

CITY CLERK'S OFFICE



CITY of
TRAVERSE CITY

ANNUAL REPORT

A YEAR IN REVIEW



2021

City Clerk's Office
400 Boardman Avenue
Ground Floor
Traverse City, MI 49684

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TEAM MEMBERS

YOUR CITY CLERK’S OFFICE



BENJAMIN MARENTETTE
CITY CLERK

Benjamin Marentette has served as City Clerk since the confirmation of his appointment in September 2011. He holds a Master of Business Administration with a concentration in finance and leadership and a Bachelor of Arts. Benjamin has completed the Senior Executives in State and Local Government Program at Harvard University’s Kennedy School and was selected by his peers across the State of Michigan as City Clerk of the Year in 2017. Additionally, he serves in a number of volunteer advisory capacities for various foundations, nonprofit, and local organizations to advance this vibrant community.



SARAH LUTZ
DEPUTY CITY CLERK

Sarah Lutz joined the City Clerk’s team in June 2021 as the Deputy City Clerk. She has a Bachelor of Science in Accountancy and Certificate in Human Resources from Ferris State University, Associates in Legal Assistant from Northwestern Michigan College, and 10+ years of local government experience. Sarah successfully completed the Michigan Associations of Municipal Clerk’s certificate in 2021.



STACY FOLGMANN
LICENSING & ELECTION
SPECIALIST

Stacy joined the City in August 2021 as the Licensing & Election Specialist. She came to the City after working for the Grand Traverse County for twelve years. She served at the County jail where she worked as a Collections Officer and Office Specialist and was awarded the Employee of the Year Award for the Sheriff’s Office/Corrections Division.



KATIE MILLER
ADMINISTRATIVE
SPECIALIST

Katie Miller joined the City Clerk’s team as Administrative Specialist in October 2021. She has a Bachelor of Fine Arts from Michigan State University and returned to Traverse City in 2010 after living in Portland and working as graphic designer. Katie previously assisted the City Clerk’s Office in elections in 2020 and 2021.



COLLEEN PAVEGLIO
COMMUNICATIONS
SPECIALIST

Colleen Paveglia joined the City in 2020 and was promoted to a newly created position, Communications Specialists, in June 2021. She has a nearly 18 years of professional experience with the City of Traverse City in marketing, communications, and special events. She holds a Bachelor of Arts & Science Degree in Communications from Michigan State University with a specialization in Sociology.



OUR MISSION

Under Oath, the mission of the City Clerk’s Team is to serve our community residents and business owners, the City Commission, the City Manager and City departments, rendering equal service to all, providing top-level enthusiastic, accurate and courteous service. As a team and as professionals, we are committed to this mission.

City Clerk Benjamin Marentette, and Deputy City Clerk Sarah Lutz subscribe, and strictly adhere to, the International Institute of Municipal Clerks’ Professional and Personal Code of Ethics, conducting the affairs of the office in such a way that they are above reproach and cultivate public confidence in the community.

GENERAL OPERATIONS ON BEHALF OF THE CITY

The City Clerk's Office proudly serves as the legislative and corporate office of the City, with many operational responsibilities, serving in accordance with and upholding the Michigan constitution, City Charter, ordinances, policies, federal and state laws and administrative orders of the City Manager.

\$162 MILLION RISK MANAGEMENT

The City Clerk's Office is responsible for risk management and to analyze projects and all operations to ensure proper coverage for the City's financial solvency, to cover \$162 million in City assets and managed all claims against the City and claims on behalf of the City.

\$1 BILLION LIABILITY REVIEW

The City Clerk's Office reviews over \$1 billion in insurance coverage required of others in order to protect the City's financial posture.

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PERMIT & LICENSING ISSUANCE

The City Clerk's Office manages the licensing process for the City in over 30 categories, ranging from vacation home rentals to mobile food vendors, sidewalk cafes to event licenses, and more. We issued and/or monitored nearly 500 licenses throughout 2021!

71

MEETING MANAGEMENT

The City Clerk's Office is responsible for the preparation of comprehensive meeting packets, in collaboration with the City Manager's Office, for all agenda items under consideration by the City Commission. In 2021, forty packets were prepared, which totaled over 10,000 pages! The goal of these meeting packets is to provide the right balance of information for the City Commission as well as our residents and stakeholders. The office also provides support and provides advice, guidance and support for a number of other ad hoc committees.

Additionally, the City Clerk's Office coordinates the recruitment and appointment or reappointment effort for all city boards and committees.

\$140 MILLION FINANCIAL OVERSIGHT

The City Clerk provided final approval after determining compliance on financial disbursements for the City, including Traverse City Light & Power, as co-authority with the City Treasurer/Finance Director. In Fiscal Year 2020/2021, the Treasurer's Department audited and reviewed in-excess of \$140 million financial disbursements across 13,383 individual disbursements with the City Clerk's review.

94

CONTRACT MONITORING

Each year, the City Clerk's Office not only performs the liability review of the each contract, but reviews the contract, executes, and tracks various terms and follow ups. In 2021, 94 new contracts were executed.

DEMOCRACY FOR ALL

100% ACCURACY NOVEMBER 2021 ELECTION

The City Clerk's Team is deeply committed to administering fair and accessible elections. Since the 2018 Michigan Constitutional amendment to allow for no reason absentee voting, the City's percentage of absentee voters has increased by 24.75% between November 2019 and November 2021.

On November 2, 2021, the City held an election for the Mayoral seat and four City Commissioner seats. The election was randomly selected by the Department of State, and an extensive audit of the election was conducted on December 8, 2021. The audit included analysis and examination of documents and procedures used by the City Clerk's team leading up to the election, and the procedures and documentation from a randomly-selected voting precinct, which was City of Traverse City Precinct 3, as well as the Absent Voter Counting Board for Precinct 3.

Importantly, the independent audit, conducted in accordance with Department of State regulations, also included a hand count of the vote totals in a randomly-selected race, which confirmed that it matched 100% with the reported results.



At the center of all of our team discussions is ensuring Michigan's elections – the entire apparatus – is rooted in practice that cements voter confidence. Conducting random audits such as this one is key to ensuring we have elections where everyone knows that their vote will count. Having a post-election audit is another important way to police our elections."

-City Clerk Benjamin Marentette

FUTURE VOTER STICKER DESIGN CONTEST

The City hosted a creative challenge by seeking designs for its "Future Voter" stickers. The contest was intended to instill the importance of exercising the right to vote within our youth and build lifelong citizens that participate in democracy and celebrate civic pride.

The contest was open to K-12 students in Grand Traverse, Leelanau, Benzie, Antrim, and Kalkaska counties. Approximately 40 design submissions were received and a panel of judges narrowed the field to six finalists for a public vote. Nearly 500 votes were received through the public voting process. The designs with the most votes were created by Ronin Wilson, Hanna Stalmack, and Paige LaMott. Each winner was honored with a \$100 prize and recognition at a City Commission meeting.





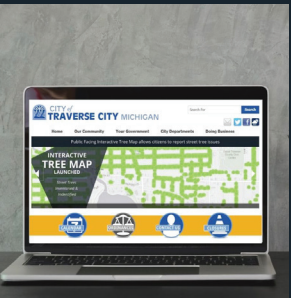
CITY COMMUNICATIONS

The City Commission had identified the opportunity, and the need, to add capacity to the city organization in terms of communications, education and engagement. In 2021, the City, with the City Commission's unanimous support established the position of Communications Specialist.

The City Clerk's Office is the City's public information office; and every year, has literally thousands of interactions with citizens and stakeholder groups. The office touches all City departments, with nearly every piece of information and business related to city government flowing through it in one shape or another, works toward proactively identifying stakeholders to plug into City initiatives, and therefore, was the natural fit to house the position the Communications Specialist.



PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE



DIGITAL RECORDS

The City Clerk's Office digitally manages and catalogs all City records including ordinances, policies and contracts.

Michigan
MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
Request for Public Records

Name of Requester _____

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Contact Phone Number _____ (Home) _____ (Work) _____

Is this request for your records? _____

If yes, we believe that in the request is for:

Requester ID: 123456789 (This is a unique number for the requester, not a public record number, and it will remain constant for all future requests.)

1. Please enter the name of the public record you are requesting and include the following:

Name Requested to be Released _____

Date of Request _____

Location of Record, if known _____

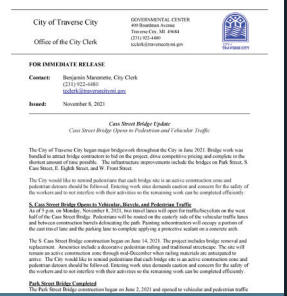
Other information helpful to identify document _____

2. Method of Access Desired: ☐ Pickup ☐ Mail ☐ Electronic ☐ Other _____

Signature of Requester _____

FOIA COORDINATION

The City Clerk's Office is the coordinating office for public record requests under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) - ensuring proper security and disclosure of City records



MEDIA RELEASES

The City Clerk's Office creates and coordinates the publishing of media releases. In 2021, an increase in media releases accompanied Public Service Announcements to better communicate detailed information on each project, funding, sources, and value. Media inquiries and outreach are also coordinated through the City Clerk's Office.



THE PERFORMANCE

The City Clerk's Office works with each department to create the City's annual report, The Performance. The report highlights the past year's accomplishments, shining a spot light on work big and small from sewers to ski slopes! A printed and digital document is published and distributed,

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Increasing digital engagement to interact with the public on various digital channels was a focus of the City Clerk’s Office in 2021. Engagement has seen a transformational shift during recent times and now more than ever, growing the City’s digital landscape is critical to reach a wider audience. The projects and initiatives of the City are great in terms of numbers, and engaging the public is critical to building a strong community.

WEBSITE OVERHAUL

The City is working on a major website overhaul to increase engagement and transparency and better highlight City services and amenities.

In 2021, the City Clerk’s Office began the process of seeking the development of a new website that is service forward with a unique design for navigational ease that demonstrates our special community and brand identity for communication moving forward.

Desired features will include communication tools for prominent display of news and alerts, subscriptions to a digital newsletter and updates, and an improved calendar. Departmental pages will have improved navigation.



SHARED STREETS

The City Clerk’s Office joined the Shared Streets Committee and developed a resident survey that was mailed to the affected and surrounding streets, team members went door to door, a webpage was developed, and letters were sent in advance of program start.



GET THE SCOOP

The City Clerk’s Office launched a series of public engagement initiatives with the Adult Use Marijuana Ad Hoc Committee to seek feedback on proposed zoning and regulations for Adult Use Marijuana facilities within the City limits.

A “virtual open house” was launched via Arc GIS Story Map to provide background and the methodology on proposed zoning was developed and accompanied an online survey. 735 participants took the online survey. Lastly, an in-person open house was hosted at the City Opera House. The City also worked with a local ice cream maker to create Get The Scoop Ice Cream as a thanks to those taking the time to engage in City initiatives.

HEALTHIER DRINKING CULTURE

The City Clerk’s Office was an active participant in the Healthier Drinking Culture initiative, serving on the steering committee. Through an extensive public engagement process, a Strategic Plan was developed, which identified actions steps for implementation.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

In an effort to reduce the spread of COVID-19, the City of Traverse City quickly pivoted to a “virtual city hall,” in March 2020. Live streaming for public meetings continued to be broadcast and a method was developed for the public to attend virtually, and provide public comment.

In person public bodies returned July 6, 2021. Meetings continue to be broadcast live on Cable Channel 191 and streamed online. Additionally, safety measures have been put in place to protect the health of those in attendance.



DEPARTMENT & NEIGHBORHOOD RELATIONSHIPS

The City Clerk’s Office met with Department Heads to conduct a needs assessment, increasing communication between departments to improve communications and offer assistance where needed: i.e. press releases, public presentations, webpages, etc.

The City Clerk’s Office met with Neighborhood Presidents to find out top issues within their neighborhoods and where communication blind spots may occur with the City. We look forward to improving communications with residents.



DIGITAL EXPERIENCES

627% INCREASE THE SOCIAL NETWORK

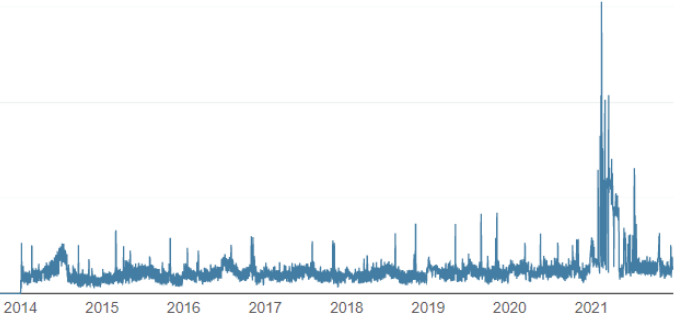
The City of Traverse City’s Facebook engagement grew significantly in 2021 with an increase in post views by **627%**, and an overall increase in audience reach of **95.7% for a total of 271,600**. Utilizing social media for project updates and City Commission agenda highlights served as an additional avenue to engage the community on City initiatives.

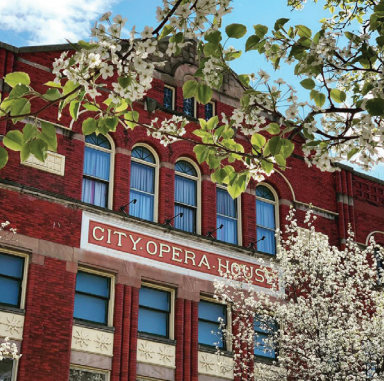
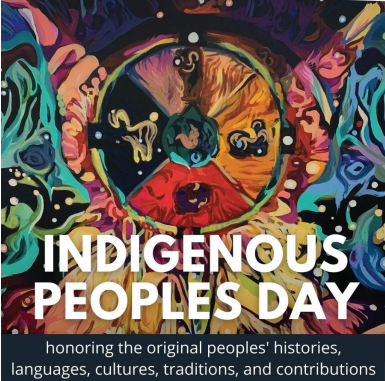
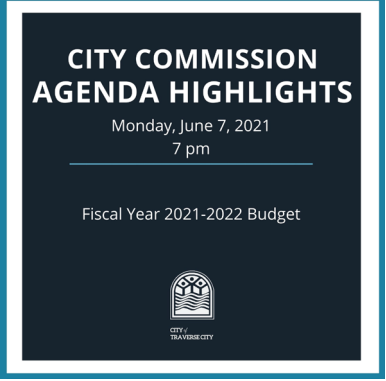
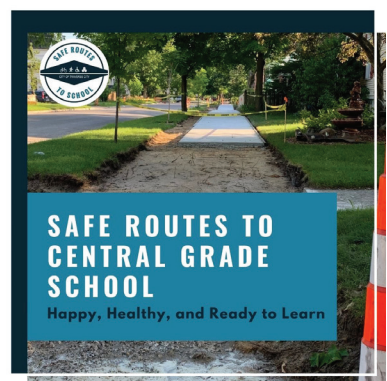
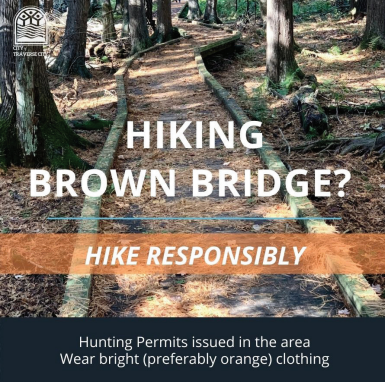
A “**High Fives**” campaign was also launched to give recognition to the City’s hard working staff and spread positive news community members.

Social media resulted in nearly **6,500 post clicks to the City’s website** where more detailed, factual information was provided on the posted subject matter.

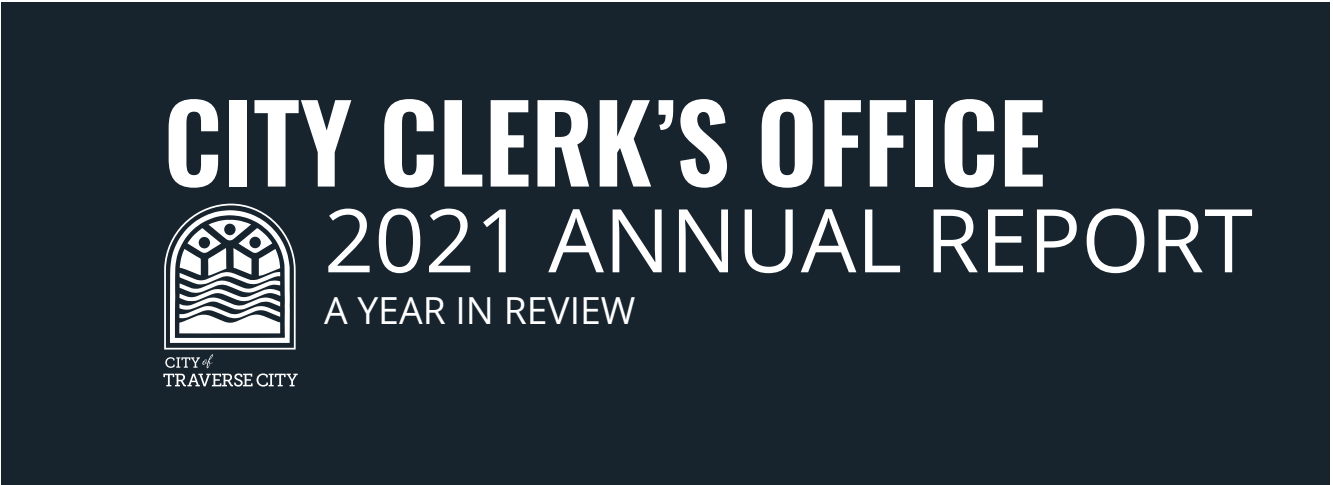
95% INCREASE ENGAGING IN A VIRTUAL WORLD

Web traffic nearly doubled to 500,000 sessions in 2021 and **page views jumped from 550,000 to 775,000**. The City’s website is a place to tell our story, and provide updates on all projects and initiatives. In 2021, 92.8% of the visitors were new. The City has set a goal to increase our return visitors so the website is an information resource and utilized as a tool for engagement.





WHAT'S NEXT



WEBSITE LAUNCH

The City Clerk's Office is leading the project for the website overhaul. Improved navigation and refreshed content to drive up engagement and transparency will provide a cohesive brand identity for the City and effectively communicate goals and objectives. The launch is scheduled for April 2022.

DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS

Increasing communication methods is on slate for 2022 with the launch of a digital newsletter.

The City is also exploring the opportunity to incorporate text alerts into their communication portfolio.

ELECTION SEASON

The City Clerk's Office plays a crucial role in making sure local elections are properly run and conducted in an open and fair manner. Beginning in May 2022, the City Clerk's Office will begin gearing up for two election in 2022, in August and November.

HEALTHIER DRINKING CULTURE

Upon the development of the Strategic Plan for the Healthier Drinking Culture initiative, 2022 will bring implementation of major action steps, by moving forward with public input sessions with the goal of developing value based criteria for awarding liquor licenses and working with City departments and stakeholders.

CITY LEADERSHIP INITIATIVE

The City Clerk's Office will embark upon a strategy to build the pipeline of future candidates for City Commission and volunteers on appointed boards and committees. This strategy will center around informing citizens on how City government works, and the role the City plays in quality of life for its residents. Additionally, participants will learn how they can become active and engaged participants in leadership

1, 5, &10 YEAR VISION

A 1, 5, and 10 year visioning process will serve as a roadmap for the City Clerk's Office values and commitment to achieving our goals.

The process will offer a possibility for change, and generate creative thinking for goals and action plans.

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