Across Grandview Parkway

Strengthening Connections Between Downtown and the Bay
A Character Study and Design Guidelines for the City of Traverse City, Michigan
A project submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degrees of Master of Science and Master of Landscape Architecture at the University of Michigan’s School of Natural Resources and Environment, and for the degree of Master of Urban Planning from the Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning
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Faculty Advisor:
Dr. Larissa Larsen
Known as the Cherry Capital of the World, Traverse City is an economic and tourism hot-spot in the northwestern lower peninsula of Michigan. Located at the base of West Grand Traverse Bay, Traverse City’s mild climate and sandy beaches have made it a vibrant and popular place to live, work and play for generations. During the spring of 2005, the decommissioning and deconstruction of the City’s power station returned a significant portion of the Bay Front to open space. This newly acquired open space garnered significant attention from residents and city officials. While the area is a great location for a park or other pedestrian-oriented space, Grandview Parkway, the main east-west connector through the city, creates a physical and psychological barrier to accessibility between the downtown and the waterfront. This Character Study was developed to assist the city in an attempt to create safe and enjoyable pedestrian connections that will draw visitors back and forth between the downtown and the bay front. Public participation, site visits, historical research, and land-use evaluations were used to better understand the tangible and intangible qualities of Traverse City that combine to produce its unique personality. Information gathered during the character study process was then used to identify specific areas within the downtown core to concentrate on as key downtown-to-waterfront transition areas. This research and analysis culminated in a list of recommendations and suggestions, included at the conclusion of the Study, for enhancing and maintaining Traverse City’s character for future residents and visitors.
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The purpose of this Character Study is to understand the essence of Traverse City’s downtown character through a thoughtful review of the following: the city’s history, past and present planning initiatives, residents’ sentiments, and the consideration of sustainable development practices. In addition, the Traverse City Character Study serves as one of several sources which will inform a set of forthcoming design guidelines for creating new connections between the city’s Central Business District and the waterfront. Both of these documents are part of the larger “Your Bay, Your Say” initiative. This initiative brings the knowledge and ideas of Traverse City residents together with the expertise of Michigan State University and the University of Michigan to develop a contemporary vision for the West Grand Traverse Bay waterfront and enhanced connections between the bay and the downtown. This initiative consists not only of the authors of this study but also of undergraduate Landscape Architecture students from Michigan State University who participated in a design charrette with Traverse City residents in September of 2005 to generate design ideas and identify preferences. This character study was completed to partially fulfill the requirements for Master of Landscape Architecture, Master of Science, and Master of Urban Planning degrees from the University of Michigan in the spring of 2006. This project was completed over a sixteen month period from January 2005 to May 2006. The Traverse City Downtown Development Authority served as the project client.

character study rationale

The purpose of this urban character study is to understand the tangible and intangible qualities of downtown Traverse City that combine to create its unique personality. Kevin Lynch, the eminent urban design scholar, in his landmark 1960 text “The Image of the City”, noted the importance of the physical landscape in providing the settings for a meaningful everyday life. He stated that “A vivid and integrated physical setting, capable of producing a sharp image, plays a social role as well. It can furnish the raw material for the symbols and collective memories of group communications.”

Thus, the very nature of the built environment can contribute to or detract from the social life of the city. The citizens of Traverse City have long appreciated their scenic waterfront location and sought to shape their built environment in a harmonious and enlivening manner.

Traverse City has a well-established downtown core that is economically vibrant and therefore evolving. Centrally located industrial and residential neighborhoods can contribute to the aesthetic qualities of the downtown core. Jane Jacobs, in her seminal 1961 book “The Death and Life of Great American Cities” decisively concluded that “…lively, diverse, intense cities contain the seeds of their own regeneration, with energy enough to carry over for problems and needs outside themselves…” This regeneration is successfully represented in Traverse City, as it has matured from a small mill-town in the mid 19th century to the successful community that it is today, constantly evolving and revolving around its central downtown area and waterfront.

Traverse City’s cohesive character can be found in its downtown. Small shops and businesses that have withstood the retail shift towards big-box stores and the suburbanization of commerce are proflific. Its success is in part due to its location and pedestrian scale, sandwiched between the bay and the Boardman River. William Whyte, in his book “The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces,” noted the importance of density and urbanity in smaller cities:

“...some are blessed with a tight, well defined center, with some fine old buildings to anchor it. But many others have loosened up; they have torn down old buildings and not replaced them, leaving much of the space open. Parking lots and garages become the dominant land use, often accounting for more than 50 percent of downtown. ...they are so interspersed with parking lots that they don’t connect very well…”

While the variety of uses in the downtown and the physical waterfront setting of Traverse City have contributed to its unique character, it is the architecture of the area that has done the most to define Traverse City as a distinct Northern Michigan city. Many old buildings, such as the historic City Opera House, the Park Place Hotel, and the Hannah-Lay Mercantile Building, have been retained and preserved. These buildings serve as links to Traverse City’s past and form the foundation of the city’s architectural character. William Whyte described the function of historical buildings in well-working downtowns by saying:

“It is significant that the cities doing best by their downtowns are the ones doing best at historic preservation and reuse. Fine old buildings are worthwhile in their own right, but there is a greater benefit involved. They provide discipline. Architects and planners like a blank slate. They usually do their best work, however, when they don’t have one. When they have to work with impossible lot lines and bits and pieces of space, beloved old eyesores, irrational street layouts, and other such constraints, they frequently produce the best of their new designs – and the most neighborly.”

A city’s character is influenced by many things: the natural landscape, the uses contained within it, and the architecture of the area. However, it is only when people interact and interpret these factors that the character of a city becomes truly recognizable. Kevin Lynch captured this complex truth when he wrote that “nothing is experienced by itself, but always in relation to its surroundings, the sequences of events leading up to it, the memory of past experiences.” Preserving a city’s character requires thoughtfully distilling its essence and suggesting how change should be managed to promote the unique possibilities inherent to the city and its inhabitants.
Traverse City is located in the Northwest part of the Michigan’s Lower Peninsula, just south of the Leelanau Peninsula. In 2000, the city was home to 14,500 people, and encompassed just over 8 square miles. Incorporated in 1895, the city has a long and varied history predating this time.

This character study was undertaken at the behest of the city in an effort to: take stock of residents’ current attitudes and preferences on the city’s current form, determine the direction of the city relative to future development, and strengthen connections between the waterfront and downtown.

**Introduction**
For the purpose of this character study, we will be focusing on the area surrounding the downtown core, shown in Figure 3. This area is defined on the western edge by Oak Street, from the bay south to Fifth Street, continuing along Fifth Street to Wadsworth Avenue, south on Wadsworth to Sixth Street, east on Sixth to Locust Avenue, and south on Locust to Eighth Street. The southern edge of the district is defined by Eighth Street from Locust to Boardman Avenue. The eastern edge of the district is defined by Boardman between Eighth and State Street, continuing east on State to Railroad Avenue, northwest on Railroad Avenue to Front Street, east on Front Street to Grandview Parkway, then following Grandview Parkway west for a short length to just east of the mouth of the Boardman River.

Located at the intersection of wine country, Sleeping Bear Dunes, the Lake Michigan coast, and the numerous downhill skiing areas of Northern Michigan, Traverse City is one of Michigan’s premier vacation spots. As such, Grand Traverse County’s population has grown quickly: the 1970 population of 39,175 doubled to 77,654 by 2000. Growth in the county has averaged 15% a decade for the past 100 years, but a 40% growth rate from 1970 – 1980 left the county with a population far exceeding the city’s capabilities to provide services. In direct contrast to the county’s growth, the city saw a 4.3% population decrease over the past decade. The population declined from 15,155 in 1990 to 14,532 permanent residents in 2000. As a result of the population change throughout the county, Traverse City’s development in the past few decades has been more suburban in character. Much growth has taken place along the bay and south of downtown, past the natural barrier of Boardman Lake, and further out into the county.

The National Cherry Festival, held each summer on the bay front in downtown Traverse City, draws many tourists, both nationally and locally. In addition to this week-long event, Traverse City has worked hard to create year-round events, to draw both area residents and visitors to what is one of Northwest Michigan’s most vibrant downtowns.

Traverse City is the economic center of the region. Residents and visitors alike recognize that what distinguishes the city from other Northern Michigan towns is its vibrant downtown, diverse recreational offerings, the natural beauty of the surrounding area, and its small town atmosphere. It is in the hope of aiding Traverse City in retaining and enhancing these assets that we undertake this character study and the accompanying design guidelines.
Historical Synopsis

Like Michigan’s oldest towns and cities, Traverse City has a rich natural and cultural history. The Grand Traverse area’s unique landforms, water bodies, and climactic conditions were fundamental in shaping the indigenous and immigrant societies which depended upon the area’s resource base. The area’s extensive coastline, sandy beaches, rolling hills, verdant forests, surging rivers, and inland lakes continue to be prized assets for Grand Traverse residents and visitors.

There can be no precise date that marks the beginning of Traverse City’s story; however, the formation of the land and bays that lend the Grand Traverse area its shape is a useful starting point.
The region’s topography is largely a result of the movement and melting of glaciers as they receded around 6100 B.C. The area’s proximity to Lake Michigan, along with its protected bays, has resulted in a moderated climate. Grand Traverse’s natural history has had important implications for the ecology and commerce of the region over the millennia.

The first known inhabitants of the region, the indigenous mound-building peoples, are believed to have come to the area after the glaciers receded, and are thought to have depended upon agriculture, including corn. Much later, around the 1700s, Native Americans (primarily the Odawa and Ojibwa) took advantage of the area’s favorable climate and sandy soils to garden and tend fruit trees. Cherries, one of the agricultural products which have taken on cultural importance in the area’s modern history, were first cultivated by Reverend Peter Dougherty in 1852 at his mission in Omena.

In addition to fruit production, the Grand Traverse area’s water bodies and forests played a seminal role in the region’s modern development. The mid-1800s witnessed a significant influx of European settlers, attracted first by pine lumber and later by hardwoods. The history of the lumber industry in Traverse City is the history of its influential founders. The flurry of economic and demographic growth that lasted until the early 20th century depended upon the area’s rich forests and their proximity to a number of important water bodies. What is known today as Traverse City was particularly attractive for commerce and residence due to its location on the Boardman River. With its mouth at the foot of West Grand Traverse Bay, the river proved fundamental to the lumber industry’s growth, permitting workers to float timber downriver. The use of the land, river, and bay for logging operations led to the beginnings of a village; with mills and worker housing along the bay front, and institutional buildings, retail, services, and residences nestled in the crook of the river. By the late 19th century, increasing numbers of tourists began to arrive in Traverse City to enjoy the area’s natural beauty. Beachside resorts and hotels sprang up in response to this growing hospitality industry.

The Boardman River and other important features of Traverse City took their name from Captain Harry Boardman, one of the city’s first pioneers. In the mid-1800s he purchased 200 acres of land from the US Government between Boardman Lake and West Grand Traverse Bay. Boardman quickly resold his land to Perry Hannah, Tracy Lay, and James Morgan from Chicago. Hannah, Lay and Company was the first substantial employer in the city. The Company’s success exercised a heavy and lasting influence on settlement patterns in Traverse City, as well as its urban form. The village was formally laid out by lumber baron Tracy Lay, with Hannah, Lay, & Company donating land for the first courthouse, jail, and a number of other important institutions.

In 1913, a half million dollar cherry crop resulted in Traverse City’s designation as the cherry center of the nation. Traverse City commemorated its new status as the “Cherry Capitol of the World” with a festival for the first time in 1925.
The mid-1800s through the beginning of the 20th century witnessed the arrival of important transportation services, the enhancement of transit routes, the provision of the first public utilities, and increased construction activity. By the early 1870s, the first railroad came to Traverse City. This was a great boon for both commerce and the movement of new residents and tourists. The Hannah, Lay, and Company Mercantile Building, still standing today at the corner of Front and Union Streets, opened in 1863. A multitude of religious organizations formed and built places of worship from this time forward. Schools, a fire station, and a waterworks were added, and in 1885, Traverse City’s first electric light and power plant opened. The Northern Michigan Asylum (later known as the Traverse City State Hospital) opened the same year. Working-class immigrants concentrated in modest, but architecturally-interesting residences south of the Boardman River around Union and 8th Streets. At the same time, business and professional people began to form what is now the Boardman neighborhood. Cultural landmarks were born to serve the growing population of residents and tourists, including the City Opera House. Finally, important buildings that remain today were added to the downtown during the 1890s: the Masonic, Beadle, Munson, and Wurzberg Buildings, along with the Whiting Hotel. By 1895, Traverse City officially became a city and adopted a charter.

In 1900, long distance telephone service with the rest of the state was established. The new Boardman River Electric Light and Power Company began servicing buildings and streetlights. Improved and expanded utility service coincided with an explosive amount of construction during the first decade of the twentieth century. Between 1900 and 1905, almost 500 buildings were erected, forming the core of today’s downtown. By 1910, the city’s population was a little more than 12,000. The automobile had arrived in Traverse City and would only grow in popularity, bringing more visitors to the area. Regionally, agriculture was thriving. In the early 1910s, cherry production outpaced apples. In 1913, a half million dollar cherry crop resulted in Traverse City’s designation as the cherry center of the nation. Traverse City commemorated its new status as the “Cherry Capitol of the World” with a festival for the first time in 1925.

Although industry was on the decline, improvements to the city’s infrastructure, transportation networks, and urban form continued throughout the early- to mid- 20th century. Dangerous bridges spanning South Cass and Union Streets were replaced with two new bridges in the 1930s, and a new city airport opened in 1938. The landmark Park Place Hotel that sits at Park and State Streets was built by 1930. Traverse City Park Commissioner Conrad Foster spearheaded an immense effort using hundreds of volunteers in the early 1930s to clean up the waste leftover from industries on the bay. Foster and his volunteers also made a portion of the bay front into a public park. This would be the beginning of a number of city efforts to acquire property along the bay front for the establishment of park and recreational areas. Also during this decade, an aquarium, the Con Foster Museum and the Clinch Park Zoo – which would later move to the bay front – were constructed and opened to the public.

In 1940, Traverse City adopted the city manager form of government. The same year, the city began planning for the construction of Grandview Parkway to address increasing traffic and congestion. The Parkway was completed in 1953 and two years later, Front and State Streets became one-way. An additional significant development of the 1950s was the establishment of Northwestern Michigan College.
In the 1960s Traverse City reached its peak population of some 18,400 residents. As discussed in later chapters, this number would decline to today’s estimated 14,500 owing to the closing of the Traverse City State Hospital and the lure of growing suburban areas. There was increasing diversification of the area’s economic base in the 50s and 60s, though agriculture and tourism continued to play seminal roles in the economy. The 1960s also saw the formation of the Downtown Traverse City Association, an organization of merchants and other businesses whose purpose was to market and promote Traverse City. By the late 1970s, the Downtown Development Authority was formed as the impact of competition from shopping centers and malls was felt by downtown businesses. Finally, during these decades the people of Traverse City increased their support for conservation and preservation. Public support continued to grow for the “Open Space” along West Grand Traverse Bay as more buildings were removed, while a commitment to the preservation of a number of historic structures in the downtown also grew. (The We-Que-Tong Building was torn down in 1945. The Musselman Grocery Company Building and the J.C. Morgan Cider Mill came down in 1969 and 1970. Strong support for the preservation and enhancement of the “Open Space” continues today. In 2005, the last major industrial structure on the bay front, the Traverse City Light and Power Plant, was torn down.)

In the late 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s, additional improvements to infrastructure, parks and recreational opportunities, and important services proved to be fundamental in building the vibrant place that Traverse City is today. During these years, the Governmental Center Building was constructed to house both city and county offices. The Bay Area Transportation Authority (BATA) and the Traverse Area Recreation and Transportation (TART) Trail were both established, a new public library was built on Boardman Lake, and the redevelopment of the old state hospital into a new mixed-use Grand Traverse Commons began. The new airport added in the late 1960s, along with the expansion of healthcare and educational services through Munson Medical Center and Northwestern Michigan College, respectively, are other important milestones in the city’s recent history. Indeed, it is this progressive improvement in public amenities, social services, and environmental protection over the years that has made Traverse City’s downtown one of the healthiest for local businesses, and one of the most attractive to residents and visitors in the State of Michigan.

Natural History

The unique combination of landforms, water bodies, and air masses that meet in the Grand Traverse area create a wealth of natural resources. The extensive coastline, sandy beaches, rolling hills, verdant forests, surging rivers, and inland lakes have been prized for centuries by Grand Traverse residents and visitors.

Geomorphology

Geologists estimate that 14,500 years ago, the last ice sheet of the Wisconsin ice age covered most of what is now Michigan. As the ice sheet receded from the area that is now Grand Traverse County, around 8100 years ago, the sediments deposited by its melting bulk formed the Manistee moraine (“End Moraine” in Fig 10). The Manistee moraine is a broad ridge, three to four miles wide, that partially surrounds Traverse City, extends north into Leelanau County, and extends east from...
Acme to the point where the Kalkaska County line meets Round Lake. Two large ground moraines form most of Old Mission Peninsula and a portion of land east of East Grand Traverse Bay. Drumlins rise up from these ground moraines, giving these areas their picturesque rolling landscape. Along the shores of the bays are lake plains; these were once the bottom of glacial Lakes Algonquin and Nippising on which present-day Traverse City is located. Parallel beach ridges are interspersed with swales containing shallow ponds or swamp forest. South of the lake benches and north of the Manistee moraine is an area of outwash plains and glacial spillings. Traverse City and the area immediately surrounding it are on the Rubicon-Grayling soil association, which includes level to steep droughty soils. More specifically, the area that is now the Central Business District, along with all of the shore, is fairly level Lake Beach and Eastport Sand. Further south, all the way to the south end of Boardman Lake, the area is covered by East Lake-Manchelona loamy sands. The drumlins consist of well-drained gravelly sand and gravelly sandy-loam. Many of the narrow depressions between drumlins contain peat and other thick organic soils.

**Watershed**

Grand Traverse Bay is a large, deep, oligotrophic (ecologically "young") inlet of Lake Michigan, covering a surface area greater than 360 square miles, with a shoreline longer than 132 miles. Old Mission Peninsula divides the bay in two: West Grand Traverse Bay averages 167 feet in depth, with a maximum depth of 402 feet, while East Grand Traverse Bay averages 193 feet, with a maximum depth of 612 feet. Grand Traverse Bay drains a watershed of about 973 square miles, including more than 20 tributaries, the most important of which are Boardman River (which flows through Traverse City), Elk River, Mitchell Creek, Yuba Creek, and Acme Creek. The gravel and sand comprising so much of the region’s soil allows water to infiltrate and move through the soil readily. The tributaries of Grand Traverse Bay are therefore 95% groundwater fed, with stable, cold flows that create ideal habitats for cold-water fish.

**Climate**

The proximity of these landforms to Lake Michigan and the protected bays has a moderating effect on the area’s climate, creating a hybrid of continental and quasi-maritime climates. Like most large bodies of water, Lake Michigan retains the warmth of summer far into the autumn, and the cold of winter far into the spring. Winds from the south or southeast blow overland and this is sometimes the cause of abrupt temperature variation. However, winds traveling west over the Lake grow warmer or colder in accordance with the water temperature. By the time they reach the Grand Traverse area, westerly winds bring cooler temperatures in the spring which discourage plants from budding before the last frost. These winds bring warmer temperatures in the autumn, allowing plants more time to mature and bear fruit. The lake also stabilizes the yearly precipitation, so that rainfall from April to September tends to be well-distributed. Most thunderstorms lose strength as they cross Lake Michigan, although there are sometimes high-intensity storms in the summer.

These climactic conditions have had important implications for ecology, agriculture, industry and tourism over the millennia. Plants, protected from wasting their energy early in the spring, also thrive later into the growing season, leading to productive forests and farmland. Air drainage down hillsides reduces the danger of frost damage. Snowfall in the winter is usually sufficient to protect both winter grain and grapevines from freezing. This favorable climate, along with the sandy, well-drained soils found throughout the region, provides ideal conditions for the growth of many kinds of fruit.
Atop the landforms and soils was the natural resource that drew a huge influx of settlers in the mid-1800s: the forests. Loams and limey soils supported the growth of sugar maples, beech, elm, and other trees, especially hardwoods. Stands of red and white pine, interspersed among the hardwoods, made the most of poor, infertile soils. Black spruce, northern white-cedar, and balsam fir dominated in swamps. Less abundant trees included black oak, white oak, trembling aspen, bigtooth aspen, balsam poplar, hop-hornbeam, yellow birch, paper birch, black cherry, white ash, black ash, basswood, jack pine, hemlock, tamarack, and juniper.

**Human Influence**

Clear-cut timber harvesting left large swaths of land empty of all but snags and dry, discarded brush, called “slash.” This accumulation of dry woody debris created the perfect conditions for raging forest fires, especially where pitch-containing pine brush was left behind. Consequently, wildfires frequently blazed through logged areas, living forest, and towns.

Fire stimulated the growth of aspen stands, oaks, and pin cherry trees, among others. In many cases, attempts to farm clear-cut and burned areas were unsuccessful until the land recovered enough nutrients to support crops. The infertile soils that bore pine trees thwarted would-be farmers especially.

“Log running,” the practice of floating large quantities of timber downstream during spring floods, caused erosion of river banks and channels, modifying their shapes and flow regimes. Construction of dams, first for water power and later for hydroelectric power, changed the flow of water, sediment, nutrients, energy, and biota, interrupting and altering most of the rivers’ important ecological processes, and transforming riverine habitats.

Over the last century and a half, industry, agriculture and development of land for housing, commercial, and transportation purposes have had significant effects on natural resources. Waste disposal, excessive fertilizer and pesticide use, construction activity, removal of forest, and increases in impervious surface have contributed to erosion, sedimentation of streams and rivers, and pollution of land and water with excess nutrients, toxins, and pathogens. Additional concerns include thermal pollution of waterways, habitat loss, and invasive species that outcompete their neighbors or alter the environment so that other species can no longer survive. The protection of large swaths of land, such as the Pere Marquette State Forest, has helped to preserve habitat and limit fragmentation. Contemporary efforts to establishment greenways throughout Northwestern Michigan are also beneficial for the species that inhabit this region. The map below shows the land uses in the region around Traverse City in 1978. Today, the land use in the Grand Traverse Bay Watershed is still largely forest (49%), agriculture (20%), and open shrub or grasslands (15%). Water makes up 9% of the land use, and wetlands account for 1%. The remaining 6% is urban area, with Traverse City and Kalkaska being the largest urban centers.
Cultural History

11,000 – 1500 A.D. Prehistoric Peoples

The first people to leave behind evidence of their presence in the Grand Traverse area were Paleo-Indians. They are believed to have migrated into the area from the south as glaciers retreated. Spear points from these early inhabitants, dating from around 8,000 B.C., have been found in Grand Traverse County.26

The next inhabitants of the area were a population of mound-building indigenous people. Small burial mounds were found around Boardman Lake and along Boardman River, including many at the site that is now the location of the Grand Traverse County Courthouse (Boardman Avenue and Washington Street). These mounds were generally three to five feet tall and approximately 18 feet in diameter, containing weapons, ornaments, tools, and possessions, as well as bodies of the dead. The site of an ancient manufactory of stone arrowheads was found on a bank of the Boardman River.27, 28

It is unclear whether the mound builders that inhabited the Grand Traverse area were of the Hopewell culture (beginning around 300 BCE and ending between 600 and 800 CE) or the Mississippian culture (beginning between 600 and 900 CE, and ending between 1000 and 1400 CE). Both cultures had widespread trade networks, cities, and well-established forms of government and religion. Both depended on agriculture: the Hopewell cultures grew squash, sunflowers, and various grasses, including maize. The Mississippian cultures focused primarily on intensive maize production. The Hopewell cultures seem to have disappeared starting around 300 CE, and it is uncertain whether they have a link to the Mississippian culture. However, the latter culture transitioned through stages from sedentism through the formation of complex chiefdoms, to a period of increasing warfare, political strife, and population movement. First contact of the Mississippian cultures with Europeans resulted in misunderstandings and aggression. Eventually, as Europeans settled the eastern coast of North America, diseases devastated some native communities, while others acquired European horses and returned to a nomadic way of life. European settlers who noticed the earthworks developed an idea that they had been constructed by a “lost race” of mound builders unrelated and superior to the Native American peoples they were displacing. However, scholarly research in the late 1870s showed that there was no physical difference between the mound builders and the Native Americans encountered by the settlers. The Mississippian are now believed to be ancestral to the Native Americans living in the same territories in the 1500s.29, 30, 31, 32

1500s – 1700s The Anishnabek, French Traders and “Le Grande Traverse”

Other Native Americans also came to the Grand Traverse area. The majority of these people were members of two tribes indigenous to “Turtle Island” (North America), who migrated west through Canada from the eastern coast of the continent during the 1500s, eventually reaching the Lower Peninsula of Michigan. These people, along with other tribes, called themselves the Anishnabek (“good man” or “original man). They still share a culture, spiritual beliefs, religious practices, and the Anishinaabemowin language. The Anishnabek established trade routes from the Atlantic Ocean to the Rocky Mountains and from northern Canada to the Gulf of Mexico.33, 34, 35

Traveling through Ontario in 1615 and to Sault Ste. Marie in 1622, the Anishnabek encountered French explorers. Legend recounts that the names of sub-groups of the Anishnabek were the result of a miscommunication between early explorers and these native peoples. Explor-
ers attempting to make inquiries in Anishnaabemowin mistakenly assumed that words describing the tasks carried out by different groups of Anishnabek (“ojibwek” — going to build lodges, “odawak” — going to trade, and “bodwe aadamiinhk” — keeping the fire) were the names of different tribes. These names were pronounced “Chippewa,” “Ottawa,” and “Pottawattamii” by Europeans. More recently, many of the indigenous people have chosen to return to the names “Ojibwa,” “Odawa” and “Bodowadomi.” These three groups form the “Three Fires Confederacy.”

The Algonquin also consider themselves to be Anishnabek, but hold themselves politically independent of their kinfolk.

The French traders treated the Native Americans with respect, offering gifts and unfamiliar weapons — guns and gunpowder — in exchange for furs. Unlike the British and American settlers who came later, many Frenchmen married Native American women. The Anishnabek did not arrive in Grand Traverse Bay until the 1700s, when the Odawa population shifted from eastern to western Michigan. They had amicable relations with the French for many decades, and it was the French who named the region “Le Grande Traverse” (“The Great Crossing”) because of the stretch of open water at the mouth of the bays that must be crossed, when traveling along Lake Michigan’s southern coasting.

For those who resided in northwestern Michigan’s Lower Peninsula, the large bays and the mouth of the Boardman River at the south end of the western bay were particularly important. The river is located so that its last course before joining the bay runs nearly parallel to the bay’s shoreline. The Anishnabek frequently used the point of land at the mouth of the river as a staging area where they changed between canoe travel and overland foot travel through the forests.

Members of a clan typically chose sites near water to build homes singly, in small groups, or in larger communities (based on family affiliations) such as the one at Old Mission. While their summer dwellings varied in size, shape, and material, the largest lodges, called wiigwaam, measured 50-60’ in length and could contain three fires. Villages often included separate buildings where the community’s food was stored. The Anishnabek grew pumpkins, corn, beans, and potatoes in their gardens. In springtime, they harvested sap from maple trees for sugar. During the winter, they scattered to the forests to hunt and fish, and some brought back seeds of wild plum and other fruits from their southern hunting grounds.

In 1836, the new United States government sent Commissioner Henry Schoolcraft to the Odawa and Ojibwa in Michigan with a treaty. The two bands of Anishnabek agreed to act together, and ceded away two-thirds of the land that is now Michigan, but reserved one-third of the land for their own use and retained their hunting, fishing, and gathering rights on the ceded lands. This reservation was intended to remain in effect for only five years; after this time, the bands would be moved west of the Mississippi. Presbyterian missionary Peter Dougherty established a mission in 1839 on the north end what later became known as Old Mission Peninsula. He and his followers built a mission church there in 1842. Some of the Anishnabek scouted out the land to which their removal was planned, and became distraught upon seeing its dry, barren nature. Dougherty advised these Anishnabek to try to become citizens, so that they might be able to purchase...
available lands from the U.S. government and avoid being forced to relocate. From 1841 to 1844, these individuals petitioned the Legislature to support their bid for U.S. citizenship, which it finally did in 1844. 46, 47, 48, 49

1847–1863 Logging and the Company Town
The United States and State of Michigan governments pursued a strategy of acculturation and assimilation of Native Americans. The 1859 Michigan Constitution allowed “males of Indian descent” to vote, as long as they denounced their affiliation with any tribe. Most of the Anishnabek in Michigan managed to avoid deportation out west. In 1855, the Odawa and Ojibwa signed a second treaty, dissolving their tribal organization and thus ending the threat of removal. The treaty reserved tracts of land for allotment to the Indians, including most of Leelanau County and some of Antrim County. However, a large proportion of this land could not be claimed by the Odawa and Ojibwa within the ten year time limit, due to a combination of federal laws, governmental mismanagement, illegal transactions, squatters, and the Anishnabek’s unfamiliarity with the workings of the land tenure system. 50

In 1847, Captain Harry Boardman from Naperville, Illinois purchased 200 acres of land between the lake and the bay from the U.S. government. This area included the river connecting them. His son, Horace, along with several hired hands, built a single water-powered sawmill on Mill Creek (now Kid’s Creek), to mill the Eastern white pine. 51

In 1851, Perry Hannah, Tracy Lay, and James Morgan, owners of the recently-formed Hannah, Lay and Company, of Chicago, purchased the land, buildings, and mill from Captain Boardman. Hannah, Lay and Company immediately built their own steam-powered sawmill between the Boardman River and the bay. They cleared the river of debris, enabling workers to fell trees, skid logs out of forests over snow in winter, float them downriver during spring floods, haul logs into the mill, and load processed lumber right onto ships in the bay on the other side of the mill. They added a second steam sawmill in 1862. Logging would become less seasonally-dependent as big wheels, invented in 1875, and later logging railroads on narrow-gauge moveable tracks, allowed logs to be transported year-round. 52, 53, 54

The use of the land, river, and bay for logging operations led to the beginnings of a village. Initially, Hannah, Lay, and Company was the only employer in town. The mill hands settled along the bay to the west of the new steam sawmill. Their homes were constructed out of mill slabs, and as a result the little community came to be known as “Slab Town.” As the number of workers grew, Hannah, Lay and Co. moved and expanded their small general store. In 1855, they constructed a 90-foot two story frame building north of Bay Street. This store eventually gained three additional sections, and included a general banking room and vault. Other retail, services, institutional buildings and residences were constructed on the land located in the crook of the river. Saloons were established, and boarding houses and hotels were built (e.g. the Bay, Cutler, Sprague, and Gunton Houses, the Exchange Hotel) to accommodate unmarried workers. 55

Grand Traverse County was officially organized in 1851. The village was laid out by lumber baron Tracy Lay. In 1852, the establishment of a post office required the town’s name to change from the unofficial “Grand Traverse City” to “Traverse City.” Traverse City’s first school started in 1853, with classes taught by Helen Goodale in a converted stable on the 400 block.
of E. Front St. Later, a frame school building constructed at the corner of Park and State Streets was used for church services, community gatherings, and classes. The Methodist Episcopal Church and the Congregational Church were organized in 1858 and 1863, respectively. Hannah, Lay, and Company donated land for the first courthouse and jail which were built in 1854. However, the wooden courthouse burned down just 8 years later.\cite{56, 57}

Until 1864, Traverse City was very isolated. Those seeking to reach or leave the town had to travel Lake Michigan by boat, or trek the Native American trails. This largely limited travel to the warmer seasons, as boats could not safely traverse the bay in winter. Hannah, Lay and Company purchased ships to transport their lumber to Chicago. Connection to Traverse City improved with the construction of a road to the nearby town of Acme in 1857.\cite{58, 59, 60, 61}

1864-1871 The Road, Settlers and Agriculture

In 1864, after four years of construction, the Northport-Newago State Road opened. It was the first road to the south, and followed a Native American trail. At this time, stagecoach service was offered to both the Old Mission Peninsula and to Muskegon. In 1870, Henry D. Campbell established stagecoach lines that connected with the Grand Rapids and Indiana Railroad at Big Rapids. Although the road was not easy to travel in winter, it was highly traveled during warmer seasons, as new settlers moved to the Grand Traverse Area.\cite{62, 63, 64, 65}

In the mid-1860s, a number of factors made Northern Michigan an appealing destination for settlers. Congress passed the Homestead Act in 1862, allowing any individual 21 years or older to claim a 160-acre parcel of public land, so long as they could pay a filing fee of $18, live on the land, build a home, make improvements, and farm for 5 years. This was an incredible opportunity, especially for newly-arrived immigrants, farmers without their own land, single women, and former slaves. Unfortunately, this also meant that many settlers disregarded Anishnabek claims, and seized land. At the end of the Civil War, in 1865, many soldiers were paid in land grants. Those receiving land grants in the Grand Traverse Area who had little interest in living in Northern Michigan sold their land to lumber barons or to eager settlers.\cite{66}

In 1865, some of Traverse City’s prominent citizens hired a state geologist to examine and report upon the suitability of land and the climate in the area for agriculture, with the hopes of attracting farmers. The report was very favorable, pronouncing the region’s moderate climate and sandy soils well-suited for fruit production. A species of crabapple, Malus coronaria, was already present in the area before European settlers arrived. However, with European settlement, foreign varieties of apples were introduced.\cite{67} The first cherry trees in the area were cultivated by Reverend Peter Dougherty in 1852 at his mission in Omena.\cite{68} Farmers were delighted to find that the cool nights were favorable “for ripening of high-quality cherries and [producing] good color of McIntosh apples.”\cite{69} The most successful orchards, later, were those within 5-10 miles of the bay. In 1867, George Parmalee established a fruit farm on Old Mission Peninsula, specializing in apple production. In other parts of the area, professional men experimented with different varieties of fruit, including cherries. By 1868, potatoes were being grown as a cash crop for export around Traverse City.\cite{70, 71, 72}

Meanwhile, Traverse City itself was growing. A building constructed on the corner of Front and Park Streets in 1868 by the Honorable D. C. Leach included county offices and a room for holding court.\cite{73} New industries such as the Greilick Chair Factory and Greilick Manufacturing Plant, started by an enterprising former
Hannah, Lay and Company employee, focused on the use of hardwoods. Two newspapers, “The Grand Traverse Herald,” started by Morgan Bates, and the “Traverse Bay Eagle,” run by Elvin Sprague, competed within the small community. Hannah, Lay and Company built new structures. These included the bridge at the foot of Union Street, and a permanent dam on the Boardman River between Cass and Union Streets, which was used to power the new four-story Hannah-Lay Gristmill. On Washington Street near Cass, the Methodist Episcopal Church was built on land donated by Perry Hannah, and dedicated in 1867. The Congregational Church at 302 Washington was constructed the same year.74

1872-1890 Railroads, New Markets and Growth
The arrival of the railroad, a reliable multi-season mode of travel, had been long-awaited and precipitated great change in all areas of Traverse City life. The first railroad to come to Traverse Bay was supposed to bypass Traverse City and to go to the town of Little Traverse instead. Citizens of both Traverse City and Grand Traverse County formed the Traverse City Railroad Company and raised $20,000, matched by another $20,000 from Hannah, Lay and Company, to build a branch of railroad from Walton to Traverse City. In 1872, the Grand Rapids and Indiana Railroad arrived in Traverse City. A temporary depot built at this time was replaced by separate freight and passenger depots in 1884. The railroad was a great boon for both commerce and personal travel; along with lumber, potatoes were among the first cargoes exported from the region. Easier travel also made Traverse City more accessible to the lecture circuit; for example it enabled Susan B. Anthony to speak about women’s suffrage at the Ladies’ Library Association in 1879. As Traverse City became more and more accessible, the population grew rapidly, increasing from 3,000 in 1884 to 4,000 in 1885.75,76,77

Railroads didn’t provide the only new connection to the outside world. Michigan Bell Telephone ran lines to Traverse City from Charlevoix and Elk Rapids in 1875, and a telegraph line connected the post office to the Grand Rapids and Indiana Railroad depot. Regular telephone service was established in 1884. Local travel by water also improved, with Hannah, Lay, and Company steamers “Clara Belle” and “City of Grand Rapids” offering service to Northport, New Mission, Suttons Bay, Bowers Harbor, Petosky, and Mackinaw.78,79

Growth of retail and services continued downtown. In 1873, Henry D. Campbell built Campbell House, a hotel on Park and State Streets, to serve visitors. Hannah, Lay, and Company bought Campbell House in 1879, and added a 3-story Annex across Park Street in 1880. The immense Hannah, Lay, and Company Mercantile Building opened on the corner of Front and Union in 1863. Hailed as the biggest general store north of Grand Rapids (possibly the largest general store in Michigan), the three story building included six large departments, a bank vault, and a generator in the basement to provide the first electricity in town. Traverse City was dramatically different from most other company towns due to the character of its founding fathers. Instead of trying to monopolize business, as would have been typical in company towns, Traverse City’s lumber barons encouraged growth by providing start-up capital for enterprising workers who wished to open competing stores and industries. One prominent competing dry goods store, operated by
former Hannah, Lay and Co. employees J. W. Milliken and Frank Hamilton, opened in 1874 and moved into a new building on the corner of Front and Cass. They shared this space with the First National Bank beginning in 1889.  

Traverse City’s institutions were growing at this time as well. In 1881, Traverse City was incorporated as a village, with Perry Hannah as president. Central School was built in 1877 at the current location of Central Grade School, and Traverse City High School was built in 1886. A Fire Station was constructed on the corner of Union and Seventh Streets. Traverse City’s first water works were built by Judge Campbell in 1881, and his sons joined him to build Traverse City’s first electric light and power plant at the same site in 1885. The new jail and sheriff’s quarters were completed in 1884. The Northern Michigan Asylum (later known as the Traverse City State Hospital) opened in 1885 under the direction of Dr. James Decker Munson. Occupational therapy and contact with nature were an important part of treatment at the Asylum. The patient population increased from 43 to more than 400 within one month, and the asylum soon became one of the largest employers in Traverse City. A multitude of religious organizations and structures sprang up, including the Baptist Church at 244 Washington Street and St. Paul’s Church (later to become Grace Episcopal) on State Street. Both were built in 1874. Congregation Beth-el at 311 South Park Street, south of Washington Street, was constructed in 1885. The Friends (the Quaker Church) began meeting, and St. Francis Catholic Church was built on Cass and 10th Street in 1887.

St. Francis became the nucleus of the already-thriving Bohemian community that had grown up south of the Boardman River, as new immigrants arrived to work at the sawmills from the 1850s through the 1870s. Concentrated around Union and 8th Streets, the Bohemians built homes of modest size, exhibiting a great variety of styles and individuality that was expressed in fine woodcarving and small details. This neighborhood gained three additional amenities in the late 1880s: the Wilhelm Brothers Clothing and Dry Goods Store, built on the northeast corner of Union and 8th Streets in 1885; Novotny’s Saloon, built in 1886 at 423 South Union Street, and the Cesko Slovansky Podporujici Spolecnost community lodge hall, built in 1887 at 320 South Union Street.

While members of the working class — including mill hands, factory workers, clerks and carpenters — lived in boarding houses or at the perimeter of the city, the families of business and professional people began to form a neighborhood around Washington Street, east of Boardman Avenue and south of Front Street. Eventually, this became the Boardman neighborhood. The earliest houses in the Boardman neighborhood were carpenter’s cottages, which gained additions as families grew.

In the early 1880s, the fanciful and romantic Queen Anne style of architecture appeared in Traverse City. Characterized by steeply-pitched roofs, asymmetrical gables, towers, turrets, and copious amounts of gingerbread, part of the appeal of this style was that its surface decoration allowed for a great range of individuality, even amongst houses of the same exact structure.

The look of the downtown streets was changing too: in 1878, Washington Street was graded, clayed, and graveled from Boardman Avenue to 244 Washington. In 1886, Front Street between Cass and Park was improved with a curbing of blue Euclid stone and sewers to carry water away. Front Street bore raised boardwalks on either side of the street near its intersection with Union. A year later, street numbers were established with odd numbers on the east and north sides of the streets, running consecutively up from the corner of Front and Union. Bridges were built at West Front Street, Eighth Street, and Boardman Avenue.
The United States government continued to push for the assimilation of Native Americans, through the Dawes General Allotment Act of 1887. This act divided up the least desirable tribal lands for use by individual Native Americans. This undermined traditional tribal ties and lifestyles of indigenous peoples, while making the remaining land available for non-Native Americans. Around the same time, schools for Native American children were established. Children were often taken far from their homes and families, deprived of the use of their native languages, and indoctrinated into the ways of mainstream Americans.

1890s Culture, Recreation, Tourism and New Industries

The 1890s ushered in a new era of culture and recreation for Traverse City. Believing that the city was ready for the next step in its cultural evolution, Perry Hannah persuaded Charles Wilhelm, Anthony Bartak, and Frank Votuba to build a much larger structure to serve as home for their mercantile, grocery, dry goods, carriage and leather goods stores which would also include a Victorian-style, 1,200-seat opera house. In its early years, the City Opera House served as a venue for “concerts, traveling plays, vaudeville shows, high school graduations, dinners and balls.” Steinberg’s Grand Opera House, seating 900, was completed just three years later, farther east on the north side of Front Street. Steinberg’s also provided delightful live entertainment and culture for its patrons until the rise of motion pictures and concurrent decline of live shows in the late 1910s caused it to close. Residents were not the only ones to benefit from these new amenities. Traverse City continued to become more accessible with the arrival of the Chicago and Western Michigan Railroad in 1890, and the Manistee and Northeastern Railroad in 1892, allowing tourists from the south to seek the cooler summer weather and scenic vistas of northwestern Michigan. Visitors attracted by the clean lakes, sandy beaches, woodlands, hills, and valleys arrived to spend their summer vacations at local resorts, guest houses and hotels. In 1895, Traverse City officially became a city, with a city charter and Perry Hannah as President. Services and utilities increased. A new fire station was built on Cass Street. Consumer Oil Company began daily deliveries of kerosene and gasoline by tank wagon, and the first bulk fuel station opened on Gillis Street. The new Boardman River Electric Light and Power Company began servicing not only businesses and residences, but was also contracted by the city to provide electricity for streetlights. Northern Telephone came to Traverse City in 1898 and strung wires on poles along the city streets.

Outdoor recreational opportunities increased, as the city leased land bounded by Union, Division, Eleventh, and Fourteenth Streets for a park. The park contained a baseball diamond and mile track. The Leach Building was moved back from Front Street so that it opened on Park Street instead of Front Street, and an ice-skating rink was put in on its former site in the winter of 1893. Traverse City’s first golf course was constructed on land provided by Perry Hannah. Traverse City’s high-society organized the exclusive social and recreational We-Que-Tong Club, and members built a three-story clubhouse at the mouth of the Boardman River, between the river and the bay, with an area in the lowest level for docking pleasure craft. Residents were not the only ones to benefit from these new amenities. Traverse City continued to grow and prosper, with the addition of the Masonic, Beadle, Munson, and Wurzberg Buildings, and the Whiting Hotel. The most devastating fire in the history of Traverse City’s downtown occurred in 1896, destroying most of the wooden buildings on the south side of Front Street between Park and Cass. All of these structures were replaced with brick buildings.

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However, they were soon taken over by Citizens Telephone Company, which buried the downtown lines underground, began providing rural service, and by 1900, established long distance connections with the rest of the state. Public transportation began in 1894 with new horse-drawn city bus lines that ran from the asylum to Union Street then on to Front Street, and from Oak Park down Washington Street then back to Front Street. In 1897, a speed law for horses was passed, limiting speeds to 8 mph on Front Street, and 12 mph on Union Street. State Street was becoming populated largely by livery stables; the stench and flies of the European Horse Hotel next-door to Grace Episcopal Church motivated the clergy and parishioners to physically move the church building three blocks, to a new location on Washington Street. Farmers had long considered fruit trees to be a secondary source of income after their main crops. However, by 1890, many found that it was more profitable to focus their production on cherries and other fruits, rather than on grains and vegetables. Orchards, vineyards, and berry farms thus became increasingly popular, while potato farming continued to flourish.

New industries utilizing hardwoods, as well as those capitalizing on Traverse City’s burgeoning commercial fruit and potato production, popped up all along the city’s many waterf ronts. The hardwood industries included W.E. Williams Company, the Wells-Higman Basket Factory (which produced containers for picking, shipping, and storing fruit), Oval Wood Dish Factory (one of the city’s largest employers for many years), and Fuigham Manufacturing Company. J.C. Morgan bought a cider mill on the bay front at the foot of Union Street, from Hannah, Lay and Company, and soon built a cold storage plant nearby. The Potato Implement Company manufactured sprayers, dusters, and the locally-invented seed/corn hand planters, for worldwide distribution. Michigan Starch Company, producing potato and then corn starch, opened on the bay front, but closed within four years.

1900-1910 Construction Extravaganza
The first decade of the twentieth century was Traverse City’s most prolific period of growth. From 1900 to 1905, almost 500 buildings were constructed, forming the core of today’s city. By 1910, the city’s population had grown to 12,115. Some of the most notable structures built during this decade were:

- Emanuel Wilhelm’s five-story brick “skyscraper,” home to the Traverse Theatre, and later, Traverse Hotel (This building lost its top three stories in a fire in 1970.)
- The stone and brick county courthouse on Washington Street and Boardman Avenue
- The Traverse City State Bank on the northwest corner of Front and Union Streets
- The Carnegie Library on Sixth Street
- Traverse City’s first post office building on the corner of State and Cass Streets
- The Ladies’ Library Building on Cass Street, just south of the new post office.

Significant residential construction also occurred during this period. The completion of Perry Hannah’s immense Victorian house on Sixth Street in 1894 made this street suddenly fashionable, and other well-to-do families subsequently located there. Hannah approved each plan before a new home was built on Sixth Street. Preferring order, symmetry, and a certain unity of appearance, Hannah platted the lots himself, and specified that all homes along Sixth Street be set back the same distance from the street. (This may have been one of Traverse City’s first documented efforts to regulate building standards that would not be codified as law until about fifty years later.) Although many of
the new homes were in the Queen Anne style, by the late 1890s, frustration with the amount of maintenance required for this style caused an adverse reaction, and large, square neo-Colonial homes or Georgian-Colonial homes became popular.\textsuperscript{107, 108} Although a cemetery sat across Sixth Street from his new home, Perry Hannah had the graves (including those of some Native Americans) relocated to Oakwood Cemetery, making way for a new park.\textsuperscript{109} The construction of Hannah Park along the south shore of the Boardman River, right next to the site of the soon-to-be-built public library, was yet another attraction for prospective new home-owners.\textsuperscript{110} Central Neighborhood grew outward from Sixth Street, and today is roughly bounded by Fifth, Union, Thirteenth, and Division Streets.\textsuperscript{110}

More modest residences were constructed on the south side of town to house workers employed at a new railroad yard and roundhouse. Built in the early 1900s east of Lake Avenue, between Eleventh and Twelfth Streets, the roundhouse provided maintenance and repair services for the steam engines of all three of Traverse City’s railroads.\textsuperscript{111}

Industries in Traverse City and the region were kept busy supplying materials for all of this new construction. R.W. Round and Son Foundry produced heavy castings for building columns and door sills. Traverse City Manufacturing Company made custom millwork, including doors, window sashes, store and office fixtures, and planing mill products. Southside Lumber Company manufactured hardwood interior furnishings for homes and businesses. A.W. Rickerd specialized in marble and granite works, while Traverse City Iron Works, on the southern shore of the Boardman River, west of Cass Street, also prospered.\textsuperscript{112}

Other industries complemented Traverse City’s agricultural activities, catered to residents’ sweet tooths, or increased Traverse City’s importance as a center of regional commerce. Traverse City Canning Company, owned by Perry Hannah, Dr. C. J. Kneeland, and Birney Morgan, opened on Hall Street in 1902 and later moved to Lake Street. J.C. Morgan (no relation to Birney Morgan) opened Morgan Cannery on North Union Street in 1907. Women often earned extra income for their families by working in the fruit-processing plants. Straub Brothers and Amiotte Candy Company constructed a new building on West Front and Hall Streets, also employing mostly young women. In 1902, Musselman Grocery Company opened a large wholesale warehouse (3 stories plus a basement) on the bay front, from which they distributed their products regionally and supplied local grocers.\textsuperscript{113, 114}

Utilities grew and the city began to assume responsibility for some services. In 1900, H.D. Campbell and Sons sold their water works to the city, heralding the beginning of the Traverse City Water Department. The Traverse City Gas Company, located on Hall Street (now the Candle Factory) manufactured flammable gas from coal, and distributed it to customers through pipes, starting in 1901.\textsuperscript{115}

1910-1924 Automobiles, Cherries and Economic Decline
The preferred mode of transportation in Traverse City changed between 1910 and 1914 as automobiles became increasingly popular. Dealerships such as the Grand Traverse Auto Company appeared on Front Street and more and more rough, potholed roads were repaired and paved with crushed rock. Traverse City even had its own automobile manufacturer, the Napoleon Motor Car company, from 1917-1924. Rennie’s Oil Company, the city’s first gas station, opened at 128 South Union Street in 1918. In 1921, motorized bus service became available. The firehouse also changed over to motorized vehicles in the 1920s.\textsuperscript{116, 117}
As automobiles became increasingly affordable and reliable, more tourists arrived, seeking peaceful relaxation or active recreation in Grand Traverse Bay’s natural areas and cities. Camp Interlochen, a recreation camp for girls, opened near Traverse City in 1917. The Boardman River’s charm for fishermen was enhanced in 1913 when it was stocked with 56,000 rainbow trout. The Northwestern Michigan Fair found a home in land purchased from Howard and Isabelle Whiting by Grand Traverse County. In 1905, the Traverse City Golf and Country Club opened to Traverse City’s elite with an eighteen-hole golf course that doubled as a toboggan run in winter. Traverse City State Park was established on the East Bay in 1920. In 1918, a new attraction materialized downtown: the motion picture-playing Lyric Theatre at 233-235 East Front Street. Unfortunately, in 1920, the motion picture firm operating the Lyric Theatre also leased and closed the City Opera House to remove competition for its own film theaters.

A variety of festivals and parades attracted tourists, enabled Traverse City residents to connect as a community, and allowed merchants to advertise their wares with floats. Traverse City’s Fourth of July Parade drew visitors from as far away as Manistee. Some of these festivals even doubled as service days, such as “Clean Up and Paint Day” in 1912. Agriculture was thriving in the Grand Traverse region in the early 1900s and 1910s. Barn-raising and threshing days served as social events as well as being efficient ways of pooling the labor of a group of farm families to achieve individual projects. Cranberries, raspberries, and ginseng were profitable to grow in the region, in addition to Traverse City’s usual cash crops of potatoes, apples, and cherries. In the early 1910s, cherry production started to exceed apple production and in 1913, a half million dollar cherry crop led to Traverse City’s recognition as the cherry center of the nation. 1914 saw the first refrigerated train cars which allowed fruits to be shipped across the country.

From 1910 to 1920 the lumber industry declined due to the depletion of hardwoods. Many factories destroyed by fire were not rebuilt. In 1917, Oval Wood Dish Company moved to Tupper Lake, NY, taking 100 worker families with it, and precipitating an economic decline that lasted until World War II. By 1925, Traverse City’s population had declined to 10,925. This was also a time of political turmoil for the United States. When the nation entered World War I, all aliens in Traverse City were rounded up and registered. Prohibition was in effect from 1920 to 1933, generating great enthusiasm for moonshine production amongst some portions of the population. In 1923, the Klu Klux Klan held a demonstration on Front Street.

Positive progress during this period included the first vote for women in a school board election in 1917, the organization of Traverse City’s Chamber of Commerce in 1918, and the chartering of the Rotary Club of Traverse City in 1920. 1925-1939 Festivals, Air Travel, Clinch Park and the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934 Traverse City held a new festival in the spring of 1925 to celebrate its new status as the “Cherry Capitol of the World.” Complete with a cherry blossom queen, a parade with a multitude of blossom-bedecked floats, and a priest to provide the blessings, the Blessing of the Blossoms Festival was a delightful occasion for residents, business-owners, and tourists. Just three years later, the celebration was renamed the Michigan Cherry Festival, and was rescheduled for mid-July to take advantage of the abundance of ripe Grand Traverse cherries.
In the 1920s, a number of civic improvements made Traverse City easier to navigate. The North Cass Street Bridge was built over the Boardman River in 1926. A cobblestone fountain was installed in the center of Cass Street at the same time, serving as a home to a number to sturgeon during the summer months. Traverse City's first traffic lights were installed on Front Street at the intersections with Park, Cass, and Union Streets. In 1930 and 1931, new bridges replaced dangerous old bridges spanning South Cass and Union Streets. The city was cognizant that the quality of bridges at these important locations could seriously influence tourists’ perceptions of Traverse City. The Union Street Bridge, in particular, served as a gateway to Traverse City because of its location on a state and federal route. Its architects took care to ensure that the design and materials used were aesthetically pleasing. The city’s first airfield was established south of town on Ransom field, on top of Rennie Hill. A biplane named “Spirit of Traverse City” provided Traverse City’s first air service to the rest of the state. In 1936, a new city airport opened on Garfield Avenue, and Penn-Central Airline began service there in 1938. In 1930, old factories and industrial waste still littered Traverse City’s bay front. Traverse City Park Commissioner Conrad Foster spearheaded an immense effort in the early 1930s, using hundreds of volunteers to clean up the waste leftover from industries on the bay. They also made a portion of the bay front into a public park. The Michigan Starch Company Factory on the bay was torn down in 1922, and the We Que-Tong Club property was sold to the city in 1935 (with the intention that it be used for park space). In 1935 the Con Foster Museum was constructed. Conrad Foster journeyed throughout the Midwest purchasing Native American and pioneer artifacts to display in the museum. The Elsie Raff Hannah Bathhouse joined the other buildings on the bay, and a wading pool in front of it allowed swimmers to rinse beach sand off their feet before going indoors. Another Works Progress Administration project was the construction of the small-scale buildings of a Miniature City, a permanent exhibit at the Clinch Park Zoo. This delighted children and adults alike. The quality of the water also improved after the first sewage disposal plant was built on Boardman Lake in 1933. A number of industries, institutions, and businesses downtown experienced various combinations of closures, fires, renovations, and turnovers in ownership. The Hannah, Lay and Company gristmill burned down in 1926, while the Greilick Chair Factory and Straub Brothers and Amiotte Candy Factory both closed in 1929. The old Park Place Hotel was torn down in 1929, and an impressive new nine-story Park Place Hotel was completed in 1930. Many other buildings downtown were spared from renovation by the lack of available funds during the Great Depression. By the late 1930s, many chain stores were moving into downtown Traverse City. The Hannah-Lay Mercantile closed, and in 1937, Montgomery Ward and Company moved in. Three years later, a fire destroyed the two east bays of the building. J. C. Penney Company opened at 243 East Front Street. A new post office building was completed at the corner of Union and State Streets in 1939, and City Hall moved into the original post office building. Also in 1939, a farmer’s cooperative, Cherry Growers Inc., opened a canning factory on the bay. While all of this activity occurred downtown, the opening of the Munson Medical Center on the State Hospital Grounds marked a hopeful beginning of a new occupational trend in Traverse City.
During this period, the US government acknowledged regret for its oppression of Native American peoples, and took steps to mitigate the centuries of persecution. The Indian Reorganization Act of 1934 provided a congressional sanction for tribal self-government and was meant to encourage economic development, cultural plurality, a revival of tribalism, and self-determination. The Anishnabek in the area applied for federal recognition under this Act but were denied.

1940-1959 WWII, Second Industrial Revolution and Grandview Parkway
The United States’ entry into World War II caused hardships for citizens across the nation, but the increase in production to support the war effort finally lifted the national economy out of its long decline. Many Traverse City residents were either directly or indirectly affected by the war. As during WWI, all “aliens” in Traverse City were rounded up and registered. In 1942, some Japanese-Americans were brought to Traverse City to pick cherries, followed by Jamaicans three years later. This marked the beginning of the era of migrant labor camps and their role in the fruit harvest in the Grand Traverse Area. Meanwhile, the Anishnabek applied for federal recognition under the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934 again in 1943, and were once again denied.

The 1940s and 1950s were a time of great technological advancement for the city. Parsons Corporation moved to Traverse City at the behest of the Chamber of Commerce in 1942. They set up their Pureair Unit Kitchen Division in part of the old Greilick factory. However, the company soon turned to producing aircraft wing panels and helicopter rotor blades for military use. Machining the complex contours of these parts required meticulous calculations and care. Parson’s method for operating machine tools automatically through commands from their processing units came to be known as “numerical control.” Its inception made Traverse City “the birthplace of the Second Industrial Revolution.”

Progress was evident in many other areas too. In 1940, Traverse City adopted the city manager form of government. The Michigan Theatre was built at 121 East Front Street in 1940, and included a roller skating rink below. Les Biederman established the first radio station in town, WTCM, in 1941. The first TV station in the area, Midwestern Broadcasting Company, followed in 1954, opening on County Line Road M-72. Traverse City’s first supermarket, Oleson’s, opened on State Street in 1946. The supermarket moved to a new location on Garfield Avenue in 1953 where it expanded greatly and was reputed to be the largest supermarket in northern Michigan. Traverse City’s Osteopathic Hospital was built in 1947. The Lyric Theatre burned in 1948, but quickly reopened as the State Theatre. Northwestern Michigan College (NMC) was set up in an old Coast Guard building in 1952. In 1956, the city acquired its first dial telephone service.

Traffic patterns were changed to accommodate the increased traffic and relieve congestion downtown. In 1940, the city began planning the construction of a parkway along Grand Traverse Bay: Grandview Parkway was opened and dedicated in 1953. Its location required relocating several companies and public amenities. The North Cass Street fountain was removed, and the Clinch Park Zoo buildings and animals were moved to the bay side of Grandview Parkway. The North Union Street Bridge over the Boardman River was rebuilt, and Front and State Streets became one-way streets in 1955.
The diversification of Traverse City’s economic base characterized the next decade. Agriculture continued to thrive, and technological advances enabled farmers to use new methods of spraying, pruning, cultivating, and harvesting. The advent of mechanical harvesting reduced labor requirements and ended the migrant labor camps. Tourism expanded to include recreation in fall, winter, and spring, as well as summer. Holiday Hills and Hickory Hills, which opened in 1949 and 1950-51, respectively, became popular skiing destinations. Meanwhile, the Ahgosa Golf Course, with its reasonable prices and unpretentious atmosphere, was a favorite with Traverse City’s working men. The first Traverse Bay Outdoor Art Fair was held in July 1961 under the ancient pine trees on the Northwestern Michigan College campus. NMC began training pilots in its new aviation program in 1967. A new county jail and Sheriff’s Quarters were constructed in 1965. New industrial and retail developments took off. These included construction of Giantway Plaza, Traverse City’s first shopping mall, on Munson Avenue in 1966. The 1960s formation of the Downtown Traverse City Association, a voluntary organization of merchants and other businesses, allowed members to better market and promote Traverse City.

Fire, demolition, and new construction continued to change the look of the city. Fire destroyed Steinberg’s Grand Opera House in 1963, and burned the top three floors of Wilhelm’s 5-story building in 1970. The Park Place Hotel Annex was torn down in 1956, and the main part of the hotel was renovated in 1964. The Elsie Hannah Bathhouse was torn down in 1969. New buildings in the Moderne style characteristic of the 1960s included the Chamber of Commerce “Blockhouse” on Grandview Parkway, a new wing added to the Carnegie Library, and the 1969 Cherry County Airport.

The people of Traverse City strongly maintained their support for the “Open Space.” Over time, the city acquired a significant amount of property along the bay. More buildings along the bay were demolished: the We-Que-Tong Building was torn down in 1945, and the Muselman Grocery Company Building and the J.C. Morgan Cider Mill were removed in 1969 and 1970, respectively. Although there was some thought of selling the County Fairgrounds to a private developer in 1962, the plan was abandoned due to public outcry. The fairgrounds became the Grand Traverse Civic Center in 1967.

1971–1989 Services, Competition for Shoppers, Renovation and Restoration, the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians
Services related to agriculture, government, and transportation advanced in the 1970s and 1980s. In 1979, the Northwest Michigan Horticultural Research Station was established on the Leelanau Peninsula, with Michigan State University Extension in charge of research and educational programs. The station has been an invaluable resource for farmers throughout the region ever since. The Governmental Center Building was constructed in 1979, to house both city and county offices. Succeeding previous Traverse City bus services, the Bay Area Transportation Authority was established in 1985.

In the mid-1970s, competition from shopping centers, malls, and big box stores at the outskirts of the city and in the suburbs presented a dilemma for businesses downtown.
At some points, there were 17 or 18 empty stores downtown at the same time. A summit organized by the Chamber of Commerce and downtown merchants welcomed all interested community members to participate and generated a vision of downtown Traverse City as “a place to shop, a place to work, a place to live, a place for recreation, and a place that [is] safe.” The Downtown Development Authority formed in 1979, taking responsibility for retail and office recruitment efforts, public improvements, planning and development issues, and the organization of the Traverse City Farmer’s Market (later renamed for local community leader Sara Hardy).

Traverse City’s businesses, government, and residents have been reusing historic buildings throughout the city’s history: some in a condition close to the original, others with a great deal of modification. The 1970s brought a new appreciation for the historic structures in the city, and the beginning of ongoing efforts to preserve and restore them. The City Opera House was put on national and state historic registers in 1971, and the City Opera House Heritage Committee began raising money in 1978 to restore the building. In 1975, city residents voted to remodel the Grand Traverse County Courthouse building and a campaign led by the County Historical Society President, Jennie Arnold, raised $1.7 million to help fund the renovation.

The Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians was officially recognized as an Indian tribe by the federal government in 1980, under the provisions of the 1934 Indian Reorganization Act. The Tribe drafted a Constitution and formed a government, developing tribal programs to serve its membership. An economic development corporation established by the tribe in 1983 enabled them to effectively launch businesses, including casinos. They provide many services and assistance to their members, demonstrate excellent stewardship of their natural resources, and strive to maintain a closely knit community that embraces its cultural heritage.

1970s–Today: Community Amenities
The Rotary Club of Traverse City received a windfall in 1976 when oil was discovered on 400 acres of land that they had leased to the Boy Scouts since 1920. Within two years, they formed Rotary Charities to distribute interest income from the oil and gas royalties. They did so in the form of challenge and matching grants for projects throughout the five county region of Northwest Michigan (Antrim, Benzie, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, and Leelanau Counties). The first such projects included Munson Medical Center’s Biederman Cancer Center and Northwestern Michigan College’s University Center and Dennos Museum. This group also purchased the closed Park Place Hotel and made major renovations and upgrades to the building. (They managed the hotel for several years before selling it.) According to one local official, this project was one of the most significant investments in the downtown during the recession of the 1980s. In addition to health and education, projects focusing on affordable housing, environment, culture, recreation, strengthening families, and community capacity building have received support. Rotary Charities also supported the birth of the Grand Traverse Regional Community Foundation, organized in 1992 to “[develop and support] a diverse collection of permanent endowment funds supported by a wide range of donors.” The organization manages these funds, and coordinates disbursement of resources through scholarships and grants for special projects involving youth, community, and the environment.
Several new recreational facilities have grown in recent years. The Grand Traverse County Civic Center gained the Easling Memorial Pool and Pool Building, as well as the Howe Arena, in 1971, 1973, and 1989, respectively. Later additions included a baseball field, a skateboarding park, and Kids’ Cove, an unusual and much-loved wooden playground. The Friends of the Traverse Area Recreation and Transportation (TART) Trail formed in 1989, and succeeded in obtaining the funding and support necessary to construct the TART Trail. The trail was paved from 1991 to 1995. In 1998, associations for the four trail systems: TART, Vasa, Leelanau, and the Boardman Lake Trail, joined together to form TART Trails, Inc. The East-Side Boardman Lake Trail opened to the public in 2005.

Creative and performing arts continue to be highly valued in Traverse City. Artists have always been attracted to the natural beauty of the area, and the numerous galleries and art fairs in the city give them opportunities to showcase their work. The Downtown Art Fair has been held annually since 1977, while the much more recent (2001) Old Town Arts and Crafts Fair replaced the Old Town Bazaar. The Dennos Museum at NMC, opened in 1991, includes an extensive collection of Canadian Inuit art, as well as changing displays of nationally and internationally acclaimed artwork. The Music House Museum, which opened in Acme in 1985, houses a collection of rare antique instruments and music-making machines, as well as the 1931 Miniature model of Traverse City (donated by Howard Stoddard in 1993, and now undergoing restoration). In 1972, the Traverse City Civic Players, a community theatre group formed in 1960, moved into Old Town Playhouse, the converted First Christian Church. The Playhouse was completely renovated in 1990. The first Traverse City Film Festival, held in July 2005, motivated many volunteers to help in the cosmetic restoration of the State Theatre. The festival has helped to refocus some community attention on the State’s planned renovation, currently in the fundraising stages. Orchestras or bands in parks and ensembles downtown provide musical entertainment for residents throughout the warmer seasons. A new community festival, Friday Night Live, started in 1991. This downtown event recurs each Friday from mid-July through August, with food vendors, activities, and entertainers along Front Street, which is closed to vehicular traffic during the event.

Two important community resources are intimately connected by their consecutive occupancy of the same structure: the Carnegie Building. The Traverse City Public Library accumulated so many books that its collection could no longer be adequately housed in the building by the 1980s and 1990s. The Traverse Area District Library (TADL), a federated system including Fife Lake, Interlochen, Kingsley, Peninsula, and the Traverse City Public Libraries, was created in 1984. In 1999, TADL moved into a new building on the Boardman lakeshore, overlooking the new Children’s Learning Garden that was created as the library’s back yard. The Friends of Con Foster Museum had been seeking a new place to show the collection, so in 2002, the Grand Traverse Heritage Center moved into the restored Carnegie Building. The Grand Traverse Pioneer and Historical Society, the Maritime Heritage Alliance, the Railroad Historical Society of Northwest Michigan, the Women’s History Project of Northwest Michigan, and the Grand Traverse Area Rock and Mineral Club also found a home there.
Education mixes with environmentalism in a number of organizations. The Inland Seas Education Association began teaching children aquatic science, environmental awareness, and how to sail from their tall “schoolship” in 1989. In 1993, the Land Information Access Association formed as a nonprofit corporation, “to provide technical, scientific, educational and informational services ... for land use planning, resource management, emergency management planning, and environmental protection.” The Great Lakes Children’s Museum, which opened in 2001, features hands-on, interactive, informal exhibits meant to stimulate curiosity and exploration. They have temporarily moved to Greilickville, though they are hoping to relocate when they find an appropriate space in downtown Traverse City. Adult education has been enhanced, too, with NMC’s addition of their Michigan Technical Education Center in 2001 and their Great Lakes Campus in 2004.

Recent Years: Brownfield Redevelopment, Renovations, Technological Innovations in Services, and Agriculture

In 1990, The Downtown Development Authority merged offices and staff with the Downtown Traverse City Association, and began to manage the city’s parking system. A retail market analysis performed in 1991 determined that the success of Traverse City’s downtown hinged on its ambiance as a “hometown place to shop,” encouraging businesses to focus on local customers in order to draw both locals and visitors. The analysis also highlighted the importance of maintaining a sense of history to increase the appeal of downtown businesses.

Along waterfront areas and downtown, brownfield properties, contaminated by industries, utilities, depots and fueling stations, presented a formidable problem. Developers were unwilling or unable to pay for the extensive clean-up necessary before such properties could be redeveloped. Changes in Michigan’s clean-up standards, along with new grants, loans, and tax increment financing opportunities, enabled local leaders, public officials, and developers to take a fresh look at redevelopment in 1995. Grand Traverse County established a Brownfield Redevelopment Authority in 1997 to write brownfield plans and apply to the state for brownfield incentives. Between 1997 and 2004, the city obtained $27 million from Michigan’s brownfield redevelopment program.

The first brownfield project using such a grant was River’s Edge, a mixed-use 2 to 5-story urban infill development. River’s Edge sits at the former site of the old Traverse City Ironworks and connects the downtown to Old Town. Harbour View Centre, built with a brownfield revitalization loan, is a mixed-use five-story building on Grandview Parkway near Hall Street. Traverse City Gas Company’s coal gasification plant once sat on part of the property. On sites that were home to a gas station and car dealership sits Radio Centre, a retail and office complex. This development, and the adjacent Larry C. Hardy Parking Deck (built by the city), were funded through a state brownfield grant and tax increment financing.

Abandoned properties present similar challenges that can be transformed into opportunities when the right combination of incentives and people are involved. The Traverse City State Hospital closed in 1989. In the early 1990s, the Grand Traverse Commons Redevelopment Corporation formed to save the historic structures and park-like landscape from destruction. A portion of the state hospital structures have...
been renovated into Grand Traverse Pavilions, residential facilities including various levels of health care. Other parts of the state hospital, including the enormous “Building 50,” are being restored as the Village at Grand Traverse Commons, a mixed-use, walkable community. This redevelopment is using incentives received both as a brownfield property (some abandoned buildings qualify for this designation) and as a Renaissance Zone.

In 2004, voters in Garfield Township and in Traverse City overwhelmingly approved three open space proposals: the first authorized funding for a joint township-city recreational authority to purchase the historic barns and 54.7 acres around them, while the second was an operational millage providing funds to purchase the former Smith Barney office building on Grandview Parkway, to purchase and maintain the 117-acre Oleson Field, and to maintain the state hospital property and barns for twenty years. A more unusual approach to renovation and new development is taking place in the current (2006) Courthouse expansion project on Washington Street. The existing Bethany Baptist Church and Old Stone Church are being renovated and connected by a building that is largely modern-looking glass, but with a partial stone facade along the ground floor that is meant to match and tie together the two stone churches. This structure will house the 86th District Court and Probation/Family Court.

Technological innovations in utility and transportation services are helping to make Traverse City one of the more environmentally progressive cities in the state. Traverse City Light and Power, a community-owned municipal facility, erected a wind turbine in 1996 and has been offering customers the opportunity to pay the “green rate” which enables them to receive all of their electricity from wind energy. As of 2004, Traverse City Light and Power served over 10,000 customers, of which about 125 residential and commercial customers chose the green rate. The Traverse City Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant was converted into the largest operating Membrane Bioreactor in North America in July 2004, increasing the plant’s capacity as well as improving the quality of effluent dramatically.

In 2005, the Bay Area Transportation Authority unveiled a prototype, custom-made 27’ hybrid-diesel/electric bus, which is currently being tested along its regular fixed routes. Agriculture has seen many ups and downs over recent years. In addition to apples and cherries, other produce such as plums, peaches, apricots, pears, chestnuts, and hazelnuts are currently grown for direct sale to consumers at fruit stands and farm markets. Grapes are also grown for local wine-making. In 2000, the cherry supply far surpassed demand and a national effort to maintain cherry prices dictated that certain districts limit the volume of cherries that they could sell. Any further supply had to be marketed for a different purpose or stored. Although this seemed like a hardship at the time, an early bloom followed by a killing frost in 2002 made farmers glad to have had cherries in reserve. Such early blooms have been problematic in some recent years due to unseasonably warm spring weather. The Montmorency cherry has traditionally been the most popular tart cherry in the area, but Michigan State University’s development of the Balaton cherry, which blooms later and may therefore escape frost damage more readily, could help cherry agriculture in the future.

To capitalize on tourist attendance, the National Cherry Festival dates were moved to encompass the July 4th weekend. However, in some years, this means that the Grand Traverse cherry crop is not ripe.
in time for the Festival. Cherries have been imported from Washington and Oregon to fill in the gaps in the past. Today, cherry growers emphasize the importance of finding unusual ways to market cherries, and honor individuals who create new cherry products.

Public interest in improving and protecting the ecological qualities of the Grand Traverse Bay Watershed has increased during recent times. Organizations involved in environmental conservation and restoration have become increasingly important. The Grand Traverse Conservation District, established during the Great Depression, has long provided planning, technical, and educational services related to land use and stewardship of natural resources. In 1991, GTCD created the Boardman River Restoration Project, which has been partially funded by grants from the Clean Michigan Initiative since 2001. The Grand Traverse Bay Watershed Initiative (now, the Watershed Center Grand Traverse Bay) was formed in 1990 by a number of groups devoted to “sustaining or restoring the bay’s watershed to ensure the region’s economic viability, high quality of use and employment for future generations.” The organization has taken on projects that balance economic growth with environmental protection. In 2002, the Watershed Center became part of the Waterkeeper Alliance, creating the new position of Baykeeper. The Baykeeper is an advocate for the environmental health of the Grand Traverse Bay Watershed. This position’s responsibilities include: acting as a liaison between concerned community members and regulating bodies, working with local governments, monitoring pollution levels and enforcing standards, and conducting outreach and education programs. Together, the watershed center and the Baykeeper have developed an extensive watershed protection plan, and continue to coordinate community activities and restoration efforts such as the Boardman Lake Clean-up and the 2005 Kids Creek Restoration.

The last major industrial structure on the city’s bay front property, the Traverse City Light and Power Bayside Power Plant, was torn down in 2005. Today, Traverse City residents place a great emphasis on the importance of the “Open Space” to their community, and take great pleasure in the public ownership of such a large swath of bay front property. The public beaches and parks along the bay are enjoyed by those seeking recreation or just a beautiful view.
Through the years, Traverse City has seen many changes. Logging gave way to industry which was in turn surpassed by agriculture and tourism. Vehicles and parking replaced horses and liveries. Wooden frame buildings became brick and then steel. All of these changes have left their mark on Traverse City, and reveal themselves in subtle layers as one walks down the street or stands in the sand at the foot of the bay. The people of Traverse City comprise another layer in the landscape that reflects the past, present, and future. Their decisions will influence the heart and face of Traverse City to come. It is therefore imperative to understand the foundation upon which they move, live, and work.
The following section describes the multitude of layers that create Traverse City, starting with its spine: the Boardman River. As discussed in the preceding historical monograph, the growth of Traverse City has been significantly influenced by the river. Subsequent sections describe the Traverse City residents of today, the built environment constructed by their ancestors, and the character that these spaces exude. By examining these layers, we learn, grow, and find inspiration for the future development of the city.

The Evolving Boardman River

The Boardman River travels its last mile and a half through Traverse City before it empties into Grand Traverse Bay, just northeast of the downtown. For years the Boardman has been an integral part of the Grand Traverse region’s economy and culture. Whether it was used for travel and sustenance by the Native Americans, for floating timber to the mills by settlers in the mid 1800s, or to generate hydroelectric power in the 20th century, the River has always been an asset to the region and the city. Today recreation is also popular on the river, as it is a great place to fish, paddle, or dock a boat. A salmon harvest weir, located immediately northeast of the Front Street Bridge, allows passage of small watercraft all year long except for September and October. Further upstream, the Union Street Dam (Fig 114) prevents boat travel to Boardman Lake. A fish ladder here allows trout and salmon to migrate, while blocking upstream movement of sea lamprey. Hannah Park (Fig 115) stretches along the river’s southwestern bank for roughly a quarter of a mile and is one of the best places to get close to the river. Paved or dirt paths provide informal access to the river. Boardwalks allow pedestrians to walk along many parts of the river, including: Midtown, River’s Edge, Hannah Park, and Front Street, east of North Cass Street. A stretch of sidewalk accompanies the Boardman River to its outlet into West Grand Traverse Bay (Figs 19 and 120.)
While Traverse City has been able to capitalize on the Boardman River in the past, recent news that three of its four dams will be removed as early as 2007 has brought new attention to the waterway. Studies like the “Boardman River Natural River Plan” and the “Boardman Lake Watershed Study of 2003” (BLWS) have demonstrated the need for conservation and management of both the river and greater contributing watershed through better land use practices and sustainable stormwater management techniques.

The south side of the Boardman River, between the points where it crosses under Front Street and under Grandview Parkway, is retained with a concrete wall and a steel sheet piling wall. These walls were placed there in the late 1950’s when the main trunk line of the regional interceptor sewer was added. The retaining walls reduce flooding risk for the buildings on the north side of Front Street and stop stream-bank erosion. Close attention should be paid to heavily paved areas, especially when they are directly adjacent to water bodies, as are the parking lots behind buildings on Front Street.

While the sewer and stormwater systems are separated throughout Traverse City, stormwater is currently mostly untreated and flows directly into the Boardman River and bay. Best Management Practices (BMPs) should be used to prevent untreated stormwater runoff from entering the river. The BLWS reported nutrient and bacterial contamination in stormwater culverts along portions of the Boardman River that flow through downtown, and also noted a pipe near the Cass Street Bridge that was releasing water at a temperature of 96.8 °F. Contaminants and high temperatures can have deleterious effects on the ecological quality of the river and bay, and can contribute to potential health risks for users.

As mentioned in the History section of this document, many groups are currently working to combat the negative impacts of pollution to improve the health of the Boardman River and Grand Traverse Bay Watershed. Among these entities are the Watershed Center Grand Traverse Bay, the Grand Traverse Baykeeper, and the Grand Traverse Conservation District. The city has also recently received a grant to investigate the use of Best Management Practices along the Boardman. Furthermore, the Baykeeper has been actively working with the city government to implement more BMPs such as grease separators, rain gardens, and riparian buffer zones.

In addition to addressing the ecological needs of the Boardman River, more can be done to highlight its aesthetics and integrate it into the vibrant downtown. Buildings in the Central Business District have historically been built with a focus on Front Street, leaving a void behind the buildings which is currently used for little more than deliveries and parking. As discussed in the Planning History portion of this study, Traverse City residents have recognized these issues for more than 50 years. The 1977 Comprehensive Plan highlighted many opportunities to enhance the Boardman River, as did earlier Plans. The 1977 plan explicitly stated that one of the community goals should be to develop the Boardman north of Front Street “as a commercial and recreational resource” with small shops and cafes.
Relative to the state and the rest of the country, Traverse City residents possess a high level of education.

31.2 percent of Traverse City residents hold a bachelor’s degree or higher, compared with 21.8 percent of Michigan residents.

11.6 percent of Traverse City residents have a graduate or professional degree, whereas this number is 8.9 percent for the nation.

The Current Face of Traverse City: Demographics

Since the softwood lumber industry first moved into Traverse City in the mid-1800s, the city has grown substantially (Table 1). In the 1960s Traverse City reached its peak population; however, in the latter part of that decade, several events triggered a population decline which has continued to the present. A key factor in the decline was the state hospital’s reduction in the number of its resident patients. This caused many employees who lived in the city to leave and find work elsewhere. The eventual closing of the state hospital resulted in the largest decline — estimated at 3,000 people — in the city’s population.

Table 1: Population of Traverse City and Grand Traverse County from 1890 to 2004

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Traverse City</th>
<th>Grand Traverse County</th>
<th>Ratio of City to County Residents</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1890</td>
<td>4,353</td>
<td>13,355</td>
<td>1 to 3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>9,407</td>
<td>20,479</td>
<td>1 to 2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>12,115</td>
<td>23,784</td>
<td>1 to 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>10,925</td>
<td>19,518</td>
<td>1 to 1.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>12,539</td>
<td>20,011</td>
<td>1 to 1.6</td>
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<td>1940</td>
<td>14,455</td>
<td>23,390</td>
<td>1 to 1.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>16,974</td>
<td>28,598</td>
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<td>18,432</td>
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<td>1990</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>14,532</td>
<td>77,654</td>
<td>1 to 5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>14,508</td>
<td>82,752</td>
<td>1 to 5.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While the number of dwellings in Traverse City has increased since the 1960s, the family size per dwelling has dropped sufficiently to result in a loss of overall population, even discounting the loss of the state hospital residents and staff.

The removal of downtown buildings for surface parking lots has factored into the loss of population density in the downtown as many residents moved beyond the city limits into suburbs of Grand Traverse County. By 1970, the percentage of residents living in Traverse City made up less than 50% of the total population of Grand Traverse County. The proportion of county to city residents has been increasing since that date.

As demonstrated in Table 2 on pages 38 to 39, Traverse City has experienced several notable demographic trends in recent years. The population of Traverse City is, on average, older than Grand Traverse County’s, the State
of Michigan’s, and the United States’, with the median age of 38 being 3 years older than the state and national median age. In terms of race, Traverse City is less diverse than both the state and the nation. Its residents most strongly identify with German, Irish, English, and Polish ancestry. Relative to the state and the rest of the country, Traverse City residents possess a high level of education. Thirty-one percent of Traverse City residents hold a bachelor’s degree or higher, compared with 21.8 percent of Michigan residents. (This figure is 24.4 percent for the entire United States.) In addition, 11.6 percent of Traverse City residents have a graduate or professional degree, whereas this number is 8.9 percent for the nation. Although median household income ($46,912) is lower in Traverse City than in the state ($44,667 and $53,457) and nation ($41,994 and $50,046), per capita income is higher (see Table 2), and the percentage of families considered to be living below the poverty level (3.8%) is significantly less than these percentages for the state (7.4%) and the rest of the country (9.2%).

Bringing additional permanent residents to the downtown in particular could create an even richer cultural environment, while also strengthening the ability of the city government to continue to provide the services and amenities that it does to Traverse City residents.

**Table 2: Traverse City and Beyond: Select statistics from the 2000 U.S. Census**
### ANCESTRY (single or multiple)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total population</th>
<th>100</th>
<th>77,654</th>
<th>100</th>
<th>9,938,444</th>
<th>100</th>
<th>281,421,906</th>
<th>100</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total ancestries reported</td>
<td>17,615</td>
<td>121.1</td>
<td>87,471</td>
<td>112.6</td>
<td>10,859,658</td>
<td>109.3</td>
<td>287,304,886</td>
<td>102.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech</td>
<td>349</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>1,245</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>62,053</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>1,703,930</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dutch</td>
<td>685</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>3,467</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>480,774</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>4,542,494</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>2,329</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>10,996</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>988,625</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>24,515,138</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German</td>
<td>3,747</td>
<td>25.8</td>
<td>21,647</td>
<td>27.9</td>
<td>2,028,210</td>
<td>20.4</td>
<td>42,885,162</td>
<td>15.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irish</td>
<td>2,392</td>
<td>16.4</td>
<td>10,331</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>1,068,901</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>224,803</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polish</td>
<td>1,298</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>6,412</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>854,844</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>16,150,000</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scottish</td>
<td>576</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2,735</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>224,803</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>4,890,581</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swedish</td>
<td>509</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>2,078</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>161,301</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>3,988,310</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welsh</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>651</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>50,609</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>1,753,794</td>
<td>0.6</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### EMPLOYMENT STATUS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Population 16 years and over 12,025</th>
<th>100</th>
<th>60,352</th>
<th>100</th>
<th>7,630,645</th>
<th>100</th>
<th>217,168,077</th>
<th>100</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In labor force</td>
<td>8,380</td>
<td>69.7</td>
<td>41,995</td>
<td>69.6</td>
<td>4,926,463</td>
<td>64.6</td>
<td>138,820,935</td>
<td>63.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed</td>
<td>7,827</td>
<td>65.1</td>
<td>39,964</td>
<td>66.2</td>
<td>4,637,461</td>
<td>60.8</td>
<td>129,721,512</td>
<td>59.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>533</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>1,918</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>284,992</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>7,947,286</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armed Forces</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>4,010</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>1,152,137</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median household income (dollars)</td>
<td>37,330</td>
<td>(X)</td>
<td>43,169</td>
<td>(X)</td>
<td>44,667</td>
<td>(X)</td>
<td>41,994</td>
<td>(X)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean retirement income (dollars)</td>
<td>17,345</td>
<td>(X)</td>
<td>16,806</td>
<td>(X)</td>
<td>16,725</td>
<td>(X)</td>
<td>17,376</td>
<td>(X)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median family income (dollars)</td>
<td>46,912</td>
<td>(X)</td>
<td>51,211</td>
<td>(X)</td>
<td>53,457</td>
<td>(X)</td>
<td>50,044</td>
<td>(X)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per capita income (dollars)</td>
<td>22,247</td>
<td>(X)</td>
<td>22,111</td>
<td>(X)</td>
<td>22,168</td>
<td>(X)</td>
<td>21,587</td>
<td>(X)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### POVERTY STATUS IN 1999 (below poverty level)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Families 172</th>
<th>801</th>
<th>192,376</th>
<th>6,620,945</th>
<th>4.8</th>
<th>3.8</th>
<th>7.4</th>
<th>9.2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percent below poverty level</td>
<td>(X)</td>
<td>(X)</td>
<td>(X)</td>
<td>(X)</td>
<td>(X)</td>
<td>(X)</td>
<td>(X)</td>
<td>(X)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### HOUSING OCCUPANCY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total housing units</th>
<th>100</th>
<th>34,842</th>
<th>100</th>
<th>4,234,279</th>
<th>100</th>
<th>115,904,641</th>
<th>100</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Occupied housing units</td>
<td>6,443</td>
<td>94.2</td>
<td>30,396</td>
<td>87.2</td>
<td>3,785,661</td>
<td>89.4</td>
<td>105,480,101</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacant housing units</td>
<td>399</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>4,446</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>448,618</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>10,424,540</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For seasonal, recreational, or occasional use</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>3,026</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>233,922</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>3,578,718</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homeowner vacancy rate (percent)</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>(X)</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>(X)</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>(X)</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>(X)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rental vacancy rate (percent)</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>(X)</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>(X)</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>(X)</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>(X)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### HOUSING TENURE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Occupied housing units</th>
<th>100</th>
<th>30,396</th>
<th>100</th>
<th>3,785,661</th>
<th>100</th>
<th>115,904,641</th>
<th>100</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Owner-occupied housing units</td>
<td>3,805</td>
<td>59.1</td>
<td>23,521</td>
<td>77.4</td>
<td>2,793,124</td>
<td>73.8</td>
<td>69,815,753</td>
<td>66.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renter-occupied housing units</td>
<td>2,638</td>
<td>40.9</td>
<td>6,875</td>
<td>22.6</td>
<td>992,537</td>
<td>26.2</td>
<td>35,664,348</td>
<td>33.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average household size of owner-occupied unit</td>
<td>2.31</td>
<td>(X)</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>(X)</td>
<td>2.67</td>
<td>(X)</td>
<td>2.69</td>
<td>(X)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average household size of renter-occupied unit</td>
<td>1.94</td>
<td>(X)</td>
<td>2.14</td>
<td>(X)</td>
<td>2.24</td>
<td>(X)</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>(X)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specified owner-occupied units</td>
<td>3,489</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>17,669</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>2,269,175</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>55,212,108</td>
<td>100</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### VALUE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Median (dollars)</th>
<th>124,600</th>
<th>130,400</th>
<th>115,600</th>
<th>119,600</th>
<th>119,600</th>
<th>119,600</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### YEAR STRUCTURE BUILT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1999 to March 2000</th>
<th>83</th>
<th>1.2</th>
<th>1,642</th>
<th>4.7</th>
<th>91,872</th>
<th>2.2</th>
<th>2,755,075</th>
<th>2.4</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1995 to 1998</td>
<td>276</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3,799</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>272,594</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>8,478,975</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990 to 1994</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>3,782</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>259,389</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>8,467,008</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980 to 1989</td>
<td>577</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>6,203</td>
<td>17.8</td>
<td>446,197</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>18,326,847</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970 to 1979</td>
<td>1,108</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>7,743</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>722,799</td>
<td>17.1</td>
<td>21,438,663</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960 to 1969</td>
<td>566</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>2,773</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>602,670</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>15,911,903</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940 to 1959</td>
<td>1,507</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>4,353</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>1,123,299</td>
<td>26.5</td>
<td>23,145,917</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1939 or earlier</td>
<td>2,557</td>
<td>37.4</td>
<td>4,547</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>715,459</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>17,380,053</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Evolution Of The Central Business District

Historical Growth of the Downtown

To gain a better understanding of the development of downtown Traverse City, several types of historical documents were consulted. One method involved the analysis of Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps from 1884, 1904, 1929 and 1945. These maps were once used by insurance companies to show potential fire risk to urban structures. They included numerous details about built forms, including building outlines, construction materials, building heights, and uses. For this study these maps were used to create figure-ground studies in which all built structures inside the study area were outlined and shaded to definitively show the amount and location of development present in each time period. The same process was used with aerial photographs of Traverse City taken in 1961, 1981, and 2003. Together, these maps illustrate the evolution of the downtown over a period of 119 years.

To quantify downtown growth, Polk City Directories were used for the years 1894, 1929, 1940, 1962, 1980, and 2004. Streets were analyzed in the directories on a street-by-street basis and the uses at each address were recorded as one of six possible categories: institutional, residential, commercial, office, industrial or vacant. When the data were tallied by period it permitted us to compare the distribution of uses over time.

With a broad understanding of the changes in downtown over time, a more detailed look at Front Street seems appropriate due to its pre-eminent position as the heart of downtown Traverse City. City directory information was used to chart the evolution of usage along Front Street from 1894 to 2004 (Figure 74). Dating from the earliest records, commercial usage has consistently been the most prevalent type of use of downtown built space. It is only in the past few years that office use has risen to approximately an equal percentage of commercial. While office use is more conducive to drawing pedestrian traffic downtown than industrial, keeping office space on the second floors (and above) of buildings, particularly along Front Street, is strongly recommended. Commercial uses consistently draw a larger, more varied group of pedestrians into an area than any other combination of uses. It is especially important to offer priority to commercial spaces at street level for this reason. Residential use is also valued in the downtown. Along Front Street, residential uses steadily declined after 1929, and have only recently increased to represent 24% of downtown use. The most positive trend shown by Figure 74 is that the proportion of vacant use along Front Street has decreased since its maximum in 1980, and is continuing to decline as the downtown becomes a more varied and exciting place to live, shop, and work.
By the end of the 1920s, density has increased along State Street and extended further east along Front Street. This time period also ushered in the beginnings of an industrial district that is now known as the Garland Hall District. This industrial district is located between Union and Hall Streets, just northwest of downtown Traverse City.

By the mid-1940s rail lines have promoted the creation of a bustling industrial sector and density has increased on the western edge of Front Street, just east of Pine Street. New development has occurred south of Washington Street at the edge of the Boardman River.
Fig. 128: Downtown Traverse City, 1961. In the 1960s Traverse City experiences its peak building density. Front Street is completely developed, Grandview Parkway has been constructed between the downtown and the bay, and the Garland Hall District has a large number of industrial buildings and warehouses.

Fig. 129: Downtown Traverse City, 1981. Building density has decreased since the mid 1960s. Empty lots remain where buildings formerly existed on the south side of Front Street, as well as on the north side of State Street. There is new development along the bay front, with the addition of the Holiday Inn Hotel and several other structures near the power plant.
The year 2003 shows additional vacant areas in the downtown where buildings existed as recently as the 1980s. The Garland Hall District shows a significant reduction in the number of structures, and surface parking has become a dominant feature in the downtown.
Historic Buildings

One of the features of Traverse City which makes it so attractive to residents and visitors is the eclectic mix of new and old buildings found there. Traverse City possesses many historic treasures, a number of which are listed in the National Register of Historic Places and/or on the State of Michigan’s Historic Register. (A complete list of these is found in Table 3.) Here, however, the focus is on those structures in downtown located on Front Street and Grandview Parkway, most of which are not listed on either Register. This is because one of the emphases of the character study is on informing the design guidelines for connecting the Central Business District with the bay. It is thus worthwhile to examine the architectural history and features of these structures in greater detail in an effort to bring to light those elements and materials which might be included in future construction. The locations of these featured structures are lettered A-P in Figure 133, with a narrative on each following subsequently. The history and features of the structures referred to in Table 3 are already well-documented, and therefore are only referenced here.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structure</th>
<th>Year Constructed</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Register and Date Listed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American Legion</td>
<td>1930</td>
<td>South Cass Street</td>
<td>National Register of Historic Places 2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memorial Bridge - South Cass</td>
<td></td>
<td>where Cass meets the Boardman</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street Bridge</td>
<td></td>
<td>River</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City Opera House</td>
<td>1891</td>
<td>106-112 East Front Street</td>
<td>State Register of Historic, 1971</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congregation Beth El</td>
<td>1885</td>
<td>312 South Park Street</td>
<td>State Register, 1975.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Traverse County Courthouse</td>
<td>1898</td>
<td>Southwest corner of Boardman</td>
<td>State Register, 1974.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(present structure)</td>
<td></td>
<td>and Washington Street</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perry Hannah House</td>
<td>1891-1893</td>
<td>305 Sixth Street</td>
<td>State Register, 1971.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Michigan Asylum -</td>
<td>approx 1885</td>
<td>West end of Traverse City</td>
<td>State Register, 1978.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traverse City State Hospital -</td>
<td>(main building)</td>
<td>bounded partially by Division</td>
<td>National Register, 1985.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Traverse Commons</td>
<td></td>
<td>and 11th streets and Elmwood</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avenue</td>
<td></td>
<td>Avenue</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Novotny’s Saloon - Dill’s</td>
<td>1886</td>
<td>423 South Union Street</td>
<td>State Register, 1979.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park Place Hotel</td>
<td>1929-1930</td>
<td>300 East State Street</td>
<td>State Register, 1990.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sledor’s Tavern</td>
<td>1882</td>
<td>717 Randolph</td>
<td>State Register, 1981.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Union Street’</td>
<td>1931</td>
<td>South Union Street where</td>
<td>National Register, 2000.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boardman River Bridge</td>
<td></td>
<td>Union meets the Boardman River</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilhelm Brothers Store</td>
<td>1883?</td>
<td>427 South Union</td>
<td>State Register, 1985.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Areas of Historic Significance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Register and Date Listed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boardman Neighborhood Historic</td>
<td>1890s-</td>
<td>Between State and Webster Streets, Railroad and</td>
<td>National Register, 1978.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District</td>
<td></td>
<td>Boardman Avenues</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Neighborhood Historic</td>
<td>1890-1914</td>
<td>Between Fifth, Locust, Union, Ninth and Division</td>
<td>National Register, 1979.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District</td>
<td></td>
<td>Streets</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Traverse Bay</td>
<td></td>
<td>Northern boundary of Traverse City</td>
<td>State Register, 1956.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 132: Martinek’s clock in downtown Traverse City

Table 3: Historic Structures in Traverse City listed on the National and/or State Register of Historic Places
### Table 4: Historic buildings in the study area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Built</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A Traverse City State Bank</td>
<td>102 W. Front St.</td>
<td>1902</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B Emanuel Wilhelm Building</td>
<td>101-103 W. Front St., 102-108 S. Union St.</td>
<td>1900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C Masonic Building</td>
<td>102-104 E. Front St.</td>
<td>1890</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D Hannah, Lay and Co. Mercantile Building</td>
<td>101 E. Front St.</td>
<td>1883</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E City Opera House</td>
<td>108-112 E. Front St.</td>
<td>1891</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F Anderson Building</td>
<td>114-116 E. Front St.</td>
<td>1892</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G Wurzburg Building</td>
<td>118 E. Front St.</td>
<td>1893</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H Michigan Theatre</td>
<td>121 E. Front St.</td>
<td>1940</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I People’s Savings Bank</td>
<td>134 E. Front St.</td>
<td>1902</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J Whiting Hotel</td>
<td>150-154 E. Front St.</td>
<td>1894</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K Beadle Building</td>
<td>161 E. Front St.</td>
<td>1894</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L First National Bank</td>
<td>201 E. Front St.</td>
<td>1908</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M Lyric Theatre (State Theatre)</td>
<td>236.5 E. Front St.</td>
<td>1918, 1949</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N Con Foster Museum</td>
<td>181 E. Grandview Parkway</td>
<td>1934</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O Traverse City Gas Company</td>
<td>301 Grandview Parkway</td>
<td>1901</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P Straub and Amiote Bros. Candy Factory</td>
<td>400 W. Front St.</td>
<td>1905</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: Historic buildings in the study area
A) Former Traverse City State Bank (Fifth-Third Bank)

Located on the northwest corner of Front and Union Streets, the former Traverse City State Bank was built in 1902 with materials from Markham’s brickyard in nearby Greilickville. The building stands about 60 feet tall, with a clock tower and flag pole that may reach 100 feet high. Absent today’s building are the Vermont marble columns and the original first floor façade details. The original cornice has also been modified as illustrated by the photos above.

B) Emanuel Wilhelm Building

Built in 1900, Emanuel Wilhelm’s “skyscraper” was 5 stories. Reaching perhaps 75 feet in height, it was the tallest brick building of the day until the Traverse City State Bank came along two years later with a striking tower that surpassed it. Formerly the Traverse Theatre and the Traverse Hotel, it now houses retail establishments and offices.

The top 3 floors of Wilhelm’s building burned in 1970. Note that the second story windows on today’s building are the same as those in the original building. However, the modern Mansard style roof and rigid awning added after the fire gives the impression that the windows and second floor are shorter than they actually are. In addition, the entrances to the building have been significantly modified, and in some instances, relocated.
C) Masonic Building

At 102 and 104 East Front Street, across the street from the old Hannah Lay and Company Mercantile, is the Masonic Building. Designed by architect E.R. Prall of Pontiac, the building was constructed in 1890 with a double storefront and two stores in the rear of the building on Union Street. The Masonic Lodge occupied the upper two floors. A fire destroyed much of the building sometime between 1986 and 1987, and the building was mostly rebuilt. While it retains much of the character of the original, there are notable differences. Once a four story building (as pictured above), the majority of the Masonic Building with frontage on Union Street is now just three stories. The front of the building remains largely the same, although shorter than the original. Note how the taller windows of the original building’s first floor make it appear much taller than today’s first story. Much of the ornamentation has been replicated, including the window fenestration. Decorative cornices as shown in the original photograph, however, have not been replicated in the newer structure. A much simpler cornice is present today.

The building directly south of the Masonic Building is an addition to it, and includes an elevator. Since the southernmost storefront of the Masonic Building on Union Street has always housed a series of barbershops from the building’s construction until the fire, Robertson’s Barbershop in the first floor of the addition continues this long tradition of use.

D) Hannah, Lay and Company Mercantile Building

At 101 East Front St, on the northeast corner of Front and Union Streets, sits the Hannah, Lay and Company Mercantile Building built in 1883 of Markham brick. It was the biggest general store in Northern Michigan, and possibly in all of Michigan for a time. In 1928, the Mercantile closed and remained so until Montgomery Ward occupied the building in 1937. The structure is currently home to Boyne Country Sports and other businesses. Note that the building originally possessed 6 bays, whereas today there are 4. The two easternmost bays burned in 1940. However, a firewall prevented the fire from spreading further west throughout the building. The upper two stories of the building closely resemble the original structure in terms of the fenestration and building material, although today the brick is painted. In addition, the entire first floor façade is a more modern one than the original with arches over the entrances and windows. The long porch has been removed.
E) City Opera House

The City Opera House, at 106 East Front Street, was built in 1891 by John Wilhelm with financing from Anthony Bartak, Charles Wilhelm and Frank Votruba. Also designed by E. R. Prall, this late Victorian-style building has been the host of numerous functions, such as meetings, concerts, dinners, and dances. In 1980, a descendant of Frank Votruba donated the building to the city and efforts to restore its interior continue into 2006. The City Opera House was added to the State Register in 1971, to the National Register of Historic Places in 1972, and in 1985 a historic marker was placed near the site.254

The building remains 3 stories high and is constructed mainly of brick and stone. Note the changes in the first story façades of the businesses that are located there. Frank Votruba’s Harness Company became a Leather Goods Store in the late 1920s.255 Some of the stone accents remain the same, but the sign now covers much more of the windows. The second and third floor exteriors are the same, with brick pilasters adorning both.

F) Anderson Building

The Anderson Building at 116 East Front Street, built with Greilick brick in 1892,256 was partially destroyed by fire at some point in its history. While it lost its third story, today’s second story is virtually unchanged.257
G) Wurzburg Building

Next door to the Anderson Building is the Wurzburg Building, built in 1893 at 118 East Front Street. Originally a furniture store, it is the only building on Front Street whose original bay window remains intact. Mullions provide decoration in the windows above the storefront.

H) Michigan Theatre (Front Row Centre)

The Michigan Theatre, built in 1940 at 121 East Front Street, has undergone some significant changes over the years. For instance, an extra story was added. Note how the symmetry of the building has been preserved through the addition of long windows that fit the shape of the pilasters extending the length of the original structure. The same square-shaped ornamentation persists. One example is the imitation of the original marquee in the form of a permanent awning.
I) People’s Saving Bank

The People’s Savings Bank at 134 East Front Street was Traverse City’s second bank and was constructed in 1902. It closed during the Depression and today serves as the location of the retail store Nannette Keller. Much of the original architecture has been preserved. The first floor has been painted, but the masonry work is intact. The Romanesque arches on the first and third floor remain, though the original second and third story casement windows were replaced, and the decorative glass over the entrance was removed. In the entryway, the name of the bank is still visible in a floor mosaic.

J) Whiting Hotel

At 150-154 East Front Street sits the Whiting Hotel, the first brick hotel in the city, built in 1894. Since the 1940s, there appear to have been no structural changes to the second and third floors of the building. Notably, the balconies, fire escape ladders, and hotel sign were removed, but the segmented arches on the third floor windows remain, as does the parapet that adorns the roofline of the building.
K) Beadle Building (Mackinaw Brewing Company)

The Beadle Building sits at 161 East Front Street on the northwest corner of the Front and Cass Street intersection. It was built in 1894 from Markham Brickyard bricks, and is now home to the Mackinaw Brewing Company and upstairs offices. Notable changes to the first story include a change in the location of the principal entry on Front Street. As shown in the photo from the 1940s, the entrance subdivided the building into two retail spaces, producing a double storefront. Later the entrance would be moved to the west end of the storefront. The large windows on the ground floor remain principally the same, although the advertisements that used to occupy the upper portion of these windows have been removed, allowing more light in from the outside. Additionally, a brick corner was added to the southeast side of the building. The Beadle Building provides another example of the skilled brick craftsmanship that can be found in several of Traverse City's historic buildings.

L) First National Bank (Federico’s Design Jewelers)

First National Bank opened on the northeast corner of Front and Union Streets in 1908. At 201 East Front Street, Federico's Design Jewelers occupies this historic structure today. With the exception of extensive changes to the front of the building, including the removal of the Ionic columns and changes in masonry, much of the original architecture has been preserved. The columns were removed.
M) Lyric Theatre (State Theatre)

At 233-235 East Front Street sits the State Theatre, once the Lyric Theatre. The Lyric Theatre was built in 1918, but burned in 1948. The State Theatre, which opened in 1949, retains the side and back walls of the Lyric. As a result of the fire, however, the front of the original building collapsed and the brick was replaced with the bright red tile panels above. The windows and original ornamentation were not replaced. A modern marquee was added and an important Traverse City landmark was born.

N) Con Foster Museum

At 181 Grandview Parkway is the Con Foster Museum, built as a WPA project in 1934. In 2002, the staff and Friends of the Con Foster Museum decided to move the collections once housed there to the Carnegie Building, where they can be more readily accessed year-round. Since this time, the Con Foster Building has remained empty.

The brick structure, built in the institutional Art Moderne style, still looks as it originally did, although some openings have been modified. However, the landscape around the building has changed considerably, with the construction of Grandview Parkway in 1952, the addition of the underpass nearby, and the conversion of stairs to an accessible ramp.
O) Traverse City Gas Company (The Candle Factory)

At 301 Grandview Parkway, the old Traverse City Gas Company appears to have remained largely intact over the years, particularly in the eastern half of the building. Although the original windows are still present, it looks as if the door on the western side of the building has been converted into a window and that the primary entrance to the Candle Factory is now on the north end. The roof has changed over time with the removal of the upper portions.

P) Straub Bros. and Amiotte Candy Factory (North Peak Brewing Company)

The Straub Brothers and Amiotte Candy Factory was built in 1905 at 400 West Front Street when the company grew too large for its earlier factory. After the Candy Factory closed during the Depression, the building served a manufacturing company and a motor car company. Today, it is the home of North Peak Brewing Company and upstairs offices and residences.

Significant changes have occurred over the years. Although the original building and today's structure do not appear to be remarkably different, the current building is the product of extensive renovation. For instance, approximately 10 years ago, the 3rd floor of the building was added back on. In addition, the primary entrance has been relocated to the western side of building, and an additional entrance has been added on the eastern side. It also appears that the southernmost portion of this structure was rebuilt at some point: there are more windows on the south side of today's building. New windows have replicated the original windows, both of which were built with mullions to create separate panes.
A Planning History of Traverse City

As mentioned in the historical overview, Traverse City’s tradition of regulating and planning for development began long before the city adopted its first zoning code in 1941.

Shortly after Traverse City adopted its first set of zoning ordinances, J Martin Frissel, a city planning consultant from East Lansing, completed “A Report Upon The Comprehensive City Plan 1942 for Traverse City.” Major revisions to the comprehensive City Plan were subsequently adopted in 1962, 1977, and 1994. Revisions to the city plans have coincided with major changes in the Traverse City Zoning Code at several points in the city’s history. At the writing of this study, a group of citizens and city officials are revising the 1994 plan. Minor amendments have occurred since the plan was adopted in 1994. However, more significant changes are expected with amendments in 2006. Appendix C presents several comparative examinations of the city plans and zoning ordinances throughout the years in an effort to chronicle the changing trends in planning in Traverse City. A content analysis of the city plans reveals significant changes in the approach to planning in Traverse City, as well as several consistent concerns about the character of the community.

Notable changes in Traverse City Planning (as embodied in the city plans) include:

1. Increasing concern for maintaining and enhancing quality of life.

Population projections are an important part of any comprehensive plan. The projections for Traverse City from the 1942 and 1962 Plans proved inaccurate and, by 1977, the physical build-out of the city proper just exceeded the 1960’s level. However, growth outside of the city boundaries continued at a high rate.

Whereas the 1941 and 1962 plans emphasized the technical aspects of physical planning, such as the distribution of a growing population across the city, the suitability of land for development, and infrastructure provision; by 1977, there was a new focus. This new focus was on broader community goals such as the urban and social character of the city and historic and environmental protection.

The 1977 City Plan reflected an increased awareness of the linkages between population growth and economic factors, as well as the growing national environmental consciousness of the day. In Traverse City, the environment has always been valued for its recreational and agricultural value, but a history of growth, along with experience with earlier planning efforts, led to a more forward-looking city plan. By the late 1970’s, the importance of adopting a flexible, dynamic document reflecting community goals became the norm.

2. An increase in the amount of public participation and community involvement in the planning process.

Significant documentation of community involvement in the planning process first appeared in the 1977 City Plan. In the 1942 and 1962 plans, the concepts of community goals and public involvement are mostly absent. The 1942 plan recommends “that every individual interested in the orderly development of Traverse City, study the city plan and bring to the City Planning Commission suggestions, comments, and constructive criticisms which may be helpful in keeping the plan a living and vigorous achievement...to make the plan effective.”

By the 1970s, community participation in the revision and adoption of the plan (largely prepared from consulting work conducted by Johnson, Johnson, and Roy - JJR) is discussed at length in the plan. In Traverse City, community involvement in the planning process has become more proactive and inclusive over time.
3. Greater concern for environmental protection.
In the early 1940’s, environmental concern in the city plan was focused on recreation and the preservation of scenic vistas. While these goals remain, today there are many references to the need to protect woodlands, wetlands, water areas, and other significant features for reasons beyond human enjoyment.

4. The importance of preserving the historic character of the Central Business District first appeared in the 1975 Traverse City Central Area Plan and later in the broader, 1977 City Plan.
Whereas the 1962 plan envisioned a downtown with newer, modern-style structures, the 1977 plan emphasized maintaining the pedestrian scale of the central business district, enhancing historic façades and adding pedestrian streetscape improvements.

Both the 1962 and 1977 plans called for malls in the West End of the Central Business District, the latter suggesting a pedestrian mall in the alley between Front and State Streets. Alternatively, the 1962 plan called for a reorientation of the buildings on the north side of Front Street toward the Boardman River.

On the south side of Front Street and north side of State Street, new structures would be erected facing one another, with parking between the two. This would have effectively created a 1960’s shopping plaza in the downtown, with Front and State Streets becoming major traffic corridors.

A number of concerns have persisted throughout the evolution of the city plans. These concerns are:

1. Preserving Traverse City’s “small-town character.”
The 1977 and the 1994 plans made the preservation of its small-town character a community goal. In 1977, the plan talked of “(maintaining) a small-town atmosphere [and] keeping the balance and diversity of people and environment.” Elements of this included a mix of historic and new structures and a pedestrian-scale built environment. It also included less tangible attributes such as community involvement, “familiar people and places, friendliness and concern, and a hometown feeling.”

2. Concern for the protection of the Boardman River, as well as its enhancement and development for recreational enjoyment.
The 1942 City Plan stated: “The protection and development of the banks of Boardman River for public use is as important as the development of the bay front. The river winds through the center of the city and is constantly in the public eye...various treatments will be required as conditions may warrant. Certain narrow stretches in the business district may be merely tree lined walkways or promenades; in other places a trail above or below the bluffs will give the public access to the scenic value of the River, which is now neglected and abused. It is important that the community exercise control over the river banks to protect them from spoilation.”

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Fig. 165: Suggested front façade treatments from the 1962 Second Phase Master Plan prepared by Harland Bartholomew and Associates, St Louis, MO.
3. A continuing call to improve the rear façades of the buildings on the north side of Front Street overlooking the Boardman River. Phase II of the 1962 Bartholomew Plan was the first to prescribe treatments for the rear sides of the buildings on the north side of Front Street. Referring to architectural designs and concepts included in the 1962 Plan, Bartholomew and Associates asserted that

“...the suggested treatment would afford marked advantages. The structures would not only be more attractive, but could also be more convenient for the customers ... The walks provided in the rear of the stores would, in effect, result in double frontages, which should attract customers and improve the value of the properties for retail use.”

4. A consistent concern for the enhancement of the Central Business District (CBD) and the Bay Front. The value of the CBD, the river, and the bay front, has long been recognized in the city. In addition to the aforementioned comprehensive plans, special studies, such as the 1974 JJR Central Business District Plan, have been commissioned from time to time, highlighting the importance of these areas to Traverse City. This plan was the first to articulate the potential benefits of enhancing the Boardman River as a means to integrate the downtown and the waterfront. The work of Traverse City residents and partner institutions in the current “Your Bay, Your Say” initiative is particularly relevant when the documentation of these enduring priorities is considered.

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Fig. 166: Suggested rear façade treatments for buildings facing the Boardman River from the 1962 Bartholomew and Associates Plan

Fig. 167: Recommendations from the 1975 JJR Plan for inserting activity along the edge of the Boardman River, creating destinations between the downtown and the waterfront.
Zoning Boundaries: Past and Present

While the Comprehensive Plan is the community’s road map for its future, the zoning ordinance is the specific rule book that shapes change over time. As mentioned earlier, Traverse City adopted its first zoning code in 1941. Major revisions to the code were enacted in 1958 and 1999, with a number of amendments made in the intervening years. Figures 168 and 169 compare zoning in 1941 and today. By comparing the 1941 zoning map with the current zoning map, numerous changes are evident between Eighth Street and the bay front. These changes include an increase in the amount of open space along the bay front, the removal of industrial districts, a decrease in multi-family residential areas, and changing designations for commercial space. Further, note the increase in flexibility within this area today insofar as the type of development is concerned. For example, three different development districts which allow for, and encourage, mixed use have been added. Table 5 shows the evolution of zoning districts within the Traverse City Character Study Area through the years. Appendix B contains a table of complete zoning districts for this period.
In an effort to compare not only the changes in land use designations since the 1940s, but also the changes in building standards since that time, we examined the standards for multi-family dwelling districts, the central business district, and office and institutional spaces. Retaining a mixture of uses is a critical component for the enduring vitality of any downtown. These designations are highlighted in Table 5. Appendix C provides a comparative chart of changes in site planning and building standards in these districts throughout the years.

Building height, Development Districts, and parking and setback requirements are important indicators of the city’s commitment to encouraging renewed growth and infill development in the downtown. We have summarized the change in these indicators over time.

**Building Height**

Between 1942 and today, allowable maximum building height has fluctuated with an increase in some areas. (Recall that some of Traverse City’s tallest buildings, such as the four-story Fifth-Third Bank on the northwest corner of Union and Front Streets and the ten-story Park Place Hotel at State and Park Streets, were constructed well before the zoning code was enacted.) In 1942, the maximum height of buildings was not to “be erected to a height exceeding the width of the street it fronts or abuts.” In 1942, the width of Front Street right-of-way was 66 feet wide. (The street pavement from curb to curb is 44 feet wide.) By 1958, buildings in the C-4 CBD were allowed to be a maximum of ten stories and 125 feet tall. By 1999, the C-4 district was divided into three separate classifications: C-4 a, b, and c.

In these areas, new construction can range from 30 to 100 ft in height, although any building higher than 60 feet must contain at least one floor of residential units. Above a height of 45 feet for these buildings, the floor must be recessed ten feet from the first floor building façade. In addition, buildings are allowed to reach 100 feet only if the top floor is used to screen needed building equipment. (This provision was approved in late 2005.)

In the multiple dwelling districts, allowable building height has increased by just 5 feet since 1941, except for in 1958 when a high rise district was added to very select areas adjacent to the CBD with allowances for multiple dwelling units that were up to 125 feet tall.

We are particularly supportive of the increases in the commercial districts with incentives for mixed use development, especially because new construction in these areas is likely to occur south of Front Street, and in some cases, at its western end. Although these regulations allow for potential changes to the skyline of the CBD, they are highly unlikely to produce development that will obstruct views from the CBD to the bay front and vice-versa.
Development Districts and other Improvements to Regulation

The inclusion of special Development Districts, such as the Red Mill Development District in the 1999 Code, is an innovative and important step to support the objectives mentioned above.

Additional progressive changes that have encouraged efficient use of land and resources in the downtown are discussed below.

One such change was the elimination of front setback requirements in the CBD commercial areas in the late 1950s - except for instances in which structures are to be constructed adjacent to residential areas. Between 1958 and 1999, rear setback requirements in commercial areas were reduced from 25 feet to a range of 5 to 20 feet, depending upon the structure’s proximity to residential districts.

In 1942, the Traverse City zoning ordinance restricted development by implementing restrictions on lot frontage, lot area, and by requiring minimum floor areas and lot sizes for dwelling units. By 1999, all of the above provisions had been removed from the multiple family and commercial districts. (Some, but not all, of these provisions had been removed in the interim version of the Code) While still regulating building placement and height, the current code offers much greater flexibility in terms of the varieties of parcels which can now be developed.

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Although some may feel that taller buildings threaten the small-town feel of Traverse City, increased density does not have to mean additional traffic, or a deterioration of community. Increased density is essential to make the most efficient use of city tax dollars, as well as for encouraging compact development that relies less on automobiles, and more on walking and biking. The impact of automobiles and their attendant greenhouse gas emissions are increasingly evident throughout the world. In order for Traverse City to minimize the impact of climate change on the natural areas that it holds important for personal and financial reasons, we urge the community to take advantage of the opportunity it has to serve as a model of environmentally responsible development for the rest of Northern Michigan.

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Parking: Historic Trends

Table 6 quantifies the changes in parking evidenced in Figures 170 and 171. Of important note is that today’s DDA boundaries vary from the area inventoried in 1962. In contrast to 1962, some of the parking that the DDA oversees is found west of Pine Street (between Front and State), south of Washington, and south of the Boardman River between Union and Cass. (Parking that exists today south of Lake Street is not pictured in Figure 171.)

Although the inventory boundaries are not a complete match, the amount of parking has increased in Traverse City over time. The 1962 Bartholomew Plan indicates that a 1952 survey found 1724 parking spaces (with another 60 spaces under construction). Furthermore, when the associates at Harland Bartholomew conducted their study, they reported that there were 84 parking spaces per 1000 residents living in Traverse City in 1962. Recall from the 1960 U.S. Census data that Traverse City’s population equaled about 18,400 residents. Our calculations show that there were about 125 total parking spaces per 1000 residents in 1962, while today this figure is more than twice that: 302 parking spaces per 1000 residents.

Traverse City has taken a proactive strategy in providing parking for its residents and visitors in the downtown, while also recognizing the need to turn less-used surface parking lots into more productive uses. Consolidating surface lots into

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parking System</th>
<th>Number of Spaces</th>
<th>Notes on 2006 Parking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Curbside Parking</td>
<td>513</td>
<td>Mostly metered-parking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Off-Street Spaces: Public Lots</td>
<td>549</td>
<td>Included in this figure 475 are metered and permit spaces in the Larry C Hardy Deck.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Off-Street Spaces: Customer Lots</td>
<td>485</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Off-Street Spaces: Private Lots</td>
<td>749</td>
<td>Some of these spaces are located south of Lake Street, not counted in 1962.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>2296</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Today</strong></td>
<td><strong>4382</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6: Parking Available in Downtown Traverse City: 1962 to present

Fig. 170: Parking Facilities in the Central Business District 1962

Fig. 171: 2006 Public Parking Facilities in the Central Business District.
US Census data shows that in the 25 years between 1975 and 2000, the number of licensed drivers in the US increased by 46%, from 130 million to 190 million. Over the same time period, the number of vehicles in the US increased by 58% from 138 million to 219 million.

structures such as the Larry C. Hardy deck at the east end of the downtown follows precedent. The construction of the Hardy structure incorporates the latest mechanism for maximizing commercial, residential, and other space and promoting infill development: the structure is concealed in the middle of the block, enveloped by businesses, offices, and other uses.

The new Bay Area Transportation Authority (BATA) station will hopefully further alleviate some of the need for parking as residents consider the financial and environmental benefits of taking public transit.

Today, much of the downtown, and indeed the area covered by this study, fall under the C-4 commercial zoning designation where off-street parking is not required. This is a wise policy for ensuring a healthy mix of office, retail, and residential uses in the downtown.

Traffic Moving Out of Downtown

According to the Michigan Land Use Institute, 2000 US Census figures show that commuters in Traverse City increased their average trip time to 20 minutes each way, an increase of almost 25% since the 1990 Census. Also, during these ten years, vehicle registrations in the Traverse City region increased at double the rate of the State of Michigan. US Census data shows that in the 25 years between 1975 and 2000, the number of licensed drivers in the US increased by 46%, from 130 million to 190 million. Over the same time period, the number of vehicles in the US increased by 58% from 138 million to 219 million.

Perhaps as a result of the increasing travel time and automobiles on the road in Traverse City, many commuters have switched their East-West crossings from the northern route through downtown to the southern route closer to Boardman Lake. Traffic counts for the same 40-year period of time reflect large increases in traffic outside of downtown. Areas showing the largest increases were: the southern edge of Traverse City on Cass Street just north (a 287% increase) and south (246%) of Fourteenth; Fourteenth Street (422%); Silver Lake (361%) and Parsons Roads (402%), which lead both southeast and southwest out of the central city. The redirection of the traffic out of the downtown reflects the movement of both residences and work out of the central city.

As an aid to relieving traffic congestion, Traverse City is currently building the BATA transit station as urban infill development in the Red Mill Development District along Hall Street. It will service city, rural, and village-connector service buses. The transit station is scheduled to be completed in the summer of 2006.
To gain a better understanding of what the community and visitors value within and around Traverse City, we randomly distributed 120 disposable cameras to Traverse City residents and tourists at the end of June 2005. With the assistance of the Traverse City Convention and Visitor’s Bureau, 20 cameras were distributed to six distinct segments of the population: community members including children (0-12 years), teenagers (13-19 years), younger adults (20-39 years), adults (40-59 years), and seniors (60+ years). The sixth group consisted of tourists of any age. Along with the cameras, we included instructions reading, in part:
We would like you to participate in our study by taking 27 photographs of the things YOU VALUE MOST about Traverse City. We will collect the cameras and analyze the images to gain insight into what residents and visitors prize within the community. Below are 27 empty lines, one for each exposure on the camera that you have. To help us understand what is important to you, please write down a description of the picture you took. You may also use the back of the sheet to tell us anything else that you feel you were unable to explain with just a picture.

We distributed 120 cameras; 28 cameras were returned with photos taken by 7 children, 6 teenagers, 2 younger adults, 3 adults, and 10 seniors. We did not receive any cameras from tourists. Some photographers used all 27 exposures, while others used only part of the roll. All of the respondents included at least a list of the photos taken, and many described the photos or explained what the scene featured represented to them in more detail. In some cases, photographers listed additional sights they would have liked to include, and explained why.

Results
The four specific categories with the highest numbers of photographers were the marina (57%), boating/boats (43%), “open space” (39%) and “shopping downtown” (39%). It is interesting to note that these categories all relate to outdoor activities. Both the content of the photographs and comments provided by participants were used to cluster specific categories into broad groupings, providing a more comprehensive analysis of what photographers valued. All of the photographs in this section were taken by camera study participants.

The highest ranking groupings were Natural Features, Recreational Opportunities, Cultural or Community Amenities, Businesses, and Managed Landscapes.

A resounding 96% of participants took pictures of natural features. The beaches, bays, open space, and Boardman River were the most photographed, demonstrating the prominence that these waterfront areas play in defining Traverse City’s uniqueness in participants’ minds.

Similarly, within the Recreational Opportunities group, boating was the most popular photographic subject. Pictures of play structures, swimming, and trails were also present but less frequent.
Within the Cultural/Community Amenities group, many photographers took pictures of specific places or organizations. The most popular subjects included the new marina, the zoo, the district library, the City Opera House, the farmer’s market, the Great Lakes Children’s Museum, and the civic center – all popular destinations for families.

Within the Businesses grouping, 17 people highlighted Traverse City’s downtown in general, with pictures of people shopping, restaurants, activities, and downtown diversity. Fifteen people photographed specific restaurants, pubs, ice cream shops, and wineries – some downtown, others in the surrounding area. Twelve people noted specific shops (mostly downtown or in the Garland-Hall area), 7 people mentioned hotels, and five people took pictures of entertainment locations. Four people (3 teenagers and 1 younger adult) photographed stores outside the downtown, in Grand Traverse Mall, strip malls, or big box stores. Three people stressed the importance of small and/or independent local businesses. The high percentage of participants including photographs of downtown Traverse City reflects the relevance of downtown commercial businesses to everyday life.

Within the Managed Landscapes grouping, participants were most enthusiastic about horticulture, and many photographers featured the Friendly Garden Club planting bed on the bay or the Children’s Garden at the library. The numerous parks, orchards, farms, and trails in and around Traverse City were very popular. The Boardman River boardwalk and fish weir were also included.

Of the participants who photographed examples of Transportation, most were concerned with resources for pedestrians and bicyclists: either praising the trails systems or emphasizing the importance of the underpass (under Grandview Parkway), sidewalks, and driver etiquette. The pedestrian bridge over the Boardman River was also included. Parking, the new airport, public transportation and cars received much less attention in images and comments than the city’s walkability.

Built Features were included by fewer photographers (16/28), but out of these examples, twelve focused on historic architecture. Many participants photographed the city’s well-kept Victorian-era homes, including the historic Perry Hannah House on Sixth Street. The State Hospital and barns, the City Opera House, and the former Traverse City State Bank were the next most popular categories of historic building photographs. In their comments, photographers emphasized an appreciation not only for the preservation of historic structures, but also for their continuing use.

We have named one of the most interesting categories of photographs “Intangible Qualities”. The photographer’s written comments were extremely important in making this determination. Photographs in this category conveyed a character or feeling through the visual medium. These photos illustrated neighborhood aesthetics, safety and security, community feeling, humor, and preservation/restoration. Examples of comments that illustrate these “Intangible Qualities” are: “Hope for the Future”, “Pride in the Past”, and “Living the Simple Life”.

Fig. 179: The Clinch Park Zoo

Fig. 180: The Traverse Area District Library

Fig. 181: Downtown Traverse City

Fig. 182: The Friendly Garden Club Planting Bed
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>NATURAL FEATURES</strong></th>
<th><strong>Total number photographers</strong></th>
<th><strong>Percentage photographers</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beaches</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bay</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open Space</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boardman River</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wildlife</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Views</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old Mission Peninsula</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boardman Lake, Waterfront, Landforms, and Forest</td>
<td>2 of each</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES</strong></th>
<th><strong>Total number photographers</strong></th>
<th><strong>Percentage photographers</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boating/Boats</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play Structure/Area</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swimming</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trails</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baseball and Volleyball</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boardman Boardwalk, Bicycling, and Hiking</td>
<td>4 each</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canoeing, Fishing, Picnicking, Running/Track, Skateboarding, and Skiing</td>
<td>2 each</td>
<td>7%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>CULTURAL/COMMUNITY OPPORTUNITIES/AMENITIES</strong></th>
<th><strong>Total number photographers</strong></th>
<th><strong>Percentage photographers</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marina</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinch Park Zoo</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library (Traverse Area District Library) and City Opera House</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sara Hardy Farmer’s Market, Grand Traverse Civic Center (inc. exhibit hall), and Great Lakes Children’s Museum</td>
<td>7 of each</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dennos Museum</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Traverse Heritage Center, Old Town Playhouse and Convention and Visitor’s Bureau</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milliken Auditorium</td>
<td>4 of each</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music House Museum and Senior Center</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11%</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>BUSINESSES</strong></th>
<th><strong>Total number photographers</strong></th>
<th><strong>Percentage photographers</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Photos of Downtown Traverse City</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shopping Downtown</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restaurants Downtown</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Business District Diversity and Active Downtown</td>
<td>8 of each</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downtown Alleys</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific Eateries</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific Restaurants</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdoor Dining and Wineries</td>
<td>4 of each</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ice Cream Shops</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific Shops</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotels</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mall/Strip/Big Box Stores</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small/Independent Local Enterprises</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>MANAGED LANDSCAPES</strong></th>
<th><strong>Total number photographers</strong></th>
<th><strong>Percentage photographers</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Horticulture</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parks</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trails and Boardman River Structures</td>
<td>8 of each</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Camera Study Results by Category</strong></th>
<th><strong>Total number photographers</strong></th>
<th><strong>Percentage photographers</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>TRANSPORTATION</strong></td>
<td>18</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedestrian Trails/Crossing/Access</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bicycling</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Airport</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cars and Public Transportation</td>
<td>1 of each</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>BUILT FEATURES</strong></th>
<th><strong>Total number photographers</strong></th>
<th><strong>Percentage photographers</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Historic Homes/Victorian Architecture</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perry Hannah House</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historic Buildings being used by businesses</td>
<td>4 of each</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Hospital and Barns – Village at Grand Traverse Commons and Grand Traverse Pavilions, potential</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>uses for barns currently being debated</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City Opera House</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traverse City State Bank Building - current 5th/3rd Bank</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beadle Building – current Mackinaw Brewing Co.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ben’s Bar – current Moe’s Bum Steer</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Car Dealership – current Antique Store</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carnegie Building – current Museum of History at the Grand Traverse Heritage Center</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City Gas Co. - current Candle Factory</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dairy Bar - current Stained Glass Store</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historic Firehouse - current Hanna Bistro</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hannah Lay Mercantile Building – current Boyne Country Sports</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ladies’ Library and City Hall – currently law offices</td>
<td>1 of each</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bldg that now contains Omelette Shop</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auto Service – current Randy’s Old Town</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historic Buildings and Architectural Details</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old Mission Lighthouse</td>
<td>1 of each</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firehouse #1 sign and Martinek’s Clock</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4%</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>NEIGHBORHOODS</strong></th>
<th><strong>Total number photographers</strong></th>
<th><strong>Percentage photographers</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Architecture, Site Furniture, Signage and Sculpture</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed Use Developments and Alternative Energy Sources</td>
<td>2 of each</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>INSTITUTIONAL</strong></th>
<th><strong>Total number photographers</strong></th>
<th><strong>Percentage photographers</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Educational</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuing/Specialized</td>
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<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary and Elementary and College</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious</td>
<td>6 of each</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreation Services</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Resources</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7%</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>INTANGIBLE QUALITIES</strong></th>
<th><strong>Total number photographers</strong></th>
<th><strong>Percentage photographers</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Neighborhood Aesthetic Qualities</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victorian-era Stately Older Homes</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brick Streets</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trees Providing Dappled Shade</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gardens, Sidewalks and Well-Kept Homes</td>
<td>1 of each</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiet</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Feeling</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>21%</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Camera Study Results by Category</strong></th>
<th><strong>Total number photographers</strong></th>
<th><strong>Percentage photographers</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preservation/Restoration of Historic Architecture</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Architectural for Current Use</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety and Security</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hope for the Future, Living the Simple Life, Open Space/Forest Conservation, Patriotic Spirit, Preservation of History, Pride in the Past, and Place for Solitude</td>
<td>1 of each</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>SERVICES</strong></th>
<th><strong>Total number photographers</strong></th>
<th><strong>Percentage photographers</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Medical Services</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Governmental Services</td>
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<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courtesy Services, Police/Security and Lifeguards/Safety</td>
<td>1 of each</td>
<td>4%</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>EVENTS</strong></th>
<th><strong>Total number photographers</strong></th>
<th><strong>Percentage photographers</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yearly Events</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Film Festival</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cherry Fest</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly/Annual Events</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shakespeare in the Park, Free Concert in Parks and Music by the Bay</td>
<td>1 of each</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Live musical performances - Interlochen, etc.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly/Annual Events</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art Fairs</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday Night Live</td>
<td>1</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>OUTSIDE TRaverse CITY</strong></th>
<th><strong>Total number photographers</strong></th>
<th><strong>Percentage photographers</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Natural Features</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural/Community</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managed Landscapes</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trails</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parks and Structures Associated with Water</td>
<td>2 of each</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture and Aquaculture</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreational Opportunities</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Built Features</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small/Local Enterprises</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The general character of Traverse City, based upon photographic analysis, historical research, stakeholder surveys, and field observation is that of a historic northern resort town located on the waterfront with the charm of small-town living. Home to events like the National Cherry Festival and the locally-popular Friday Night Live, the city still maintains its character with an appealing northern quality throughout much of the year. The majority of the downtown is very walkable, making the street a place for social interaction. Each distinct area of the downtown provides the pedestrian with a unique experience, shaped by its own land use, services, and architecture.

Urban design scholar Kevin Lynch suggested that a community’s character could be separated into five distinct categories: districts, paths, edges, landmarks, and nodes. Using Lynch’s methodology, we were able to map out these characteristics in Traverse City based on input from community members, walking tours, the camera study, and participation in a community-wide waterfront focused design charrette. As seasonal change dictates usage of an area, our site visits occurred during different times of the year.

Mapping The Study Area

Central Business District
Enclosed by the organic form of the Boardman River on three sides, the Central Business District’s grid-like streets provide an easily navigable experience for vehicles and pedestrians alike. Traveling through this district outside of the Pedestrian Core, a visitor will notice evenly sized blocks filled with a mix of uses. Retail, office, and institutional uses are housed side-by-side in a series of dispersed buildings interrupted by surface parking lots. The frequent incorporation of parking lots on the street sides creates open views, allowing, for instance, the backs of buildings along Front Street to be observed. This area is not as pedestrian-friendly. Buildings in this district maintain a relatively common building height, many being only one to two stories in height, with the exception of the Park Place Hotel, which visually punctuates the sky with its ten-story tower. A decreasing

Districts
Districts are areas that maintain a distinct visual character throughout. They may have well-defined boundaries, such as a busy road. Districts can be united by a common pedestrian scale or architectural style. Districts vary in size. It is not uncommon for a district to have a strong core surrounded by a gradient in which the character changes as you move outward. Ten different districts are contained within the downtown Traverse City area. These areas range from residential districts (i.e. the Central Neighborhood, Boardman Historic District), to mixed-use (i.e. River’s Edge, Old Towne), primarily commercial neighborhoods (i.e. the CBD and its subset, Pedestrian Core area), to current redevelopment areas (Warehouse District and Red Mill District), and open areas (Waterfront). These districts are shown in Figure 101 and described in further detail in the text that follows.
amount of first-floor retail is noticed as one travels outward from the center of the central business district, resulting in less pedestrian interest and travel. Streets are wide enough to allow for two lanes of vehicular traffic with parallel parking on both sides. Sidewalks are wide and lined with young trees. Four-way stops or stoplights exist at intersections to regulate traffic and allow for safe travel by foot. The large amount of surface parking contained in the downtown, in addition to the Larry C Hardy Parking Deck, together demonstrate the importance of the automobile. The combination of a limited public transportation system into surrounding neighborhoods, along with a comparatively small number of residences in the downtown versus the suburbs, causes most residents and visitors to drive to and from downtown. Therefore, much of the pedestrian travel in this area is comprised of visitors traveling from their cars to shops or to work.

**Pedestrian Core**

Pedestrian travel increases as one moves closer to the “pedestrian core” of the Central Business District. Located along Front Street between Union and Park Streets, the visitor immediately notices a distinct visual change from the surrounding areas. Buildings become much denser and gradually rise in height—up to four stories in some areas. Decorative cornices in a variety of colors crown the buildings, while the latter’s arched windows create a cadence of glass down the street. Colorful awnings and trees lining the street extend out over the sidewalk to enclose the pedestrian in the streetscape. Parallel parking on both sides of the street provides protection to the pedestrian, creating a buffer from two lanes of traffic heading west on Front Street. Filled with dispersed retail, offices, and residences, Front Street keeps the visitor’s eyes wandering from storefront to storefront.

The densely arranged buildings make use of a mixture of materials, including both painted and exposed brick, wood, and concrete. New architecture blends with the old, and new retail uses, such as the Mackinaw Brewing Company, occupy historic structures. From the historic red brick of Fifth-Third Bank, to the stone walls of the historic First National Bank building, construction materials provide visual interest as they change from block to block. Crosswalks and bump-outs interrupt each block, with brick-paver paths guiding the pedestrian from each side of the street.

**Boardman Historic District**

Located directly adjacent to the CBD, visitors observe a change in land use as they enter the more private residential area of the historic Boardman Neighborhood. The architectural styles of the area’s single family residences, demonstrate the variation in the ages of homes in the district. Homes of many colors, sizes, and styles, ranging from cottages to the romantic and decorative Queen Anne style can be found here. Peaked roofs, wrap around porches, turrets, and colorful ornamentation are common sights here. Throughout this district lush vegetation and manicured lawns are evident, demonstrating that this area was once and still is a fashionable place to live. High canopies of mature trees create a sun-dappled effect on the narrow streets, reinforcing the peaceful, mature feel of the area.
Traveling from north to south within the Central Neighborhood, the visitor immediately notices the transition from grand old homes of a common Victorian-style to smaller, more conventional single family homes. A few commercial, retail, and institutional land uses are interspersed throughout the area, including the National Cherry Festival Headquarters, the Grand Traverse Heritage Center, and the Reynolds Jonkhoff Funeral Home (also known as the historic Perry Hannah House). The Central Neighborhood became one of the most desirable places to live within Traverse City after Perry Hannah built his home there. In this section of the district, homes are set back at a uniform distance on lots on Sixth Street’s north side, for Hannah wanted to enjoy unobstructed views from his porch. Lush vegetation greets the visitor, providing a canopy of green as one passes through the neighborhood. Houses built in this section of the neighborhood follow Hannah’s ideals of symmetry and an orderly community. Situated close to the mixed-use Old Town area and the major arterial streets of Division and Eighth, this neighborhood takes on a more public feel than the Boardman neighborhood to those passing through by car. Brick-paved streets, patched with asphalt, show evidence of gradual deterioration due to traffic flows and the age of the brick.

**Old Town**

The intersection of Sixth and Union Streets marks the district historically known as the Old Town Business District. Across the Union Street Bridge is a smaller pedestrian scale retail area that slowly melds into Lay Park and the Central Neighborhood. This area contains a series of 2-story retail and commercial buildings extending down Union Street. Many of these buildings mimic the architectural styles of the buildings found in the pedestrian core in the late 1880s - some even bear the rectangular facades that extend up beyond their peaked rooftops. Young trees and parallel parking create a buffer to the two lanes of vehicular traffic moving north and south on Union Street. This strip contains the closed Dill’s (once known as Novotny’s Saloon), a historic building noted by the Michigan Historical Register.

**River’s Edge**

In the River’s Edge district, the visitor finds an area filled with new development. This district, once containing an iron foundry, was transformed from a neglected brownfield to an area filled with mixed-use properties and detailed landscaping. Standing at approximately two to five stories above grade, this development gradually steps back from the Boardman River as it rises up to its maximum height. Materials such as red brick, concrete and glass give a more industrial feel to parts of the site, connecting back to its historically industrial use. Borrowed views to the Boardman River enhance River’s Edge, whose modern style and size are a bit overwhelming to those passing through via the Boardman River boardwalk.
Red Mill District

Visitors to the Red Mill district will immediately notice an extension of the Warehouse area, including three well-known enterprises: North Peak Brewery, Folgarelli’s Market, and the Candle Factory. The historic structures and newer construction, such as the Northern Lakes Community Mental Health building and BATA station (currently under construction), come together to create the eastern edge of this district along Hall Street. Numerous redevelopment efforts have been proposed for this area in an attempt to create better pedestrian connections to the waterfront. Brownfield redevelopment has significantly increased development in the Red Mill District, allowing for new construction such as the Harbour View Centre.

Warehouse District

Containing former industrial uses, this area is home to both neglected and restored buildings that are either vacant or serve as commercial enterprises. Buildings in this district are primarily one or two stories tall, are commonly constructed of concrete, and exhibit a distinct industrial feel. Few trees exist here as much of the land area is covered by pavement and surface parking. The overgrown edge of the river, on the south edge of the district, is a popular place to fish. Due to the many open areas and juxtaposition with the waterfront, the National Cherry Festival is held in part in this district during the summer months. Pedestrian and vehicular movement through the site is minimal as a result of Garland Street turning north to Grandview Parkway rather than continuing straight through from Hall Street to Union Street. Both pedestrians and drivers may feel as though they are trespassing through a private area, a reflection of the industrial nature of the site.

Pedestrian Core to Waterfront Transition

This area, primarily comprised of surface parking, is a zone of flexible use and transition. The lot between Cass and Union Streets houses the popular Farmer’s Market twice a week during the market season. This area is a well-used parking lot during the rest of the week. The lot to the east of Park Street features a nearby boat launch that is also frequently used by boaters throughout the year. The Chamber of Commerce and the Traverse City Convention and Visitor’s Bureau, which has architecture reminiscent of the old Manistee and Northwestern railroad depot, call this district home. The southern edge of this district abuts the northern side of the Boardman River, naturalized in some areas, and reinforced by retaining walls in others. A line of vegetation along this edge includes both young and mature trees and shrubs, as well as lawn. Views to the north are completely open, allowing for a long view over Grandview Parkway towards the bay. This district also facilitates physical movement across Grandview Parkway through the underground tunnel to the zoo, found just west of Cass Street. Public art in the form of sculpture, a small riverside plaza, and access to the river boardwalk make this district one of the most diverse in the city.
Waterfront
Considered Traverse City’s most beloved resource, the waterfront is home to the city’s “open space,” sandy beaches, and a recently renovated marina complex. Boating traffic is high during the summer months and visitors can often be found playing sand volleyball or swimming near the beach. There are few structures, with the exception of those associated with Clinch Park Zoo and the Duncan L. Clinch Marina. Paved paths on the north side of Grandview Parkway allow for pedestrian and bicycle travel. Plantings do exist; however, they are strategically placed to avoid obstructing pedestrian and vehicular views to the bay. Views to the bay can be had from the downtown looking north on Park, Cass, and Union Streets. As Grandview Parkway runs the length of the waterfront to the south of the site, pedestrian access to the waterfront from downtown is only permitted via crosswalks at Park and Union streets, the boardwalk at river level, or the pedestrian underpass at Cass Street, connecting to the Zoo.

Pathways
Pathways, often dominant city elements, are defined as linear segments in the landscape that are used to travel from point to point. Their level of importance is dependent upon their use. Pathways can include pedestrian and vehicular routes. In Traverse City, our team has focused on pedestrian paths. In addition to the sidewalk system, pedestrians travel throughout the study area via the existing TART trail, Boardman River boardwalks, and waterfront trails. A hierarchy of foot-traffic on these paths is shown in Figure 103. The majority of these paths provide pleasant traveling experiences; however, the pedestrian occasionally faces the challenge of crossing busy streets. For example, the corridor along Grandview Parkway, although located near the waterfront, is unpleasant to cross due to fast moving vehicles. To the visitor, this major east-west corridor is conceptually dominant, given that vehicles are rarely required to stop for them. An underpass at Cass allows pedestrians to avoid conflicts with vehicular traffic while crossing to Clinch Park. However, the tunnel is often locked during cold weather, and from evening until morning. Union, Cass, and Park Streets are the major north/south connections in the hierarchy of paths linking downtown to the waterfront. The view culminates in open space when looking down both Union and Park Streets to the north. Cass Street, centrally located within the Pedestrian Core, acts as a grand promenade. The view north along Cass Street to the waterfront ends at the Clinch Park Zoo and the Con Foster Building, creating a destination at Cass’s northernmost end. Each year during the winter holidays, the city places a large, decorated holiday tree in the center of Cass, north of Front Street. Historically, as described in the history section, a fountain was located at this point. These actions indicate that Cass Street is an important pathway from the downtown to the waterfront in all seasons.
Particular attention should be paid to the pathways created by Union, Cass, and Park Streets, by creating major downtown to bay front connections at these points. Hall Street is secondary in the north-south connection hierarchy. The northern views from along these streets are unobstructed ones of the open space on the waterfront. However, the Red Mill District and the Warehouse District, as described previously, do not provide pleasant pedestrian experiences within them. In addition, traveling south on these streets does not connect the pedestrian to the downtown. Front Street acts as the major east-west pathway for pedestrians based on the high levels of activity there that make it a memorable place.

**Edges**

Edges are created by distinct changes in character, such as traffic flows, natural features, and perceived changes in the landscape. Edges, whether they be railroads or throughways, topography, or district boundaries, typically fragment the landscape.⁹⁸⁸

As shown in Figure 104, the Boardman River acts as a clear edge of separation in the landscape. A vehicle or pedestrian cannot cross it unless permitted to do so by bridge, underpass, or boardwalk. River’s Edge, the Warehouse District, the Central Business District, Old Towne, and the Pedestrian Core to Waterfront Transition all share a common boundary: the Boardman River. Many areas along the Boardman River, including those between Cass and Union Streets, and Hannah Park and the River’s Edge District, are well kept and provide for pedestrian access. However, along some parts of the Boardman River these edges are undesirable. Pedestrians can not always walk to the edge of the river, due to steep slopes or dense, shrubby vegetation. Some areas are fenced off, giving the feeling that one is not supposed to cross there, or that danger sits behind it. Along Front Street, nearly all of the buildings have their backs facing the river with rear parking behind, accentuating the river as an edge.

Traffic movement also creates defined edges. Grandview Parkway and Eighth Street have heavy traffic flows, each creating an edge that makes it difficult for a vehicle or pedestrian to move across these streets. Pedestrians are required to dart across these edges, since actual crosswalks are infrequent and widely spaced.

The five-lane Grandview Parkway, in particular, acts as both a visual and mental barrier to pedestrians wishing to travel from downtown to the bay front. There is not a stoplight or formal crosswalk at Cass Street (the grand promenade) and Grandview Parkway, making travel across the parkway even more difficult for pedestrians. (As noted earlier, the tunnel at Cass and Grandview Parkway is frequently locked, especially during winter months.) Stoplights and formal crosswalks do exist at the intersections of Union and Park Streets with Grandview Parkway, but the length of time allowed for pedestrians to cross is short.

As Lynch writes, “a strong edge does not necessarily equate to something that is a barrier, or impenetrable.”⁹⁸⁹ A strong edge exists at the transition between the Pedestrian Core and the Central Business District. Once a pedestrian crosses over this edge or threshold, the charac-
ter of the downtown is distinctly different. In the Pedestrian Core, the buildings become denser and begin to enclose the pedestrian, making the streets feel more walkable. Similarly, the pedestrian takes note of this change in character as they move from the Pedestrian Core toward the CBD. Buildings become less dense and more surface parking lots arise.

This strong edge is felt on Front Street just west of the Fifth Third Bank and Wilhelm Building. A number of new infill and redevelopment plans have been proposed for this area, which may aid in relieving this sudden change in character.

Another prominent edge is located along Boardman Avenue along the stretch in between the courthouse and old elementary school. Although Boardman Avenue defines a separation between the Central Business District and the Boardman Neighborhood, the style and architecture of these buildings echo each other from across the street. This creates a nice transition from either side, signifying the positive character that an edge can create.

**Landmarks**

A landmark is a well-defined physical object in the landscape, often used as a visual marker for orientation and way finding. For example, if someone from out of town were to ask a Traverse City resident for directions, the latter may use landmarks to describe how to get from place to place (e.g. “walk towards the Fifth-Third Bank tower,” or “it is across the street from Horizon Bookstore,” or “go two blocks down from the County Courthouse,” etc.) A landmark is often spatially prominent, meaning that it is visible from many locations or that it provides a local contrast with surrounding elements. Landmarks are often located at junctions where wayfinding decisions are made. They are also located along dominant pedestrian paths such as those described earlier. Many of these landmarks are located on Front, Union, Cass, and Park Streets, the dominant pedestrian pathways discussed previously. In some cases, they signify a beginning or an end to dominant pathways. Landmarks often define the end of vistas. This is the case with the view north from Cass Street to the bay front. The vista ends at a landmark: the Clinch Park Zoo. However, landmarks do not exist at the northern ends of Union and Park Streets where they meet Grandview Parkway. Traverse City has many landmarks, many of which are identified in Figure 197.

**Grand Traverse Bay:** Perhaps the most important and highly valued landmark in Traverse City.

**Boardman River:** Although underutilized, it is still recognized as important due to its containment of the downtown and connection to the bay.

**Friendly Garden Club Planting Bed:** One of the largest and most well-maintained garden beds on the bay front. Its Victorian-style plantings often create a picture for the viewer.
Farmer’s Market: Located in a flexible use space in the Pedestrian Core to Waterfront Transition area, this commercial and social space is a parking lot during non-market times.

Traverse City Convention and Visitor’s Bureau: An important landmark for tourists to learn about Traverse City’s amenities and attractions.

Fifth-Third Bank Tower: A historic building on the northwest corner of Union and Front Streets, it stands taller than any other on Front Street. The tower provides vertical punctuation of the downtown skyline.

City Opera House: A historic building that is currently being renovated, it is home to many cultural events, dinners, and performances.

South Union Street/Boardman River Bridge: A historic bridge that offers a connection from the Central Business District to the surrounding residential neighborhoods and Old Town Business District.

Grand Traverse Heritage Center and the Museum of History: A historic building that houses a museum and numerous organizations devoted to the preservation of Traverse City history.

Reynolds Jonkhoff Funeral Home (Perry Hannah House): A historic home built by the lumber baron Perry Hannah for his retirement.

Duncan L. Clinch Marina: The newly developed marina is a bay front landmark.

Clinch Park: Adjacent to the area known as the “open space” along the bay front, this area is also full of green recreational space and provides an unobstructed view to the bay.

Clinch Park Zoo and Mini-Train: The zoo currently serves as a destination point on the waterfront for the many children and parents who wish to see animals and ride the train. Although the zoo will be closing soon, this area will likely serve another important civic function in the future, remaining a focal point of activity.

Traverse City Chamber of Commerce: A newly-built structure that embraces historical architecture and overlooks the waterfront.

State Theatre: A place of entertainment where movies are currently shown as part of special events, it is hoped that the Theatre will reopen soon with a more permanent schedule.

Horizon Bookstore: This independent retail shop draws visitors of all ages. Its coffee shop and patio serve as an important Traverse City gathering point.

Park Place Hotel: Its ten-story tower, the highest structure in the study area, provides a vertical marker high in the sky.

County Courthouse: A large, historic brick structure surrounded by a well-maintained carpet of green.

Governmental Center: A large, modern building situated on the banks of the Boardman River.
Nodes

Nodes are similar to landmarks in that they define social gathering spaces within the community and add to its perceived vibrancy. As Lynch suggests, “people heighten their attention in areas where decisions are made. In these areas, nearby elements and landmarks are often perceived with higher than normal clarity.”

In Traverse City many of these nodes, shown in figure 198, are located in places of social interaction or pathway intersection. Social nodes include: the marina, Clinch Park and the “open space,” the Farmer’s Market, and Horizon Bookstore. (Intersection nodes include: the intersections of Front Street with Union, Cass, and Park Streets and the intersection of Front Street and Grandview Parkway.) These nodes are more heavily used in the summer, when the weather is pleasant. These areas also act as places of winter activity, although this activity is sporadic, demonstrating the need for additional winter nodes. There are also many places to informally eat outside, including the space outside of Sassy Sandwich at Union and Front Streets, Horizon Bookstore, the grassy area between 242 and 250 East Front Street, and the Jay Smith walkway.

Nodes are associated with a sense of arrival. For example, visitors recognize that they’ve entered downtown Traverse City when they cross the intersection of Front and Park Streets. They also tend to recognize that they’ve left it once they cross over Front and Union Streets. Clinch Park is a type of thematic concentration, characterized by open space complete with trails, plantings, and pedestrian activity.

“A strong physical form is not essential to the recognition of a node,” according to Lynch. For instance, the Farmer’s Market, located in the parking lot in the Pedestrian Core to Waterfront Transition District is most memorable when the market activity is occurring, rather than when it is merely a parking lot.

Character Of The Central Business District and Waterfront

Districts, paths, edges, landmarks, and nodes comprise the basic elements used to create a city’s image in the minds of those who navigate through it. Each of these elements come together to intensify and enhance the overall character of the area, ultimately defining its entire structure and identity. For an identifiable form to be created, these elements must be combined to either reinforce each other or create structure through conflict. For example, one building or place often serves as both landmark and a node. We also see edges and districts abutting each other to create tension and focus due to their juxtaposition.
Districts are made distinct by overarching land use, scale, and typical building forms. The ten districts included in the study area create a variety of experiences, from the dense Pedestrian Core with its access to services and easy walkability, to the less dense areas, like the Warehouse District. Within each district are particular types of the other basic elements that further differentiate the districts from each other. Narrow streets based on a grid, wide sidewalks, and tree-lined streets create pathways that encourage pedestrian movement. Landmarks exist throughout each area, giving residents and visitors visual clues to help them navigate the city. Small spaces that invite socialization create nodes in the city, often at areas of pathway intersection or high activity. These spaces add to the vibrancy and attractiveness of the city.

Two districts within the study area are particularly valued by residents and visitors alike: the Pedestrian Core (mentioned by 61% of photographers in the Camera Study) and the Waterfront (mentioned by 68% of photographers). Each of these districts has unique characteristics, which are described in detail below.

The Pedestrian Core provides a mixture of architectural forms and details. The quality and type of building materials in this district connect observers to the history of the city. Historical buildings still exist within the city, as shown in Figure 197. As mentioned previously, residents value the preservation of these structures and would like to see new developments build upon historic architecture. (Recall that 43% of all photographers from the camera study noted that they value historic architecture.) Both the camera study and public participation meetings also demonstrated that one of the most popular characteristics of Traverse City is access to downtown services.

The waterfront is another important district within Traverse City. As evidenced by the camera study and public participation meetings, open spaces and vistas within these spaces are highly valued. In fact, natural features such as the bay front were the most valued community assets in Traverse City according to results of the camera study. The waterfront acts as both Traverse City’s front yard and a popular destination; however, physical access from the downtown is minimal, due to the perceived “edge” created by Grandview Parkway. The waterfront is visually accessible at both pedestrian and driving scales. From the downtown, the bay front can only be seen from select points: looking north on Union and Park Streets. These forced views allow for much potential in terms of creating experiences along viewable areas on the waterfront.

The Waterfront and Pedestrian Core districts are separated both physically and psychologically by the perceived “edge” created by Grandview Parkway and the difficulties of walking across the parkway between these districts. As there is little interaction between the Waterfront and Pedestrian Core Districts, it makes sense to borrow from the qualities that make each attractive to enhance flows between the two. This will help draw the residents and visitors that use the waterfront into the downtown and vice-versa. It is evident that we must build on the existing assets of each place to marry the waterfront and the Central Business District.
Five areas for improvement have been identified; they can easily be defined as central nodes of interaction in downtown Traverse City. Their development will help bridge the gap between the Central Business District and the bay front. They are shown in Figure 107.

**Grandview Parkway and Front Street**

If we were to create a hierarchy of importance for these “nodes” of interaction, then the corner of Grandview Parkway and Front Street would be at the highest level. This intersection acts as a gateway for vehicular and pedestrian traffic to both the downtown and the waterfront. It is also the point at which Grandview Parkway begins to bisect the downtown and the waterfront. The mouth of the Boardman River is located near this intersection and can also be enhanced to act as a destination point.

**Grandview Parkway and Union, Cass, Park Streets**

The intersections of Grandview Parkway with Union, Cass, and Park Streets are next in the hierarchy. It is important to create nodes in these areas that will act as connectors between the waterfront and downtown. As described earlier, these nodes also provide visual connections to the waterfront from downtown and the potential for punctuation at their respective termini on the bay.

**Garland Street and Hall Street**

The Garland/Hall area acts at the final node in the hierarchy. If the Grandview Parkway and Front Street intersection is the front door, then the Garland and Hall area is the less well-known backdoor into Traverse City. The area around this node is presently much less developed than that of the “front door” or downtown area, presenting Traverse City with an exciting opportunity to create another unique gateway to their downtown.

**Conclusions**

A city’s character is influenced by many things; but it is only truly recognizable when people interact with and interpret it. We must build on existing relationships to engage in a distinctive marriage between the preservation of natural features and the growth of Traverse City. The story of the city is preserved among the sands of Grand Traverse, held in the trees that line Front Street, observed in the banks of the Boardman, and seen in the walls of historic architecture. It is possible for development and nature to coexist, as each touches back to the history and culture of Traverse City and reminds us that this is an area full of unique possibilities and special qualities. The city’s character will always be faced with change, but now as these identifiable traits are recognized, the city can plan to manage and enhance the connections between them.

In light of the accumulated findings of this character study, as well as the public meetings and other events held with Traverse City residents over the period of the study, we offer the following suggestions for further enhancing the city’s fascinating, eclectic, and historic character. These recommendations will be built upon in the design guidelines portion of this study.
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MAINTAINING AND ENHANCING TRAVERSE CITY’S CHARACTER

- Follow long-standing community goals to promote the ecological restoration and aesthetic enhancement of the Boardman River.
- Provide uninterrupted boardwalks to allow pedestrians opportunities to be close to the river.
- Consider streetscape treatments, landscaping improvements, and architectural changes to improve the rear façades of the buildings along the north side of Front Street, making them more aesthetically appealing and inviting to pedestrians.
- Continue to promote mixed-use compact development, particularly of residential, commercial, and institutional spaces in the Central Business District.
- Create Destination spaces for both active and passive use and well-established pathways within all of Traverse City’s districts, to guide residents to and from these areas and create a well-unified community.
- Districts should, however, maintain their unique architectural and historical styles through the use of appropriate site furnishings, architectural details, and building types.
- Encourage new construction that makes use of the latest advances in energy efficiency, on-site stormwater management techniques, and environmental stewardship.
- Continue Traverse City’s tradition of rehabilitating historic structures for contemporary uses.
- Continue to strategically reduce off-street surface parking in the Central Business District by moving it to structured parking, so that new parcels may become available for future construction, parks or gathering spaces, and other positive uses.
- Complement the existing variety of unique districts by targeting underutilized areas for development that is consistent with community-driven design guidelines (i.e. the Warehouse and Red Mill Districts) without sacrificing the districts’ existing distinctive qualities.
- Focus on underutilized areas for investment and development in order to promote desirable uses in districts and preclude less-desirable ones.
- Consider overlay zoning or form-based coding to achieve the abovementioned objectives.
- Make the intersection of Grandview Parkway and Front Street the vehicular gateway to the downtown and the waterfront.
- Create destinations at the intersections of Union, Cass, and Park Streets with Grandview Parkway to act as main points of connection between downtown and the bay front.
- Continue examining site planning and building standards to further promote infill development.
- Create incentives for the development of affordable housing options in the Central Business District for those that work in the downtown and would like to live there.
- Convert the “Pedestrian Core to Waterfront Transition” area into a new district that will facilitate transition and flow between the downtown and the waterfront, reinforcing those characteristics that Traverse City visitors and residents value.
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The Traverse City Design Guidelines are intended to increase connectivity between the downtown and the bay front, enhance urban landscapes and promote district revitalization. These guidelines build upon the results of the preceding Traverse City Character Study, which provides the historical, cultural, and environmental basis for many of the recommendations found here. The elements and qualities that make Traverse City unique, as expressed by residents during the “Your Bay, Your Say” initiative, include the following: a celebration of natural resources, a strong sense of local history, unique small-town character, and sustainable living. We will build upon these community values in the recommendations that follow for enhancing Traverse City’s character.
Armed with an understanding of the values and priorities of Traverse City residents, we present the following principles and themes that drive our design concepts. It is our hope that they respond to the identified needs of Traverse City, and as such, have the potential to gain widespread support.

Context-sensitive design
New development within downtown Traverse City will primarily take the form of infill development. This should be done at a scale and in a style compatible with, surrounding buildings and spaces to ensure that the existing rhythm and cadence along streets is enhanced.

Enhance public space along the bay front and Boardman River
Through the reclamation of underutilized space along the Boardman River north of Front Street, a multi-use, pedestrian-oriented area can be created. This ecologically-sensitive area should include updated stormwater management techniques, while also providing places for seating, recreation, dining, and other daily activities.

Showcase stormwater management and focus on ecological health of the river and bay
Traverse City largely owes its existence to its location along the Boardman River and West Grand Traverse Bay. It has a long, symbiotic relationship with these two remarkable natural resources. Given the degree of environmental awareness of today’s citizens, the city is better positioned than ever to serve as a steward for watershed health by implementing stormwater best management practices, and limiting the amount of impervious surfaces within its boundaries.

Provide ample workforce housing
If Traverse City is to continue to offer services and shopping that are distinctive in the region, it should offer economic incentives and implement affordable housing policies that enable downtown workers to live near their jobs. We believe that this will be a persistent challenge for the city and urge its citizens to put their demonstrated creative talents to work to ensure a diverse residential base.
Provide necessary amenities and services for downtown residents
We recommend the addition of several basic services and amenities in the downtown for current and future residents. Despite an increased commercial presence in downtown Traverse City, some needs are not being met. These include a lack of grocery stores, hardware stores and office supply stores. The City of Traverse City could help alleviate this need by implementing a cap on the number of non-retail first-floor uses in the core downtown and Garland-Hall areas.

Provide entertainment options for all ages downtown
Downtown Traverse City should be a destination for all segments of the population: families, seniors and teenagers, as well as young adults and professionals. By drawing diverse groups in at all hours, pedestrian safety can be enhanced by the sheer number of people on the streets. Making additions to the Garland-Hall area could encourage round-the-clock social and commercial activity there.

Promote year-round activity both downtown and on the bay front
The city should seek to provide year-round activities in downtown and along the waterfront, supporting both businesses and a community atmosphere.

Create spaces for all levels of activity throughout the bay front and downtown
Traverse City residents and visitors should be able to choose from many active and passive spaces at both the waterfront and in the downtown. Public spaces should be flexible and serve multiple purposes.

Draw pedestrians safely across Grandview Parkway
Grandview Parkway acts as a significant physical barrier to non-motorized traffic between the downtown and the bay front. By creating destinations on either side of the Parkway and enhancing crosswalks and landscaping, the road’s exclusive auto-orientation can be changed to better accommodate pedestrians.

The speed and volume of traffic along the parkway also deters frequent pedestrian crossing between the downtown and the bay front. Through the addition of traffic calming devices, pedestrian activity will increase as drivers are apt to exercise more caution when pedestrians are present.

Implement Parking Changes
Significant areas of downtown Traverse City and the waterfront are dedicated to surface parking. By reducing this surface parking and consolidating it in structures, more area can be opened up for public gathering and recreation spaces, as well as productive infill development.

If Traverse City is to continue to offer services and shopping that are distinctive in the region it should offer economic incentives and implement affordable housing policies that enable the downtown workforce to live near their jobs.
Current Conditions and Focus of Design Guidelines

These design guidelines address those locations between the city’s downtown and the West Grand Traverse Bay waterfront that are not living up to their full potential as indicated by community members.

Our guidelines proceed from a belief that good design and ecological sensitivity go hand in hand. While keeping in mind the previously mentioned principles for creating seamless transitions between the downtown and the bay front, we also propose the implementation of a series of Stormwater Best Management Practices (BMPs) throughout the Design Guidelines Study Area. The purpose of these BMPs is to reduce the quantities of pollutants carried into the Boardman River and Grand Traverse Bay, while allowing groundwater to be recharged. Currently, much of the land on both sides of the Boardman River is paved with asphalt and concrete or covered with buildings that have conventional roofs. It is our goal to decrease the surface area and connectivity of these impermeable surfaces in an effort to promote more on-site treatment and infiltration and ultimately, to improve the health of the Boardman. Further information about stormwater BMP’s can be found in Appendix C.

In addition to its ecological value, the Boardman River is also culturally important. It is a prominent feature within the downtown, but seems neglected and underappreciated in certain areas. Buildings are oriented away from the river. Land adjacent to the Boardman River is used for parking and delivery, and pedestrian amenities are lacking. Our suggested improvements would transform both the south and north sides of the Boardman, showcasing this prized natural resource while also capitalizing on its strategic importance to the downtown and the bay front. Our design concepts for the river consider 1) pollution prevention, 2) riparian restoration, 3) pedestrian amenities and attractions, and 4) practical matters such as the provision of adequate parking.

Making pedestrian connections across Grandview Parkway is one of the central goals of our designs. The current connections make pedestrians uneasy and apprehensive about crossing the road. Pedestrian crosswalks at grade currently exist at the intersections of Grandview Parkway with Park and Union Streets. At these locations, traffic lights allow pedestrians to cross while vehicles turn onto Grandview Parkway. There is no crossing light cycle dedicated to pedestrians, and while they can actuate a crossing signal at the Park Street intersection, there is no similar opportunity at the Union Street intersection. Additionally, the traffic lights are not timed to allow for gaps in traffic. An underpass at Cass Street allows pedestrians to cross to Clinch Park during the daylight hours in warmer weather, but is frequently closed at other times.

We propose a variety of ways to enhance pedestrian safety along Grandview Parkway. A large proportion of these strategies focus on traffic-calming measures designed to lower the speed at which vehicle operators feel comfortable driving. We provide ideas for new destinations on each side of Grandview Parkway to increase the volume and frequency of pedestrian crossings, which, in a positive feedback loop, will also encourage drivers to slow their speed.

The changes we propose for the bay front will provide diverse opportunities for passive and active enjoyment of the beaches and the bay – all while keeping the greatest parts of the open space “open.”

The Garland-Hall District, composed of the Warehouse and Red Mill Districts, is an area west of the Central Business District with significant potential for infill development. As such, the revitalization of this area plays an important role in shaping the future face of downtown Traverse City. We propose a set of design guidelines for the creation of a vibrant pedestrian-oriented neighborhood with a distinctive atmosphere celebrating themes of industry, work, creativity, and environmental responsibility; linking the district’s past, present, and future.
Fig. 200: The Traverse City Design Guidelines Study Area is denoted by the yellow line.
Throughout the Traverse City Character Study, one common theme was water and its interaction with the land. From this comes the idea of waves repeatedly rolling onto the shore, leaving behind gentle, intricate lines in the sand as the water ebbs and flows.

We believe that the natural tidal rhythm between water and land can be mimicked by building spaces which encourage the same dynamic flow of people and places. For this reason, undulating and interwoven lines are replicated throughout our design concepts for connecting downtown Traverse City to the bay front.
Existing buildings (pink) are supplemented by the addition of infill development (red), to create a fully-developed downtown area. Echoes of the wave pattern are noticeable in the design of the Farmers’ Market, central to both the downtown and our master plan. The waterfront area is left relatively undeveloped, with the exception of some destination and activity nodes strategically placed across from pedestrian crossings along Grandview Parkway.
Appreciation for the Boardman River could be renewed by transforming the parking lots and delivery areas south of the river into a network of attractive pedestrian plazas and walkways. Small plazas and arcades would lead pedestrians to the riverwalk from Front Street. Entrances on Park, Cass, and Union Streets would draw people in to experience a series of appealing social spaces with views of the river.

Building upon the wave motif, we propose public art highlighting this inspiration. Below we show a glass tile mosaic along the concrete retaining wall of the Boardman River. (This installation, as well as all others proposed in this document, could be re-imagined and installed by any number of local artists.) Behind the retaining wall is the reclaimed rear-of-building space between the river and several Front Street businesses. Enough hardscape should be maintained to facilitate garbage pick-up and delivery drop-off, in addition to providing dining, recreation, and gathering spaces. Planters with seating walls dispersed throughout the riverwalk could hold native Michigan plants, such as grasses whose vertical structure takes advantage of the wind. Gentle lighting would illuminate the path, allowing for safe evening strolls next to the river. With these improvements, back doors of business would become additional front doors. Bioretention cells filled with native perennials, shrubs, and trees could replace the lawn adjacent to the retaining wall in the areas east of Union Street. West of Union Street, restoration of the riparian buffer is needed.

Fig 203: Paths and seating at a proposed new plaza at the corner of Park and Front Streets direct attention to the riverwalk beyond.

Fig 204: The Boardman Riverwalk features a network of pedestrian plazas on the south side, and an extended boardwalk on the north side of the river.

Fig 205: Before and After. Looking from the Farmers’ Market area at the rear façades of several buildings along Front Street.
In 2002, Gosling Czubak Engineering Services, Inc. convened groups of Farmers’ Market and Artisans’ Market vendors to discuss their preferences for a redesigned market. Several participants expressed dissatisfaction with the day and time of the Artisan’s Market (Sunday afternoons); however, a suitable alternative solution was not found. We propose to relocate the Artisans’ Market to the south side of the Boardman River. Doing so creates another functional social space between the river and the rear of Front Street buildings. This space would feature pathways to the Jay Smith Walkway and to the pedestrian bridge that leads to the Farmers’ Market, increasing connectivity and traffic between these two areas. This could be beneficial to both markets and the downtown, as new visitors to any one of these areas will invariably notice other activities taking place a short distance away.

Across the riverwalk from the Jay Smith Walkway, a new pedestrian bridge measuring 15 feet wide is envisioned as a gateway to a newly redesigned Farmers’ Market. Arching over a path leading to the bridge, we conceptualize a structure built of native stone to house the Market Master’s office and public restrooms.

Artisans’ Market

Pedestrian Bridge

Figs 206: Current pedestrian bridge to the Farmers’ Market and a conceptual schematic of the pedestrian bridge leading to a new Farmers’ Market gateway

Fig 207: Plan view of the Artisan’s Market at the end of the Jay Smith Walkway and the pedestrian bridge to the Farmers’ Market
Within the modified Farmers’ Market, 70 vendor stalls would be situated in a wave pattern. On-site parking for vendors to load, unload, and have stock on hand is essential, as indicated by merchant participants in the 2002 Gosling Czubak Farmer’s Market Study. 293 All other parking has been relocated off site, to allow for a much-needed expansion of shopping space, augmentation of vendor facilities, and additional vendor stalls. Parking can be accommodated in a proposed structure across Union Street from the west end of the market, or in the existing lot across Cass Street from the east end. A drop-off/pick-up location at the east end of the market is proposed for vendor or visitor use. Three universally accessible parking spaces are also located to the east of the drop off area, and the entire redesigned Farmers’ Market is universally accessible. Pedestrian access to the market is located on both Cass and Union Streets, over the pedestrian bridge (pictured in Figure 206), and through the tunnel under Grandview Parkway. Vehicular access is located off of Union Street, allowing for coherent one-way travel through the market, with an exit on Grandview Parkway.

We envision the stall coverings in the redesigned Farmers’ Market to be tensile structures employing woven PVC-coated polyester, an exterior fabric that can be installed and removed seasonally. This would allow for other uses within the market, such as events associated with the Cherry Festival, Friday Night Live, Art Fair, school carnivals, or other happenings. Flexible sails mounted to the tops of some of the market stalls could make an interesting addition. Following the wave and water inspiration, these sails would stand out among the trees in the market area and be visible from the Boardman Riverwalk, Grandview Parkway, and the bay front. The sails would serve to create an image for the area, standing out as a destination for pedestrians and vehicles. A wave pattern would also be recognizable within the groundplane, serving to further connect the inland Farmers’ Market area with the waterfront and beaches.

An alternative vision for the Farmers’ Market would have tensile sail-like structures posed over each stall, providing shade and shedding rain (while still being removable at times when the market would become a true multi-use space). Many other design options for tensile fabric structures would also be possible.
Building upon the existing boardwalk on the north side of the river, we propose extending the boardwalk west to the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) fish weir and east to a new pier built atop the breakwall at the mouth of the Boardman River. The new boardwalk sections could be designed to float and to accommodate high river levels. This would create yet another pedestrian-oriented path through downtown Traverse City and enable travelers to come into close contact with the river.

Select locations along the Boardman River Boardwalk would include overlooks with comfortable seating, plantings, and interpretive signage: possibly highlighting the river’s ecology, its relationship to the watershed, or its history of use. Other parts of the boardwalk could step down to the river, enabling people to touch the water. Existing lawn areas adjacent to the river could also be replaced with native perennials to demonstrate Traverse City’s commitment to ecology and sustainability. Areas highlighting stormwater BMPs such as these could aid in raising the ecological awareness and sensitivity of residents and visitors.

Traveling east toward the mouth of the Boardman, we propose enhancing the riparian buffer on the southern edge of Parking Lot D by removing invasive species and replacing them with native trees and shrubs. Existing lawn areas adjacent to the river could also be replaced with native perennials too, offering residents and visitors an up-close look at the city’s stormwater BMP’s as they travel along the boardwalk.
Proposed enhancements to the existing pedestrian underpass include widening the southern entrance and creating a terrace at the eastern edge of the Farmers’ Market. For safety reasons we recommend additional lighting and signage within and around the underpass. Lighting additions could potentially include a skylight in the tunnel from the boulevard on Grandview Parkway. Outdoor seating and plantings could also be added, creating an additional outdoor gathering place and further ensuring safety for travelers.

As pedestrians emerge from the underpass leading to Clinch Park and look back across the parkway towards the Farmer’s Market, they would be greeted by a memorable view depicted in Figure 216. A series of berms, ranging from two to four feet tall at their apex and planted with shade trees, provide places for people to relax or enjoy a picnic any day of the week. Gaps between the berms offer glimpses of activity within the plaza, slowing parkway traffic and drawing people in from the road or bay front to the market or other events. Although the berms gradually slope down to the plaza on their south sides, their north sides are cut in cross-section and supported with a retaining wall which, from the north, resembles a succession of waves. This wall could serve as another canvas for local mural artists.

Just north of the retaining wall, a shallow bioretention cell including a sediment forebay would cleanse the first flush of runoff from Grandview Parkway’s storm sewers before it percolates into the groundwater or flows to the Boardman River. Filled with native perennials, this cell could be used for snow storage during the winter.
Grandview Parkway

Grandview Parkway is a major impediment to north-south pedestrian traffic between downtown and the bay front. As a state trunkline and the major east-west thoroughfare in the city, it carries heavy traffic, particularly during summer.

Figures 218 & 219 shows an example of streetscape improvements to Grandview Parkway. We propose extending the existing medians east along the road to Grandview Parkway’s intersection with Front Street, and west to its intersection with Hall Street, creating a boulevard along the length of the road. The medians would serve as “refuge islands” to protect pedestrians and bicyclists crossing the street. We propose keeping the lanes of Grandview Parkway to a relatively narrow 12’6”. This, in addition to planting trees in the boulevard and along the edges of the parkway, will create an enclosed feeling with vertical definition to help drivers judge their own velocity, translating into slower speeds along the road.

Our plan for connecting the downtown to the bay front hinges largely on creating safer pedestrian crossings. We envision formal, conspicuous crossings with appropriate signage at the intersections of Grandview Parkway with Front, Union, Cass, Hall, and Garland Streets. These crossings would be differentiated from the rest of the parkway with alternative paving patterns and materials, as well as landscaping. Traffic lights could be timed to create gaps in traffic flows, for easier crosswalk use.

All crosswalks would be connected by a continuous sidewalk system, dictating the need for additional sidewalk on the south side of Grandview Parkway.

The addition of a boulevard and refuge islands can provide safe rest for pedestrians. The crosswalks are angled so that pedestrians in the median automatically make visual contact with oncoming traffic. This angling also decreases the chance of bicyclists or skaters inadvertently rolling straight into oncoming traffic as they...
cross the street. The refuge islands could also include small structures to offer shelter from inclement weather.

If this approach were to be adopted for improving connectivity between the downtown and the bay, it would require widening the parkway between Union and Hall Streets by eight to ten feet in order to accommodate the boulevard.

Although some have suggested building a pedestrian overpass between the downtown and the bay, we believe that in order for the people of Traverse City to have a more unified, pedestrian-oriented downtown and waterfront, it is essential to “take back” the parkway by putting people on it, rather than over it. It is our contention that a boulevard and street-level pedestrian crossings can not only enhance safety and slow traffic, but can lead to beautification of the entire area. The construction of a pedestrian overpass has the potential to be more costly and to create a visual impediment to the bay.
We recommend a final major improvement to the parkway: adding a roundabout to calm traffic, improve legibility and understanding of the intersection at Front Street and Grandview Parkway, and to provide additional, safe crossings for pedestrians.

**Background**

Roundabouts have a long history in Michigan: one early type of roundabout, a rotary, was built in Marshall, Michigan, in the 1930s. The fully-developed roundabout came to Michigan in the 1990s. There are roundabouts in a number of Michigan towns and cities including, Okemos, Sterling Heights, Lansing, Kalamazoo, and Brighton. While those in Lansing and Kalamazoo are on the campuses of Michigan State and Western Michigan Universities, respectively, the State of Michigan has constructed several roundabouts on state trunklines and is planning for more. Many of Michigan’s roundabouts were designed and built under the auspices of the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), including those in Brighton, Sterling Heights, Marshall, and Homer. MDOT is also planning to complete a roundabout at the intersections of 1-75 and M-81 in November of 2006 and is studying the possible implementation of a roundabout in Maple Grove at M-43 and 72nd Street.

Given these precedents, constructing a roundabout at the intersection of Grandview Parkway, Front Street, and Railroad Avenue is well within the scope and scale of MDOT’s current projects. According to their website, MDOT is building roundabouts because of the many benefits that can come from replacing standard intersections with them. These benefits include: reduced traffic delays and stopping, increased pedestrian and automobile safety, traffic calming, enabling downstream traffic to move safely from driveways onto streets, and improving aesthetics by providing handsome entrances to urban areas. In addition, the low circulating speeds of roundabouts can lead to a greater automobile capacity than that of a standard light-operated intersection.
Roundabout continued

Traverse City Roundabout

Statistics show that the number of pedestrian and automobile accidents can be reduced when roundabouts replace conventional intersections.\(^{296}\) The Federal Highway Administration’s (FHWA) research shows that roundabouts can decrease the total number of crashes. One reason for this could be due to the fact that roundabouts eliminate the possibility of many accidents by allowing only right-hand turns.

The newly designed roundabout at the intersection of Grandview Parkway, Front Street, and Railroad Avenue would serve many purposes. Ideally, it will slow traffic entering the downtown core. It will also facilitate additional pedestrian access points to and from the downtown.

The roundabout will ensure a smoother flow of traffic across Traverse City, eliminating many traffic back-ups at this critical intersection.

Finally, by creating a roundabout at this intersection and closing the end of Franklin Street, the city would gain a large space for a welcome park. This park could have plantings, seating, and a welcome sign that would be a memorable first vision for visitors to Traverse City.

Figs 223: Before and After. Looking west at the intersection of Grandview Parkway and Front Street and the proposed roundabout.
Our group’s mandate was to provide suggestions for the downtown and its connections to the bay front, while the Small Town Design Initiative and a class of Bachelor’s of Landscape Architecture students from Michigan State University were charged with creating designs for the bay front and its connections to downtown. As we were designing safer links across Grandview Parkway, however, we found that we needed to envisage specific destinations on the bay front, as well as in the transitional area, to draw pedestrians across the road and present drivers with interesting views, encouraging them to slow down and enjoy the sights.

The waterfront is a place where many people go simply to enjoy the beauty of the bay, beaches, and parks, while others desire more vigorous exercise and entertainment. Our suggestions enhance both passive and active recreation, while providing for some simple comforts.

The portion of Clinch Park closest to Cass Street has a different aesthetic than the relatively open and sunny bay front nearby. We recommend that the mature trees in this part of the park be retained to preserve the area’s character.

**Children's Museum, Splash Pad-Ice Rink, and Welcome Plaza**

The historic Con Foster Museum could become the new home of the Great Lakes Children’s Museum to facilitate the return of this well-loved institution to downtown Traverse City. Behind the Museum, a new children’s splash pad would be flooded in the winter for ice skating. Plantings and berms would shelter skaters from winter winds. Adjoining the splash pad/ice-rink, a pavilion structure could incorporate equipment rental services, a concession stand offering seasonal refreshments, and a hot house where skaters could warm themselves. On the east side of the Children’s Museum, a welcome plaza might be embellished with a wave pattern inscribed in the groundplane, evoking the bay, beach, and spaces throughout the city that share this motif.
Clinch Park continued

**Bathhouse**
The eastern end of the plaza would be anchored by a new bath house with public changing rooms and restroom facilities. The popular TART trail would meander through this space and separate the welcome plaza from a passive recreation area to the north. A spacious opening through the bathhouse would span the TART trail and afford people in the plaza with a dramatically framed view of the bay front. The presence of both trail users and beach-goers at all times of day would help ensure the safety of bathhouse visitors.

**Park Street Plaza**
Opposite Park Street’s intersection with Grandview Parkway, a new plaza on the bay front would provide visitors with another place to sit and relax. A number of bicycle racks would allow bicyclists to take a break and walk on the beach, while a universally accessible ramp would provide easy access to the beach. This plaza might include a compass in the ground plane as part of a nautical theme. Paving could be engraved with facts about the bay and Traverse City history.

**Stormwater BMPs**
Stormwater BMPs that require more space to treat larger volumes of water, rather than just the first flush of runoff, could potentially be utilized on the north side of Grandview Parkway. Filter strips preceded by level spreaders could remove excess sediment from runoff while directing it either into dry swales filled with native grasses, or into bioretention cells filled with a variety of native perennials.

**Bay View Restaurant**
We envision a new restaurant with spectacular views of the bay at the north end of the eastern man-made peninsula, currently the site of a surface parking lot. The City of Traverse City should retain ownership of the property and lease the restaurant, using some of the profits to support public programming and services. The boat ramp should be retained with adjacent parking for vehicles with boat trailers, and universally accessible parking should be available near the restaurant. Parking for beach-goers, marina users, museum attendees...
and some Farmers’ Market customers could be consolidated into a lot southwest of the Harbor Master Building, employing permeable paving and bioretention cells in islands and around the perimeter of the lot. Groupings of native trees and shrubs could be planted along with the perennials to partially screen and soften the look of the parking lot. A proposed parking structure on Union Street would also handle some of these parking needs, as discussed in the Garland-Hall District section to follow.

**Marina**

North of the former zoo area, the recently-renovated Duncan L. Clinch Marina is a hub of activity. Modest improvements to the marina walkways could include planters with built-in seating and paving patterns reminiscent of wave imprints in the sand.

There has been considerable interest in the fate of the former Traverse City Light & Power Bayside Power Plant site. It is essential to discuss the site’s history of contamination and remediation in order to develop a feasible plan for this area.

**Background**

Rich Smith and Gregg Pierce, the Executive Director and Deputy Director of Traverse City Light & Power (TCLP), respectively, described the remediation process that the former Bayside Power Plant property has undergone.29, 30

After the power plant was decommissioned, TCLP tested 180-200 locations on the property. Little contamination was found on the south 1/2 to 2/3 of the site. Most of the contamination was found on the third of the property north of the former Power Plant building footprint. The pollutants were heavy metals arsenic, selenium, and mercury. Soil in all areas where contamination was found was dug out, landfilled, and replaced with clean fill (all sand). Then, 3’ of clean fill was spread on top of the site.

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![Wave Field - former Power Plant Site](image)

*Fig 227: View demonstrating proposed improvements to the marina walkways*
Wave Field (former Power Plant Site) continued

TCLP opted to keep the site more natural, without using a cap or geomembrane. They are required to monitor the site for two years using observation wells. As of May 2006, no contamination has been found on the site. The company recently confirmed that the city could safely install a sprinkler system to better establish vegetation on the site. There are some restrictions on land use and digging for the north, but not on the south portion of the property.

Design Possibilities

A wave field could be created on the site by adding fill (not digging) to form a series of curved berms with their convex sides oriented out toward West End Beach and the bay. The berms closest to the parkway would be the tallest, while those closer to the bay would become progressively shorter, ensuring a sweeping perspective of the beach and water for people atop any of the berms. Groupings of trees, benches, and picnic tables would provide welcome shade and resting areas on top of the berms. An excellent venue for passive recreation such as picnicking or just relaxing and enjoying the view, the wave field could also be used for active recreation. Walkers and runners could vary their workouts by cross-training on the slopes, while children could expend their energy running up and down the berms. The level ground between the berms could still be used during Cherry Festival and similar events for smaller features such as booths and activities that do not require an immense flat area.

Phyto remediation might be a constructive option for the northern portion of the power plant site. Even though no contamination has been found since the soils were replaced, phyto remediation might do additional good, in case any heavy metals do remain. Hybrid poplar trees can hyperaccumulate many different metals, including arsenic. Poplar trees may be planted in the north part of the former power plant site, and should be tested periodically for the presence of arsenic and other contaminants. If any trees are found to have accumulated contaminants, then they should be removed and disposed of properly.

Bay Front near Hall Street

Building upon the presence of the volleyball courts on the bay front east of the Hall Street intersection with Grandview Parkway, we recommend the addition of other amenities for active outdoor recreation: including tennis courts, a basketball court, and a sport equipment rental facility in a small new building with public restrooms. A drop-off area and a small parking lot with universally accessible spaces would be located near the rental facility. The TART trail is well-loved by walkers, runners, roller-bladers, bicyclists, skiers, and many others. It remains a vital part of the bay front, and has been considered and incorporated into all of our designs. Additional benches should periodically be situated just off the TART trail, taking advantage of beautiful views of the bay. Numerous bicycle racks should be provided near the Hall Street intersection, close to the wave field, and in the Clinch Park and Marina areas.
Recalling the industrial heritage of the Red Mill and Warehouse Districts, enhancing the area through the talents of local artists, and building upon the efforts of TCLP and the Bay Area Transportation Authority (BATA) to use renewable energy; we recommend that the Garland-Hall area strive for architecture, streetscapes, and programming that reflect themes of industry, work, creativity, and environmental responsibility. Those familiar with the Garland-Hall area will note that a number of our recommendations are consistent with the vision expressed by the stakeholders who participated in the 2002 Gourdie-Fraser study of this area.201

In order to draw more people into the Garland-Hall area, it is essential to provide access to transportation amenities and to improve connections between downtown, the Garland-Hall district, and the bay front.

The presence of the Bay Area Transportation Authority (BATA) station on Hall Street will enhance the ability of pedestrians of all ages to conveniently catch bus rides to and from the area. This is especially important for drawing teens into the area.

Bike racks should be plentiful throughout the area to encourage nonmotorized traffic and to draw bicyclists across Grandview Parkway from the TART trails.

Diagonal parking is currently available along the west side of Hall Street. We recommend that a parking structure be built along the north side of the Boardman River, stretching from Union to Garland Street (on a parcel currently owned by Fifth-Third Bank). The parking in this structure would relocate the parking that we propose removing from the Farmers’ Market plaza and the area between the Front Street buildings and the Boardman River. A vehicular entrance on Union Street, an entrance and exit on Garland Street, and stairs, elevators, and pedestrian walkways on each side would provide easy access to the Farmers’ Market, the downtown, the Traverse City Convention and Visitor’s Bureau (TCCVB), and the Garland-Hall district.

Crosswalks across Grandview Parkway at the intersections with Hall Street and Garland Street should be improved as discussed previously.

A pedestrian bridge stretching northwest from a parcel of city property south of the Boardman River towards a city right-of-way north of the river would provide a new connection to part of the downtown where new development is planned.
Programming in the Garland-Hall area should carefully consider the desired character of the district, the existing uses, and needs or desires of Traverse City residents that have yet to be fulfilled. Existing businesses in the Garland-Hall district include an art gallery, an antique store, retail—featuring items from kiteboards to home furnishings, and offices housing a variety of professional services. A new bar/salon is planned for Garland Street. A few restaurants and cafes are also scattered thinly through the area. Additional art galleries, create-your-own-art, and quirky retail stores would bolster the area’s image as creative place. Programming suggestions are contained in Figure 231.

Commercial
Residents have indicated a number of businesses that would be positive additions to the downtown. Incorporated into the Garland-Hall district, such businesses could attract a large number of customers and increase patronage of other area businesses. According to survey work conducted by the UM EDA Center for Economic Development in the summer of 2005, two of the most strongly-desired businesses are a first-run movie theater and a full-service grocery store. (The grocery store would carry everyday items needed by those who work and live downtown.) Other ideas might include a hardware store, another pharmacy, a home & garden store, an office and art supply store, an internet cafe and a Traverse Area District Library branch.

The Garland-Hall district could fulfill two much-needed niches by providing places for teens to socialize and for families to enjoy activities together. A variety of new entertainment and recreation enterprises could benefit from the proximity of the BATA station and the outdoor recreation facilities on the bay front. Within the Garland-Hall district, the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) salmon harvest fish weir provides a seasonal attraction. The proposed movie theater, internet café, library branch, a family game and recreation center, and would provide year-round diversions for teens and families.

In order to make the streetscape appealing for pedestrians, ground floor spaces should be occupied by retail businesses, eateries, and other uses where attractive window displays or views into the establishment can capture the culture and atmosphere of the district. The Design Guidelines for the Garland-Hall district are intended to guide the development of commercial and mixed-use buildings that complement the existing character of the neighborhood.
interest of the passerby. Offices and residences should be restricted to upper floors. The inclusion of nighttime uses, such as restaurants, bars, and nightclubs, can increase pedestrian street activity and safety after dark.

**Movie Theater**

We recommend constructing a movie theater on the northeast corner of Front and Hall Streets to occupy the second and third floors of a building that would feature ground floor retail. A wine bar and a soda fountain on an upper floor could include access to an intensive green roof above for lounging.

**Full-Service Grocery Store**

A full-service grocery store could be located on Hall Street between the new BATA station and the Candle Factory (once necessary remediation has been completed on this brownfield site). The grocery store should be on the ground floor to maximize customer accessibility and street-level activity. The upper floors could be occupied by offices or residences. This might be an ideal location for workforce housing.

**Parking**

The Union-Garland Street parking structure should be enveloped, at least on the Union Street side and the north side, with a “retail wrap” on the ground floor, so that the parking is hidden from view (much as it is in the Larry C. Hardy Deck). The retail wrap could continue around the south side of the parking structure, if desired, or, if a different aesthetic is preferred along the path, the south side of the structure could be a plant wall. Vines, rooted at the base of the wall, could travel up trellises along the side, just as the river-bank grape vines climb the existing fence in this location. The second and third floor façade of the structure should be made to resemble the facades of other residences and businesses on Garland Street.

It might be desirable to add another mixed-use building featuring a parking structure, closer to the grocery store. In the past, the owners of Harbour View Center (HVC), located just west of the Candle Factory, have expressed an interest in building a parking structure for their tenants. Perhaps if such a structure were built on HVC property behind the grocery store, there could be shared parking, since the majority of grocery shopping is more likely to take place during weekends and after work hours on weekdays. Other areas of this building could be dedicated to new residential development. Given its proximity to HVC, building such a structure to 60’ would not comprise the overall scale of the area.
Residential
It is important to increase density in the Garland-Hall district where a larger residential population will boost local demand for retail and services and provide "eyes on the street" to increase security. Dwelling units should vary in size and price, with an emphasis on workforce housing (with rents appropriate to the income of artists and staff of stores, eateries, and offices in the area.)

The Garland-Hall District and the adjacent bay front had been the domain of industry from the early 1900s until recent decades. Lumber mills, canning factories, and grocer companies predominated, alongside utilities such as the City Water Works, Standard Oil Company, and Traverse City Oil Company. Straub Brothers and Amiotte Candy Company thrived here for many years, while other factories made a variety of products, from ice cream to marble monuments. Warehouses, primarily located along Garland Street, were used for storage of ice, apples, potatoes, grains, building materials, and many other items.

Today, Traverse City is establishing a reputation for responsible energy use, and serves as a model for Northwest Michigan. Two companies that own property in the Garland-Hall District are at the fore of this progress. TCLP already operates one wind turbine, and according to Rich Smith, its Executive Director, the company will be building another turbine in the near future in partnership with BATA. BATA intends to power their hybrid buses with electricity generated from wind power. Other properties in the Garland-Hall area can follow these environmentally-responsible practices by employing green building technologies and stormwater best management practices (BMPs) on their own sites.
Buildings

Architectural Style
We hope to evoke the industrial history of the Garland-Hall district, embodied in the Candle Factory and the North Peak Brewing Company buildings, by using architectural styles reminiscent of a warehouse district along Grandview Parkway and Hall Street.

Along Garland Street, property owners have professed a preference for a "gaslight district" aesthetic. We suggest that the architecture along Garland take its cues from attractive buildings in Traverse City's downtown and other walkable neighborhoods around the country. Ground floor restaurants and cafes might have walls that fold or slide back, allowing customers to enjoy the outdoors on fine days. Balconies could visually connect the second floor residences with activities on the street.

Scale
The scale of buildings on either side of each street should remain consistent enough to ensure pedestrian comfort. New buildings on Garland Street and the south side of Grandview Parkway should be two stories, ranging from 26' to 32' in height. Buildings along Hall Street should be three to four stories (40' to 45' tall) in keeping with the height of the existing buildings there. We believe that the appeal of the eclectic mix of buildings in downtown Traverse City is partly due to the fact that roof and window lines are not uniform. For this reason, we recommend that for the Garland-Hall district, slight variation (within a foot for adjacent buildings) in floor heights, fenestration, and rooflines be used to create visual interest and also to prevent new construction from resembling a planned community.

Fig 233: Sources of inspiration for design and building materials for a warehouse district.
Fig 234: Design and building materials for the proposed gaslight district.
Fig 235: View east along Garland Street
Materials
High quality building materials and attention to detail will enhance the aesthetic appeal of the area. Brick, stucco, and wood in highly varied, though muted colors would predominate along Garland Street. Brick in cream, tan, red and brown would predominate along Hall Street and Grandview Parkway. Brick or stonework accents around windows and doors would highlight simple facades. Large windows should be used throughout the Garland–Hall district, particularly on the ground floors. Kickplates and trim around ground floor windows might be brick, metal, or wood, and richer hues could be adopted here. Glass block could be used as another accent in warehouse areas where it would not obscure the views into or out of businesses. Corrugated metal awnings might be used over entrances and seating areas for protection from sun, wind, and snow.

Green Building Technologies
We recommend green building for improved energy efficiency. Salvaged materials should be reused wherever possible (e.g., reclaimed brick, metal, and glass block), and renewable resources should be purchased from reliable sources (e.g., wood certificated by the Forest Stewardship Council), if any are present within a reasonable distance. Local materials should be sourced to the greatest extent possible to save transportation energy. While it is important to be conscious of the energy embodied in materials used, a first priority is to reduce the energy use of the structure over its lifetime. We recommend the use of green roofs to lower heating and cooling costs, as well as for improving stormwater management. According to the Rocky Mountain Institute, planning for energy efficiency upfront can lower capital costs. For example, a building with other energy efficiency features may require a smaller, less costly Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC) system.

Fig 236: North elevations of proposed buildings along the south side of Grandview Parkway
**Streetscape**

**Streets**
Garland and Hall Streets should be kept narrow, to encourage traffic to move slowly. We recommend a width of 11’ for each driving lane. As mentioned, the lane of angled parking on the west side of Hall Street should be maintained, although Garland Street need not have any parallel parking due to its proximity to the proposed parking structure.

**Walkways**
Sidewalks and walkways throughout the entire area should also measure 11’ in width, allowing ample space for pedestrian movement, shade trees, street lamps, fire hydrants, benches, trash receptacles, window boxes, etc. This width also provides some space for a row of tables from cafes or restaurants to spill out onto the sidewalk, or for sidewalk sales. A uniform setback of 11’ should be maintained, although some establishments may include recessed doorways or even larger recesses to expand the outdoor dining area. The area should be enhanced with distinctive paving; we recommend the use of permeable pavers with gravel-filled gaps. Care should be taken to prevent any inconsistency of grade where different paving materials meet, in order to avoid trip hazards. Curb cuts and crosswalks should be indicated by changes in pavement texture and appearance.

**Site Furniture**
We recommend selecting site furniture for its aesthetic appeal, comfort, and practicality for the Garland-Hall district, as has been done for many other parts of Traverse City already. Use of a consistent style throughout the district will lead to the perception of the area as a distinct neighborhood. (Bench seats and backs should be wooden to retain comfort during cooler seasons.) Street lamps should be half cutoffs, in order to keep the night streetscape well-lit while limiting light pollution. Trash receptacles, streetlamps, and even poles for traffic lights could be selected to recall the ironwork produced in Traverse City during the construction boom of the early 1900s. Alternatively, local artists could be appealed to for creative inspiration for site furniture, including whimsical bicycle racks. Power lines should be buried, while dumpsters and utility boxes should be screened from view.

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**Fig 237:** Examples of building accents, site furniture, streetscape elements for the Garland-Hall area.
**Public Art**
Local artists could be engaged to produce artwork focusing on the themes of industry, work, creativity, and environmental responsibility. Sculptures could be displayed in the small plazas, while murals could enliven the alleyways. An art installation with pieces spanning the bay front, Grandview Parkway median, and Garland-Hall would serve as an entrance into the area, and could possibly slow traffic. Rain chains, decorative alternatives to traditional downspouts, allow stormwater to remain visible and audible as it drains. Rain chains could serve as another form of public art throughout the Garland-Hall district, and if used in conjunction with rain gardens, bioretention cells, or rain barrels, they would link the themes of creativity and environmental responsibility. Interpretive signage with information about the area’s history, green building, or stormwater management could be located in the plazas or along walkways.

**Plazas and walkways**
In contrast to the expansive open spaces on the bay front and the continuous spacious plazas proposed for the area behind the Front Street buildings, we envision a number of small public plazas and walkways for the Garland-Hall district. These “hidden” plazas and walkways would be known well by Traverse City residents, regular visitors, and newcomers who stumble upon them.

**Riverwalk**
A riverwalk along the north side of the Boardman River in the Garland-Hall District would be distinctly different from those described earlier for the south side of the river, east of Union Street. This difference is because much of the river west of Union Street has a naturalized edge. Tall trees on the river bank and the proposed buildings on the other side of the path will give it an enclosed feeling. As discussed in the Riparian Restoration part of the Stormwater Management appendix, in some
The riverwalk would continue west and then south, passing restaurant patios on its north and west side, and more of the restored riparian buffer on its south and east side. Just east of the fish weir, a sizeable rain garden would collect water from shallow swales running along the south side of the riverwalk. While helping to prevent erosion and to filter pollutants out of the stormwater before it reaches the river, the plants would add color and attract birds and butterflies into view of people relaxing on the patios and meandering along the riverwalk. More rain gardens would be located southwest of the fish weir and around a patio on the east side of the movie theater building. The portion of the riverbank just west of the river’s bend, north of Front Street, has a very steep slope and relatively few invasive species. The trees (an assortment of maples) will obscure the view of the river from the proposed movie theater building when they are in leaf. They are critically important for bank stabilization and should not be removed. Invasive shrubs may be removed, and bare patches of bank could be filled in with native shrubs and perennials to aid in erosion prevention.

Riparian restoration is also needed on the south side of the river, where many bald patches of soil and even pads of asphalt on the bank suggest that runoff from the parking lots is eroding the riverbank.

**Alleyway**

North of the riverwalk node plaza, a wide alley (currently a city right-of-way) could greet pedestrians with colorful murals, a profusion of trellised vines and lush planted areas, and tables spilling out of restaurants and cafes on either side of the path. (The city’s TIF 97 Plan calls for the transformation of this plaza into a pedestrian promenade.) The buildings along the alley could even be constructed with windows and retractable glass doors facing into the alley. The alley runs to the south side of Garland Street then continues from the north side of Garland Street to Grandview Parkway.

**Other Plazas and Walkways**

If the area between TCCVB and the proposed parking structure does not become a through street, it could be a charming plaza with more area devoted to plants than to hardscape. One sidewalk will hug the shops and eateries in the parking structure’s retail wrap, while another set of paths will sinuously meander among a number of bioretention cells, leading to the side entrance of TCCVB, to Union Street, and to Garland Street. These bioretention cells will include native shrubs as well as perennials, and trees will shade benches set throughout the space. A small triangular plaza would be located inside the curve of Garland Street (on the northwest corner). More open than the riverwalk plazas and patios, this plaza could also feature rain gardens, in this case with seating walls perforated at grade, so that stormwater can flow into them. Shade trees, tables and chairs, public art, and a view of the bustling sidewalks will make this a comfortable place to relax and people-watch.

West of the parking structure, a small plaza would mark an important node where the proposed pedestrian bridge across the Boardman River, the riverwalk, and a series of charming alleyways meet. This unassuming plaza, with comfortable seating, permeable paving, shade trees, and public art, should include a path clear of obstacles so that delivery and waste removal vehicles can proceed through it.

Periodic breaks in the trees will offer glimpses of the river over low growing perennials. Fishermen may continue to enjoy the peacefulness and relative quiet of this part of the river in particular. If the retail wrap continues around to the south side of the parking structure, the atmosphere would be much livelier, with shops opening right onto the sidewalk.

Riparian restoration is also needed on the south side of the river, where many bald patches of soil and even pads of asphalt on the bank suggest that runoff from the parking lots is eroding the riverbank.

**Character continued**
Along the south side of Grandview Parkway, a slightly sunken bioretention cell filled with native Michigan perennials and red maple trees would serve as a buffer between pedestrians and the busy road. The bioretention cell would join the sidewalk in an undulating edge. Red maple trees would be located only in areas where the cell is widest, close to the permeable paving of the sidewalk. Snow may be stored until it melts in areas of the bioretention cell where there would be no danger of a snow plow hitting a tree.

After conducting a literature review on form-based coding (FBC) and considering its potential for facilitating redevelopment in the Garland-Hall area, we decided against recommending a new form-based code. First, the existing zoning designations in this area (D-3 and C-4) already encourage a diversity of uses. Residential development is encouraged with incentives that allow for the provision of greater floor area. The current code also calls for the use of high quality, context-sensitive building materials. Although the recommendations presented here do not align perfectly with the requirements of the existing zoning districts, we believe that seeking a special use permit and a few variances would be just as efficient for property owners as complying with a new form of regulation. Collaborative decision-making on the part of property owners will be the most effective in the short and long-term for redeveloping this area. Given the relatively small size of the Garland-Hall area and number of decision-makers involved, such an approach seems entirely feasible.

Form-based coding per se does not guarantee affordable housing or greater density, just as a traditional zoning code does not. It is the application of either that results in the availability of workforce housing. We believe that as committed members of the Traverse City community, property owners realize that the economic and social benefits to be reaped from the long-term prosperity of the district outweigh the benefits promised by a concern for short term returns on investment. Providing workforce housing in the district can make downtown housing affordable for residents that staff nearby offices and retail establishments.
A variety of incomes in the downtown supports a diverse community with different tastes and needs. In addition, the provision of workforce housing is important to the long term economic well-being of the community – particularly as energy prices rise and these essential employees earning average or below average salaries find it more difficult to make ends meet. Finally, it is our contention that supporting such a community can translate into an additional competitive advantage for Traverse City. As more and more downtowns experience gentrification, we believe that residents and visitors alike will appreciate the more authentic, small-town feel that the city can offer by promoting opportunities for upper and lower income individuals to be neighbors. Should the property owners in the Garland-Hall area decide to adopt the recommendations for architectural and streetscape standards presented here, the following issues must be considered within the context of the current zoning ordinance:

- The proposed building heights are almost fully compliant with the zoning regulations in the C4-A and C4-B districts. They fall within minimum and maximum height for both districts. The exception to this is our recommendation that some of the two-story buildings on the north side of Garland be slightly shorter than 30 feet to allow for a variation in roofline.

- We recommend an 11’ front setback for the Garland-Hall area to allow for ample sidewalks. This is wider than the 8’ maximum called for in the current zoning code for the C-4 and D-3 districts, although it should be noted that this is a recent change from the previously allowed maximum of 15’.

- In the Red Mill District, any building over 8,000 sq ft requires a special use permit. The proposed mixed-use buildings with a grocery store and parking for HVC tenants would require such permits.

Fig 239: Plan depicting proposed building standards and ecological restoration in the Garland-Hall area
Conclusion

The preceding set of Design Guidelines has been formulated to accomplish three main goals: increased connectivity between the downtown and the bay front, enhanced urban landscapes, and the promotion of district revitalization. These goals are the synthesis of commonly held values and priorities of citizens of Traverse City as expressed by city residents during the “Your Bay, Your Say” initiative. These values include the following: a celebration of natural resources, a strong sense of local history, unique small-town character, and sustainable living.

Celebration of Natural Resources

Traverse City’s economy and people are tied to the land in a way that is becoming rare in the twenty-first century. Agriculture and tourism, made possible by the region’s landforms, water bodies, and climate, are two of the most important industries in the area — not only for the economy, but also because they, in turn, define the region’s landscape character.

Mix of Northern Michigan and Progressive Character

Traverse City is lively year round and is truly a regional destination, thanks to being home to a local art scene, a thriving downtown, Northwestern Michigan College, a variety of recreational opportunities, and more. Its eclectic character is embodied in its northern summer and winter landscapes, lively downtown shops, art galleries, and festivals focused on art, music, film, agriculture, and the community.

Flourishing businesses and industries benefit from their proximity to an institute of higher learning and the accompanying intellectual benefits that this provides. Other hallmarks of Traverse City’s forward-thinking include a very involved citizenry and its increasing support for sustainable technologies. Protecting the social and industrial diversity, by ensuring that people from all walks of life can live and work downtown, will guarantee that Traverse City retains its special, small-town character.

Living Sustainably

The city and region are leaders in the use of alternative energy, public transportation, and smart growth principles, all basic tenets of sustainable living. Further, Traverse City is making decisions today that consider the well-being of future citizens and their need for resources. By maintaining a viable downtown core and expanding the services and residential density it supports, the city can continue to minimize its “ecological footprint,” preserving its prized landscapes for current and future inhabitants.

Sense of History

Traverse City’s built environment is the legacy of a history rich in agricultural, industrial, medical, and technological influences. During the prosperous period from 1880-1910, buildings were constructed to replace wooden structures destroyed by fire. Good-quality materials such as locally-manufactured brick, ironwork, millwork, and stonework distinguish the buildings of this era. Built to last, with attention to detail, these buildings still serve as the structural framework of the downtown. The scale of buildings, streets, and sidewalks date to a time before the automobile, and thus reflect a necessary pedestrian orientation.

Agricultural History Exhibit, Museum of History at the Grand Traverse Heritage Center.

GTHCA! CD-ROM, 1998

Traverse City City Planning Department staff, and Traverse City Planning Commission. 1977 City Plan. Prepared by Johnson, Johnson and Roy, the Traverse City Planning Department staff, and Traverse City Planning Commission.

Traverse Heritage Center. 3 March 2006.


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endnotes

Boursaw, 1999


GTCHAI CD-ROM, 1998


Written communication with Russ Saying, Director of City Planning, Traverse City, Michigan. 6 April 2006.


Traverse City Convention and Visitor’s Bureau homepage. 11 Feb 2006. <mytraversocity.com/>


“Courthouse Expansion Project.” Grand Traverse County. 11 Feb. 2006. http://www.grandtraverse.org/gthomepage.nsf/docs/d2733ad9e9e6abc49785256aa4d06e5a48f759e7fbb1625c9695b5709ad067337c7b5d09 documentary

In 2004, the Green Rate premium was $151 per kilowatt hour, added to each rate class, which averaged to $7.58 dollars per customer per month. Traverse City Light and Power homepage 2004. http://www.tclp.org/about_public_power.php. March 15, 2005.


Agricultural History Exhibit. Museum of History at the Grand Traverse Heritage Center


Personal communication with Tim Lodge, Traverse City Engineer. 3/23/06


Use data from 1894. Residential data only includes boarding houses.
## Appendix A Traverse City Comprehensive Plans Comparisons 1941 to 2002.
### Shifting Priorities as Demonstrated by Examining the Table of Contents.

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Plan Name</th>
<th>A Report Upon The Comprehensive City Plan 1942</th>
<th>The First Phase of Comprehensive the Plan: October 1961</th>
<th>City Plan 1977</th>
<th>City Plan 2002</th>
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<tr>
<td>Preparer</td>
<td>J Martin Frissel, City Planning Consultant. East Lansing, MI</td>
<td>Harland Bartholomew and Associates. St Louis, MO</td>
<td>Johnson, Johnson and Roy (JJR), Traverse City Planning staff, and Traverse City Planning Commission</td>
<td>Traverse City Planning staff, and Traverse City Planning Commission, Traverse City Residents</td>
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<td>Notes</td>
<td>The 1961 report (the first phase) forms the essence of the City Plan. Phase II, completed in 1962, is a support document meant to provide rationalization for suggestions in the first phase.</td>
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### Appendix B  Zoning Districts: 1942 to 2005

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<td>R-1: Single Family Residence District</td>
<td>R-9, R-15 and R-29 - Multi-Family Dwelling District</td>
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<td>R-1B: Single Family Residence District</td>
<td>R-2: Single Family Residence District</td>
<td>R-2 - Two-Family Dwelling District</td>
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<td>R-2A: General Residence District</td>
<td>R-3: Two-Family Residence District</td>
<td>R-1a and R-1b - Single Family Dwelling Districts</td>
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<td>R-2T: Tourist Residence District</td>
<td>R-4: Multiple Dwelling District</td>
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<td>R-3: Outer Residence District</td>
<td>R-4a: Medium-Density Multiple Dwelling District</td>
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<td>R-4A: Apartment Residence District</td>
<td>R-4b: Low-Density Multiple Dwelling District</td>
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<td>R-4C: Cabin Residence District</td>
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<td>R-4T: Trailer Residence District</td>
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<td>C-1: Neighborhood Shopping District</td>
<td>C-2: General Retail District</td>
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<td>C-2: General Retail District</td>
<td>C-1: Office Service District</td>
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<td>WM-1A: Wholesale-Light Manufacturing</td>
<td>C-2: Neighborhood Shopping District</td>
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<td>WM-1B: Wholesale-Light Manufacturing</td>
<td>C-3: Commercial District</td>
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<td>M-2: General Industry</td>
<td>C-4: Central Business District</td>
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<td>F-1: Forest Agriculture District</td>
<td>M-1: Restricted Industry District</td>
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<td>S-1: Scenic Reserve District</td>
<td>M-2: Industrial District</td>
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<td>G-1: Government Service District</td>
<td>I-1: Light Industrial District</td>
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<td>I-2: General Industrial District</td>
<td>I-2: Vehicular Industrial District</td>
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<td>P-1: Vehicular Industrial District</td>
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Note: A 1970s copy of this Code was analyzed for this report which likely included amendments to some of the original provisions of the 1958 Code.
### Zoning Districts (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ordinance Year &amp; District</th>
<th>Allowable Uses</th>
<th>Stories (max)</th>
<th>Feet (max)</th>
<th>Front Setback</th>
<th>Side Setback: One Side</th>
<th>Rear Setback</th>
<th>Minimum Floor Area</th>
<th>Minimum Lot Area</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<td>1942</td>
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<tr>
<td>R-4-A: Apartment Residence District</td>
<td>Single-Family Dwellings, Two Family Dwellings, Hotels, Multi-Family Apartments, Group Homes, Tourist Homes, Lodging and Boarding in Private Homes, Public and Parochial Schools, Churches, Not-for-Profit Parks, Rec Areas, Museums, Libraries, Charities/Philanthropies, etc.</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>no less than 25 ft</td>
<td>standard: two side yards should sum to no less than 20 feet, min. setback on either side is 8 ft</td>
<td>not specified</td>
<td>Every MFR shall have first floor area not less than 600 sq ft., each apartment must be at least 300 sq ft.</td>
<td>had provisions for minimum frontage, minimum area of the lot that could be covered. For this district they were: Dwelling not to occupy more than 50 percent of lot area. In addition, required to provide one parking space for each MF unit.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>C-2: General Retail District</td>
<td>Single-Family Dwellings, Two Family Dwellings, Hotels, Multi-Family Apartments, Group Homes, Tourist Homes, Lodging and Boarding in Private Homes, Public and Parochial Schools, Churches, Not-for-Profit Parks, Rec Areas, Museums, Libraries, Charities/Philanthropies, etc., Hospitals and clinics (not for the insane), Clubs, Greenhouses, Service Stores (i.e. groceries, meat, pharmacies, barber and beauty shops, shoe repair), Automobile Service Stations, Office Buildings, any &quot;generally recognized strictly retail business&quot; (i.e. banks, restaurants, tailors, etc.), used and new car lots and used and new farm implement display lots (subject to restrictions), Laundries (subject to restrictions)</td>
<td>Buildings shall not be erected to a height exceeding the street it fronts, except for semi-public or public institutions where the front and side lot are increased by one foot for every foot added to the building height.</td>
<td>Residential, 25 ft. minimum. For commercial, existing commercial setbacks.</td>
<td>no requirement for other uses, for residential, no less than 10 ft on either side.</td>
<td>no less than 25 ft, except for MFR where it is 35 ft.</td>
<td>no requirement for non-residential. SFR, MFR requirements stated.</td>
<td>Buildings shall not be erected to a height exceeding the street it fronts or abuts.</td>
<td>Commercial setbacks not available.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 1970's version of 1958 Code

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ordinance Year &amp; District</th>
<th>Allowable Uses</th>
<th>Stories (min)</th>
<th>Feet (max)</th>
<th>Front Setback</th>
<th>Side Setback: Total</th>
<th>Rear Setback</th>
<th>Minimum Floor Area</th>
<th>Minimum Lot Area</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R-4a: Medium-Density Multiple Dwelling District</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>600-2 bedroom and larger, 500-1 bedroom efficiency unit</td>
<td>5000 - 1 family, 3000 - 2 family and multiple dwelling</td>
<td>Minimum Lot width of 50 for this district.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R-6: High-Rise Apartment District</td>
<td>4 (minimum)</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>2 (all 2 ft setbacks for projections not higher than 3ft from the ground i.e. terraces, patios)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-4 Central Business District</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>5000 - 1 family, 2500 - 2 family, 1000 - multiple dwelling</td>
<td>400</td>
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<td>-----------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>2005 Code</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>R-15</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>Within 4' of the average setback of principle buildings on same face of block, no closer than 6' to prop line</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R-29</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>Within 4' of the average setback of principle buildings on same face of block, no closer than 6' to prop line</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-41a</td>
<td>GP district uses; C-3 district uses, except the following: drive-ins, drive-throughs, motels, sexually-oriented businesses, vehicle wash facilities, veterinary services and kennels; Boat livers; Convention centers; Drinking places with or without entertainment; Markets, public or municipal; Parking areas, private, for dwelling units (limited to one per dwelling unit); Parking areas, private, if public parking is not available with 500 feet of an allowed use, subject to the following standards:</td>
<td>2 min.</td>
<td>30-45</td>
<td>2.5 ft min, 15 ft max</td>
<td>None, except a min 10 ft side setback on any side abutting an R District</td>
<td>5 feet, except min 20 ft if abutting or adjacent to R District</td>
<td>see C-4a</td>
<td>see C-4a</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>2 min.</td>
<td>30-60 (682,4)</td>
<td>2.5 ft min, 15 ft max</td>
<td>see C-4a</td>
<td>see C-4a</td>
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<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>2 min.</td>
<td>30-85</td>
<td>2.5 ft min, 15 ft max</td>
<td>see C-4a</td>
<td>see C-4a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D3: Red Mill Area</td>
<td>3 to 5</td>
<td>45-75</td>
<td>20 ft from Gillis, 8 ft from Grandview Parkway, 3 ft from other streets.</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>Parking areas should have a minimum 5 ft setback on the side and rear of the parcel. Adjacent to an R district, a 10 ft side and 20 ft rear setback is required. Maximum density is 60 dwelling units per acre, with a max amount of 80% impervious surface. Greater building heights allowed provided residential units are part of the development. Generally 1-2 stories. Portion of the building taller than 60 feet will be recessed 10 feet from the facade facing the public street.</td>
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</table>
Appendix C Stormwater Best Management Practices

The main focus of the stormwater Best Management Practices (BMPs) we recommend is to reduce the quantities of pollutants (including sediments, taxes, and excess nutrients) carried into the Boardman River and Grand Traverse Bay, while allowing groundwater recharge. Currently, much of the land on both sides of the Boardman River is paved with hardcape such as conventional asphalt and concrete, or covered with buildings that have conventional roofs. Stormwater that falls on parking lots, roads, and walkways picks up oil, grease, toxins, and sediments and carries these into storm sewers that outlet into the Boardman River. Our goal is to decrease the surface area and connectivity of these impermeable surfaces. The suggested BMPs will also increase opportunities for stormwater to infiltrate into the soil, or to groundwater or surface waters. Many of the BMPs we suggest use vegetation to help increase stormwater interception, evapotranspiration, filtration, and percolation. Some of the treatment practices can be carried out by themselves, but in many cases, a treatment train of several BMPs in series is recommended.

While the ideas presented here can help to stimulate stormwater management planning, it is crucial that professionals be involved in analyses of the hydrologic conditions and in the design of any BMPs. Precipitation frequency, storm duration, drainage area size and shape, and soil types should all be taken into account, to ensure that the kinds of BMPs selected will work effectively with the site conditions and larger context of the area. For more detailed information on Stormwater BMPs for cold climates, the reader may be interested in the Minnesota Urban Small Sites BMP Manual. 304

Native Plants

We recommend using plants native to northwestern Michigan, selected for the shade, soil, and moisture site characteristics. There are many advantages of using native plants: native plants are already adapted to Traverse City’s climate, they require less irrigation and fertilizer, they are more resistant to local pests and diseases, they provide food and habitat for local wildlife and their deep root systems that stabilize the soil. The Grand Traverse Conservation District is a good source of additional information about plants native to Traverse City and the surrounding area. 305

Riparian Restoration

Buffers of trees and shrubs are present along the north bank of the Boardman River throughout a large part of our Design Guidelines area. Some of the existing plants in these riparian buffer zones are “Invasive species.” These invasive plants spread aggressively, decreasing biodiversity by outcompeting other native plants.

We recommend that riparian restoration should be carried out to remove invasive plants. These invasives include Tartarian honeysuckle (Lonicera tartarica, purple loosestrife (Lythrum salicaria), deadly nightshade (Solanum dulcamara, bladder campion (Silene vulgaris), and periwinkle (Vinca minor) in the Garland-Hall area. Other aggressive invasives common to this area include amur honeysuckle (Lonicera maackii), common buckthorn (Rhamnus cathartica), glossy buckthorn (Rhamnus frangula), autumn olive (Elaeagnus angustifolia), garlic mustard (Alliaria petiolata, dame’s rocket (Hesperis matronalis), Canary Reed Grass (Phalaris arundinacea), and Common Reed (Phragmites australis).

Rain Gardens/ Bioretention Cells

In locations where one might think to install planted areas at grade, slightly sunken rain gardens or bioretention cells can be used to capture runoff and allow it to infiltrate slowly, typically over a 24-hour period. Rain gardens use the existing soil, while bioretention cells tend to be more complicated, including a specialized soil mixture, an aggregate of sand bed base, and an underdrain, in cases where the existing soil does not allow for easy infiltration. Plants and microbes in rain gardens and bioretention areas use excess nutrients and take up or break down toxins. Both rain gardens and bioretention cells are designed to drain within 24 hours, so that there is no risk of standing water and mosquito breeding. The vegetation can include groundcover, perennials, grasses, shrubs, and even trees. A layer of mulch should also be used. Unlike most BMPs, bioretention cells can be used for snow storage. However, woody plants should not be planted in snow storage areas.

We recommend the use of rain gardens or bioretention cells along the south side of the Boardman River (e.g., where there is currently a strip of lawn), along much of the land just south of Grandview Parkways (water from storm sewers can be directed into rainwater gardens or bioretention areas), and, where the ground is level, on top of the bank on the north side of the Boardman River. Rain gardens or bioretention cells can be incorporated into parking areas as parking islands, while taller perennials, shrubs, and trees in such gardens can shield parking lots from view. Shallow swales planted with grasses may collect runoff and direct the flow of stormwater into a rain garden, as we propose for a rain garden at the east end of Parking Lot C (adjacent to Park Street) and for the fish weir rain garden in the Garland-Hall district.

Dry Swales

Dry swales, which can be designed to accommodate a ten-year storm, are considerably deeper than bioretention cells, and are typically filled with grasses. A dry swale filled with native grasses could be used along the bayfront, north of Park Street.

Filter Strips and Sediment Forebays

In areas with significant amounts of space, filter strips, vegetated areas with extremely shallow, even slopes, can be used to remove sediment from runoff moving by sheet flow. The vegetation can range from perennial grasses and flowers to shrubs and trees. The most important characteristic of a filter strip is that the gradual slope promotes sheet flow and reduces pooling or channeling. Filter strips trap sediments in vegetation, protecting surface waters or BMPs at the lower end of the filter strips. A 4’ wide strip should suffice as pretreatment before a rain garden, bioretention cell, or dry swale. A level spreader, such as a long trench filled with gravel, can precede a filter strip to ensure that water flows onto the strip evenly.

In areas with space limitations, where storm sewer systems are already in place, water can be directed through pipes into a portion of a bioretention area known as the “sediment forebay.” A sediment forebay is a small pool with rip-rap, where coarse sediments settle out among the rocks. Finer sediments remain suspended in the water, which flows into other parts of the rain garden/ bioretention area. It is important to have a layer of mulch at the surface of the rain garden/ bioretention area, so that these fine sediments will be trapped in the mulch layer and not clog air pores in the soil. Sediment forebays require regular cleaning but this do not require plant replacement.
Flow Splitters

When the volume of stormwater is too great for these stormwater BMPs to handle, it is essential to have a bypass system. Flow splitters installed along a storm sewer pipe allow the “first flush” of runoff (which carries the largest load of pollutants) to flow into the pretreatment BMP and then into the water quality BMP, but diverts the rest of the stormwater back into the storm sewer.

Grit/Oil Separators and Vortex Valves

The stormwater outlets into the Boardman River can and should be modified, wherever possible, to include devices such as grit/oil separators. These separators cause sediment to settle out while trapping floating trash, grease and oil in the device. Vortex valves slow the velocity of stormwater flowing from the outlet into the river, especially during harsh storms. These cost-effective stormwater management devices must be cleaned regularly.

Stormwater Storage

Stormwater that drains from rooftops may be directed to flow into a rain garden from a downspout, rain chain, or over land. Alternatively, for any building that has enough space to accommodate a rain barrel or a cistern, rain can be collected and used for watering plants.

Permeable Paving

Some areas of conventional pavement can be replaced with permeable pavement that allows water to infiltrate through gaps or pores.

We recommend using gravel-filled permeable pavers for sidewalks, parking areas, and roads or delivery areas with light vehicular use. Permeable pavers are not as good an option for roads with heavy traffic, due to the potential for high maintenance costs.

We do not recommend the use of turf-filled pavers for any areas where vehicles will drive at least three times per day, since the grass would have trouble surviving such use. Turf-filled pavers are also difficult for lighter wheeled vehicles to traverse, so they should not be used in areas intended to be universally accessible.

Porous pavement such as porous asphalt may be appropriate for a cold-climate location such as Traverse City. Recent studies suggest that in areas with good infiltration, water drains below the level where it might cause freeze-thaw damage. However, it is uncertain how porous asphalt will work with the coarse sediments applied to Traverse City’s roads to increase traction in winter. It is possible that these sediments could clog the pores in the asphalt, and porous pavement requires regular cleaning.

Green Roofs

Green roofs can help to mitigate the environmental effects of development. There are two types of green roofs: extensive and intensive. Extensive green roofs use a relatively light system of drainage and filtration components with a thin (2-4") layer of soil mixture and drought-tolerant plants. Intensive green roofs require higher structural capacity, and are designed to accommodate shrubs and even trees in deeper soil mixtures, and allow for regular human use.

Green roofs provide many advantages over conventional roofing systems. Environmentally, they reduce and delay stormwater runoff, keep runoff cooler, increase habitat for birds and insects, reduce CO2 levels, filter and bind dust and other particles, and reduce the urban heat island effect by cooling and humidifying the surrounding air. Building owners and occupants may also appreciate the ability of a green roof to insulate buildings, reducing heating and cooling costs; to absorb sound, keeping the internal environment quieter, and to increase the life expectancy of rooftop waterproofing by protecting it from ultraviolet rays and mechanical impact.

Buildings should be designed to accommodate the weight of the roof materials, soil mixture, plants, snow, and people who will be on the roof, even if only during maintenance procedures. Plants should be selected for their resistance to extremes of drought, high winds, and low winter temperatures. Retrofitting existing buildings for green roof installation tends to be much more difficult and costly than designing a new building to support a green roof. Sloped roofs require special erosion-control structures. For these reasons, we recommend the use of extensive green roofs on newly constructed buildings, especially those in the Garland-Hall area.

Phytoremediation

Phytoremediation is the use of plants to take up (accumulate or hyperaccumulate), break down, or stabilize pollutants in the soil, or to enhance microbial degradation of the pollutants in the root zone. Phytoremediation should be carefully considered as a potential remediation strategy for any brownfield sites, since it can be aesthetically pleasing as well as functional.