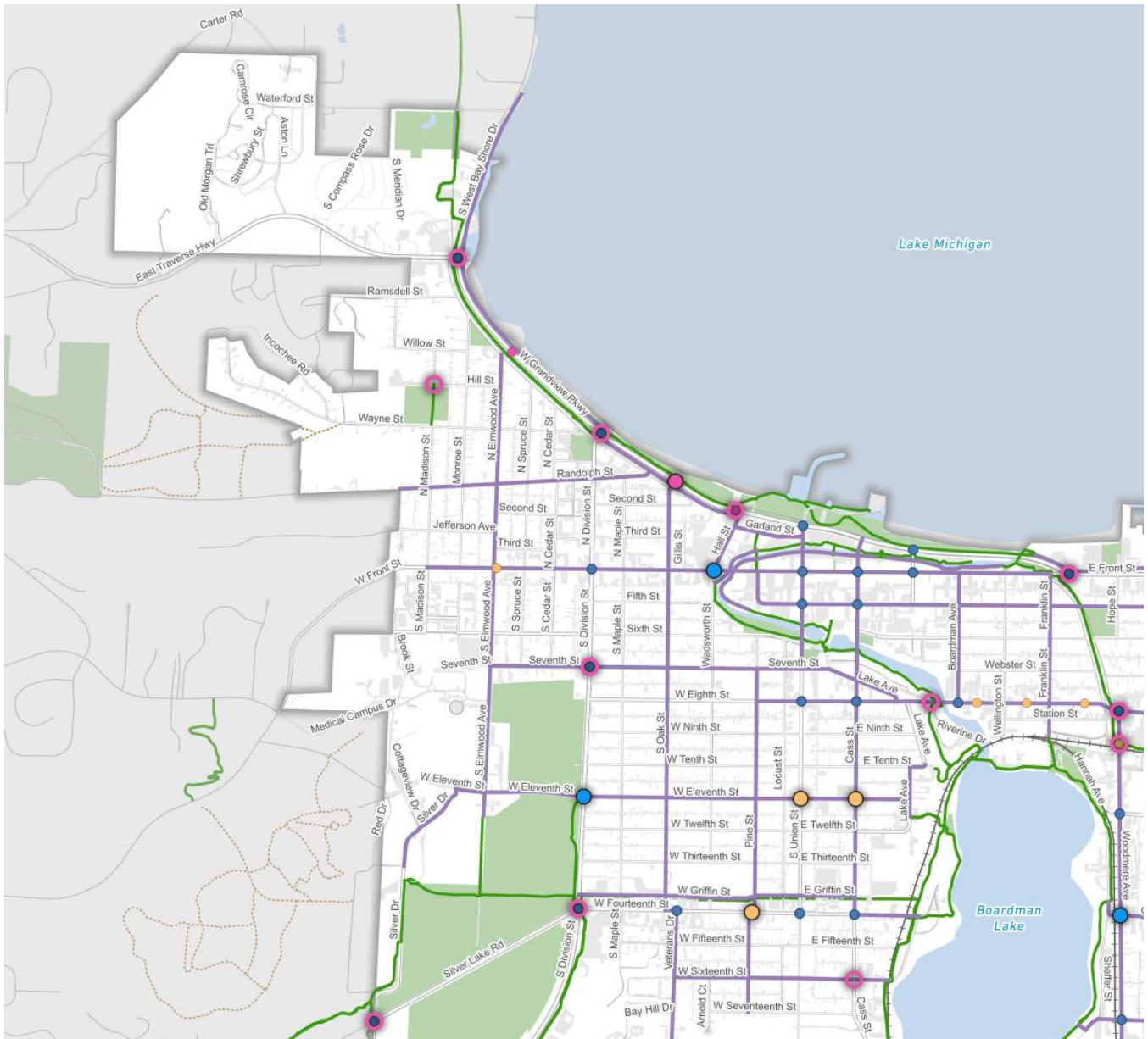
Taking the quantitative and qualitative data into account, the Mobility Action Plan Team developed the preferred Mobility Network for Traverse City. This plan represents a network approach that seeks to connect the City's streets, neighborhoods, and business districts together in a "safe for all users, all abilities" network.

Observing the City's current bicycle network, it can be noted that 73% of Traverse City lies within a quarter-mile distance of some form of bicycle facility. While desiring to bring mobility infrastructure to the entire city, there are topographical challenges that limit the feasibility of mobility infrastructure in select locations. Accounting for this along with excluding the airport property, where public mobility is strictly prohibited, the Mobility Network seeks to place 93% of the City within a quarter-mile radius of a bicycle facility – a bold and aspirational goal that is in line with other progressive bicycling cities such as Seattle, WA and Fort Collins, CO. It should also be noted that TART, the City of Traverse City, and the Traverse City DDA are currently pursuing the Bayfront Improvement and Extension Project with the intent of enhancing mobility access to Grand Traverse Bay. This project includes reconstruction of the existing trail, replacing it with a bi-directional bicycle path along with dedicated spaces for other mobility users.



# Traverse City Mobility Network

## Northwest Quadrant



46

### Legend

- Nature Trails
- Paved Trails
- +— Railroads

#### Existing Crossing Improvements

- HAWK
- RRFB
- TrafficSignals

#### Potential Crossing Improvements

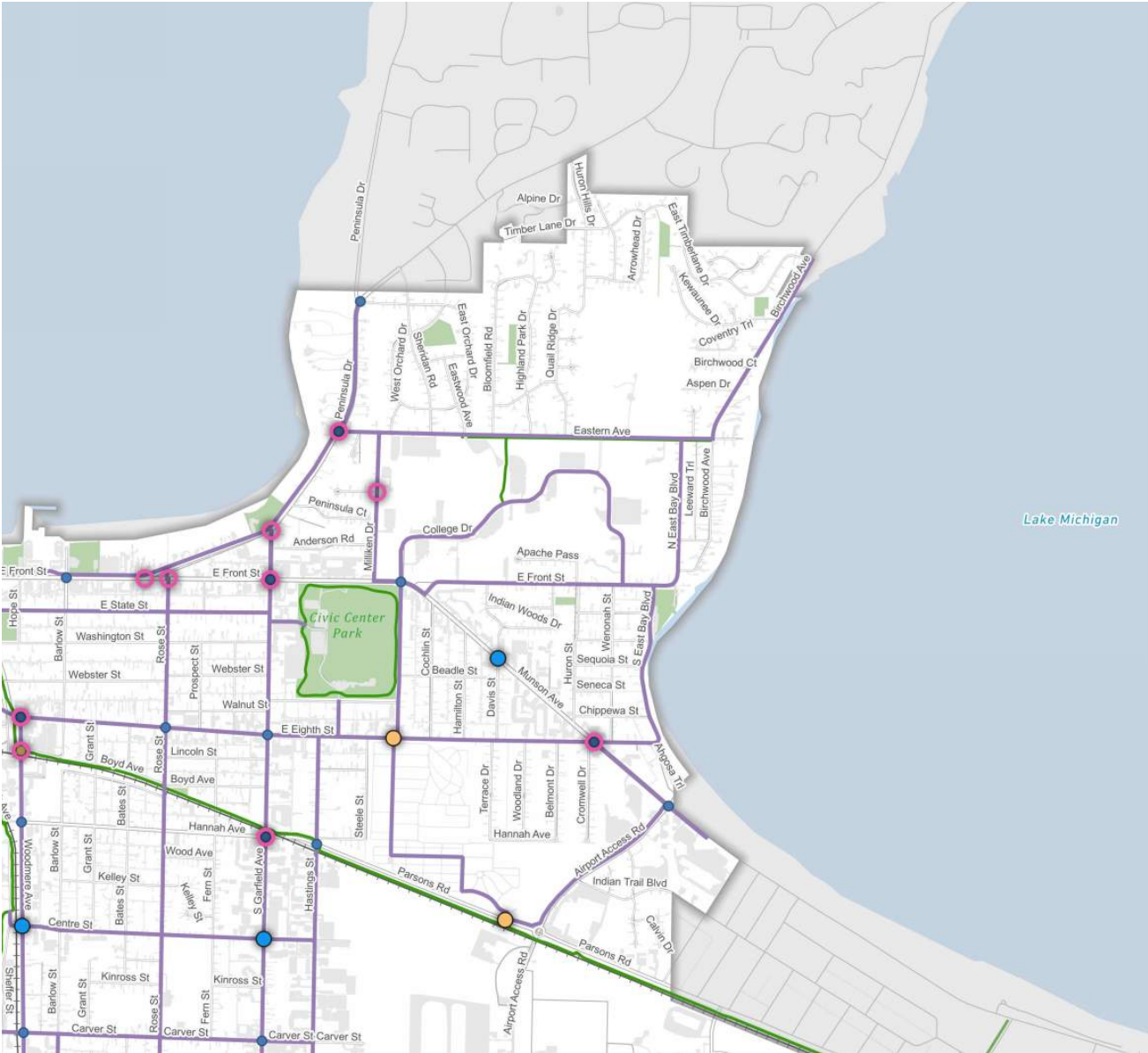
- HAWK
- RRFBs
- Traffic Signal
- Crossing Improvement

#### Potential Bike Network Improvements

- Proposed Vision Bike Network

# Traverse City Mobility Network

## Northeast Quadrant



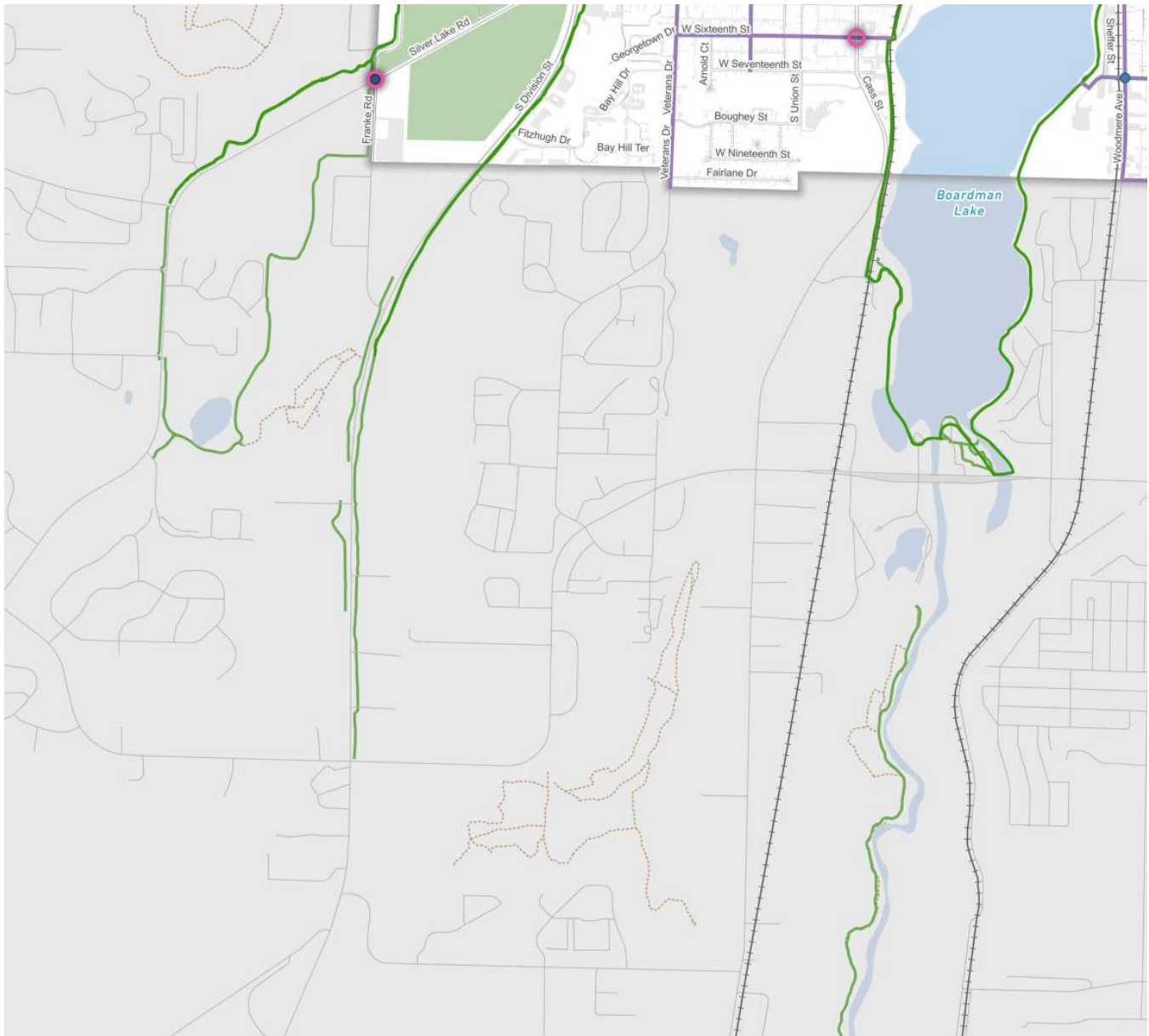
### Legend

- Nature Trails
- Paved Trails
- +— Railroads
- Existing Crossing Improvements**
- HAWK
- RRFB
- Traffic Signals

- Potential Crossing Improvements**
- HAWK
- RRFBs
- Traffic Signal
- Crossing Improvement
- Potential Bike Network Improvements**
- Proposed Vision Bike Network

# Traverse City Mobility Network

## Southwest Quadrant



### Legend

- - - Nature Trails
- Paved Trails
- + + + Railroads

#### Existing Crossing Improvements

- HAWK
- RRFB
- Traffic Signals

#### Potential Crossing Improvements

- HAWK
- RRFBs
- Traffic Signal
- Crossing Improvement

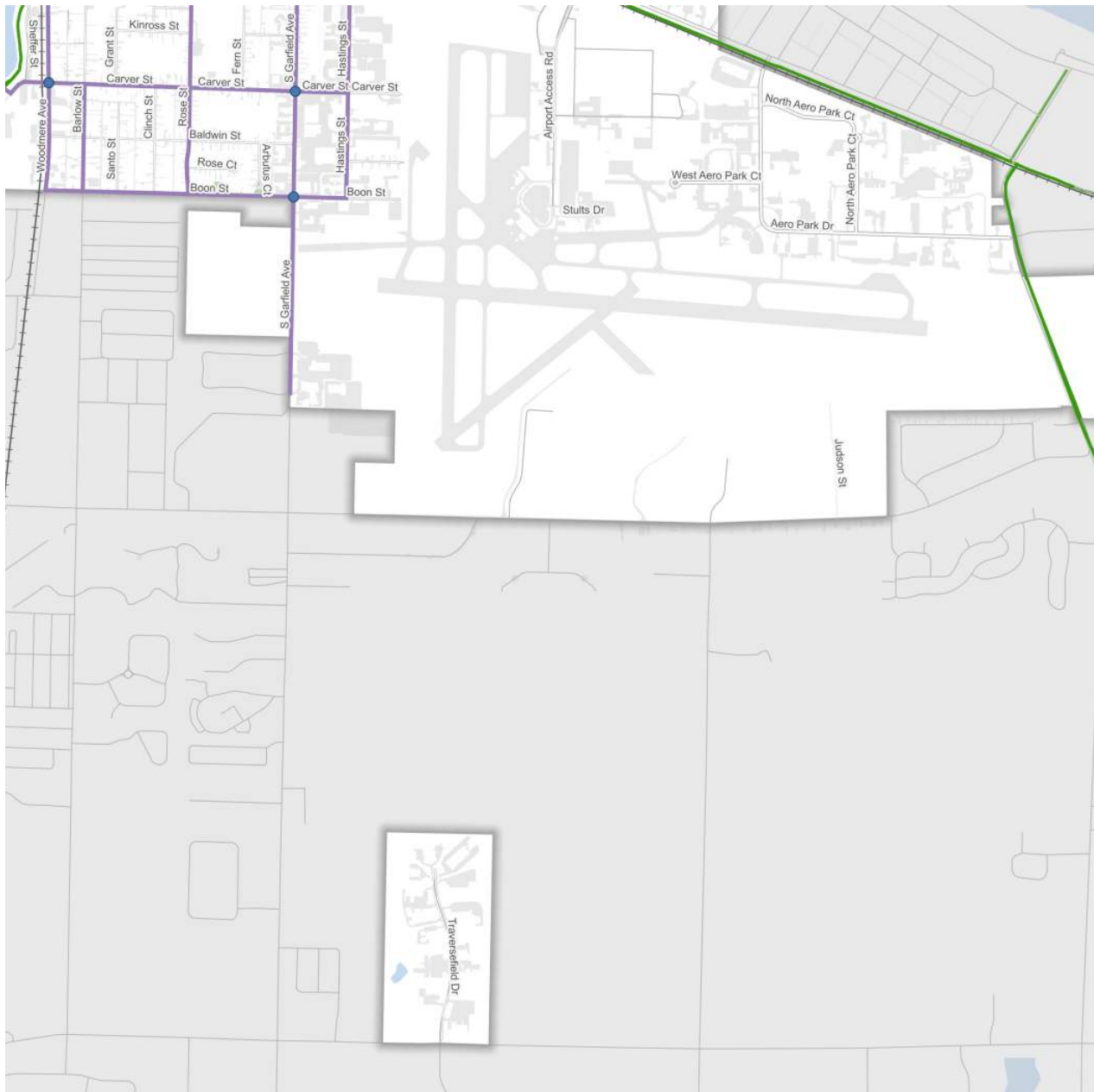
#### Potential Bike Network Improvements

- Proposed Vision Bike Network

48

# Traverse City Mobility Network

## Southeast Quadrant



### Legend

- Nature Trails
- Paved Trails
- Railroads

#### Existing Crossing Improvements

- HAWK
- RRFB
- Traffic Signals

#### Potential Crossing Improvements

- HAWK
- RRFBs
- Traffic Signal
- Crossing Improvement

#### Potential Bike Network Improvements

- Proposed Vision Bike Network

## Facility Treatment Types

### Facility Type Cost Legend

|          |                                 |
|----------|---------------------------------|
| \$       | = Low-Cost Facility             |
| \$\$     | = Moderate Cost Facility        |
| \$\$\$   | = High-Cost Facility            |
| \$\$\$\$ | = Especially High-Cost Facility |



Example of Shared Lane or Sharrow

### Shared Lane or Sharrow

**Design Speed:** Under 25mph

**Treatment Width:** Depends on road width

**Average Cost per Mile:** \$

**Maintenance:** Street sweeping, snow plowing, restriping

**Parking Interactions:** Parking not impacted

Used to connect cyclists to destinations while offering cyclists the right-of-way in places where space is limited.

#### Pros

- Inexpensive to implement
- Full lane to cycle in
- Cyclists have the right-of-way
- Minimal pavement markings and construction

#### Cons

- Cyclist must share road with cars
- Cyclists and drivers must interact to avoid crashes
- Can create driver confusion
- May prevent less confident users from bicycling

50





*Example of Paved Shoulder*

## **Paved Shoulders**

**Design Speed:** 35-55mph

**Treatment Width:** 4 feet to 6 feet from edge line

**Average Cost per Mile:** \$

**Maintenance:** Street sweeping, snow plowing

**Parking Interactions:** Parking not impacted

Mainly used in suburban or rural areas to allow space for cyclists.

### **Pros**

- Offers space for cyclists that vehicles don't use
- Minimal changes to existing roads
- Allows cyclists to be visible to vehicles

### **Cons**

- Left turns are difficult for cyclists
- Not a dedicated bicycling lane
- Often has debris that has blown off the road
- Not identifiable as a bicycling facility



*Example of Bicycle Boulevard*

## **Bicycle Boulevard**

**Design Speed:** Under 25mph

**Treatment Width:** Depends on road width

**Average Cost per Mile:** \$\$

**Maintenance:** Street sweeping, snow plowing, wayfinding sign replacement

**Parking Interactions:** Parking not impacted

Used in residential areas to connect cyclists to destinations while offering cyclists the right-of-way in places where space is limited while reducing vehicle through traffic via traffic calming and occasionally diverting vehicles to adjacent streets.

### **Pros**

- Only local traffic is allowed with the cyclist
- The cyclist has the right-of-way
- More space for groups of cyclists
- Utilizes existing infrastructure

### **Cons**

- Cyclist must share the road with cars
- Cars make exiting driveways difficult for residents
- Must ensure the road isn't used as motor vehicle cut-through to avoid traffic congestion



*Example of Bike Lanes*

## **Bike Lanes**

**Design Speed:** 25mph - 35mph

**Treatment Width:** 5 feet to 7 feet from curb or gutter pan if present

**Average Cost per Mile:** \$\$

**Maintenance:** Street sweeping, snow plowing, restriping

**Parking Interactions:** Must be located outside of door zone, may require parking space removal

Used to create dedicated routes for cyclists on striped roads to destinations.

### **Pros**

- Create an easily identifiable lane for cyclist
- Can be paired with on-street parking
- Easy to add to most existing roads, space-permitted
- Familiar to public

### **Cons**

- May require on-street parking to be removed
- Must be cleaned to remove debris from road



*Example of Buffered Bike Lanes*

## **Buffered Bike Lanes**

**Design Speed:** Greater than 25mph

**Treatment Width:** 1.5 feet to 3 foot buffer, 5 feet to 7 foot lane

**Average Cost per Mile:** \$\$

**Maintenance:** Street sweeping, snow plowing, restriping

**Parking Interactions:** May require parking space removal

Used to create dedicated routes for cyclists on striped roads to destinations. Offer greater separation from vehicle traffic than regular bike lanes.

### **Pros**

- More separation from vehicles
- More definition of the bike lane for people driving to see
- Can be made large enough to have cycle passing lanes or be multi-directional

### **Cons**

- Left turns can be difficult for cyclists
- May require on-street parking to be removed
- Must be kept clean of debris



*Example of Separated Bike Lanes*

## Separated Bike Lanes

**Design Speed:** Greater than 25mph

**Treatment Width:** 1.5 feet to 3 foot buffer, 5 foot to 7 foot lane, although larger lanes can be used where there are very high volumes of bicyclists

**Average Cost per Mile:** \$\$\$

**Maintenance:** Street sweeping, snow plowing, restriping, seasonal bollard removal/installation, bollard replacement

**Parking Interactions:** May require parking space removal

Used to create dedicated space for people bicycling. Provides a physical barrier separating bicycle traffic from vehicular traffic, offering an additional level of comfort for people bicycling.

### Pros

- Semi-permanent barriers provide more safety from vehicles
- Better defined bike lane for drivers
- Can be made large enough to have cycle passing lanes or be bi-directional (two-way)

### Cons

- Left turns can be difficult for cyclists
- May require on-street parking to be removed
- Barriers may need to be replaced over time
- Must be kept clean of debris
- Winter maintenance can be difficult with plow trucks



*Example of Multi-Use Path*

## Multi-Use Paths

**Design Speed:** Greater than 25mph

**Treatment Width:** 10 foot minimum, 12 feet to 16 feet preferred

**Average Cost per Mile:** \$\$\$\$

**Maintenance:** Snow plowing, striping at intersections, repaving separate from street improvements

**Parking Interactions:** Parking not impacted

Used to create dedicated shared routes for cyclists and pedestrians, these facilities are often recreational in nature and are separated from the roadway.

### Pros

- Fully separated pathways for cyclists and pedestrians
- Grass or other buffer located between path and roadway
- Often a recreational destination

### Cons

- Large space requirements
- Requires enhanced road crossings or grade-separation for connections



*Example of Cycle Track*

## Cycle Tracks

**Design Speed:** Greater than 25mph

**Treatment Width:** 5 feet to 7 foot buffer, 8 foot to 12 foot lane

**Average Cost per Mile:** \$\$\$\$

**Maintenance:** Snow plowing, restriping, seasonal bollard removal/installation, bollard replacement

**Parking Interactions:** May require parking space removal

Used to create dedicated routes for cyclists on striped roads to destinations. These facilities provide a fully-separated place for cyclists that is often parallel and grade-separated from the roadway.

### Pros

- Permanent barriers separating cyclists from traffic
- Can be constructed at a different grade than the roadway

### Cons

- Likely will require on-street parking to be removed
- Best for long, un-interrupted stretches with little to no driveways

Each of these facility treatment types have unique advantages and disadvantages that are very context-specific to surrounding infrastructure. Because of this, there is no “one-size-fits-all” approach to creating the Proposed Mobility Network, as these treatments must be deployed to fit the context, funding, and local input of each street segment when appropriate.

|                       | Shared Lane (Sharrows)                    | Paved Shoulders               | Bicycle Boulevard  | Bike Lanes  |
|-----------------------|---|-------------------------------|--|---|
| Design Speed          | Under 25 mph                              | 35 - 55 mph                   | Under 25 mph   | 25 - 35 mph   |
| Treatment Width       | Depends on road width                     | 4 ft - 6 ft from edge line    | Depends on road width                                      | 5 ft - 7 ft from curb to gutter pan if present                    |
| Average Cost Per Mile | \$  | \$                            | \$\$   | \$\$  |
| Maintenance           | Street sweeping, snow plowing, restriping | Street sweeping, snow plowing | Street sweeping, snow plowing, wayfinding sign replacement | Street sweeping, snow plowing, restriping                         |
| Parking Interaction   | Parking not impacted                      | Parking not impacted          | Parking not impacted                                       | Must be located outside of door zone, may require parking removal |

58



# Street Facility Matrix

|                       | Buffered Bike Lanes                       | Separated Bike Lanes   | Multi-Use Paths  | Cycle Tracks   |
|-----------------------|---|--|--|--|
| Design Speed          | Over 25 mph                               | Over 25 mph  | Over 25 mph  | Over 25 mph  |
| Treatment Width       | 1.5 ft - 3 ft buffer, 5 ft - 7 ft lane    | 1.5 ft - 3 ft buffer, 5 ft - 7 ft lane, larger lanes can be used                   | 10 ft minimum, 12 ft - 16 ft preferred                                 | 5 ft - 7 ft buffer, 8 ft - 12 ft lane  |
| Average Cost Per Mile | \$\$                                      | \$\$\$   | \$\$\$\$   | \$\$\$\$   |
| Maintenance           | Street sweeping, snow plowing, restriping | Street sweeping, snow plowing, restriping, seasonal bollard removal / installation | Snow plowing, striping at intersections, repaving separate from street | Street sweeping, snow plowing, restriping, seasonal bollard removal / installation |
| Parking Interaction   | May require parking space removal         | May require parking space removal  | Parking not impacted   | May require parking space removal  |

## Shared Streets: Design over Facility

While conversations around bicycle infrastructure often focus on facility types, a roadway's design and surrounding streetscapes play a much larger role in the roadway's perceived safety. Just as a separated bike lane on a busy, high-speed highway remains a stressful environment to walk or ride a bike, a street's design influences its level of traffic stress. With this in mind, designing streets to slow traffic not only creates safer streets but streets that are conducive to mixed pedestrian, bicycling, and vehicular traffic.

Because of the limited space within road rights-of-way, thoughtful planning must go into prioritizing modes on some streets and alternative modes on others. While some streets will emphasize cyclists, others will emphasize pedestrian travel while others emphasize transit access or vehicular traffic. With this in mind, the "shared street" design creates an environment conducive to pedestrian traffic while remaining open to bicycling and vehicular traffic. Because of their traffic-calming characteristics however – such as textured pavers, extensive landscape plantings, wide sidewalks with outdoor seating spaces, and the elimination of curbs and gutters – these shared streets represent low-speed, low-volume environments that operate more as public spaces rather than through-ways for vehicle traffic. Although absent of a dedicated bicycle facility, these streets offer cyclists and pedestrians a safe and comfortable environment to travel.



### **Clematis Street West Palm Beach, FL**

Following a conversion from one-way to two-way in the 1990s, Clematis Street was redesigned in 2019 and now features a curbless street, an 18-foot travelway with no striped centerline, wide sidewalks, and extensive landscaping features.

60

*Above: Images of Clematis Street. Images Gathered from The Palm Beach Post and Dover, Kohl & Partners.*

### ***Broadway - Eugene, OR***

Passing through downtown Eugene, this street lacks curbs and a striped centerline, features wide sidewalks, extensive streetscaping and sharrows indicating the multi-modal nature of the street.



### ***Wall Street - Asheville, NC***

Narrower than other shared street examples, Wall Street lacks curbs and striped centerlines and incorporates wide sidewalks allowing businesses to flex seating and other items into the street.



This topic was discussed at length in the context of State Street and Front Street within downtown Traverse City. Due to the area's high pedestrian traffic, limited right-of-way constraints, and an emphasis on creating low-speed and desirable environments to linger, the idea of implementing shared streets within downtown was discussed and identified as the preferable mobility future for downtown. This envisions a downtown that operates as an "outdoor living room" and is such a low-speed environment that all users feel safe interacting within this area. The intent of downtown shared streets are for Traverse City residents and visitors – families with young children, older couples, tourists traveling between stores and restaurants, professionals accessing their workplaces, friends connecting over drinks – all people would feel welcome and comfortable traveling in and through downtown Traverse City.

While aspirational, this requires Traverse City's mobility culture to first shift towards accepting shared spaces as an environment for all users. Until this occurs, incremental mobility facilities can bridge the span between this ultimate vision for downtown and the still largely auto-oriented conditions that exist today.

## Complete Streets

“Complete streets” refers to an infrastructure design philosophy focused on building a mobility network that is accessible for all people, regardless of their transportation choices. Standing in contrast to the auto-oriented infrastructure of previous decades, “complete streets” are designed to create mobility networks accessible to people walking, riding bikes, taking transit, or other alternative transportation modes. Adopted in December 2022, Traverse City’s Complete Streets Policy desires to create:

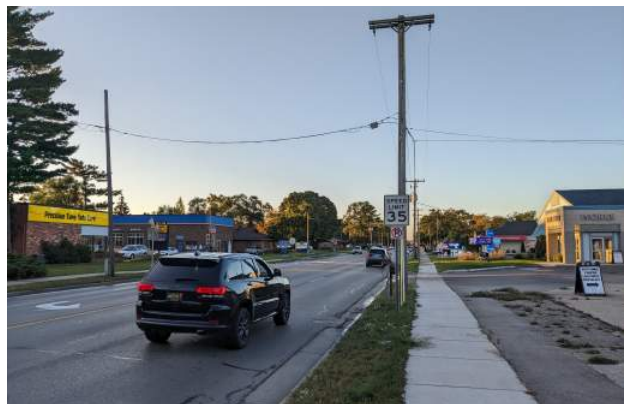
*“ - an equitable and effective transportation network where every transportation user can travel safely, conveniently, and efficiently, and where sustainable transportation options are available to everyone.”*

This policy statement emphasizes the City’s focus on creating a multi-modal transportation network. Recognizing that streets differ in terms of traffic volumes, street widths, the number of driveways and intersections, and a variety of other factors - designing “complete streets” must be context-sensitive to these factors in determining the appropriate facility type.



*The mobility facility appropriate for the street above...*

*...Is likely different from the facility appropriate for the street below*



With this in mind, streets that are low-volume and low-stress (**left image above**) can be classified as “complete streets,” as they are comfortable and safe environments for all mobility users. Streets that feature higher speeds and higher traffic volumes (**right image above**) likely require mobility facilities that provide protection and separation from vehicular traffic. Recognizing this distinction between road types allows resources to be deployed in these high-stress corridors, resulting in a more resilient mobility network over time.

62

# 7

## Implementation

### Background and Approach

Infrastructure implementation is more than just orange barrels and asphalt; it is a complex, ongoing process involving vision from policymakers and the public, and coordination across numerous city departments. Due to this complexity, there are challenges and trade-offs associated with design decisions, the construction process, and how facilities are maintained. A lack of intentional coordination can result in streets being reconstructed only to be torn up again to replace aging utilities; sidewalks leading to nowhere; and trails not being maintained. Unfortunately, it is easy for details to “slip between the cracks,” impeding overall implementation of the community’s vision.

Understanding roles and responsibilities is an essential element to prevent missed opportunities, effectively leverage resources, and prevent re-work. A sports analogy best captures how to “win the game” of effective infrastructure implementation. There are the policy-makers (elected and appointed officials), the coach (City administration), and the team players (City staff across multiple departments). Understanding this dynamic and the interactions between these entities will ensure success. Each group’s role as it pertains to infrastructure is highlighted below.

### *Infrastructure: It’s a Team Effort*

*Just as there are many roles in building a competitive franchise, there are many roles in Traverse City’s infrastructure process. This sports analogy shows that focusing on each role and their unique responsibilities makes the organization stronger as a whole.*



- **Team Owners (Elected and Appointed Officials)**

Tasked with establishing vision, not involved in specific team strategy but guides long-term direction of team.

- **Coach (City Manager)**

Develops game plan and oversees performance of the team on a day-to-day basis.



- **Team Players (City Staff)**

Professionals with unique skillsets that collaborate to execute the game plan.



**Elected and Appointed Officials (Team Owners)** – Just like a governing body of a sports team, the elected officials are tasked with establishing the long-range vision and rules of the team. While they operate “outside the locker room” and are not involved in specific team strategy, they create the policies and parameters the team must follow in order to win. The Traverse City Planning Commission and City Commission are some of the “policy-makers” for the City.

**City Administration (Team Coach)** – As leader of all city departments and staff, city administration acts as the team coach, ensuring that all players of the team are operating according to the established game plan. Just like a coach, city administration must ensure the team plays in accordance with the rules established by the policy-makers.



**City Staff and Departments (Team Players)** – As the City’s technical professionals, City staff represent the players on a team, using their unique skillsets in a complementary manner to follow the established policies and achieve the team’s objectives. In the context of Traverse City’s infrastructure process, it is city staff’s role to design, construct, and maintain the City’s infrastructure assets – streets and alleys, water and sewer lines, signs and signals, etc.

These separate roles – elected and appointed officials, city administration, and city staff – all play an important role in how Traverse City infrastructure is implemented, operated, and maintained. This section highlights how these roles can better coordinate to reduce conflict points and ensure the effective provision of infrastructure improvements. It also offers a review of existing policies and proposed practices that can be adopted and refined to achieve the city’s long-term mobility goals. This in turn should make the infrastructure implementation process more straight-forward, leading to the effective implementation of the City’s near-term, medium-term, and long-term improvements as outlined later in this section.



*Governmental Center*

## *Current Approach*

### **Current Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Process**

Traverse City follows a July 1 – June 30 fiscal year cycle. As capital expenditures make up a significant portion of each year’s budget, the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) process is vitally important to not only the implementation of the City’s transportation goals but the overall operation of city government.

The current process begins with the establishment of a CIP Committee comprised of the following entities:

- City Manager
- Planning Department
- Public Services Department
- Engineering Department
- Downtown Development Authority (DDA)
- Board of Light and Power
- Department of Municipal Utilities
- Parking Services
- Parks and Recreation
- Fire Department
- Police Department
- Treasury Department

The intent is for this Committee to outline large-scale improvements to the City’s physical assets over the coming six (6) years. The CIP Committee reviews community needs and gathers proposed project lists from each department. The Committee then prioritizes projects based on staff capacity and available funding.

After the selection of projects, the CIP is presented to the Planning Commission who then schedules a public hearing. After the public hearing and adoption by the Planning Commission, the City Manager prepares the annual budget, incorporating the CIP’s first year projects. It should be noted that allocated funding for proposed first year projects is typically insufficient to complete all projects on the list, leading to difficult budget decisions over the fiscal year.

During the Mobility Action Plan’s engagement process, frustration was expressed that the selection of capital projects sometimes operates in a “shot-gun” approach, attempting to hit many high-profile targets at once and serve as a “catch-all” for items that could be included elsewhere in the annual budget. This inconsistent and reactive process ultimately delays and weakens overall implementation by failing to maintain focus on a central vision. A vicious cycle is then created - decision-makers are frustrated by a lack of progress and feel compelled to select projects that will be of higher profile to demonstrate action, which in turn causes implementation of the vision to slow down, drawing more criticism for lack of progress. Taking a “less is more” or a systematic approach can yield a more actionable CIP as it allows resources to coalesce around fewer, large-scale projects and provides opportunities for infrastructure investments to build upon each other to produce a better result. A virtuous cycle can be created by changing the CIP process to one that is more proactive and methodical, maintaining focus on the long-term goals set forth by the City Commission, and achieving them more quickly, so the next batch of projects can proceed without delay.





## Current General Fund Street Project Process

In addition to the Capital Improvement Process, City staff follow a process that helps project street reconstruction and resurfacing projects to be funded through the City's General Fund. This process generates the informal streets project list or "Rainbow Sheet" – a colored list of streets and construction estimates projected over a nine (9) year period.

This process begins with an Evaluation Phase, with the City Engineer considering the Infrastructure Policy outlining the City's desired break-down of infrastructure spending. They also consider maintenance costs and the geographic breakdown of previous year's projects. The development of the street project list is also informed by pavement quality (PASER) ratings along with proposed utility projects that are provided by the Municipal Utilities Superintendent.

From here, the process enters a Staff Review Phase. The Engineering Department provides the streets project list to the Department of Public Services, the Board of Light & Power staff, Department of Municipal Utilities, the Planning Department, Parks and Recreation Division, and the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) if applicable. The Planning Department reviews the list to ensure consistency with the Master Plan while the Engineering Department reviews the list and develops preliminary cost estimates for these projects. The Department of Municipal Utilities also reviews the list to ensure alignment with water and sanitary sewer infrastructure projects. Upon their review, each department meets with the City Manager to finalize the streets project list.

With all entities in agreement, the Planning Department will then take the document and publish a public hearing notice. During this Planning Department Review Phase, the Planning Commission tours the streets proposed for improvement and ultimately approves or rejects the streets project list. With the Planning Commission's approval, the streets project list is submitted to the City Commission for their approval.

For street reconstructions that represent a significant change in character or function, the Planning and Engineering Department consults the Planning Commission and Active Transportation Committee, first sharing early design concepts and gathering their feedback. The Planning Department sends out letters to impacted residents and gathers feedback. The Active Transportation Committee reviews resident feedback and develops project design recommendations.

Following these recommendations, the Engineering Department develops a preliminary roadway design and provides it to the Planning Commission for their review and approval. If the design is consistent with the Master Plan, the Planning Commission can approve the preliminary design. After the heavy lift of designing the project, garnering feedback, revising the project design to satisfy feedback, and receiving Planning Commission approval – the Engineering Department then develops the final design and begins soliciting bids for construction.

## Graphic of Current Street Improvement Process

### Step 1: Establish Capital Improvements Program

Developed annually, the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) is created by City staff, the City Manager, and is adopted by the Planning Commission. Upon approval and adoption by the Planning Commission, the CIP is included in the annual budget approved and adopted by the City Commission. This establishes the street projects to be programmed over the coming years.



### Step 2: Street Design Development

With a street segment identified within the CIP, City Staff begin the process of designing its next phase. City Staff will refer to the Master Plan, Mobility Action Plan, Street Design Guide, and other documents informing the street's design. For extensive reconstruction projects, the Planning Commission along with public input will guide street design. Following this feedback, City Staff develop the preliminary street design. The final design is reviewed and approved by the Planning Commission.



### Step 3: Final Engineering, Contract Award, and Construction

Once the preliminary street design has been approved by the Planning Commission, City Staff develops the final engineered drawings and specifications for construction. Upon completion of these documents, City Staff advertises for bids. City Staff then selects a bidder for construction. After this work, City Staff submits the bid and construction contract for final approval to the City Commission.





Washington Street

## Recommended Approach

### Challenges and Potential Solutions

Although these processes guide the City's current infrastructure improvement process, City staff have mentioned a number of limitations associated with them. Through numerous meetings with representatives of the City's various departments, common themes emerged as crucial to implementing the vision and goals of the Mobility Action Plan. These are discussed below.

#### **CHALLENGE:**

**Lack of Coordination between City Departments** – Although existing infrastructure processes call out a specific manner of coordination between departments, City staff mentioned this often does not function as it exists “on paper.” In meetings, staff mentioned the lack of a cohesive process for involving all city departments in determining annual infrastructure improvements. While departments will regularly consult with other departments on an “as-needed” basis, there is no standing meeting that brings all departments to the table. Staff mentioned a desire for a regular meeting to coordinate infrastructure improvements.

## *Case Study: Grand Rapids Design Team*

With the adoption of the Vital Streets Plan in 2016, the City of Grand Rapids sought to formalize the process for City staff from relevant departments to collaborate on major infrastructure and development projects. Comprised of staff representing Planning, Traffic Safety, Mobility, Fire, Stormwater, Sanitary Sewer, Water Services, Street Lighting, Forestry, and Engineering (among others) – the Grand Rapids Design Team brings these departments together early in the infrastructure process, offering them an opportunity to coordinate projects, resolve design concerns, and ultimately apply the goals of the Vital Streets Plan into the City’s infrastructure improvements.

This Design Team process has a number of benefits. First, it gives City staff a venue to offer their expertise and share recommendations. As designing infrastructure is an iterative process, the Design Team ensures that all parties are consistently in the conversations that ultimately shape its implementation. Ideally, this reduces City staff time for project review while reducing re-work for project designers.

An equally important benefit of Design Team is its unified voice, representing the sum of the City’s technical expertise and professional knowledge. As the City’s planners, engineers, and professionals in water resources, public works, fire services, and utilities are represented and given an equal voice – the Design Team presents a recommendation that has been tested and deliberated over by experts from a variety of perspectives. Acknowledging this expertise and the work that goes into developing consensus – Grand Rapids establishes the Design Team’s recommendation as the final plan to be implemented. By enhancing interdepartmental coordination and empowering staff to make final recommendations, the Grand Rapids Design Team creates certainty and predictability into the infrastructure improvement process while ensuring infrastructure is constructed in accordance with the Vital Streets Plan and other City policies.

### **SOLUTION:**

To meet the goals and objectives of the Mobility Action Plan, a regular coordination meeting between City departments involved in infrastructure can be held. In the case of the Grand Rapids Design Team, the City’s Engineering Department has “ownership” of the team’s administration – scheduling meetings, establishing agendas, and providing meeting minutes. The intent of these meetings is to develop consensus on infrastructure improvements and provide a final design recommendation to be implemented in accordance with the Mobility Action Plan, Street Design Manual, and other applicable infrastructure policies. Recognizing its importance and the weight of its recommendations, attendance at Design Team meetings should be mandatory and decisions should be well-documented to further bolster the group’s decision-making authority. An additional benefit is it can also be a mechanism to review complex private development projects. An important key to success is that departmental decision-makers must be at the table and commit to the standing meeting date and time as “off limits” for rescheduling, as well provide a unified voice in presenting street designs to the Planning Commission and City Commission.

## CHALLENGE:

**Relations between City Staff and Elected and Appointed Bodies** – As identified in the City’s current Capital Improvement Program (CIP) process and General Fund Street Project Process, City staff develops projects and infrastructure designs that are then reviewed and adopted by the Planning Commission. Tasked with overseeing the physical development of Traverse City, the Planning Commission is the appointed body assigned to ensure the City’s development conforms to the Master Plan and Mobility Action Plan.

As project construction is a financial matter however, final awards for infrastructure projects go before the City Commission for approval. It has been noted that this is a potential point of conflict, as in some instances City staff and the Planning Commission have spent considerable amounts of time and energy to design an infrastructure asset yet the City Commission fails to award a construction contract due to disapproval or disagreement over the project’s design. This action subverts the established decision-making structure, assuming the decision-making responsibility of the Planning Commission while disregarding design considerations developed through the project engineering and design process. This introduces ambiguity and ultimately leads to project delays, increased staff demands, re-work, and costly increases due to project redesigns.

*“As infrastructure is one of the most tangible aspects of good governance and its stewardship of public resources, ensuring that City leadership, City administration, and City staff work in a collaborative manner is crucial in building public trust and fulfilling the overall vision for a more sustainable mobility system.”*

## SOLUTION:

As infrastructure is one of the most tangible aspects of good governance and its stewardship of public resources, ensuring that City leadership, City administration, and City staff work in a collaborative manner is crucial in building public trust and fulfilling the overall vision for a more sustainable mobility system. As former sections stated, each group performs specific responsibilities, often involving the delegation of decision-making to other groups. This requires greater trust and communication between elected and appointed officials, City management, and City departments.

Project selection and design criteria have been formally adopted by the City Commission, as the legislative body, to provide direction to the City Manager, staff, and Planning Commission. The City’s *Infrastructure Strategy Policy* identifies what resources City staff and the Planning Commission should rely on for design guidance. The National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) *“Urban Street Design Guide”* and *“Context Sensitive Solutions in Designing Major Urban Thoroughfares for Walkable Communities”* are currently listed. It is recommended that this policy be revisited to ensure that it aligns with the recommendations of the Mobility Action Plan, state and federal design requirements, as well as to reorganize the document into two major sections that relate to modal hierarchy and vulnerable road users, and the other to the design of streets and facility types.

A best practice is for the legislative body (City Commission) to set the criteria by which decisions are made, and the administration of those criteria is left to persons credentialed in their field (City staff) with an additional check involving the Planning Commission which is also considered an administrative body in local government. Engineering judgement is oftentimes required when working in urban environments due to constrained rights-of-way. Trade-offs are common in decision-making. The Infrastructure Strategic Policy and its cited resources, alongside this plan, the Complete Streets Policy, the Street Design Manual, and the City's Master Plan provide ample guidance.

This collaboration – from the City Commission establishing the overall vision and policies to trusting City staff and administration in developing designs and providing professional expertise to the Planning Commission's role to vet the proposed designs, ensuring their accordance with the City's future development – these interactions require trust between these three groups. Understanding that all groups have Traverse City's best interests in mind, responsibility for its welfare is shared across all groups.

### Relations between City Commission, Planning Commission, and City Staff

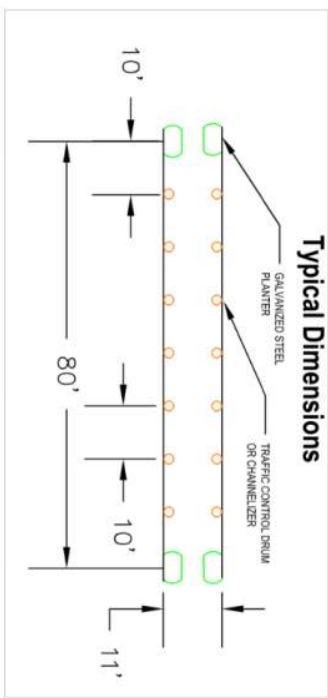


**Implement a Proportional Engagement Strategy** – Infrastructure improvements range from simple road resurfacing projects to complex reconstruction projects that incorporate new designs that alter traffic patterns. Recognizing this, community engagement cannot be a “one size fits all” approach and must instead be tailored towards each project. Although the City developed a useful “Level of Public Involvement Needed” worksheet in The City’s Public Participation Strategy, it now has an opportunity to create a decision-making matrix for infrastructure projects.

|   | Type of Street Project  | Methods   |
|---|---|---|
| <b>Light</b><br><i>(Informative Approach)</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Road maintenance like cape and crack sealings and wedgings</li> <li>• Rotomill and resurfacings and reconstruction that return road to previous state</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Postcard</li> <li>• Website</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Medium</b><br><i>(Design Input Needed)</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rotomill and resurfacings or reconstructions where curbs or road geometry is unchanged</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Letter</li> <li>• Website</li> <li>• Design meetings</li> </ul>                                |
| <b>Heavy</b><br><i>(Design Input Needed)</i>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rotomill and resurfacings or reconstructions that move cubrs or that change road geometry (parking removal, lane configuration changes, etc.)</li> </ul>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Informational sign</li> <li>• Same as above but including preferred design meetings</li> </ul> |

This approach can provide clarity to the community input process in a fair and predictable manner. By following this matrix, the City can plan for an amount of community engagement proportional to the project’s scope – capturing input from impacted residents, using their input to influence design, and ultimately yielding a project that is responsive to resident needs in a timely manner.

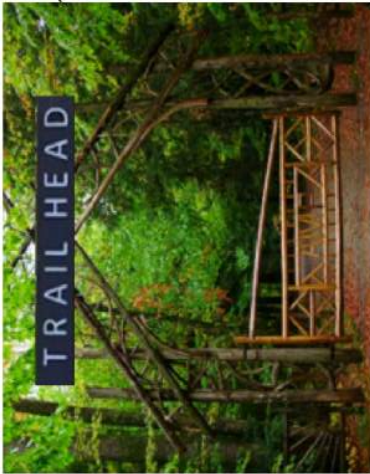
**Flexibility to Implement Small-Scale Tactical Engagement / Traffic Calming** – Infrastructure improvements range from simple road resurfacing projects to complex reconstruction projects that incorporate new designs that alter traffic patterns. Recognizing this, community engagement cannot be a “one size fits all” approach and must instead be tailored towards each project. Although the City developed a useful “Level of Public Involvement Needed” worksheet in The City’s Public Participation Strategy, it now has an opportunity to create a decision-making matrix for infrastructure projects. A number of tactical engagement projects considered during the planning process are included on following pages.



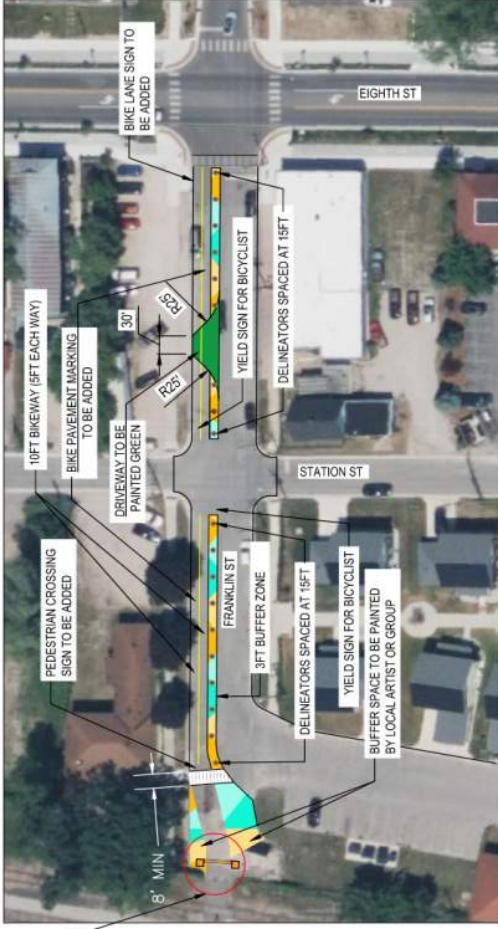
| Item                                | Quantity   | Apprx. Cost per Item (\$) | Total Cost (\$) |
|-------------------------------------|------------|---------------------------|-----------------|
| Traffic Control Drum OR Channelizer | 190-195    | 60                        | 11700           |
| Galvanized Steel Planter            | 25-30      | 150                       | 4500            |
| Yellow Waterborne Paint             | Apprx. 75' | 0.75                      | 57              |
| Total (\$)                          |            |                           | 16257           |
| <b>Required Signs</b>               |            |                           |                 |
| Divided Roadway Sign                | 2          |                           |                 |
| Right Turn Only Sign                | 4          |                           |                 |

NOTE: Costs can be reduced through the utilization of items on hand, partnerships with local artists, or sponsorships from the community.





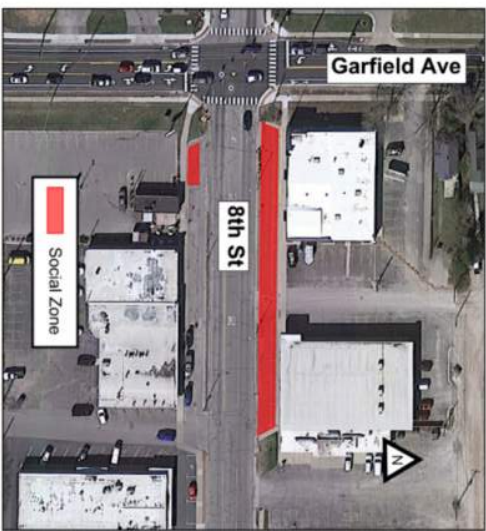
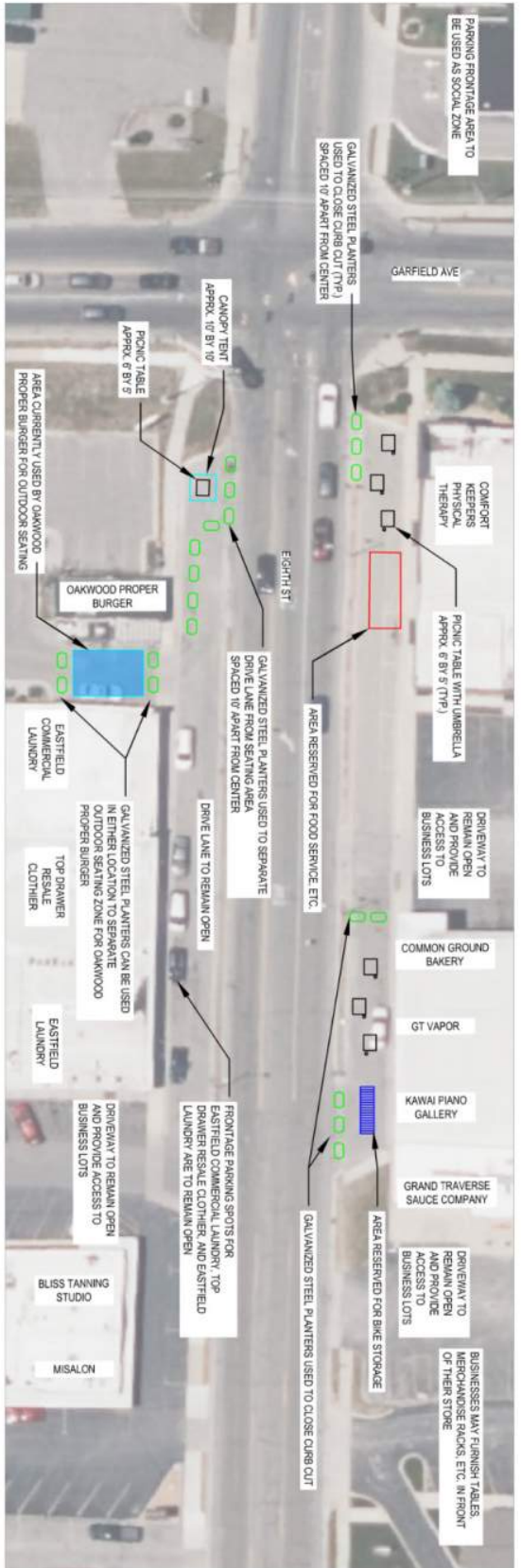
BOARDMAN RIVER TRAIL GATEWAY DESIGN TO BE PROVIDED BY THE CITY



| Item                    | Quantity | Apprx. Cost per Item (\$) | Total Cost (\$) |
|-------------------------|----------|---------------------------|-----------------|
| Delineators             | 19       | 40                        | 760.00          |
| Bike Pavement Markings  | 2        | 150                       | 300.00          |
| Yellow Waterborne Paint | 895      | 0.75                      | 671.25          |
| Traffic Signs           | 3        | 130                       | 390.00          |
| Crosswalk               | 1        | 150                       | 150.00          |
| Gate & Sign             | 1        | 1000                      | 1,000.00        |
| Total (\$)              |          |                           | 2,271.25        |

| Required Signs |   |
|----------------|---|
| Yield Sign     | 2 |
| Bike Lane Sign | 1 |

NOTE: Costs can be reduced through the utilization of items on hand, partnerships with local artists, or sponsorships from the community.



| Item                     | Quantity            | Apprx. Cost per Item (\$) | Total Cost (\$) |
|--------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|-----------------|
| Bike Rack                | Apprx. 36 linear ft | 57/ln. ft.                | 2052            |
| Canopy Tent              | 1                   | 250                       | 250             |
| Galvanized Steel Planter | 18                  | 150                       | 2700            |
| Picnic Bench             | 7                   | 280                       | 1960            |
| Porch Umbrella           | 6                   | 150                       | 900             |
| <b>Total</b>             |                     |                           | <b>7862</b>     |

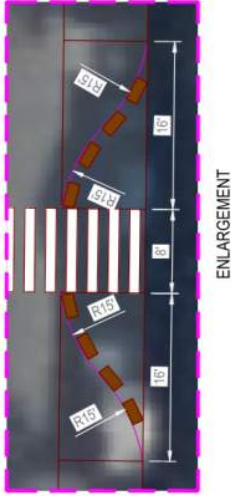
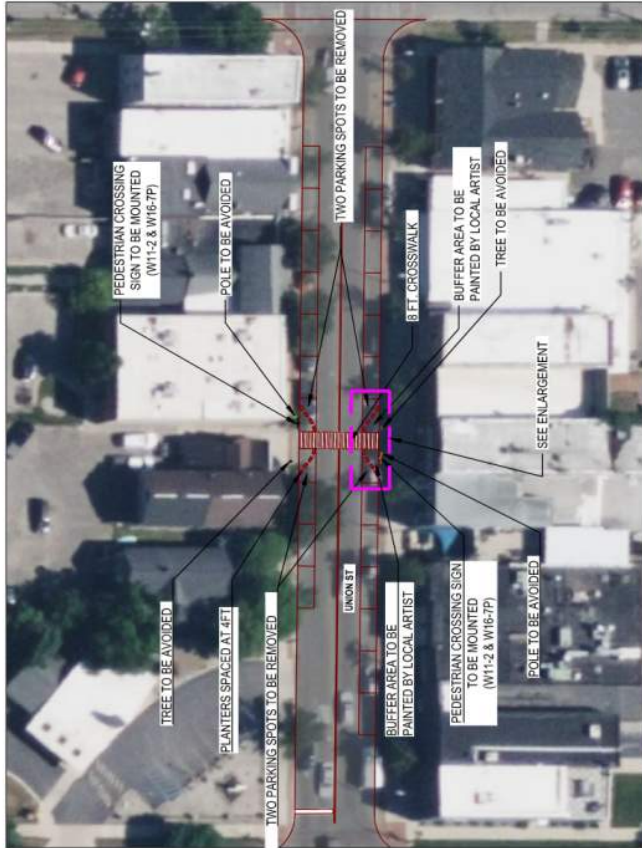
NOTE: Costs can be reduced through the utilization of items on hand, partnerships with local artists, or sponsorships from the community.

City of Traverse City  
 Mobility Action Plan

## Streetscape Improvements - Potential Tactical Urbanism Implementation

Basic Layout

### Example of Tactical Engagement Project



ENLARGEMENT



| Item                      | Quantity | Apprx. Cost per Item (\$) | Total Cost (\$) |
|---------------------------|----------|---------------------------|-----------------|
| Pedestrian crossing signs | 2        | 130                       | 260.00          |
| Wood crates with plants   | 12       | 55                        | 660.00          |
| Crosswalk                 | 1        | 150                       | 150.00          |
| Total (\$)                |          |                           | 1,070.00        |

NOTE: Costs can be reduced through the utilization of items on hand, partnerships with local artists, or sponsorships from the community.

## Policy Recommendations

While many of the points within this section are provided as long-term considerations, existing City policies can be changed in the near-term, reflecting the City's priorities towards fulfilling the vision and goals of this Plan. These policies and proposed changes are listed below.

### Chapter 410 – Traffic Codes

- **Add Section Requiring Motorists to Give Cyclists Five (5) Feet When Passing** – While Michigan law requires motorists to give cyclists a three (3) foot buffer when passing, some communities have increased this buffer to a five (5) foot minimum to increase safety for cyclists.



### Chapter 420 – Bicycle and Coaster Toys

- **Remove Language Requiring Licensing of Bicycles Sections** – According to Sections 420.01 – 420.03, cyclists are required to license their bicycles and attach this license on their bicycles. As Traverse City lacks a dedicated system for processing this licensing program along with the burden it places on bicyclists, it is recommended this requirement is repealed.
- **Consider Regulating Micro-Mobility Hubs** – As micro-mobility options such as scooter sharing becomes more prevalent, the City can implement “scooter corrals,” or dedicated locations where scooters are permitted to be parked and accessed. The City can review how other communities regulate micro-mobility options.
- **Add Section Addressing Electric Bicycles in Sensitive Areas** – Section 420.04 empowers the City Commission to prohibit bicycles and other vehicles in areas they deem appropriate. With the rise of E-bikes, this section can address different classifications of electric bicycles and provide guidance on where different classes are permitted. Class 1 electric bicycles (pedal-assisted and limited to 20 miles per hour) may be permitted in areas of regular bicycle use while Class 2 and Class 3 electric bicycles (featuring higher speeds) can be prohibited in sensitive areas such as shared use trails, pedestrian pathways, and other conflict areas.

78

**Above Left:** Image gathered National Association of City Transportation Officials, Shared Lane Markings. **Above Right:** Image gathered from University of Arkansas, Scooter Corrals, (September 21, 2020).

## Chapter 480 – Parking Generally

- **Add Section Prohibiting Vehicle Parking that Obstructs Sidewalks** – Language that prohibits parking that obstructs sidewalks can be added to ensure safe pedestrian spaces are maintained.
- **Add Section Prohibiting Vehicle Parking in Bicycle Lanes** – Language can be added to ensure vehicles do not park within bicycle lanes.



## Chapter 668 – Safety, Sanitation, and Health

- **Add Section Requiring Removal of Snow/Ice/Leaves from Bicycle Facilities** – Language can be added to Section 668.11 that prohibits residents from piling snow or lawn debris in bicycle facilities. It can also enshrine the City's responsibility towards snow-plowing the City's bicycle facilities.
- **Review Snow-Clearing Enforcement Policies** – Although typically enforced based on resident's complaints, the City can consider adding code enforcement staff to ensure compliance and keep the mobility network accessible year-round.

## Chapter 1020 – Street and Sidewalk Areas

- **Remove Language Prohibiting Playing in Streets and Alleys** – Although created with safety in mind, this rule reinforces roads as a place for cars and not for people. While this is already likely not enforced, removing this rule aligns with the City's view of streets being a place for all people and mobility modes. There are nuances to removing this rule however, as higher-volume streets are not appropriate for playing in while residential streets may be more appropriate. It should also be noted that all streets must be unobstructed and remain free for vehicle traffic. Because of these factors, this is another policy that requires thoughtful consideration before changing.

**Above Left:** Image from Easterbrook Blog Post (June 8, 2011).  
**Above Right:** Image gathered from City of Grand Rapids, MI.

## Chapter 1374 – Circulation and Parking

- **Revision of Bicycle Parking Requirements** – Consider amending bicycle parking language, potentially requiring more along major bicycle corridors or areas with high bicycling traffic.

### Zoning Ordinance

- **Amend Zoning Ordinance** – Amend the Zoning Ordinance to include a bonus provision or parking reduction where showers are provided or transit infrastructure is provided to encourage active commuting. Increase required sidewalk width to 7 feet where vehicle parking is perpendicular to the pedestrian way to take into account car overhangs and sufficient pedestrian space. Consider reducing or eliminating vehicle parking requirements and consider provisions that encourage development of bus shelters, benches, and bicycle parking.

### Traverse City Traffic Calming Program

- **Review Current Program Implementation** – According to the current process, Traverse City residents are tasked with identifying streets that are ideal candidates for traffic calming – not City staff. They then must approach the City and petition to study the street to see if traffic calming is feasible. A survey of surrounding property owners must then garner at least 50% support before funding can be allocated. While formalizing a way to implement important traffic calming features, this process may be overly complex and can erode public trust when projects that have been identified and deliberated over fail to be implemented due to lack of funding. With this in mind, the goals of this program may be better accomplished through a nimbler tactical urbanism program.



### Mobility Action Plan Updates

- **Regularly Update Mobility Action Plan** – Just like the Master Plan, the Mobility Action Plan should be reviewed and updated every five years to ensure consistency with ongoing transportation initiatives. This allows the Mobility Action Plan to be a “living document” while further incorporating mobility efforts within the region.

## Develop Mobility Education and Programming

***Develop Shared Street Safety Messaging*** – Communities with healthy mobility cultures acknowledge a shared responsibility towards street safety. The City can develop a public messaging program can educate residents and visitors on how to interact between all road users and demonstrates that streets belong to people of all ages and abilities.

## Active Transportation Committee

- ***Consider Dissolution of Active Transportation Committee*** – As the Planning Commission is already intimately involved in the development of infrastructure projects, the Active Transportation Committee largely serves a redundant role in overseeing the City's infrastructure projects. In the interest of reducing committees and freeing staff resources, the City can consider the dissolution of the Active Transportation Committee by formally transferring its responsibilities to the Planning Commission or another body as deemed appropriate.

## Strategic Plan

- ***Consider Development of Strategic Plan*** – Many communities have undertaken strategic planning exercises in recent years as a way for elected officials and appointed boards to demonstrate their values and goals for the future, providing greater clarity on the organization's future direction. Staff have mentioned this would be a useful supplement as this information can be tied into future planning efforts.

## City Staff Design Team

- ***Consider Establishment of Design Team*** – Similar to Grand Rapids' Design Team to implement its 2016 Vital Streets Plan, Traverse City can establish a regular meeting with relevant city departments to review development plans to ensure they comply with the Master Plan and Mobility Action Plan. The intent of this group is to review projects in a holistic manner, ensuring that City staff's concerns and feedback is shared and is used to inform the development of infrastructure projects. With all departments contributing and offering their input, the Design Team would then provide a final design to be implemented. An administrative policy could be enacted that defines the team's charge and responsibilities, as well as decision-making framework should a disagreement arise between departments.

## Identify Implementation Timeline

- ***Near-Term Improvements*** – Many mobility improvements can be achieved through small, incremental changes to the City's network. Improvements such as crosswalks, improved striping, sharrows, and wayfinding can be achieved quickly and are relatively affordable. While often considered "low-hanging fruit," these projects represent small wins that result in the build-up of the city's mobility network. These can conveniently be added to road resurfacing projects currently on the books, expediting the buildout of these projects.

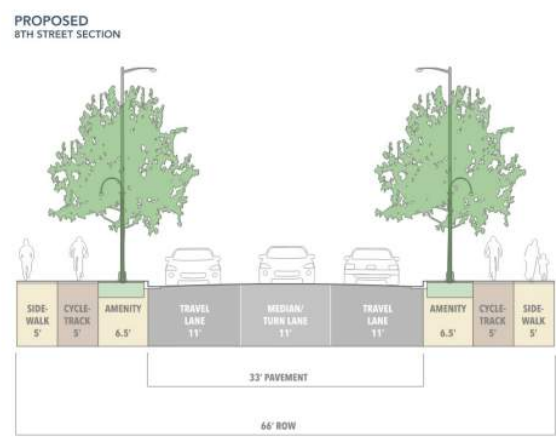
- **Medium-Term Improvements** – These improvements represent projects that require more thought, planning, and deliberation than those that can be implemented in tandem with existing resurfacing projects. These projects represent changes to the city’s rights-of-way, reconsidering lane widths and the provision of mobility infrastructure in new and unique ways such as incorporating protected bicycle facilities. Although bold, these projects are possible to be constructed over coming years. Their implementation is predicated on a growing mobility culture however – one that prioritizes bicycling and walking infrastructure when road reconstruction opportunities arise over the coming construction seasons.
- **Long-Term Improvements** – These projects represent transformational mobility improvements that warrant extensive studies, stakeholder engagement, and budgeting. These complex projects typically require key trade-offs between accommodating vehicular traffic versus bicyclists and pedestrians. Because of this, these projects are not politically feasible currently but are likely to be successful in years to come, as Traverse City’s mobility culture continues to shift and becomes more accommodating towards bicyclists and pedestrians. Acknowledging that timing is a crucial ingredient in the mobility network’s success, these improvements take a decade-plus horizon and represent the large-scale, foundational projects the City can work towards achieving over time.

## Eighth Street Implementation Case Study

The cycle tracks on Eighth Street were the product of a decade-long planning process that engaged the public and was subject to a number of studies. Culminating in the adoption of the Envision 8th Plan in 2017, this plan saw the corridor as a vibrant mixed-use environment featuring dedicated cycling facilities adjacent to the roadway. These improvements were made in tandem with a road reconstruction project in October 2019. These dedicated bike facilities provide an example of a long-term improvement that came to fruition in recent years, representing the work and engagement involved in projects of this magnitude.



82



**Left:** E Eighth Street Cycle Track and Sidewalk



# 7

## Measures of Progress

As Traverse City continues to pursue its mobility vision and the buildout of its network, City leadership, administration, and staff should continually study metrics indicating the overall success of the Mobility Action Plan.

**Perform Bicycle and Pedestrian Traffic Counts** – In summary, the Mobility Action Plan intends to get more residents walking and bicycling throughout the city. There is no better way of measuring this success than by measuring the level of pedestrians and cyclists within the community over time. Increases in people walking and bicycling indicate the improving mobility culture the Plan strives to cultivate while the opposite indicates that barriers remain that inhibit people’s abilities to utilize the mobility network.

**Miles of Facilities Installed** – A simple measure of progress is tracking and publicizing the amount of new bicycle facilities constructed each year. This can be demonstrated in a simple graphic each year that is updated to the City’s webpage.



**Carbon Emission Reductions** – Relating directly to the Mobility Action Plan’s Vision Statement of “creating a mobility network that reduces the region’s carbon footprint,” studies can be conducted over time to gauge whether carbon emissions are decreasing within Traverse City. Although challenging to monitor regularly, measuring the number of City employees riding their bikes to work can indicate reduced carbon emissions.

**Facility Implementation Impacts** – The construction of new signals and traffic-calming devices can influence which streets people choose to take. Following construction of these facilities, the City can monitor traffic for changes in volumes and speed. This can convey information that then informs future facility implementation projects.

**Above Left:** Image from Bike Portland (December 4, 2019).

**Above Right:** Image gathered from City of Bellingham, WA (December 21, 2020).

**Percentage of Residents within Quarter Mile of a Mobility Facility** – The proposed Mobility Network envisions 93% of Traverse City being within a quarter-mile of a mobility facility. This is a forward-looking mobility goal shared with much larger communities such as Seattle and indicates Traverse City’s commitment towards geographic equity. This can be achieved by inputting completed mobility projects into GIS and running buffer analyses each year.

**Annual Community Survey** – One method of gauging the Mobility Action Plan’s overall success is by gathering qualitative data from residents and stakeholders. This can be achieved through an annual survey that prompts survey takers to indicate whether progress has been visible in their community. This serves a useful purpose of also continuously gathering data that can be used to identify areas of concern and refine future mobility projects.

**Increased Transit Ridership** – A successful mobility system complements the region’s transit system and vice versa. As all transit trips begin with either a walk or bike ride, observing Bay Area Transportation Authority (BATA) ridership data can indicate how people are using the system as well as demonstrate how people are interacting with the mobility network.



**Observe Traffic Crash Data** – While the Mobility Action Plan seeks to create a safer transportation network for everyone, an increase in vehicle-cyclist or cyclist-pedestrian conflicts may indicate more people feeling comfortable bicycling and walking around Traverse City. While seemingly counterintuitive, more people bicycling and walking as opposed to driving will likely result in more crashes between different transportation modes. The severity of these crashes can indicate a key tenet of the Plan; lower traffic speeds due to the sharing of streets and a healthier mobility culture should reduce the number of severe crashes overall. Studying this trend over time can help achieve the City’s goal of eliminating traffic fatalities.



*Washington Street*

## Summary

Although these provide both quantitative and qualitative metrics for measuring the overall success of the Mobility Action Plan – understand that a healthy mobility culture represents the community’s collective sense of safety and is often an unmeasurable, intangible value. While there is little direct way to measure Traverse City’s mobility culture, these metrics can indicate its mobility culture in the aggregate, as a healthy mobility culture will yield positive changes in all of the metrics provided.

This plan recognizes that mobility culture takes time to change. This is not a reason for discouragement however; it’s a realization that incremental improvements to the network are steps towards realizing the City’s ambitious vision of being a premier bicycling, walking, and transit community. Traverse City has the opportunity to “live this plan” by implementing its recommendations and incorporating its procedures into existing processes. In this way, this Plan will guide the City’s infrastructure process, resulting in Traverse City’s streets being designed for all users in mind.

