

Traverse City Downtown Development Authority Regular Meeting

Friday, June 20, 2025

9:00 am

Commission Chambers, Governmental Center
400 Boardman Avenue
Traverse City, Michigan 49684



The City of Traverse City does not discriminate on the basis of disability in the admission to, access to, treatment in, or employment in, its programs or activities. Interim Assistant City Manager, 400 Boardman Avenue, Traverse City, Michigan 49684, phone 231-922-4440, TDD/TTY 231-922-4412, VRS 231-421-7008, has been designated to coordinate compliance with the non-discrimination requirements contained in Section 35.107 of the Department of Justice regulations. Information concerning the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the rights provided thereunder, are available from the ADA Coordinator.

If you are planning to attend and you have a disability requiring any special assistance at the meeting and/or if you have any concerns, please immediately notify the ADA Coordinator.

The City of Traverse City and Downtown Development Authority are committed to a dialog that is constructive, respectful and civil. We ask that all individuals interacting verbally or in writing with board members honor these values.

Downtown Development Authority:
c/o Harry Burkholder, Executive Director
(231) 922-2050
Web: www.dda.downtowntc.com
303 East State Street, Suite C
Traverse City, MI 49684

**Welcome to the Traverse City Downtown Development Authority
meeting**

Agenda

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1. CALL TO ORDER	
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2. ROLL CALL	
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3. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA	
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4. PUBLIC COMMENT	
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5. CONSENT CALENDAR	
<i>The purpose of the consent calendar is to expedite business by grouping non-controversial items together to be dealt with by one DDA Board motion without discussion. Any member of the DDA Board, staff or the public may ask that any item on the consent calendar be removed therefrom and placed elsewhere on the agenda for individual consideration by the DDA Board; and such requests will be automatically respected. If an item is not removed from the consent calendar, the action noted in parentheses on the agenda is approved by a single DDA Board action adopting the consent calendar.</i>	
A. Consideration of approving the minutes from the May 16, 2025 DDA Regular Board Meeting (approval recommended) May 16, 2025 DDA Meeting Minutes - PDF	4 - 7
B. Consideration of approving the the May 2025 Financial Reports and Distributions for DDA General, Old Town TIF, TIF-97 and the Arts Commission (approval recommended) May 2025 DDA General, Old Town TIF, TIF-97 Financial Report and Dashboard - PDF May 2025 Arts Commission Financial Report - PDF	8 - 16
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6. ITEMS REMOVED FROM CONSENT CALENDAR	
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7. SPECIAL ORDER OF BUSINESS	
A. Informational Bi-Annual Report to the Community (MCL 125.4910(4)) Information Meeting Memo (Burkholder) - PDF	17
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8. OLD BUSINESS	

A.	2025 - 2026 DDA Budget (approval recommended) 2025 - 2026 Budget Memo (Burkholder) - PDF 2025 - 2026 Proposed TIF-97 and Old Town TIF Expenses - PDF 2025 - 2026 Proposed DDA General, TIF-97 and Old Town TIF Budget (as presented by the City) - PDF	18 - 42
B.	Streetscaping/Snowmelt Reimbursement Policy Streetscape Memo	43
C.	Project Priorities (approval recommended) TIF 97 Project Priorities Memo (Burkholder) - PDF B&R Proposed Professional Fees - PDF B&R Proposed Work Plan - PDF Farmers Market Pavilion Letter of Support - PDF Rotary Square Timeline June - PDF Boardman Ottaway Riverwalk Timeline June - PDF	44 - 55
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9.	NEW BUSINESS	
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10.	EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT	
A.	Executive Director Report Executive Director Report (Burkholder) - PDF Planning Commission Rezoning Materials - PDF Traverse City Strategic Action Plan Report - PDF	56 - 119
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11.	STAFF REPORTS	
A.	Arts Commission Art Commission Report (Bohac) - PDF	120 - 121
B.	Director of Events and Engagement Director of Events and Engagement Report (Klebba) - PDF	122 - 123
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12.	RECEIVE AND FILE	
A.	Traverse Connect Spring 2025 Informational Bi-Annual Report to the Community Traverse Connect Spring 2025 Regional Economic Ecosystem Report - PDF	124 - 151
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13.	PUBLIC COMMENT	
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14.	ADJOURNMENT	



**Minutes of the
Downtown Development Authority for the City of Traverse City
Regular Meeting
Friday, May 16, 2025**

A regular meeting of the Downtown Development Authority of the City of Traverse City was called to order at the Commission Chambers, Governmental Center, 400 Boardman Avenue, Traverse City, Michigan, at 9:00 a.m.

The following Board Members were in attendance: Board Member Peter Kirkwood, Board Member Jeff Joubran, Board Member Todd McMillen, Board Member Ed Slosky, and Mayor Amy Shamroe

The following Board Members were absent: Board Member Shelley Spencer, Board Member Gary Howe, and Board Member Mike Powers

Chairperson Slosky presided at the meeting.

(a) **CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Slosky called the meeting to order at 9:11 a.m.

(b) **ROLL CALL**

(c) **REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

(1) That the board approve the Agenda as amended as presented.

Moved by Peter Kirkwood, Seconded by Amy Shamroe

Yes: Peter Kirkwood, Jeff Joubran, Todd McMillen, Ed Slosky, and Amy Shamroe

Absent: Shelley Spencer, Gary Howe, and Mike Powers

CARRIED. 5-0-3 on a recorded vote

(d) **PUBLIC COMMENT**

(e) **CONSENT CALENDAR**

The purpose of the consent calendar is to expedite business by grouping

non-controversial items together to be dealt with by one DDA Board motion without discussion. Any member of the DDA Board, staff or the public may ask that any item on the consent calendar be removed therefrom and placed elsewhere on the agenda for individual consideration by the DDA Board; and such requests will be automatically respected. If an item is not removed from the consent calendar, the action noted in parentheses on the agenda is approved by a single DDA Board action adopting the consent calendar.

- (1) Consideration of approving the minutes from the April 25, 2025 DDA Regular Board Meeting (approval recommended)
- (2) Consideration of approving the April 2025 Financial Reports and Distributions for DDA General, Old Town TIF, TIF-97 and the Arts Commission (approval recommended)
That the board approve the Consent Calendar as presented.

Moved by Amy Shamroe, Seconded by Jeff Joubran

Yes: Peter Kirkwood, Jeff Joubran, Todd McMillen, Ed Slosky, and Amy Shamroe

Absent: Shelley Spencer, Gary Howe, and Mike Powers

CARRIED. 5-0-3 on a recorded vote

(f) **ITEMS REMOVED FROM CONSENT CALENDAR**

(g) **SPECIAL ORDER OF BUSINESS**

- (1) Public Hearing for the 2025 - 2026 DDA Budget

The public hearing was called to order and opened at 9:18am by Chair Slosky.
No public addressed the board.

The public hearing was closed at 9:19am by Chair Slosky.

The following addressed the board.

Harry Burkholder
Amy Shamroe
Ed Slosky
Pete Kirkwood

(h) **OLD BUSINESS**

- (1) TIF-97 Budget Priorities (with presentation from Progressive on Rotary Square)

The following addressed the board:

Jason Ball
Lauren Pedigo
Harry Burkholder
Pete Kirkwood

Amy Shamroe
Ed Slosky

(2) Streetscaping Policy (approval recommended)

The following addressed the board:

Harry Burkholder
Ed Slosky
Amy Shamroe
Jeff Joubran
Pete Kirkwood

(i) **NEW BUSINESS**

(1) Ambassador (clean and green) Program Contract (approval recommended)

The following addressed the board:

Harry Burkholder

That the DDA Board enter into contract with SEED's for a not-to-exceed cost of \$72,000 for Clean and Green Services from May 19th through September 26th 2025, using TIF97 and Old Town TIF funding, subject to approval as to its form by the DDA Executive Director and Attorney

Moved by Todd McMillen, Seconded by Amy Shamroe

Yes: Peter Kirkwood, Jeff Joubran, Todd McMillen, Ed Slosky, and Amy Shamroe

Absent: Shelley Spencer, Gary Howe, and Mike Powers

CARRIED. 5-0-3 on a recorded vote

(2) Retail Incubator (approval recommended)

the following addressed the board:

Harry Burkholder
Pete Kirkwood

That the DDA Board approve the DDA Executive Director and the DDA attorney to move forward with a formal agreement with IAM Funds LLC to terminate the lease agreement under the proposed terms provided by IAM Funds LLC.

Moved by Amy Shamroe, Seconded by Todd McMillen

Yes: Peter Kirkwood, Jeff Joubran, Todd McMillen, Ed Slosky, and Amy Shamroe

Absent: Shelley Spencer, Gary Howe, and Mike Powers

CARRIED. 5-0-3 on a recorded vote

(j) **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT**

The following addressed the board:

Harry Burkholder

- (1) Executive Director Report (Burkholder) - PDF

The following addressed the board:

Harry Burkholder

(k) **STAFF REPORTS**

- (1) Director of Events and Engagement

The following addressed the board:

Sara Klebba

(l) **RECEIVE AND FILE**

- (1) Traverse Connect Quarter One Growth Barometer

(m) **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Then following addressed the board:

Richard Robbins
720 Center Place

(n) **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:31am by Chair Slosky

Harry Burkholder, Executive Director

Traverse City DDA - General

Trial Balance
As of May 31, 2025

	DEBIT	CREDIT
1000 Fifth Third Checking - 3112	792,339.43	
1010 Fifth Third Savings - 6740	215,701.26	
1020 Petty Cash	0.00	
1072 Bill.com Money Out Clearing	0.00	
1200 Accounts Receivable	72.42	
1101 Due From APS (City of TC)	0.00	
1102 Due From Arts Council	0.00	
1103 Due From DTCA	0.00	
1104 Due From Other Funds	0.00	
1220 Grants Receivable	0.00	
1230 Other Receivable	0.00	
1300 Pre-Paid Expense	14,601.60	
1480 Payroll Advance	0.00	
1499 Undeposited Funds	0.00	
2000 Accounts Payable		204,550.74
2153 Credit Card		2,605.14
2050 Other Accrued Liabilities		0.00
2100 Due to Other Funds		0.00
2110 Due to Oldtown TIF		0.00
2120 Due to TIF 97		0.00
2200 Payroll Liabilities		0.00
2201 Payroll Liabilities:Direct Deposit Liabilities		0.00
2202 Payroll Liabilities:Accrued Payroll Liabilities		11,081.49
2203 Payroll Liabilities:Accrued Salaries		37,361.89
2205 Payroll Liabilities:457b Payable		0.00
2210 Payroll Liabilities:Federal Income Tax Payable		0.00
2215 Payroll Liabilities:Health, Dental, Vision Insurance Payable		916.60
2220 Payroll Liabilities:Life & Disability Insurance Payable		49.92
2225 Payroll Liabilities:Medicare Tax Payable		0.00
2230 Payroll Liabilities:Social Security Tax Payable		0.00
2235 Payroll Liabilities:State Income Tax Payable		0.00
2240 Payroll Liabilities:State Unemployment Tax Payable		0.00
2245 Payroll Liabilities:Wage Garnishment Payable		0.00
2300 Deposits Payable		0.00
2301 Deposits Payable:Double Up Food Bucks	2,490.00	
2303 Deposits Payable:NCF Reimbursements		0.00
2304 Deposits Payable:Prescriptions for Health		0.00
2305 Deposits Payable:Project Fresh		357.50
2306 Deposits Payable:Senior Project Fresh		0.00
2307 Deposits Payable:SNAP Food Assistance Payable		0.00
2403 GRANTS:EGLE - Cornwell Development		0.00
2407 GRANTS:MEDC Civic Square		100,000.00
2409 GRANTS:Rotary Charities		0.00
2600 Deferred Income		22,510.83
Bryan Crough Memorial Fund		0.00

Accrual Basis Friday, June 13, 2025 09:10 AM GMT-04:00

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Traverse City DDA - General

Trial Balance
As of May 31, 2025

	DEBIT	CREDIT
Bumpout Project Funds Collected		0.00
Buy Local Give Local Campaign		0.00
Suspense		0.00
3000 Opening Bal Equity		107,606.27
3900 Retained Earnings		468,428.85
4101 TAXES:Property Taxes		122,431.44
4200 GRANTS & CONTRIBUTIONS		141,656.00
4204 GRANTS & CONTRIBUTIONS:Grants - EGLE cornwell		1,250.00
4207 GRANTS & CONTRIBUTIONS:MACC Grant		12,000.00
4212 GRANTS & CONTRIBUTIONS:EGLE Grant-State Street West-End Mixed Use		385.00
4302 REIMBURSEMENTS:Administrative Services		737,478.00
4303 REIMBURSEMENTS:Parking Services		181,317.90
4305 REIMBURSEMENTS:Farmers Market Revenue		16,034.68
4306 REIMBURSEMENTS:Farmer's Market Booth Rental Income		53,214.00
4501 INTEREST INCOME:Interest & Dividends		7,008.66
5101 SALARIES:Salaries & Wages	403,503.75	
5102 SALARIES:Hourly Wage Expense	128,620.72	
5201 FRINGE BENEFITS:Health Insurance	17,427.75	
5202 FRINGE BENEFITS:Disability Insurance Benefits	1,531.93	
5203 FRINGE BENEFITS:Life Insurance Expense	310.66	
5204 FRINGE BENEFITS:457 Company Matching	37,729.94	
5208 FRINGE BENEFITS:Social Security Tax Expense	34,525.45	
5209 FRINGE BENEFITS:Medicare Tax Expense	8,074.43	
5210 FRINGE BENEFITS:SUTA Tax Expense	1,378.90	
5211 FRINGE BENEFITS:Workers Compensation	1,534.50	
5401 PROFESSIONAL SERVICES:Contract Services	98,628.29	
5402 PROFESSIONAL SERVICES:Legal	46,180.48	
5403 PROFESSIONAL SERVICES:Professional/Contractual	243,473.94	
5409 PROFESSIONAL SERVICES:Grant exp EGLE cornwell bldg	1,250.00	
5418 PROFESSIONAL SERVICES:SNAP Food Assistance Expense	17,458.39	
5419 PROFESSIONAL SERVICES:EGLE Grant-State Street West-End Mixed Use	962.50	
5420 PROFESSIONAL SERVICES:Farmers Market Administrative Expense	24,364.39	
5421 PROFESSIONAL SERVICES:Marketing	76,322.00	
5501 TRAVEL AND CONFERENCES:Lodging, meals	736.54	
5502 TRAVEL AND CONFERENCES:Transportation	390.76	
5503 TRAVEL AND CONFERENCES:Training	275.00	
5601 REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE:Repairs & Maintenance	1,498.78	
5301 OFFICE SUPPLIES AND UTILITIES:Office Supplies	13,851.31	
5302 OFFICE SUPPLIES AND UTILITIES:Utilities	4,676.77	
5303 OFFICE SUPPLIES AND UTILITIES:Operation Supplies	464.70	
5305 OFFICE SUPPLIES AND UTILITIES:Dues, Subscriptions and Memberships	24,214.04	
5306 OFFICE SUPPLIES AND UTILITIES:Printing & Publishing	1,378.05	
5307 OFFICE SUPPLIES AND UTILITIES:Communications	2,569.48	
5308 OFFICE SUPPLIES AND UTILITIES:Miscellaneous Expense	7,038.77	
5311 OFFICE SUPPLIES AND UTILITIES:Escheatment Liability		40.00

Accrual Basis Friday, June 13, 2025 09:10 AM GMT-04:00

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Traverse City DDA - General

Trial Balance
As of May 31, 2025

	DEBIT	CREDIT
5404 OFFICE SUPPLIES AND UTILITIES:Insurance, Bonds & Taxes	2,707.98	
TOTAL	\$2,228,284.91	\$2,228,284.91

Traverse City DDA - Old Town TIF

Trial Balance
As of May 31, 2025

	DEBIT	CREDIT
1001 Fifth Third Checking - 0650	1,331,138.33	
1072 Bill.com Money Out Clearing	0.00	
1200 Accounts Receivable	16,544.91	
1103 OTHER CURRENT ASSETS:Due From Other Funds	0.00	
1104 OTHER CURRENT ASSETS:Due From DDA	0.00	
1300 Prepaid Expense	1,666.65	
2000 Accounts Payable		0.00
2100 Due to Other Funds		0.00
3900 Retained Earnings		799,554.29
4101 Property Taxes		927,662.98
Sales		0.00
5302 OFFICE SUPPLIES & UTILITIES:Utilities	1,889.15	
5308 OFFICE SUPPLIES & UTILITIES:Miscellaneous Expense	146.10	
5400 PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	290,081.27	
5500 Contributions to District Construction Projects	85,894.43	
5900 Repairs and Maintenance	1,740.00	
4501 INTEREST INCOME:Interest & Dividend Income		1,883.57
TOTAL	\$1,729,100.84	\$1,729,100.84

Traverse City DDA - TIF 97

Trial Balance
As of May 31, 2025

	DEBIT	CREDIT
1001 CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS:Fifth Third Checking - 8026	7,525,263.47	
1072 Bill.com Money Out Clearing	0.00	
1200 Accounts Receivable	177,149.21	
1102 OTHER CURRENT ASSETS:Due from other governments	0.00	
1103 OTHER CURRENT ASSETS:Due From Other Funds	0.40	
1104 OTHER CURRENT ASSETS:Due From DDA	0.00	
1210 Deposits-Security Deposit	4,500.00	
1300 Prepaid Expense	14,550.26	
1499 Undeposited Funds	0.00	
2000 Accounts Payable	3,152.37	
2300 Due to City - Capital Projects		0.00
2100 Due to Other Funds		0.00
2200 Deferred Revenue		0.00
3000 Opening Bal Equity	21,200.00	
3900 Retained Earnings		6,307,524.02
4101 TAXES:Property Taxes		4,214,671.52
4501 INTEREST INCOME:Interest & Dividends		15,264.13
5301 OFFICE SUPPLIES AND UTILITIES:Office Supplies	210.75	
5302 OFFICE SUPPLIES AND UTILITIES:Utilities	3,736.69	
5306 OFFICE SUPPLIES AND UTILITIES:Printing & Publishing	1,530.43	
5308 OFFICE SUPPLIES AND UTILITIES:Miscellaneous Expense	1,123.26	
5309 OFFICE SUPPLIES AND UTILITIES:Bank Charges	645.04	
5400 Professional Services	1,247,434.47	
5500 Contributions to District Construction Projects	609,557.87	
5600 Contributions to Other Governments-Debt Service	913,719.95	
5901 REPAIR & MAINTENANCE EXPENSES:Repairs and Maintenance	13,685.50	
TOTAL	\$10,537,459.67	\$10,537,459.67

TC Downtown Development Authority (DDA)
Board Financial Report - Dashboard

5/31/2025

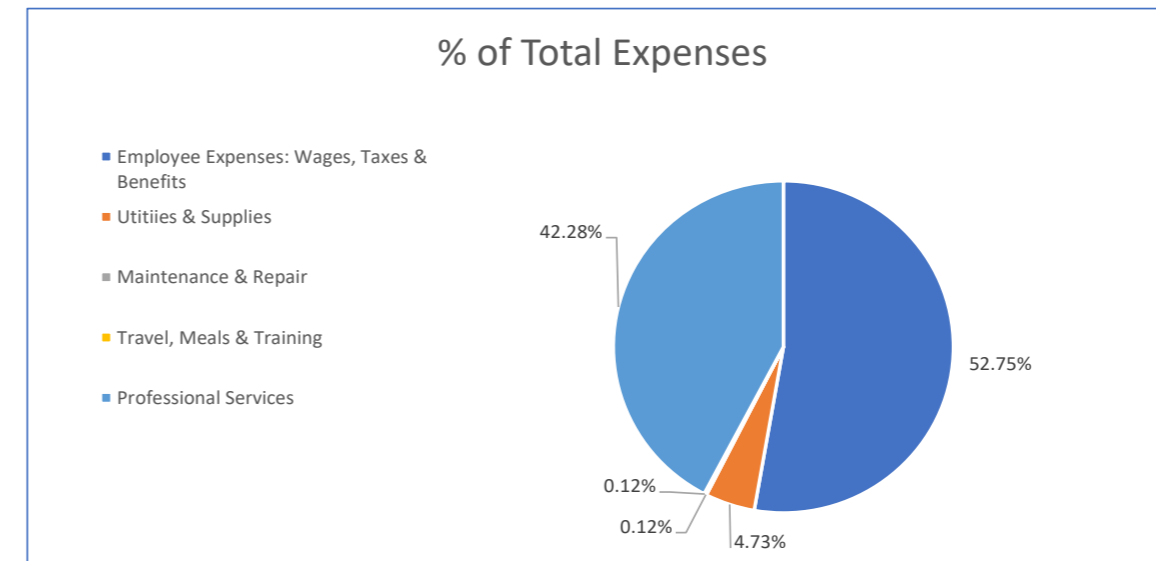
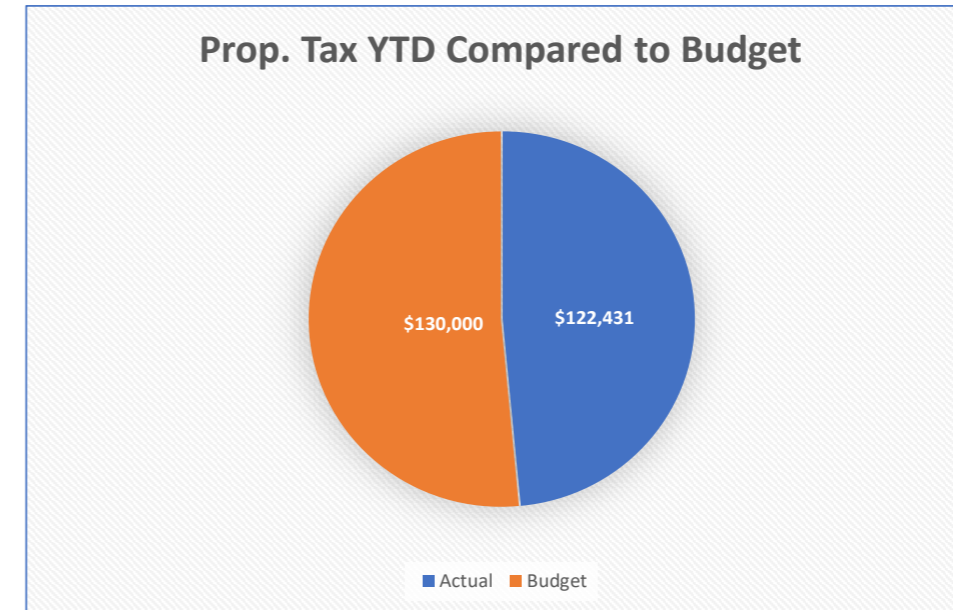
Financial Position	YTD as of 5/31/2025	Prior Year as of 6/30/2024 *	Change
Total Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 1,008,041	\$ 811,754	\$ 196,287
Other Assets	14,674	283,104	(268,430)
Total Assets	\$ 1,022,715	\$ 1,094,858	\$ (72,143)
Current Liabilities	\$ 204,551	\$ 337,420	\$ (132,869)
Total Other Liabilities	172,393	181,402	(9,009)
Total Liabilities	376,944	518,823	(141,878)
Fund Balance	645,771	576,035	69,735
Total Liabilities and Fund Balance	\$ 1,022,715	\$ 1,094,858	\$ (72,143)

* Prior year balances are pre-audit and subject to change

Revenue	YTD	Annual Budget	% of Budget
Property Taxes	\$ 122,431	\$ 130,000	94.2%
Grants & Contributions	155,291	1,875,000	8.3%
Reimbursements	934,831	743,728	125.7%
Rental Income	53,214	51,000	104.3%
Interest	7,009	2,000	350.4%
Total Revenue	\$ 1,272,776	\$ 2,801,728	45%

Expenses	YTD	Annual Budget	% of Budget
Employee Expenses: Wages, Taxes & Benefits	\$ 634,638	\$ 541,113	117%
Office Supplies & Utilities	56,861	80,000	71%
Maintenance & Repair	1,499	0	0%
Travel, Meals & Training	1,402	30,000	5%
Professional Services	508,640	377,800	135%
Rental Expense	-	-	0%
Total Expenses	\$ 1,203,040	\$ 1,028,913	117%

No CPA has audited, reviewed, compiled or expressed any assurances on these financial statements



Old Town Tax Increment Financing
Board Financial Report - Dashboard

5/31/2025

Financial Position	YTD as of 5/31/2025	Prior Year as of 6/30/2024 *	Change
Total Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 1,331,138	\$ 1,192,161	\$ 138,977
Other Assets	18,212	35,035	(16,824)
Total Assets	\$ 1,349,350	\$ 1,227,196	\$ 122,154
Current Liabilities	\$ -	\$ 427,642	\$ (427,642)
Total Other Liabilities	-	-	-
Total Liabilities	-	427,642	(427,642)
Fund Balance	1,349,350	799,554	549,796
Total Liabilities and Fund Balance	\$ 1,349,350	\$ 1,227,196	\$ 122,154

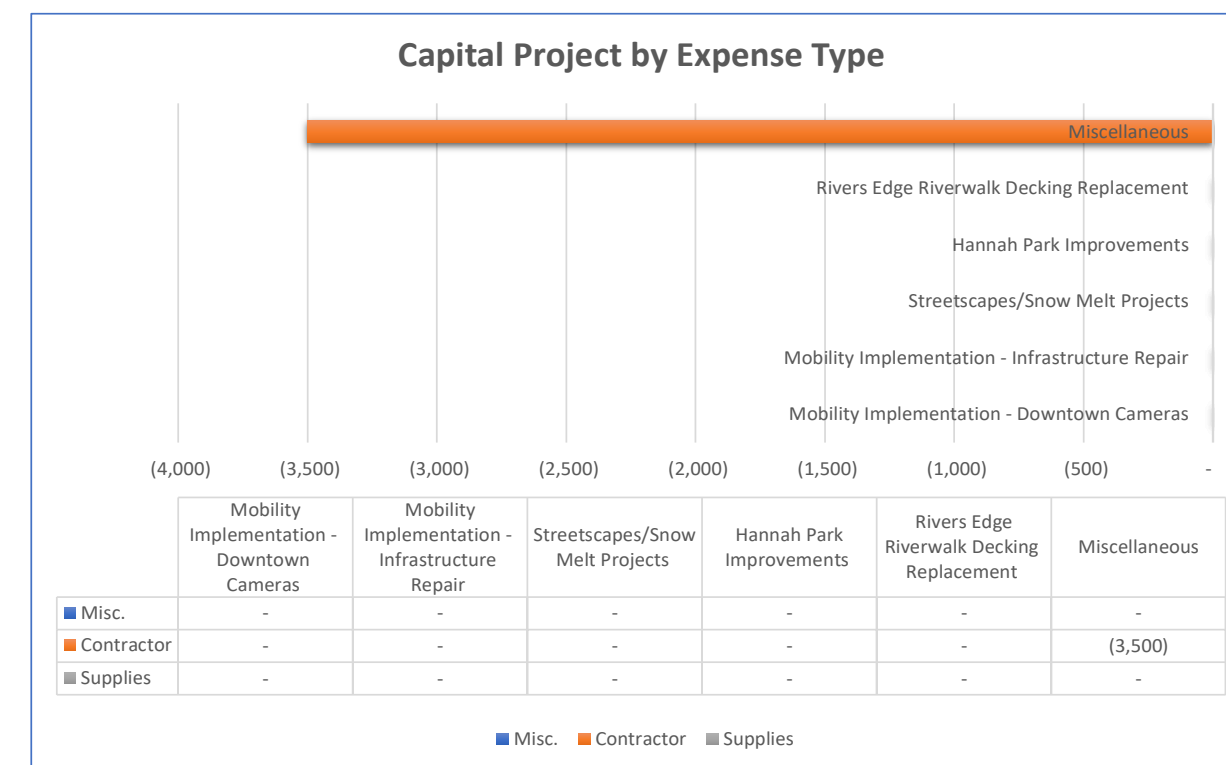
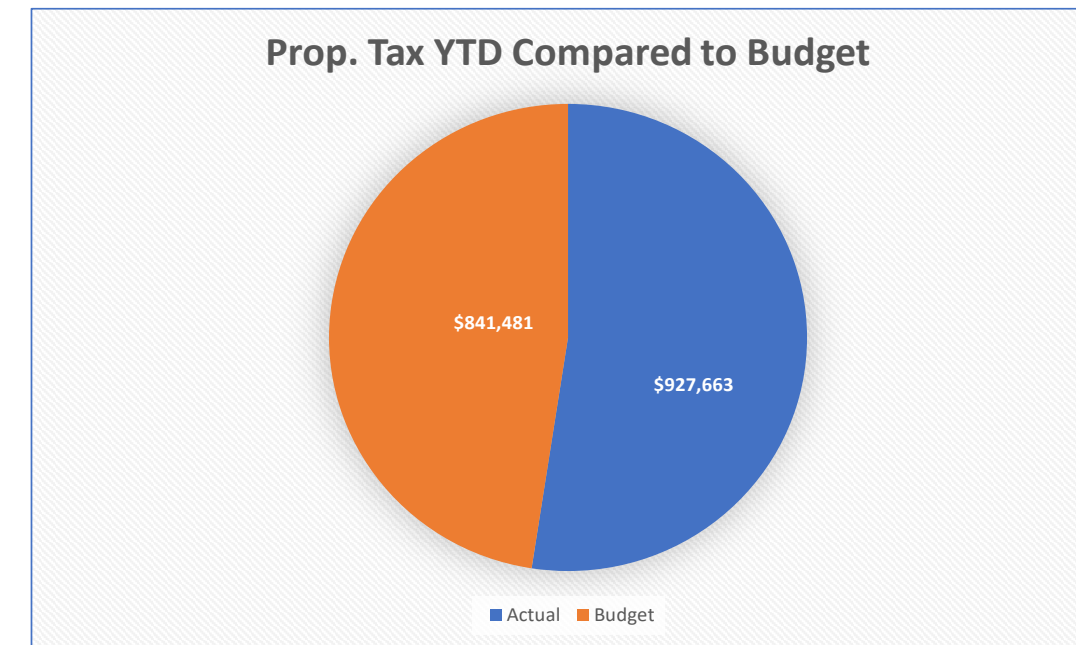
* Prior year balances are pre-audit and subject to change

Revenue	YTD	Annual Budget	% of Budget
Property Taxes	\$ 927,663	\$ 823,427	112.7%
Interest	1,884	100	1883.6%
Total Revenue	\$ 929,547	\$ 823,527	113%

Expenses	YTD	Annual Budget	% of Budget
Utilities	\$ 1,889	\$ -	N/A
Professional Services	290,081	303,383	96%
Other: Printing/Publishing, Supplies	146	100	146%
Repairs & Maintenance	1,740	60,000	3%
Capital Projects	85,894	378,120	23%
Total Expenses	\$ 379,751	\$ 741,603	51%

Capital Project Expenses:	YTD	Annual Budget	% of Budget
Mobility Implementation - Downtown Cameras	-	28,120	0%
Mobility Implementation - Infrastructure Repair	-	30,000	0%
Streetscapes/Snow Melt Projects	-	100,000	0%
Hannah Park Improvements	-	80,000	0%
Rivers Edge Riverwalk Decking Replacement	-	130,000	0%
Miscellaneous	(3,500)	10,000	-35%
Intersection Improvements - 8th & Cass/Union	89,394	89,394	100%
Total Project Expenses	\$ 85,894	\$ 467,514	18%

No CPA has audited, reviewed, compiled or expressed any assurances on these financial statements



Tax Increment Financing Bond 97 (TIF97)
Board Financial Report - Dashboard

5/31/2025

Financial Position	YTD as of 5/31/2025	Prior Year as of 6/30/2024 *	Change
Total Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 7,525,263	\$ 6,109,666	\$ 1,415,597
Other Assets	196,200	274,515	(78,315)
Total Assets	\$ 7,721,463	\$ 6,384,181	\$ 1,337,283
Current Liabilities	\$ (3,152)	\$ 97,857	\$ (101,009)
Total Other Liabilities	-	-	-
Total Liabilities	(3,152)	97,857	(101,009)
Fund Balance	7,724,616	6,286,324	1,438,292
Total Liabilities and Fund Balance	\$ 7,721,463	\$ 6,384,181	\$ 1,337,283

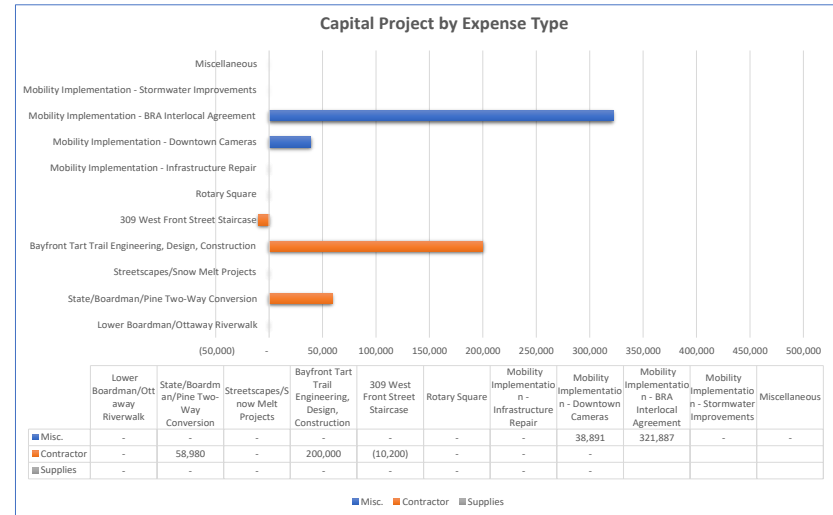
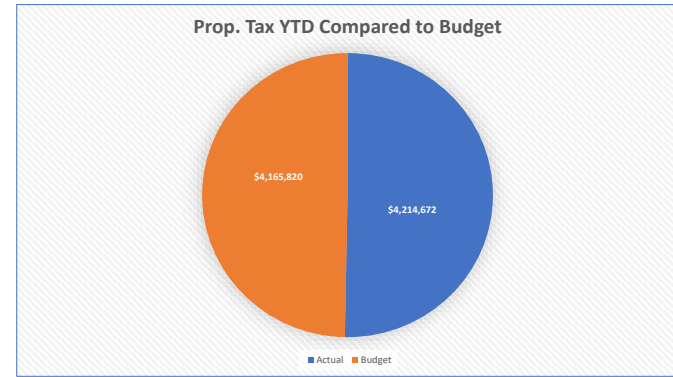
* Prior year balances are pre-audit and subject to change

Revenue	YTD	Annual Budget	% of Budget
Property Taxes	\$ 4,214,672	\$ 4,165,820	101.2%
Grant Revenue	-	-	N/A
Reimbursements	-	-	N/A
Interest	15,264	4,500	339.2%
Total Revenue	\$ 4,229,936	\$ 4,170,320	101%

Expenses	YTD	Annual Budget	% of Budget
Office Supplies & Utilities	\$ 7,246	\$ 20,000	36%
Professional Services	1,197,934	1,427,215	84%
Rent Expense	49,500	50,000	0%
Repair & Maintenance	13,686	250,000	5%
Capital Projects	609,558	3,034,367	20%
Debt Service	913,720	913,720	100%
Taxes & Transfers	-	-	0%
Total Expenses	\$ 2,791,644	\$ 5,695,302	49%

Capital Project Expenses:	YTD	Annual Budget	% of Budget
Lower Boardman/Ottaway Riverwalk	-	1,000,000	0%
State/Boardman/Pine Two-Way Conversion	58,980	500,000	12%
Streetscapes/Snow Melt Projects	-	400,000	0%
Bayfront Tart Trail Engineering, Design, Construction	200,000	200,000	100%
309 West Front Street Staircase	(10,200)	100,000	-10%
Rotary Square	-	100,000	0%
Mobility Implementation - Infrastructure Repair	-	100,000	0%
Mobility Implementation - Downtown Cameras	38,891	112,480	35%
Mobility Implementation - BRA Interlocal Agreement	321,887	321,887	100%
Mobility Implementation - Stormwater Improvements	-	100,000	0%
Miscellaneous	-	100,000	0%
Total Project Expenses	\$ 609,558	\$ 3,034,367	20%

No CPA has audited, reviewed, compiled or expressed any assurances on these financial statements



REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE REPORT FOR TRAVERSE CITY
 PERIOD ENDING 05/31/2025

GL NUMBER	DESCRIPTION	2024-25YTD BALANCE		ACTIVITY FOR		ENCUMBERED BALANCE	% BDGT USED
		UNDEDED BUDGET	05/31/2025	MONTH ENCUMBERED	05/31/25 YEAR-TO-DATE		
Fund 107 - PUBLIC ARTS COMMISSION FUND							
Revenues							
Dept 000 - NON-DEPARTMENTAL							
107-000-664.000	INTEREST & DIVIDEND EARNIN	1,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,000.00	0.00
107-000-675.000	CONTRIBUTIONS-PUBLIC SOUR	15,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	15,000.00	0.00
107-000-692.000	PRIOR YEARS' SURPLUS	20,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	20,000.00	0.00
107-000-699.000	TRANSFERS IN	45,000.00	45,000.00	15,000.00	0.00	0.00	100.00
Total Dept 000 - NON-DEPARTMENTAL		81,000.00	45,000.00	15,000.00	0.00	36,000.00	55.56
TOTAL REVENUES		81,000.00	45,000.00	15,000.00	0.00	36,000.00	55.56
Expenditures							
Dept 000 - NON-DEPARTMENTAL							
107-000-801.000	PROFESSIONAL AND CONTRAC'	64,000.00	7,367.74	0.00	3,337.93	53,294.33	16.73
107-000-930.000	REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE	2,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,000.00	0.00
107-000-970.000	CAPITAL OUTLAY	15,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	15,000.00	0.00
Total Dept 000 - NON-DEPARTMENTAL		81,000.00	7,367.74	0.00	3,337.93	70,294.33	13.22
TOTAL EXPENDITURES		81,000.00	7,367.74	0.00	3,337.93	70,294.33	13.22
Fund 107 - PUBLIC ARTS COMMISSION FUND:							
TOTAL REVENUES		81,000.00	45,000.00	15,000.00	0.00	36,000.00	55.56
TOTAL EXPENDITURES		81,000.00	7,367.74	0.00	3,337.93	70,294.33	13.22
NET OF REVENUES & EXPENDITURES		0.00	37,632.26	15,000.00	(3,337.93)	(34,294.33)	100.00



303 E. State Street
Traverse City, MI 49684
harry@downtowntc.com
231-922-2050

Memorandum

To: Downtown Development Authority Board of Directors
From: Harry Burkholder, DDA Executive Director
Date: June 12, 2025
Re: Informational Meeting

Per the requirements of the Recodified Tax Increment Finance Act, the DDA must hold two (2) informational meetings for each taxing jurisdiction levying taxes that is subject to capture by the Authority under this Act (MCL 125.4910(4)). Official notice for this meeting was sent to each taxing jurisdiction and posted on the DDA website. The taxing jurisdictions include:

- City of Traverse City
- Grand Traverse County
 - Commission on Aging
 - Veterans
 - Animal Control
- Northwestern Michigan College
- Road Commission
- Recreational Authority
- BATA
- Soil Conservation District

This informational meeting will include an overview of projects funded for the 2025/2026 Fiscal Year. Please note, this is not a public hearing, but rather an informational overview of the TIF budgets and projects.



Downtown Development Authority
303 E. State Street
Traverse City, MI 49684
harry@downtowntc.com
231-922-2050

MEMORANDUM

To: DDA Board of Directors
From: Harry Burkholder, Executive Director, DDA
Date: June 12, 2025
Re: 2025 - 2026 Budget Approval

The proposed 2025 – 2026 budgets (and narratives) for the DDA, TIF-97 and Old Town TIF are presented below.

Fiscal Year: July 1st 2025 – June 31st 2026

Budget Process & Timeline

March 14 th	DDA Board reviews and discusses preliminary budget ✓
April 17 th	DDA Finance Committee reviews and discusses draft budget ✓
April 25 th	DDA Board reviews budget & schedules public hearing for May 16 th ✓
May 5 th	DDA draft budget submitted to the City Commission ✓
May 12 th	DDA draft budget discussed at City Commission Study Session ✓
May 16 th	DDA holds public hearing on budget ✓
May 19 th	City Commission holds public hearing on budget ✓
June 2 nd	Approval of budget by City Commission ✓
June 20th	Approval of budget by DDA Board (we are here)

Budget Amendment Prior to Approval

At your recall, at our May 16th meeting, the DDA Board approved a lease termination proposal with IAM Funds LLC for the retail incubator space. As a result, the DDA Board also approved to reduce the FY 2025–2026 funding allocation for the Retail Incubator from \$50,000 to \$9,000, reflecting the ending of lease-related expenses.

The DDA Board further recommended reallocating the remaining \$41,000 from the Retail Incubator line item to support general stormwater infrastructure improvements within the TIF-97 district.

DDA staff will coordinate with City Engineering to determine the appropriate scope and locations for this funding, which may align with projects identified in the DDA's 2018 TIF-97 Stormwater Management Plan or other ongoing stormwater initiatives already being led by the city.

City Commission Approval

The DDA budget(s) were presented to and discussed by the City Commission at their May 12th study session and then formally approved at the June 2nd meeting.

DDA Budget and Funds

The DDA has three unique, but complementary, funds that comprise its budget.

DDA General Fund

Revenue sources for the DDA General Fund include a 2-mill levy of property within the Downtown District, grants, administrative fees from the TIF-97 and Old Town TIF Funds, revenue from the Farmers Market (booth fees) and the DTCA contract.

TIF-97 and Old Town TIF Funds

TIF-97 and Old Town TIF (see district map below) is funded through the harnessed appreciation of tax revenue from the taxing authorities within each district, including: Commission on Aging, Veteran Affairs, Road Commission, NMC, BATA, Conservation District, Animal Control, the Traverse City/Garfield Township Recreation Authority and Grand Traverse County. Tax revenue from the DDA (2-mills) and the city is also harnessed. As a reminder, harnessed revenue from the City of Traverse City contributes 53-cents to every one-dollar of TIF, with the remaining 47-cents contributed by the participating taxing authorities listed above.



Budget Considerations

The DDA budget(s) are a reflection of how the DDA allocates resources for projects and services. In developing the 2025/2026 budget, we considered a number of plans, on-going initiatives and overarching strategies that have either already been adopted or are in the process of development/adoption by the DDA, City and other community entities. These include, but are limited to:

- Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)
- Ongoing financial obligations and services (e.g., city service fee)
- Traverse City Strategic Action Plan (developing themes)
- Planning Documents (e.g., Lower Boardman Unified Plan, Mobility Action Plan)
- Current DDA Capital Improvement and Service Priorities
- Moving Downtown Forward Guiding Principles

Moving Downtown Guiding Principles

1. Design a great place for all ages and for future generations
2. Protect and preserve small local independent businesses
3. Support job growth and varied career opportunities
4. Champion the development of attainable and workforce housing
5. Advance climate action, sustainability, renewable energy, energy efficiency and resiliency

In addition, we are mindful of the parameters of the DDA. Listed below is a chart that illustrates the functions and limitations of the DDA.

WHAT DOES THE DDA DO?

The DDA **Does**

Implement critical physical improvements, including public infrastructure projects and initiatives (in partnership with the city):

- Issue bonds and use TIF funds to help build capital projects, including streetscape beautification, pedestrian bridges and trails and other public amenities.
- Contribute to and offer leadership for the planning, design and construction of wide variety of public improvements

Provide services that create a vital and vibrant Downtown experience, including:

- Implement "clean, green, safe and accessible initiatives":
 - Plan and implement the way-finding program
 - Operate and manage the Sara Hardy Farmers Market
 - Plan and facilitate Downtown cleaning
 - Plan and facilitate holiday lights
 - Plan and facilitate Downtown planting program
 - Fund the Downtown Police Officer position
 - Fund the removal of trash
- Work with, advocate for and promote Downtown business.
 - Manage the merchant's association (DTCA) and lead Downtown events, promotions and the gift certificate program
 - Apply for grants
 - Convene Downtown stakeholders

WHAT DOESN'T THE DDA DO?

The DDA **Does Not:**

Maintain street, sidewalk, park and underground infrastructure

The physical maintenance of streets, sidewalks, parks and underground infrastructure is managed by the city. However, the DDA continues to explore ways to provide enhanced cleaning and snow removal and often contributes financially to these types of infrastructure project within the downtown district.

Provide direct funding to private developers

The DDA can help fund infrastructure in support of and associated with a private development (e.g., streetscaping, heated sidewalks), but cannot fund any other part of the private development.

Approve and reject private development proposals

The DDA can work only work with private developers to help identify possible locations and additional resources for existing building rehabilitation and improvements. The size and aesthetic of private development is governed by the city's zoning ordinance and planning commission.

Take a cut of parking revenue

Parking services is now operated directly by the city. All parking revenue (e.g., permits, tickets, etc.) is allocated to the city.

DDA General Fund

Revenue

General fund revenue includes several grants that have been secured, including a \$657,750 grant from the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians (via a grant from NOAA) for habitat restoration and the Lower Boardman/Ottawa River, the grant from EGLE for environmental remediation of the vacant properties on the west end of downtown and additional funding from Rotary Charities for Rotary Square. The remaining revenue comes from administrative fees from both TIF accounts, the contract with the DTCA (“reimbursements”), property taxes, booth fees from the Farmers Market, income from state food assistance programs from the Farmers Market (as a pass through) and income from interest.

Expenditures

The Salary and Wages and Fringe Benefits line item is built with the potential of five employees – a position of *Communications and Special Project Coordinator* was recently posted.

Professional Services will encompass contracts with Rehmann (financial services), Leyman Wesely and One-Up-Web (technology), and Scott Howard (Legal). Professional services will also encompass a website development (for a new website), and board training/education.

Office Supplies and Utilities encompasses a number of office needs and services, including software programs that target a new CRM and well as dues/memberships and some communications.

Funding for conferences is included for staff professional development.

TIF Funds

I have organized the two TIF Budgets (and their associated projects) under four categories (see table attached):

1. Running Downtown
2. Building and Maintaining Downtown
 - (a) Essential Public Infrastructure
 - (b) Essential Public Service
3. Transforming Downtown
 - (a) Transformative Public Infrastructure
 - (b) Transformative Public Services
4. Activating Downtown and Growing Business

TIF-97

The captured taxable value for the TIF-97 District is projected to be \$170,026,825 which will bring in an estimated \$4,336,329 in revenue. Total expenditures are an estimated \$7,063,873, which will require the DAA to use some of its fund balance.

Running Downtown: \$1,209,783

These costs encompass the DDA administration fee (which is allocated to the General Fund), the service agreement fee to the City, utilities and legal services.

Building and Maintaining Downtown

Essential Public Infrastructure: \$1,504,459

Hardy Parking Deck Payment \$874,459

This is our annual bond payment for the Hardy Parking Deck, which will be fully paid for in 2027.

Streetscaping & Snowmelt \$120,000

Streetscaping and snowmelt will remain important as new development continues throughout the district. There are a handful of new developments that are expected to be completed in the next fiscal year. We continue to explore additional opportunities for a district-wide approach to snowmelt, leading to a connect network of walkable sidewalks all year-round.

Stormwater Infrastructure Lot B \$110,000 & General Stormwater Infrastructure \$41,000

Plan for the reconstruction of Lot B have been completed, which include new underground infrastructure to manage for stormwater. This item would contribute to the overall cost of the stormwater related components of the project, estimated to be \$600,000.

North Union Street Bridge Repair \$150,000

Due to some needed structural improvements, load restrictions were recently placed on the North Union Street Bridge. This will require some structural "under-deck" work. This item would contribute to the overall cost of this improvement (estimated to cost roughly (\$600,000) and provide pedestrian lighting underneath the bridge to enhance the pedestrian walkway experience.

North Union Deck/Stair Replacement \$80,000

This item will replace the temporary staircase and railing system (now several years old) adjacent to the Union Street Bridge.

General Infrastructure Repair \$65,000

This item was added last year to address small repairs to public infrastructure throughout the district (e.g., cracked sidewalks and pedestrian crosswalks, street repair, etc.)

City Infrastructure Contribution \$80,000

This item is new this year. As you are aware, the DDA and City collaborate on many projects. We anticipate a number of funding requests from the city throughout the year, but don't always know what projects will be requested and/or their cost. This item will reserve funding in advance of such asks, rather than approving unexpected costs through a budget amendment during the year.

Essential Public Services: \$284,200

These line items encompass a number of services to help keep our downtown clean, green and safe. A few of the highlights include:

Clean and Green Team \$65,000

We are planning to partner with SEEDS to provide daily maintenance services (watering, graffiti removal, sidewalk washing, debris removal, etc.) throughout the downtown district.

Farmers Market \$38,000

This item will continue our collaboration with SEEDS to oversee and manage the Farmers Market.

Transforming Downtown

Transformative Public Infrastructure

Boardman/Ottaway Riverwalk \$400,000

One of the DDA's Board's top priorities, this item will fund schematic and engineering services with INFORM for the first phase of the Riverwalk Project (J-Smith Walkway, pedestrian way through the Parking Lot, and a new pedestrian bridge). This project will also look at ways to pull-back the river wall, incorporate stormwater management infrastructure and restore the near-shore and under-water habitat.

Rotary Square \$150,000

This is a second DDA Board priority. Upon the completion of the conceptual design and schematic design, we may be able to implement a few new elements of the dt Rotary Square design. However, major improvements are likely for the 2026/2027 fiscal year.

Farmers Market Pavillion \$2,800,000

Another one of the DDA Board's top priorities, this item will cover the redesign/engineering and construction of a year-round pavilion for the Farmers Market. This project will be incorporated into city efforts to reconstruct Lot B.

Two-Way Pilot \$80,000

This item will fund the on-going study and analysis of the two-way pilot (including the long-term funding needs for two-way traffic should it be made permanent) and potential street/signal modifications.

Mid-Block Crosswalk \$300,000

In support of traffic calming and additional pedestrian movement along State Street, this item will fund the construction of one mid-block crosswalk along either the 100 or 200 block of State Street. Engineering and design of the mid-block crosswalk is being provided by city engineering. Additional crosswalks along State Street may be included in future budgets.

West End Demolition \$80,000

This item will support a portion of the cost (shared with City Parking Services), to demolish the two vacant buildings on State Street. This will provide an opportunity to add roughly 60 new parking spaces to this end of downtown and continue to help clear the site for future development (which may also include parking). The EGLE grant could still be used to cover these expenses if a portion of the progress of a future redevelopment.

Transformative Public Services \$75,000

These line items encompass a number of on-going public services and initiatives including the Downtown Restaurant Composting Program and the Retail Incubator, although we are working with our partners to end our lease agreement for the incubator space. In addition, we have included funding to implement non-motorized and/or mobility infrastructure within the district.

Activating Downtown and Growing Business \$100,000

Communications, Promotion and Events \$90,000

This item is meant to support our downtown business community in partnership with the DTCA. Funding will support our continued support with Greenlight Marketing for design services, promotions for the downtown and all of our downtown events (e.g., Arts Fairs, Friday Night Live, Holiday Parade, etc..).

Traverse Connect \$10,000

This will continue our partnership with Traverse Connect to support economic development with the downtown and region. This proposed funding allocation is significantly lower than the \$38,000 approved in this year's budget and is significantly lower than the proposed 2nd-Year allocation presented by Traverse Connect.

Old Town TIF

The captured taxable value for the Old Town TIF District is projected to be \$33,556,796 which will bring in an estimated \$829,992 in revenue. Total expenditures are an estimated \$732,210.

Running Downtown: \$272,210

These costs encompass the DDA administration fee (which is allocated to the General Fund), the service agreement fee to the City, utilities and legal services.

Building and Maintaining Downtown

Essential Public Infrastructure: \$90,000

Streetscaping & Snowmelt \$50,000

Streetscaping and snowmelt will remain important as new development continues throughout the district. We continue to explore additional opportunities for a district-wide approach to snowmelt, leading to a connect network of walkable sidewalks all year-round.

Stormwater Infrastructure \$10,000

This item would support costs associated with stormwater project within the district, in collaboration with the City.

General Infrastructure Repair \$10,000

This item was added this past year to address small repairs to public infrastructure downtown (e.g., cracked sidewalks and pedestrian crosswalks, street repair, etc.)

City Infrastructure Contribution \$20,000

This item is new this year. As you are aware, the DDA and City are collaborative partners on many projects. We anticipate a number of funding requests from the city throughout the year, but don't always know what projects will be requested and/or their cost. This item will reserve funding in advance of such asks, rather than approving unexpected costs through a budget amendment.

Essential Public Services: \$75,000

These line items encompass a number of services to help keep our downtown clean, green and safe (in combination with similar funding items listed under TIF-97). A few of the highlights include:

Downtown Policy Officer \$3,000

This item will continue our collaboration with Officer Culver and the TCPD, for year-round police service in the downtown district.

Clean and Green Team \$15,000

We are planning to partner with SEEDS to provide daily maintenance services (watering, graffiti removal, sidewalk washing, debris removal, etc.) throughout the downtown district.

Transforming Downtown

Transformative Public Infrastructure

Rivers Edge Riverwalk \$250,000

This item will address the replacement of the existing boardwalk in and around the FishPass Project. This funding will be used to upgrade the planned decking material. Additional funding for a new railing system along this section of the boardwalk will likely be planned for the 2026 – 2027 fiscal year.

Riverwalk Signage \$20,000

This item will cover the development of a signage program/design for the Lower Boardman/Ottaway Riverwalk and the fabrication of at least two signs in this portion of downtown.

Transformative Public Services \$10,000

These line items include the Downtown Restaurant Composting Program and the implementation of non-motorized and/or mobility infrastructure within the district.

Activating Downtown and Growing Business \$25,000

Communications, Promotion and Events \$20,000

This item is meant to support our downtown business community in partnership with the DTCA. Funding will support our continued partnership with Greenlight Marketing for design services, promotions for the downtown and our downtown events (e.g., Arts Fairs, Friday Night Live, Holiday Parade, etc..).

Traverse Connect \$5,000

This will continue our partnership with Traverse Connect to support economic development with the downtown and region.

Attachments include:

- TIF-97 and Old-Town TIF spreadsheets
- Fund Summary for the DDA General Fund, TIF-97 Fund and Old Town TIF Fund as they appear in the proposed city budget (new Clear Gov. format).

The entire City Budget can be linked to [here](#). The DDA portion of the budget begins on page 296.

Recommended Motion

That the DDA Board of Directions hereby approves the 2025/2026 budget as follows:

Downtown Development Authority (General) Fund	\$2,600,900
Tax Increment Financing District 97 Fund	\$6,983,400
Tax Increment Financing District Old Town Fund	\$ 729,200

Final DDA TIF(s) 2025 - 2026 Budget

TIF-97

Taxable Value	\$ 170,026,825
Estimated Revenue	\$ 4,336,329
Est. Fund Balance of Previous Fiscal Year	\$ 6,599,401

Running Downtown	\$ 1,209,783
DDA Administration	\$ 595,094
Service Agreement with City	\$ 514,689
Legal Services	\$ 20,000
Miscellaneous & Utilities	\$ 80,000

Building and Maintaining Downtown	
(A) Essential Public Infrastructure	\$ 1,545,459
Hardy Parking Deck Payment	\$ 874,459
Streetscaping/Snowmelt	\$ 120,000
Stormwater Infrastructure (Lot B)	\$ 110,000
Stormwater Infrastructure	\$ 41,000
N. Union Street Bridge Repair	\$ 150,000
N. Union Deck/Stair Replacement	\$ 80,000
General infrastructure Repair	\$ 65,000
City Infrastructure Contribution	\$ 80,000
Miscellaneous	\$ 25,000

(B) Essential Public Services	\$ 284,200
Community Police Officer (\$120,431)*	
Trash Removal (\$60,078)*	
Farmers Market	\$ 38,000
Public Restroom Program	\$ 6,000
Wayfinding Signage	\$ 15,000
Clean and Green Team	\$ 65,000
Landscaping**	\$ 10,000
City Truck Rental	\$ 5,200
Holiday Lights	\$ 120,000
Miscellaneous	\$ 25,000

Transforming Downtown	
(A) Transformative Public Infrastructure	\$ 3,810,000
Rotary Square	\$ 150,000
Farmers Market Pavillion	\$ 2,800,000
Boardman/Ottaway Riverwalk	\$ 400,000
Two-Way Pilot	\$ 80,000
Mid-Block Crosswalks	\$ 300,000
West End Demolition	\$ 80,000

(B) Transformative Public Services	\$ 34,000
Composting Program	\$ 10,000
Retail Incubator	\$ 9,000
Non-Motorized Investments***	\$ 15,000

Activating Downtown & Growing Business	\$ 100,000
Communication, Promotion & Events	\$ 90,000
Traverse Connect	\$ 10,000

Total Expenses	\$ 6,983,442
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Estimated Remaining Fund Balance	\$ 3,952,288
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* Trash Removal & Police Officer included In The Service Agreement Total

** Planters and maintenance of Rotary Square and other downtown areas

*** Includes BATA's Destination Downtown Program

Old Town TIF

Taxable Value	\$ 33,556,796
Estimated Revenue	\$ 829,992
Est. Fund Balance of Previous Fiscal Year	\$ 878,401

Running Downtown	\$ 272,210
DDA Administration	\$ 117,449
Service Agreement with City	\$ 124,761
Legal Services	\$ 10,000
Miscellaneous & Utilities	\$ 20,000

Building and Maintaining Downtown	
(A) Essential Public Infrastructure	\$ 90,000
Streetscaping/Snowmelt	\$ 50,000
Stormwater Infrastructure	\$ 10,000
General infrastructure Repair	\$ 10,000
City Infrastructure Contribution	\$ 20,000

(B) Essential Public Services	\$ 62,000
Community Police Officer (\$3,000)*	
Trash Removal (\$20,000)*	
Wayfinding Signage	\$ 3,000
Clean and Green Team	\$ 15,000
Landscaping**	\$ 3,000
City Truck Rental	\$ 1,000
Holiday Lights	\$ 30,000
Miscellaneous	\$ 10,000

Transforming Downtown	
(A) Transformative Public Infrastructure	\$ 270,000
Rivers Edge Riverwalk	\$ 250,000
Riverwalk Signage	\$ 20,000

(B) Transformative Public Services	\$ 10,000
Composting Program	\$ 5,000
Non-Motorized Investments***	\$ 5,000

Activating Downtown & Growing Business	\$ 25,000
Communication, Promotion & Events	\$ 20,000
Traverse Connect	\$ 5,000

Total Expenses	\$ 729,210
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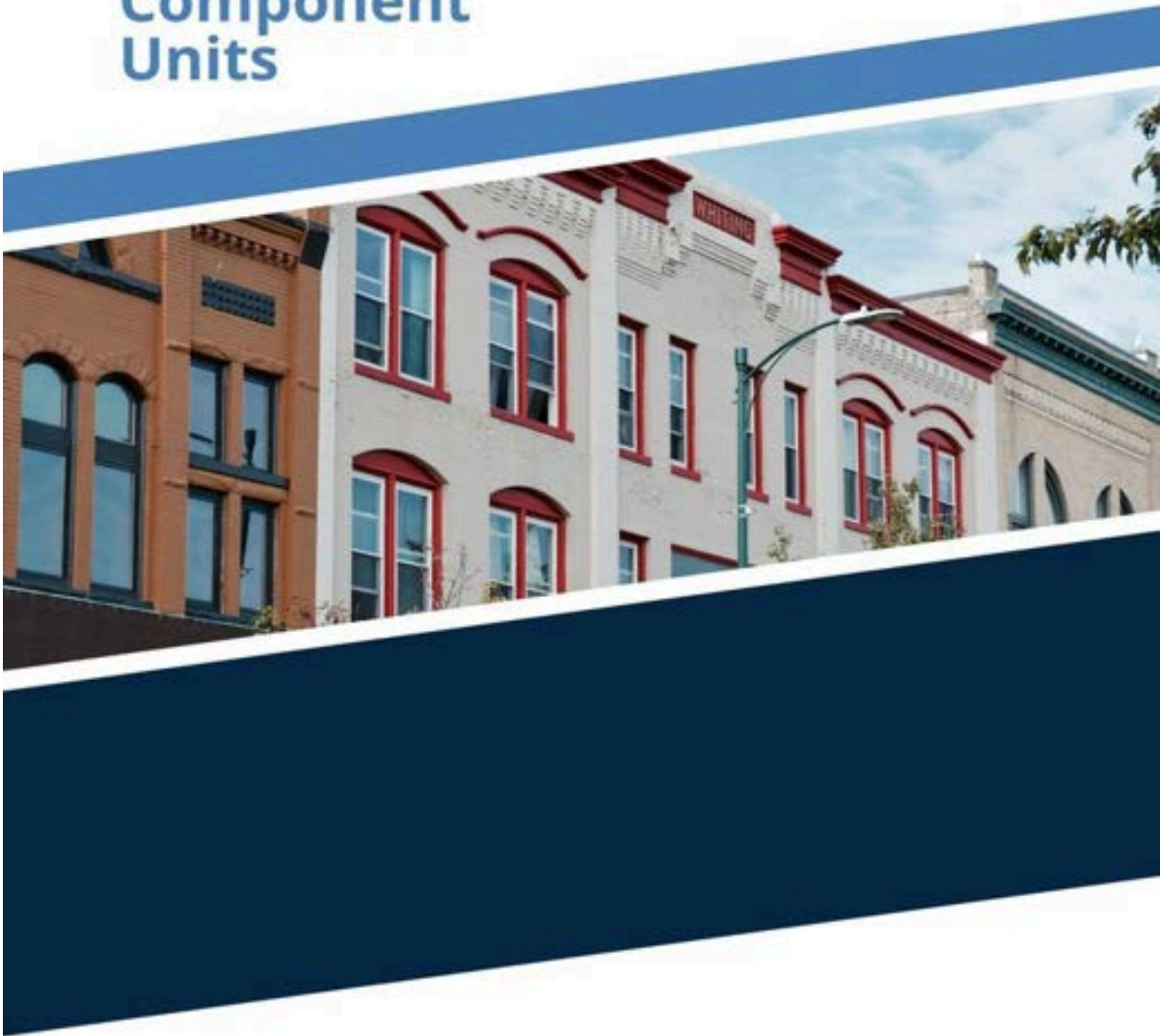
Estimated Remaining Fund Balance	\$ 979,183
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* Trash Removal & Police Officer included In The Service Agreement Total

** Planters and maintenance of Rotary Square and other downtown areas

*** Includes BATA's Destination Downtown Program

Component Units



Component Unit Funds: Account for operations maintained and operated by related entities of the City created through the State Statute or City Charter. The City of Traverse City has 2 component units, Traverse City DDA and Traverse City Light & Power.

Downtown Development Authority

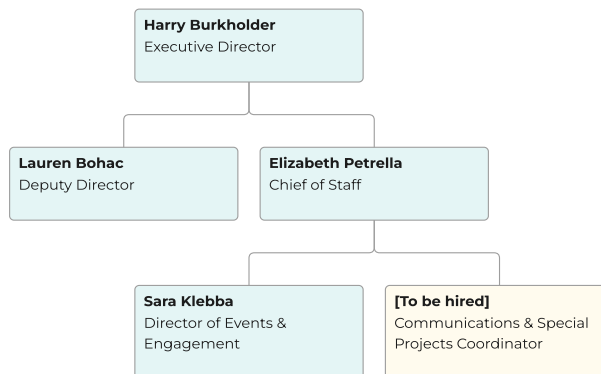
Established in 1978, the Traverse City Downtown Development Authority (DDA) is directed by a nine-member City-appointed board, which hires an Executive Director to lead its operations. The DDA is considered a *Component Unit* of the City of Traverse City and is responsible for creating, supporting and promoting critical public infrastructure and other services that enhance the downtown experience, promote business growth, serve as a catalyst for private investment and contribute to the year-round vitality and unique sense-of-place of Downtown Traverse City.

DDA Mission: To promote economic growth and provide a world-class downtown that is active, thriving and inclusive. In collaboration with all stakeholders, the DDA creates and implements development plans, encourages historic preservation, corrects and prevents deterioration in the downtown district, and makes sound investments in sustainable infrastructure and civic amenities. Serving as the caretakers of Downtown Traverse City, the DDA works with businesses, property owners, and residents to maintain a vibrant city center that is economically healthy.

The DDA facilitates its work in partnership and collaboration with the City. Projects may be led and funded entirely by the DDA, or the City and the DDA may share the cost of collaborative projects.



DDA Organization Chart



Overview

The DDA utilizes the current plans, ongoing initiatives and overarching strategies adopted by the DDA, City and other community entities to develop the framework for its budget, including but not limited to the Capital Improvement Plan, the City’s ongoing Strategic Action Plan, the Lower Boardman Unified Plan, the Moving Downtown Forward Plan and priorities/recommendations of the DDA Board.

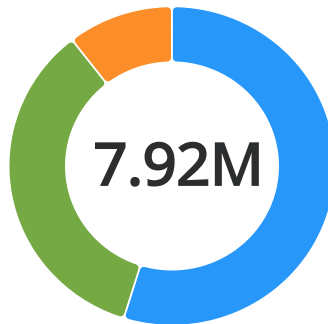
The Guiding Principles of the DDA’s Moving Downtown Forward Plan illustrate the mission and values of the DDA and serve as the basis for its projects and services.

Moving Downtown Forward Guiding Principles

1. Design a great place for all ages and for future generations
2. Protect and preserve small local independent businesses
3. Support job growth and varied career opportunities
4. Champion the development of attainable and workforce housing
5. Advance climate action, sustainability, renewable energy, energy efficiency and resiliency

The DDA has three unique but complementary funds that comprise its total budget: the General Fund, the TIF-97 Fund, and the Old Town TIF Fund.

FY26 Revenues by Fund

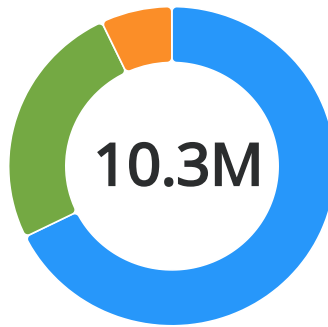


● DDA TIF 97	\$4,340,800	54.79%
● DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY	\$2,752,000	34.73%
● DDA OLD TOWN TIF	\$830,100	10.48%

Revenues by Fund

Category	2023/2024 Actual	2024/2025 Amended	2024/2025 Projected	2025/2026 Budgeted	2024/2025 Amended vs. FY 2025/2026 Budgeted (% Change)
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY	\$1,803,617	\$2,801,728	\$1,283,600	\$2,752,000	-1.77%
DDA OLD TOWN TIF	\$790,274	-	\$910,600	\$830,100	-
DDA TIF 97	\$3,979,794	\$4,170,320	\$4,017,900	\$4,340,800	4.09%
Total Revenues	\$6,573,685	\$6,972,048	\$6,212,100	\$7,922,900	13.64%

FY26 Expenditures by Fund



● DDA TIF 97	\$6,983,400	67.71%
● DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY	\$2,600,900	25.22%
● DDA OLD TOWN TIF	\$729,200	7.07%

Expenditures by Fund

Category	2023/2024 Actual	2024/2025 Amended	2024/2025 Projected	2025/2026 Budgeted	2024/2025 Amended vs. FY 2025/2026 Budgeted (% Change)
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY	\$1,878,619.34	\$2,907,113.00	\$1,069,300.00	\$2,600,900.00	-10.53%
DDA OLD TOWN TIF	\$1,118,257.00	\$1,154,533.00	\$558,600.00	\$729,200.00	-36.84%
DDA TIF 97	\$3,142,642.00	\$4,803,540.00	\$2,771,100.00	\$6,983,400.00	45.38%
Total Expenditures	\$6,139,518.34	\$8,865,186.00	\$4,399,000.00	\$10,313,500.00	16.34%

DDA Administration Fund (248)

The DDA General Fund is used to pay for the day-to-day operations of the DDA, including employee salaries, office supplies and utilities, professional services and professional development. Revenue sources for the DDA General Fund include a 2-mill levy on property within the Downtown District, administrative fees from the TIF-97 and Old Town TIF funds, booth rental fees from the Farmers Market, a contract with the Downtown Traverse City Association (DTCA), and grants for specific DDA projects and initiatives.



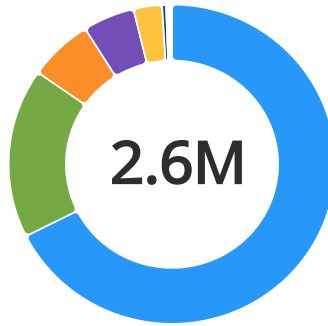
Expenditures Summary

Significant changes include a reduction in Professional and Contractual Services, and an increase in Capital Outlay.

The Capital Outlay expenditure category is supported by grants for three infrastructure projects:

- \$500,000 from Rotary Charities for the development of Rotary Square
- \$657,750 from the National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration as a sub-recipient of a grant awarded to the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians for coastal habitat restoration
- \$600,000 from the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) for the environmental clean-up and development of deteriorated West End sites

FY26 Expenditures by Expense Type Summary



● CAPITAL OUTLAY	\$1,757,700	67.58%
● SALARIES & WAGES	\$446,200	17.16%
● PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	\$165,400	6.36%
● FRINGE BENEFITS	\$133,000	5.11%
● OFFICE/OPERATING SUPPLIES	\$73,600	2.83%
● MISCELLANEOUS EXP	\$10,000	0.38%
● COMMUNICATION	\$5,000	0.19%
● PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	\$5,000	0.19%
● UTILITIES	\$4,000	0.15%
● REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE	\$1,000	0.04%

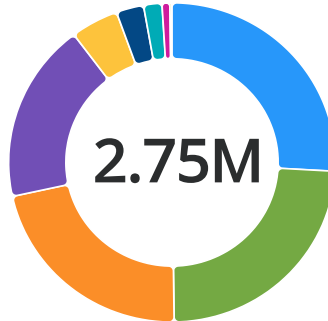
Expenditures by Expense Type Summary

Category	2023/2024 Actual	2024/2025 Amended	2024/2025 Projected	2025/2026 Budgeted	2024/2025 Amended vs. FY 2025/2026 Budgeted (% Change)
SALARIES & WAGES	\$938,446	\$430,000	\$446,400	\$446,200	3.77%
FRINGE BENEFITS	\$327,813	\$111,113	\$134,200	\$133,000	19.70%
OFFICE/OPERATING SUPPLIES	\$20,125	-	\$10,700	\$73,600	-
PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	\$562,104	\$476,000	\$412,300	\$165,400	-65.25%
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	\$14,451	\$5,000	\$3,600	\$5,000	0.00%
COMMUNICATION	-	-	\$2,000	\$5,000	-
CONTRACTUAL SERVICES	-	\$50,000	\$49,200	-	-100.00%
PRINTING & PUBLISHING	-	-	\$1,100	-	-
UTILITIES	\$15,000	\$10,000	\$3,400	\$4,000	-60.00%
REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE	\$680	-	\$1,000	\$1,000	-
MISCELLANEOUS EXP	-	-	\$5,400	\$10,000	-
CAPITAL OUTLAY	-	\$1,825,000	-	\$1,757,700	-3.69%
Total Expenditures	\$1,878,619	\$2,907,113	\$1,069,300	\$2,600,900	-10.53%

Revenues Summary

There are no significant changes to revenue. Revenues in the Business Licenses & Permits and Rent & Royalties categories are from fees and booth rentals for the Sara Hardy Farmers Market.

FY26 Revenues by Revenue Source



● TRANSFER IN OTHER FUNDS	\$712,500	25.89%
● FEDERAL GRANTS	\$657,700	23.90%
● STATE GRANT	\$600,000	21.80%
● GRANTS FROM LOCAL SOURCES	\$500,000	18.17%
● REAL ESTATE/PERSONAL PROPERTY TAX	\$130,000	4.72%
● CONTRIBUTIONS-PUBLIC SOURCES	\$75,000	2.73%
● RENT & ROYALTIES	\$50,000	1.82%
● BUSINESS LICENSES & PERMITS	\$21,500	0.78%
● INTEREST REVENUE	\$5,300	0.19%

Revenues by Revenue Source

Category	2023/2024 Actual	2024/2025 Amended	2024/2025 Projected	2025/2026 Budgeted	2024/2025 Amended vs. 2025/2026 Budgeted (% Change)
REAL ESTATE/PERSONAL PROPERTY TAX	\$131,422	\$130,000	\$125,900	\$130,000	0.00%
BUSINESS LICENSES & PERMITS	-	-	\$21,500	\$21,500	-
FEDERAL GRANTS	-	\$175,000	-	\$657,700	275.83%
STATE GRANT	-	\$1,200,000	\$12,400	\$600,000	-50.00%
GRANTS FROM LOCAL SOURCES	-	\$500,000	\$145,000	\$500,000	0.00%
INTEREST REVENUE	\$4,882	\$2,000	\$5,600	\$5,300	165.00%
RENT & ROYALTIES	-	\$51,000	\$48,200	\$50,000	-1.96%
CONTRIBUTIONS-PUBLIC SOURCES	-	-	-	\$75,000	-
TRANSFER IN OTHER FUNDS	\$1,667,313	\$743,728	\$925,000	\$712,500	-4.20%
Total Revenues	\$1,803,617	\$2,801,728	\$1,283,600	\$2,752,000	-1.77%

DDA Old Town TIF Fund (252)

The Old Town TIF Fund was established through the Old Town Tax Increment Financing (TIF) plan adopted by the DDA and City in 2016 (originally called TIF-2, which was adopted in 1985 and expired in 2015). It is funded through the harnessed appreciation of tax revenue within the Old Town TIF District. The City of Traverse City contributes 53-cents on the dollar of the revenue collected in the Old Town TIF, with the remaining 47-cents contributed by the following regional taxing authorities: Grand Traverse County Commission on Aging; Grand Traverse County Veterans Affairs; Grand Traverse County Road Commission; Northwestern Michigan College; Bay Area Transportation Authority; Grand Traverse County Conservation District; Grand Traverse County Animal Control; the Recreation Authority; and Grand Traverse County, as well the DDA's levied millage.



Expenditure Summary

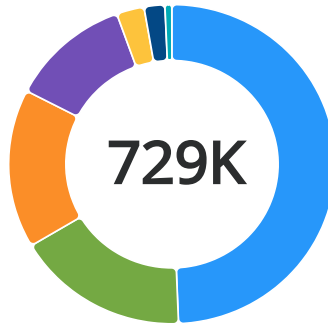
There are no significant changes to Expenditures. The Capital Outlay expenditure category is comprised of all items under "Building and Maintaining Downtown (A) Essential Public Infrastructure" and "Transforming Downtown (A) Transformative Public Infrastructure". All items under "Building and Maintaining Downtown (B) Essential Public Services" and "Transforming Downtown (B) Transformative Public Services" are within the Professional Services expenditure category.

Funds under (A) Essential Public Infrastructure may be used for projects developed by the DDA or as a contribution to projects led by the City. A new line for City Infrastructure Contribution was created specifically to support City projects.

Under (B) Transformative Public Services new line for Non-Motorized Investments was created to support projects or programs led by the DDA or the City that encourage and prioritize non-motorized transportation downtown, including the DDA's Destination Downtown partnership with BATA.

Old Town TIF	
Taxable Value	\$33,556,796
Estimated Revenue	\$829,992
Est. Fund Balance of Previous Fiscal Year	\$878,401
Running Downtown	\$272,210
<i>DDA Administration</i>	\$117,449
<i>Service Agreement with City</i>	\$124,761
<i>Legal Services</i>	\$10,000
<i>Miscellaneous & Utilities</i>	\$20,000
Building and Maintaining Downtown	
(A) Essential Public Infrastructure	\$90,000
<i>Streetscaping/Snowmelt</i>	\$50,000
<i>Stormwater Infrastructure</i>	\$10,000
<i>General infrastructure Repair</i>	\$10,000
<i>City Infrastructure Contribution</i>	\$20,000
(B) Essential Public Services	\$62,000
<i>Community Police Officer (\$3,000)*</i>	
<i>Trash Removal (\$20,000)*</i>	
<i>Wayfinding Signage</i>	\$3,000
<i>Clean and Green Team</i>	\$15,000
<i>Landscaping**</i>	\$3,000
<i>City Truck Rental</i>	\$1,000
<i>Holiday Lights</i>	\$30,000
<i>Miscellaneous</i>	\$10,000
Transforming Downtown	
(A) Transformative Public Infrastructure	\$270,000
<i>Rivers Edge Riverwalk</i>	\$250,000
<i>Riverwalk Signage</i>	\$20,000
(B) Transformative Public Services	\$10,000
<i>Composting Program</i>	\$5,000
<i>Non-Motorized Investments***</i>	\$5,000
Activating Downtown & Growing Business	\$25,000
<i>Communication, Promotion & Events</i>	\$20,000
<i>Traverse Connect</i>	\$5,000
Total Expenses	\$729,210
Estimated Remaining Fund Balance	\$979,183
* Trash Removal & Police Officer included In The Service Agreement Total	
** Planters and maintenance of Rotary Square and other downtown areas	
*** Includes BATA's Destination Downtown Program	

FY26 Expenditures by Expense Type Summary



CAPITAL OUTLAY	\$360,000	49.37%
TRANSFER OUT CITY FEE	\$124,800	17.11%
TRANSFER OUT	\$117,400	16.10%
PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	\$87,000	11.93%
COMMUNITY PROMOTION	\$20,000	2.74%
MISCELLANEOUS EXP	\$15,000	2.06%
UTILITIES	\$5,000	0.69%

Expenditures by Expense Type Summary

Category	2023/2024 Actual	2024/2025 Amended	2024/2025 Projected	2025/2026 Budgeted	2024/2025 Amended vs. FY 2025/2026 Budgeted (% Change)
OFFICE/OPERATING SUPPLIES	-	\$100	\$300	-	-100.00%
PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	\$267,432	\$25,000	\$158,400	\$87,000	248.00%
COMMUNITY PROMOTION	-	-	-	\$20,000	-
UTILITIES	-	\$5,000	\$2,000	\$5,000	0.00%
REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE	-	-	\$1,400	-	-
MISCELLANEOUS EXP	-	\$5,000	-	\$15,000	200.00%
TRANSFER OUT CITY FEE	-	\$82,339	-	\$124,800	51.57%
CAPITAL OUTLAY	\$850,825	\$923,394	\$282,900	\$360,000	-61.01%
TRANSFER OUT	-	\$113,700	\$113,600	\$117,400	3.25%
Total Expenditures	\$1,118,257	\$1,154,533	\$558,600	\$729,200	-36.84%

Revenue Summary

There are no significant changes to revenue. Revenue is from the tax capture in the Old Town TIF district.

Revenues by Revenue Source

Category	2023/2024 Actual	2024/2025 Amended	2024/2025 Projected	2025/2026 Budgeted	2024/2025 Amended vs. FY 2025/2026 Budgeted (% Change)
REAL ESTATE/PERSONAL PROPERTY TAX	\$789,984	-	\$910,000	\$830,000	-
INTEREST REVENUE	\$290	-	\$600	\$100	-
Total Revenues	\$790,274	-	\$910,600	\$830,100	-

DDA TIF 97 Fund (253)

The TIF-97 Fund was established through the Tax Increment Financing (TIF) plan adopted by the DDA and City in 1997. TIF-97 is funded through the harnessed appreciation of tax revenue within the designated TIF-97 District. The City of Traverse City contributes 53-cents on the dollar of the revenue collected in TIF-97, with the remaining 47-cents contributed by the following regional taxing authorities: Grand Traverse County Commission on Aging; Grand Traverse County Veterans Affairs; Grand Traverse County Road Commission; Northwestern Michigan College; Bay Area Transportation Authority; Grand Traverse County Conservation District; Grand Traverse County Animal Control; the Recreation Authority; and Grand Traverse County, as well the DDA's levied millage.



Expenditure Summary

There is a significant increase to Capital Outlay expenditures, which can be attributed to the major projects planned within "Transforming Downtown (A) Transformative Public Infrastructure," including a mid-block crosswalk on State Street, schematic design/engineering of the Lower Boardman/Ottaway Riverwalk's first phase, and the long-planned Farmer's Market Pavilion, which would enhance the City's upcoming reconstruction of Lot B.

The Capital Outlay expenditure category is comprised of all items under "Building and Maintaining Downtown (A) Essential Public Infrastructure" and "Transforming Downtown (A) Transformative Public Infrastructure." All items under "Building and Maintaining Downtown (B) Essential Public Services" and "Transforming Downtown (B) Transformative Public Services" are within the Professional Services expenditure category.

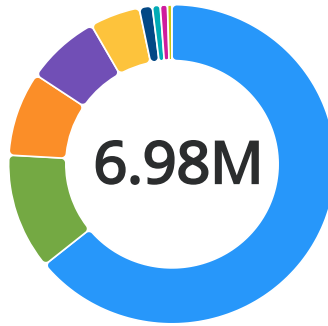
Funds under (A) Essential Public Infrastructure may be used for projects developed by the DDA or as a contribution to projects led by the City. A new line for City Infrastructure Contribution was created specifically to support City projects.

Under (B) Transformative Public Services, a new line for Non-Motorized Investments was created to support projects or programs led by the DDA or the City that encourage and prioritize non-motorized transportation downtown, including the DDA's Destination Downtown partnership with BATA. The DDA is actively working with its property management partner to find the retail incubator space's next tenant, which would eliminate this line item.

TIF-97

Taxable Value	\$170,026,825
Estimated Revenue	\$4,336,329
Est. Fund Balance of Previous Fiscal Year	\$6,599,401
Running Downtown	\$1,209,783
<i>DDA Administration</i>	\$595,094
<i>Service Agreement with City</i>	\$514,689
<i>Legal Services</i>	\$20,000
<i>Miscellaneous & Utilities</i>	\$80,000
Building and Maintaining Downtown	
(A) Essential Public Infrastructure	\$1,504,459
<i>Hardy Parking Deck Payment</i>	\$874,459
<i>Streetscaping/Snowmelt</i>	\$120,000
<i>Stormwater Infrastructure (Lot B)</i>	\$110,000
<i>N. Union Street Bridge Repair</i>	\$150,000
<i>N. Union Deck/Stair Replacement</i>	\$80,000
<i>General infrastructure Repair</i>	\$65,000
<i>City Infrastructure Contribution</i>	\$80,000
<i>Miscellaneous</i>	\$25,000
(B) Essential Public Services	\$284,200
<i>Community Police Officer (\$120,431)*</i>	
<i>Trash Removal (\$60,078)*</i>	
<i>Farmers Market</i>	\$38,000
<i>Public Restroom Program</i>	\$6,000
<i>Wayfinding Signage</i>	\$15,000
<i>Clean and Green Team</i>	\$65,000
<i>Landscaping**</i>	\$10,000
<i>City Truck Rental</i>	\$5,200
<i>Holiday Lights</i>	\$120,000
<i>Miscellaneous</i>	\$25,000
Transforming Downtown	
(A) Transformative Public Infrastructure	\$3,810,000
<i>Rotary Square</i>	\$150,000
<i>Farmers Market Pavillion</i>	\$2,800,000
<i>Boardman/Ottaway Riverwalk</i>	\$400,000
<i>Two-Way Pilot</i>	\$80,000
<i>Mid-Block Crosswalks</i>	\$300,000
<i>West End Demolition</i>	\$80,000
(B) Transformative Public Services	\$75,000
<i>Composting Program</i>	\$10,000
<i>Retail Incubator</i>	\$50,000
<i>Non-Motorized Investments***</i>	\$15,000
Activating Downtown & Growing Business	\$100,000
<i>Communication, Promotion & Events</i>	\$90,000
<i>Traverse Connect</i>	\$10,000
Total Expenses	\$6,983,442
Estimated Remaining Fund Balance	\$3,952,288
* Trash Removal & Police Officer included In The Service Agreement Total	
** Planters and maintenance of Rotary Square and other downtown areas	
*** Includes BATA's Destination Downtown Program	

FY26 Expenditures by Type Summary



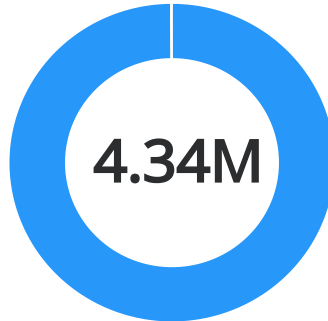
● CAPITAL OUTLAY	\$4,481,000	64.17%
● PRINCIPAL	\$820,000	11.74%
● TRANSFER OUT	\$595,100	8.52%
● TRANSFER OUT CITY FEE	\$514,700	7.37%
● PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	\$348,100	4.98%
● CONTRACTUAL SERVICES	\$90,000	1.29%
● INTEREST EXPENSE & FEES	\$54,500	0.78%
● MISCELLANEOUS EXP	\$50,000	0.72%
● UTILITIES	\$30,000	0.43%

Expenditures by Type Summary

Category	2023/2024 Actual	2024/2025 Amended	2024/2025 Projected	2025/2026 Budgeted	2024/2025 Amended vs. FY 2025/2026 Budgeted (% Change)
OFFICE/OPERATING SUPPLIES	-	\$5,000	\$700	-	-100.00%
PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	\$1,318,785	\$670,026	\$374,400	\$348,100	-48.05%
CONTRACTUAL SERVICES	-	-	-	\$90,000	-
PRINTING & PUBLISHING	-	\$20,000	\$1,500	-	-100.00%
UTILITIES	-	-	\$3,400	\$30,000	-
MISCELLANEOUS EXP	-	-	\$46,000	\$50,000	-
TRANSFER OUT CITY FEE	-	\$514,689	\$514,700	\$514,700	0.00%
CAPITAL OUTLAY	\$830,746	\$2,125,000	\$361,600	\$4,481,000	110.87%
PRINCIPAL	\$840,000	\$840,000	\$840,000	\$820,000	-2.38%
INTEREST EXPENSE & FEES	\$153,111	\$73,719	\$73,700	\$54,500	-26.07%
TRANSFER OUT	-	\$555,106	\$555,100	\$595,100	7.20%
Total Expenditures	\$3,142,642	\$4,803,540	\$2,771,100	\$6,983,400	45.38%

Revenues Summary

FY26 Revenues by Revenue Source



● REAL ESTATE/PERSONAL PROPERTY TAX	\$4,336,300	99.90%
● INTEREST REVENUE	\$4,500	0.10%

Revenues by Revenue Source

Category	2023/2024 Actual	2023/2024 Amended	2024/2025 Projected	2025/2026 Budgeted	2024/2025 Amended vs. 2025/2026 Budgeted (% Change)
REAL ESTATE/PERSONAL PROPERTY TAX	\$3,832,136	-	\$4,016,500	\$4,336,300	4.09%
INTEREST REVENUE	\$54,755	-	\$1,400	\$4,500	0.00%
RENT & ROYALTIES	\$700	-	-	-	-
REIMBURSEMENTS	\$92,203	-	-	-	-
Total Revenues	\$3,979,794	-	\$4,017,900	\$4,340,800	4.09%



303 E. State Street
Traverse City, MI 49684
harry@downtowntc.com
231-922-2050

Memorandum

To: Downtown Development Authority Board of Directors
From: Harry Burkholder, DDA Executive Director
Memo Date: June 12, 2025
Subject: Streetscaping Policy

At our March meeting, the DDA Board approved a request from a downtown property owner for reimbursement of 50% of streetscaping costs associated with a new development. As we discussed, the DDA has traditionally used TIF funds to cover 50% of eligible streetscaping improvements - such as decorative brick pavers, street trees, and snowmelt systems - associated with new development projects.

As part of that discussion on reimbursement, staff included the last version of the Streetscaping Investment Policy. Based on a review of the policy, the DDA staff had been working to update the policy. However, based on subsequent board discussion as well as additional discussion with the city engineering department, it is our recommendation that we pause on updating the policy and broaden the conversation about a snowmelt policy and reimbursement with city staff. DDA staff will bring back more information about snowmelt as it develops.

In the meantime, the DDA is still receiving inquiries and requests for reimbursement of streetscaping projects. In fact, I anticipate there will be another streetscaping reimbursement request at our July meeting.



Downtown Development Authority
303 E. State Street
Traverse City, MI 49684
harry@downtowntc.com
231-922-2050

MEMORANDUM

To: Downtown Development Authority Board

From: Harry Burkholder, Executive Director

Date: June 12, 2025

Re: TIF-97 Project Priorities

This memo is intended to provide an update on the status of each capital improvement project priority, including next steps, critical decisions and budget needs. Attached to this memo is a project “timeline” for the Riverwalk and Rotary Square projects. The timeline illustrates project phases, key decisions and project milestones. This memo and an updated project timeline will be included in every DDA Board meeting moving forward.

TIF-97 Priority Projects

1. Rotary Square
2. Farmers Market Pavilion
3. Boardman/Ottaway Riverwalk - Phase 1-A (J-Smith Walkway, Pedestrian Bridge, Naturalized Abutments/Stormwater Infrastructure)

Rotary Square

Work is progressing steadily on the conceptual design for Rotary Square in partnership with Progressive Companies. On May 15th, we hosted a well-attended community Open House at Rotary Square, where approximately 50 residents reviewed and provided input on a series of preliminary design concepts.

In addition to the Open House, we facilitated an online survey to gather broader feedback, collecting an impressive 315 responses. This valuable input, along with guidance from the upcoming Steering Committee meeting, will inform the next phase of design development - two refined conceptual designs will be presented to the public at a second community Open House, scheduled for **July 8th** at **Rotary Square**.

Project Phases and Milestones

A. Planning, Design and Engineering Phase

Task One. Community Engagement	Timeline: Feb. – June
Task Two. Prior Work Review	Timeline: Completed
Task Three. Develop Preliminary Conceptual Design Alternative Concepts	Timeline: April - May
Task Four. Develop Schematic Design Plans	Timeline: May- July
Task Five. Develop Operational and Management Framework	Timeline: August

Milestone: DDA Board approves funding to begin procurement and construction Phase (**September**)

B. Procurement Phase

Timeline: Jan. 2026

C. Construction Phase

Timeline: May 2026

Farmers Market Pavillion

In 2017, the DDA engaged Beckett & Raeder (B&R) to develop a conceptual design for a permanent pavilion at the Sara Hardy Downtown Farmers Market, located in Lot B. As discussed in recent meetings, the City is preparing to repave Lot B and install upgraded stormwater infrastructure - creating a timely opportunity to incorporate a permanent pavilion as part of the broader site improvements.

Since B&R's original design, Lot B has been reconfigured and will likely undergo further modifications through the City's repaving and infrastructure work. Given these changes, the pavilion design must be updated to reflect the current and anticipated site conditions.

Over the past month, DDA staff have worked closely with City Engineering and B&R to clarify the scope, roles, and key components of the pavilion project. Following these discussions, B&R submitted a refined design proposal (attached), which comes in nearly \$40,000 less than their original estimate.

Given B&R's in-depth knowledge of the original concept, their understanding of the site and project goals, and their productive working relationships with both DDA and City staff, continuing with B&R offers significant efficiencies. Their approach has consistently emphasized creating a true public space - a flexible, vibrant, and functional pavilion that complements and enhances its downtown surroundings, rather than merely serving as a shelter over asphalt.

Additionally, Beckett & Raeder's project team includes Hugh A. Boyd Architects, a nationally recognized firm with deep expertise in public market and placemaking design. Notably, their portfolio includes the Grand Rapids Downtown Market, among others. Their involvement brings significant added value and experience to the project.

We believe re-engaging Beckett & Raeder for this next phase positions the project for success, ensuring the final design remains rooted in the original vision while thoughtfully adapting to present-day site conditions.

If the Board supports moving forward with Beckett & Raeder, a recommended motion is provided below. However, if the Board prefers to initiate a new competitive bidding process for this next phase of design, staff are prepared to proceed accordingly.

The DDA has also been engaging farmers and vendors who participate in the Sara Hardy Farmers Market to update them on the potential next steps and help to elevate their collective voices in support of a permanent structure for the market. Over 30 vendors have already signed on to a letter of support for the pavilion (see attached).

Potential Phases and Milestone

- | | |
|---|-----------------|
| A. Budget allocation for Planning, Design and Engineering Phase | Timeline: July |
| B. Planning, Design and Engineering Phase (cost estimate) | Timeline: Sept. |
| C. Procurement Phase | Timeline: Dec. |
| D. Construction Phase | Timeline: April |

Recommended Motion

That the DDA Board enter into contract with Beckett & Raeder for a not-to-exceed cost of \$93,100 for conceptual design and cost estimation for the Farmers Market Pavillion using TIF-97 funding, subject to approval as to its form by the DDA Executive Director and Attorney.

Boardman/Ottaway Riverwalk

The DDA Board approved to move forward with INFORM Studio on the Schematic Design and Design Development phases of this project at our February meeting. We held our first team meeting with INFORM to discuss the project timeline, site and pre-engineering documentation needs and key next steps. We are working with the INFORM team to secure and complete the pre-engineering documentation.

Working Phases and Milestone

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------|
| A. Schematic Design | Timeline: Sept. |
| B. Design Development (cost estimate) | Timeline: Dec. |

PROFESSIONAL FEES



BASE FEE

Beckett & Raeder, Inc. and Hugh A. Boyd, Architect, propose a lump sum fees plus reimbursable expenses for the scope of services as described in this proposal. Invoices will be prepared monthly based on a percentage of the work completed.

Task	Description	Total Price
1	Prior Work Review and Recommendations	\$ 26,700
2	Construction Drawings and Specifications	\$ 66,400
3	Bidding and Award	Hourly/ As Needed
4	Construction Administration	Hourly/ As Needed

TOTAL PROJECT COST: \$ 93,100

REIMBURSABLE EXPENSES: \$4,500

Additional Services

Any additional services including but not limited to attendance at additional meetings, site visits, public meetings, preparation of three dimensional graphics or other services not specifically outlined above will be provided upon request and invoiced at the attached hourly rate schedule.

WORK PLAN

Project Initiation and Organization

The BRI Team leadership will coordinate and administer an initial meeting with DDA project leadership to discuss specific details related to verification of the project scope and budget, the final work plan, schedule, and any special considerations in the design process. We recommend establishing a project stakeholder group consisting of members who can make decisions about the development of final construction documents. We will prepare a project schedule and develop a timeline of meetings, which will be followed and/or updated during subsequent phases of the project. The BRI Team will coordinate with the DDA by in-person (or virtual if preferred) meetings to inform the DDA and a project stakeholder group regarding the progress of the work.

Task 1: Prior Work Review and Field Investigation

1.1 Prior Work Review

The BRI Team will analyze relevant planning and design documents that have been prepared since the development of the 2016 Conceptual Farmer's Market Plan. We will summarize any concerns that may require consideration by the DDA and project stakeholder group. During the conceptual plan review and verification meeting, we will facilitate consideration and resolution of these concerns so that any revisions can be incorporated into the construction drawings and specifications.

1.2 Site Visit

The BRI Team will conduct a site visit to become reacquainted with the project site, document its current condition and identify any significant changes that may have occurred since the development of the 2016 Conceptual Plan. During the conceptual plan review and verification meeting, we will review any relevant observations with the DDA and project stakeholder group.

1.3 Conceptual Plan Review and Verification

Prior to proceeding with the preparation of construction documents for the Farmer's Market Pavilion, BRI will facilitate a conceptual plan review and verification meeting with the DDA and project stakeholders. The purpose of this meeting will be to review the 2016 Conceptual Farmers' Market Plan and the 2023 Parking Lot Renovation Plan.

Following the meeting, the BRI Team will prepare documentation to support recommendations for modifications or enhancements of the 2023 Parking Lot Renovation Plan that may help to better align the parking lot and farmers market uses.

BRI will then meet with the DDA and City of Traverse City to facilitate alignment so that we can share a common vision as we advance from the original concept to the final Farmer's Market Pavilion construction documents.

TASK 2: Construction Drawings and Specifications

This task involves the preparation of all drawings and specifications for Farmer's Market Pavilion as necessary to describe the proposed work completely and accurately for permitting, bidding and construction. This task will be divided into two phases. Based on the review of prior work and verification of the work scope with the DDA and project stakeholders, The BRI Team will prepare a set of 50% construction documents for review. We will meet with the DDA and project stakeholders to review the 50% construction documents and verify that the construction documents are consistent with the expectations established during the conceptual plan review and verification meeting. Following the acceptance of the 50% construction documents, the BRI Team will proceed the completion of the 100% construction documents.

2.1 Drawings

The complete set of working drawings for Farmer's Market Pavilion will include, but not necessarily be limited to, the following:

- Site Layout and Materials Plans for Farmer's Market Pavilion
- Architectural Plans, Elevations, Cross Sections & Details
- Structural Plans and Details
- Pavilion Electrical and Lighting plans and details

The BRI Team drawings will be provided to the City of Traverse City for incorporation into the project bidding and construction documents.

2.2 Specifications

Prepare and assemble complete specifications in CSI Format and include City of Traverse City standards and forms required for inclusion in the specifications. The Client will provide the front-end documents. The BRI Team specifications will be provided to the City of Traverse City for incorporation into the project bidding and construction documents

2.3 Cost Estimate

Prepare a detailed unit price cost estimate, which indicates that proposed construction is consistent with preliminary cost estimates and with the budget established for the project.

TASK 3: Bidding and Award

Bidding and award services are available on an hourly basis as needed.

Task 3.3 Pre-Bid Meeting

The BRI Team may attend a Pre-Bid Meeting. The Client will introduce the project and review the bidding procedures. The BRI Team will review the documents and together with the client, answer any questions from the attendees.

TASK 4: Construction Administration

Construction administration services are available on an hourly basis as needed.

Task 4.2 Pre-construction Meeting

The BRI Team may attend a pre-construction meeting.

Task 4.3 Site Visits

During the construction period, The BRI Team may make periodic visits to the sites to observe critical stages of the work and to ensure that the contractor fulfills the intent of the Contract Documents. After the work is in progress, the frequency and type of observations will be in accordance with prudent professional practice.

Task 4.4 Pay Applications

The BRI Team may verify and approve the invoices from the construction contractor and prepare periodic estimates of the percentages and value of work completed.

Task 4.5 Bulletins and Change Orders

The BRI Team may prepare Bulletins and approve Change Orders as necessary.

Task 4.6 Shops and Submittals

The BRI Team may review, approve, and distribute, as necessary, any shop drawings and submittals submitted by the construction contractor.

Task 4.7 Progress Meetings

The BRI Team may attend construction progress meetings.

Task 4.8 Punch List

The BRI Team may prepare a punch list of items to be corrected prior to final approval.

Task 4.9 Final Inspection

The BRI Team may make a final inspection and make recommendations regarding acceptance of the work.

WORK BY OTHERS / UNDERSTANDINGS

Work not included in this proposal is as follows:

- Boundary Survey
- Topographic Survey
- Environmental Investigations (Phase I or Phase II)
- Construction materials testing
- Threatened and Endangered Species consultation
- NEPA consultation or other environmental reviews
- Archeological investigations
- Wetland Delineation, JPA Permit and impact/mitigation design
- Front-end specification documents
- Printing multiple sets for reviews/bidding
- Application, Permit and Tap Fees
- Capacity Analysis/Modeling of Utilities
- Hydrologic or hydraulic studies/modeling
- Floodplain studies
- Design of Irrigation systems
- Traffic Studies (by others if required)
- Maintenance of Traffic Plans (by others)
- Construction Plan Documents (beyond the footprint of the Farmer's Market Pavilion) including the following:
 - Existing Conditions
 - Demolition Plans
 - Soil Erosion Sedimentation Control Plans
 - Site Materials and Layout
 - Grading Plans
 - Utility Plans
 - Stormwater Management Plans or Calculations
- Facilitation of planning commission review
- 3D drawings or renderings
- Offsite improvements
- Easements or supporting exhibits
- As-built survey for record documents

This proposal assumes that the project will be prepared with a single bid release package.

May 28, 2025

To whom it may concern,

We write to extend our support for the construction of the Sara Hardy Farmers Market pavilion this year as proposed by the Traverse City Downtown Development Authority.

The Sara Hardy Farmers Market (SHFM) is an incredibly important location for us as local growers to sell our products from the seven county region. As the premier market of the region and the largest growers-only market in Michigan, upgrades to the market's current accommodations are long overdue to support the continued growth of this integral part of our community and economy.

SHFM vendors have long reported a need for improved shelter from the elements as well as improved freedom of movement for vendors and customers. In a study conducted in 2014, 65% of vendors supported adding a permanent structure to the market, with less than 10% opposing. Since 2014, SHFM has seen an increase in its number of vendors, exacerbating the need for improvements without any progress on the pavilion we expected to resolve these concerns.

While the location of SHFM is accessible and convenient, without permanent infrastructure, it lacks a distinct sense of place that many smaller farmers markets across Michigan offer and does not reflect the quality or community of this market. We are deeply proud to participate in the Sara Hardy Farmers Market, and hope that our voices can make an impact to improve the market through our support for the Sara Hardy Farmers Market pavilion.

Sincerely,
Vendors of Sara Hardy Farmers Market
(individual signatures below)

Ryan Lanham	Adam & Dana Weinrich	Josh Trust	Tyler, Cameron & Seth Troszak
Sweet Frond Farm	Anavery Fine Foods	Nan Bop Farm	Northern Growin' LLC
Lori & Ben Buchan Buchan's Blueberry Hill	Jeff Kane Harper's Ridge Farm & Little Long Ears ProvisionS	Dave Omar Saltless Sea Creamery	Courtney Lorenz Cultured Kombucha

Anna Mae Kucharski
& Ariel Dupra
Merlyn's Pâtisserie

Marisa Farr
Jojo's Cookies

Katie Gallagher
Gallagher's Centennial
Farm

Josh McColley
Uncle Bill's Orchard

Stacie Lichty
Shortie's TC

Rick & Pollyanna Torres
Ranger Rick's SuperMex
Salsa

Cindi John
Treaty Fish Co.

Austin Bower
Bee Joyful

Melanie Coon
Mother Nature CBD

Steve Bailey
Bailey's Farms

Christopher Rodes
PDG Pretzels

Gary Smith
Leelanau Cheese Co.

Kelly Dillon
Kewadin Honey

Cristiane Bonebrake
Exotic Treats

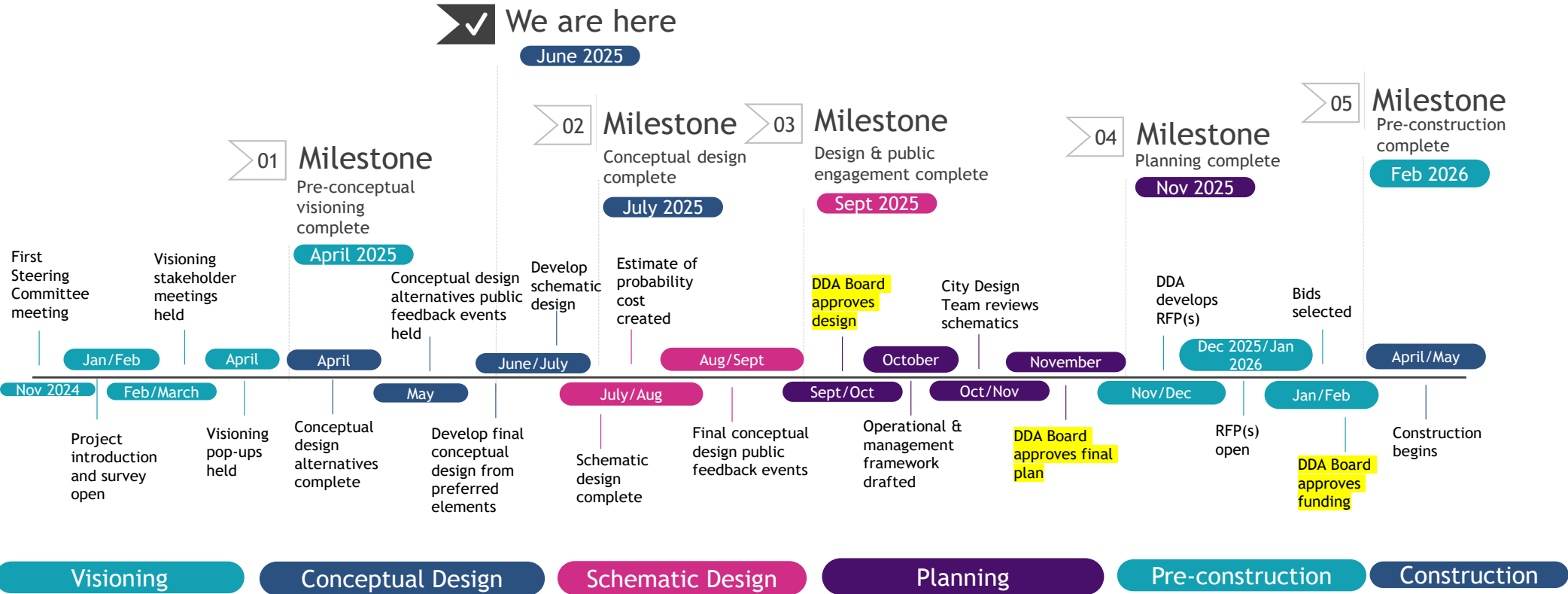
Logan Glinski
Mangio Fresco

Stuart Kunkle
Morganic Farm

Joelle Harmony
Bear Earth Herbals

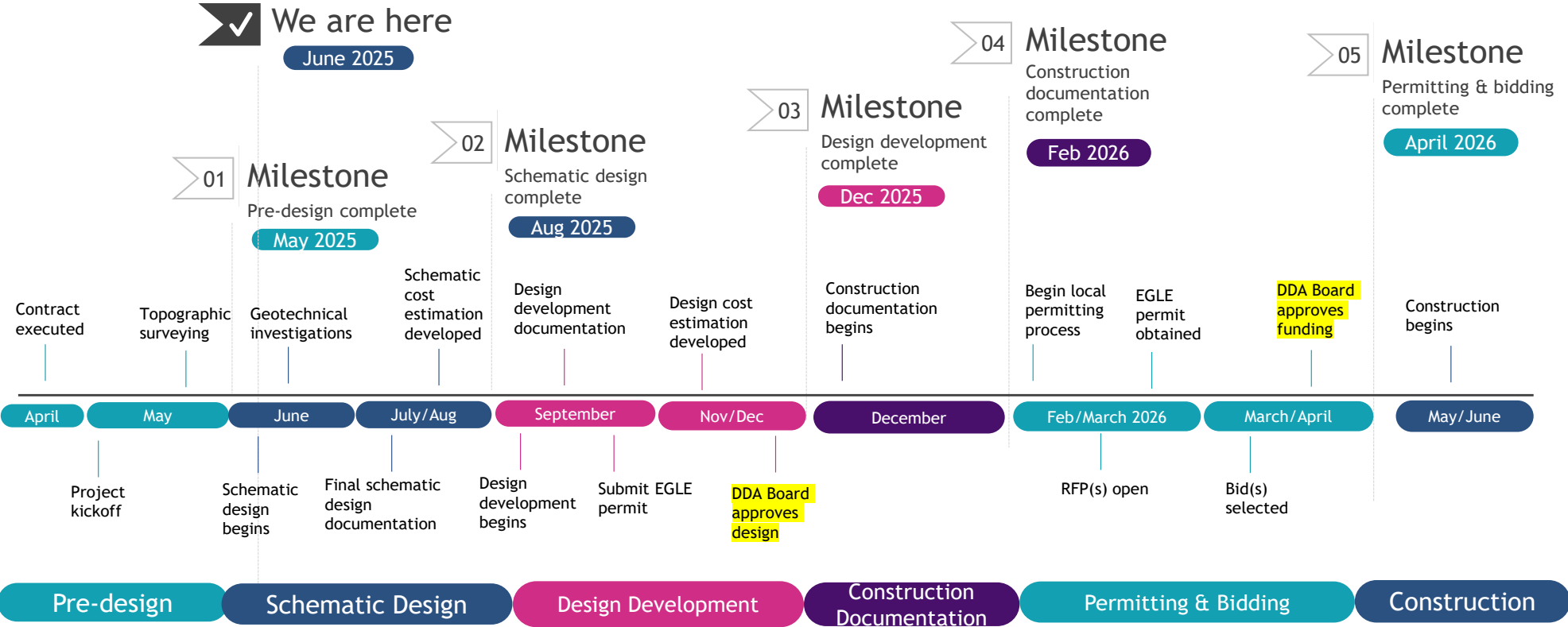
Timothy Scott
Old Hundredth Farm

Rotary Square Timeline



Timeline subject to change

Boardman/Ottaway Riverwalk Timeline



Timeline subject to change



Downtown Development Authority
303 E. State Street
Traverse City, MI 49684
harry@downtowntc.com
231-922-2050

Memorandum

To: DDA Board of Directors
From: Harry Burkholder, DDA Executive Director
Date: June 12, 2025
Subject: Executive Director Report

Below is an overview and update on projects and initiatives that the DDA is working on.

Hannah Park Overlook

The two benches have been installed at the Hannah Park Overlook. Upon a final inspection from the County, this project will be officially completed.

Two-Way Pilot Project

City Commissioners approved to extend the two-way pilot project to December 31, 2025. We will be reviewing the results of the most recent data collection efforts as well as discussing potential pilot modifications and long-term implications for street infrastructure and funding needs should the pilot be made permanent at our next city design team meeting. The design team discussions will continue on a regular basis throughout the next six months.

Holiday Lights

We are currently reviewing proposals and checking references from firms that responded to our RFP.

Farmers Market

The Farmer's Market is now open on Wednesdays in addition to the traditional Saturday Market.

General Infrastructure Repair

As you may recall, earlier this spring, DDA and City staff conducted a walking tour of downtown to identify opportunities for targeted public infrastructure repairs, including sidewalks, curbs, streets, and related improvements.

Through this collaborative effort, we identified a number of areas in need of maintenance or repair. Below is a summary of the proposed improvements:

Streets

1. Union Street (North of Front to the Bridge)
 - Repave southbound lane (315 ft) and patch east lane
2. Union Street (South of Front Street)
 - Repave northbound lane (100 ft)
3. Cass Street (South of Front Street)
 - Repave both northbound lanes (50 ft)

Alley Approach

- 200 block alley approach to Cass (behind the Milliken Building)

Mid-Block Crosswalk

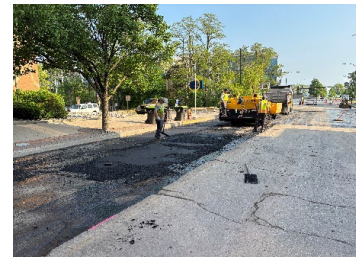
- 100 block of Cass Street (between State and Front)

Sidewalk Repairs

1. Intersection of Lake & Cass Streets – partial sidewalk replacement
2. Intersection of State & Park Streets – partial sidewalk replacement

To take advantage of the current fiscal year, DDA staff prioritized the street improvements, working directly with the City Streets Department to coordinate and complete the work:

- Improvements on North Union Street were completed last week.
- Cass Street improvements are expected to be finished by June 18.
- Total cost for these three street repairs: \$27,345.



For the remaining projects (alley approach, crosswalk, and sidewalk repairs), DDA staff partnered with the City Engineering Department to prepare bid documents. Bids were opened last week, with cost estimates ranging from \$243,000 to \$457,500 - well above the \$75,000 budgeted (\$65,000 from TIF-97 and \$10,000 from Old Town TIF) for general infrastructure maintenance in the FY 2025–2026 budget.

As a result, we are now working with the Engineering Department to determine which project(s) should be prioritized for this coming fiscal year. Remaining projects will be earmarked for FY 2026–2027. I will keep the Board updated as cost evaluations and scheduling progress.

Potential Zoning Changes in Old Town

On June 17, the Planning Commission will hold a public hearing to consider the rezoning of the 300 and 400 blocks of South Union Street (between Sixth and Eighth Streets) from C-2 to C-4a.

This rezoning effort was originally initiated by the City and the DDA in 2022, but it has resurfaced due to a recent inquiry from a property owner in the district. A full description and analysis of the proposed rezoning is included in this month's meeting packet, taken from the Planning Commission's materials.

Two key aspects of the proposed rezoning to note:

1. Flexibility for Vertical Expansion – The change to C-4a zoning would make it easier for existing building owners to add an additional floor to their structures.
2. Height Limit Unchanged – The maximum building height would remain at 45 feet, consistent with the current C-2 zoning.

This rezoning proposal could support modest increases in density and investment in the Old Town district.

TIF Implementation Policy & Next Steps

As we have discussed, the City Commission is expected to revisit the proposed Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Implementation Policy later this summer. The purpose of this policy is to establish a clear and consistent process for how future TIF plans will be evaluated and approved by the City Commission, including the steps required to place a proposal on the ballot - as now mandated by the City Charter. The policy is designed to ensure that all TIF proposals are reviewed and approved under the same framework, regardless of the scope or content of the request.

While the timing of the City Commission's approval of the TIF Implementation Policy remains uncertain, I believe it is important for the DDA Board to begin a conversation about next steps for the Moving Downtown Forward TIF Plan.

To that end, I intend to include a "framework for moving forward" as part of our July Board meeting packet. This will help guide our discussion and identify key considerations as we continue to engage with the community and city leadership on this important initiative.

As part of this discussion, we will also review the recently adopted City of Traverse City Strategic Action Plan. Understanding how the goals and priorities outlined in this plan align - or do not align - with the Moving Downtown Forward TIF Plan will be an essential part of our strategy. The Strategic Action Plan is attached, and I encourage all Board members to review it ahead of our July meeting.



Memorandum

TO: City Planning Commission

COPY:

FROM: Shawn Winter, Planning Director

MEMO DATE: June 10, 2025

SUBJECT: Public hearing and possible recommendation on the rezoning of the 300 and 400 blocks of South Union Street to C-4a, as recommended by the Master Plan, and initiated by an application submitted by representatives of 418 and 420 S Union St.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The Planning Commission has scheduled a public hearing in consideration of rezoning the 300 and 400 blocks of South Union Street. This consideration was prompted by a rezoning application submitted by the owner's representative of the lots located at 418 and 420 South Union Street. That request specifically was to rezone those two parcels from C-2 to C-4a. However, the Master Plan future land use plan and action plan both specifically call for the rezoning of the aforementioned blocks to C-4a. The attached staff report outlines the information related to the request and provides suggested motions.



REZONING REQUEST STAFF REPORT

**418 & 420 S UNION ST
 C-2 to C-4a**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The real estate agent for the owner of record for the properties located at 418 and 420 S Union St has applied to rezone the subject properties from C-2: Neighborhood Center District to C-4a: Regional Center District.

This request is directly supported by the Master Plan that prescribes rezoning the 300, 400, and 500 blocks of S Union St to C-4a. This builds off an effort in 2022 where the same rezoning consideration was discussed with property and business owners along the corridor. This effort stalled due to other priorities at the time.

In addition to this application request, the Planning Commission is asked to consider expanding the request to the areas prescribed in the Master Plan. This would avoid a spot zoning scenario, and would further implement the recommendations of the Master Plan, allowing the Planning Commission to assume a more proactive approach to implementing a component of the plan.

An analysis of the application request follows.

PROPERTY INFORMATION:

Address:	418 S Union St; 420 S Union St	
Parcel Nos.:	28-51-618-024-00; 28-51-618-025-00	
Owner(s):	Three Spartans LLC	
Applicant:	Scott Hardy, Real Estate Agent for Ownership	
Area:	Approximately 0.38 acres / 16,553 sf (0.19 acres each)	
Current Zoning / Land Use:	C-2: Neighborhood Center District 418 S Union: vacant 420 S Union: developed as a commercial building	
Surrounding Zoning / Land Use:	North:	C-2: commercial
	East:	C-2: commercial
	South:	C-2 commercial
	West:	R-2: residential, R-1b: residential

Aerial Map:



ZONING AND LAND USE:

The subject properties are under common ownership. The owner intends to combine the lots, and redevelop the combined lot as a single development. The property located at 418 S Union is currently vacant. The previous building was demolished in late 2023/early 2024. The property located at 420 S Union is developed as a commercial property, and currently houses a personal services tenant.

The current zoning classification is C-2: Neighborhood Center District. The district's intent as stated in the Zoning Ordinance "...is for the purpose of accommodating small businesses primarily serving adjacent neighborhoods with day-to-day retail goods and services. These small centers are comprised of residentially-scaled buildings with limited parking areas and a strong pedestrian orientation. Existing buildings and quality vegetation should be retained. New buildings are to be designed to reflect a residential flavor and minimize impacts (e.g., noise, light, traffic) on neighborhood residences.

There was an inquiry in 2022 from a law firm located in Old Towne that desired to build another story to accommodate their growing firm. Their building at that time was two stories, and they wished to add a third story. The ordinance allows buildings in the district to be 45 feet tall, however, any building above 30 feet must have at least one story of residential. The former Planning Director indicated that this requirement was added to the new Zoning Ordinance in 1999 to incentivize residential development downtown, which really wasn't occurring at the time. That is no longer the case today, and probably an unnecessary requirement.

The law firm’s two-story building was approximately 24 feet tall, which would have been approximately 34 feet tall with a third story addition. Since this was going to exceed 30 feet, they would have to build a fourth floor for residential use just to accommodate their growing business. They were not interested in becoming residential landlords, nor were they in a position to make that additional investment, and as a result after over 100 years operating in Old Towne they relocated out of the City in Copper Ridge.

Seeing that this was a potential limitation to existing businesses, the DDA and Planning Department held a number of discussions in 2022 with Old Towne business and property owners to gather their input on the proposed rezoning to C-4a. The intent was to make Old Towne a more natural extension of the downtown core—with FishPass and the South Union Street bridge replacement further strengthening this effort—and to implement a zoning classification that more closely resembles what is built today. In reviewing the possible zoning designations, it was determined that C-4a would be the most appropriate as it would not allow taller buildings than what is allowed today. There really was no objection at that time from the business or property owners, but the effort did fall to the wayside as the law firm committed to relocating, and priorities in front of City and DDA staff shifted.



MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATION:

The Master Plan Future Land Use Map (FLUM) designates this area as part of the Commercial Core FLUM category, which is the same designation as downtown. The description of this category is:

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.

The four pages from the Master Plan on this FLUM category have been attached for reference. It does state in the “Existing Zoning Districts” section that the Commercial Core is best supported through the C-4(a/b/c) zoning classification, and that the areas currently zoned C-2 should be upzoned, which aligns with this request.

This is further directed through the Master Plan’s five-year Action Plan, which under item 15(d) specifically prescribes rezoning the 300, 400, and 500 blocks of S Union to C-4a to better reflect the existing development pattern and to create a stronger connection to downtown.

Lastly, the Master Plan further prescribes this rezoning in the Zoning Plan section where it calls for rezoning this part of the City to C-4a in order to implement the Master Plan goals and vision.

ZONING DISTRICT COMPARISON:

The rezoning applications do not correspond to any proposed development at this time. This is good in that the request should be considered comprehensively, with all district uses and zoning standards considered, since all would be applicable to future development. The following tables summarize the zoning standards for comparison:

Standard	C-2: Neighborhood Center District	C-4a: Regional Center District
Intent	The Neighborhood Center district is for the purpose of accommodating small businesses primarily serving adjacent neighborhoods with day-to-day retail goods and services. These small centers are comprised of residentially-scaled buildings with limited parking areas and a strong pedestrian orientation. Existing buildings and quality vegetation should be retained. New buildings are to be designed to reflect a residential flavor and minimize impacts (e.g., noise, light, traffic) on neighborhood residences. Overall density of up to 29 dwellings per acre is allowed.	The Regional Center Districts are for the purpose of accommodating a broad variety of retail, office and residential uses integrated with hotels, convention centers, and integrated common parking facilities. Internal linkage between stores is encouraged. It is extremely important that new development be integrated with historically significant buildings. The first floors of buildings are primarily for retail, financial services and restaurants. Dominant and striking visual features of the central area of the City should be maintained and enhanced. The upper stories of buildings are generally to be occupied by offices, services and residences. High density housing is also appropriate. It is the intent of these districts to create streets which encourage pedestrian activity. Buildings along Boardman River should be designed to integrate with both the sidewalk and riverwalk systems. Driveways crossing sidewalks should be limited to public parking areas.

Standard	C-2: Neighborhood Center District	C-4a: Regional Center District
Uses Allowed by Right*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • C-1 district uses except drive-throughs • Adult use marijuana retailer • Boat liveryes • Brew pubs • Convenience stores • Drinking places w/ & w/o entertainment • Florists • Fruit & vegetable markets, but not public or municipal markets • Grocery stores • Hardware stores • Laundromats • Marinas • Medical marihuana provisioning center 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GP district uses; • C-3 district uses (including C-1 & C-2), except: drive-ins, drive-throughs, Medical Marihuana Provisioning Centers, sexually-oriented businesses, vehicle wash facilities, veterinary services and kennels, vacation home rentals on the first floor; • Boat liveryes; • Convention centers; • Drinking places with or without entertainment; • Markets, public or municipal; • Adult use marihuana retailers • Parking areas: private for dwelling units, private (interior), private (surface), public (surface), decks (public or private) • Theaters, live and performance art centers.
Uses Allowed by SLUP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residential care & treatment facilities • Schools • Transitional housing & emergency shelters • Wind energy building-mount 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication towers; • Drive-throughs for finance services; • Essential services buildings; • Parking areas, private, if public parking is available within 500 feet of the allowed use; • Taller buildings in the C4-b or C4-c district; • Transit centers.
Lot Width	Minimum: 20 ft	Minimum: n/a
Lot Area	Minimum: 3,750 sf	Minimum: n/a
Density	Maximum: n/a	Maximum: n/a
Imp. Surface	Maximum: 70%	Maximum: 100%
Front Setback	<p><u>Building</u>: the lesser of 8 feet or the average of principal buildings on the same face block. Max of 25 feet</p> <p><u>Parking</u>: Behind or to the side of the principal building setback a distance equal to the principal building or 25 feet, whichever is greater</p>	<p><u>Building</u>: 2.5 ft</p> <p><u>Parking</u>: Behind or to the side of the principal building setback a distance equal to the principal building or 25 feet, whichever is greater</p>
Side Setback	<p><u>Building</u>: None, except 10 feet when abutting or across an alley from an R-district</p> <p><u>Parking</u>: 5 feet, except 10 feet when abutting or across an alley from an R-district</p>	<p><u>Building</u>: None, except 10 feet when abutting or across an alley from an R-district</p> <p><u>Parking</u>: 5 feet, except 10 feet when abutting or across an alley from an R-district</p>
Rear Setback	<p><u>Building</u>: 5 feet, except 20 feet when abutting or across an alley from an R-district</p> <p><u>Parking</u>: 5 feet, except 20 feet when abutting or across an alley from an R-district</p>	<p><u>Building</u>: 5 feet, except 20 feet when abutting or across an alley from an R-district</p> <p><u>Parking</u>: 20 feet when abutting or across an alley from an R-district</p>
Building Height	Maximum: 30 ft, 45 feet with one floor residential	Maximum: 45ft
Special Requirements	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) A building shall not exceed 6,000 square feet in gross floor area per floor. (2) No use shall be open to the public between the hours of 2:00 a.m. and 6:00 a.m. (3) The predominant building wall and entryway shall face the street. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) The predominant building wall and entryway shall face the public or private street. (2) Unless determined to be impractical by the Planning Director, the building width shall not be less than 90 percent of the property width at the street.

Standard	C-2: Neighborhood Center District	C-4a: Regional Center District
	<p>(4) Unless determine to be impractical by the Planning Director, the building width shall not be less than 80 percent of the property width at the street.</p> <p>(5) Vertical building modulation shall be used to add variety and interest and to make a large building appear to be an aggregation of smaller units relief from a continuous street facing wall may be achieved with wall offsets in combination with pilasters, corbeling or other permanent architectural elements, however, offsets in any wall shall not be less than 8 inches from the subject plane.</p> <p>(6) Window glazing shall be recessed from the outside of all building walls.</p> <p>(7) Clear or lightly tinted transparent glass shall be used for all windows facing a public street. Decorative stained glass may be used for accents. Mirrored, smoked and darkly tinted glass is prohibited.</p> <p>(8) Street-facing building facades shall incorporate permanent architectural elements which create shadow patterns and surface textures which, in turn, enhance visual interest.</p> <p>(9) Except for buildings that are solely residential, windows or street level activities are required on 50 percent of the first story street wall facing any public street. Street level activities include public display space, public atriums, pedestrian entrances and interior circulation and windows with views into any designated street level use.</p> <p>(10) For each 90 feet of linear building frontage, pedestrian entrances will be required. Pedestrian entrances may open onto the sidewalk or mid-block passages or walkways leading to the public right-of-way. Entries must be prominently identified and must not interfere with safe pedestrian passage along walkways. Primary entries must set back a minimum 4 feet from the facade, however the Planning Director may reduce or waive this requirement if no pedestrian zone conflicts are identified by the placement of the building.</p> <p>(11) The spacing and shape of windows and openings on the building shall closely reflect the fenestration of any adjacent historic buildings. Brick, stone, wood or a combination</p>	<p>(3) Vertical building modulation shall be used to add variety and interest and to make a large building appear to be an aggregation of smaller units. Relief from a continuous street-facing wall may be achieved with wall offsets in combination with pilasters, corbeling or other permanent architectural elements; however, offsets in any wall shall not be less than 8 inches from the subject plane.</p> <p>(4) Horizontal building modulation, like awnings, balconies and roof features shall be used to reduce the perceived mass of a large building.</p> <p>(5) Fenestration, cornices and other architectural elements incorporated in new buildings or additions to existing buildings shall be in context with historic buildings in the area.</p> <p>(6) Window glass planes shall be recessed at least 4 inches from the outside of all building walls to create a shadow line except in bay windows and other projecting window elements.</p> <p>(7) Clear or lightly-tinted transparent glass shall be used for all windows facing a public street. Decorative stained glass may be used for accents. Mirrored, smoked and darkly tinted glass is prohibited.</p> <p>(8) New buildings and additions to existing buildings, including parking structures, shall be constructed of durable materials utilizing the predominant building materials of traditional brick and stone used in the Regional Center District or constructed of materials of comparable aesthetic value.</p> <p>(9) Any rooftop equipment shall be enclosed or screened from street level view using the same materials used for the building walls or a material which is approved by the Planning Director as visually compatible with the building. All utility meters and wall or ground mounted mechanical equipment, such as HVAC systems, shall be limited to the rear third of the parcel, unless determined impractical by the Planning Director.</p> <p>(10) Windows or street level activities are required on 50 percent of the first story street wall facing any public street. Street level activities include public display space, public atriums, pedestrian entrances and exterior circulation.</p> <p>(11) For each 90 feet of linear building frontage, pedestrian entrances are required. Pedestrian entrances may open onto the sidewalk, or be mid-block passages or walkways leading to the</p>

Standard	C-2: Neighborhood Center District	C-4a: Regional Center District
	<p>thereof, compatible with adjacent historic buildings, shall be used.</p> <p>(12) Fenestration, cornices and other primarily horizontal architectural elements incorporated in new buildings or additions to existing buildings shall be in context with historic buildings in the area.</p> <p>(13) Any rooftop equipment shall be enclosed or screened from street level view using the same materials used for the building walls or a material which is approved by the Planning Director as visually compatible with the building.</p> <p>(14) All buildings that front the street, except for parking structures, accessory and utility buildings and buildings that are intended and designed to be exclusively developed for residential use shall have a minimum height of 14 feet measured from the street level entrance level to the next finished level or roof structure. The Planning Director may grant a first floor building height exception if it has been clearly demonstrated that such provision is unnecessary or that such requirements would create a practical difficulty, as contrasted merely granting an advantage or convenience.</p> <p>(15) Buildings on corner lots or on lots with a front loaded driveway shall have clipped or recessed corners for the heights of the first floor level if the building facade is within 20 feet of the street or driveway/street intersection. These building corners shall be recessed at least 5 feet from the planes of the building if such building is located not less than 20 feet from the edge of street or driveway intersection. See diagram below.</p>	<p>public right-of-way. Entries must be prominently identified and must not interfere with safe pedestrian passage along walkways. Primary entries must set back a minimum 4 feet from the property line.</p> <p>(12) All buildings that front the street, except for public parking structures, accessory, and utility buildings, shall have a minimum height of 14 feet measured from the street level entrance level to the next finished level or roof structure. The Planning Director may grant a first floor building height exception if it has been clearly demonstrated that such provision is unnecessary or that such requirements would create a practical difficulty, as contrasted with merely granting due to an advantage or convenience.</p> <p>(13) Dumpsters or trash receptacles exterior to a building shall be placed in the rear yard, on private property, screened with a wall not less than the height of the dumpster or trash receptacle and be constructed of similar materials used for the exterior of the building.</p> <p>(14) The first 30 feet of the building's interior first floor space facing a public street shall not be used for parking, storage, or utilities. For corner lots and through lots, this requirement shall be measured from the street with the higher traffic volume. For through lots with frontage on Garland Street and Grandview Parkway, this requirement shall be measured from Garland Street.</p> <p>(15) Buildings on corner lots or on lots with a front loaded driveway shall have a clipped or recessed corner for the height of the first floor level if the building facade is within 20 feet of the street or driveway/street intersection. These building corners shall be recessed at least 5 feet from the planes of the building if such building is located less than 20 feet from the edge of street or driveway intersection. See diagram below.</p>

* Some uses have applicable limitations in the zoning ordinance



ANALYSIS OF REQUEST:

Rezoning is a legislative decision and should be based on sound planning principles. The following questions have traditionally been provided to the Planning Commission for consideration of rezoning requests. Points and information have been provided by staff to help facilitate the discussion.

1. Is the current C-2: Neighborhood Center District reasonable for the land and location?
 - *Much of the existing development pattern aligns more with proposed zoning district than what it is classified as today.*
 - *The current zoning is not consistent with the rest of zoning in the downtown core, creating further disjointedness between Old Towne and the Front/State St corridors*
2. Is the rezoning request consistent with the goals and policies of the future land use plan of the Master Plan?
 - *The request is consistent with the Future Land Use Map, and is specifically prescribed in the Master Plan's Zoning Plan and Action Plan components.*
3. Would the parcel size and environmental conditions accommodate C-4a: Regional Center District uses?
 - *Many of the properties are nonconforming regarding the dimensional standards of the C-2 zoning classification.*
 - *A table has been attached from the 2022 community discussion that shows in red all the properties that are nonconforming by one or more dimensional standard. At that time, the consideration did not include the west side of the 500 block of S Union St.*
4. Are the uses allowed in the proposed zoning district compatible with the surrounding uses?
 - *The uses allowed under the proposed C-4a rezoning would be consistent with the balance of the City's downtown, identified collectively in the Master Plan as the "Commercial Core."*
5. Are there adequate utilities and capacity on the adjacent streets to serve the site?
 - *There are no known capacity limitations and the current use and structure are adequately served.*
6. Are there sufficient demands for additional C-4a: Regional Center District zoning classifications?
 - *The downtown core is largely built out at the surface level. Multiple property owners and business owners in the Old Towne Union St corridor have expressed interest in the C-4a zoning classification to support their growing businesses without having to relocate.*

REQUESTED ACTION:

The Planning Commission may only make a recommendation to the City Commission after the close of the public hearing. If after the public hearing and deliberation the Planning Commission supports the rezoning, an appropriate motion would be:

*Motion that the **300 and 400** blocks of South Union Street be rezoned to C-4a as prescribed by the Master Plan and initiated by the representatives of 418 and 420 S Union Street be recommended for **approval** to the City Commission.*

Conversely, if the Planning Commission does not support the Master Plan recommendation, then an appropriate motion would be:

*Motion that the **300 and 400** blocks of South Union Street be rezoned to C-4a as prescribed by the Master Plan and initiated by the representatives of 418 and 420 S Union Street be recommended for **denial** to the City Commission.*

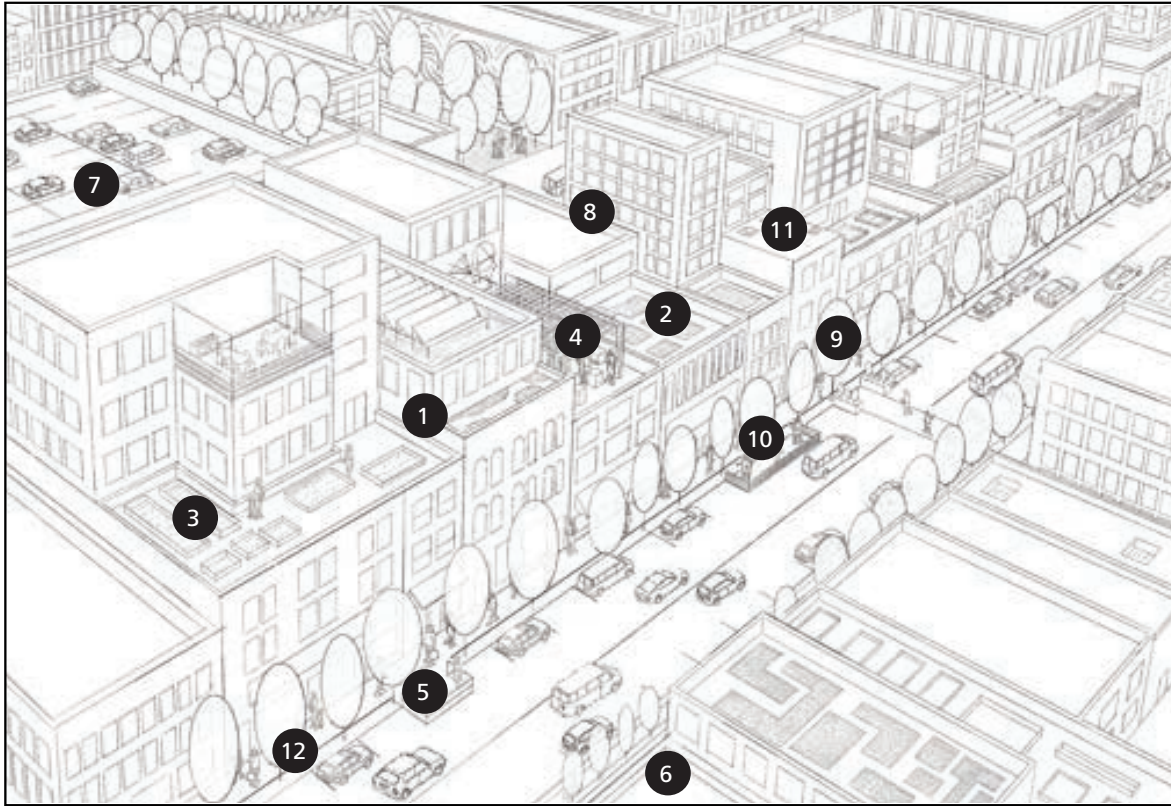
This rezoning consideration was initiated by an application to rezone two specific properties. If the Planning Commission passes the first motion above, that request would be inclusive of the rezoning application request. However, if the Planning Commission passes the second motion above, then it would be appropriate for the Planning Commission to go on record and make a recommendation to approve or deny the rezoning of 418 and 420 S Union St to C-4a. In that case, an appropriate motion would be:

*Motion that the application to rezone the properties located at 418 and 420 S Union St from C-2 to C-4a be recommended for [**approval**] [**denial**] to the City Commission.*



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.



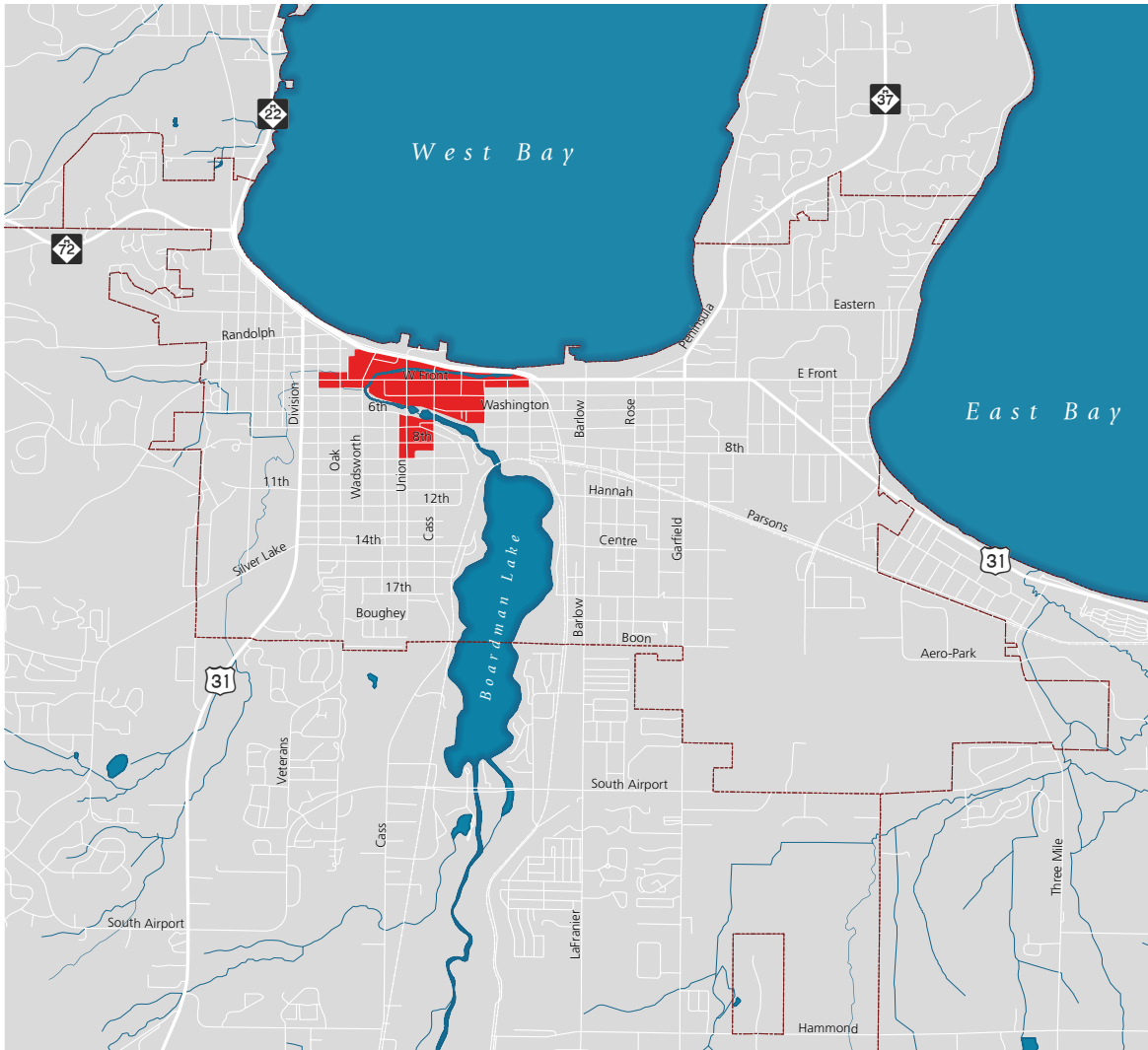
- 1 Building setbacks,
- 2 Green roofs,
- 3 Roof-top gardens,
- 4 Public/quasi-public roof-top use,
- 5 Public art,
- 6 Pocket parks,
- 7 Parking decks,
- 8 High density,
- 9 Street trees,
- 10 Outdoor use,
- 11 Alternative energy,
- 12 Pedestrian/non-motorized infrastructure.

Housing and Neighborhoods

The Commercial Core supports a variety of high-density housing types. Multi-family buildings and mixed-use developments with a residential component are highly appropriate in the Commercial Core. Because the Commercial Core is intended to contain the majority of density in Traverse City, high-density residential structures contribute to the function and scale of the Commercial Core. Low-density residential development is discouraged in the Commercial Core as these residential types are not the highest and best use of the land in this categorization.

Transportation and Mobility

The Commercial Core is not short of transportation challenges and opportunities. A future priority for the Commercial Core is to continue to connect it with other parts of the City through non-motorized infrastructure. People walking or biking to the Commercial Core reduces the number of vehicles downtown and alleviates the perceived perception of traffic congestion and overcrowding in the district.



Additionally, reducing the number of surface parking lots and promoting vertical parking (parking decks) will create development opportunities while providing needed parking.

Infrastructure and Energy

As one of the densest areas of Traverse City, the infrastructure and utility needs of the Commercial Core are great. Water, sewer, and stormwater systems should be designed and built to support high-density mixed-use development. Additionally, as building mass is intended to comprise the majority of lots in the Commercial Core, there is limited space for renewable energy installations (with the exception of rooftop mounted solar installations).

Land Use

The Commercial Core has the greatest variety of land use types of all future land use designations. Retail, entertainment, other commercial, office recreation, high-density residential, public/quasi-public, and institutional are all appropriate uses in the Commercial Core. First-floor uses should be pedestrian-facing with high foot traffic and other uses that generate less foot traffic should be on the upper floors. As properties in the downtown generate the most tax revenue on a per-acre basis, non-taxable uses should be carefully balanced so the City is not sacrificing high-value taxable land.

Sustainability, Resiliency, and Natural Systems

Dense urban environments are some of the most sustainable land use types because of the lifestyle they allow. Those living in and around the Commercial Core do not need to travel via car to access daily needs, thereby reducing vehicles on the road and their carbon emissions. Additionally, building vertically as opposed to horizontally preserves land on the fringes of urbanized areas, reducing land and natural features consumed by urban sprawl. However, the density and surfaces of the Commercial Core do generate a high degree of stormwater runoff. Therefore, development should actively consider the amount of stormwater that it is projected to generate. Additionally, sustainable building materials and design should be used where possible. Incentives for rooftop renewable energy systems are strongly encouraged.

Health, Safety, and Wellness

Medical offices and uses are appropriate in the Commercial Core, provided they are on the upper floors of the buildings in the district. Because they do not generate high volumes of foot traffic, locating these offices on the first floor would not contribute to the primary function of the Commercial Core. Safety is a key concern in any area of the city where a high volume of people are likely to congregate. The Traverse City Police Department is headquartered just south of downtown in the municipal building, and recent policies such as the Healthier Drinking Culture are intended to improve safety and community relationships in the Commercial Core. Additionally, the Downtown Community Policing Officer was assigned to the area for the explicit purpose of managing and enhancing police services downtown.

Arts, Culture, and Recreation

The Commercial Core is where art and culture shine. They are vital to creating a vibrant and active space, which is also an essential element of the Commercial Core. Art and culture facilities are more of the very appropriate features of the Commercial Core - the Opera House and State Theater, among others, are already located in the Commercial Core. Additionally, arts and culture organizations and offices are aligned with the office uses on the upper floors of Commercial Core buildings. Public art, murals, sculptures, and temporary installations contribute to the function of the Commercial Core, and public spaces without existing art installations should be evaluated for public art.

Economic Development

Development pressure in the city is highest in the Commercial Core as people want to live, work, and shop in the district because it is a lively, active space with lots of amenities. However, residents adjacent to the Commercial Core do not support the horizontal development of the area. Future development in the Commercial Core should go up and in. Many of the buildings in the Commercial Core are two to three stories, moderately below Traverse City's height limitations. This creates opportunities to build up or on existing buildings. To maintain the pedestrian scale and intimate feel of the Commercial Core, buildings should "step-back" at a certain height to balance the impact on the street and provide additional space above. Furthermore, surface parking lots are not the highest and best use of land in the Commercial Core as they actively detract from the atmosphere and consume valuable land. Overtime, parking should shift from surface parking to vertical parking so that the land can be used for a purpose more aligned with the intent of the Commercial Core. The DDA is vital to the continued success of the Commercial Core. Over the past few decades, the DDA has fostered the Commercial Core, and its leadership cannot be understated.

Existing Zoning Districts

The existing zoning district of C-4: Regional Business is most aligned with the intended function of the Commercial Core. The intent of the C-4 zoning district is to accommodate a broad variety of retail, office, and residential uses integrated with hotels, convention centers, and common parking facilities. The internal linkage between stores is encouraged. It is extremely important that new development be integrated with historically significant buildings. The first floors of buildings are primarily for retail, restaurants, and other high activity uses. Dominant and striking visual features of the central area of the City should be maintained and enhanced. The upper stories of buildings are generally to be occupied by offices, services, and residences. High-density housing is also appropriate. Portions of the land designated as the Commercial Core on the future land use map are also C-2. The Master Plan recommends an upzoning of these areas with appropriate measures to transition to lower-density land use patterns around the Commercial Core.

OLD TOWNE EXISTING CONDITIONS						
Street No.	Street Name	Zone	Lot Area (sf)	Impervious Coverage (sf)	Impervious Coverage (%)	Lot Width (ft)
109	Sixth	C-2	16,509	5,053	30.6%	170.6
312	Union	C-2	12,632	12,284	97.2%	79.5
322	Union	C-2	4,138	4,138	100.0%	25.1
324	Union	C-2	11,369	10,585	93.1%	88.4
114	Seventh	C-2	3,150	2,346	74.5%	50
325	Union	C-2	9,365	4,726	50.5%	75.9
329	Union	C-2	3,194	2,789	87.3%	24.9
400	Union	C-2	4,620	4,300	93.1%	28
402	Union	C-2	3,630	3,400	93.7%	22.1
406	Union	C-2	4,620	2,493	54.0%	28
408	Union	C-2	3,300	3,300	100.0%	16.6
410	Union	C-2	4,794	2,874	59.9%	34
412	Union	C-2	8,276	6,752	81.6%	50.2
418	Union	C-2	8,250	7,912	95.9%	50.2
420	Union	C-2	8,250	5,735	69.5%	50.2
430	Union	C-2	14,520	8,308	57.2%	88
401	Union	C-2	9,075	8,497	93.6%	55
405	Union	C-2	3,300	2,686	81.4%	20.1
407	Union	C-2	8,250	7,780	94.3%	50
411	Union	C-2	4,125	3,925	95.2%	25
413	Union	C-2	4,125	3,660	88.7%	25
415	Union	C-2	4,125	3,833	92.9%	25
417	Union	C-2	4,125	3,984	96.6%	25
421	Union	C-2	12,210	7,478	61.2%	74
427	Union	C-2	10,560	8,633	81.8%	64
500	Union	C-1	20,625	13,747	66.7%	125
512	Union	C-1	8,233	4,983	60.5%	50
516	Union	C-1	8,250	2,170	26.3%	50
520	Union	C-1	8,233	4,835	58.7%	50
530	Union	C-1	14,505	6,752	46.5%	88.4
501	Union	C-2	16,500	14,956	90.6%	100
509	Union	C-2	4,125	2,551	61.8%	25
511	Union	C-2	4,125	3,452	83.7%	25
513	Union	C-2	4,125	3,175	77.0%	25
515	Union	C-2	6,270	5,800	92.5%	38
517	Union	C-2	4,455	3,974	89.2%	27
521	Union	C-2	10,065	7,860	78.1%	61
525	Union	C-2	5,775	5,771	99.9%	35
531	Union	C-2	4,620	4,209	91.1%	28

The properties in the red rows are currently nonconforming with at least one or more of the C-2 zoning standards

TRAVERSE CITY PLANNING COMMISSION
APPLICATION FOR
ZONING CHANGE

APPLICATION FEE: _____ DATE: 4/13/25
- Zoning Change \$1,050.00
- Conditional Rezoning \$1,680.00 (please refer to §1320.05 (8))
Check No: 1174 Hearing Date: _____
Receipt No: 171 Case No: _____

Address of subject Property: 418 & 420 S Union Traverse City MI

Tax Parcel Number: 28-51-618-024-00 & 28-51-618-025-00

Legal Description: (418) LOTS 8 & 9 BLK 2 HANNAH LAY & CO'S 1ST ADD
(420) LOTS 10-11 BLOCK 2 HANNAH LAY & CO'S 1ST ADD

Present Zoning Classification: S-2

Requested Zoning Classification: G-4a

Signature of Owner: _____

Printed Owner Name: Troy Buttleman

Owner's Address: 12955 S.W. Partridge Dr. T.C. 49681

Applicant's Signature: _____

Printed Applicant's Name: Scott Hardy

Relationship of Applicant to Owner: Realtor

Applicant's Address: 402 E. Front Traverse City MI

Applicant's Telephone: (231) 492-5898

Applicant's Email: scott.hardy@cbgreallakes.com

May 2019

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

The application fee must accompany this request.

This application must be presented to the City Planning Department a minimum of twenty-four (24) days prior to the public hearing. After the Planning Commission makes a recommendation, the matter will be forwarded to the City Commission before which another public hearing will be held. Action by the City Commission completes the rezoning process.

Fourteen (14) copies and one (1) electronic copy of a site plan, drawn to scale and complete with the following, must accompany this application:

1. All property lines and setbacks shown.
2. Indicate and name adjacent streets and alleys.
3. Indicate all existing structures on the property.
4. Indicate the scale of the drawing.
5. North arrow.
6. Any additional information deemed by the Planning Commission Secretary to be necessary for proper review of the request.

The applicant acknowledges that the City may be required from time to time to release records in its possession. The applicant hereby gives permission to the City to release any records or materials received by the City as a result of this request, requested to do so as permitted by the Freedom of Information Act, MCL 15.231 et seq.

RECEIVED

APR 24 2025

PLANNING & ZONING
City of Traverse City

**412 S. Union St., LLC
412 S. Union
Traverse City, MI 49684**

May 27, 2025

City Commission
City of Traverse City
400 Boardman Avenue
Traverse City, MI 49684

Dear Commissioners:

As the Managing Partner of Alward Fisher, and one of the partners in 412 S. Union St., LLC, I write to express our support for the proposed re-zoning of the 300 and 400 blocks of Union Street from C2 to C4a.

This change will provide our firm with the option to expand and remain in the City of Traverse City, if and when necessary, thus avoiding the challenges faced by the law firm that previously occupied our building.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Edward G. Price
412 S. Union, LLC
Alward, Fisher, Rice, Rowe & Graf. PLC



Shawn Winter <swinter@traversecitymi.gov>

Fwd: Zoning Letter for City Commission

1 message

Scott Hardy <shardy0925@gmail.com>
To: Shawn Winter <swinter@traversecitymi.gov>

Fri, May 30, 2025 at 3:25 PM

I have several of these coming in and written to the city commission. I will forward them to you as I get them.

Scott

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Terry Beia** <tbeia@gtproperties.org>
Date: Fri, May 30, 2025 at 2:56 PM
Subject: Fwd: Zoning Letter for City Commission
To: Scott Hardy <shardy0925@gmail.com>

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Terry Beia <tbeia@gtproperties.org>
Date: May 30, 2025 at 2:33:51 PM EDT
To: Amy Shamroe <ashamroe@traversecitymi.gov>
Subject: Zoning Letter for City Commission

Madam Mayor,

As the owner of properties at both 427 S. Union and 101 7th (the corner of union and 7th streets) I am in full support of the requested zoning change from C-2 to C-4a for the 300-400 blocks of Union Street.. This change was adopted in the new city master plan for this portion of Old Town and I supported it then. The next natural step is to make the actual zoning change so that owners in these two blocks can be in legal compliance with the commercial zoning requirements of C-4a should we wish to further develop our properties.

We fully expect the Old Town district to be a vibrant part of our downtown living and retail/dining community and this change will further accelerate that goal.

Thank you for your help and assistance in recognizing the need for this change and for your support of the Old Town business community.

Terry L. Beia

--
Scott Hardy
(231) 492-5898



Shawn Winter <swinter@traversecitymi.gov>

Union St. rezoning

1 message

Chris Hinze <cjhinze@gmail.com>

Sun, Jun 8, 2025 at 12:15 PM

To: planningcommission@traversecitymi.gov, swinter@traversecitymi.gov

Hello Planning Commissioners,

Thank you all for your service to the City.

I would like to thank the commission and Planning Director for taking a holistic analysis of the rezoning request at 418 and 420 S. Union St. in the context of the Master Plan and future growth of our community.

A little about me and my biases - my family and I have lived on Union St. (600 block) for the past 17 years. My 2 girls (ages 13 and 11) have grown up in Olde Towne, walking to school every day, riding bikes with their friends, etc. Olde Towne is a great neighborhood that is near and dear to my heart.

In regards to the rezoning request under consideration:

- 300 and 400 blocks - I support rezoning from C2 to C4a here.
 - The proximity to the downtown core and existing/future uses in this area support this modification. More vibrant commercial activity and residential density (NOT short term rentals) would be beneficial additions to this area.
- 500 block - I do not support rezoning in this area from C1/2 to C4a
 - I think of the 500 block as a sort of a transitional "buffer" between the higher density and more commercial areas of Eighth St and Union St (north of eighth) and the neighborhoods to the south and west. I feel that maintaining the C1 & 2 zoning on this block can help create a better balance of supporting the "neighborhood character" that is important to so many TC residents while still encouraging growth, development, and density in a thoughtful manner.

Thanks for taking a moment to consider my thoughts.

Chris Hinze
624 S. Union St.

McMillen's Custom Framing
322 S. Union Street
Traverse City, MI 49684

June 9, 2025

City Commission
City of Traverse City
400 Boardman Ave
Traverse City, MI 49684

As a property/small business owner of 38 years in Old Town, I'd like to urge you to re-zone the Old Town Neighborhood from C2 to C4a. After being on the Downtown Development Authority Board, this change will benefit the community of Union Street and allow property owners better development opportunities without taking from the core principles the commission wishes to implement.

Old Town is on the verge of becoming the new "it" street of downtown Traverse City. With the Civic Square and Fish Pass connectivity, Union Street can develop a "New Look within Old Town", and rezoning this district can make the growth and density more of a reality.

Thank You for your time.

Todd McMillen
McMillen's Custom Framing



MSU Federal Credit Union
3777 West Road
East Lansing, MI 48823
(517) 333-2424

6/4/2025

To Whom It May Concern:

As the property owner at 312 S Union Street, MSU Federal Credit Union fully supports the proposed zoning change from C-2 to C-4a for the 300–400 blocks of Union Street. This change aligns with the vision outlined in the recently adopted city master plan for this section of Old Town—a plan we supported at its inception.

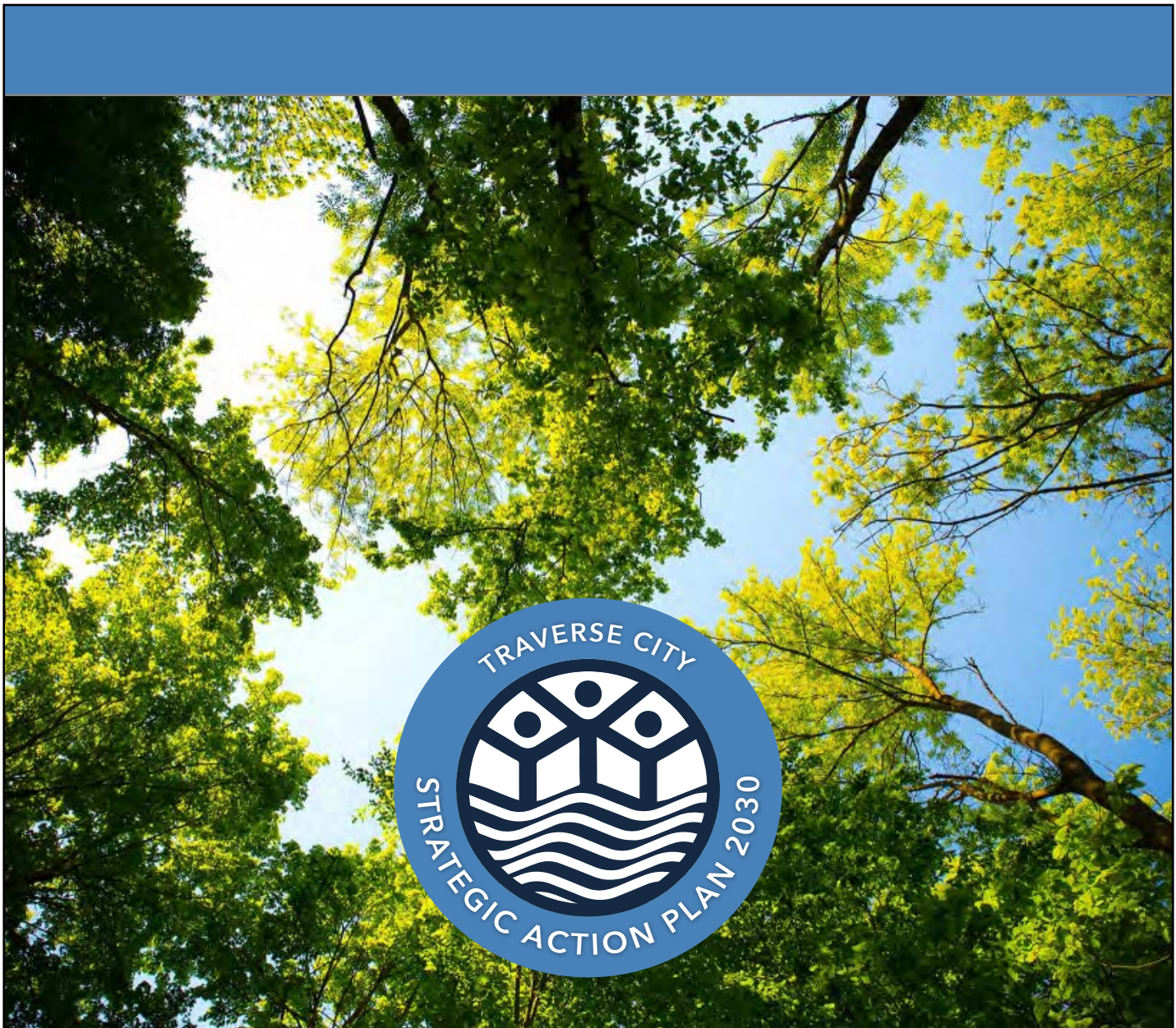
Updating the zoning to C-4a is a necessary and logical next step. It will enable property owners in these blocks to align with current commercial zoning requirements and pursue future development opportunities consistent with the area's evolving character.

We believe Old Town is poised to become an even more vibrant hub for living, retail, and dining within the downtown district. This zoning change will help accelerate that transformation.

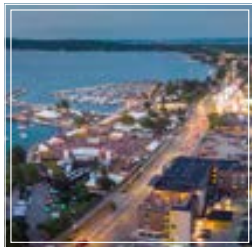
Thank you for your continued support of the Old Town business community and for recognizing the importance of this zoning update.

Sincerely,

Erin Bowdell
VP of Infrastructure, Planning, and Facilities
MSU Federal Credit Union



TRAVERSE CITY
STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN
MICHIGAN, USA MAY 2025





TRAVERSE CITY STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

MICHIGAN, USA MAY 2025

This Strategic Planning process was designed to identify focus areas and actions that are important to the community over the next five years.

Stakeholder engagement was a priority element, and the desire was to gather extensive input in an open and transparent manner. The engagement work has included stakeholder interviews, two community surveys, a two-day Think-Tank, focus group sessions, community visioning sessions and updates, and a strategic round-table work session. There have been regular community updates via e-newsletters, in-person sessions and presentations at Commission meetings.

The findings from this planning process can be used to help inform future priorities for the City and the Commission. Over the coming years, this will help shape City goals and objectives and will help guide new investments and planning decisions.

These reports and the associated data analysis are available on the project portal:

lab2.future-iq.com/traverse-city-strategic-action-plan/



June 3, 2025



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»»»» SNAPSHOT | REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

This planning work has identified a range of existing and emerging issues that are important to the community and has highlighted areas where the community would like to see new or additional attention. Some of these areas have been previously identified in Commission goals and objectives, and some are new priorities. Some highlights include:



STRONG DESIRE TO PROACTIVELY MANAGE URBAN DESIGN AND STRENGTHEN PLACE-MAKING

Throughout the planning process, there has been considerable interest and support in taking a much more intentional approach to guiding urban design, including corridor developments and establishing stronger guidelines to protect and enhance the charm of the community.



DEEP INTEREST IN CONTINUING TO DIVERSIFY THE ECONOMY AND REDUCE RELIANCE ON TOURISM

There is strong support to continue to diversify the economy, with particular interest in building the manufacturing sector to provide more year-round well-paid jobs. The current manufacturing resurgence in the country offers an opportunity to attract some new investments to the city and region.



CONTINUED COMMITMENT TO ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Traverse City has a long history of commitment to environmental sustainability. This commitment continues, with support for the idea of broader County-wide sustainability planning and applying best practice solutions to reduce and mitigate climate impacts.



EMERGING HIGH PRIORITY ISSUE AROUND AVAILABILITY OF CHILD CARE

The availability of childcare has been flagged as one of the most important and urgent current issues. This is an area where people would like to see action taken to address, and it is seen as a constraint for young families.



NEED TO CREATIVELY AND AGGRESSIVELY TACKLE THE HOUSING ISSUE

The issue of availability and affordability of housing has been repeatedly raised as a concern, and how it is pricing locals and families out of the community. There is also concern about losing the year-round population from the core neighborhoods, and people support creative ways to bring this back to year-round residential areas. Housing was also seen as an impediment to attracting and retaining people in the local workforce.



EMERGING INTEREST IN DEVELOPING A SUSTAINABLE TOURISM APPROACH

There is growing discomfort with some residents about the potential negative impacts of tourism and over-tourism. Taking a sustainable tourism approach was seen as a way to help manage destination impacts, and move away from more destination marketing.



Community engagement was a central theme to the planning process. The aim was to gather wide and deep community input, to help shape and prioritize key actions to include in the Strategic Action Plan.

1.0 | INTRODUCTION

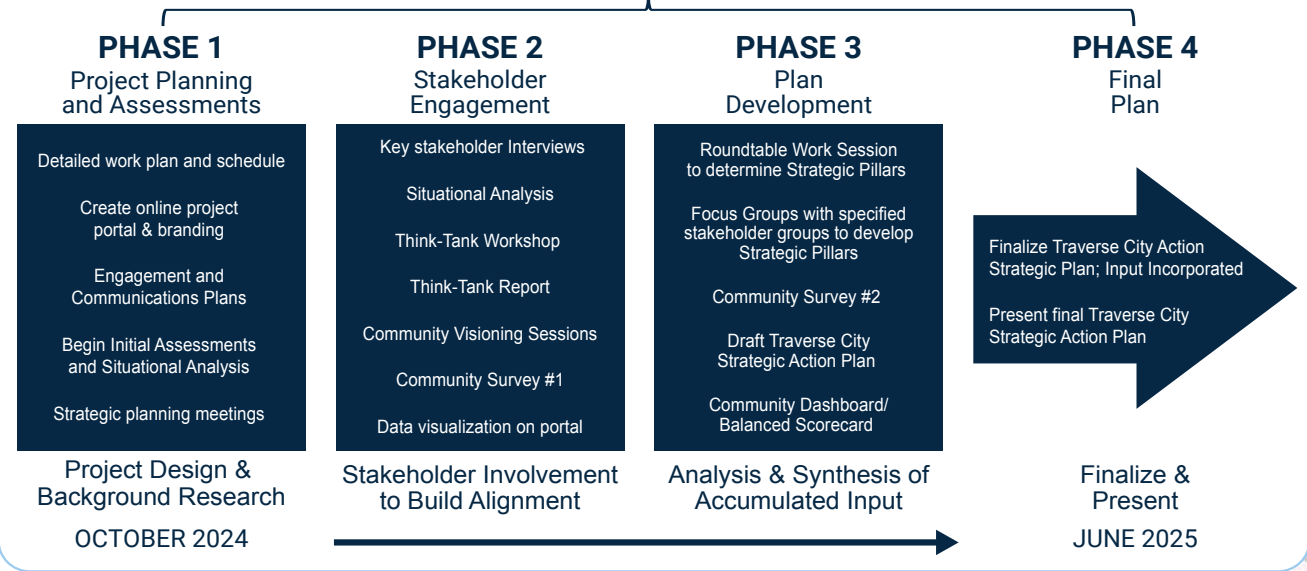
In October 2024, the City of Traverse City embarked on a strategic planning process to deliver a 5-year Strategic Action Plan.

Key to this process was the desire for extensive community and stakeholder engagement and input. This engagement was very successful with over 1,500 individuals participating in the Traverse City Strategic Action Plan over the seven months process. This engagement ascertained where Traverse City is and where it could evolve by 2035.

The strategic planning community engagement process began in October 2024 and ended in May 2025, with the production of this final Traverse City Strategic Action Plan. This report represents the analysis of the engagement outcomes and outlines how the accumulated data has informed the identification of a preferred future and key strategic action areas. All information pertaining to the Traverse City Strategic Action Plan project can be viewed on the unique project portal at lab2.future-iq.com/traverse-city-strategic-action-plan/.



CITY OF TRAVERSE CITY STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN PROJECT



1.1 | OBJECTIVES OF THE TRAVERSE CITY STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN PROCESS

One of the overarching principles in the planning process was to create a community-driven process, where the community ideas and thoughts could be drawn into identifying a vision and future strategic direction.

The objective of the strategic planning process is to build on the current success and incorporate new actions to maintain this success over the next 5 years.

This planning process has had a specific and deliberate focus on community engagement. The intention was to provide residents and city staff with numerous opportunities to contribute to the creation of the plan and help identify and prioritize key strategic actions. Some of the specific steps through the planning process were:



Understanding key drivers that are shaping the future of Traverse City. This included examining emerging trends, developments and shifts in societal expectations and desires.



Exploring different plausible future scenarios and examining their implications for the future. This allowed residents to consider what represented their preferred future, and to gather insight into the appetite for change.



Formulating key strategic themes, which were presented as Strategic Pillars. These represent the broad focus areas that the community identified as important in shaping the future direction of the community.



Identification and prioritization of a range of strategic actions that support the Strategic Pillars. This was intended to identify new actions or priority areas, that the community judged as having the greatest impact on shaping the preferred future.



Future Insights

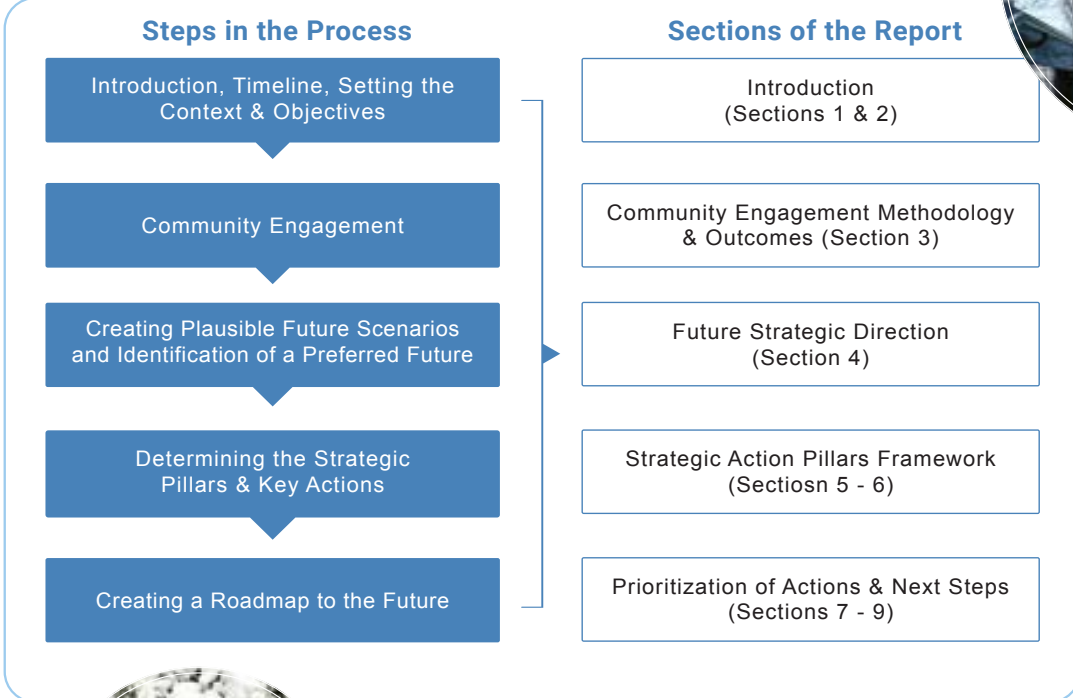
- The City of Traverse City leadership team recognized the importance of strong community engagement with residents, staff and other partner organizations. Over the seven-month planning cycle, people were offered numerous opportunities to contribute ideas and help shape the actions. This makes the plan stronger, and more reflective of the community aspirations and priorities.
- Traverse City is at the center of an important and growing region. It is also the center of a high visitation tourism economy, which brings additional dynamics and stresses to local communities and infrastructure. Considering the future trajectory of the community was an important part of this planning work.



The focus of the Traverse City Strategic Action Plan has been on in-depth community and stakeholder engagement that focuses on the future of Traverse City, looking out to 2035.

2.0 | HOW TO USE THIS REPORT

This report lays out the findings from each key step in the Strategic Action Planning process. The process moved from a background analysis and exploration, through to identifying key priorities for the future of Traverse City. This work represents robust 'future thinking' regarding where stakeholders and community members considered possible future directions and the impacts and consequences of those directions for Traverse City. The process then drilled down deeper into what people saw as the optimal or preferred future. This understanding helped lay the groundwork for illustrating how the preferred future can be reached. The preferred future identified through this process presents a compelling and enticing vision for how Traverse City could evolve looking out to 2035. However, a vision needs actions, and this report provides a summary of the key focus areas and actions identified by the community.



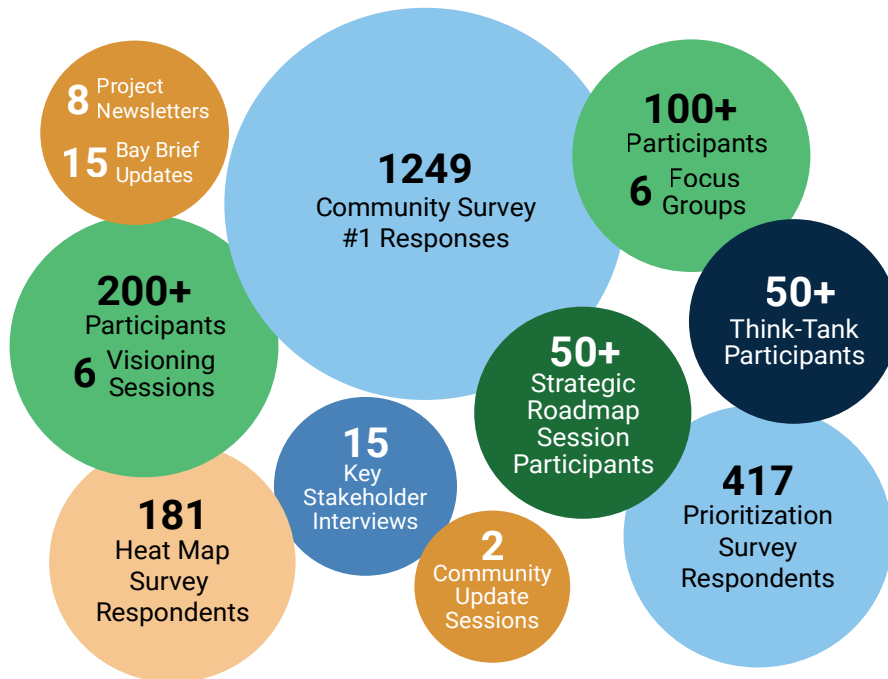
3.0 | COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT METHODOLOGY & OUTCOMES

The Traverse City Strategic Action Plan has been built on extensive community and stakeholder input. This engagement was an integral and central design feature of the planning process.

The engagement and data-driven methodology progressively focused the discussion on emerging key themes and stakeholder aspirations for the future. The purpose of the process was to arrive at a ‘point of consensus’ that represented the shared vision for the future, and a comprehensive strategic plan – with actions - that propels the region towards that preferred future.

A key feature of the engagement and planning process was the amount of participation at key engagement sessions. These engagement opportunities were also supported by a robust communication effort, with a dedicated project website portal, regular e-newsletters and socials media posts.

The Traverse City Strategic Action Plan involved a wide, deep, and transparent engagement process with over 1,500 people providing high quality input.



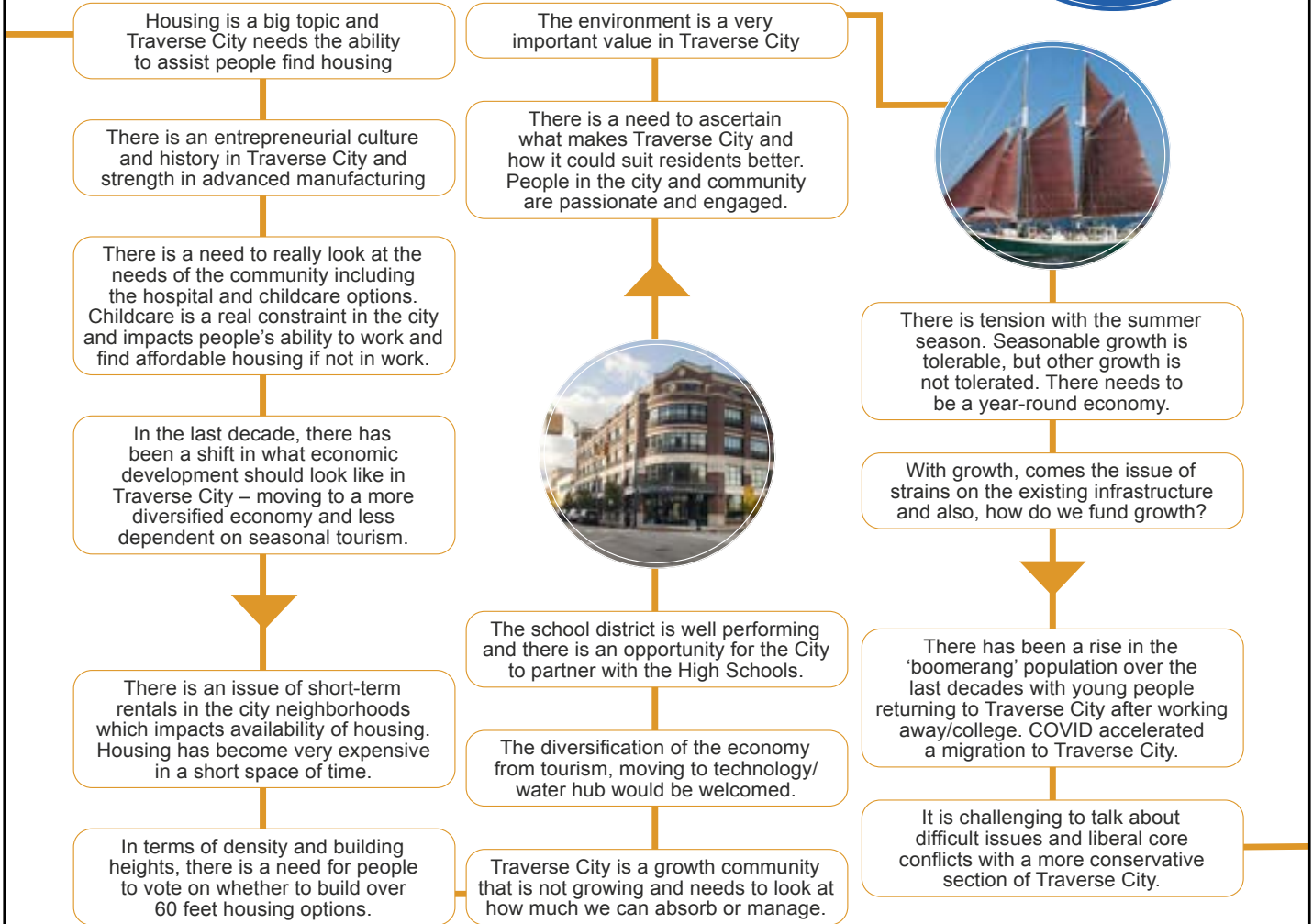
Data Insights

- In total, over 1,500 people had input into this planning process. This included significant resident input, in both virtual surveys and in-person sessions. Overall, people appeared to really appreciate the opportunity and generously provided their insights and perspectives.
- People were able to offer input in a variety of ways, including online surveys, workshops, Think-Tank sessions and focus groups. This was complemented by more informal sessions with community visioning sessions with residents, interviews with organizational and business stakeholders, and presentations at service groups.

3.1 | INITIAL SITUATIONAL SCAN – INTERVIEWS AND DISCUSSIONS

These interviews and discussions were very valuable in providing an initial context to the challenges and opportunities that Traverse City faces, prior to the community engagement.

In May and June 2024, the project team held a range of interviews and discussions with City of Traverse City Staff and other local and regional organizations. These discussions explored issues that helped frame the engagement process starting with community and stakeholders.



Key Insights

- The Traverse City area is a community that is rapidly changing and growing. This has implications across many dimensions such as social fabric, infrastructure and economy. There is a sense that the community is at a cross roads on a range of important issues.
- Across the region and City there are many effective organizations, with very capable leadership. These leaders are very mindful of the issues and challenges and are seeking solutions that suit the unique character of Traverse City.





3.2 | TRAVERSE CITY FUTURE THINK-TANK

Approximately 50 people attended the Future Think-Tank, held at the Governmental Center, Traverse City over 2 days to work on four plausible futures for Traverse City, looking out to 2030.

A key part of the engagement methodology was the Think-Tank held in early October. This was the first significant stakeholder engagement event and kicked off the discussion about the future direction of the community.

To identify the preferred future of Traverse City, looking out to 2035, stakeholders and community members participated in the two-day scenario-planning future Think-Tank. The six-hour Traverse City scenario-based Think-Tank event was conducted over two days on October 8 and 9, 2024. Approximately 50 people attended including key business, education, government, non-profit stakeholders, and community members.

Traverse City participants worked through the scenario planning process to produce 4 plausible futures for Traverse City, looking out to 2035. These scenarios became a 'testing ground' for future stakeholder input in the survey and focus groups.

More information on the content and outcomes from the Future Think-Tank can be found in Section 4 of this Strategic Action Plan and also in the Traverse City Future Think-Tank report that was released in December 2024 and can be viewed at lab2.future-iq.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/Traverse-City-Think-Tank-Report.pdf.



Key Insights

- The Think-Tank process highlighted several key future splitting themes. One of these was around how development is managed and guided. There was a recognition that the intensity of development in Traverse City is reshaping the character of the community, and there is potential to more intentionally and proactively guide urban design.
- The demographic makeup of the community was discussed. It was identified that there are some encouraging signs of new younger families moving into the city, but this is also having impacts on housing prices as people with more income or resources move in from more expensive urban locations. Maintaining a healthy demographic was seen as important, and there was appetite for finding ways to support more year-round residents and not lose vital family housing to seasonal rental markets.
- The natural environment was a common point of discussion, and residents are very interested in environmental sustainability. They are also very concerned about potential impacts of climate change on the natural landscape, and also how it might drive more people to move to locations like Traverse City.



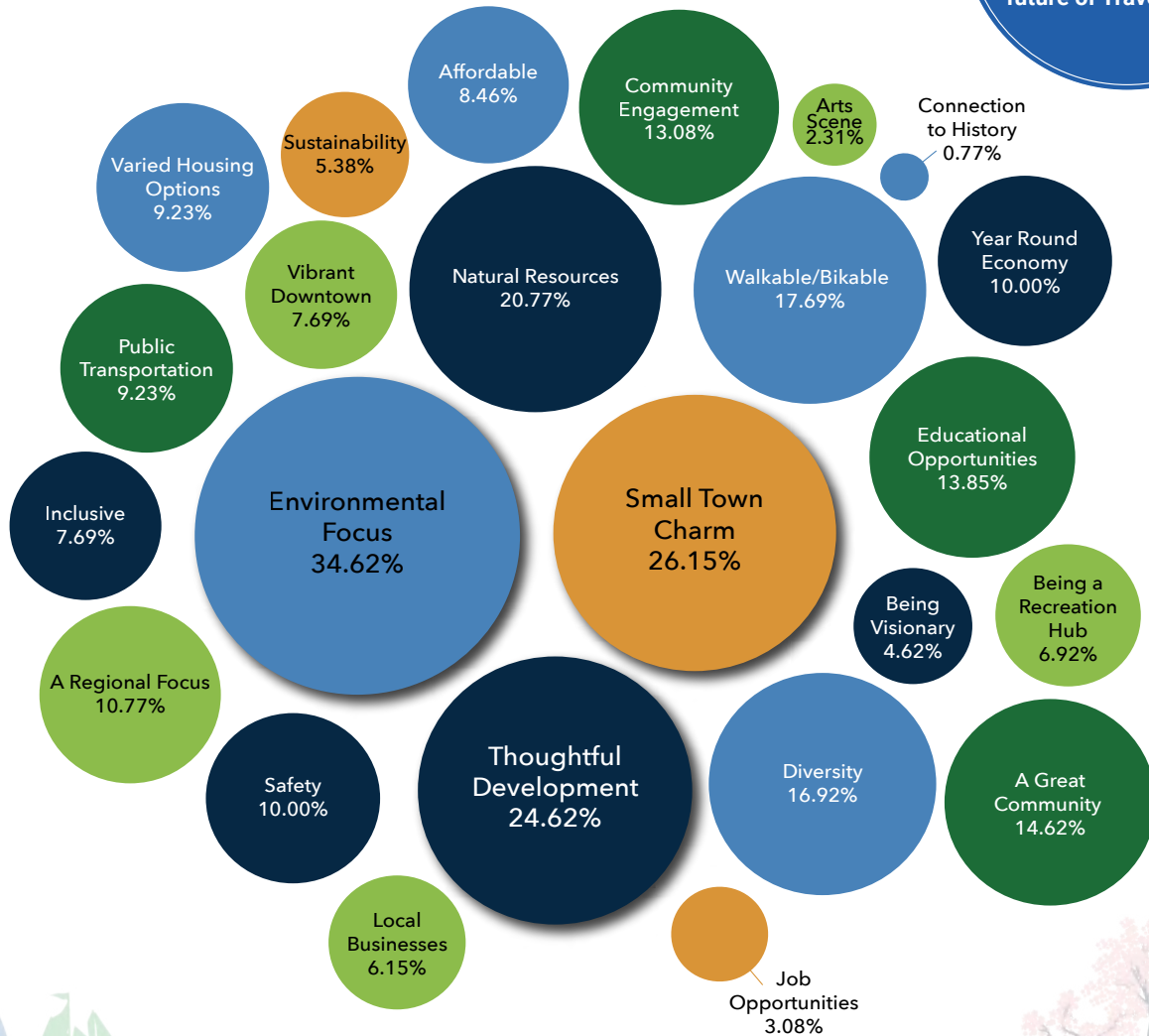
3.3 | COMMUNITY VISIONING SESSIONS

Following on from the Traverse City Future Think-Tank, six Community Visioning sessions were held between November 11 and 14, 2024 with approximately 200 participants.

These workshops were highly interactive 60-minute sessions discussing the preferred future generated from the Traverse City Strategic Action Plan Think-Tank and issues facing the future of the city. Participants discussed their reactions to the scenarios and completed a short survey that explored their view about desirable values and attributes of Traverse City.

The well attended Community Visioning sessions enabled community members to discuss the Think-Tank and issues facing the future of Traverse City.

'WHAT VALUES AND ATTRIBUTES SHOULD TRAVERSE CITY RETAIN OR DEVELOP?'



3.4 | TRAVERSE CITY STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN COMMUNITY SURVEY

The Traverse City Strategic Action Plan Community Survey ran from January through February 2025. The survey received 1,249 responses. With a mix of ranking questions and open-ended questions, this survey intended to ascertain the community and stakeholders' views on the following topics:

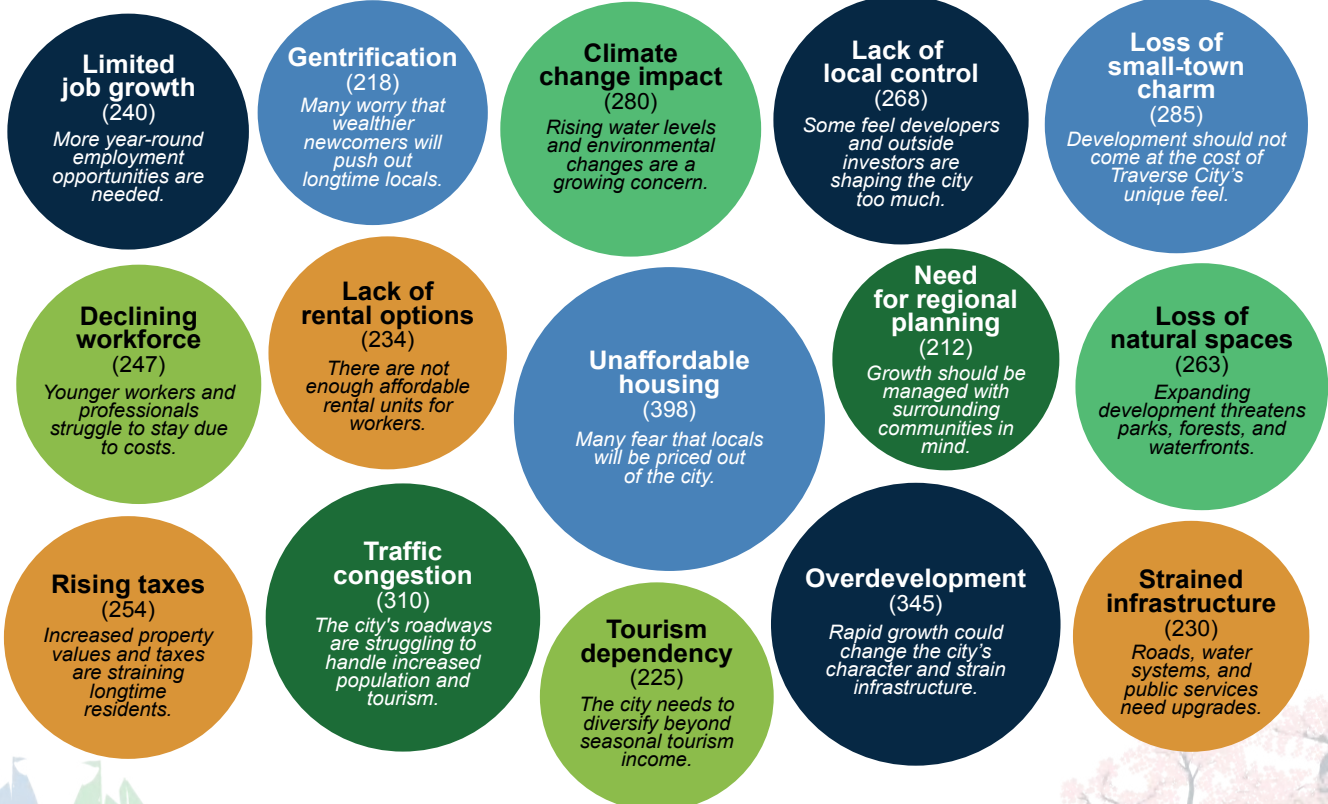
- Satisfaction with living in Traverse City
- Current community dynamics within Traverse City
- Traverse City vision and values
- Traverse City's current direction and speed of change
- Development trajectory and community direction of Traverse City

The results from the Community Survey can be viewed on the project portal at lab2.future-iq.com/traverse-city-strategic-action-plan/survey1/dv/.

Respondents were asked 24 questions which can be viewed in the Community Survey results on the project portal. These results can be filtered and analyzed in terms of age groups, ethnicity, how long people have lived in Traverse City and where people live in Traverse City. The full range of responses can be viewed at lab2.future-iq.com/traverse-city-strategic-action-plan/survey1/dv/.

'WHAT CHANGES MOST CONCERN YOU ABOUT TRAVERSE CITY'S FUTURE?'

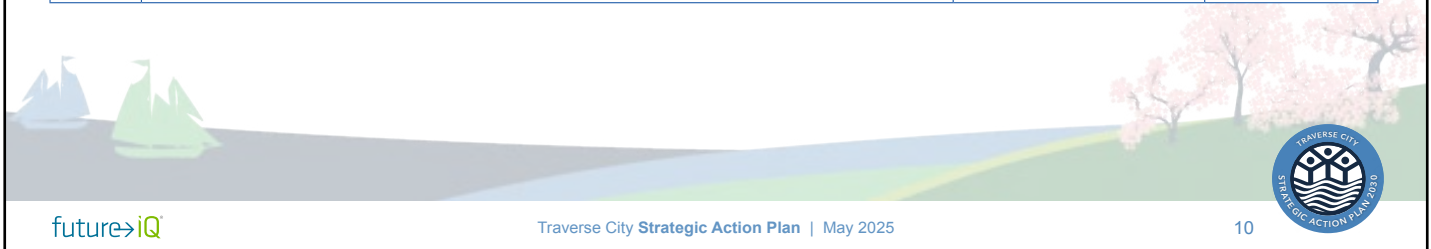
Below are the **top 15 key sentiments**, their **frequency** of mentions, and a brief **narrative**.



3.4.1 | ANALYSIS OF OPEN-ENDED RESPONSES BY AGE GROUP

The open-ended responses were analyzed to explore sentiments and themes. There are notable differences by age groups. The 60+ year age group respondents represented just over half the total responses, which is a slight over-representation in the survey sample. The under 39 year age group is under-represented in the survey sample.

Age Group	Key Sentiments	Key Difference	# Survey Respondents
19-29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Repeated calls for more affordable housing and protection of natural spaces. Concerns about climate change, pollution, and loss of green areas. Emphasis on creating more job opportunities beyond tourism/service sectors. 	This group shows the strongest emphasis on environmental protection and economic opportunity, with progressive outlooks on growth.	34 (3%)
30-39	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Noted concerns about development near water, pollution, and maintaining character. Strong support for childcare access, family-oriented amenities, and managing short-term rentals. Desire for balanced growth that keeps Traverse City livable for families. 	The most family-focused age group , advocating for policies that support children, affordable living, and safe neighborhoods.	158 (13%)
40-49	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concerns around neighborhood overdevelopment and rising costs. Continued emphasis on housing availability and preserving the city's appeal. Advocacy for master planning and investment in long-term infrastructure. 	Most aligned with regional planning , community structure, and managing sprawl effectively.	207 (17%)
50-59	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Express worry over increased cost of living and potential cultural shifts. Desire to preserve greenspace and reduce traffic. Mixed sentiments on development: support for infrastructure but concern over losing local feel. 	This group shows the highest concern about affordability and tourism growth disrupting long-time residents.	203 (16%)
60-69	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong emphasis on controlling short-term rentals and protecting affordability. Preference for intentional development that aligns with Traverse City's values. Concerns about infrastructure and housing stability. 	Balanced view of growth, but with an increasing focus on stabilization rather than expansion .	294 (24%)
70-79	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on community character, protecting natural beauty, and avoiding crowding. Call for better infrastructure maintenance and walkability. Concerned about losing community identity to external development pressures. 	This group is more conservative toward development , preferring to reinforce what exists over expanding.	293 (24%)
80+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Want to preserve Traverse City "as it is" with minimal change. Support for senior services, healthcare, and easy access amenities. Worry about losing sense of community due to pace of change. 	Most resistant to change , prioritizing comfort, preservation, and protection of long-held values.	56 (4%)





3.5 | STRATEGIC ROUND-TABLE AND FOCUS GROUPS

The 6 Focus Group sessions would inform the final six Strategic Pillars for this Strategic Action Plan.

Following on from the Community Visioning Sessions, a Strategic Round-Table and six Focus Groups were held during January and February 2025, to explore in greater detail the topics that had been generated to date in the process.

Six topics were identified as being critical to the future of Traverse City. Each topic was studied in a 90-minute session with experts and interested parties participating. The topics would form the basis of the Strategic Action Pillars, which are outlined in Section 6.

The topics were identified as:

- Proactively manage urban design
- Strengthen place-making and neighborhood character
- Fostering a regional collaborative approach
- Building economic systems and amenities
- Supporting environmental sustainability
- Building thriving year-round economy



Key Insights

- The Focus Group sessions helped identify key issues, objectives and actions under each of the Strategic Pillars. The discussions were very productive and surfaced actionable ideas and highlight points of tension about the future direction of the community.
- Concerns about the pace and type of development was a reoccurring theme. There is a concern the community is losing its natural small-town charm, and that over-tourism could further degrade the resident experience of living in the community. This was balanced by a very strong affinity and affection people have for the community.
- The discussions were solution based and explored residents ideas about how to achieve the right balance and enhance the community.



4.0 | FUTURE STRATEGIC DIRECTION

4.1 | SCENARIOS OF THE FUTURE FOR TRAVERSE CITY – FRAMEWORK FOR EXPLORATION

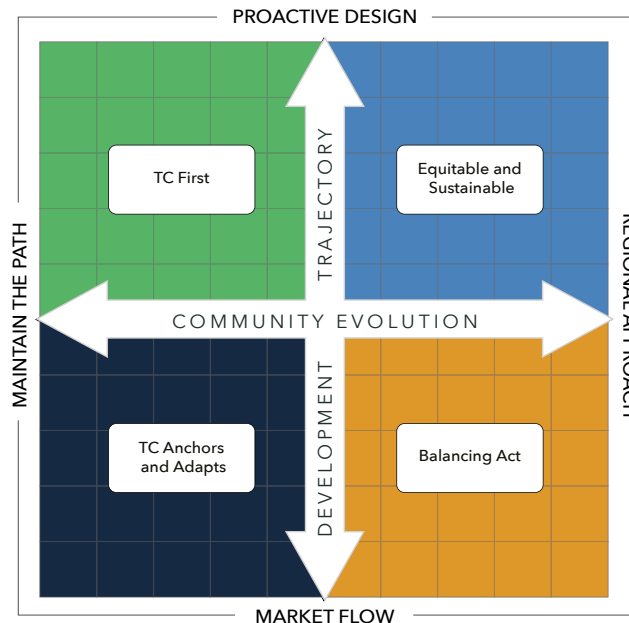
The scenarios developed during the scenario planning process at the Think Tank were used as a framework to discuss future possible outcomes and implications for strategies for the City of Traverse City.

The scenario development process at the Think-Tank allowed community members to examine the implications and consequences of different plausible future directions for Traverse City, looking out to 2035.

The scenario framework created four different future scenarios, with varying degrees of change and trajectory. The scenarios were created using the scenario matrix framework, which was built around the two macro themes of Community Evolution and Development Trajectory. This framework was used throughout the community engagement work and survey to identify a preferred future and help inform the strategic action plan. For more details on the Traverse City Strategic Action Think-Tank, please refer to the published in-depth [Think-Tank Report](#).

Proactive urban design shapes the future. There is investment in expanding business diversity and innovation capability, to build a year-round economy. The focus is on regional collaboration and integration, that helps manage resources, utilities, and climate adaptation.

The City focuses on local and internal issues. The community fabric is allowed to naturally change and evolve as the population demographics and ownership patterns shift, and as the tourism and visitation economy grows.



The community intentionally invests in designing and building the socio-economic systems and amenities to create a 'complete community'. A strong regional leadership approach helps amplify the City influence and heft.

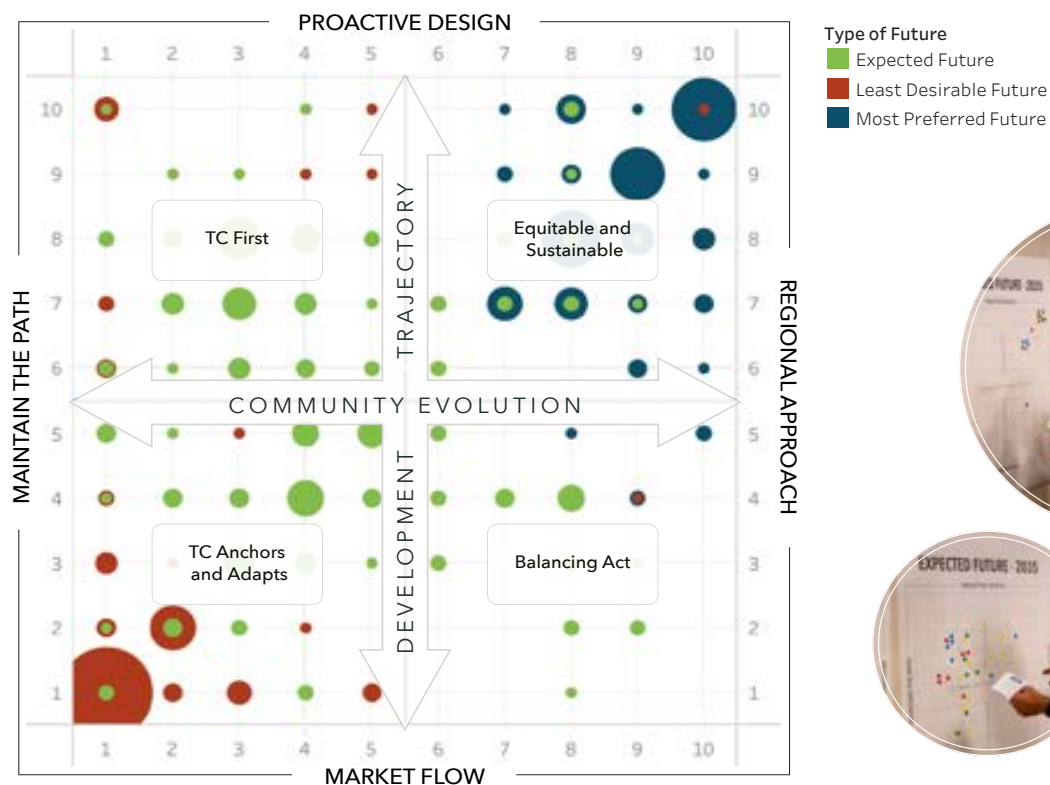
Development patterns and housing availability is primarily driven by emerging market needs and forces. City planning and infrastructure investment responds as the needs arise, including making adaptations and upgrades as climate impacts occur.



4.2 | IDENTIFYING AND VALIDATING THE PREFERRED FUTURE

The scenario development process at the Think-Tank allowed community members to examine the implications and consequences of different plausible future directions for Traverse City against a backdrop of Macro Trends and the key drivers that are impacting Traverse City now and looking out to 2035.

During the Traverse City Strategic Action Plan Think-Tank, four different future scenarios were created. The scenarios were created using the scenario matrix framework, which was built around the two macro themes of Community Evolution and Development Trajectory. An in-depth scenario planning process over two days enabled the development of four potential future scenarios. For more details on the Traverse City Strategic Action Think-Tank, please refer to the published in-depth [Think-Tank Report](#).



Key Insights

- Throughout the process community members repeatedly identified the upper right quadrant as the preferred future. In fact, most responses are in the extreme upper right, which reflects a high appetite for change and even a sense of urgency.
- This result has been validated in multiple ways throughout the engagement to ensure it is reflective of the community aspirations.
- The preferred future represents the most change, and a significant investment in intentionally planning and designing the future. It also represents a changing role for City leadership, as there is a greater emphasis on building regional collaboration.



4.3 | THE PREFERRED FUTURE FOR TRAVERSE CITY IN 2035 – ‘EQUITABLE AND SUSTAINABLE’

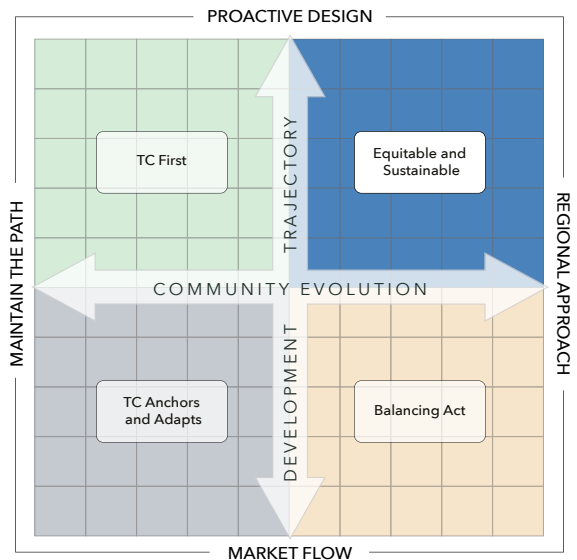
The preferred future, generated from the work carried out in the Future Think-Tank and following sessions, was Scenario B – Equitable and Sustainable.

This future is one where proactive urban design shapes the future. There is investment in expanding business diversity and innovation capability, to build a year-round economy. The focus is on regional collaboration and integration that helps manage resources, utilities, and climate mitigation and adaptation. The community intentionally invests in designing and building the socioeconomic systems and amenities to create a ‘complete community’. A strong regional leadership approach helps amplify the City influence and heft.

The preferred future was used to help define the strategic plan framework, which is designed to focus on the building blocks to make that future a reality.

SCENARIO SNAPSHOT | FUTURE IMPLICATIONS

- The region grows as communities come together to strategize and increase the regional population.
- Climate change, housing, transportation, and other issues are dealt with regionally.
- The City of Traverse City leads a regional collaborative effort to maintain influence statewide.
- All voices are brought to the table to help make decisions and influence outcomes.
- The transition to a year-round economy strengthens regional economic resilience.

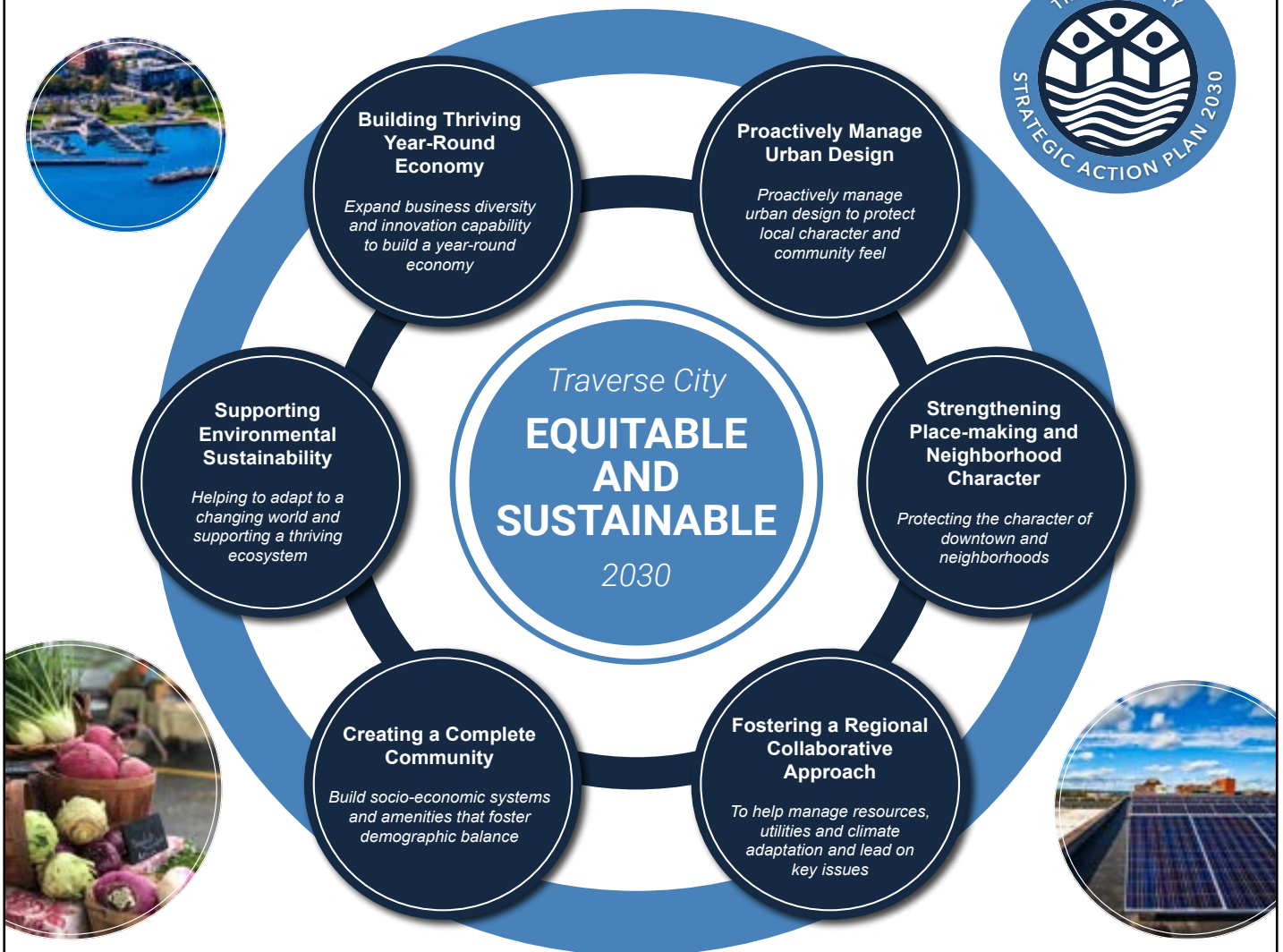


5.0 | STRATEGIC PILLARS FRAMEWORK

The preferred future was used to help define the strategic plan framework, which is designed to focus on the key strategic areas that will make that future a reality. These key focus areas are called the Strategic Pillars.

Each of the Strategic Pillars are supported by a series of key actions that can be achieved in the short to medium term and will produce long term results. They are intended to produce systemic and catalytic shifts that will drive the future economic growth, community reputation and character of Traverse City. These objectives have been designed to build the future pathway to the preferred future. The time-frame for the Strategic Pillars and Actions was 2030. This creates five years of actions, that support the longer 2035 vision established in the Think-Tank process.

The Strategic Pillars are the big focus areas identified through the stakeholder engagement work. Traverse City community members, City staff and additional stakeholders helped to shape these focus areas and their supporting objectives.



Pillar called 'Creating a Complete Community' was renamed following feedback at the Future Summit in May 2025.



Proactively Manage Urban Design

5.1 | PROACTIVELY MANAGE URBAN DESIGN

High Level Objective: Proactively manage urban design to protect local character and community feel.

5.1.1 | IMPORTANCE OF PROACTIVELY MANAGING URBAN DESIGN

Throughout the engagement process, the importance of this topic was highlighted through the Community Survey, Leadership interviews, the Think-Tank and Focus Groups. In the Community Survey, almost 74% of respondents felt that to ‘Proactively manage urban design to protect local character and feel’ was extremely important to help shape the future development of Traverse City. Furthermore, Community Survey respondents were overwhelmingly in support of the focus being on ‘Proactively guiding and managing development and urban design.’ There is significant innovation occurring in urban design, where cities are looking at creating more walkable environments that better connect people to nature and to each other. Traverse City appears to have the appetite to pilot or test some very innovative models.

The concept of proactively managing urban design is intriguing for a city the size of Traverse City. Residents expressed a strong desire to have design actively influence the streetscape and building developments in the future.



Future Insights

- Emerging trends in city and urban living, such as aging population and increasing work-from-home options, is changing the way people live and relate to their neighborhood spaces and local recreation spaces. There is an increasing social appetite for more connection, to avoid loneliness and isolation, and to enrich people’s social lives.
- Traverse City could reimagine some of the city spaces to create more gathering and connection ‘third places’.





Proactively
Manage Urban
Design

5.1.2 | KEY ACTION AREAS

The key actions areas have been drawn from the focus group discussions, and aggregate ideas shared by the community in the surveys and workshops.

Action 1: Proactively design the future of key corridors

There was a strong interest in creating corridor plans for key areas such as 14th Street, East Eighth Street (east of Boardman Avenue), and South Garfield Avenue. These areas offer the opportunity to provide additional community experiences and smaller scale local commercial nodes, and to relieve some of the pressure on the downtown area. Residents highlighted the need to get the scale and building design right, to create the desired intimate experience.



Action 2: Create localized building design guidelines

There was a strong sentiment that establishing design guidelines could help preserve and enhance neighborhood character and reflect key historic design features. These guidelines could be developed on a neighborhood basis, in collaboration with residents. The approach is intended to help new buildings blend better into the overall neighborhood aesthetics.



Action 3: Explore people-centric street design

Many of the residents offered ideas about creating a more people-centric, and less car-centric street design approach. There is an opportunity to re-imagine 'Traverse City street design' that encourages more walking and biking options, and reduces the impact of noise and visual impact of vehicle traffic. This could also include topics such as examining street-tree selections, lane width, periodic closures and vehicle speeds.



Action 4: Intentionally create more community connection points

There has been considerable interest in the idea of designing more local community connection points, intentionally linked by trails and walkways. There could be small plaza areas, pocket parks and commercial nodes, that help foster the casual interactions of locals and could be used to host small occasional events.

Bold Idea: Create a unique Traverse City 'people-first design model'

The sentiment from residents was that this pillar is where bold thinking and innovation could be applied. Some people suggested flipping planning models 'on their head' and create a 'Traverse City model' where design of housing, roads and public spaces is focused primarily on people's experience and enjoyment. In discussion, there was considerable appetite for a more European style of urban design, that is focused on walkability and smaller scale neighborhood connection points. This idea was raised multiple time in different engagement steps. This is an idea that could be bold and transformational for residents, and offer a car-free option, at least for three seasons of the year.



5.1.3 | IDEAS FROM THE COMMUNITY



The following bullet points are ideas and actions that emerged during the engagement process. Focus group participants and survey respondents were asked for specific ideas on actions that could be taken to achieve the preferred future, 'Equitable and Sustainable'.

Share positive stories within the community and other communities from people who are enjoying diversity and growth.

"Development should not come at the cost of Traverse City's unique feel."
- Community Survey #1 Respondent

We need Intergenerational meetings about lack of housing— all ages together (hopes/fears/ what people are going through).

We need to look through the zoning codes regarding what communities need to change relating to urban design.

There should be design standards for walking – reflective of the streets that we want.

There is a need for heated sidewalks and fully protected bike lines

City Commission to adopt Street Design Manual for complete streets – narrow lanes and street trees.

Additional Corridor Plans to promote new mixed use development.

Provide funding for individuals to develop new dwellings on existing lots. ADUs, Duplexes, two smaller home on a lot.

Responsible tourism – visitors help pay for maintaining the community and enhancing parks and community amenities.

14th street corridor should have more of a downtown feel with slow moving traffic (20 mph) with on street parking, filling in existing parking lots with buildings and parks.

New downtown in 14th St.

Add to the diversity of uses that would serve neighboring residential areas – makes Traverse City more walkable.

Traverse City is for everyone – we need intentional design.

A year round community – more seasonal residents (dark buildings/ homes/windows – empty).

"Traverse City needs traffic calming, pedestrian and bicycle friendly streets."
- Strategic Roundtable Participant

Need more sustainable businesses and provide goods and services that embrace biking/walking.

Functional design for intentional integration.

Traverse City for everyone – equitable and sustainable.

Protecting community character – a year round community. Concern for dark buildings.

Amenities and economy that will keep people here year round.

Greatly increase density with creative solutions.

Form Commission with neighborhood representation.

Plan from the bottom up, not the top down.

Individuals should identify issues, problems and have questions on how to improve issues.

European style plazas and parks.

Tall buildings do not hurt people! Build up!

Less curb cuts and strip malls.

"We need to focus on Corridors – 14th street is the right project for Traverse City. We could have a design competition with firms to help with uses for 14th street."
- Focus Group Participant

We need housing availability within Traverse City at different price points.

Need to incorporate green areas into urban planning.

We need cohesive building design.

Implement the Master Plan that has already been approved.

Move forward on the mobility plan and 5 year action plan.

Educate the public about barriers to development.

Source of Stakeholder Idea:

- Focus Groups
- Community Survey
- Strategic Roundtable





5.2 | STRENGTHENING PLACE-MAKING AND NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

Traverse City has a long history of investment in place-making, and pride in its character and history. There is resident desire to extend this work into the neighborhoods.

High Level Objective: Protecting the character of downtown and neighborhoods.

5.2.1 | IMPORTANCE OF STRENGTHENING PLACE-MAKING AND NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

People in Traverse City are proud of their city and also of the downtown and their specific neighborhoods. This has been conveyed through all aspects of the engagement process. Currently there are 13 Neighborhood associations, albeit some are more active and engaged and influential than others. There is also zoning currently in place with guidelines for design. There are strategic leases for downtown businesses (i.e. retail store fronts, coffee shops, and food establishments) which will enhance the downtown appeal and attraction. The Community Survey respondents noted that improvements in the downtown area, including more walkability and public spaces would generate enthusiasm among residents and visitors. Furthermore, Community Survey respondents were overwhelmingly in support of a focus on 'Strengthening place-making and neighborhood character'. This was reiterated at every point during the engagement process with key ideas being generated, which feature in the 'Ideas from the Community' section of the report.



Future Insights

- Place-making can be a very powerful planning tool for cities to create the right scale and sense of intimacy. Activating community spaces with small festivals, public art and 'pop-up events' can create the sense of vibrancy and activity that can create destinations and connection points.
- Traverse City residents are proud of the sense of place, and the character of the iconic areas. There is a clear desire to protect and strengthen this character, and a fear that key parts of the community will become over-developed.





Strengthening
Place-making
and
Neighborhood
Character

5.2.2 | KEY ACTION AREAS

The key actions areas have been drawn from the focus group discussions, and aggregate ideas shared by the community in the surveys and workshop.



Action 5: Bring an 'experience-based' approach to place-making efforts across the city

The character and the experience of various community spaces is very important to residents. This is reflected in a desire for intimate community scale and enhancing the 'small-town feel'. An intriguing approach would be to identify the desired charm and character people are seeking in specific community places, then explore how spaces, buildings, trees and art can help amplify the desired experience.

Action 6: Empower and elevate the role of the neighborhood associations

The neighborhoods are becoming well defined in Traverse City, and a number have functioning neighborhood associations. Elevating the support and role of these associations could help residents have a more direct role in shaping the character and evolution of their neighborhoods. Convening the associations together on a regular basis could help foster innovation and strengthen the relationship with the City.

Action 7: Intentionally create gathering and social spaces for locals

Attractive tourism destinations often face the challenge of residents feeling 'squeezed out' in high visitation periods. There is the potential to intentionally create community social and amenity spaces, that are orientated to locals rather than visitors. For example, areas around community spaces that are outside of the tourism hot spots (like library or schools) can be enhanced with dog parks, recreation areas and social spaces, that can offer a haven for locals in busy visitation periods.

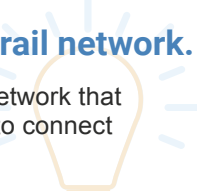
Action 8: Enhance multi-modal connectivity between neighborhoods and community places

Tourism communities like Traverse City can experience an intensity of traffic and congestion that erodes the ease of living and livability of the local community. Enhancing the multi-modal connectivity, including walkable and bikeable options, could better connect the neighborhoods to community spaces and offer another way to reduce the dependence on cars, and navigate the traffic congestion.



Bold Idea: Build a fully connected city-wide trail network.

Develop and build a fully connected city-wide trail and bike network that allows residents to access key community destinations, and to connect neighborhoods together in a different way.




5.2.3 | IDEAS FROM THE COMMUNITY

Strengthening Place-making and Neighborhood Character

The following bullet points are ideas and actions that emerged during the engagement process. Focus group participants and survey respondents were asked for specific ideas on actions that could be taken to achieve the preferred future, 'Equitable and Sustainable'.

Keep neighborhoods safe and reflecting the charming community that attracted so many people to live here.

*"Traverse City has a small-town feel, especially in the winter months. Our children are growing up with a sense of community - they can walk to school, and they have great neighborhood friends. But we still have access to some really good restaurants and events/things to do. And, of course, summer is a dream living this close to the water."
- Community Survey #1 Respondent*

Concentrate population density to key hubs (i.e. downtown TC, Kingsley, etc.) to preserve the agricultural integrity of the region.

We need specific havens for locals to meet. How do we use tools to develop these havens?

We should aim for a compatibility of materials that are in context.

We need enforcement behind the design and consequence if these standards are not followed.

Neighborhood associations should be more proactive than reactive and work to assist community connections.

City priorities should ensure equity across all neighborhoods.

To maintain safety and appearance standards, we need regular inspections on rental properties.

Neighborhood Association presidents should meet on six-monthly basis and make recommendations.

Transient lodging tax – some cities have generated enough money from these to take care of waste, parks, etc. It is important for these taxes to be really looked at. Impact management instead of promotion.

We need to funnel tourism tax to come back to the neighborhoods and residents. Incentives to builders/developers to build a better aesthetic appeal.

Deed restrictions could be a possible tool to preserve neighborhood character.

We need to define what character is and come to consensus and bring it into better focus neighborhood per neighborhood. How does each neighborhood define its character?

Urban design needs to be better defined.

Explore what the architecture integrity is per neighborhood.

Create safe streets for all users.

'Community Character' to be valued.

Address current adversarial relationship between Traverse City Planning and neighborhoods.

Discuss how parking can impact the neighborhoods.

'Little Fleet' effect and third places in new areas such as Union/8th St. and 14th St.

*"More social districts to create meeting places around town, similar to what happened during Covid."
- Strategic Roundtable Participant*

Towne Plaza to be open in the evenings with pop ups and food trucks.

Not just protect but enhance the neighborhoods.

14th Street should be gateway to the city.

Incentivize ADUs.

Communicate to government what people want to accommodate within the bound of 'small town charm/character and clarify what these terms mean.

Create incentives for creativity regarding downtown development.

Gathering spaces in the neighborhoods, even if it is just enhancing sidewalks and planting more trees.

For 14th Street corridor improvements, we need Old Town and Fernwood to be active participants.

Source of Stakeholder Idea:

- Focus Groups
- Community Survey
- Strategic Roundtable



5.3 | FOSTERING A REGIONAL COLLABORATIVE APPROACH

Fostering a Regional Collaborative Approach

High Level Objective: To help manage resources, utilities and climate adaptation and lead on key issues.

5.3.1 | IMPORTANCE OF FOSTERING A REGIONAL COLLABORATIVE APPROACH

Throughout the engagement process, the importance of this topic was highlighted through the Community Survey, Leadership interviews, the Think-Tank and Focus Groups. In the Community Survey, almost 73% of respondents felt that to 'Foster a regional collaborative approach to help manage resources, utilities and climate adaption and lead on key issues' was extremely important to help shape the future development of Traverse City. It was also noted that there is a lot of work currently being carried out between Traverse City and regionally to foster and build this regional collaboration, including the 10 county regional planning of Networks Northwest, BATA, Traverse Connect, TART, MPT/TTIC (Leelanau Grand Traverse and Traverse City), Regional healthcare via Munson hospital, the Airport, TCAPS, MSH Water Quality, the Traverse Bay Intermediate School District and via the Grand Traverse County Funding levels. While Traverse City is doing well with current partnerships across the region, there was a perception that even more can be done, which could help accelerate progress on key issues.

A regional collaborative approach has been a key focus area throughout the engagement process. Community members are keen to see Traverse City take on a leadership role in helping convene groups to work together on the grand challenges.



Future Insights

- Greater region-wide collaboration will help provide better access to services and new efficiencies and quality in service delivery. When asked what changes in Traverse City would most excite residents, many respondents noted that stronger partnerships with surrounding communities to address housing and infrastructure are welcomed.
- Any of the biggest challenges in the region, such as housing and transportation, will require inter-government solutions, and public-private partnerships. Building these collaborative approaches will help spur new solutions and accelerate outcomes.



Fostering a Regional Collaborative Approach

5.3.2 | KEY ACTION AREAS

The key actions areas have been drawn from the focus group discussions, and aggregate ideas shared by the community in the surveys and workshop.

Action 9: Map the current collaborations across the region

Build understanding of the current collaborations and relationships, and between sectors of the regional economy to explore gaps, opportunities and identify where success is occurring. Understanding the current successes in collaboration can help encourage institutions to continue to do the hard work of finding common ground, aligning plans and sharing resources.



Action 10: Convene organizations in the region to identify needs and solutions

Engage major institutions from across the wider region to identify the needs and resources required. This will involve more cooperative planning with a common vision between all regional jurisdictions with an initial focus on infrastructure, housing, connectivity, utilities and transportation. The current housing challenges and shortages is an ideal place to start - as this is an urgent and shared issue in the region.



Action 11: Explore the potential for shared Government services

Identify and deliver shared services and infrastructure, ultimately providing better value to residents across the region. The region is a mixture of governments, including cities, townships and municipalities. They all have services to deliver and key roles to play, however people are looking for increased coordination and efficiency of service delivery. An increased collaboration model offers a way to continue to explore ways to identify and deliver shared services, ultimately delivering better value to residents across the region.

Action 12: Create a leadership team to advocate for the region

Draw together key leadership entities to advocate for the region at a State and Federal level. Create a Roadmap on how local government and parts of the region can contribute to the region as a whole. This leadership team should draw from a cross section of municipalities, County and key groups.



Bold Idea: Convene a leadership group to address the housing crisis.

Throughout the engagement, examples were repeatedly shared of where there are economic and service gaps because there are open jobs that can't be filled, including key positions in the healthcare and education sectors. A major contributing reason is there is not enough available housing. This is an important issue to address in a bold and urgent manner. The housing topic has been previously identified in Traverse City Commission Goals and Objectives, and remains a priority issue.



5.3.3 | IDEAS FROM THE COMMUNITY



The following bullet points are ideas and actions that emerged during the engagement process. Focus group participants and survey respondents were asked for specific ideas on actions that could be taken to achieve the preferred future, 'Equitable and Sustainable'.

Engage major institutions and identify the resources (expertise/people/facilitation).

This is part of the communication process – celebrate the wins. We need more regional collaboration to help with this.

Leadership needs to be coming together from the region to discuss the impact of funding issues since change in national government.

Key institutions can help – Networks North West.

We need to understand limitations and strengths – townships have a lower tax base.

Focus on infrastructure, connectivity, utilities, roads and transportation as a start.

Look to Grand Traverse County to play a bigger and better role – communicate out the work of the townships (CO/MSU/Traverse Connect).

Build trust through established committees.

“Create a Roadmap on how each local unit of government can contribute to the region as a whole.”
- Community Survey #1 Respondent

Engage talent communities (i.e. Alumni of Leadership Grand Traverse).

Engage the major institutions (Munson, NMC, Traverse Connect, LSD, Airport, Network Northeast, Sleeping Bear, Major Non-profits, etc) i.e. – Groundwork Center.

“Establish a structure and process tasked with promoting the region, currently it is not clear who convenes it/owns it.”
- Community Survey #1 Respondent

Play up and celebrate some of the wins with regional collaboration – NM Chamber Alliance (policy advocacy), TART, Freshwater R & I Center – Homelessness Collective and strong regional healthcare system.

Create a Regional Housing Planning Commission and regional Commissions to address key issues across the region, including tourism.

Produce and promote regional economic development planning and co-ordination, noting the need to understand limitations and strengths – townships have a lower tax base.

Engage major institutions from across Traverse City and the wider region in an organized manner to identify the resources (expertise/people/facilitation) that will benefit the entire region.

Work with MDOT to create better pedestrian infrastructure region wide.

Prevent suburban sprawl and protect rural land.

Traverse City and surrounding region to support homeless population.

Surrounding counties that benefit from Traverse City to share the load.

Copy collaboration example set by Housing Coalition.

New TIF to support these strategies.

Work with surrounding jurisdictions to strengthen BATA services.

The first issue is housing – Benzie, Leelanau and Grand Traverse County?

We need a regional approach to waste management dictated by the State.

“We need to be fostering regional cooperation – we all see ourselves as Traverse City despite where we live in the region.”
- Focus Group Participant

Traverse City needs to engage with Networks Northwest.

Create Regional Housing Planning Commission.

We need to define the region – Traverse City and Townships, Grand Travers and then Benzie and Leelanau and beyond.

Source of Stakeholder Idea:

Focus Groups

Community Survey

Strategic Roundtable





Creating a Complete Community

5.4 | CREATING A COMPLETE COMMUNITY

Many people are keen to retain a balanced community demographic. This will require addressing the housing affordability and availability issues.

High Level Objective: Build socio-economic systems and amenities that foster demographic balance

5.4.1 | IMPORTANCE OF CREATING A COMPLETE COMMUNITY

Traverse City is known for its diverse and progressive community. It is a place that people want to move to, remain living in, return to and visit. A high response rate from all engagement parts of the process discussed how much people love Traverse City and the individual neighborhoods that exist within Traverse City. Housing was the key issue that emerged during the process, regarding affordable housing and overall housing options. It was noted that surrounding townships are providing a lot of the new housing because they have more available land, and that the city is exploring ways to limit or balance short term rentals with the desire for full time residents. However, there is concern about the community becoming less appealing and affordable for young families, and residents were keen to find creative ways to build a balanced and vibrant demographic profile.



Future Insights

- There is a desire to ensure that Traverse City has a diverse and attainable housing market, which is necessary for attracting and retaining a strong workforce as well as for young families and young professionals.
- Many members of the community have expressed that they would like to keep Traverse City as Traverse City. This would include ways to accommodate socially and culturally the various demographics that live in the city.
- As tourism is a key element in Traverse City, which bring visitation pressures, there is a need to find ways to maintain the quality of life for the Traverse City resident. Many people spoke about gathering spaces or havens for the community, that would help maintain the social fabric and community feel of the city.





The key actions areas have been drawn from the focus group discussions, and aggregate ideas shared by the community in the surveys and workshop.

Action 13: Encourage more full-time residents living in core neighborhoods

A key concern for residents was the ‘loss’ of family homes to short-term rental or seasonal residents, creating ‘dark windows’. Residents are keen to see approaches that encourage more full-time residents, especially in the traditionally family home neighborhoods. This can bring vibrancy to the neighborhood, and help ensure the school enrollments stay at healthy levels.



Action 14: Host summits to showcase best practice solutions to socio-economic challenges

Across the country, numerous cities, counties and organizations are experimenting with new and novel approaches to tackling systemic issues such as housing affordability and availability, childcare, and homelessness. Best practice examples from this broader work should be showcased, to help spark innovation, creative local ideas and action.



Action 15: Promote Social Equity within Traverse City

As the demographics in the community change, there are new needs and issues. It is proposed to develop an action plan to more intentionally support the needs of underserved groups, including age-in-place communities.



Action 16: Develop a plan to boost childcare capacity in Traverse City

Develop a target goal and plan for childcare capacity in Traverse City, which would increase accessibility of childcare for young families who are in the workforce and help those who struggle to meet the cost of childcare. The lack of childcare was seen as a key constraint for a lot of working families, which in turn makes it challenging for young families to live in the community.

Bold Idea: Find innovative ways to address childcare shortage.

The shortage of childcare was highlighted as a key issue in the engagement sessions. This issue needs a bold and innovative approach to create a breakthrough in the supply. This could be a topic for immediate focus.



5.4.3 | IDEAS FROM THE COMMUNITY

Creating a Complete Community

The following bullet points are ideas and actions that emerged during the engagement process. Focus group participants and survey respondents were asked for specific ideas on actions that could be taken to achieve the preferred future, 'Equitable and Sustainable'.

Embrace the Corridor Development plan and Housing Atlas as tools for smart growth.

Increase housing stock across the region and for every income level.

Work on a vision for how housing will be provided in a sustainable way to meet the needs of Traverse City residents now and in the future at all income levels.

Incentivize people aged 55-62 to sell their larger properties therefore allowing families to move into the established larger homes.

"We need to create opportunities for our high school and college graduates to remain gainfully and positively employed locally Let's stop the boomerang of our young people."
- Community Survey #1 Respondent

We need Policies that promote smart development, increase housing inventory, and support middle-income residents will create a more balanced and sustainable community.

Poverty – people in crisis – set aside units for a coalition to house people with vouchers.

Increase membership to Traverse Connects.

Incremental Development Alliance – teaching homeowners to make things affordable.

Housing – Brown Ridge Trust Fund Advisory Board setting up Housing Trust Fund who will provide micro loans for roofs etc.

Better packages and more input at planning commission. We need a more 'across the board' approach to level out the changes regarding planning and zoning.

People need social roots – places for people to meet and make families/see a future here.

Community Center. We need a social outlet if people aren't sporty, etc. Common Grounds is a great community space.

Need to embrace Traverse City being a City – is Traverse City the hub of the region? We have to be a city with all of the amenities of a city. We need to choose to embrace that – but will have to take on the infill and density.

Create a Welcome package for new residents.

Incentive long term rentals of second homes - homestead exemption for long term rentals.

Incentivize major employers to offer daycare (i.e. TCAPS).

Support service-workers regarding housing availability.

Create multi-use dense housing.

Work with partners such as hospitals to build industry housing.

"How do people build equity – i.e.) condos that are attainable for young people to build equity to build a larger home. This is useful for young professionals who are not ready for the responsibilities of a larger home but condos offer ownership."
- Focus Group Participant

Protect the public schools.

Explore the possibility and concept of inclusive housing mileage and explore an in-depth, local census of the state of housing and its impact on the ability of employers (including healthcare) to function and provide their service.

Cultivate and nurture relationships and actively (and proactively) work to find workable solutions to develop empty lots for housing.

Develop a tool and/or fund to help people who no longer need larger residences to downsize feasibly.

Develop quantifiable target goal for housing for all .

Explore financial appeal and benefits to splitting lots for creation of desired housing.

Develop target goal and plan for childcare capacity.

Make plan for adding smaller parks adjacent to new housing.

Build capacity for mental health care.

Source of Stakeholder Idea:

- Focus Groups
- Community Survey
- Strategic Roundtable





Supporting Environmental Sustainability

5.5 | SUPPORTING ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

High Level Objective: Helping to adapt to a changing world and supporting a thriving ecosystem

5.5.1 | IMPORTANCE OF SUPPORTING ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Traverse City has the potential to be a model for how communities can reduce their environmental impact. This resonates with the values expressed by the community.

It was noted throughout the Community Survey, Focus Groups and the meetings with leadership that Traverse City is focused on environmental sustainability. There is a clear desire in the community to pursue environmental and sustainability practices. Adjustment to climate change, and the mitigating impacts of extreme weather events, such as extreme heat, fires and floods, are seen as urgent issues to address. Throughout the planning process, environmental sustainability was seen as the overall driver of community health. It was also consistently highlighted that people choose to live in Traverse City due to its natural resources which is why this is an important messaging tool.



Future Insights

- The younger population cohorts (under 40) in the survey expressed greater concern and interest in issues associated with environmental sustainability, and concerns about the future impacts of climate change.
- There appears to be appetite in the community to continue and expand the efforts to address sustainability steps and programs. In particular, there was interest in how to embrace some of the emerging technologies and systems that allow houses to be fully electrified, and therefore using 100% renewable energy sources for heating and operating.





5.5.2 | KEY ACTION AREAS

The key actions areas have been drawn from the focus group discussions, and aggregate ideas shared by the community in the surveys and workshop.

Action 17: Develop a comprehensive region-wide sustainability plan that focuses on climate mitigation and adaptation

Create a city and county-wide plan to help anticipate where climate impacts might occur and build in mitigation and offset strategies. This should also include the pathway to zero-carbon and other established goals.



Action 18: Research and replicate best sustainability practices from other similar cities

Explore and apply best practice from across the United States and Europe regarding incremental changes that are demonstrably achievable. This could include ideas from similar cities, and also ideas from across all types of cities. This should cover practices across all scales, from individual homes to neighborhood and city levels.



Action 19: Embed environmental education initiatives at visitor interface locations

Build broad awareness and promote Traverse City as an ambitious 'living laboratory' for environmental sustainability. Make this visitor-facing, so they can appreciate the community values and become active contributors to the vision.

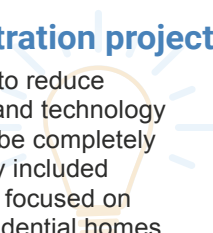
Action 20: Explore novel ways for the visitation economy to help fund sustainability measures

Examine the potential for ideas like airport surcharges and 'tourism taxes' to help fund local environmental offsets and initiatives. There is a 'sea-change' occurring in many tourism destinations, where there is a pivot from destination promotion to destination impact management.



Bold Idea: Pilot electrification of houses as a demonstration project.

There is a need to pilot projects that demonstrate the ability and capacity to reduce environmental impact at a local level. There is the existing local capacity and technology to establish an innovative electrification project, to show how houses can be completely powered by renewable electric technology. This issue has been previously included in Traverse City Commission goals and objectives, but has been primarily focused on government buildings. There is an opportunity to bring that thinking to residential homes, allowing people to see how they can contribute directly on their own properties.



5.5.3 | IDEAS FROM THE COMMUNITY

Supporting Environmental Sustainability

The following bullet points are ideas and actions that emerged during the engagement process. Focus group participants and survey respondents were asked for specific ideas on actions that could be taken to achieve the preferred future, 'Equitable and Sustainable'.

Low hanging fruit/incremental changes. There are lots of versions of incremental changes and so be bold and politically savvy. I.E) Make downtown car free. We need to show people case studies.

"We need to remember that it is the bay, lakes, rivers, and woods that make our area so great."
- Community Survey #1 Respondent

Create a surcharge on flights during tourism season at the regional airport. This is a price that people should have to pay on a year round basis regarding the downgrade of the environment.

We need to create opportunities to pilot projects – i.e.) incentives to keep yards tidy.

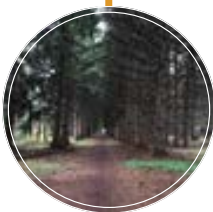
Gap financing/ incentives for those businesses who may be impacted.

Local glamping at Boardman Lake.

Boardman River – make it more beautiful.

Waste water and Storm Run off.

Improve city parks regarding biodiversity and native species.



Change curb design to reduce storm run-off.

Attract more environmentally sustainable year round businesses, which attract more jobs.

Look at zoning regarding driving differently or increase density development.

Reduced paved parking – encourage public transportation.



Boardman River behind Front Street – make more of a natural riparian ecology.

Continue to maintain and upgrade water treatment, including storm water run-off.

Advocate at State level to clarify environmental options such as run off utility.

Prioritize infrastructure and the CIP over non infrastructure progress.

Include EV chargers in all new construction

Support bikeable and walkable design to reduce car reliance

Create infrastructure that doesn't incentivize more vehicle traffic.

Don't sacrifice all of the permeable surfaces.

Naturalize the Boardman River, make it an amenity.

Follow TCLP lead on Climate Action Plan.

Continue to develop as a Trail City.

"We are not going to get everyone to participate for environmental reasons. We need to appeal to people regarding financial benefits, quality of life, congestion, time, etc.... Talk to people about their hyper local environment rather than the larger national picture."
- Focus Group Participant

TCLP and solar for home owners.

Continue to maintain and upgrade water treatment – including storm water run off.

Manage city urban forestry plans. Update tree species planting list – include shrubs and bushes as alternatives (especially flowering).

Advocate at state level to clarify options for run off utility.

Source of Stakeholder Idea:

Focus Groups

Community Survey

Strategic Roundtable





Building Thriving Year-Round Economy

5.6 | BUILDING THRIVING YEAR-ROUND ECONOMY

High Level Objective: Expand business diversity and innovation capability to build a year-round economy

5.6.1 | BUILDING THRIVING YEAR-ROUND ECONOMY

Traverse City is well known for its exceptional outdoor recreational offerings. Throughout the engagement process, many spoke about the need to create a year-round economy with tourism in the winter. Also, in the Community Survey, respondents were excited about economic diversification beyond seasonal tourism. Almost 61% of Community Survey respondents felt that it was extremely important to expand business diversity and innovation capability to build a year-round economy. With post COVID options to work remotely, this could improve a year-round economy for Traverse City.

The goal should be not only a greater diversity of businesses, but a greater number of businesses in current sectors to increase competition, which will give employees options and can support more competitive wages for employees.



Future Insights

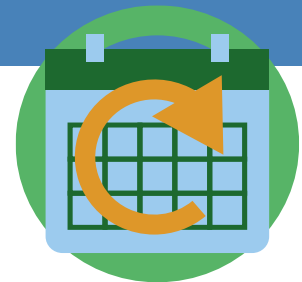
- A greater diversity and number of businesses will also encourage high school and college graduates to remain in Traverse City without the need to leave the area in search of employment and career paths.
- Build the 'Traverse City Brand' to attract the future workforce and ascertain the industries that Traverse City needs to attract and the skills that they need. The future workforce is predicted to focus more on skills than roles, with more expertise needed in technological roles.





5.6.2 | KEY ACTION AREAS

The key actions areas have been drawn from the focus group discussions, and aggregate ideas shared by the community in the surveys and workshop.



Action 21: Embrace Sustainable Tourism approaches to moderate seasonal nature of tourism

Adopt a destination impact management approach built on the philosophy of sustainable tourism that addresses local community and environmental impact. For Traverse City to adopt an intentional sustainable approach, this will mean moving from a destination marketing approach to destination impact management.

Action 22: Strategically market Traverse City to the future remote workforce

Continue to build the 'Traverse City Brand' to attract the future remote workforce. This target group is likely to be recreation orientated and drawn by the lifestyle and character of the community. They could also be important new demographics in the community, representing younger age groups.

Action 23: Explore the potential for recreation and resource related products and businesses

The Traverse City brand could be leveraged for business creation that is associated with outdoor recreation and resource management. An example is the higher-end products that are appealing to the recreation market, such hiking gear, equipment, water bottles and accessories.



Action 24: Build on the specialized advanced manufacturing sector

There is a 'window' of time to capture some of the reshoring manufacturing that is occurring and will likely accelerate. This will help reduce seasonal tourism dependency through fostering industries and businesses that provide stable, well-paying jobs throughout the year. Traverse City already has a strong advanced manufacturing base which could be expanded. This could also include a water-related industries hub, creating a unique location for technical and specialty businesses.

Bold Idea: Embrace a sustainable tourism model approach

Across the world, visitation dependent economies are increasingly exploring the idea of sustainable tourism, and focusing on the impact on destinations and residents. This includes changing the focus to 'quality over quantity', and more experienced-based approaches where local values and community interests are put first. This is a challenging pivot for many destination communities, but is showing promise as a way to avoid heading further into over-tourism situations.



5.6.3 | IDEAS FROM THE COMMUNITY

Building Thriving Year-Round Economy

The following bullet points are ideas and actions that emerged during the engagement process. Focus group participants and survey respondents were asked for specific ideas on actions that could be taken to achieve the preferred future, 'Equitable and Sustainable'.

Commercial corridors that have been utilised for short term rental. How can we incentivize long term rental?

A larger, more robust airport with increased flight options will enhance business opportunities, tourism, and overall regional accessibility. Support business diversification, workforce development, and economic incentives will help create long-term economic stability.

Investing in infrastructure improvements and expanded air service will position Traverse City for future growth and competitiveness.

What can we do in a strategy to support this? Housing – it all starts with housing.

We need more density regarding housing, people and scale.

How do we raise revenue to offset the impact of tourism.

Why do we need a thriving economy? There are 600 open jobs at Munson hospital that they cannot fill.

Regionally lowest state average regarding salaries.

"Reducing seasonal dependency by fostering industries that provide stable, well-paying jobs throughout the year is critical. Supporting business diversification, workforce development, and economic incentives will help create long-term economic stability for Traverse City."
- Community Survey #1 Respondent

Reliance on tourism industry – dark windows, distorted socio economic systems.

How do we control tourism?

Remote working.

The community has aspirations but are struggling to fill this year round economy.

What are the measurements of a thriving economy? There have been a lot of shifts in Traverse City – no longer a sleepy town in the winter/Sundays.

Focus on people and place – childcare crisis changes what people can afford. Infrastructure to support workforce.



There is still wage disparity in TC – what are the impacts on our hospitality/healthcare.

Childcare issues.

More day care centers and make them more affordable.

More affordable housing or increase salaries. Need to increase wages to keep up with cost of living and inflation.

Be creative with industry to build housing for service workers.

Become a winter destination rather than just appealing in the summer.

Work with major existing employers.

More affordable air travel needed.

Heated sidewalks and better winter mobility.

Close Front St. in the summer.

Encourage new businesses/industry - not just manufacturing.

Lean into fiber utility to attract new businesses.



Deed restrictions that slow down short-term rentals, in order to create more housing options.

Increase indoor recreation activities and options in the winter, and produce free winter parking.

Promote and encourage new businesses that have 40-100 plus jobs which aren't here already.

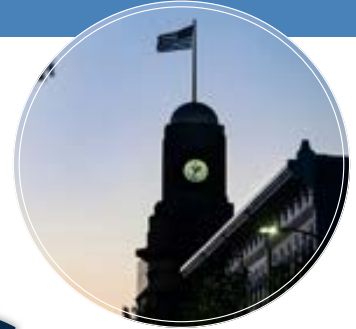
Source of Stakeholder Idea:

- Focus Groups
- Community Survey
- Strategic Roundtable

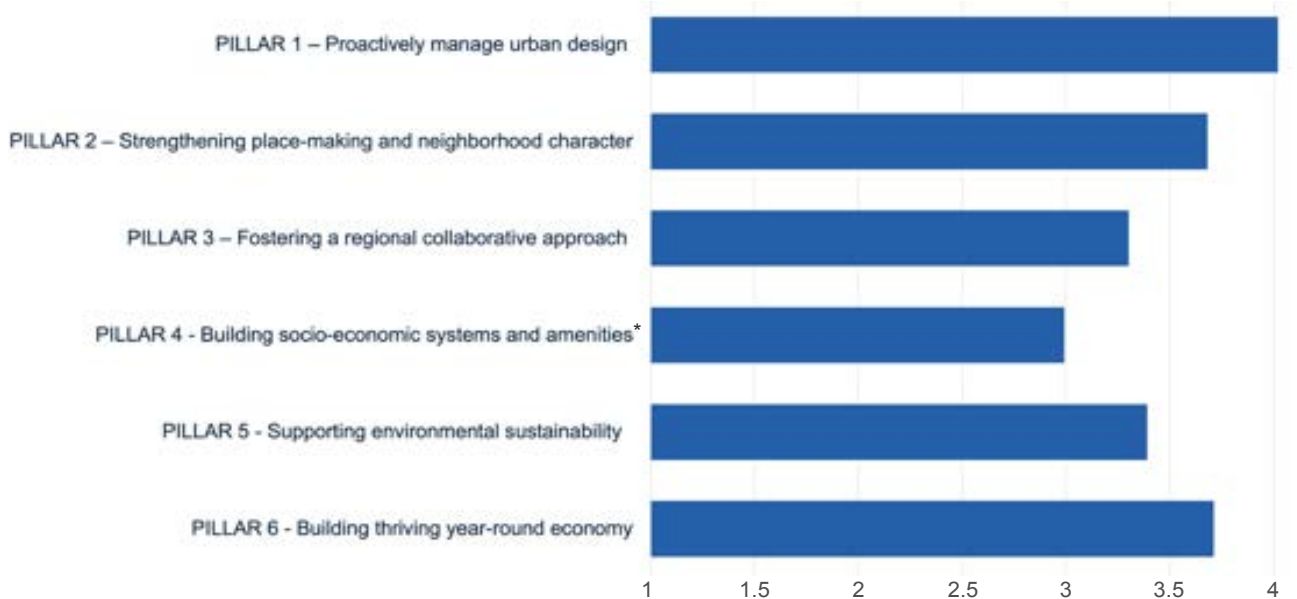


6.0 | DYNAMIC SYSTEMS-THINKING APPROACH

The framework for action developed through the strategic planning process has identified a set of six key Strategic Pillars that will help the City of Traverse City pivot its trajectory towards the 'Equitable and Sustainable' scenario. This framework is the culmination of engagement and input via survey, in-person events and deliberation by the focus groups. The resulting overall framework creates the basis of the roadmap to the future and the guiding vision that will inform future planning efforts by the City of Traverse City.



Ranking of pillars based on their potential positive impact on Traverse City over the next five years. SCALE: 1= lowest; 6= highest



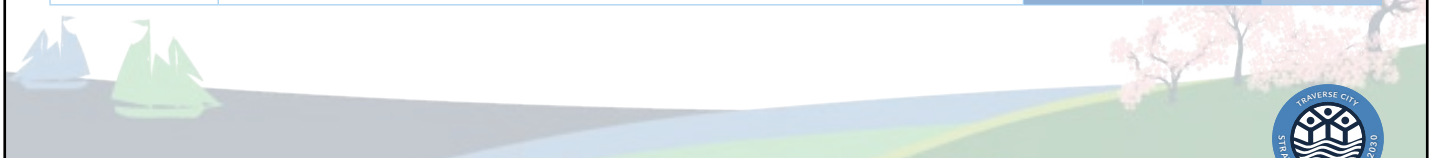
* This pillar was renamed to 'Creating a Complete Community' after feedback at the Future Summit.



7.0 | PRIORITIZATION OF ACTIONS

The 24 actions were prioritized against dimensions of ‘Future impact on Traverse City,’ ‘Need to be bold and innovative’; and ‘Urgency for implementation’. The darker the color, the higher the average score. This provides a way to sort the highest priority actions, based on community input and perspective.

Pillar	Action	Impact	Boldness	Urgency
PILLAR 1: Proactively manage urban design	Proactively design the future of key corridors	Dark Blue	Light Blue	Dark Blue
	Create localized building design guidelines	Light Blue	Light Blue	Light Blue
	Explore people-centric street design	Dark Blue	Light Blue	Light Blue
	Intentionally design more community connection points	Light Blue	Light Blue	Light Blue
PILLAR 2: Strengthening place-making and neighborhood character	Bring an ‘experience-based’ approach to place-making efforts	Light Blue	Light Blue	Light Blue
	Empower and elevate the role of the neighborhood associations	Light Blue	Light Blue	Light Blue
	Intentionally create gathering and social spaces for locals	Light Blue	Light Blue	Light Blue
	Enhance multi-modal connectivity between neighborhoods & places	Light Blue	Light Blue	Light Blue
PILLAR 3: Fostering a regional collaborative approach	Map the current collaborations across the region	Light Blue	Light Blue	Light Blue
	Convene organization in region to identify needs and solutions	Light Blue	Light Blue	Light Blue
	Explore the potential for shared Government services	Dark Blue	Light Blue	Light Blue
	Create a leadership team to advocate for the region	Light Blue	Light Blue	Light Blue
PILLAR 4: Creating a Complete Community	Encourage more full-time residents living in core neighborhoods	Dark Blue	Dark Blue	Dark Blue
	Host summits to showcase solutions to socio-economic challenges	Light Blue	Light Blue	Light Blue
	Promote social equity within Traverse City	Light Blue	Light Blue	Light Blue
	Develop a plan to boost childcare capacity in Traverse City	Dark Blue	Dark Blue	Dark Blue
PILLAR 5: Supporting environmental sustainability	Develop a sustainability plan that focuses on climate mitigation	Dark Blue	Light Blue	Light Blue
	Research and replicate best sustainability practices from other cities	Dark Blue	Light Blue	Light Blue
	Embed environmental education at visitor interface locations	Light Blue	Light Blue	Light Blue
	Explore new visitation economy funding for sustainability measures	Dark Blue	Dark Blue	Light Blue
PILLAR 6: Building thriving year-round economy	Embrace Sustainable Tourism approaches to moderate seasonal nature of tourism	Dark Blue	Light Blue	Light Blue
	Strategically market Traverse City to the remote workforce	Light Blue	Light Blue	Light Blue
	Explore potential for recreation and resource products & businesses	Light Blue	Light Blue	Light Blue
	Build on the specialized advanced manufactured sector	Light Blue	Light Blue	Light Blue





8.0 | NEXT STEPS - ROADMAP TO THE FUTURE

The findings from this planning process can be used to help inform future priorities for the City and the Commission. Over the coming years, this will help shape City goals and objectives and guide new investments and planning decisions.

This Strategic Planning process was designed to identify priority focus areas and actions that are important to the community over the next five years. It has successfully accomplished this aim. Some of the ways this planning framework can be used over the coming years will include:

- Identifying **new initiatives and focus areas** for City staff and Commissioners attention and deliberation.
- Informing **future planning decisions** and helping to refine planning priorities, guidelines and approaches.
- Guiding future Commission **goals, objectives**, and informing investments and **budget priorities**.
- Reframing the role the Commissioners and City **leadership take in a regional context**.

The community has identified they have appetite and interest in bold and innovative solutions on a number of high impact areas, that are seen as urgent to address.

The community of Traverse City has shown a healthy appetite for change going forward. This is the first step toward the preferred future 'Equitable and Sustainable,' that will guide the City's future planning efforts.





9.0 | ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS & MORE INFORMATION

Community members and stakeholders have engaged in this strategic action planning process with great enthusiasm and commitment. Their passion and interest have ensured discussions are open, thoughtful, and reflective of the myriad of perspectives that exist within Traverse City. This dedication is also reflective of the deep commitment participants have to the future of Traverse City.

Additionally, extra appreciation is extended to Elizabeth Vogel (City Manager, The City of Traverse City), Colleen Paveglio (Communications Director, The City of Traverse City), Deborah Allen (Assistant City Manager, The City of Traverse City) and Benjamin Marentette (City Clerk, The City of Traverse City). Weekly project calls held with this team have ensured that the project has been organized, seamless and thorough.

For more information on the Traverse City Strategic Action Plan project please contact:

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Learn more about the Traverse City Strategic Action Plan on the project portal:

lab2.future-iq.com/traverse-city-strategic-action-plan/





TRAVERSE CITY
STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN
MICHIGAN, USA
MAY 2025



303 E. State Street
Traverse City, MI 49684
lauren@downtowntc.com
231-922-2050

Memorandum

To: Downtown Development Authority Board of Directors
From: Lauren Bohac, DDA Deputy Director
Memo Date: June 16, 2025
Subject: Arts Commission Update

As the Arts Commission is meeting on June 18, the Commission will be meeting between the time of this memo's writing and the DDA Board meeting. Any updates from Wednesday's meeting will be provided at the Friday Board meeting.

FY 25/26 Budget

The Arts Commission successfully advocated for a \$30,000 increase to its annual budget, which was approved by the City Commission on June 2. This effort was spearheaded by Arts Commissioner Caitlin Early and City Commissioner Heather Shaw.

Inaugural Mural Festival

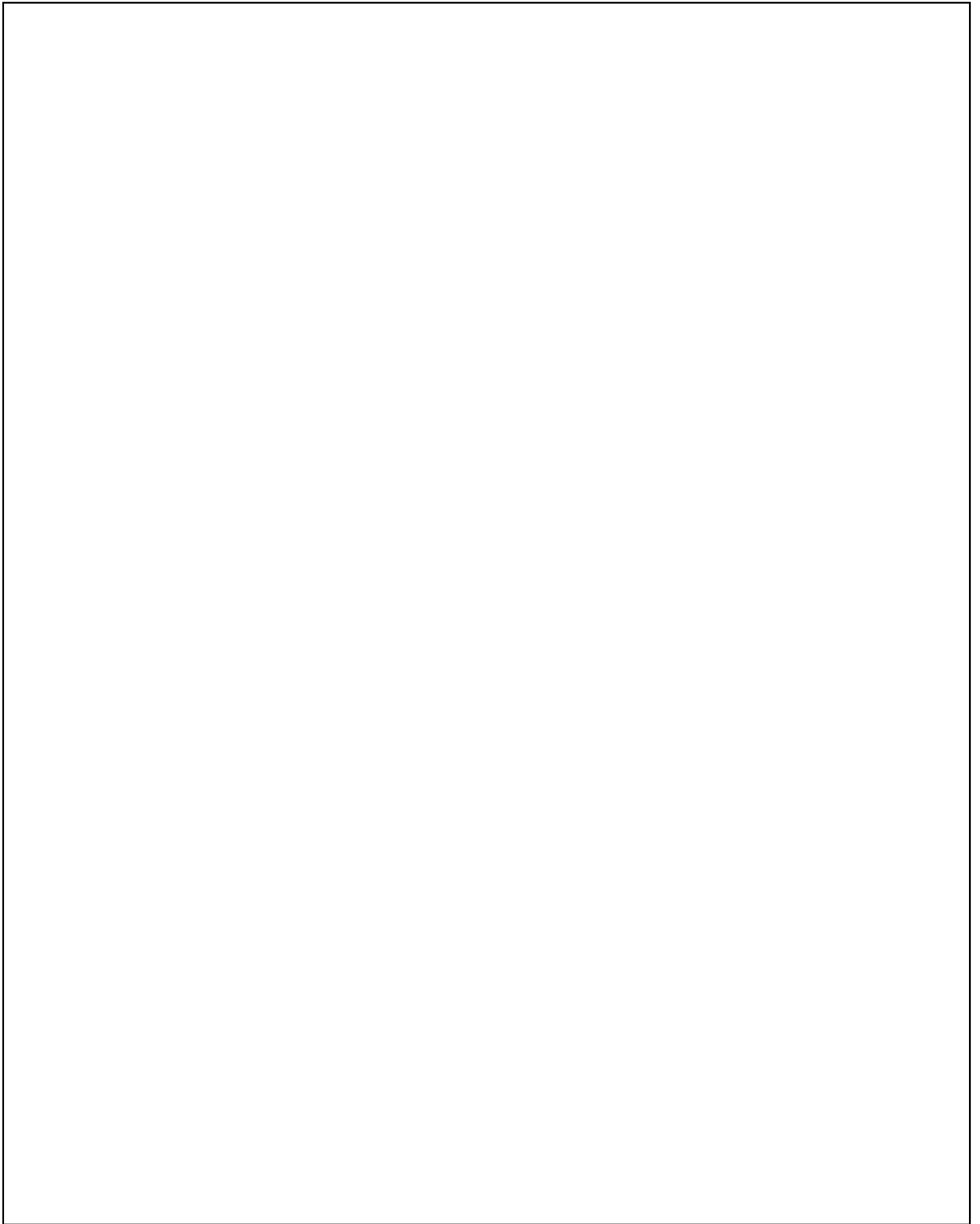
6 artists and mural sites have been selected to participate in the Inaugural Mural Festival with contracts pending. All contracts are expected to be executed by the July DDA Board meeting.

The Arts Commission's focus for the next month is finalizing programming details for the festival. Tentative plans include a panel discussion with the muralists, a walking tour of the completed murals, and family programming partnered with TADL.

The Commission intends to roll out the festival's communication and advertising in July.

Rotating Art Exhibit

The Arts Commission approved a new art exhibit to replace the damaged Spirit of the Forest display on the Boardman Lake Trail. Steve and Dorota Coy, who created the Spirit of the Forest, were selected to replace their exhibit with an alternative piece. The piece will be installed in July.





Downtown Development Authority
303 E. State Street
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Memorandum

To: Harry Burkholder, DDA Executive Director
 Downtown Development Authority Board of Directors

From: Sara Klebba, DDA Director of Events & Engagement

Date: June 16, 2025

Subject: DTCA Director of Events & Engagement Update

Live After 5 Spring Entertainment Series (May 16, 23, 30, June 6; 5-8pm; 2 acts)

- The Downtown Traverse City Association hosted eight musicians over four weeks for a May-June spring music series. Weather was steady: no real rain during the event, just before or after. Slightly chilly some days with winds, but the crowd was resilient. There was pent-up desire to get back outside after an extended winter.
- Quote from host Horizon Books: *“Thank you for creating and coordinating the recently launched Live After Five in downtown. We were happy to be a host site and saw increased sales on those evenings. Customers enjoyed it ... Nicely done! Great idea!”*
- Placer.ai Data:

Date(s)	Timespan	Visits	Visits YOY	Avg Dwell Time
5/16/2025	4pm-9pm	4,159	17.10%	141 mins
5/23/2025 (Memorial Wkd)	4pm-9pm	6,194	110.40%	109 mins
5/30/2025	4pm-9pm	4,755	49.50%	107 mins
6/6/2025	4pm-9pm	5,778	89.20%	126 mins

Toast to Downtown (June 5, 5-8pm, COH)

- The downtown community came out to celebrate and connect with fellow stakeholders at the annual DTCA fundraiser. About 150 guests, volunteers, sponsors, and partners came to play, create, and honor their colleagues and friends at the City Opera House.
- Former City Opera House Executive Director Diane Baribeau was awarded the annual Lyle DeYoung award in recognition of outstanding service, dedication, and impact within the downtown community.
- The inaugural Slider & Cocktail Showdown saw Blue Tractor take the top prize for their “Prized Pig” slider and American Spoon scored Best Cocktail with their Cherry Lime Punch mocktail.

- Ticket sales: \$4,900; fundraising (gift card marketplace, silent auction): \$3,900. Final expense items are being tallied.
- Survey has been emailed to participants, volunteers, sponsors, and partners.

Art Fair Series

- **Old Town Arts & Crafts Fair** was held Sat, June 14, 10a-5p. The rain held out and all participants enjoyed a beautiful day perusing and buying local art.
 - 85 vendors were confirmed. Attendance data to be available soon from Placer.ai.
 - Qualitative data from all vendors asked onsite: Sales were excellent to average; none were below average.
 - The vibe was positive, the crowd relatively steady.
- **National Cherry Festival Arts & Crafts Fair:** Sun, June 29, 10a-6p. Full with applications. Sending out vendor packets this week.
 - We are short on critical volunteers for load-out, 6-8pm.
- **Downtown Art Fair:** Sat & Sun, Sept 13-14; 10a-6p, 10a-4p. Close to full (60 booths). Invoicing process now.
 - In early stages of discussion with Crooked Tree Arts Center to locate an interested artist/muralist to assist with community mural. Front St. building location to post mural being worked out with building owner.

Street Sale/FNL (Aug 1 & 8)

- Friday Night Live applicants to be contacted in the next week with confirmation of acceptance or decline.
 - Aug 1 Cass & Front “main event” to feature the All-American Dance Party: Nonstop dance music on a community stage at Cass & Front. All family friendly versions of various genres, played in two to three song category segments, with paid dancers.
 - Aug 8 to feature ‘90s country revival local “supergroup” Little Dipper with line dancing and instruction.
- Street Sale application to go live soon. Must be DTCA member to participate in this permitted event.

New DTCA Board Members

- Three new members were welcomed to the DTCA board at the Toast to Downtown. Terms are July 2025–June 2028:
 - Katie Asher: Owner, slip. vintage
 - Andre Bushell: Owner, Bushell’s Kitchen + Cocktails
 - Hunter Eagle: Manager, Mammoth Distilling
- We say goodbye to two of our valuable board members:
 - Dawn Gildersleeve, Cherry Republic (Board President)
 - Libby Hogan, Lilies of the Alley (Board Treasurer)
- The new executive members will be nominated and elected at the July 10 DTCA board meeting.

A white motorboat with an American flag is on a body of water, with a forested shoreline in the background.

REGIONAL ECONOMIC ECOSYSTEM REPORT

SPRING 2025

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Traverse Connect hosted the Skyline & Shoreline: West Bay Aerial Mobility Showcase on May 6 at Discovery Pier in Traverse City. Attendees watched real-time demonstrations over West Grand Traverse Bay, including drone use cases such as environmental monitoring, lakebed mapping, and search-and-rescue missions. The event highlighted Michigan's leadership in advanced aerial mobility and featured participation from public safety agencies, researchers, and technology partners.

INTRODUCTION

TO OUR INVESTORS AND PARTNERS



Warren Call

Thank you for reading Traverse Connect's Spring 2025 semi-annual Economic Ecosystem Report. Published each spring and fall, the Economic Ecosystem Report is intended to supplement Traverse Connect's [Quarterly Growth Barometer Updates](#) and its [Annual Report](#). This report highlights our work to grow the Grand Traverse regional economy via our business attraction, industry cluster, and growth efforts, as well as our talent attraction and retention efforts.

This report provides an update on the continuation of the comprehensive economic development strategies as outlined in the Traverse Connect Strategic Plan, including leading regional economic development strategy, providing business expansion services, managing talent attraction, implementing business attraction programs, as well as supporting entrepreneurship and innovation, community development, and infrastructure development.

Our work would not be possible without the partnerships and support from the public sector, our investors, and our strategic partners. We thank you for your ongoing support in making the Grand Traverse region a great place to live. Over the past six months, we have achieved several crucial economic development milestones. Thanks to you, our partners, we can continue these efforts to create a vibrant and healthy economic ecosystem.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Warren M. Call".

President & CEO
Traverse Connect

REGIONAL DASHBOARD

Traverse Connect tracks five metrics in Talent Attraction & Development and Economic Development to measure the region's progress against our organization's vision and goals for 2030. The vision: By 2030, the Grand Traverse region will be a diversified economic destination of choice powered by growth-oriented enterprises providing competitive total compensation to match our world-class quality of life. Data is an imperfect, yet necessary, tool to measure those gains. Four of the five key metrics on the Traverse Connect [Regional Dashboard](#) trended upward and positively going into 2025, while the metric related to Annual GDP Per Employee remains neutral.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

ANNUAL GDP PER
EMPLOYEE
2030 GOAL: \$84,000

\$73,767 

STATE AVERAGE WAGE
PERCENTAGE
2030 GOAL: 90%

87% 

TALENT ATTRACTION & DEVELOPMENT


BACHELOR'S DEGREE
OR POST-SECONDARY
CERTIFICATE
2030 GOAL: 60%

53% 

GROWTH OF PRIME
WORKING AGE
POPULATION (35-49)
2030 GOAL: 5%

8% 

SCIENTIFIC,
PROFESSIONAL,
TECHNICAL, & IT JOBS
2030 GOAL: 3,200

2,825 

SEMI-ANNUAL KEY MILESTONES

REGIONAL COMPETITIVENESS

- Traverse Connect's CEO & President, Warren Call, and Director of Government Relations, Haley Bennett, attended the Mackinac Policy Conference in May, where they engaged with business and policy leaders on key topics, including the state budget, new economic development legislation, and state housing initiatives. During the conference Traverse Connect developed a full itinerary of engagement opportunities with policy makers culminating in an evening networking event co-sponsored by The Northern Michigan Chamber Alliance.
- Successfully advocated for creating the [\\$60M Michigan Innovation Fund and an R&D tax credit](#). The legislation has specific carve-out language designating investment fund allocations for 20Fathoms in Traverse City and Northern Michigan Chamber Alliance partner, InvestUP.
- Hosted a successful Northern Michigan Policy Conference in January with record attendance. State and Federal policy makers joined business leaders from across Michigan to learn more about the region's advocacy priorities, and Governor Whitmer used the event stage to announce a new [employer-assisted housing fund](#).
- Traverse Connect continues to work in collaboration with 20Fathoms to roll out Small Business Support Hubs programming for Northwest Lower Michigan regional businesses, including early development of an E-Guide to Customer Discovery.
- The formation of the new legal entity for the Freshwater Research and Innovation Center is official! The new board of directors hosted the first meeting on February 5, 2025, to elect the board, approve articles of incorporation and bylaws, and continue work to complete the facility, fundraising, and the [all-important task of ensuring the building is full of dedicated researchers and innovative companies](#).



BUSINESS ATTRACTION & INDUSTRY CLUSTER DEVELOPMENT



- Hosted the second annual [Northern Michigan Manufacturing Summit](#) in May where industry leaders discussed workforce issues, tariffs and trade, and innovation in the regional manufacturing sector.
- Hosted the [Skyline & Shoreline](#) showcase including aerial innovation demonstrations and testing over Grand Traverse Bay. This event is highlighted on page 14 of this report.
- In partnership with technology providers blueflite and DroneUp, and partners Munson Healthcare, and Central Michigan University's Rural Health Equity Institute, Traverse Connect secured a second round of funding of almost \$1M via the [Advanced Aerial Mobility grant](#) to scale a pilot program utilizing uncrewed aircraft systems to optimize the delivery of medical cargo between Munson's healthcare facilities. This second round of funding was announced during a specially hosted Media Day on May 19 to cover the medical cargo delivery pilot which took place between Munson facilities in May.



SEMI-ANNUAL KEY MILESTONES

- Traverse Connect's Director of Ecosystem Development Camille Hoisington, represented the region via a kiosk at the Michigan Pavilion at [XPONENTIAL 2025](#), in Houston TX, in May. Hosted by AUVSI (Association for Uncrewed Vehicle Systems International), XPONENTIAL is the leading conference for uncrewed systems and autonomous technology.
- Finalized a memo of understanding for the Northsky Consortium with 20Fathoms, NMC, Traverse Connect, and industry partners. The consortium's purpose is to strategically lead a concerted effort to transform Northern Michigan and the Traverse City region into a national hub for Uncrewed Aircraft Systems (UAS) and Advanced Aerial Mobility (AAM) to drive innovation, workforce development, and economic growth.



- Traverse Connect and the Grand Traverse Area Manufacturing Council partnered with the National Defense Industry Association – Michigan Chapter to host the first Northern Michigan Defense Conference in March. The event brought together regional manufacturers with the U.S. Army Contracting Command, Michigan Army National Guard, and other U.S. military leaders to strengthen defense industry supply chains.

- Building on the momentum of Traverse Connect's annual E-Boat Demo Days and MichAuto's annual Outdoor Recreation Roundtable, plans are underway to launch the inaugural 'ReShore' event in August this year. ReShore will convene innovators, industry leaders, and policymakers to spotlight Northern Michigan's rising leadership in bluetech, outdoor recreation, advanced

aerial systems, and future mobility. Stay tuned!

TALENT INITIATIVES

- The Michigan Economic Development Corporation awarded Prosperity Region 2 (Northwest Michigan) a \$500,000 talent program grant for 2025 to support a remote worker study, and expansion of the Michigan's Creative Coast program, and rural talent attraction efforts. The grant was awarded to Networks Northwest and the Collaborative Development Council, including Northern Lakes Economic Alliance (Petoskey), Traverse Connect, the Manistee Chamber, and the Alliance for Economic Success (Cadillac).
- Expanded and improved the [Michigan's Creative Coast Resume Pack](#) initiative that provides resumes from job seekers delivered directly to the inbox of employers and HR managers.
- Leadership Grand Traverse and a new Traverse Connect leadership development program, Let Her Speak, concluded the most recent sessions this spring with ceremonies and presentations of the program participants.



- The Michigan Growth Office announced its latest round of [Make MI Home grants](#) to new programs that will retain and attract a talented workforce statewide. Northwest Michigan's consortium of Traverse Connect, Networks Northwest, Alliance for Economic Success, Charlevoix Area Chamber of Commerce, Manistee Area Chamber of Commerce, and Petoskey Regional Chamber of Commerce will provide housing assistance to retain and attract professionals working or relocating to work in the Northwest region.

SEMI-ANNUAL KEY MILESTONES

PUBLIC SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS

- Completed a Unified Prosperity Plan in partnership with Grand Traverse County Economic Development Corporation and based upon a series of 2024 workshops with leaders from the sixteen municipalities within Grand Traverse County.
- Renewed economic development services contract with East Bay Township for a three-year term, including a Marketing Plan for the Township as part of the Redevelopment Ready Community certification process.
- Renewed an economic development services contract with the City of Traverse City for a three-year term.
- Traverse Connect continues professional services agreements for economic development work with East Bay Township, Garfield Township, Traverse City Downtown Development Authority, TVC-Cherry Capital Airport, and Grand Traverse County. These public/private partnerships are critical to Traverse Connect's long-term efforts in entrepreneurial ecosystem development and talent attraction for the region.

ENTREPRENEURIAL ECOSYSTEM HEALTH

Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Growth Model

At Traverse Connect, our approach to economic development is forward-thinking and non-traditional. Instead of focusing all our resources on “chasing smokestacks,” we value a healthy mix of attracting new business to the region while supporting the growth of our existing companies and encouraging the creation of new industries from the ground up.

Building a vibrant entrepreneurial ecosystem means fostering a culture of openness and information exchange between companies and across industries within our region, from corporate headquarters and startup entrepreneurs, down to Main Street coffee shop founders. Our goal is to ignite a community of entrepreneurs and local partners who feed off each other’s talent, creativity, and support at each stage of growth. By focusing on local business conditions, we hope to create clusters of new firms and industries that ultimately produce a fertile landscape long term.

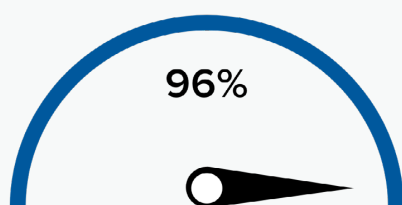
By encouraging the growth of our existing assets – healthy partner relationships, the scaling up of our existing companies – and attracting new business, we will see our already vibrant entrepreneurial ecosystem continue to flourish and grow.

Business Growth Barometer Survey

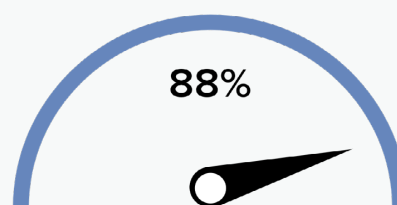
Traverse Connect conducts a quarterly Business Growth Barometer Survey of investor and member businesses, aimed at providing a snapshot of the regional business sentiment, outlook, and current challenges. Quarterly surveys inform Traverse Connect’s strategic priorities and help it respond to the needs of the business community.

The survey asks two simple questions:

1) Is our region a good place to grow your business?



2) Is our region improving as a place to grow your business?

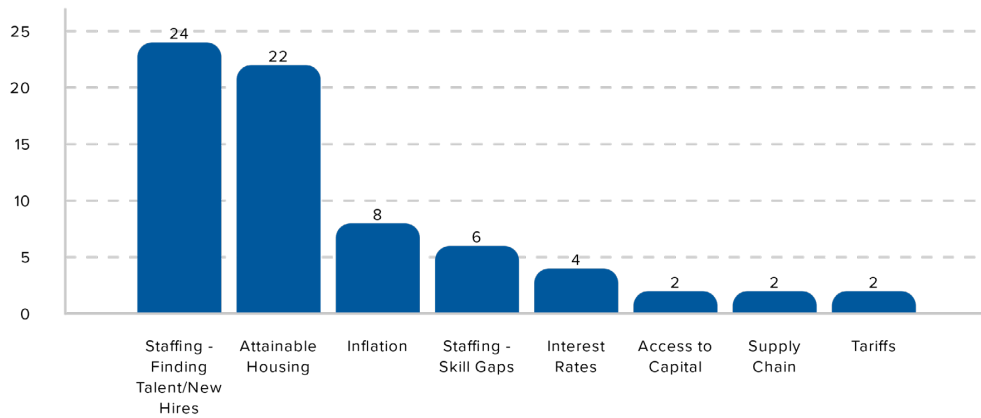


The results of the **most recent survey (Q1 2025)** show that 96% of respondents agree that the Grand Traverse region is a good place to grow their business, with 88% in agreement that the region is improving as a place to grow their business; both measurements showed a significant increase from the fourth quarter of 2024.

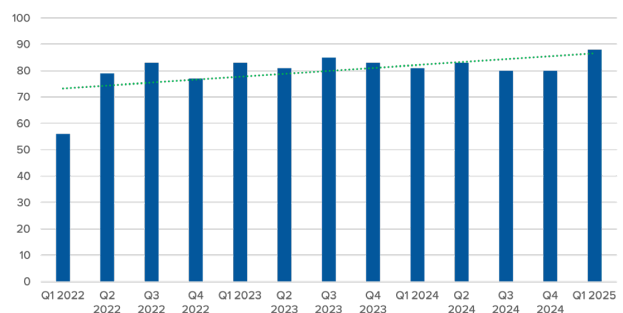
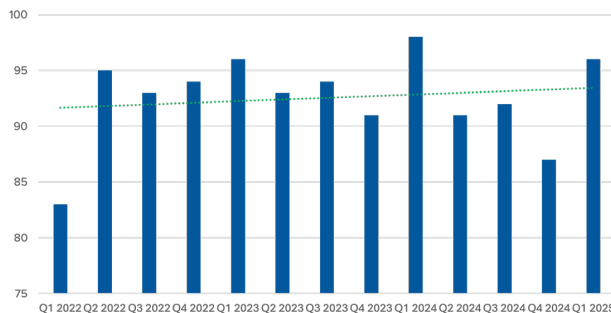
Business Growth Barometer Survey

WHAT IS THE SINGLE-BIGGEST BARRIER TO GROWING YOUR BUSINESS?

Changes to the 2025 survey offered respondents two different staffing-related responses to the question, “What is the single-biggest barrier to growing your business?”: finding and hiring talent, and skill gaps. Nearly a quarter of respondents cited finding and hiring talent as their primary barrier to growth. Traverse Connect and other economic development partners in Northwest Michigan will be working on talent attraction and retention strategies in the second quarter of 2025.



GROWTH BAROMETER REGIONAL BUSINESS OUTLOOK



1) Is our region a good place to grow your business?

2) Is our region improving as a place to grow your business?



REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

*Traverse Connect has identified **target businesses and industry clusters** with strong potential to prosper and thrive in Northern Michigan. Place-based and tech-based economic development strategies consider both the industries already rooted in the region and the area's unique natural resources and assets. Traverse Connect has worked to define and promote Northern Michigan's distinct value proposition and market opportunities—highlighting the region's existing businesses, infrastructure, and cultural assets that form a competitive entrepreneurial ecosystem.*

Target Market Engagement

FOSTERING THE ADVANCED AERIAL MOBILITY INDUSTRY

THE VISION: Building A National Hub for Commercial Drone Innovation and Workforce Development

Traverse Connect continues to advance the vision of establishing the Grand Traverse Region as a national hub for commercial drone innovation and workforce development. In close collaboration with regional partners, we are steadily building the infrastructure, partnerships, and programs needed to support this growing advanced aerial mobility (AAM) industry—from FAA-certified workforce training and BVLOS (Beyond Visual Line of Sight) corridors to real-world testing environments and a thriving startup ecosystem. With a strategic focus on developing this industry cluster, we remain committed to positioning Northern Michigan as a leader in uncrewed aerial systems, strengthening local industries, and attracting national attention and investment.



Medical Delivery Drone Projects Contribute to Region's Economy
Traverse City Record-Eagle, May 2025

ADVANCED AERIAL MOBILITY ACTIVATION FUND AWARD

Traverse Connect Receives Second Round of Grant Funding to Further Implement Advanced Aerial Mobility Pilot Programs

In July 2024, Traverse Connect received a grant from the Advanced Aerial Mobility (AAM) Activation Fund, a collaborative effort between the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), the Office of Future Mobility and Electrification (OFME), and the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC), with support from Newlab, to streamline AAM growth in Michigan. As a 'regional implementation partner,' Traverse Connect has collaborated with partners in technology, higher education, nonprofits, and the private sector to pilot various drone technology use cases in northern Michigan. The projects receiving funding are outlined below:

RURAL HEALTHCARE DELIVERY & HOSPITAL SYSTEM OPTIMIZATION

Over a three-week period in May, Traverse Connect collaborated with Munson Healthcare blueflite, DroneUp, and Central Michigan University's Rural Health Equity Institute to deliver laboratory samples and medical supplies between Munson Medical Center and two of its facilities—Munson Dialysis Center and Copper Ridge Surgery Center. These flights are part of an ongoing effort by Munson Healthcare, blueflite, and DroneUp to iterate and refine a drone-based delivery system that optimizes supply chain logistics, improves quality, and supports timely patient care.

This initiative aims to enhance healthcare access in rural communities by streamlining logistics through drone technology. In partnership with Munson Healthcare,

technology providers DroneUp and blueflite, and Central Michigan University's Rural Health Equity Institute, the project is testing the use of drones to transport lab samples, medical supplies, and other critical healthcare goods. The objective is to demonstrate a faster, more efficient delivery method that reduces reliance on road transport and strengthens supply chain resilience across northern Michigan's rural hospital network.

Medical drones to begin pilot flights in Traverse City
WCMU Public Radio, May 2025

Fostering the Advanced Aerial Mobility Industry

Phase 1 of the project, which began in May 2025, focuses on testing VLOS (Visual Line of Sight) drone deliveries between Munson Medical Center and the two participating facilities. Future phases will expand this work; Phase 2 will test BVLOS (Beyond Visual Line of Sight) capabilities.

In May 2025 it was announced that a second round of

funding in the amount of almost \$1M will be administered by Traverse Connect to implement a ramped-up Phase 3 of multi-mission BVLOS flights to transport medical cargo between multiple Munson Healthcare facilities. The long-term goal is to establish a sustained, scalable drone delivery logistics program for rural healthcare systems in Michigan and beyond.



Record-Eagle photo/Jan-Michael Stump



Record-Eagle photo/Jan-Michael Stump



Munson Healthcare photo/Megan Brown



Munson Healthcare photo/Megan Brown

[*Munson Healthcare tests drones for faster medical supply delivery – UpNorth Live, May 2025*](#)

[*Munson Healthcare working towards drone delivery of prescriptions, test samples – 9&10 News, May 2025*](#)

[*Local drone project lands another \\$950,000 from state – Traverse City Record-Eagle, May 2025*](#)

[*Munson Healthcare trials drones for streamlined medical logistics - AirMed & Rescue, May 2025*](#)

[*Michigan Drone Delivery Project Lands Second State Grant of \\$950,000 - DroneXL, May 2025*](#)

Target Market Engagement

SKYLINE & SHORELINE: THE INTERSECTION OF DRONES & WATER

On May 6, 2025, Traverse Connect and its partners hosted an event — Skyline & Shoreline: West Bay Aerial Mobility Showcase — a public demonstration of how advanced drone technologies can be applied to solve real-world challenges across public safety, environmental monitoring, and infrastructure planning. Held at Discovery Pier on the shores of Grand Traverse Bay, the event drew a crowd of industry leaders, community stakeholders, and the public to witness three live flight missions and hear from key leaders shaping Michigan’s growing aerial mobility ecosystem.

Highlights of the event included a simulated Search and Rescue operation featuring a blueflite drone working in tandem with the U.S. Coast Guard emergency response team and the USCG helicopter. In the demo, the drone

located a missing vessel, dropped a beacon and strobe light, and effectively acted as a rapid-response tool in life-saving missions. Other missions included a water sampling demonstration led by Northwestern Michigan College’s Water Studies Institute and UAS program, and bathymetric mapping of the lakebed using LiDAR-equipped drones from Frontier Precision—showcasing the versatility of drone technologies in environmental research and monitoring. Opening remarks were delivered by representatives from the Michigan Department of Transportation, Office of Future Mobility and Electrification, Newlab, Northwestern Michigan College, and Traverse Connect.

The event was attended by approximately 100 individuals and received good press coverage.



[SKYLINE & SHORELINE: Drone tech advances in rescue, research here – Traverse City Record Eagle, May 2025](#)

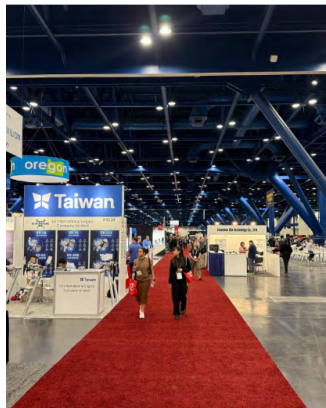
[Blueflite showcases cutting-edge drone technology – Vertical Mag, May 2025](#)

[Traverse Connect shows how drones can be used in Northern Michigan - 9&10 News, May 2025](#)

Target Market Engagement

XPONENTIAL

Traverse Connect was represented in Houston, TX, at [XPONENTIAL 2025](#), the leading conference for uncrewed systems and autonomous technology. Hosted by AUVSI (Association for Uncrewed Vehicle Systems International), XPONENTIAL convenes global industry leaders to explore emerging tech, policy, and integration challenges. Traverse Connect and the northern Michigan NorthSky Consortium exhibited under the Michigan Pavilion, organized by MEDC, showcasing Northern Michigan's growing role in advanced aerial mobility, research, and business attraction. With XPONENTIAL coming to Detroit in 2026, this was a key opportunity to attract new AAM businesses and position the region as a destination for autonomy and aerial mobility innovation.



Regional Strategic Priority

BUSINESS EXPANSION

HELPING COMPANIES GROW AND SCALE IN THE GRAND TRAVERSE REGION

CENTURY, LLC

Century, LLC – City of Traverse City

Century, LLC, the Traverse City-based group of three manufacturing companies, Century Specialties, Century Sun, and Clark Manufacturing, has secured a seven-year, \$46 million contract with Bell Flight to produce main rotor shafts for their civil helicopters.

Cherry Republic – Leelanau County

The Make it in Michigan program announced its support of [Cherry Republic's expansion](#) in Empire Township, which will create 20 family-sustaining job opportunities. The project is a \$3.25million expansion which will add 16,000 to the existing 25,000 square foot facility.



Grand Traverse State Bank – Traverse City and Traverse City DDA District

Grand Traverse State Bank (GTSB) completed an acquisition of First State Bank of Decatur, the oldest chartered bank in the state of Michigan, with total assets of \$54 million. In early 2025, GTSB will seek regulatory approval to offer full-service banking to the region under the name Grand Traverse State Bank

JanTec, Inc. – Garfield Township

JanTec Inc., manufacturer of material handling and conveyor equipment & systems, purchased B&T Bearing Inc., a producer of ball transfer units, conveyor rollers and cargo handling equipment out of Louisville, Ky. The acquisition will allow JanTec to offer customers an expanded, engineered solution for their material handling needs, and B&T Bearings customers gain access to JanTec's handling and conveyance solutions.



Promethient – Garfield Township

Promethient, the locally-based startup company, recently finalized the installation of their Thermavance quick-touch heating and cooling climate control technology in 400 premium comfort seats at the Detroit Tigers' Comerica Park.

Regional Strategic Priority

BUSINESS GROWTH & RETENTION

THE ENTREPRENEURIAL ECONOMY

20FATHOMS' SMALL BUSINESS SUPPORT

In November 2023, 20Fathoms, our regional ecosystem partner supporting entrepreneurs and technology start-ups, received a Small Business Support Hubs grant from the Michigan Economic Development Corporation. The funding is helping support [20Fathoms' expansion](#) to offer its services to small businesses in all ten counties of Northwest Michigan, including Manistee, Charlevoix, Cadillac, and Petoskey. The support also means that Northwest Michigan entrepreneurs can access new funding and resources through its new partnerships with Michigan SBDC, Northern Lakes Economic Alliance, Venture North, and Traverse Connect. New services include grants, business consultations, educational programming, and professional service provider support. All entrepreneurs in Northwest Michigan are eligible.

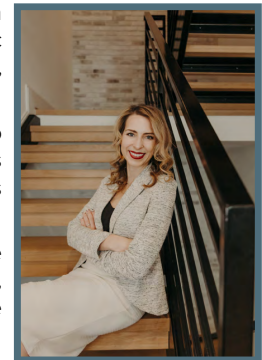
CLIENT SPOTLIGHT: FRACTIONAL INSIGHTS

Before taking the leap to become a founder and business owner, Erin Eatough was an academic. It might seem like a leap, but the research foundations she took from the academic world have informed her work in the private sector and shaped the services that her company, Fractional Insights, offers.

Fractional Insights is a “consulting, advisory, and research company founded by two organizational psychologists,” Eatough explains. “Our goal is to be able to help organizations understand and measure the connection between their people and their ultimate business outcome and goals.”

Fractional Insights offers consulting services for companies, helping them adapt to the future of work. While historically there has been a disconnect between HR and business outcomes, the rise of AI and conversations around the future of work have highlighted the need for the insights and services that Fractional Insights provides.

by 20Fathoms



20Fathoms Interview with Founder Erin Eatough

20Fathoms: How did you make the move from academia to starting your own company?

Erin: My cofounder Shonna Waters and I were seeing the world change to be more technology-driven and more AI-driven; we saw an opportunity to be useful. We could help companies see the alignment between people and business outcomes, really explaining, demonstrating, and proving that the way to get to your North Star goal is not in conflict with or mutually exclusive of dignified treatment of your people and investing in your people, rather it's an incredibly powerful strategy. The historical perspective is that “it increases cost,” but what we know from organizational science is that it's a business investment that pays off. That's where the science-to-practice gap is so clear. It was this point of frustration and motivation for us.

20Fathoms: When you think about 3-5 years in the future, what's your vision for your company? Where are you heading?

Erin: We are planning to continue advisory and professional services while scaling into a technology-enabled company to increase access for organizations. We are building a platform that seamlessly integrates AI-powered analytics with our Psychological Ergonomics™ framework to drive measurable organizational transformation. The platform combines an adaptive intelligence engine that analyzes workforce signals and data and generates tailored, evidence-based strategies, with a comprehensive measurement system that tracks metrics and connects them to business performance. This creates a scalable solution that automatically adapts to an organization's context while continuously optimizing workforce strategy through data-driven

Regional Strategic Priority: The Entrepreneurial Economy

insights and targeted interventions. However, our vision is to always have what we call “service in the loop” where expert support is looped into client success and the process, using technology to its highest and best use, and humans to theirs.

20Fathoms: How has working with 20Fathoms supported you as you’ve launched and grown your business?

Erin: I was a coworking member for about two years, which was amazing – it helped me see that there were resources around me for taking a leap out of the traditional employment status to becoming an entrepreneur. Having exposure to the community and resources that 20Fathoms played a big part in building my confidence to make a decision as big as leaving my job to start my own company.

I’ve completed a ton of the educational programming, like the Business Essentials course, the CO.STARTERS bootcamp, and I’ve tapped into other resources within the 20Fathoms community, like Aurora Patents. I have attended a lot of lunch and learns; I’m invested in continual personal development and growth. Especially when it comes to entrepreneurship – what else can I learn? I want to take advantage of the resources being offered.



TCNewTech was great; one reason that I wanted to do TCNewTech was because of the wraparound coaching to help you craft your pitch. I really took advantage and think it helped tremendously. [Fractional Insights took the top prize at TCNewTech last November.]

20Fathoms: Speaking of, congrats on winning the TCNewTech pitch competition last November! What was meaningful for you about the experience?

Erin: Beyond the win, sharing the stage with remarkable founders like Erin Blohm from Blooma, Jamie Kramer from Earthly After, and Brittanie Dabney of Ecosphere Organics was so meaningful. Each one of these brilliant women (and their teams) is tackling crucial challenges with powerful solutions. It was wonderful that we won, and also the line in the sand between any one of us could have shifted. I could have seen any one of them winning.

One of the most personally important parts of the whole experience was having my children in the audience. They usually just see me behind a laptop, missing family moments for “work.” At TCNewTech, they got to witness the impact and value of the sacrifices Shonna and I are making for our vision. They saw our work being recognized and celebrated by the community. And they got to hold a giant check!

MIT’S REGIONAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP ACCELERATION PROGRAM

Traverse Connect’s Director of Ecosystem Development, Camille Hoisington, is participating in MIT’s Regional Entrepreneurship Acceleration Program (MIT REAP) Global Program. She is one of twelve representatives making up Team Michigan, which was selected to join Cohort 11 of this prestigious two-year initiative aimed at accelerating innovation-driven entrepreneurship (IDE). Representing northwest lower Michigan, Camille joins a cross-sector group of leaders championed by Ben Marchionna, Michigan’s Chief Innovation Ecosystem Officer. The team includes stakeholders from government, academia, the private sector, risk capital, and the entrepreneurial community. Together, they will apply MIT’s evidence-based frameworks to strengthen Michigan’s statewide innovation ecosystem. Seven global teams are participating in this cohort, and Michigan’s inclusion highlights its growing momentum as a leader in entrepreneurial ecosystem development. The team completed their first three-day workshop in Cambridge, MA, in November, with an upcoming workshop in June, marking the beginning of their collaborative efforts to transform Michigan’s economic landscape through IDE.



Michigan Selected for Prestigious MIT REAP Global Program – MEDC, December 2024

Regional Strategic Priority: The Entrepreneurial Economy

20FATHOMS' EXPANDING STARTUP PROGRAMS AND RESOURCES

Coaching Services Available in Five Northwest Michigan Locations

In January, 20Fathoms announced an expansion of its one-on-one startup coaching opportunities to Elk Rapids and Petoskey. Startup coaching continues to be available in Traverse City, Manistee, and Benzonia. The service expansion allows entrepreneurs along the coastline to access this valuable service.

The coaches at 20Fathoms know how challenging being an entrepreneur is, and how valuable it can be to sit down with someone to talk through your ideas and challenges when you're starting a business. This service is open to all entrepreneurs and available at no cost as the program is underwritten by grant funding.

Startup coaches share their time, wisdom, and connections to help entrepreneurs build successful businesses and avoid common mistakes. They can help entrepreneurs with troubleshooting, opportunity and gap analysis, resources, connections, and getting clear about strategic priorities.

Two of the recent bootcamps hosted by 20Fathoms were specifically designed to meet the needs of Indigenous entrepreneurs. The Indigenous Business & Marketing Essentials bootcamp is hosted in partnership with New Mexico Community Capital and incorporates culture and tradition alongside business education.



Benzonia

When: Third Thursday of the month
4 – 6 pm

Where: Grow Benzie
5885 Frankfort Hwy, Benzonia, MI

Manistee

When: Third Wednesday of the month
9 – 11 am

Where: Man. Area Chamber of Comm.
400 River St, Manistee, MI

Traverse City

When: Every Thursday
1 – 4 pm

Where: 20Fathoms
10850 E. Traverse Hwy, Ste. 4400,
Traverse City, MI

Elk Rapids

When: Third Wednesday of the month
1 – 3 pm

Where: Waterside Office Building
212 River St, Elk Rapids, MI

Petoskey

When: Second Wednesday of the month

2:30 – 4 pm
Where: Honor Bank
Petoskey Commercial Loan Center
407 Michigan St, Petoskey, MI

Breakfast Lab Weekly Entrepreneur Event Series Continues This Summer

In early 2025, 20Fathoms introduced Breakfast Lab, a weekly series designed for entrepreneurs to tackle their most pressing issues with support from subject matter experts and peer entrepreneurs.

Whether entrepreneurs are just starting out with an idea or ready to start up, Breakfast Lab takes their business model to the next level.

Workshops begin at 9 AM, followed by work time and coaching from 10:30 to noon. Participants are welcome to attend either session or both, depending on their needs. Participants must have a completed business model canvas (business plan) in order to attend.

Each weekly workshop focuses on a particular topic and entrepreneurs can choose to attend all or selected topics that are relevant to them. Each topic will be offered on a rotational basis, and participants are welcome to attend as often as they'd like to continue to refine their work. Topics include customer discovery, marketing & sales, cost, revenue & financial modeling, MVP/product-market fit, fundraising, and storytelling & pitching.

Interested entrepreneurs can learn more and register on [20Fathoms' Breakfast Lab page](#).

Regional Strategic Priority: The Entrepreneurial Economy

20FATHOMS CLIENT SPOTLIGHT: 8BIT INSIGHTS

by 20Fathoms

Data consultant Sabrina Jordan has done it all; from data architecture to data engineering, data analysis and reporting, her career has taken her across a wide range of industries. That experience serves her well in her new role as entrepreneur. She founded her own consulting company, 8bit Insights, in 2024.

Rewind four years. In 2020, Sabrina took a job at Blue Granite Consulting. “That’s where I fell in love with consulting,” she reflects. “I felt like I’d found my niche. It was the best company I’d ever worked for, and I was very excited about it. I felt fulfilled every day when I went to work.” Two years later, the company was acquired. Sabrina didn’t feel aligned anymore, and decided to launch her own business, rooted in her values. Instead of a privately-owned company, she planned to operate as employee-owned.



As she journeyed down this path, Sabrina wanted to network and connect with other women, especially women who understood how challenging it is to start your own business. That led her to Women in Tech, a monthly networking happy hour hosted by 20Fathoms at Earthen Ales. “Getting clients, finding funding, just being in this male-dominated space, I knew there would be fantastic insights at this type of a gathering, and a community and camaraderie that would hopefully bring success to all of us,” she says.

20Fathoms Interview with Founder Sabrina Jordan

20Fathoms: What is 8bit Insights? What does it look like for someone to work with you?

Sabrina Jordan: Almost every business has data problems that they don’t know how to approach. Maybe they have multiples systems and the data doesn’t talk to each other; they might have really burning business questions they don’t know how to answer because inventory data and sales data are in different places. Having a data consultant come in that can build them a system that can answer those questions is the greatest value I can think of.

When someone gets in touch, we do a discovery call; I introduce myself briefly but we spend most of the time getting into the challenges they face, the questions they want to answer, digging into their needs.

If it looks like they are going to be a good fit, and I have possible solutions, we talk about a proposal and there might be more discovery calls to ensure what I am proposing will work, we check in throughout the process, and there’s a wrap up call at the end.

A lot of consulting companies want you to keep coming back but I ensure you have the skills to continue independently. If you want to come back for another project it’s because you trust us, not because you didn’t have another choice.

20Fathoms: What’s your vision for your company?

Sabrina: Ultimately I’d love to have 64 employees. That’s the point at which I feel you can have a completely flat hierarchy. It’s also a data joke!

I feel like it’s the best number of people to stay connected, where you can fall back on each other and have questions, get expertise, ensure that everyone in the company is able to be the best that they can be. They’re not forgotten, they’re not overlooked or lacking support. To me that’s the right size before you start to get too big.

I’m looking for sustainable growth, looking for an equilibrium instead of constant growth and striving. For some companies if you just keep striving for growth you end up never hitting the mark on a great culture or satisfied clients.

I would love to have a sustainable company that pays employees really well and has the best benefits you can get by staying small and agile and targeted.

20Fathoms: How did you get involved with Women in Tech? What made you decide to come out for the first time?

Sabrina: I was hoping to network with other women – especially those who understand how difficult it is to get started with your own business, to get clients, find funding, and be in a traditionally male-dominated space. I knew there would be fantastic insights, and community/camaraderie that would hopefully bring success to all of us.

20Fathoms: What has come out of your involvement with Women in Tech?

Regional Strategic Priority: Business Growth & Retention

Sabrina: First and foremost, my amazing branding and website! I had tried to do my own website and logo, and it was fine, but when I met Jaime [Edmondson] at Women in Tech and she started talking about how she was looking for clients to get started and was offering a special, I looked at her website Spellbound Creative Studio. I was so blown away by the quality, comparing it to my own.

I didn't feel legitimate with the website I'd built myself... it looked like all the others. Jaime's process helped me define my business more than I ever thought I would need to define it. We got so involved in the details and really honed in on what makes 8bit so unique from the competition.

It was more than just a brand and a website; it helped me understand who I am and who my company is. That never would have happened if it weren't for Women in Tech. I wouldn't have sought it out; I would have assumed it would be too expensive.

At Women in Tech, the people who have showed up have come from all sorts of different walks of life, different places in their life, from college students who have questions about what it's like to work in tech to retired people who are looking to start another business in tech or continue a side project. That variety is what makes the community so strong and gives you so much insight that can help you out. Despite that huge variety, there's such a strong bond in the women who show up. That's what makes it so valuable and rewarding.

20FATHOMS' PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT: WOMEN IN TECH

Each month Women in Tech gathers to build community and support amongst women working in, or interested in, the tech industry and tech-related roles.

"It can be intimidating for women to show up to a meetup, so we keep it as casual as possible," says Gretchen Swanson, Director of Talent at 20Fathoms and Women in Tech's regular host. "The only agenda is that there's no agenda!"

Women in Tech was founded in 2020 by two local tech professionals at the time, Courtney Bierschbach and Cotopaxi Lyon, in partnership with 20Fathoms. The goal was to expand networking opportunities, provide support, and discuss shared challenges and experiences. Five years later, the group is still going strong.

Gatherings are often made up of half-new and half-returning women. This dynamic mix ensures that everyone has someone to talk to, new connections are consistently made, and no one needs to feel hesitant breaking into an established group.



Women in Tech gathers on the third Wednesday of the month at 5 pm at Earthen Ales.

Regional Strategic Priority

TALENT ATTRACTION & GROWTH

DEVELOPING A ROBUST TALENT PIPELINE

TALENT ATTRACTION: MICHIGAN'S CREATIVE COAST SUPPLEMENTAL

Traverse Connect continues to build upon the Michigan's Creative Coast talent attraction campaign and introduced several new statistical reports that convey the value of Michigan's Creative Coast programs with metrics such as job views, successful moves, successful hires, new businesses started, and the top national out-of-state origins of the program applicants. The recently published Michigan's Creative Coast Job Board Report details metrics and testimonials which convey the value of this program. The report covers job views, successful relocations, new hires, new businesses started, and the top local and out-of-state origins of the program applicants.

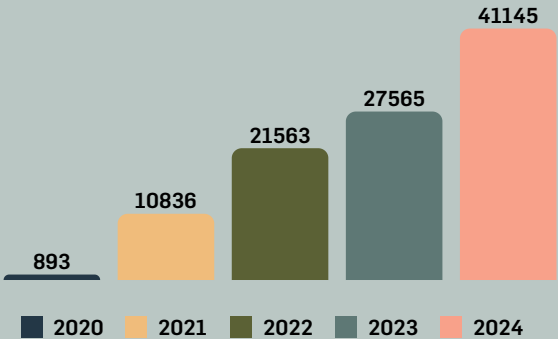


JOB BOARD PERFORMANCE REPORT

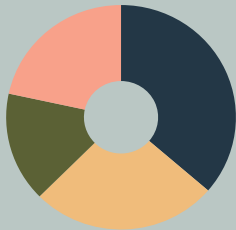
GROWING FAMILY SUSTAINING CAREERS IN THE GRAND TRAVERSE REGION

The Michigan's Creative Coast Job Board is a high-quality and curated showcase of key employers and family-sustaining job opportunities available in the Grand Traverse region. Curation of the job board is defined around pay rate parameters to ensure alignment with Traverse Connect's mission to encourage the growth of family-sustaining careers in the region.

JOB VIEWS OVER TIME



JOB VIEWS PER MAJOR EMPLOYER



Munson Healthcare	9,442
Interlochen	6,825
Britten Inc.	4,117
Northwestern Michigan College	5,622

"When I started job searching, I always looked through the job board posts. I saw the position almost immediately after it was posted. My boss still jokes about how fast she got an email from me following the post! We connected via email, scheduled an interview and I was hired later that week."

TESTIMONIAL 2022

REACH & IMPACT

TOP USER LOCATIONS

Traverse City, MI
Ashburn, VA
Houston, TX
Dallas, TX
Atlanta, GA
Miami, FL
Garfield Township
Moses Lake, WA
San Antonio, TX
Detroit, MI
Charlotte, NC
Des Moines, IA
Orlando, FL
Chicago, IL

“Loved the platform, super easy to use and great candidates came through!”

3,418

**AVG. JOB
VIEWS/MONTH**

#1

**MOST VIEWED
PAGE**

108,225

**PAGE VIEWS
IN 2024**

I've always enjoyed swiping through the Creative Coast job posts to see the diverse opportunities in the Traverse City area. Recently, I found a great position with National Vacuum Equipment that I was interested in. I followed through to meet them in person at the Northwestern Michigan College career fair, applied, and got the job!

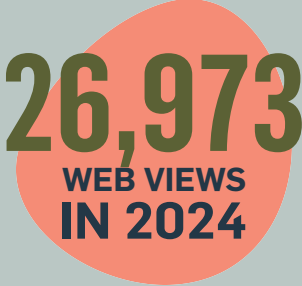
TESTIMONIAL 2021

“The job board is valuable as we have had candidates apply from other areas of the state and have had more visibility since using.”

NORTHERN NAVIGATORS PROGRAM REPORT

OPENING THE DOORS OF GRAND TRAVERSE TO NEW IDEAS, PEOPLE & GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES.

Acting as "regional ambassadors," our Northern Navigators are people who have chosen to live in the Grand Traverse region and who can help prospective residents, newcomers to the area, and locals alike feel welcomed and connected, all while offering knowledge of regional lifestyle amenities, recreation, schools, healthcare, real estate, and industry and career opportunities. Some are Traverse area locals, others have made the choice to recently move here themselves, and all of them can offer their advice from their unique experiences.



- INDUSTRIES REPRESENTED**
- Business & Corporate
 - Real Estate
 - Healthcare
 - Education
 - Remote
 - Nonprofit
 - Arts & Culture
 - Tech & Entrepreneurship

- AREAS OF EXPERTISE**
- Career Opportunities
 - Real Estate & Housing
 - Childcare
 - Entrepreneurship & Tech
 - Making Friends & Getting Involved
 - Outdoor Recreation
 - Food & Beverage Scene
 - Leadership Development

TESTIMONIALS OVER THE YEARS

"The Northern Navigator program is a priceless resource and a reflection of the type of supportive community that defines Traverse City. She kindly facilitated connections to other community members and provided a thorough list of resources for networking opportunities. I can't think of anything to improve - the program is already above and beyond my initial expectations!"

"We reached out to multiple organizations in Michigan, but it was the Michigan's Creative Coat program in Traverse City that stood out by providing us with excellent resources, including the outstanding Northern Navigators. Impressed by their expertise, we arranged another call focused on our interests in outdoor activities and community involvement. From our perspective, Northern Navigators has proven to be an exceptional resource, and we enthusiastically recommend their services to everyone we meet."

"This is the coolest and most helpful resource I could've asked for. What an incredible thing to offer people considering a move to your city. It seems that Northern Navigators are quite a diverse bunch, but it was awesome for me to meet with someone who I feel like I have a lot in common with. Such a fan of Camille and this great service!"



NORTHERN EXPLORERS PROGRAM REPORT

WELCOMING NEWCOMERS & BOOMERANGS TO THE GRAND TRAVERSE REGION

Since 2021, the Northern Explorers program aims to attract talent to the Grand Traverse region through targeted invitations and networking opportunities. Once per year, Traverse Connect and Michigan's Creative Coast invite 10 individuals from outside the Grand Traverse region to visit as our VIP guests and attend two special events. These individuals are featured with their bio and resume to the Traverse Connect and Michigan's Creative Coast audiences leading up to the events. Notably, several participants have been successfully hired by local organizations, contributing to the region's workforce diversity and economic vitality.



“Shortly after my move to Traverse City, Michigan from Chicago, Illinois, I heard of Michigan's Creative Coast and was extended the opportunity to attend the [Northern Explorer program]. This program consisted of mentorship and exposure in the Grand Traverse region that allowed me to secure a role with Britten Inc. as a Content Manager. I have been embracing the transition from big corporate to a local family-owned business. I am grateful for this opportunity and excited to live in a city I grew up loving!”

TESTIMONIAL 2021

REACH & IMPACT

OUT-OF-STATE ORIGINS

Atlanta, GA
Baltimore, MD
Charlotte, NC
Cincinnati, OH
Denver, CO
Houston, TX
Indianapolis, IN
Juneau, AK
Los Angeles, CA
Minneapolis, MN
Nashville, TN
United Kingdom

HIRED BY

- Britten Inc.
- Community Foundation
- Northwest Education Services
- World Magnetics
- Glen Lake Association

IN-STATE ORIGINS

Detroit
Grand Rapids
Holland
Kalamazoo
Royal Oak
Saginaw AND MORE...

"Just this week I closed on a house thanks to much support from Meg Zammit. The Northern Explorers program introduced me to Northern Navigators who encouraged me to pursue remote opportunities and introduced me to Meg, who helped me find my home in the community. I'm really looking forward to moving back to the area and getting reconnected with the community. Looking forward to being able to call Michigan home again!"

TESTIMONIAL 2022

