

Traverse City Downtown Development Authority Regular Meeting

Friday, December 20, 2024

9:00 am

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



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

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

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

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

Welcome to the Traverse City Downtown Development Authority Meeting

Agenda

	Page
1. CALL TO ORDER	
2. ROLL CALL	
3. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA	
4. PUBLIC COMMENT	
5. CONSENT CALENDAR	
<i>The purpose of the consent calendar is to expedite business by grouping non-controversial items together to be dealt with by one DDA Board motion without discussion. Any member of the DDA Board, staff or the public may ask that any item on the consent calendar be removed therefrom and placed elsewhere on the agenda for individual consideration by the DDA Board; and such requests will be automatically respected. If an item is not removed from the consent calendar, the action noted in parentheses on the agenda is approved by a single DDA Board action adopting the consent calendar.</i>	
A. Consideration of approving the minutes from the November 9, 2024 DDA Ad Hoc Committee Meeting (approval recommended) November 9, 2024 Ad Hoc Committee Meeting Minutes - PDF	4 - 5
B. Consideration of approving the minutes from the November 15, 2024 DDA Regular Board Meeting (approval recommended) November 15, 2024 DDA Board Meeting Minutes - PDF	6 - 9
C. Consideration of approving the minutes from the December 13, 2024 DDA Ad Hoc Committee meeting (approval recommended) December 13, 2024 Ad Hoc Meeting Minutes - PDF	10 - 11
D. Consideration of approving the November Financial Reports and Disbursements for DDA General, Old Town TIF, TIF-97 and the Arts Commission (approval recommended) DDA General, Old Town TIF, TIF-97 Financial Report and Dashboard - PDF Arts Commission November 2024 Financial Report - PDF	12 - 19
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TIF-97 Project Priority Scorecard - PDF	
December 19, 2024 Howard Memo - PDF	

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Progressive Presentation - PDF	

9. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT	
A. Executive Director Report	51 -
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10. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS	
A. Arts Commission Report	53
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A. Received Items	56 -
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13. PUBLIC COMMENT	
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14. ADJOURNMENT	
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**Minutes of the
Downtown Development Authority Ad Hoc Committee
Saturday, November 9, 2024**

An Ad Hoc meeting of the Downtown Development Authority of the City of Traverse City was called to order at the Commission Chambers, Governmental Center, 400 Boardman Avenue, Traverse City, Michigan, at 8:00 a.m.

The following Board Members were in attendance: Board Members: Spencer, Slosky, Joubran and Hardy

The following Board Members were absent: None

Chairperson Hardy presided at the meeting.

(a) **CALL TO ORDER**

Chairperson Hardy called the DDA Ad Hoc Committee meeting to order at 8:03 am.

(b) **ROLL CALL**

(c) **NEW BUSINESS**

(1) Strategic Planning and Project Priorities

The following addressed the Ad Hoc Committee:

Harry Burkholder
Scott Hardy
Ed Slosky
Jeff Joubran
Shelley Spencer

(d) **PUBLIC COMMENT**

N/A

(e) **ADJOURNMENT**

Chairperson Hardy adjourned the meeting at 9:47

Harry Burkholder, DDA Executive
Director

Draft



**Minutes of the
Downtown Development Authority for the City of Traverse City
Regular Meeting
Friday, November 15, 2024**

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

The following Board Members were in attendance: Board Member Peter Kirkwood, Board Vice Chair Scott Hardy, Board Member Ed Slosky, Mayor Amy Shamroe, Board Member Shelley Spencer, Board Member Gary Howe, and Board Member Mike Powers

The following Board Members were absent: Board Member Jeff Joubran, Board Member Todd McMillen, and Board Member Hillary Ascroft

Chairperson Hardy presided at the meeting.

(a) **CALL TO ORDER**

Chair S. Hardy called the DDA Board of Directors meeting to order at 9am.

(b) **ROLL CALL**

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

- (1) That the board approve the agenda as presented.

Moved by Ed Slosky, Seconded by Amy Shamroe

Yes: Peter Kirkwood, Scott Hardy, Ed Slosky, Amy Shamroe, Shelley Spencer, Gary Howe, and Mike Powers

Absent: Jeff Joubran, Todd McMillen, and Hillary Ascroft

CARRIED. 7-0-3 on a recorded vote

(d) **PUBLIC COMMENT**

The following addressed the board:
Tim Werner

Bob Otwell

(e) **CONSENT CALENDAR**

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

- (1) Consideration of approving the minutes from the October 18, 2024 DDA Regular Board Meeting (approval recommended)
- (2) Consideration of approving the October Financial Reports and Disbursements for DDA General, Old Town TIF, TIF-97 and the Arts Commission (approval recommended)
That the board approve the Consent calendar as presented.

Moved by Amy Shamroe, Seconded by Peter Kirkwood

Yes: Peter Kirkwood, Scott Hardy, Ed Slosky, Amy Shamroe, Shelley Spencer, Gary Howe, and Mike Powers

Absent: Jeff Joubran, Todd McMillen, and Hillary Ascroft

CARRIED. 7-0-3 on a recorded vote

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

(g) **SPECIAL ORDER OF BUSINESS**

- (1) Introduction of Lauren Bohac, DDA Deputy Director

The following addressed the board:

Harry Burkholder

Lauren Bohac

- (2) Informational Bi-Annual Report to the Community (MCL 125.4910(4))

The following addressed the board:

Harry Burkholder

Scott Hardy

(h) **OLD BUSINESS**

(1) Public Safety Video Surveillance System (Guest Chief Richmond)

The following addressed the board:

Harry Burkholder
Chief Matt Richmond
Scott Hardy
Amy Shamroe
Pete Kirkwood
Shelley Spencer
Mike Powers
Ed Slosky
Gary Howe

(2) Two-Way Pilot Project (Possible Action)

The following addressed the board:

Harry Burkholder
Scott Hardy
Amy Shamroe
Gary Howe
Pete Kirkwood
Ed Slosky
Mike Powers

That the DDA Board approve to make a recommendation to the City Commission to extend the two-way circulation pilot project along State Street, Pine Street and Boardman Avenue for a period of two years.

Moved by Gary Howe, Seconded by Amy Shamroe

Yes: Peter Kirkwood, Ed Slosky, Amy Shamroe, Shelley Spencer, Gary Howe, and Mike Powers

No: Scott Hardy

Absent: Jeff Joubran, Todd McMillen, and Hillary Ascroft

CARRIED. 6-1-3 on a recorded vote

(3) TIF-97 Budget Priorities

The following addressed the board

Harry Burkholder

Lauren Bohac
Pete Kirkwood
Mike Powers
Shelley Spencer
Ed Slosky
Scott Hardy
Gary Howe
Amy Shamroe

(i) **NEW BUSINESS**

(j) **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT**

- (1) Executive Director Report

The following addressed the board:
Harry Burkholder

(k) **BOARD MEMBER REPORTS**

(l) **STAFF REPORTS**

- (1) Director of Events and Public Engagement Report

The following addressed the board:
Harry Burkholder

(m) **RECEIVE AND FILE**

(n) **PUBLIC COMMENT**

n/a

(o) **ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Hardy adjourned meeting qat 10:50am.

Harry Burkholder, Executive Director



**Minutes of the
Downtown Development Authority for the City of Traverse City
Ad Hoc Meeting
December 13, 2024**

A regular meeting of the Downtown Development Authority of the City of Traverse City was called to order at the Commission Chambers, Governmental Center, 400 Boardman Avenue, Traverse City, Michigan, at 9:30 a.m.

The following Board Members were in attendance: Board Vice Chair Scott Hardy, Board Member Jeff Joubran, and Board Member Ed Slosky

The following Board Members were absent: Board Member Shelley Spencer

Chairperson Hardy presided at the meeting.

(a) **CALL TO ORDER**

The DDA Ad Hoc Committee meeting was called to order by Chair Hardy at 9:30am.

(b) **ROLL CALL**

(c) **ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

- (1) *Consideration of approving the minutes from the November 9, 2024 Ad Hoc Committee Meeting (approval recommended)*

That the DDA Ad Hoc

Committee approve the *minutes from the November 9, 2024 Ad Hoc Committee Meeting (approval recommended)*

Moved by Ed Slosky, Seconded by Jeff Joubran

Yes: Scott Hardy, Jeff Joubran, and Ed Slosky

Absent: Shelley Spencer

CARRIED. 3-0-1 on a recorded vote

(d) **OLD BUSINESS**

- (1) Strategic Planning

The following addressed the Ad Hoc Committee:

Harry Burkholder

Scott Hardy

Ed Slosky

Jeff Joubran

Lauren Bohac

(e) **PUBLIC COMMENT**

(1) n/a

(f) **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:43am by Chair Hardy.

Harry Burkholder, Executive Director

Traverse City DDA - General

Trial Balance

As of November 30, 2024

	DEBIT	CREDIT
1000 Fifth Third Checking - 3112	629,204.65	
1010 Fifth Third Savings - 6740	212,100.48	
1020 Petty Cash	0.00	
1072 Bill.com Money Out Clearing	111.00	
1200 Accounts Receivable	5,299.64	
1101 Due From APS (City of TC)		72.42
1102 Due From Arts Council	0.00	
1103 Due From DTCA	0.00	
1104 Due From Other Funds	0.00	
1220 Grants Receivable	33,316.81	
1230 Other Receivable	0.00	
1300 Pre-Paid Expense	1,962.50	
1480 Payroll Advance	0.00	
1499 Undeposited Funds	0.00	
2000 Accounts Payable		5,444.78
2153 Credit Card		1,928.81
2050 Other Accrued Liabilities		150.00
2100 Due to Other Funds		0.00
2110 Due to Oldtown TIF		0.00
2120 Due to TIF 97		20,335.29
2200 Payroll Liabilities		0.00
2201 Payroll Liabilities:Direct Deposit Liabilities		0.00
2202 Payroll Liabilities:Accrued Payroll Liabilities		11,081.49
2203 Payroll Liabilities:Accrued Salaries		37,361.89
2205 Payroll Liabilities:457b Payable		0.00
2210 Payroll Liabilities:Federal Income Tax Payable		0.00
2215 Payroll Liabilities:Health, Dental, Vision Insurance Payable		55,377.72
2220 Payroll Liabilities:Life & Disability Insurance Payable		3,277.24
2225 Payroll Liabilities:Medicare Tax Payable		0.00
2230 Payroll Liabilities:Social Security Tax Payable		0.00
2235 Payroll Liabilities:State Income Tax Payable		0.00
2240 Payroll Liabilities:State Unemployment Tax Payable		0.00
2245 Payroll Liabilities:Wage Garnishment Payable		0.00
2300 Deposits Payable		0.00
2301 Deposits Payable:Double Up Food Bucks	9,664.39	
2303 Deposits Payable:NCF Reimbursements	469.00	
2304 Deposits Payable:Prescriptions for Health	1,974.36	
2305 Deposits Payable:Project Fresh		764.00
2306 Deposits Payable:Senior Project Fresh	3,269.00	
2307 Deposits Payable:SNAP Food Assistance Payable		0.00
2403 GRANTS:EGLE - Cornwell Development		0.00
2407 GRANTS:MEDC Civic Square		100,000.00
2409 GRANTS:Rotary Charities		0.00
2600 Deferred Income		22,510.83
Bryan Crough Memorial Fund		0.00

Accrual Basis Thursday, December 12, 2024 03:14 PM GMT-05:00

1/2

Traverse City DDA - General

Trial Balance

As of November 30, 2024

	DEBIT	CREDIT
Bumpout Project Funds Collected		0.00
Buy Local Give Local Campaign		0.00
Suspense		0.00
3000 Opening Bal Equity		107,606.27
3900 Retained Earnings		468,428.85
4101 TAXES:Property Taxes		123,260.70
4212 GRANTS & CONTRIBUTIONS:EGLE Grant-State Street West-End Mixed Use		1,485.00
4302 REIMBURSEMENTS:Administrative Services		371,864.00
4303 REIMBURSEMENTS:Parking Services		181,257.90
4306 REIMBURSEMENTS:Farmer's Market Booth Rental Income		48,940.68
4501 INTEREST INCOME:Interest & Dividends		3,414.22
5101 SALARIES:Salaries & Wages	220,246.96	
5102 SALARIES:Hourly Wage Expense	125,824.22	
5201 FRINGE BENEFITS:Health Insurance	60,300.62	
5202 FRINGE BENEFITS:Disability Insurance Benefits	2,882.52	
5203 FRINGE BENEFITS:Life Insurance Expense	782.22	
5204 FRINGE BENEFITS:457 Company Matching	25,924.38	
5208 FRINGE BENEFITS:Social Security Tax Expense	22,325.44	
5209 FRINGE BENEFITS:Medicare Tax Expense	5,221.22	
5210 FRINGE BENEFITS:SUTA Tax Expense	448.80	
5400 PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	165.00	
5401 PROFESSIONAL SERVICES:Contract Services	5,000.00	
5402 PROFESSIONAL SERVICES:Legal	21,744.00	
5403 PROFESSIONAL SERVICES:Professional/Contractual	89,330.94	
5409 PROFESSIONAL SERVICES:Grant exp EGLE cornwell bldg	1,250.00	
5418 PROFESSIONAL SERVICES:SNAP Food Assistance Expense	10,133.00	
5419 PROFESSIONAL SERVICES:EGLE Grant-State Street West-End Mixed Use	385.00	
5420 PROFESSIONAL SERVICES:Farmers Market Administrative Expense	23,290.39	
5421 PROFESSIONAL SERVICES:Marketing	31,043.00	
5503 TRAVEL AND CONFERENCES:Training	275.00	
5601 REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE:Repairs & Maintenance	189.80	
5301 OFFICE SUPPLIES AND UTILITIES:Office Supplies	3,152.29	
5302 OFFICE SUPPLIES AND UTILITIES:Utilities	1,744.12	
5303 OFFICE SUPPLIES AND UTILITIES:Operation Supplies	389.12	
5305 OFFICE SUPPLIES AND UTILITIES:Dues, Subscriptions and Memberships	7,228.69	
5306 OFFICE SUPPLIES AND UTILITIES:Printing & Publishing	566.72	
5307 OFFICE SUPPLIES AND UTILITIES:Communications	1,049.60	
5308 OFFICE SUPPLIES AND UTILITIES:Miscellaneous Expense	5,571.25	
5311 OFFICE SUPPLIES AND UTILITIES:Escheatment Liability	0.00	
5404 OFFICE SUPPLIES AND UTILITIES:Insurance, Bonds & Taxes	720.00	
Uncategorized Expenditure	5.96	
TOTAL	\$1,564,562.09	\$1,564,562.09

Traverse City DDA - Old Town TIF

Trial Balance

As of November 30, 2024

	DEBIT	CREDIT
1001 Fifth Third Checking - 0650	1,482,967.75	
1072 Bill.com Money Out Clearing	0.00	
1200 Accounts Receivable	0.00	
1103 OTHER CURRENT ASSETS:Due From Other Funds	0.00	
1104 OTHER CURRENT ASSETS:Due From DDA	0.00	
1300 Pre-Paid Expense	0.00	
2000 Accounts Payable		0.00
2100 Due to Other Funds		0.00
3900 Retained Earnings		799,554.29
4101 Property Taxes		788,803.57
Sales		0.00
5302 OFFICE SUPPLIES & UTILITIES:Utilities	537.79	
5308 OFFICE SUPPLIES & UTILITIES:Miscellaneous Expense	146.10	
5400 PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	84,964.31	
5500 Contributions to District Construction Projects		3,500.00
5900 Repairs and Maintenance	23,401.77	
4501 INTEREST INCOME:Interest & Divident Income		159.86
TOTAL	\$1,592,017.72	\$1,592,017.72

Traverse City DDA - TIF 97

Trial Balance

As of November 30, 2024

	DEBIT	CREDIT
1001 CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS:Fifth Third Checking - 8026	9,079,267.37	
1072 Bill.com Money Out Clearing	0.00	
1200 Accounts Receivable	0.00	
1102 OTHER CURRENT ASSETS:Due from other governments	0.00	
1103 OTHER CURRENT ASSETS:Due From Other Funds	0.00	
1104 OTHER CURRENT ASSETS:Due From DDA	20,335.29	
1210 Deposits-Security Deposit	4,500.00	
1300 Pre-Paid Expense	0.00	
1499 Undeposited Funds	0.00	
2000 Accounts Payable	4,500.00	
2300 Due to City - Capital Projects		0.00
2100 Due to Other Funds		0.00
2200 Deferred Revenue		0.00
3000 Opening Bal Equity	21,200.00	
3900 Retained Earnings		6,307,524.02
4101 TAXES:Property Taxes		3,612,034.34
4501 INTEREST INCOME:Interest & Dividends		718.70
5302 OFFICE SUPPLIES AND UTILITIES:Utilities	1,080.34	
5306 OFFICE SUPPLIES AND UTILITIES:Printing & Publishing	1,530.43	
5308 OFFICE SUPPLIES AND UTILITIES:Miscellaneous Expense	1,123.26	
5309 OFFICE SUPPLIES AND UTILITIES:Bank Charges	300.87	
5400 Professional Services	338,194.49	
5500 Contributions to District Construction Projects	333,932.20	
5600 Contributions to Other Governments-Debt Service	36,859.98	
5801 RENT OR LEASE EXPENSE:Rent Expense	22,500.00	
5901 REPAIR & MAINTENANCE EXPENSES:Repairs and Maintenance	54,952.83	
TOTAL	\$9,920,277.06	\$9,920,277.06

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

11/30/2024

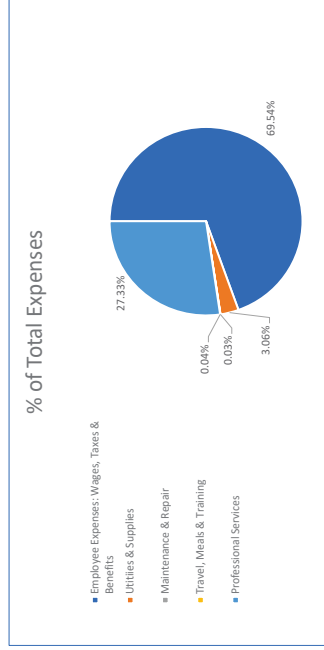
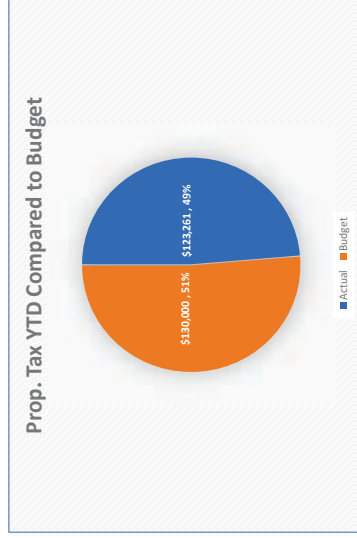
Financial Position	YTD as of 11/30/2024	Prior Year as of 6/30/2024 *	Change
Total Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 841,305	\$ 811,754	\$ 29,552
Other Assets	\$ 40,618	\$ 283,104	\$(242,487)
Total Assets	\$ 881,923	\$ 1,094,858	\$(212,935)
Current Liabilities	\$ 7,374	\$ 337,420	\$(330,047)
Total Other Liabilities	\$ 235,482	\$ 181,402	\$ 54,079
Total Liabilities	\$ 242,855	\$ 518,823	\$(275,967)
Fund Balance	\$ 639,067	\$ 576,035	\$ 63,032
Total Liabilities and Fund Balance	\$ 881,923	\$ 1,094,858	\$(212,935)

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

Revenue	YTD	Annual Budget	% of Budget
Property Taxes	\$ 123,261	\$ 130,000	94.8%
Grants & Contributions	1,485	1,875,000	0.1%
Reimbursements	553,122	743,728	74.4%
Rental Income	48,941	51,000	96.0%
Interest	3,414	2,000	170.7%
Total Revenue	\$ 730,223	\$ 2,801,728	26%

Expenses	YTD	Annual Budget	% of Budget
Employee Expenses: Wages, Taxes & Benefits	\$ 463,956	\$ 541,113	86%
Office Supplies & Utilities	20,428	80,000	26%
Maintenance & Repair	190	0	0%
Travel, Meals & Training	275	30,000	1%
Professional Services	182,341	377,800	48%
Rental Expense	-	-	0%
Total Expenses	\$ 667,190	\$ 1,028,913	65%

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



Old Town Tax Increment Financing
Board Financial Report - Dashboard

11/30/2024

Financial Position	YTD as of		Prior Year as of		Change
	11/30/2024	6/30/2024 *	11/30/2023	6/30/2023	
Total Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 1,482,968	\$ 1,192,161	\$ 290,807		
Other Assets	-	35,035	(35,035)		
Total Assets	\$ 1,482,968	\$ 1,227,196	\$ 255,772		
Current Liabilities	\$ -	\$ 427,642	\$ (427,642)		
Total Other Liabilities	-	-	-		
Total Liabilities	\$ -	\$ 427,642	\$ (427,642)		
Fund Balance	1,482,968	799,554	683,413		
Total Liabilities and Fund Balance	\$ 1,482,968	\$ 1,227,196	\$ 255,772		

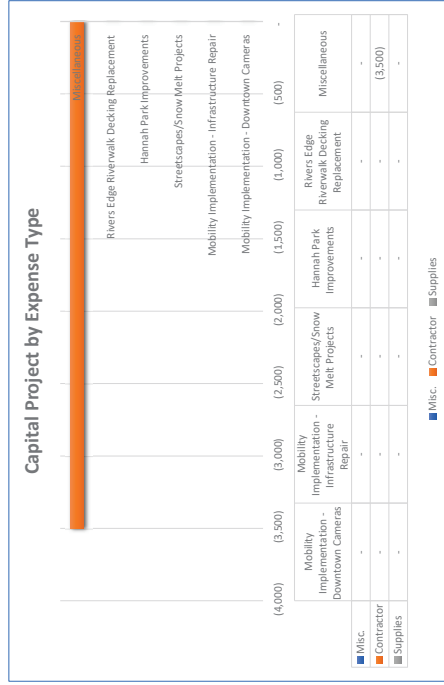
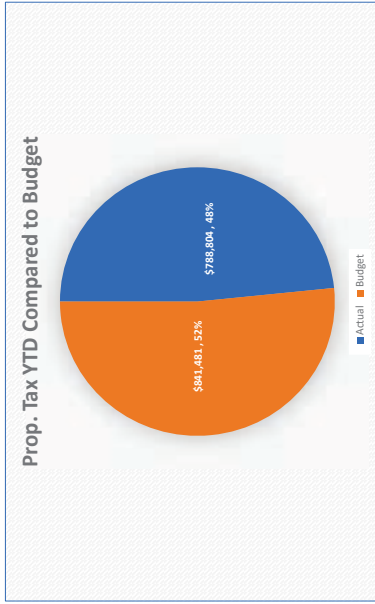
* Prior year balances are pre-audit and subject to change

Revenue	YTD	Annual Budget	% of Budget
Property Taxes	\$ 788,804	\$ 823,427	95.8%
Interest	160	100	159.9%
Total Revenue	\$ 788,963	\$ 823,527	96%

Expenses	YTD	Annual Budget	% of Budget
Utilities	\$ 538	\$ -	N/A
Professional Services	84,964	303,383	28%
Other: Printing/Publishing, Supplies	146	100	146%
Repairs & Maintenance	23,401	60,000	39%
Capital Projects	(3,500)	378,120	-1%
Total Expenses	\$ 105,550	\$ 741,603	14%

Capital Project Expenses:	YTD	Annual Budget	% of Budget
Mobility Implementation - Downtown Cameras	-	28,120	0%
Mobility Implementation - Infrastructure Repair	-	30,000	0%
Streetscapes/Snow Melt Projects	-	100,000	0%
Hannah Park Improvements	-	80,000	0%
Rivers Edge Riverwalk Decking Replacement	-	130,000	0%
Miscellaneous	(3,500)	10,000	-35%
Total Project Expenses	\$ (3,500)	\$ 378,120	-1%

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



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

11/30/2024

Financial Position	YTD as of 11/30/2024	Prior Year as of 6/30/2024 *	Change
Total Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 9,079,267	\$ 6,109,666	\$ 2,969,601
Other Assets	24,835	274,515	(249,679)
Total Assets	\$ 9,104,103	\$ 6,384,181	\$ 2,719,922
Current Liabilities	(4,500)	97,857	(102,357)
Total Other Liabilities	-	-	-
Total Liabilities	(4,500)	97,857	(102,357)
Fund Balance	9,108,603	6,286,324	2,822,279
Total Liabilities and Fund Balance	\$ 9,104,103	\$ 6,384,181	\$ 2,719,922

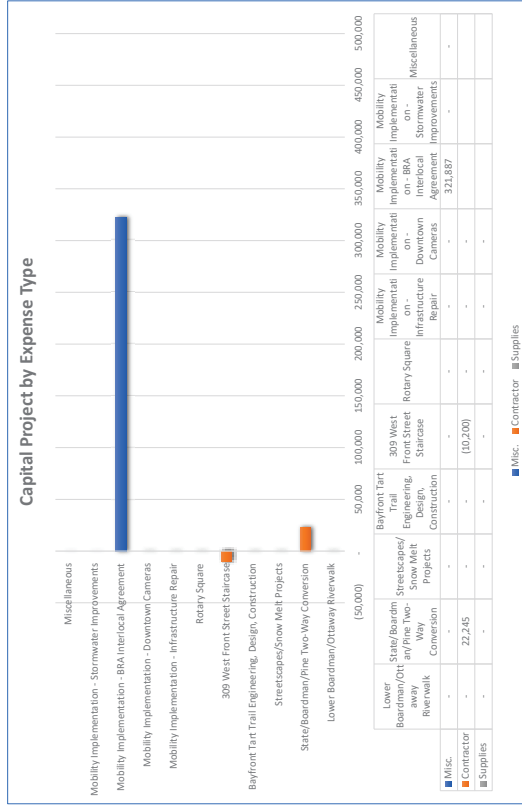
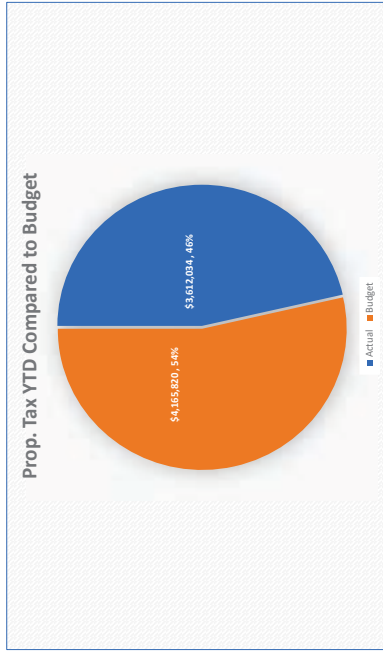
* Prior year balances are pre-audit and subject to change

Revenue	YTD	Annual Budget	% of Budget
Property Taxes	\$ 3,612,034	\$ 4,185,820	86.7%
Grant Revenue	-	-	N/A
Reimbursements	-	-	N/A
Interest	719	4,500	16.0%
Total Revenue	\$ 3,612,753	\$ 4,170,320	87%

Expenses	YTD	Annual Budget	% of Budget
Office Supplies & Utilities	\$ 4,035	\$ 20,000	20%
Professional Services	338,194	1,427,215	24%
Rent Expense	22,500	50,000	0%
Repair & Maintenance	54,953	250,000	22%
Capital Projects	333,932	3,034,367	11%
Debt Service	36,860	913,720	4%
Taxes & Transfers	-	-	0%
Total Expenses	\$ 790,474	\$ 5,695,302	14%

Capital Project Expenses:	YTD	Annual Budget	% of Budget
Lower Boardman/Ottaway Riverwalk	-	1,000,000	0%
State/Boardman/Pine Two-Way Conversion	22,245	500,000	4%
Streetscapes/Snow Melt Projects	-	400,000	0%
Bayfront Trail Engineering, Design, Construction	(10,200)	200,000	-10%
Rotary Square	-	100,000	0%
Mobility Implementation - Infrastructure Repair	-	100,000	0%
Mobility Implementation - Downtown Cameras	-	112,480	0%
Mobility Implementation - BRA Interlocal Agreement	321,887	321,887	100%
Mobility Implementation - Stormwater Improvements	-	100,000	0%
Miscellaneous	-	100,000	0%
Total Project Expenses	\$ 333,932	\$ 3,034,367	11%

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



GL NUMBER	DESCRIPTION	ACTIVITY FOR					
		2024-25YTD BALANCE	MONTH ENCUMBERED	ENCUMBERED	%	BDGT	
		ENDED BUDGET	11/30/2024	11/30/24	EAR-TO-DATE	BALANCE	USED
Fund 107 - PUBLIC ARTS COMMISSION FUND							
Revenues							
Dept 000 - NON-DEPARTMENTAL							
107-000-664.000	INTEREST & DIVIDEND EARNIN	1,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,000.00	0.00
107-000-675.000	CONTRIBUTIONS-PUBLIC SOUR	15,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	15,000.00	0.00
107-000-692.000	PRIOR YEARS' SURPLUS	20,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	20,000.00	0.00
107-000-699.000	TRANSFERS IN	30,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	30,000.00	0.00
Total Dept 000 - NON-DEPARTMENTAL		66,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	66,000.00	0.00
TOTAL REVENUES		66,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	66,000.00	0.00
Expenditures							
Dept 000 - NON-DEPARTMENTAL							
107-000-801.000	PROFESSIONAL AND CONTRAC'	64,000.00	4,478.68	0.00	3,337.93	56,183.39	12.21
107-000-930.000	REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE	2,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,000.00	0.00
Total Dept 000 - NON-DEPARTMENTAL		66,000.00	4,478.68	0.00	3,337.93	58,183.39	11.84
TOTAL EXPENDITURES		66,000.00	4,478.68	0.00	3,337.93	58,183.39	11.84
Fund 107 - PUBLIC ARTS COMMISSION FUND:							
TOTAL REVENUES		66,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	66,000.00	0.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURES		66,000.00	4,478.68	0.00	3,337.93	58,183.39	11.84
NET OF REVENUES & EXPENDITURES		0.00	(4,478.68)	0.00	(3,337.93)	7,816.61	100.00



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

MEMORANDUM

To: Downtown Development Authority Board
From: Harry Burkholder, Executive Director
Date: December 13, 2024
Re: TIF-97 Budget Priorities

The primary goal and takeaway of this discussion at our December 20th meeting is to determine which capital improvement projects the DDA will focus on and work to implement over the next three years. As discussed in previous board meetings, if TIF-97 is not extended, it will formally expire in December of 2027. That means the DDA has limited time (and construction seasons) to advance and complete capital improvement projects.

To be clear, the DDA will continue to work and advocate for the approval and extension of the Moving Downtown Forward TIF Plan, and I remain confident and optimistic about its ultimate approval. While 2027 seems like a long way out, when it comes to implementing public infrastructure (especially large projects) time moves very quickly. It is imperative that the DDA Board focus and take decisive action about which capital improvement projects it will focus on and advance.

As you recall, earlier this fall, the DDA Board initiated this discussion by asking three simple questions:

1. How much money is available to implement capital improvement project priorities?
2. What criteria should the DDA Board use to select the capital improvement project priorities?
3. What are the capital improvement project priorities?

How Much Money Is Available?

Working with our team from Rehmann, a “TIF Revenue and Expense Projection Sheet” (see attached) was developed that estimates the revenue and expenditures of TIF-97 for the next three years. The numbers listed in the preliminary revenue and expense projection sheet were developed under a few assumptions – mainly, that the expenses for Professional Services (including Debt Service on the Hardy Parking Structure, General Expenses and Repairs and Maintenance) remain consistent.

The total dollars remaining for capital improvements, coupled with our estimated *End of Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Fund Balance* of \$4,798,515, means that the DDA will have roughly \$9.3 million to spend on Capital Improvement Projects over the next three years.

To be clear, we fully anticipate that many, if not all, of the capital projects that the Board decides to move forward with are eligible for grant funding. Furthermore, some of the capital improvement projects could be combined to complement capital improvement projects led by the city (with city funding). Therefore, the roughly \$9.3 million available should not be seen as a funding ceiling for the selected capital improvement projects, but part of a comprehensive funding puzzle.

What criteria should the DDA Board use to select the capital improvement project priorities?

In an effort to determine which capital improvement project(s) to advance, DDA staff, in collaboration with the Ad-Hoc Committee, developed fifteen (15) criteria to consider (see attached). While this list of criteria is comprehensive, it may be helpful for each board member to select the top three or four criteria that you feel are most important in helping to determine capital improvement priorities.

Proposed Criteria

1. Can this project complement or be incorporated into an existing city project?
2. What is the status of this project?
3. How much money has already been invested in this project?
4. What is the total cost estimate of this project?
5. Does this project have broad community support?
6. Does this project have city commission support – will it align with the city’s strategic planning results?
7. Is completion of this project feasible by 2027?
8. What is the return on investment of this project (environmental, private investment, placemaking)?
9. Is this project considered core infrastructure or an amenity?
10. Is this project a predecessor to future project components or separate projects?
11. What are the long-term maintenance obligations of this project?
12. What are the long-term staffing obligations of this project?
13. What are the potential sources for outside funding?
14. What is the climate change, sustainability, and environmental impact considerations of this project?
15. What is the longevity of the project?

What are the capital improvement project priorities?

Based on several years of DDA Board conversations and discussions regarding capital infrastructure projects, including community discussion from the Moving Downtown Forward planning process, the DDA had identified several capital infrastructure projects of interest:

Garland Street Improvements	Public Alley Improvements	Farmers Market Shed
Rotary Square	Boardman/Ottaway Riverwalk	City Opera House
Bridge Improvements	Bayfront Improvements	Heated Sidewalks
East Front Street	Downtown Cameras	Stormwater
Streetscaping Improvements	Housing (west end)	Mobility Improvements
Composting	Two-Way Streets	TART Trail Extension
General Repair	West Front Staircase	Lot G
East Front Gateway		

Based on the considerations mentioned earlier in this memo, we identified seven projects that had previously been advanced (e.g., conceptual design, funding estimate, etc.) to a beginning state of implementation over the last couple of years and had formed the focus of many DDA discussions and work. These projects were summarized and discussed at our November Board meeting (see attached for more information).

- Rotary Square
- Permanent Farmers Market Pavilion
- Boardman/Ottaway Riverwalk – Phase 1-A
- East Front Street
- Two-Way Pilot
- Bayfront TART Trail Improvements
- Ambassador Program

Ad-Hoc Committee Recommendation

To advance this discussion, in October, the DDA Board appointed an Ad Hoc Committee to:

1. Determine the criteria from which the DDA will evaluate the potential capital improvement projects (noted above).
2. Use the criteria to narrow the list of potential projects to four or five.
3. Bring the four or five projects back to the DDA Board to then collectively discuss the criteria and further narrow down and decide on our priority capital improvement projects – again, targeting some finality to the discussion for our December meeting.

To that end, the Ad-Hoc Committee met and had a productive discussion on November 9th and again on December 13th. The proposed criteria were developed with a baseline understanding that each project is consistent with the Moving Downtown Forward Guiding Principles and each project requires some level of additional design engineering to understand the true cost of implementation. The Ad-Hoc Committee has recommended the following capital improvement projects (in no particular order) to move forward and collectively discuss with the full DDA Board.

Ad-Hoc Capital Improvement Project Priorities

1. Rotary Square
2. East Front Street
3. Farmers Market (Pavilion only)
4. State Street (two-way)
5. Boardman/Ottaway Riverwalk - Phase 1-A (J-Smith Walkway, Pedestrian Bridge, Naturalized Abutments/Stormwater Infrastructure)

DDA staff and Ad-Hoc Committee members also identified several small on-going and/or unfinished projects that would need TIF-97 funding to complete, including:

- West Front Street staircase (paused indefinitely at a previous meeting)
- J-Smith Walkway (movement to hire a landscape architect at our October meeting)
- Formal stairs/landing adjacent to the northeast corner of the north Union Street Bridge
- Refurbished benches and trash receptacles
- Composting program
- Heated sidewalks
- Downtown cameras
- Stormwater evaluation (complete the SAW analysis in downtown)

Next Steps

While Board members are encouraged to bring forward capital improvement project priorities not outlined in this memo, the Ad Hoc Committee has carefully considered the full scope of previously discussed projects and has thoughtfully recommended five projects for the full board to consider. Their thought process and reasoning for their recommendation should serve as the starting point for Fridays discussion.

I have also included a capital project priorities scorecard that may be helpful in helping you identify your top priorities. The first scorecard is an example, the second scorecard is blank and for you to fill in – again, this scorecard is provided for you as just with another way to help prioritize your projects, it is not required to fill out.

I look forward to our discussion and leaving today's meeting with a clear direction of which larger capital improvement projects the Board would like to pursue and invest in for downtown.

TIF 97 REVENUE AND EXPENSE PROJECTIONS - Thru December 2027

Thru Dec. 2027 Only

FISCAL YEAR	FY 2022-2023	FY 2023-2024	FY 2024-2025	FY 2025-2026	FY 2026-2027	FY 2027-2028
	Audited	Unaudited	Budgeted	Estimated	Estimated	Estimated
TAXABLE REAL PROPERTY INFLATION GROWTH - (Estimated @ 1.5%)			2,728,560	2,821,988	2,916,818	2,960,570
TAXABLE REAL PROPERTY NEW TO ROLL (100%) - includes uncapping			3,500,000	3,500,000	0	0
REAL PROPERTY TAXABLE VALUE	169,530,321	181,903,974	188,132,534	194,454,522	197,371,339	200,331,910
PERSONAL PROPERTY TAXABLE VALUE	7,928,140	7,092,220	8,000,000	8,000,000	8,000,000	8,000,000
TOTAL TAXABLE VALUE	177,458,461	188,996,194	196,132,534	202,454,522	205,371,339	208,331,910
BASE TAXABLE VALUE - 1997+park place brownfield	37,530,730	37,530,730	37,530,730	37,530,730	37,530,730	37,530,730
CAPTURED TAXABLE VALUE FOR DISTRICT	139,927,731	151,465,464	158,601,804	164,923,792	167,840,609	170,801,180
Increase/Decrease	17,614,899	11,537,733	7,136,340	6,321,988	2,916,818	2,960,570
MILLAGE RATES - Actual, Projected and Estimated	FY 2022-2023 Audited	FY 2023-2024 Unaudited	Budgeted	FY 2025-2026 Estimated	FY 2026-2027 Estimated	FY 2027-2028 Estimated
TRAVERSE CITY & ACT 345 + ambulance for fye 25	14.0888	14.0888	14.9407	14.8660	14.7917	14.7177
RECREATIONAL AUTHORITY (RA)	0.1500	0.1500	0.1500	0.1493	0.1485	0.1478
RA BOND	0.3300	0.2300	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
NORTHWESTERN MICHIGAN COLLEGE (NMC)	2.0574	2.0574	2.0471	2.0369	2.0267	2.0166
NMC BOND	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
GRAND TRAVERSE COUNTY (GTC)	4.7268	4.7268	4.7032	4.6797	4.6563	4.6330
GTC COMMISSION ON AGING & SENIOR CNTR	0.5684	0.5684	0.5656	0.5627	0.5599	0.5571
TRAVERSE AREA DISTRICT LIBRARY	0.9044	0.9044	0.8999	0.8954	0.8909	0.8864
GTC ROAD COMMISSION	0.9734	0.9734	0.9695	0.9650	0.9605	0.9560
GTC VETERANS	0.1135	0.1135	0.1129	0.1124	0.1118	0.1112
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY	1.5927	1.5927	1.5847	1.5788	1.5689	1.5611
BAY AREA TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY	0.4788	0.4788	0.4764	0.4740	0.4717	0.4693
GTC ANIMAL CONTROL	0.0370	0.0370	0.0368	0.0366	0.0364	0.0363
GTC CONSERVATION	0.0958	0.0958	0.0953	0.0948	0.0944	0.0939
TOTAL CAPTURED MILLAGE RATE	26.1170	26.0170	26.3344	25.4846	25.3571	25.2304
REVENUE & EXPENSE	FY 2022-2023 Audited	FY 2023-2024 Unaudited	FY 2024-2025 Budgeted	FY 2025-2026 Estimated	FY 2026-2027 Estimated	FY 2027-2028 Estimated
REVENUE						
TAXES - ((Captured Taxable Value / 1,000) x Total Captured Millage Rate)	3,677,904	3,832,599	4,215,820	4,203,011	4,255,958	4,309,374
ADJUSTMENTS AND TRIBUNAL REFUNDS	0	0	(50,000)	(50,000)	(50,000)	(696,406)
SUB-TOTAL TAXES	3,677,904	3,832,599	4,165,820	4,153,011	4,205,958	3,612,968
INTEREST	4,260	54,754	4,500	4,500	4,500	4,500
REIMBURSEMENTS	196,607	92,903	0	0	0	0
TOTAL REVENUE	3,878,771	3,980,256	4,170,320	4,157,511	4,210,458	3,617,468
EXPENSE						
PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	860,923	1,231,398	1,477,215	1,388,372	1,399,612	1,386,007
Downtown Development Authority Administration		427,355	555,106	577,233	587,442	597,804
Legal		18,158	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000
Community Policing Full Time			120,420	120,420	120,420	120,420
Dedicated Engineer for Public Infrastructure			60,000	60,000	60,000	60,000
Arts Commission - Administration			15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000
Arts Commission - Project						
Downtown WiFi						
Public Restroom (5 Private Sector downtown locations)		28,200	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000
Service Agreement		72,420	514,689	515,718	516,750	517,783
Traverse Connect Professional Services		35,000	37,000			35,000
Retail Incubator			50,000			
Composting			25,000			
Miscellaneous		650,264	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000
2017 DECK REFUNDING DEBT SERVICE (Hardy Deck)	972,956	953,111	913,720	874,459	825,656	782,541
GENERAL EXPENSES	195,789	161,093	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000
REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE (Clean & Green / Youthworks) -- Infrastructure Repair		24,157	250,000	250,000	250,000	250,000
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS	1,117,777	830,745	3,034,367	0	0	0
North Cass Street Bridge Rehabilitation	167,979					
Park Street Bridge Repair	33,589					
South Cass Street Bridge Repair						
South Union Street Bridge Repair	114,389					
West Front Street Bridge Replacement	52,155					
Lower Boardman/Ottaway Riverwalk	167,827		1,000,000			
West End Mix-Use Development		468,248				
Lot G Parking Structure						
Stormwater Management						
Workforce Housing						
Opera House Boiler Replacement						
Grandview Parkway	181,757					
East Front Street Improvements						
State/Boardman/Pine Street Two-Way Conversion	154,321	19,266	500,000			
Healthier Drinking Culture Investment (Lights & Cameras)						
Farmer's Market						
Streetscapes/Snow Melt Projects	61,813		400,000			
Bayfront Tart Trail Engineering, Design, Construction			200,000			
309 West Front Street Staircase			100,000			
Rotary Square			100,000			
Traffic Signal Mastarms						
Tree Replacement						
East Front Street Improvements						
Mobility Implementation Components	48,000	12,517				
Infrastructure Repair			100,000			
Downtown Cameras			112,480			
BRA Interlocal Agreement			321,887			
Stormwater Improvement(s)			100,000			
Miscellaneous	135,947	330,714	100,000			
TOTAL EXPENSE	3,147,445	3,200,505	5,695,302	2,532,831	2,495,268	2,438,548
CHANGE IN FUND BALANCE	731,326	779,751	(1,524,983)	1,624,680	1,715,190	1,178,920
FUND BALANCE END OF FISCAL YEAR	\$ 5,543,747	\$ 6,323,498	\$ 4,798,515	\$ 6,423,195	\$ 8,138,385	\$ 9,317,305

Criteria to Consider	Project Priorities						
	Rotary Square	Farmers Market Shed	Boardman/Ottaway Riverwalk + J. Smith Walkway	Two Way Circulation	Bayfront TART Trail	East Front Street/Gateway	Ambassador Program*
1. Can this project compliment or be incorporated into an existing city project?	Yes, potential tie into the FishPass Project	The city has identified plans to reconstruct and reconfigure Lot B, including adding stormwater infrastructure.			The city is a funding partner and stakeholder in the expansion of the Bayfront TART Trail	The city has identified plans for underground utility work if the street is replaced	
2. What is the current status of this project?	Conceptual and schematic design process has begun	Schematic design was developed in 2019, but final engineering would need to be revised to account for a reconfigured Lot B	A conceptual design was developed as part of the 2019 Unified Plan. The next phase would be working with a design engineer	In progress and up for approval of extension	In progress in collaboration with stakeholders	Project has been proposed, next phase would be developing a design	*This is not a capital project but an employee or contractor. Research into potential contracting options has begun
3. How much money has already been invested into this project?	\$1.75 million		\$350,000		\$200,000	\$319,000	\$0
4. What is the total cost estimate of this project?	TBD as part of design process	Shed: TBD: Repaving: \$400,000: Stormwater: \$600,000	Estimated \$5 million	TBD	\$200,000 from DDA	Estimated \$5 million	TBD based on contract vs. hire
5. Does this project have broad community support?	Events and farmers market held here have been successful, and the DDA continues to receive inquiries from the community about using the space	89% of respondents to the Moving Downtown Forward survey ranked stormwater infrastructure as a top priority. The farmers market is the most popular in the region and investing in its upgrades would likely be well received.	This project addresses two of the top three issues residents ranked as top priorities in the Moving Downtown Forward survey. When asked what physical improvements they found most important to downtown, 79% said implementing the proposed improvements to the Lower Boardman and 77% said making downtown more pedestrian-friendly and accessible	Feedback on two way traffic on State has been well-received, with noted improvements. With the parkway construction causing considerable changes in traffic patterns, it is not yet clear how two way traffic will operate and be received under standard circumstances	This stretch of trail is extremely popular, with over 2 million annual visits. In the Moving Downtown Forward survey, 65% of respondents said improving connectivity between downtown and the Bay was an important physical improvement project	Business owners on this stretch of East Front have expressed support for new streetscaping plan. In the Moving Downtown Forward survey, general appearance of downtown was ranked as the top characteristic respondents have noticed an improvement in, indicating support for similar projects	59% of respondents to the Moving Downtown Forward survey said providing additional maintenance including trash, snow removal, flower care, etc. was important. Additionally, in the DTCA's summer merchant survey, several merchants indicated downtown needing more cleanliness support
6. Does this project have City Commission support? Will it align with the City's strategic plan?							
7. Is completion of this project feasible by 2027?	Yes - Phase One	Depending on final cost and timeline by which the city can break ground on Lot B infrastructure and reconfiguration	Yes, somewhat determined by state permitting, if needed	Maybe	Yes	Maybe, depending on scale of project	Yes
8. What is the return on investment of this project? - Environmental - New Private Investment - Placemaking	As a space intended for events, this project could draw thousands of annual visitors downtown	With improved infrastructure, the farmers market may see an uptick in visitors and spending, which already draws 76,000 annual visitors and \$1,700-\$3,000 additional dollars spent in the community per market day	The project design is intended to serve as a gathering space and improve connectivity, drawing visitors and providing a space to spend more time and money downtown. Environmental opportunities associated with stormwater BMP's	Studies have shown two way traffic encourages economic development, improves livability, improves traffic safety, and encourages multimodal travel			The impact of an in house employee dedicated to maintaining downtown's appearance is a worthwhile investment that will be noticed by merchants, residents, and visitors
9. Is this project considered core infrastructure or an amenity?	Amenity	Core and Amenity	Amenity	Core	Amenity	Core and amenity	N/A
10. Is this project a predecessor to future project components or separate projects?	Likely not a predecessor to additional infrastructure, but a predecessor to future community events		Yes, the proposed river improvements are to be done in phases, with this project being Phase 1-A	Pending outcomes of the pilot's extension, we may learn additional projects are needed	Yes, this trail improvement is part of the larger plans for the Bayfront TART Trail and Grandview Parkway		Potentially, depending on outcomes of the role
11. What are the long term maintenance obligations of this project?	Depending on final design, Rotary Square will at least need lawn maintenance and may include infrastructure that may need maintenance	During the farmers market season, the shed will need basic maintenance and may need long term building maintenance. The lot and stormwater infrastructure will need continued city maintenance	Will need standard long term infrastructure maintenance depending on the sustainability of the building materials	Pending outcomes of the pilot's extension, we may learn additional maintenance above current levels is needed	N/A	Would need standard long term infrastructure maintenance	N/A
12. What are the long term staffing obligations of this project?	Depending on the direction and programming needs of the project, Rotary Square may need dedicated staff	No change in current staffing should be necessary as a result of this project	No change in current staffing should be necessary as a result of this project	No change in current staffing should be necessary as a result of this project	N/A	No change in current staffing should be necessary as a result of this project	One or two contractors or full time employees
13. What is this project's potential for outside funding sources (e.g., grants)?	High	High	High	Low	DDA is one of several city and regional organizations financing this project	State or federal placemaking grant opportunities may be available	N/A
14. What are the climate change, sustainability, and environmental impact considerations of this project?	Proximity could allow for future ties to Fish Pass's work	Incorporates stormwater infrastructure and supports local agriculture	Includes naturalization of hardened waters edge in project design, will aid in protection of water quality, and encourage non-motorized transportation	Potential of lower carbon emissions	Encourages non-motorized transportation	Opportunity for stormwater infrastructure upgrades	Serves as an on the ground source for keeping downtown clean and aware of potential environmental issues
15. What is the longevity of this project?	As a community meeting space, Rotary Square has the potential to become home to timeless city traditions and has a potentially infinite life cycle with comparatively little maintenance	The Farmers Market Shed is a permanent structure that will turn the market to an actual destination, solidifying its physical presence and expanding its future reach	As the river is a permanent feature of downtown, Phase 1-A would be the first step of a completely transformational amenity for downtown that can be expanded upon and last for generations to come	Two way circulation on State Street can remain for as long as the city deems it to be beneficial to downtown	The TART Trail has been a beloved and defining public amenity of Traverse City for over three decades and is sure to remain popular and frequently used for decades to come	While all street scaping has a natural life cycle, the specific design, particularly a gateway, has the potential to become symbolic imagery associated with Traverse City for future generations of residents and visitors	Depending on future budgets and labor pools, this position could become a necessity to city maintenance or even grow to a larger team



Rotary Square

Project Background

- Project was identified in the original TIF-97 Plan
- 2018 - DDA received a \$2-million appropriation from the State of Michigan for this project
- 2020 – DDA received a \$1-million award from Rotary Charities for this project
- 2020 - DDA purchased the site from TCF Bank for \$1.75 million
- DDA has cleared and seeded the site (added a formal sign)
- DDA has held a handful of community events on the site, include the 2024 Farmers Market
- DDA continues to receive interest from community organizations to use the space for events

Current Status/Opportunity

- 2024 - DDA formalized an agreement with Progressive Associates for \$141,600 to facilitate public engagement process, create a conceptual and schematic design and provide cost estimates for implementation for the square – targeting “phase one” design by May 2024
- Funding for conceptual and schematic design supported by Rotary grant award (no TIF dollars)
- Additional grant funding likely available



Permanent Farmers Market Shed

Project Background

- Farmers Market was established in 1984
- Market sits on city parkland
- 2016 - DDA commissioned a study on the fiscal impacts of the Farmers Market. Key Findings:
 - Attracts roughly 76,000 people annually (2,500 people on Saturdays)
 - Market visitors spend \$1,700 - \$3,000 in the surrounding community each market day
- 2017 - DDA hired Beckett and Reader to design a Permanent Shed
- Cost estimates for the Shed totaled roughly \$2-million
- Fundraising efforts started – with an initial pledge by the DDA of \$400,000
- 2018 - Project paused indefinitely

Current Status/Opportunity

- Repaving of Lot B has been included in the city’s CIP Plan for many years - City has renewed interest in repaving Lot B, but also adding stormwater infrastructure on the site
- Estimated Costs: Repaving (\$400,000) Stormwater (\$600,000)
- When repaving project moves forward, Lot B will be reconfigured (eliminating some parking spaces) to align with the Lower Boardman Unified Plan and egress will be eliminated from Lot T and Grandview Parkway.
- Remaining parking would be preserved for all non-market days
- Project could compliment and connect to future Boardman/Ottaway Riverwalk

Considerations

- Updated engineering and schematic design and cost estimates for a permanent Shed is needed to align with reconfigured parking lot
- Additional grant funding likely available



Boardman/Ottaway Riverwalk – Phase 1-A
J-Smith Walkway, Pedestrian Bridge, Naturalized Abutment
Approvements and Stormwater Infrastructure

Project Background

- 2018 – DDA hired SmithGroup in 2018 for \$40,000 to develop Lower Boardman Unified Plan
- 2021 - DDA and City Commission adopt Lower Boardman Unified Plan
- 2022 - DDA hired INFORM Studio for \$318,000 to develop conceptual design for new “Riverwalk”
- Inform Studio provides preliminary cost estimates for each “reach” of the Riverwalk
- 2024 - DDA terminates \$1million grant agreement for implementation of Phase I-A due to time constraints

Current Status/Opportunity

- J-Smith Walkway and Pedestrian Bridge in need of new treatment
- Scoped narrowed to Phase 1-A
- INFORM Studio provided \$1.7 million estimate to facilitate final engineering and schematic design for Phase 1-A
- Funding included in the 2024/2025 budget

Considerations

- State permitting to do work in the river
- Project identified as a priority ion the Moving Downtown Forward Report
- Additional grant funding likely available





East Front Street Reconstruction

Project Background

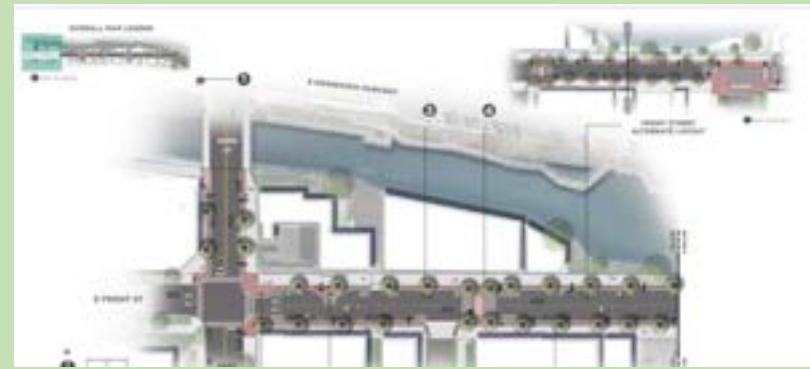
- 2020 - DDA hired Progressive AE for \$319,000 to develop a new design/streetscaping plan for East Front Street (from Grandview Parkway to Park Street)
- 2021 - DDA finalizes streetscaping plan for East Front Street, project estimated around \$5-million (Business and Property Owner Support)
- Implementation paused indefinitely due to debate on final design
- Debate on final design provided impetus for the two-way study and Mobility Action Plan
- 2024 - New intersection design for East Front Street and Grandview Parkway implemented in MDOT's reconstruction of Grandview Parkway

Current Status/Opportunity

- Implementation paused indefinitely due to debate on final design and completion of the Mobility Action Plan

Considerations

- Requires final design and engineering plan and revised cost estimates
- New entryway into downtown from Grandview Parkway recently completed provides additional space for a "gateway" feature
- Another major construction project that would disrupt a portion of Downtown during construction
- One of the last streets in Downtown without streetscaping treatment
- Unclear (at this time) how project would directly tie into a two-way pilot on Front Street
- City has interest in upgrading underground utilities if East Front Street is reconstructed (100-year-old infrastructure)
- Continued political debate on how the street will accommodate cyclists
- Mobility Action Plan is complete



Two-Way Traffic Pilot

Project Background

- 2020 - DDA commissioned two-way study with Progressive AE following planning process and pause in East Front Street project
- Nov. 2022 (with DDA Board and CC support) DDA and City initiated a two-year pilot to convert State, Pine and Boardman to two-way
- DDA utilized TIF-97 funding for small physical modifications and signage as well as contract with Progressive Partners for data gathering and analysis.

Current Status/Opportunity

- Two-Way Pilot ended in October
- Seeking approval of extension (considering Front Street)
- Currently budgeted for \$500,000

Considerations

- Acceptability of Two-Way traffic on Front Street
- Costs for continued data collection and monitoring
- Costs and timeline for additional physical improvements and modifications
- Long-term funding needs if the pilot is made permanent
- Partnership with the city
- Consistent with national trends



Bayfront TART Trail Improvements - Phase Two

History

- 2022 – DDA partnered with City and TART to facilitate design and engineering for trail expansion
- Budgeted \$200,000 in 2023/2024 for implementation, but didn't spend it
- Budgeted \$200,000 in 2024/2025
- 2024 - Phase One Completed - roughly one-mile of new trail
- Total project \$1.2 million – partially funded through a RAP grant

Considerations

- DDA budgeted for two years, but costs only incurred this fiscal year.
- Phase Two Scope (Open Space to Division)
- Proof of concept, solid partnership and highly visible
- Entire scope extends from West End Beach to Eastern Avenue – connecting with outside neighborhoods and voting precincts



Ambassador Program

History

- Concept discussed by staff for several years
- Currently use YouthWorks during the summer to provide clean and green services, but its limited

Considerations

- Very visible and addresses common criticisms
- Program could be supported through internal staff or contractors
- Need to secure equipment
- Cost
- Costs incurred as "in-house" staff or contractor

Traverse City DDA - Potential Capital Improvement Project Priority Scorecard

Example Scorecard

	A. Rotary Square	B. Farmers Market Pavillion	C. Boardman Riverwalk	D. East Front Street	E. Two-Way State St.	F. TART Trail Improvement	G. Ambassador Program	Row Wins	Column Wins	Total Wins	
A. Rotary Square		A	A	D	A	A	A	5	0	5	A.
B. Farmers Market Pavillion			B	D	B	B	B	4	0	4	B.
C. Boardman Riverwalk				D	C	C	G	2	0	2	C.
D. East Front Street					D	D	D	3	3	6	D.
E. Two-Way State St.						E	E	2	0	2	E.
F. TART Trail Improvement							G	1	0	1	F.
G. Ambassador Program								0	2	2	G.

How To Fill Out the Scorecard

On comparing A to B, if B is preferred then A “wins” and you enter A in the AB Box; in comparing A and C, if A was preferred then A “wins” and you would put A in the AC Box, and so on.

At the end, add up the row “wins” and the “column” wins for each option and rank on the total wins

Blank Scorecard

	A. Rotary Square	B. Farmers Market Pavillion	C. Boardman Riverwalk	D. East Front Street	E. Two-Way State St.	F. TART Trail Improvement	G. Ambassador Program	Row Wins	Column Wins	Total Wins	
A. Rotary Square											A.
B. Farmers Market Pavillion											B.
C. Boardman Riverwalk											C.
D. East Front Street											D.
E. Two-Way State St.											E.
F. TART Trail Improvement											F.
G. Ambassador Program											G.

How To Fill Out the Scorecard

On comparing A to B, if B is preferred then A “wins” and you enter A in the AB Box; in comparing A and C, if A was preferred then A “wins” and you would put A in the AC Box, and so on.

At the end, add up the row “wins” and the “column” wins for each option and rank on the total wins

MEMORANDUM

To: Harry Burkholder & the Board of Directors of the Traverse City Downtown Development Authority
From: Scott W. Howard & Ross A. Hammersley | OLSON & HOWARD, PC
Date: December 19, 2024
Re: Requirements relating to TIF capture and expenditures

The capture of “tax increment financing” (TIF) funds by the Traverse City Downtown Development Authority (DDA) is governed pursuant to Michigan’s Recodified Tax Increment Financing Act (Public Act 57 of 2018; MCL §125.4201, *et seq.*), as well as the City’s currently in-effect TIF plan and Chapter 298 of the City’s municipal code.

Part 2 of the Act referenced above pertains to “Downtown Development Authorities,” and this memorandum provides a short summary of certain requirements under Part 2 of the Act (as well as pertinent provisions from the TIF plan and/or city code) relating to the capture of TIF and the expenditure of captured TIF funds:

1. Authorization and Capture of TIF Revenues:

- Under Section 214 of the Act, the DDA is authorized to capture TIF funds from the downtown development district in accordance with the City’s approved TIF plan and Chapter 298; among other requirements, the TIF plan is required to include a development plan that has been prepared and approved in accordance with the provisions of Section 217.
- Section 217 spells out the required contents of an authority’s development plan, and further details numerous considerations that the DDA must undertake in order to use captured tax increment revenues to finance activities and projects within the downtown development area pursuant to the approved development plan.

2. Expenditure of Captured TIF Funds:

- Once captured, the funds may only be expended in accordance with the provisions of the TIF plan & Chapter 298 of the City’s municipal code (*See* MCL §125.4215).
- The expenditure of captured funds must align with the provisions set out in MCL §125.4217 and §125.4219 which govern the appropriate uses of TIF funds for redevelopment purposes.
- Obligations and commitments made by the DDA and City pursuant to the TIF plan must be paid with the captured TIF funds (or as financed under Section 211), and this includes contracts for DDA projects that are committed to or any bond payments required by any bonds issued.

December 19, 2024

Page 2

- Section 215 of the Act provides that “The governing body of the municipality may abolish the tax increment financing plan when it finds that the purposes for which it was established are accomplished. However, the tax increment financing plan shall not be abolished, allowed to expire, or otherwise terminate until the principal of, and interest on, bonds issued ... have been paid or funds sufficient to make the payment have been segregated.” If the TIF plan is formally abolished, Section 215 further requires that “surplus funds shall revert proportionately to the respective taxing bodies.”

3. Amendment Requirements:

- If the DDA or the City intends to alter the scope of projects funded by TIF, they are required to amend the current TIF plan, which requires following the same procedures “as are required for approval of the original plan.” MCL §125.4214(5).
- Any amendment(s) to the TIF plan or ordinance would require submission to and approval by the electorate of the City, as now required by Section 28 of the City Charter (amended in the November 2024 election).

4. New Charter Provision:

- The new Charter provision mandates that a City-wide vote is required to approve any proposal to create a TIF plan, or to modify, amend, or extend an existing TIF plan.
- The following language was added to Section 28 of the City Charter via the November 2024 election: “We declare that tax increment financing (‘TIF’) plans shall be submitted to a vote of the people, since TIF plans divert local property tax revenue away from the general fund and basic city services such as police, fire, ambulance, streets, and parks. Any proposal to create a TIF plan, or to modify, amend, or extend an existing TIF plan, shall not be adopted or approved by the City or City Commission until after the proposal is submitted to and approved by a majority of the electors of the City at a regular election or at a special election held for that purpose.”

5. Compliance and Considerations:

- The DDA and City must ensure that any ordinances enacted after January 1, 2025, relating to TIF plans, comply with the electorate's petition rights and voting requirements.
- Existing projects authorized under the current ordinance and TIF plan are not affected by this new Charter provision.

For the DDA to continue capturing and expending TIF funds lawfully, it must comply with the current and any amended ordinances, ensuring all changes align with the recent provisions voted by the public.



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

Memorandum

To: DDA Board of Directors
From: Harry Burkholder, DDA Executive Director
Date: December 16, 2024
Subject: Rotary Square Conceptual and Schematic Design

As you recall, earlier this year, we entered into a contract with Progressive Companies to lead and facilitate public engagement, conceptual design, schematic design, base and refined cost estimates and operational development estimates for Rotary Square. Funding for these activities is covered under the grant we received from Rotary.

Over the last couple of months, we have worked with the Progressive Team to aggregate background & geographic data/information, establish a project steering committee (Board Member Pete Kirkwood sits on the Committee) and develop a community engagement plan.

The team from Progressive will be at our meeting on Friday to review and discuss the public engagement/conceptual design process and plan (including goals for this spring) and facilitate a discussion with board members on design considerations/elements of Rotary Square.

PROGRESSIVE
COMPANIES



ENVISIONING SUCCESS FOR ROTARY SQUARE'S ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

2024 12 19 DDA Meeting



OUR TEAM



JASON BALL
AICP
Senior Planner



TODD MEYER
AICP, PLA
Urban Design Practice Leader



MAUSHARIE VALENTINE
AIA, CSI
Urban Design & Planning



RYAN JOHNSON
PLA
Landscape Architect

AGENDA

- Early Ideas for Rotary Square
- Community Engagement Overview
- Questions/Next Steps



PROJECT TIMELINE

Oct. – Dec.

- Prior work review
- **Community engagement plan**
- **Stakeholder identification**

Jan. – Mar.

- Community visioning
- Pop-up events
- Stakeholder outreach

Mar. – May

- Conceptual design alternatives
- Community feedback loops
- Rough cost estimates

Jun. – Aug.

- Schematic design
- Cost estimates
- Operational & management framework

ITERATIVE AND INTERACTIVE ENGAGEMENT



STEERING
COMMITTEE



POP-UP EVENTS



FOCUS GROUPS



COMMUNITY
EVENTS

CONSISTENT AND DELIBERATE **COMMUNICATION** TO THE PUBLIC THROUGHOUT THE ENGAGEMENT PROCESS



EARLY IDEAS FOR ROTARY SQUARE

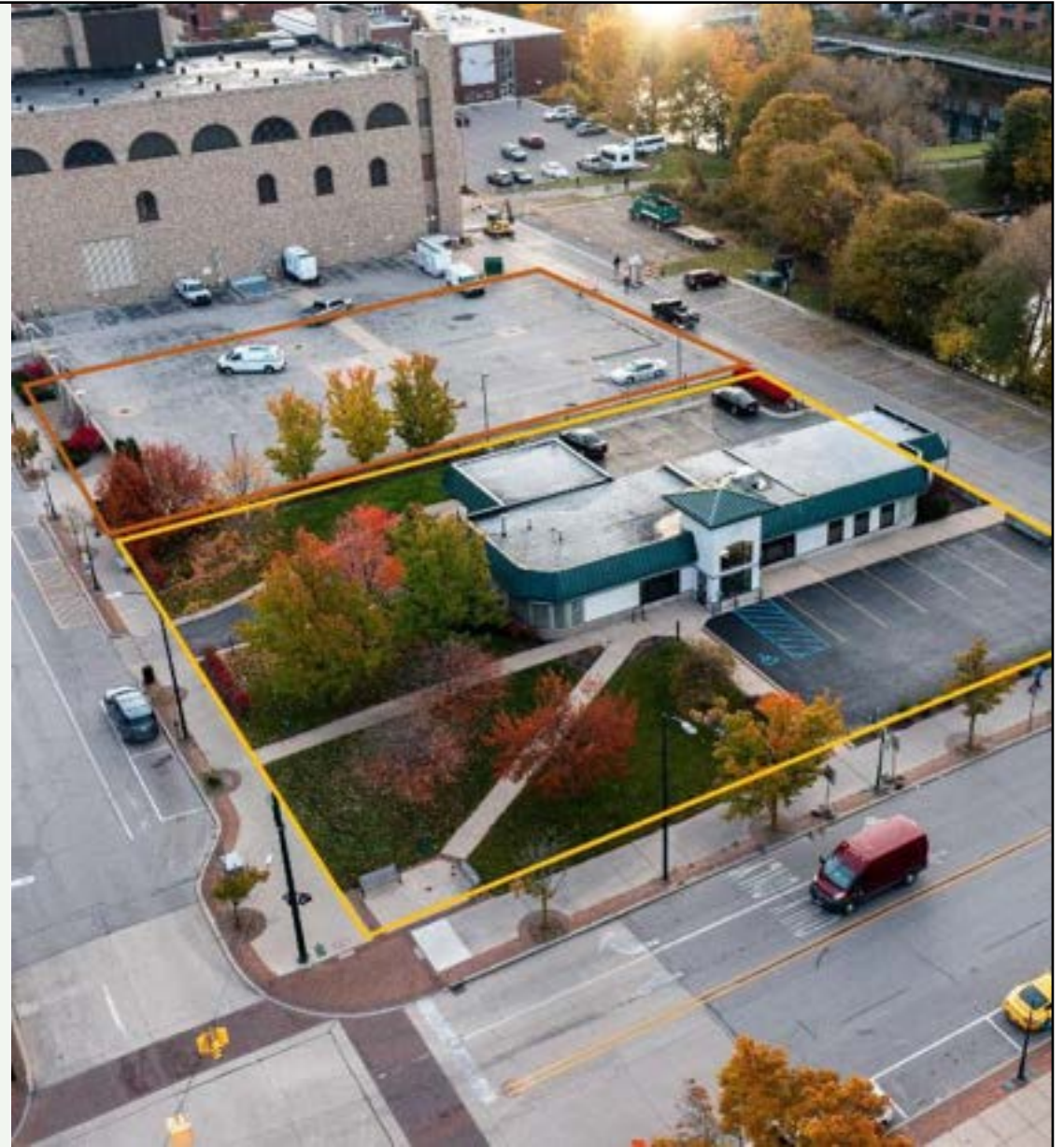
Envisioning Success

Imagine you leave
Traverse City **next
month...**



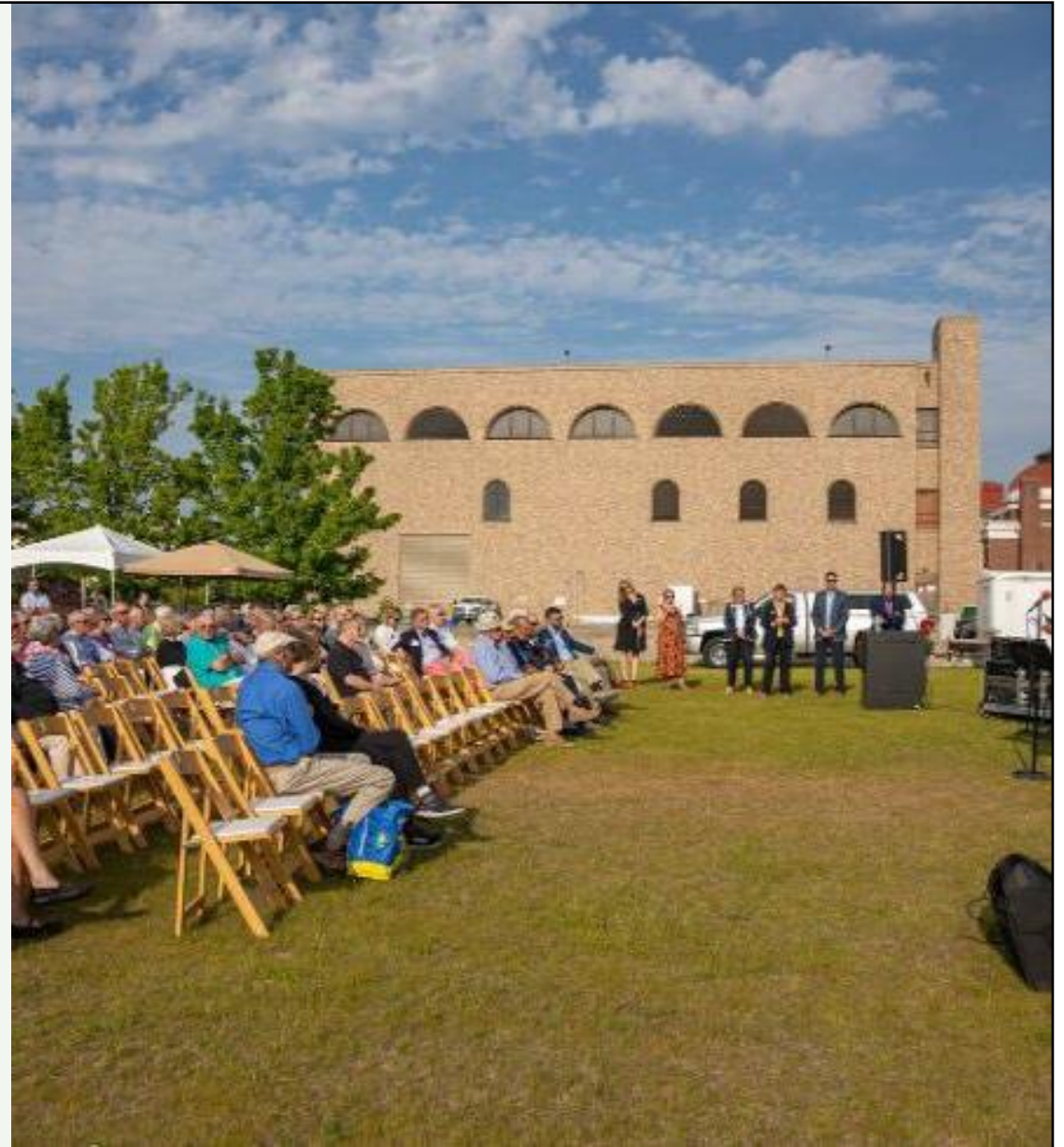
Envisioning Success

...And you return
10 years later.
What do you see at
Rotary Square?



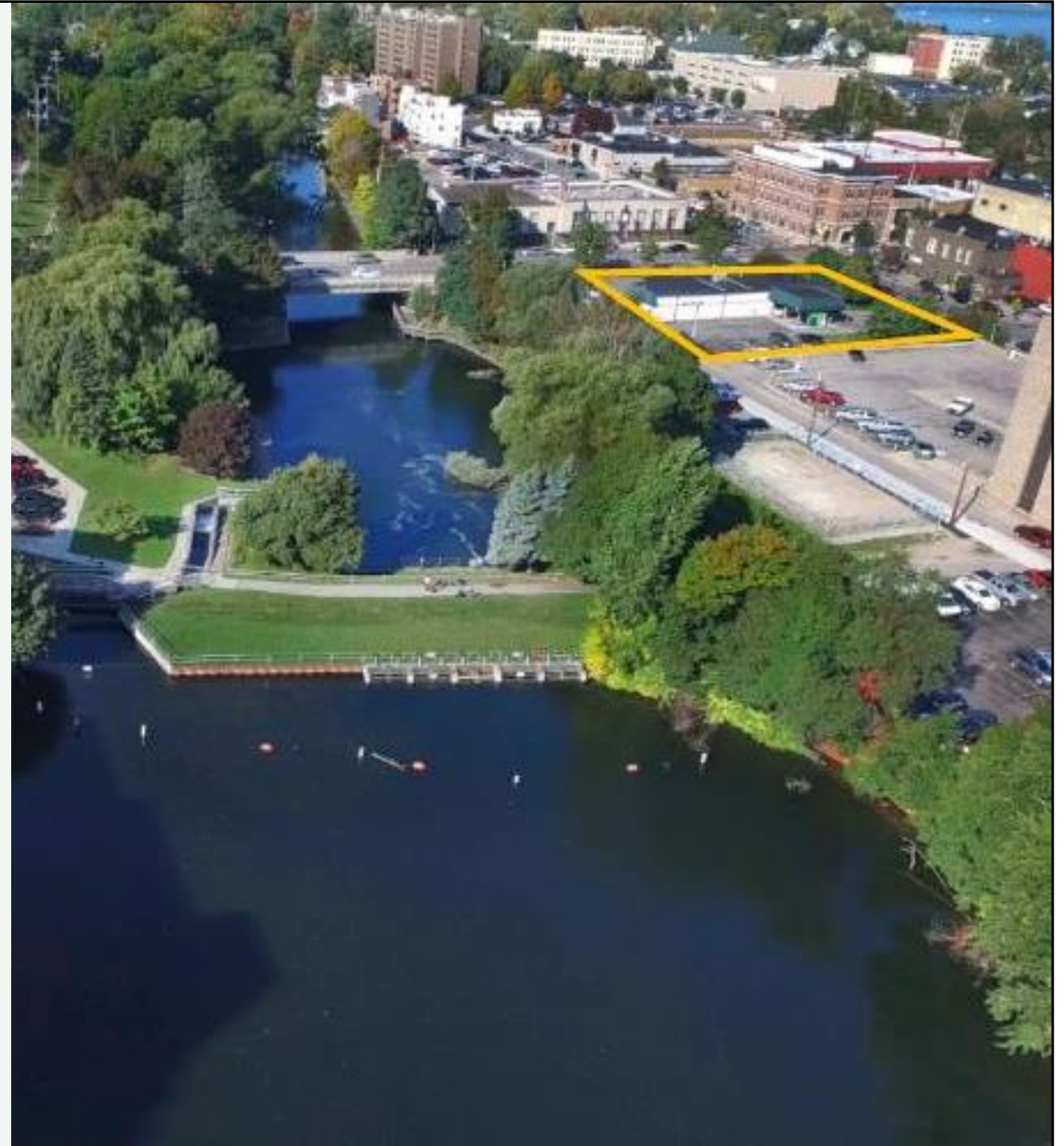
WHAT WE'D LIKE TO SEE:

- A **year-round active** and welcoming outdoor room for Traverse City **locals** of **all ages** and **backgrounds**.
- An accessible space for all ages that utilizes **natural elements** such as logs, rocks, and elevation to create spaces for **play**.
- A space that **encourages commerce surrounding the square** which can accommodate food vendors, small shops, and local businesses.
- A space that **celebrates sustainability and climate resilience** opportunities.



Envisioning Success

What
opportunities
excite you the
most about
Rotary Square?



KEY OPPORTUNITIES FOR ROTARY SQUARE INCLUDE:

- Becoming a cherished place to create **lifelong memories.**
- Being a place that celebrates the **culture and history** of Traverse City and it's people.
- Providing a space that **evolves over time with the community** and develops its own **unique identify.**
- Offering a place to meet and linger **for locals.**
- Housing a **signature or iconic feature.**
- Strategically planning **the alley as a flexible space** that provides access for people and vehicles.
- Direct **connection to the FishPass.**





COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PLAN SUMMARY

Group Review & Discussion

ENGAGEMENT TIMELINE

Public engagement will begin in January with an online survey and finish with the final design celebration in August.

Communication will happen throughout the process to keep the community informed and set expectations for the process.

Engagement Activities	2024		2025									
	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct
Surveys												
Community Survey			■	■								
Follow-Up Surveys					■	■		■	■			
Stakeholder Interviews/Focus Groups												
Awareness & Visioning				■	■							
Design Alternative Review							■					
Operational & Management Plan Development							■					
Pop-Up Events												
Awareness & Visioning					■							
Conceptual Feedback						■						
Community Events												
Conceptual Feedback						■						
Design Alternatives & Programming Review								■				
Final Design Celebration										■		
Leadership Meetings												
Steering Committee Meetings		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	
DDA Meetings		■		■		■		■		■		
Other Meetings (TBD)												
Communication Channels												
Social Media/Website		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Press Releases (subject to change)		■		■		■		■		■		

PARTNERS & STAKEHOLDERS

- City of Traverse City Government:
 - City of Traverse City Commission
 - City of Traverse City Planning Commission
 - City of Traverse City Parks and Recreation Department
 - City of Traverse City Department of Public Services
- Downtown Property and Business Owners
- Transportation Interests
- Neighborhood Associations & Residents
- Non-Profits, Institutions and Civic Organizations
- Education & Youth

- Are any key partners or **stakeholder groups missing?**
- Are there any types of stakeholders or specific organizations **that we absolutely must engage?**

ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

- Steering Committee Meetings
- DDA Meetings
- Surveys
- Stakeholder Interviews / Focus Groups
- Pop-up Events
- Community Open Houses

Where are **great places to engage locals** (e.g., Farmer's Market)?

COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

- Press Releases
- DDA Website
- Social Media
- Sign(s) on the Rotary Square Site
- You!

Any important ways to **raise awareness** that we are missing?

QUESTIONS?

Next Steps:

- Updates to DDA Website & Online Survey (January)
- Stakeholder outreach and interviews (Feb. – Mar.)
- First Community Event (March - April)



weareprogressive.com



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

Memorandum

To: DDA Board of Directors
From: Harry Burkholder, DDA Executive Director
Date: December 11, 2024
Subject: Executive Director Report

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

Hannah Park Overlook

This project is now anticipated to start in January and last six to eight weeks, depending on weather. As a reminder, the DDA committed \$105,000 from Old Town TIF toward this project – matching similar funding amounts from the city.

Rotary Square

Work continues with Progressive Companies on the conceptual design for Rotary Square. The Steering Committee for this project has met and representatives from Progressive Companies and Progressive will be at our meeting to discuss and review the project timeline and public engagement plan.

Two-Way Pilot Project

DDA staff, in collaboration with City staff and representatives from Progressive Companies, will provide an overview of the last two years of the two-way pilot project as well as plans for a possible two-year extension of the pilot at the January 13th City Commission Study Session. Commissioners will then consider a formal approval of the two-way pilot at a future regular meeting.

Downtown Composting Program

Following their update to the DDA Board at our October meeting, we met with SEEDS to discuss program activities for 2025, including addressing challenges for current participants, increasing the visibility and marketing the program and generating new leads to expand the program (including beyond the typical food and beverage establishments).

Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)

DDA staff is working congruently with city staff to develop the 2025/2026 capital improvement plan. This process provides the DDA an opportunity to discover and potentially sync future DDA/City capital improvement projects. The formal approval process, including public hearings on the CIP, will begin in February.

DDA Committee Meetings

Over the last month, both the Governance and Finance Committee met. The Governance Committee reviewed, discussed and revised both the Governance Committee Roles and Responsibilities worksheet and the DDA Board Rules and Responsibilities worksheet. The two revised worksheets will likely be on the DDA's January meeting agenda for review and approval.



303 E. State Street
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Memorandum

To: Downtown Development Authority Board of Directors

From: Harry Burkholder, DDA Executive Director & Todd McMillen, DDA Board Member

Memo Date: December 12, 2024

Subject: Arts Commission Update

Inaugural Mural Festival

The Arts Commission is moving forward on several components of the Mural Festival (scheduled for the fall of 2025).

- The DDA has been awarded a MACC grant (on behalf of the Arts Commission) \$12,000 toward the Mural Festival.
- In collaboration with the City Commission, we have applied for a 2% grant from the Grand Traverse Band.
- We have issued the RFP for artists for the Mural Festival.



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

Memorandum

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

From: Sara Klebba, DDA Director of Events & Engagement

Date: December 12, 2024

Subject: DTCA Director of Events & Engagement Update

Ladies' & Men's Nights (12/5 & 12/12)

- Ladies' and Men's Nights both experienced extreme winter weather, but women still came out in decent numbers. (Waiting on Men's Night turnout.) Many merchants appreciated the snow and wind because they spent more time in their stores. A lower number complained about the traffic being lighter this year, one said lowest in 16 years.
- To send merchant survey after 12/12.

Traverse City Restaurant Week (2/23-3/1)

- Email invitations to sign up were sent to past restaurant participants and merchant list.
- We'll be launching our external promotions with partner Traverse City Tourism in January. TCT will be heading up the consumer digital passport program again with prize incentives and oven mitt giveaway.

DATA CAPTURE:

Downtown Halloween Walk (10/26)

- Merchant survey (25 respondents) top level learnings:
 - 72% (18) very satisfied, 16% (4) somewhat satisfied, 8% (2) neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, 4% (1) very dissatisfied
 - One directional flow and volunteers were deemed effective overall and appreciated
 - Should the street be shut down for the event? Yes: 44% (11) – safer, options for food/coffee truck, helps with speeding up foot traffic, if you do it go for the day; No 40% (10) – not worth it unless longer, parking concerns, hurts sales; Maybe 16% (4)
 - Sales impact? Decreased: 40% (10), no change (36%), increased 24% (6)
 - Is sales impact important? No: 44% (11), somewhat: 36% (90), yes: 20% (5)

Shop Your Community Day (11/9)

- 42 merchants supported 30 nonprofits
- Total raised: \$21,204.81

- Top NPOs: Cherryland HS: \$4,070; Women's Resource Ctr: \$2,095; Boots for Kids: \$1,957; Project Feed the Kids: \$1,808; Noah's ARC: \$1,148
- Bottom NPOs: Love Thy Neighbor: \$72; Kids on the Go: \$104; Evergreen Cmty Grp: \$105; Greenspire: \$107; OTP: \$158
- Category averages: Animals (5): \$1,402; Arts (4): \$313; Education (7): \$433; Environment (3): \$399; Health (2): \$479; Social Services (9): \$861
- To discuss noncompliance fee structure for merchants who do not adhere to instructions and/or timeline for donations

Light Parade & Tree Lighting with Santa (11/23)

- Survey responses: Entrants (24)
 - Registration easy: 88%
 - Comms on time: Yes: 75%, somewhat: 25%
 - Satisfied with event: Extremely/very: 100%
 - Staging organized: 63% very well, 33% somewhat, 4% (1) not very
 - Helping staff/vols in staging: 92% yes, 2% somewhat
 - Consider participating in parade next year: 100% yes
 - 88 Net Promoter Score (NPS); High score: 30-100, medium: 0-30, low: -100-0
 - Suggestions:
 - Crowd control; kids in street pose a danger
 - IDEA: Could we do hand outs at Rotary Square or Santa's House after?
 - Mind the gaps (TADL culprit; no books next year)
 - Move tree lighting after parade
- Survey responses: Partners (7)
 - Event planning process: 100% Extremely/very satisfied
 - Comms: 100% Excellent
 - Event satisfaction: 100% Very satisfied
 - Well organized event: 100% Yes
 - Staff/vol effectiveness at event: 86% excellent, 14% (1) above avg
 - 86 NPS
 - Suggestions:
 - Crowd control, more officers on duty
- Survey responses: Merchants (10)
 - How was foot traffic impacted? Increased: 40%, No impact: 30%, Decreased: 30%
 - What was sales impact? Increased: 10%, No impact: 50%, Decreased: 40%
 - How important is sales impact? Important: 50%, Neutral: 30%, Not important: 20%
 - 50% of merchants were closed for the parade and after and none offered any special promotions (though one merchant suggested promoting late night shopping)
 - Atmosphere: Good to exceptional: 100%
 - 22 NPS
 - Suggestions/feedback
 - More signage, QR code, share route map and bathroom locations; make posters available (all of these were posted and offered through the DDA office)
 - More police presence needed
 - Parking not available for shoppers
 - This is not really an event created for merchants



REGIONAL ECONOMIC ECOSYSTEM REPORT

FALL 2024

Contents

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- 11 Industry Growth Clusters
- 12 Industry Cluster Highlight
- 14 Business Attraction
- 18 Business Growth and Retention
- 20 Talent Attraction and Retention



Traverse Connect hosted the Drone and E-Boat Demo event on August 5 at Elk Rapids Marina. E-boats X-Shore 1, Arc One, Hercules eDrive pontoon, and LilyPad solar-powered boat took passengers out on Elk Lake. Attendees watched drones conducting water-sample testing and overwater mapping capabilities demonstrated by Northwestern Michigan College's Great Lakes Water Studies Institute and Uncrewed Aerial Systems programs

INTRODUCTION

TO OUR INVESTORS AND PARTNERS



Warren Call

Thank you for reading Traverse Connect's Fall 2024 semi-annual Economic Ecosystem Report. Published each spring and fall, the Economic Ecosystem Report is intended to supplement Traverse Connect's [Quarterly Growth Barometer Updates](#) and its Annual Report. This report highlights our work to grow the Grand Traverse regional economy via our business attraction, industry cluster, and growth efforts, as well as our talent attraction and retention efforts.

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

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

Thank you,

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

President & CEO
Traverse Connect

REGIONAL DASHBOARD

Traverse Connect tracks five metrics in Talent Attraction & Development and Economic Development to measure the region's progress against our organization's vision and goals for 2030. The vision: By 2030, the Grand Traverse region will be a diversified economic destination of choice powered by growth-oriented enterprises providing competitive total compensation to match our world-class quality of life. Data is an imperfect, yet necessary, tool to measure those gains. Three of the five key metrics on the Traverse Connect [Regional Dashboard](#) trended positive going into 2024. Two key metrics show an impact of regional employer changes, which are likely connected.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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


\$73,767 

STATE AVERAGE WAGE
PERCENTAGE
2030 GOAL: 90%

86% 

TALENT ATTRACTION & DEVELOPMENT

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

51% 

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

7% 

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

2,718 

2024 KEY MILESTONES

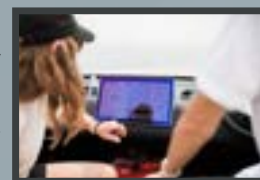
REGIONAL COMPETITIVENESS

- Joined TCAPS, GTACS, North Ed., Interlochen Center for the Arts, Rotary Charities, and the G.T. Regional Community Foundation at a press conference with Governor Whitmer, Senator John Damoose, and Representatives Betsy Coffia and John Roth to announce **\$5 million for educator housing** near Blair Elementary School.
- The state budget process concluded in late June, **securing funding for key priorities**: Michigan Innovation Fund, Office of Rural Prosperity, **\$1 million for Fish Pass**, and **\$5 million for Blair Township educator housing**. The budget also included a MSHDA Technical Assistance program and **\$2 million for redeveloping the former Pugsley facility into an agricultural tourism hub**. Talent-attraction marketing was excluded.
- CEO Warren Call attended the **Mackinac Policy Conference** to engage with business and policy leaders on key issues like the state budget and economic development.
- The Northern Michigan Chamber Alliance hosted its **annual Bully Pulpit event**, discussing election forecasts and regional policy priorities, plus a candidate forum for the 103rd and 104th state house districts.
- The **Annual Economic Summit** on November 4 had over 600 attendees and featured a keynote by Jeff Guilfoyle, a fire-side chat with Consumers Energy CEO Garrick Rochow, and a panel with leaders from Interlochen Center for the Arts, Hagerty, and Rehmann.
- Hosted the **Consul General of Canada** for discussions on economic cooperation, focusing on BlueTech industry collaboration and potential Toronto air service.



BUSINESS ATTRACTION & INDUSTRY CLUSTER DEVELOPMENT

- In partnership with the Grand Traverse Area Manufacturing Council (GTAMC), hosted the annual **Northern Michigan Manufacturing Summit** in May, achieving record attendance and strong feedback.
- Supported **Arc Boat Company's** electric boat demos at Northport and Elk Rapids Marinas in July and August, showcasing AQUA superPower's rapid e-boat chargers.
- The **second annual electric boat exhibition** at Elk Rapids Marina in August featured global low-carbon boat manufacturers and drone water sampling demos, with MEDC executives attending.
- Partnered with MICHAuto and others for an **Outdoor Mobility Roundtable** during the Center for Automotive Research conference to highlight recreation innovation and manufacturing.
- In partnership with Munson Healthcare and other organizations, secured an **Advanced Aerial Mobility grant** to pilot medical cargo drone deliveries and test drone applications for water sampling and emergency response.
- Collaborated with partners in the 'NorthSky Consortium' to apply for a U.S. Department of Transportation **SMART grant** to boost the region's aerial mobility industry.



2024 KEY MILESTONES

- Participated in the State of Michigan trade delegation to the **Farnborough International Airshow** in London, one of the largest aerospace conferences.
- MEDC and partners **secured a Saab project** in Northern Michigan, adding 70 manufacturing jobs in Grayling.
- Hosted a **Bluetech Industry Meet & Greet** on Discovery Pier during NMC's Lakebed 2030 Conference, thanks to support from Boomerang Catapult.
- Collaborated with 20Fathoms to launch Small Business Support Hubs programming and administered mini-grants.
- Participated in **Michigan Tech Week**, hosted a panel at the Michigan Outdoor Summit, and joined the Michigan Mobility Conference to contribute to an Advanced Aerial Mobility Roundtable and moderate an Ecotourism panel.



TALENT INITIATIVES

- Hosted Michigan's **Chief Growth Officer Hilary Doe** for meetings and events focusing on talent attraction and the region's population growth.
- The **Northern Explorers** were welcomed as VIP guests at the November Fresh Coast Quarterly Club and Annual Economic Summit for networking and community engagement.
 - Emphasized arts and cultural assets as economic drivers at the **Northwest Michigan Art & Culture Summit**.
 - Launched professional development programs, including **Let Her Speak, Leadership Roundtables**, and the **Women's Leadership Cohort**.
 - Joined **Central Michigan University's ribbon-cutting** for its new office in the Traverse Connect building.
 - Hosted a roundtable with **Detroit Mayor Michael Duggan**, Traverse City Young Professionals, and students to discuss workforce priorities.
- Initiated an MOU with the **Traverse Area Human Resources Association** for collaborative programs and events.
- Moderated a panel at the **Northern Michigan Housing Summit** on the Blair Township Educator Housing project.



PUBLIC SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS

- Under the contract with **Grand Traverse County Economic Development Corporation**, Traverse Connect completed seven workshops with municipal leaders and is drafting an economic strategy report.
- Renewed economic development service contracts with **Garfield Township** and the **Traverse City Downtown Development Authority**.
- Continues service agreements with **East Bay Township, TVC-Cherry Capital Airport, and Grand Traverse County**, supporting ecosystem development and talent attraction.

ENTREPRENEURIAL ECOSYSTEM HEALTH

Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Growth Model

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

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

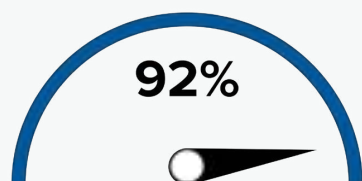
By encouraging the growth of our existing assets – healthy partner relationships, the scaling up of our existing companies – and attracting new business, we will see our already vibrant entrepreneurial ecosystem continue to flourish and grow.

Business Growth Barometer Survey

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

The survey asks two simple questions:

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



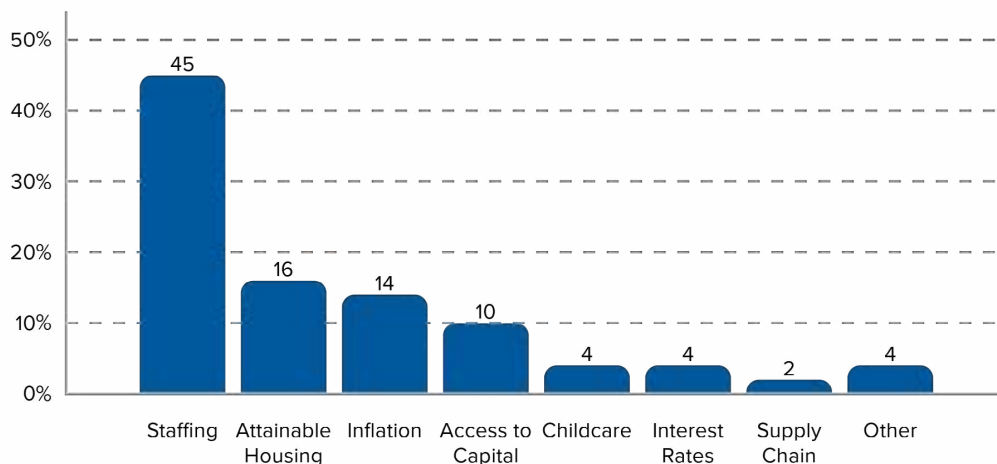
2) Is our region improving as a place to grow your business?



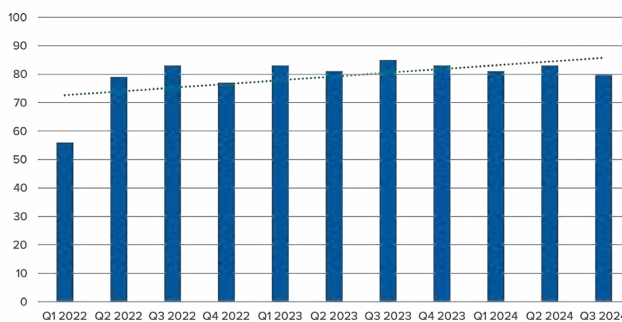
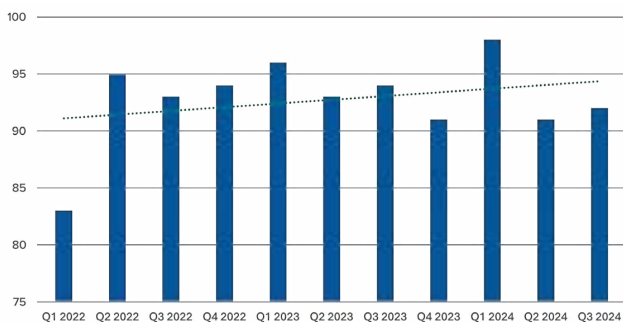
The results of the **most recent survey (Q3 2024)** show that 92% of respondents agree that the Grand Traverse region is a good place to grow their business, with 80% in agreement that the region is improving as a place to grow their business, a decrease from the second quarter. Compared to the summer, respondents are transitioning from the support from summer staffing and facing challenges of responding to business needs with smaller staff as warm weather has continued through October.

Business Growth Barometer Survey

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



GROWTH BAROMETER REGIONAL BUSINESS OUTLOOK



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

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



REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

*Traverse Connect has identified **target businesses and industry clusters** that we believe have great potential to prosper and thrive in northern Michigan. Our 'place-based' economic development strategy and 'tech-based economic development' approach consider the industries that we already have on our doorstep and look to our region's unique natural resources and assets. We have undertaken efforts to outline and market to the rest of the world the unique value proposition and market opportunities of our region, as well as existing businesses, infrastructure, and cultural assets that make up our competitive entrepreneurial ecosystem.*

TARGET MARKET ENGAGEMENT AND INDUSTRY CLUSTER FOCUS AREAS



Outdoor Recreation:

The accessibility of outdoor recreation in northwest Michigan provides an exciting longer-term opportunity to attract and develop outdoor recreation firms. Companies in this sector see value in office locations in close proximity to the TART Trails, ORV trails, equestrian facilities, and water resources for testing and promotion.

BlueTech & Freshwater Innovation:

Our region has the potential to be an internationally recognized center of excellence for freshwater technology and marine research ('bluetech'). Firms engaged in marine mapping, hydrographic surveying, autonomous subsurface exploration, and similar fields are a natural fit for the region.



Manufacturing:



The manufacturing industry represents an important driver of overall economic growth for our region, with significant local employment (16%), high average wages, and considerable multiplier effects for the local economy.

Financial Services:

Traverse City serves as the de facto financial center of northern Michigan and is currently home to many financial service firms and one of the premier insurance companies in the world. There is an opportunity to reinforce this position by attracting banking, accounting, wealth management, and insurance, as well as real estate



services. Retaining and attracting more financial firms will encourage further business travel and our regional businesses will see a positive impact from additional firms and supportive capital.



Life Sciences & Digital Health:

Traverse Connect and 20Fathoms have partnered on a series of discussions with leading life science entities to promote the development of the Grand Traverse region as a location for rural health innovation. Our rural setting and Munson Healthcare's position as a leading health system provide an opportunity to lead the development of rural health technology and digital health delivery to improve access and efficiency.

Advanced Aerial Mobility:

Northern Michigan, identified by the Michigan Department of Transportation as a future hub for advanced aerial mobility, is advancing with pilot projects to establish safe drone skyways. Traverse City and Grand Traverse Bay's diverse landscapes—forests, agricultural land, residential, and commercial areas—along with proximity to Lake Michigan, provide an ideal testbed for developing transferable insights into drone operations.



Industry Cluster Highlight

FOSTERING THE MOBILITY INDUSTRY



ADVANCED AERIAL MOBILITY

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

The Grand Traverse Region is poised to lead in drone technology, equipped with BVLOS (Beyond Visual Line of Sight) corridors, testing facilities, workforce training centers, and an emerging startup ecosystem focused on advanced aerial mobility. Traverse Connect is working with regional partners to position the area as a center for drone innovation, aiming to capture the projected \$9.4 billion U.S. drone delivery and mobility market by 2030. With the first in Michigan Federal Aviation Authority (FAA) certified training school at Northwestern Michigan College, access to restricted airspace, BVLOS corridors, and diverse rural and urban testing environments, the region offers unmatched resources for commercial drone applications. Northwestern Michigan College's Uncrewed Aerial Systems program will play a critical role in preparing a skilled workforce, ensuring that Traverse City remains at the forefront of unmanned aerial systems innovation and benefiting local industries while attracting research investment.

Northwestern Michigan College's Unmanned Aerial Systems Program Manager speaks with an attendee at this summer's Drones & E-Boats Demo Day at Elk Rapids Marina on Elk Lake.



ADVANCED AERIAL MOBILITY ACTIVATION FUND AWARD

Traverse Connect Receives Grant to Implement Advanced Aerial Mobility Pilot Programs

In July 2024, Traverse Connect received a grant from the Advanced Aerial Mobility (AAM) Activation Fund, a collaborative effort between the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), the Office of Future Mobility and Electrification (OFME), and the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) to streamline AAM growth in Michigan. As a 'regional implementation partner,' Traverse Connect will collaborate with partners in technology, higher education, nonprofits, and the

private sector to pilot various drone technology use cases in northern Michigan. BETA, another grant recipient, will install multimodal chargers at four Michigan airports, including Cherry Capital Airport (TVC), establishing an intrastate charging network to support next-generation aircraft and further strengthening the region's progression toward a robust ecosystem for drone commercialization and public safety applications.

Lt. Governor Gilchrist Announces Over \$6 Million to Four Projects Furthering the State's Advanced Aerial Mobility (AAM) Leadership

July 2024

RURAL HEALTHCARE DELIVERY & HOSPITAL SYSTEM OPTIMIZATION

In partnership with Munson Healthcare, and technology providers DroneUp and blueflite, as well as Central Michigan University's Rural Health Equity Institute this project will test the use of drones to deliver medical supplies, lab samples, and critical healthcare goods to improve supply chain resilience and patient outcomes

within northern Michigan's rural hospital system. The goal is to prove the concept of the use of drones to create faster more efficient medical deliveries to rural areas, reducing road transportation and improving healthcare access.

Industry Cluster Highlight: Advanced Aerial Mobility

- Phase 1 will test visual line of sight (VLOS) drone deliveries between Munson Medical Center and two Munson Healthcare facilities in Spring 2025
- Phase 2 will test beyond visual line of sight (BVLOS) capabilities to deliver medical cargo between Munson Healthcare facilities in Summer 2025

Traverse Connect and Munson Healthcare partner with other organizations on an aerial medical drone project

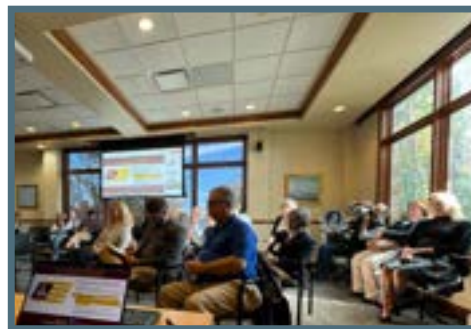
9&10 News - October 16, 2024

FRESHWATER RESEARCH & INNOVATION CENTER DRONE COMMAND CENTER

In collaboration with Discovery Center & Pier, Northwestern Michigan College, the U.S. Coast Guard, and blueflite, this project aims to establish drone takeoff and landing infrastructure at the future Freshwater Research & Innovation Center. Potential applications include overwater drones for environmental sensing, lakebed mapping, and emergency response. Planning is underway, with pilot testing scheduled for Spring/Summer 2025.



The first-ever Michigan Mobility Conference took place in October this year. Traverse Connect was invited to give an update at the Advanced Aerial Mobility Roundtable event.



Traverse Connect hosted a community information session in October to highlight the project which will be kicking off in 2025 to deliver medical cargo between Munson Healthcare facilities via drone.

Regional Strategic Priority

BUSINESS ATTRACTION

HELPING COMPANIES MOVE AND SCALE IN THE GRAND TRAVERSE REGION

MOVING & SCALING

In 2024 to date, we have met and continued conversations with several companies currently based outside of the Grand Traverse region that have expressed interest in relocating, setting up a satellite office, or partnering with local businesses and organizations on business development, contract manufacturing, and growth partnerships. Some of these include:



BLUETECH & WATER-RELATED INDUSTRY

Voltaic Marine | Arc Boats | AquaAction | gener8tor (Great Lakes Resilience Accelerator) | Current | MotMot | NV5 | Zin Boats



ENTREPRENEURIAL ECOSYSTEM

NewLab | Seamless | Union Heritage Ventures | Syndesi



MOBILITY

Bhadala | Charge Deals | ElectricFish | VoltPost | blueflite | DroneUp



LIFE SCIENCES & DIGITAL HEALTH

Atterx | RDS Strategies | early-stage AI/medtech startup



MANUFACTURING & GREENTECH

Alquist 3D | Build Additive | Acel Power



CREATIVE & LIFESTYLE

ICON Creative & Lifestyle | HDWerks | RV City Hosts

HELP US GROW THE REGION: BUSINESS FOR BUSINESS

Do you know of a company seeking a new headquarters? Know of an enterprising business owner who'd love to move their new venture to Traverse City? Put them in touch with Traverse Connect and send them to our [Move Your Business page](#) on the Traverse Connect website.

Business Attraction Highlight

BLUE TECH & WATER-RELATED INDUSTRY

VOLTAIC MARINE

Traverse Connect has been working closely with the founders of [Voltaic Marine](#), a recreational electric boat company, for over a year and a half to support their establishment in Northern Michigan. Voltaic's first connection with Traverse Connect came in 2023 when they received the Fresh Coast Maritime Challenge grant, awarded in partnership with the MEDC's Office of Future Mobility and Electrification. This grant enabled Voltaic Marine to advance their prototype vessel development and explore



Voltaic displayed the hull of their AEW24 prototype vessel at the Drones & E-Boats Demo Event at Elk Rapids Marina in August.

manufacturing options within Michigan. Since then, Voltaic Marine has completed the inaugural cohort of the Ascend Energy Mobility Accelerator, facilitated by VentureWell and hosted at TechTown Detroit, and VentureWell Aspire Climatetech. The company has since attracted strong interest from Michigan-based investors, joined the 20Fathoms community, Newlab, and partnered with Innovate Marquette to support the Outdoor Recreation Innovation Action Network charter. They have become a portfolio company for the Detroit-based Centropolis Accelerator which has provided critical guidance on design for manufacturing, supply chain

selection, and strategic planning.

In August 2024, Voltaic completed the build of their aluminum-hull prototype vessel (AEW24) in Oregon, transported it across the country, and showcased it at the Drones & E-Boats Demo Event held at Elk Rapids Marina on August 5. Following this event, the prototype was moved downstate for final assembly, paint, upholstery, and finishing touches.

The Voltaic team relocated to Michigan at the end of summer 2024, continuing their efforts to secure capital investment. They represented the company at Michigan Tech Week, the Detroit Battery Show, and are preparing to attend the CES annual trade show in Las Vegas in January 2025.

Voltaic Marine was selected as one of four finalists—out of 49 applicants—for the Pitch MI competition, a statewide shark-tank style pitch contest hosted by Michigan's Growth Office, offering a \$100,000 prize. At the inaugural Michigan Mobility Conference in October, Voltaic announced a new partnership with Michigan-based Electric Outdoors to bring fully off-grid renewable energy generation, storage, and charging solutions to the marine industry.

Voltaic's goal is to establish operations in Traverse City, grow manufacturing, and expand its workforce in Michigan. The company has international ambitions, with interest from the UAE and Saudi Arabia, and future targets in Europe, Asia, and Australia. Traverse Connect continues to support Voltaic with connections and resources to make this vision a reality. If you're interested in helping, please reach out to us directly!

***Traverse City-Based Startup Among Four Finalists For
This Week's PitchMI Competition***

The Ticker - October 23, 2024

Business Attraction Highlight

“ Our mission is to bring advanced technology and propulsion to the Marine industry, starting with recreation. Mobility will be a 26 trillion-dollar market by 2030, the largest single contributing sector to global GDP. The Blue Economy is a \$3T industry at this time. With 71% of the earth covered in water and 21% of the world’s freshwater, right here, in the Great Lakes. We decided to move our company to MI, because of the focus on mobility, manufacturing, and the collaboration of organizations supporting innovation and growth.

When our team first met Charlie Tyson from Justine Johnson’s organization (Michigan’s Office of Future Mobility and Electrification) and Camille Hoisington from Traverse Connect, I knew our visions aligned on positioning MI and the US as a leader in Blue Tech. We started our journey together under a grant from the Fresh Coast Maritime Challenge, to understand what it takes to build manufacturing in MI around this industry and our business. Through this, many great MI organizations have introduced us to ecosystem partners, vendors, investors and support groups.

Our goals align and we all realized that taking advantage of the manufacturing ecosystem in MI helps our company scale quicker while being more capital efficient. We also realize the complementary capacity our industry creates for the re-use of talent, skill, and labor, bolstering the sustainability of manufacturing jobs.

We are excited to help MI grow as a leader in marine innovation, advanced manufacturing and create great, fulfilling, and sustainable jobs.

”

Richard Phando
Founder and CEO
Voltaic Marine



Photo: MEDC

Voltaic Marine was one of four finalists that pitched at the PitchMI competition at the Michigan Mobility Conference on October 24, competing for \$100K

Business Attraction

STRATEGIC OUTREACH & EVENTS

ENTREPRENEURIAL ECOSYSTEM EVENTS

October was a busy month for key events in the entrepreneurial ecosystem. Traverse Connect's Director of Ecosystem Development attended and represented Traverse Connect at **Michigan Tech Week**, Oct 1-4, hosted at New Lab @ Michigan Central in Detroit. There was strong Northern Michigan representation at the event including attendees from 20Fathoms and Grove Community Incubator, and several regional startup founders. Traverse Connect participated on a panel at the week's Outdoor Innovation Showcase, in partnership with the Michigan Outdoor Recreation Industry Office and the Michigan Outdoor Innovation Fund.

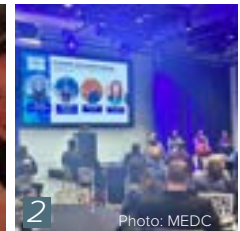
Back in Traverse City at Hickory Hills Traverse Connect participated at the **Michigan Outdoor Summit** on October 10 and hosted a panel - Building the Blue Tech Cluster - along with Vernon Lalone of Wave Lumina and Jason Slade of Northwestern Michigan College.

The inaugural **Michigan Mobility Conference** was hosted October 23-24 by the Michigan Economic

Development Corporation's Office of Future Mobility & Electrification at New Lab @ Michigan Central in Detroit. Once again, northern Michigan was well-represented with special shoutouts to Traverse City and the assistance of Traverse Connect from mobility startups blueflite and Voltaic Marine as they pitched on stage. Camille Hoisington was featured during the event's feature podcast episode of "The Michigan Opportunity", hosted by Ed Clemente, presented during the Advanced Aerial Mobility Roundtable, and moderated a panel discussion on Ecotourism, BlueTech & the Outdoor Economy.



1



2

Photo: MEDC

1) Team members from Traverse Connect, 20Fathoms, Boomerang Catapult, and Voltaic Marine attended Michigan Tech Week in Detroit at New Lab @ Michigan Central.

2) MI Mobility Conference panel on Ecotourism and Economic Development featured Traverse Connect's Camille Hoisington.

3) Camille Hoisington moderates a panel during Michigan Tech Week with panelists Jason Hyde (Chief Brand Officer at Bronco), Jane Smith (VP Digital Marketing & Media at Merrell), and Eoin Comerford (former CEO at Moosejaw)



3

BUSINESS ATTRACTION SPOTLIGHT: Saab

In September 2024, Saab announced plans to invest \$75 million in a new munitions manufacturing facility in Grayling, Michigan. This state-of-the-art plant will focus on the final assembly and integration of shoulder-fired munitions and precision fire systems, with production expected to commence by early 2026. The initiative is set to create at least 70 jobs in the Grayling area, contributing to the local economy and reinforcing Michigan's role in the defense manufacturing sector. Governor Gretchen Whitmer highlighted the project's alignment with Michigan's legacy in defense production and its potential to bolster national security. The

facility's proximity to Camp Grayling, the largest Army National Guard training base in the U.S., offers strategic advantages for testing and collaboration. This development underscores Saab's commitment to expanding its U.S. footprint and enhancing domestic munitions production capabilities. Traverse Connect was instrumental in supporting the Michigan Economic Development Corporation to host the Saab delegation and its site-selection team in Traverse City, in collaboration with 20Fathoms, the Grand Traverse Area Manufacturing Council, and other regional partners.

Regional Strategic Priority

BUSINESS GROWTH & RETENTION

THE ENTREPRENEURIAL ECONOMY

20FATHOMS' SMALL BUSINESS SUPPORT

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

TARGET MARKET SPOTLIGHT: WAVE LUMINA

One local BlueTech startup, [Wave Lumina](#), has received support from 20Fathoms, including its long-running program, TCNewTech, as it seeks to address environmental challenges related to PFAS and forever chemicals.

Vernon LaLone, a scientist and entrepreneur who grew up in Elk Rapids, recently founded Wave Lumina – a company based in Traverse City – to tackle a specific challenge related to PFAS. Before environmental engineering firms and government response teams can clean up PFAS, they need to know where it's hiding, but laboratory testing is currently expensive and time-consuming. Since 2015, Vernon has been using the technology that Wave Lumina is now leveraging for PFAS detection, but in the pharmaceutical, biomedical, and biomaterials engineering industries. Once he started learning about PFAS and digging into recent research, Vernon began exploring new business opportunities.

Vernon and the team at Wave Lumina turned to 20Fathoms for support through workshops and pitch coaching. "We've participated in several of the workshops offered. The intellectual property and entrepreneurial operating system workshops were particularly helpful to us," shared LaLone. "We've also received a ton of support refining our pitch for events like TCNewTech and others, which has been pretty successful!" Wave Lumina placed second at the AquaAction AquaHacking Great Lakes Challenge Final held in May at Northwestern Michigan College's Hagerty Center.

The team at Wave Lumina has also found the networking opportunities afforded them only because of their engagement at 20Fathoms have been critical to their success. "We have met so many investors, potential clients, and business support service providers through the network that have helped us along the way."

While Wave Lumina is advancing along its startup journey, its team members plan on engaging with 20Fathoms' 1:1 Coaching Sessions and Scrum Sprint programs in the future. Wave Lumina was one of five startups competing in the Small Town, Big Ideas Pitch Competition held on November 13. The competition showcases innovative, investor-ready, scalable tech startups from communities in the Center for Rural Innovation's Rural Innovation Network and 20Fathoms helped the team at Wave Lumina make the cut to be one of five startups competing for \$10,000.



Wave Lumina competed in the six-month-long AquaHacking Great Lakes Challenge, which culminated with a pitch competition in Traverse City at NMC's Hagerty Center in May.

Regional Strategic Priority: Business Growth & Retention



Wave Lumina demonstrated their PFAS technology for Hilary Doe, Michigan's Chief Growth Officer in July.

LaLone recommends any early stage startup engage with 20Fathoms and commit the time to engage with its programs and services. "Start meeting the incredible folks at 20Fathoms, and they will probably find ways to help. Just by chatting, a small business owner might express a need that reveals a new potential program that 20Fathoms might create and offer as support!"

BUSINESS EXPANSION SPOTLIGHT: GROWTH OF REGIONAL BUSINESSES

Traverse Connect supported [Cambium Enterprises, LLC](#), in securing a \$200,000 MEDC expansion grant, creating 26 jobs at an average wage of \$29/hr in analytical testing and product development to address PFAS chemicals in food, supplements, and botanicals. This Michigan Strategic Fund investment will foster local, high-quality careers and strengthen the year-round economy. Cambium, a rapidly growing Traverse City startup, showcases the region's expanding advanced technology industry and supports innovation in agriculture and natural products across Michigan and beyond.



Regional Strategic Priority

TALENT ATTRACTION & GROWTH

DEVELOPING A ROBUST TALENT PIPELINE

Traverse Connect offers many avenues for [professional development](#), including Leadership Grand Traverse, several mentoring and executive coaching programs, and the Traverse City Young Professionals. These programs are an important part of our talent retention and talent growth strategy, ensuring that our professional workforce is engaged to build their career in the region.

Additionally, one of Traverse Connect's key initiatives is developing a robust talent pipeline to ensure the region has a steady supply of talented workers across industries. This involves nurturing homegrown talent and attracting newcomers to the region, especially those with advanced skills. A thriving economy depends on the right people in the right jobs.

As Traverse Connect's talent attraction program for the Grand Traverse region, [Michigan's Creative Coast](#) continues to gain momentum, with over 75,000 visits to its job board this year. It has become a valuable resource for both job seekers and employers.

TALENT ATTRACTION: MICHIGAN'S CREATIVE COAST HIGHLIGHTS

NORTHERN EXPLORERS

Each fall, Traverse Connect and Michigan's Creative Coast host our signature talent attraction program for the Grand Traverse region during which we welcome job seekers from outside the area to join us at two special events as our VIP guests. Known as "Northern Explorers," these individuals can learn about what relocation to the Traverse City area looks like and connect with over 600 business leaders, residents, and local stakeholders during a long weekend of personal and professional networking.

Traverse Connect received a record number of applicants this year thanks to the support of partner organizations, statewide education institutions, and Global Detroit. From health informatics to financial analytics, the selected individuals spanned a range of industries relevant to the talent needs of the Grand Traverse region. The cohort included in-state candidates, international students, and individuals from Colorado, Minnesota, and Ohio.

Traverse Connect and Michigan's Creative Coast showcased their resumes and bios across our digital media platforms for the month preceding the events. During this time, the Explorers were paired with a "Northern Navigator" ambassador who met with them virtually to understand their career objectives and goals for attending the program.

When the weekend finally arrived, our ambassadors accompanied the Explorers to the events to help make introductions. First, they were welcomed to town at the Fresh Coast Quarterly Club, a meetup hosted by Michigan's Creative Coast for locals and newcomers alike to gather and celebrate the lifestyle assets of the Grand Traverse region. Traveling from as far away as Denver, Colorado, the Northern Explorers had the chance to meet each other, mingle with our ambassadors, spark connections with Traverse area residents, and enjoy the cozy atmosphere at Mt. Holiday's newly refreshed ski lodge.



The 2024 Northern Explorers joined Traverse Connect for the Annual Economic Summit on November 4.

Regional Strategic Priority: Talent Attraction & Growth

After a weekend of exploring the area, the Northern Explorers received complimentary tickets to Traverse Connect's largest networking event of the year, the Annual Economic Summit. With over 600 attendees at this year's event, the Northern Explorers participated in two hours of intentional networking during the Quick Connect portion of the event. During the economic outlook luncheon, each Explorer had the opportunity to sit with a high-level Traverse Connect investor to learn more about the business and career opportunities available here.

This year, we were delighted to have the support of Northwestern Michigan College as the Presenting Sponsor of the Northern Explorer program and as our strategic partner in addressing the talent needs of

the Grand Traverse region. We were also grateful for the support of the Michigan Economic Development Corporation as our Supporting Sponsor, providing financial support to the Northern Explorers to help them travel to town for the whole weekend.

The Northern Explorers program is our most individualized effort to introduce outside talent to the Grand Traverse region. Now in its fourth year as our signature fall talent attraction program, we are pleased to share that many Explorers from years past have moved

to the region. We look forward to engaging this year's cohort of Explorers and sharing additional success stories as they make inroads to town.

GLOBAL DETROIT PARTNERSHIP

As Traverse Connect continues to address the population concerns and talent deficits across the region and state, we were pleased to partner with Global Detroit this quarter. Global Detroit's mission is to connect Michigan companies with international students and graduates, filling critical talent gaps. Our partners at Global Detroit provided valuable support by offering this opportunity to explore jobs in the Grand Traverse region for international students earning their degrees in Michigan.

Global Detroit first supported us by moderating our third and final Economic Strategy Session of 2024, highlighting the untapped talent pool of international students. Over 34,000 international students are earning degrees in the state of Michigan. However, only about 40 percent of those students will find employment in the United States after graduation. With the gap between open jobs and available labor widening, this is an underutilized source of highly qualified talent.

Moderated by Global Detroit, the panel featured TentCraft, Cherry Republic, and Clark Hill to demystify

the visa process and illustrate the ROI these businesses have experienced by engaging these qualified candidates. More than 70 local businesspeople attended the Economic Strategy Session to dive into how they can reach tens of thousands of international students studying in Michigan to help meet their employment needs.

Continuing to pull the thread following the strategy session, Global Detroit promoted the Northern Explorer application to their community of international students. We were extremely pleased to receive 18 competitive applications directly from the Global Detroit referral. Furthermore, the organization assisted the students with transportation arrangements to help them travel from Allendale and Midland to Traverse City. Finally, Global Detroit joined our business showcase at the Annual Economic Summit to speak directly with local employers about the benefits and process of hiring international talent. We look forward to continuing this partnership to address the talent needs of regional employers and foster a culture of openness and creativity across northern Michigan.



Global Detroit's Dennis Beste joined Rob Hanel (TentCraft), Rebecca Mancini (Clark Hill Law) and Madison Partak (Cherry Republic) at the September Economic Strategy Session on Untapped Talent.