



Grand Traverse County Planning & Development

Planning ■ Land Bank ■ Housing Initiatives
Brownfield Redevelopment ■ Economic Development

Planning & Development Department (P&D) staff is committed to providing professional expertise and service to the people of Grand Traverse County. Based on sound planning principles and ethics, the mission of the Planning & Development Department is to assist the County in the development and implementation of its vision and support its respective boards and commissions by:

- ◆ Facilitating a community-based structure for creating and promoting plans so they are broadly used as the basis for all future decision making;
- ◆ Pursuing opportunities for implementation of projects consistent with the County's vision;
- ◆ Helping the County achieve a higher level of understanding and commitment towards its potential;
- ◆ Developing partnerships with other departments and agencies to achieve common goals;
- ◆ Nurturing public trust and community involvement by conducting all efforts in an open, accessible manner.

2014 Highlights:

- ❖ The **Bayshore Corridor Strategy** concluded Phase I of an effort to improve the 10-mile corridor along the Grand Traverse Bay from Acme to Greilickville. Resolutions of support were passed by local planning commissions. For more information, click on the Bayshore icon at: masterplan.grandtraverse.org
- ❖ The **Community Development Agreement** between Grand Traverse County, the City of Traverse City, and the Traverse City Downtown Development Authority focuses on local economic and community development activities in the City and development of a county-wide economic strategy.
- ❖ **Northern Nexus** is the new name for the Grand Traverse region's Next Michigan Development Corporation. Northern Nexus provided abatements for two local growing companies. Go to www.northernnexus.org
- ❖ **Housing** has come to the forefront of the Department's activities, including a new management agreement with Homestretch Nonprofit Housing Corporation and the kick off of a joint housing task force focused on the Traverse City urban area.

GOVERNMENTAL CENTER
400 BOARDMAN AVE, 3rd FLOOR
TRAVERSE CITY, MI 49684
(231) 922-4676
www.grandtraverse.org/planning
Monday - Friday 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

John Sych, AICP, Director
jsych@grandtraverse.org

Karen McIntyre, Planning Technician
kmcintyr@grandtraverse.org

Tyler Bevier (Contract Assistant)
tbevier@grandtraverse.org

Jean Derenzy, Deputy Director
jderenzy@grandtraverse.org

Marcia Carmoney, Office Specialist
mcarmane@grandtraverse.org

(VACANT), Housing Coordinator

Annual Report 2014



Grand Traverse County Planning Commission

The mission of the Grand Traverse County Planning Commission is to enhance the quality of life in and around Grand Traverse County by being a reliable and objective planning source and partner.

Balanced development. Quality of life.

Bayshore Corridor Strategy completes Phase I

As an implementation effort of the new County Master Plan, Department staff initiated a planning effort for the corridor (US-31, M-72, M-22) along the south end of Grand Traverse Bay linking the communities of Acme, East Bay, Traverse City and Elmwood. Phase I wrapped up in 2014. The next phase will be focused on three strategies for the corridor: Implementation of transportation improvements (i.e., crosswalks, bike lanes, etc.); development of common zoning standards; and, creation of a branding and wayfinding strategy. Visit masterplan.grandtraverse.org and click on the Bayshore icon.

PACE finances energy projects for local businesses

Energy projects will be more affordable in Grand Traverse County since the Board of Commissioners approved a Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) program that will help businesses obtain financing. PACE districts provide financial options for energy projects for commercial, industrial and multifamily properties. No taxpayer money is used. An eligible property owner may obtain financing from a private lender to complete certain energy projects on their property, which is then treated as a special assessment district. Companies can save money by making their properties more energy efficient. Up to 100% of the proposed energy project's cost can be covered under a PACE special assessment. Because financing under PACE creates a special assessment district enforced by the local government, energy projects using this financing may be amortized for between 10 to 20 years, much longer than a traditional loan extended for an energy project. Creating a special assessment district means the financing will continue regardless of who owns the property. If the property is sold, the new owner would make payments on the loan.



And the Winners Are...

Grand Traverse County Planning Commission and Grand Traverse County Chapter of the Michigan Townships Association held the 29th annual community planning awards banquet. **Rod Bogart**, Kingsley Village President, was awarded the **Frank Purvis Stewardship Award** and **Sarah Lucas**, Regional Planning Department Manager at Networks Northwest, was awarded the **Roger Williams Planner Award**. Outstanding developments and placemaking efforts honored were 160 E. Front Street and Water Bottle Filling Station Project in Traverse City, Reining Liberty Ranch in Garfield Township, Acme Shores: A Placemaking Strategy for the US-131 Shoreline Corridor, and the Fife Lake Swimming Lesson Program.

Local Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance Reviews
City, Village, or Township Master Plans/Master Plan Amendments – 3
Township Zoning Ordinance Amendments – 17
Other Reviews (PA 116 agreements, specialized plans, etc.) -- 5
Total Reviews – 25



Grand Traverse County

Brownfield Redevelopment Authority

The mission of the Grand Traverse County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority is to promote and facilitate the reuse and redevelopment of environmentally impaired properties.

Environment. Jobs. Taxbase.

Traverse Bay Area Credit Union is open for business

The Brownfield Redevelopment Authority assisted the TBA Credit Union project at the corner of Hope and East Front Streets in Traverse City. In addition to the major investment and job creation, essential environmental clean-up on the site reduced groundwater contamination that has impacted Sunset Park.

Hotel Indigo making progress

2014 saw continued work on the new Hotel Indigo at the corner of Grandview Parkway and Hall Street. The project has overcome unforeseen challenges, including addressing cyanide contaminated groundwater. As highlighted by Region 5 of the U.S. EPA, this \$17 million investment will create 45 to 55 jobs. The hotel is scheduled to open in 2015.

Uptown breaks ground

The groundbreaking for the Uptown development took place on West State Street in Traverse City. The Brownfield Redevelopment Authority approved a development agreement and CDBG grant agreement with developers. The redevelopment will create 13 unique multi-story condominiums, including five live-work, mixed-use units along the street frontage. First phase is anticipated to be completed in spring of 2015.

Indigo Hotel in September...



Uptown underway...



Cordia and the Completion of Building 50

The Cordia Senior Residential Club at Building 50 at the Village at Grand Traverse Commons has been completed. The Grand Traverse County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority has been instrumental in the redevelopment of the 386,740 square-foot building, a cornerstone to the Village, since work started over 10 years ago.

Cordia under construction...



Completed project...





Business expansion and attraction.

Grand Traverse County Economic Development

County's Revolving Loan Fund is source for New 10-County Loan Fund

Transfer of the revolving loan fund from the Grand Traverse County Economic Development Corporation (EDC) to the Traverse City Area Chamber of Commerce Foundation was completed in 2014. The revolving loan funds from Grand Traverse County and Benzie County are the source for a new 10-county loan fund as part of the Chamber's Connect to Capital program. The first project loan from fund in Grand Traverse County was for \$490,000 permanent working capital loan for Creekside Clinic to be used to hire up to 14 full time positions over two years.

YMCA Revenue Bond Issue

In 2014, the Grand Traverse County Economic Development Corporation (EDC) approved the issuance of \$4 million in limited obligation revenue bonds for the new \$14.7 million Grand Traverse Bay YMCA facility in Garfield Township. The YMCA facility will include an aquatics center, health and wellness center, and indoor tennis center. This bond issue has no impact on debt limits or requirement for financial reporting, and does not require the County's full faith and credit.



THE NEXT MICHIGAN DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION FOR THE GRAND TRAVERSE REGION

New Name and Brand

The Grand Traverse Region Next Michigan Development Corporation used a portion of its MEDC marketing grant to create a new brand and identity. The result is Northern Nexus. Northern Nexus is the new name for the Grand Traverse Next Michigan Development Corporation. The brand Northern Nexus reflects the Grand Traverse region as a home to a diverse set of industries, a dedicated workforce, and a hub for the Northern Michigan economy. Northern Nexus provides development assistance for expanding local businesses and new businesses locating in the area that are engaged in multi-modal commerce. The new website is www.northernnexus.org.

Two Abatements Assist Local Business Expansions

The Northern Nexus board approved its first abatements in 2014. The abatement for Quantum Sails in East Bay Township will assist in their expanding operations and recent \$382,000 equipment purchase while adding 8 jobs. The abatement for Electro Optics Technologies (EOT) will expand from its Long Lake Township facility with a new facility in East Bay Township. The new \$4,000,000 investment will allow EOT to expand beyond its current 75 positions by adding 25 new jobs. 80% of EOT's sales are international with a significant portion of their product being shipped out via air.



Grand Traverse County Economic Development

Collaboration. Investment. Community.

New Community Development Agreement unifies efforts

In 2014, a community development agreement approved by Grand Traverse County, the City of Traverse City, and the Traverse City Downtown Development Authority (DDA) provides an opportunity for the three entities to work proactively together on economic and community development projects and ultimately develop an economic strategy for the County.

Scope of services in the Community Development Agreement include:

Developments within DDA District: Work with private developers on existing and new plan concepts/new investment within the DDA and management of these projects. These services will include working with developers to review development plans and recommend public economic tools needed.

City-wide Development: Work with City Planning Commission, City Commission and County Board to develop an implementation plan for the established transportation corridors as outlined in the City's Corridors Master Plan. These corridors are recognized as neighborhood mixed-use districts that provide residents with goods and services that tie into downtown.

County-wide Economic Development Strategy: This strategic plan will identify the values of the community, realize the limits of government and establish joint ventures to implement economic opportunities; work to support long term jobs for Grand Traverse County residents and reinforce the County's key role in the regional economy; reinforce the message that businesses are a vital part of the community; support growth of local businesses, both small and large, in technology and non-tech fields; leverage the assets of higher education to build economic opportunities; create a County for the next generation; support investment in our community that creates new jobs; enhance commercial districts that provide residents with goods and services for the neighborhood(s) (ties directly back to the implementation of Corridors plan); and, cultivate an entrepreneurial and academic environment that fosters innovation and the encouragement to grow the cultural assets and entertainment activities that attract visitors and conventions.

A result of the strategy may be the identification of an economic development organization (EDO) to market and promote the County and region. This may include examining a variety of possible models; identifying additional community partners; and, making a recommendation and outlining the process for achieving this goal, if adopted.

Another result of the strategy is to establish a team of representatives from all taxing jurisdictions. The team will focus on tax increment financing (TIF) policy and assist in the coordination of "opting in" with any new TIF program or expansion. The team will be comprised of representatives from other tax-supported governmental units within the region. This team is critical to achieve successful implementation of any future TIF and support from the local taxing jurisdictions and having leaders from each of the organization is important to ensure communication is sent back to respective boards.



Restored properties. Stable neighborhoods.

Grand Traverse County Land Bank Authority & Housing Initiatives

The mission of the Grand Traverse County Land Bank Authority is to utilize tax-reverted properties, acquired properties and other resources for affordable housing and economic development opportunities through collaboration with community organizations and local governmental units. Housing Initiatives are overseen by the Grand Traverse County Land Bank Authority.

Michigan Fast Track Land Bank Authority awards County \$600,000

The County received \$600,000 from the Michigan Fast Track Land Bank Authority to address ground contamination in the area near the Hotel Indigo site. The funding comes in the form of an \$180,000 grant and \$420,000 loan. The funds were part of the US EPA Revolving Loan grant received by the Michigan Fast Track Land Bank Authority. This effort is being made to employ a phased approach to identify and implement the most advantageous remedial strategy for a cyanide contaminant plume underlying Traverse City Place project area as first identified in the Hotel Indigo project.

Housing rehabilitation program changes

Virginia Coulter, Housing Coordinator for Grand Traverse County's housing rehabilitation program, retired at the end of 2014. Virginia was an active housing leader in Grand Traverse County. Planning & Development will be maintaining the MSHDA funded rehabilitation program, but will be looking in opportunities to strategically realign the program with other housing services and/or agencies. In the interim, Tyler Bevier is assisting the Department in managing the rehabilitation program.

County takes lead in housing challenge

At the urging of the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA), Grand Traverse County entered into an administrative agent agreement with HomeStretch, the local non-profit housing developer. With the agreement, department staff has been working to complete various MSHDA-funded HomeStretch projects, including making reapplication for the MSHDA development grant for the Depot Neighborhood. Grant approval has since been granted by MSHDA. The staff is also assisting with the revamping of HomeStretch to make it a self-supporting organization that will be essential in future affordable housing developments and assisting the community meet its housing goals.

Joint Housing Task Force formed

Staff worked with City staff to develop a proposal for a housing task force for the Traverse City urban area where housing demands are highest, particularly for rental properties. In light of these housing challenges facing the community, a task force of County and local officials would provide needed leadership on developing organizational and financial mechanisms to expand housing choices in the County. The County's recently adopted Housing Inventory and Housing Strategy offer a good foundation for the task force. The proposal was approved by Grand Traverse County, the City of Traverse City, Garfield Township, East Bay Township, and the Traverse City Housing Commission. The task force will provide recommendations to define the role of local government in housing.

HUD Community Challenge Planning Grant successfully closed out

On June 3, 2014, the \$395,000 HUD Community Challenge Planning Grant to Grand Traverse County was officially closed out. The grant supported development of the new County Master Plan, the County Housing Inventory & Strategy, the City Corridors Master Plan, and the County Affordable Housing Trust Fund. The projects were a cooperative effort between the County, Traverse City, and Networks Northwest. Out of 583 eligible nationwide grant applicants, Grand Traverse County was one of only 42 award recipients.