

Vision, Objectives & Strategies

The Master Plan is the public framework and guide for future development of the Grand Traverse Commons. The Master Plan establishes public policies for infrastructure, the preservation of natural resources, development and land use regulation. The Master Plan’s vision is based upon broad community input established under previous public planning efforts, including the *1990 Adaptive Reuse Plan* and the *1994 District Plan* - and *more recent* input from public officials, property owners, interested stakeholders and the community under the master planning process.

The following statements are the expressed future vision and expectations for the Grand Traverse Commons. The implementation of the objectives, strategies, and action policies described in this plan will help to achieve the vision.

The Vision

The entire campus community will be referred to as The Grand Traverse Commons - characterized by its open natural environment, connection to history, and vibrant close-knit village atmosphere. The Grand Traverse Commons will continue to be a special and unique mixed-use center of activity - home to a variety of community services, businesses, and housing units. The Grand Traverse Commons will continue to evolve, shaped by the efforts and energy of the people who live, work, and play within the community. The Grand Traverse Commons will continue to be a place for community-wide gatherings and celebrations. The Commons will continue to be a place where innovative and sustainable designs and practices are encouraged and utilized.

The Grand Traverse Commons will continue to be a place where people explore and interact with the natural environment. The Grand Traverse Commons will continue to be characterized by clean creeks, rolling wooded hillsides, wetlands, tall mature trees, and the connectivity of natural and large-open landscapes. Large expansive lawns will continue to function as the Central Park of Traverse City - supporting passive recreation opportunities and community events. Portions of the Grand Traverse Commons will continue to support sustainable agricultural activities.

Grand Traverse Commons - The Grand Traverse Commons will continue to be shaped by the efforts and energy of the people who live, work and play within the community



Photo provided by The Minervini Group

The Grand Traverse Commons will continue to be defined by the unique quality, variety, charm, and character of its historic buildings. Existing historic buildings will continue to be rehabilitated whenever feasible. New development will be compatible with the architecture and character of the existing historic buildings. Existing building renovations and new development will assimilate with the surrounding landscape to create a more livable environment. Future development will be supported by adequate and well functioning public utilities.

Entryways into the Grand Traverse Commons will be easily identifiable - denoted through a combination of landscaping, road treatments and/or structural amenities. Entryways into the Grand Traverse Commons will exhibit a character that signals to visitors they are entering a special and unique place.

The Grand Traverse Commons will be pedestrian-oriented, encouraging drivers to get out of their cars. Users will navigate the Grand Traverse Commons through a clear, safe, convenient, and integrated system of sidewalks, pathways, trails, and bike-lanes that connect with the surrounding community.

Vehicular access to and throughout the Grand Traverse Commons will be well-designed, safe, and convenient for pedestrians, cyclists *and* drivers. Public and private roads will appear seamless - characterized by their quality and assimilation into the natural environment. Emphasis will be placed on discouraging cut-through traffic and reducing speeds. Streets near Munson Medical Center will continue to provide for emergency vehicles and high volume traffic. Public transportation stops will be well-defined and integrated into the entire site.

The Grand Traverse Commons will have safe and accessible parking areas, designed to accommodate multiple functions and minimize their environmental impact on the surrounding landscape.

The future of the Grand Traverse Commons will be shaped by one shared plan. This plan will continue to be shaped by the collaborative efforts of public officials, residents, business owners, important stakeholders, and the surrounding community. The plan will provide the framework for consistent, predictable, and cohesive decisions for future development.

Grand Traverse Commons - Entryways into the Commons will be easily identifiable.



Grand Traverse Commons - The Grand Traverse Commons will continue to support recreation opportunities.



Objectives and Strategies

Identity and Character

Objective: A distinctive community and neighborhood setting that celebrates, supports, and cultivates its historical assets and works to create a special and unique sense of place.

Strategy: Work with the community to help develop and cultivate a unique sense of place.

Strategy: Support the adaptive reuse of the historical State Hospital buildings.

Strategy: Develop an interpretive signage system that highlights the historical and natural features of the Grand Traverse Commons.

Strategy: Support and incorporate historical features as unique focal points of interest.

Strategy: Incorporate simple but attractive site furnishings (e.g. benches, waste receptacles) that are compatible with the historic character and surrounding landscapes of the Grand Traverse Commons.

Strategy: Incorporate public art that contributes to and does not distract from the historical character and surrounding landscapes of the Grand Traverse Commons.

Strategy: Support agricultural and horticultural activities at the community and botanical gardens.

Objective: Accessible and comfortable public spaces that host a variety of activities and promotes sociability.

Strategy: Incorporate and arrange seating and other amenities in appropriate areas to encourage social interaction.

Grand Traverse Commons - The Grand Traverse Commons will continue to be a place for community-wide gatherings and celebrations.



Photo provided by The Minervini Group

Strategy: Develop inter-connectivity of all sidewalks, trails and pathways.

Strategy: Work to reuse the historic Barns for community-wide events, gatherings and celebrations.

Strategy: Work with community, business, and civic organizations to host community-wide events, gatherings and celebrations.

Objective: A thriving center of commercial and retail services, community services and residential dwellings, that is compatible with the historic buildings and natural landscape.

Strategy: Continue to develop and reuse the historic State Hospital buildings for commercial, retail, residential and cottage-industry use.

Strategy: Provide for a range of residential opportunities and choices.

Strategy: Continue to support the development of Munson Medical Center, the Pavilions, and other medical uses.

Strategy: Continue to support the development of commercial and community services.

Landscape and the Natural Environment

Objective: Areas where the existing original historic elements of the landscape remain.

Strategy: Respect the historical landscape plantings adjacent to and around the historic buildings of the former Traverse City State Hospital, including the unique collection of trees within the historic front lawn of Building 50.

Strategy: Utilize native species and/or the existing elements of the historic designed landscape as the basis for all new plantings within the site.

Grand Traverse Commons - A thriving mixed use center of activity. (Below) - The common Mail Room of Building 50.



Grand Traverse Commons - Respect the historical plantings around the historic buildings.



Strategy: Discourage the development of contemporary landscaping adjacent to and around the historic buildings of the Traverse City State Hospital.

Strategy: Adhere to the historical landscape standards.

Objective: Protected natural areas, features, patterns, and systems.

Strategy: Preserve important visual corridors.

Strategy: Preserve the natural connections between open spaces and other natural areas.

Strategy: Preserve the wetlands and the natural vegetation along drainage areas.

Strategy: Preserve the wooded bluffs and other stands of mature trees.

Strategy: Utilize low-impact design practices to protect and enhance water quality.

Strategy: Utilize native species for replanting natural areas and areas with new landscaping, where appropriate.

Strategy: Develop best management strategies to eradicate invasive species.

Strategy: Maintain the undisturbed forest edge near buildings, streets, and parking areas, where appropriate.

Strategy: Install, increase or protect existing vegetative buffers to help slow the flow of sediments into Kids Creek and its tributaries.

Objective: Large historic lawns that support recreation and community activities.

Strategy: Preserve the large historic lawn, unique collections of trees and arboretum setting in front of Building 50.

Grand Traverse Commons - Preserve the wooded bluffs and other stands of mature trees.



Strategy: Preserve the historic lawns in front of the South Cottages.

Strategy: Prohibit parking on the historic front lawns of building 50 and the south cottages.

New Development

Objective: The adaptive reuse of the historical buildings of the former Traverse City State Hospital.

Strategy: Stabilize and reuse the historical State Hospital buildings, wherever feasible.

Strategy: Respect Federal and State historical building rehabilitation standards.

Strategy: Maintain the exterior integrity of the historic buildings.

Strategy: Continue to utilize tax credits and other financial assistance programs to support the adaptive reuse of the historic buildings.

Objective: New buildings that are sustainable and compatible with the character of the surrounding built and natural environment.

Strategy: Design and build new buildings that fit into and are compatible with the surrounding natural landscape.

Strategy: Provide for adequate sewer and water utilities throughout the Grand Traverse Commons.

Strategy: Encourage the development of “green” buildings that adhere to Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards.

Grand Traverse Commons - Respect Federal and State historical rehabilitation standards.



Sustainability - Portions of Building 50 have been retrofitted with sky-lights.



Circulation

Objective: A comprehensive street plan for the Grand Traverse Commons.

- Strategy: Work with private land owners to integrate private streets with the existing public street system.
- Strategy: Work with the City of Traverse City, the Charter Township of Garfield and local and state transportation agencies to address the future needs and design of Division Street along the Grand Traverse Commons and specifically the 11th Street and Division Street intersection.
- Strategy: Work with the City of Traverse City, the Charter Township of Garfield, the City of Traverse City and Charter Township of Garfield Recreational Authority and other campus stakeholders to provide a southern ingress/egress to the Grand Traverse Commons.
- Strategy: Consult with local and state transportation agencies, neighborhood associations, public officials, businesses and other community stakeholders to determine future street improvements.
- Strategy: Work with local and state transportation agencies to maintain and care for public streets.
- Strategy: Work to identify and secure funding from Federal, state and local agencies for future street and non-motorized maintenance and improvement projects.

Objective: Safe streets where the pedestrian is the priority.

- Strategy: Establish a 25-mph, or lower speed limit on all streets within the Grand Traverse Commons.
- Strategy: Work with local law enforcement agencies to strictly enforce the speed limit.

Grand Traverse Commons - A comprehensive street plan for the Grand Traverse Commons.



- Strategy: Incorporate traffic-calming measures at appropriate locations.
- Strategy: Separate pedestrians from moving traffic through the use of sidewalks, landscaping, and on-street parking.
- Strategy: Incorporate bike-lanes in appropriate areas.
- Strategy: Incorporate distinctive and clearly marked crosswalks at road crossings that align with sidewalks and pathways.
- Strategy: Incorporate curb extensions and other traffic calming measures to reduce the distances of pedestrian crossings, whenever feasible.

Objective: Unobtrusive streets that are compatible with the character of the surrounding buildings and natural landscape.

- Strategy: Build narrow streets.
- Strategy: Use porous/pervious pavement, where appropriate.
- Strategy: Retain native vegetation within the street right-of-way to minimize runoff into sensitive natural areas.
- Strategy: Take measures to reduce the effects of snow removal on the surrounding natural landscapes.

Objective: An integrated system of sidewalks, pathways, trails, and bike-lanes.

- Strategy: Design sidewalks and pathways that connect with sidewalk and pathway systems outside the Grand Traverse Commons, including the proposed *Safe Routes to School* pathway connecting to Traverse City West Middle School.

Grand Traverse Commons - Utilize porous/pervious pavement, where appropriate. (Below) - Impervious area on Elmwood Ave.



Strategy: Design sidewalks and pathways that connect key areas within the Grand Traverse Commons.

Strategy: Incorporate pedestrian and landscaping elements along sidewalks and pathways.

Strategy: Incorporate distinctive pavement textures on sidewalks and pathways, in appropriate areas.

Strategy: Separate pedestrians from moving traffic.

Strategy: Work with local advocacy organizations to plan for and support future non-motorized connections.

Strategy: Support the development and maintenance of the existing nature trails.

Strategy: Incorporate pet waste-stations at appropriate locations throughout the Grand Traverse Commons.

Objective: Unique and clearly identifiable entryways into the Grand Traverse Commons.

Strategy: Incorporate distinctive road treatments and structural amenities that tie into the historical character of the Grand Traverse Commons at key entryways.

Strategy: Incorporate distinctive and native landscaping features that are compatible with the surrounding natural landscape of the Grand Traverse Commons at key entryways.

Strategy: Incorporate distinctive signage with the surrounding landscape, road treatments and structural amenities of the Grand Traverse Commons at key entryways.

Grand Traverse Commons - Build sidewalks that connect to places.



Strategy: Incorporate lighting that allows for safe pedestrian and vehicular access into the Grand Traverse Commons, while enhancing the appearance and character of key entryways.

Objective: Alternative, low-impact surface parking areas.

Strategy: Utilize porous/pervious pavement on surface parking lots, wherever appropriate.

Strategy: Incorporate grass pavement systems or other alternative surface options for overflow parking areas.

Strategy: Integrate trees and planting islands, as appropriate within the surface parking areas.

Strategy: Use distinctive surface materials and other techniques to accommodate multiple uses such as public gatherings, recreation, *and* parking.

Objective: Safe, aesthetically pleasing, accessible, unobtrusive, and pedestrian-friendly parking areas.

Strategy: Discourage large expansive surface parking areas.

Strategy: Utilize distinctive surface materials to establish clear pedestrian walkways in parking areas with linkages to the integrated system of sidewalks, pathways, and trails.

Strategy: Incorporate traffic calming measures within surface parking areas.

Strategy: Consider establishing maximum parking standards.

Strategy: Utilize on-street parking, where appropriate.

Strategy: Provide for safe and efficient snow removal and storage.

Grand Traverse Commons - Aesthetically pleasing and pedestrian-friendly parking areas.



Strategy: Support shared-parking opportunities.

Strategy: Construct parking decks that are consistent with the architectural standards of the surrounding buildings.

Strategy: Place vegetative screening and plantings at appropriate locations around parking areas.

Strategy: Provide for adequate bicycle parking facilities.

Objective: Lighting that allows for safe pedestrian and vehicular circulation, with an emphasis on pedestrian scale fixtures that are compatible with the historic character and surrounding landscape of the Grand Traverse Commons.

Strategy: Minimize lighting, without compromising safety, throughout the Grand Traverse Common.

Strategy: Install energy-efficient light fixtures compatible with standards established by the International Dark Sky Association.

Strategy: Use light fixtures designed to focus light downwards.

Strategy: Utilize light fixtures and pole styles that are compatible with the historic character and surrounding landscapes of the Grand Traverse Commons.

Strategy: Incorporate timers, motion-sensitive lights, and other light-saving devices in appropriate areas to minimize over-lighting.

Strategy: Place pedestrian scale lighting along sidewalks, pathways, and parking areas.

Grand Traverse Commons - Incorporate lighting that allows for safe pedestrian and vehicle circulation, with an emphasis on pedestrian scale fixtures.



Objective: A comprehensive, unified and unobtrusive sign system that is compatible with the historic character of the Grand Traverse Commons and informs and guides drivers and pedestrians through the Grand Traverse Commons.

Strategy: Develop a way-finding system that helps drivers and pedestrians navigate within the Grand Traverse Commons.

Strategy: Work with the Downtown Development Authority (DDA), the City of Traverse City and the Charter Township of Garfield to link with future way-finding systems outside the Grand Traverse Commons.

Strategy: Utilize durable materials that are compatible in appearance with the historical character and surrounding landscapes of the Grand Traverse Commons.

Strategy: Develop standards for signs that do not distract from, and are compatible with the historical character and surrounding landscape of the Grand Traverse Commons.

Future Planning and Administration

Objective: Adequate resources and support to assist in Master Plan implementation

Strategy: Develop a simple, user-friendly, unified zoning ordinance.

Strategy: Review and update the capital improvement plan to ensure that capital projects are consistent with the objectives of the Master Plan on an annual basis.

Strategy: Work to identify and secure funding to help implement the objectives of the Master Plan.

Grand Traverse Commons - Develop way-finding signs that help drivers and pedestrians navigate within the Grand Traverse Commons.



Objective: Involved community stakeholders to assist in the implementation of the Master Plan.

Strategy: Work with residents, business owners, employees and other community stakeholders to help implement objectives of the Master Plan.

Strategy: Work with local stakeholders to formalize a property owners' association.

Strategy: Provide for educational opportunities that inform community stakeholders about the objectives of the plan and innovative land use planning and development practices.

Objective: A Master Plan that continually responds to the needs of the community.

Strategy: Continually review the Master Plan and the progress of the action policies and strategies to assess whether the plan needs to be updated.

Strategy: Conduct a thorough five-year review of the Master Plan to assess whether the plan needs to be amended.

Strategy: Convene meetings with the City Commission and Township Board to discuss the progress of key action policies and strategies.

Strategy: Convene meetings with key stakeholders within the Grand Traverse Commons to discuss the progress of key action policies and strategies.

Grand Traverse Commons - Work with residents, business owners and stakeholders to help implement the Master Plan.

