



# Traverse City & Garfield Township Recreational Authority

## PUBLIC VISIONING

March 2019



**Traverse City & Garfield Township  
Recreational Authority**

**PUBLIC VISIONING**

Beckett & Raeder, Inc. is a Michigan Corporation headquartered in Ann Arbor with additional offices in Petoskey and Traverse City, Michigan. The firm includes landscape architects, planners, civil engineers, LEED accredited professionals, and support staff maintaining registrations in the States of Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois and certification at the national level.

This visioning process was facilitated by Beckett & Raeder, Inc. with support and technical assistance from Tim Ervin, of Tim Ervin Associates.

# Acknowledgements

The Recreational Authority Public Visioning effort was sponsored by the City of Traverse City and Charter Township of Garfield Recreational Authority and administered by the Authority Board of Directors.

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Alison Metiva, Community Foundation  
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## Stakeholders, continued:

Sarna Salzman, SEEDS  
Susan Vigland, TART Board Chair  
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Tom Vitale, GTCD  
Valerie Handy, Garfield Township Parks and Recreation Commission  
Zack Millican, TC Community Garden

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Carl Ganter  
Steve Tavener  
SEEDS  
TC Community Garden  
The Botanic Garden

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# Executive Summary

Over 700 people made their voices heard through a five-month inclusive public visioning effort. The purpose of the visioning effort was to help the Recreational Authority chart a path forward to ensure continued success for years to come. Based on public input, the vision for the Authority is to serve as a regional entity that facilitates collaboration amongst stakeholders, local governments, and non-profits; serves as a convener for fundraising and project implementation; and pursues projects that foster connectivity and protect natural and cultural assets for generations to come.

Above all, the Authority will aim to serve the residents of Garfield Township and Traverse City, responding to their recreational needs and desires, and ultimately improving the quality of life for residents in this community. The Authority committed to an ambitious undertaking in 2004 with the passage of both millages and the purchase of three important properties. Before undertaking new projects, the Authority will complete what it started fifteen years ago. Of utmost importance is not to expand the scope of services to the detriment of current responsibilities to existing park properties, management groups, and park users.

However, acknowledging the continued and intensified pressure on our open space and natural assets, the Recreational Authority plans to pursue projects that connect open space with nonmotorized trails while preserving open space in a strategic manner. Additionally, the Authority plans to explore opportunities for added capacity to provide increased support for management groups at its properties.

The preferred approach is to move forward with an operational millage in 2020 and a capital bond in 2024. The board anticipates a slight increase the operational millage from what it is currently at to about 0.2 mills. The operating millage and capital bond, coupled with other grants and funding sources, will set the stage for a number of planned future priority projects for the Authority.

The operating millage will support paving the roads and parking lots at Historic Barns Park, completing planned improvements at the Cathedral Barn, establishing a trail connector between Hickory Hills and the Grand Traverse Commons, maintenance of the Boardman Lake Trail, and development of pedestrian improvements for students at Greenspire School. With the capital bond, planned projects include completion of the second barn at Historic Barns Park, further improvements to the Hickory Hills/Grand Traverse Commons trail connector, and other land acquisition projects that arise.

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# Overview & Purpose



In 2003, The City of Traverse City and Charter Township of Garfield Recreational Authority was formed under Michigan's Recreational Authorities Act. The following year, voters overwhelmingly approved a bond request to allow the Authority to acquire and preserve three culturally, environmentally, and historically relevant pieces of property for public use. Over the past 14 years, the Authority has enjoyed enormous success in renovating the Historic Barns Park, cultivating partnerships with community groups using its properties, and managing these properties for public use and enjoyment. However, opportunity remains for continual improvements to better serve the public. The Authority has not conducted a large, concentrated public input effort since 2007.

Through this 2018 public visioning effort, Traverse City and Garfield Township residents were invited to share their vision for the future of the Recreational Authority and to help guide future investments in recreational services and amenities. The results from this five-month

inclusive public visioning effort are intended to help the Authority determine its future role in recreational services for the city and township. The two fundamental questions this effort was designed to answer were:

1. Are there recreational services or amenities needed or desired by residents of Traverse City or Garfield Township that are currently not being met that may be appropriate for the Authority?
2. If so, should the Authority work with the City or Township to expand its responsibilities to address these gaps?

Through a series of surveys, focus group discussions, stakeholder interviews, and public visioning workshops, the project team gathered feedback on these questions and used that feedback to craft a series of recommendations for the Authority. This public insight will ultimately inform the future role and scope of the Authority and future fund development, including millage extension requests.

FIGURE 1: Property Map

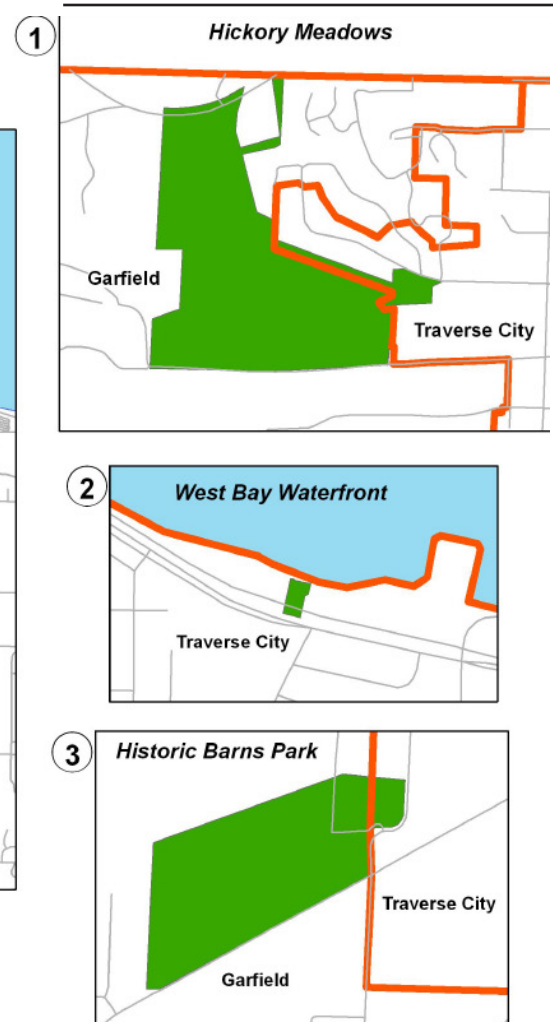
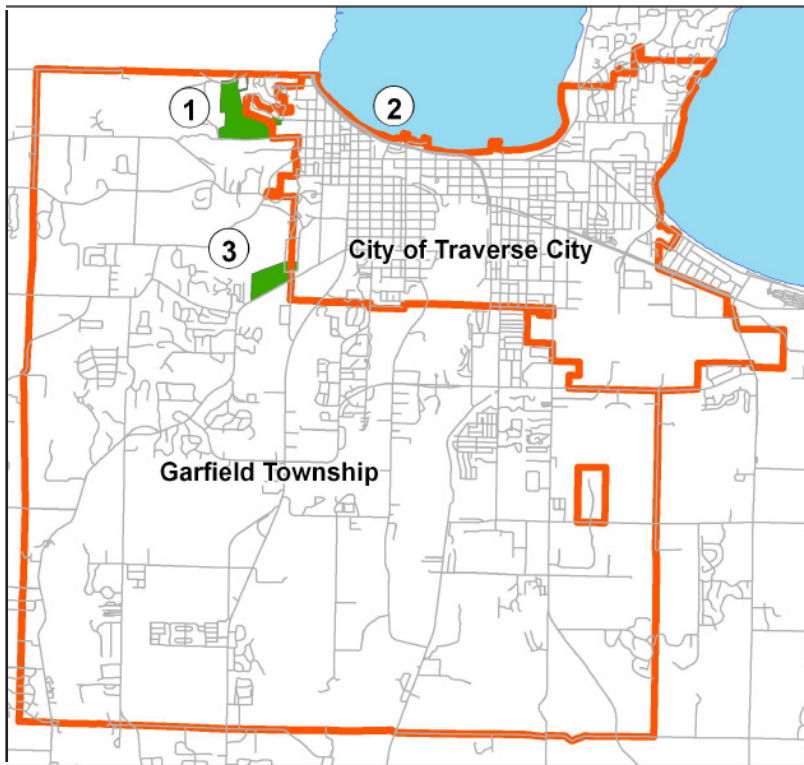
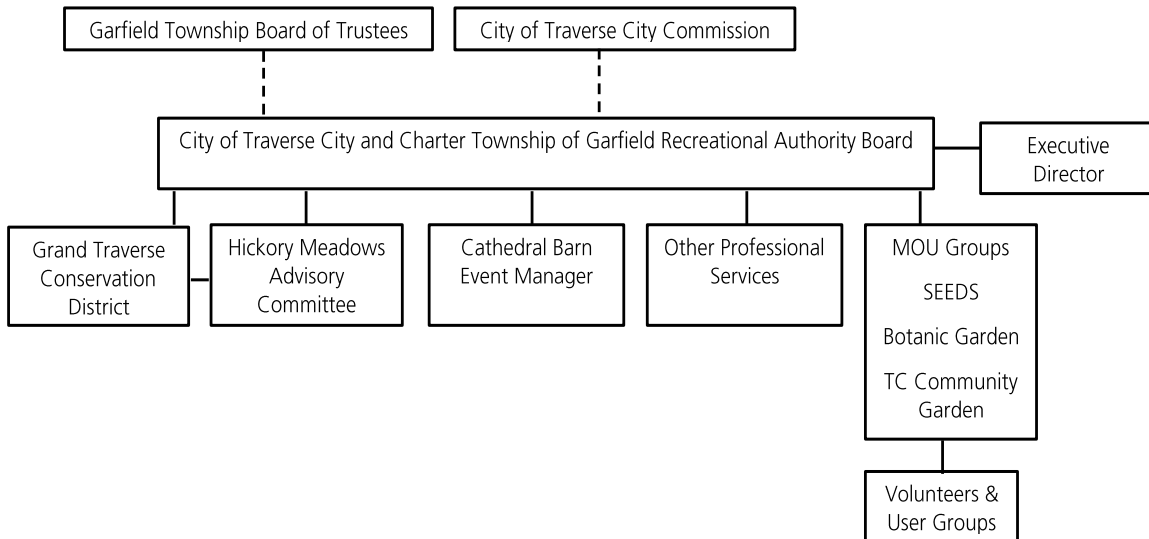
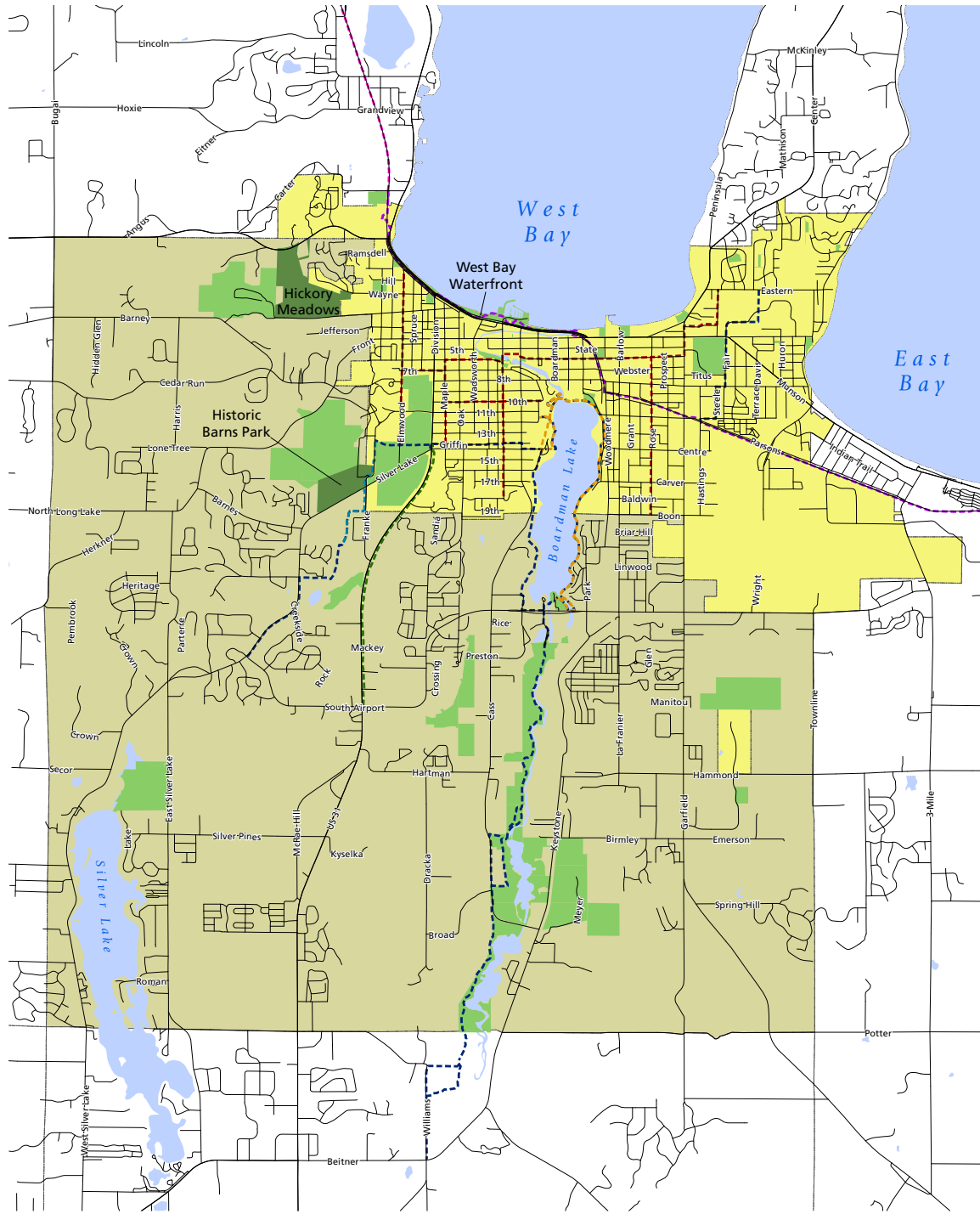


FIGURE 2: Recreational Authority Organizational Chart



The Recreational Authority’s organizational structure has served the Authority, its properties, and user groups well to date. However, there seems to be opportunities to clarify, and in some cases expand roles of the Authority board, staff, and user groups. The organizational structure will be discussed in more detail in the recommendations portion of this report.

FIGURE 3: Regional Context



THE CITY OF TRAVERSE CITY AND CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF GARFIELD RECREATIONAL AUTHORITY

## Regional Context

Data Sources: State of Michigan Geographic Data Library, Grand Traverse County GIS, City of Traverse City GIS

- Charter Township of Garfield
- City of Traverse City
- Recreational Authority Properties
- Other Public Parks
- Leelanau Trail
- TART in Town Routes
- Boardman Lake Trail
- Mall Trail
- Buffalo Ridge Trail
- TART Trail
- Proposed TART Trail Segments / Connectors



*Timeline:*

# The Recreational Authority's Fifteen Years of Success



## FIFTEEN YEARS OF SUCCESS

The Recreational Authority has enjoyed considerable success since its inception. However, its story often goes untold. Interviews with stakeholders indicate there is much opportunity for a more concerted approach in outward communications with potential funders and voters about the purpose and role of the Authority. Listed below is a summary of some of the key accomplishments by the Authority and its partners to date:

### THE EARLY YEARS: SETTING THE STAGE (2003-2007)

**2003:** The City of Traverse City and Charter Township of Garfield Recreational Authority is officially incorporated in July. It is formed through joint action by the City and Township governments to investigate potential parkland preservation efforts in the two jurisdictions.

**2004:** After more than a year of research, public input, and grassroots campaigning, the Authority completes a successful millage and capital bond campaign in November, supported by voters in both Traverse City and Garfield Township by a 3-to-1 margin. The campaign secures minimum funding for acquisition and permanent preservation of three properties: the former Smith-Barney property on West Grand Traverse Bay; the former

Oleson farm, now Hickory Meadows; and the barns and surrounding property at the south end of the former State Psychiatric Hospital, now known as Historic Barns Park.

**2005:** Shortly after acquiring the West Bay Waterfront property, the Authority demolishes the Smith-Barney Building and completes environmental cleanup on the parcel. The parcel is the last link in what is now over one mile of contiguous public open space along beautiful West Bay in downtown Traverse City.

**2005:** An urgent stabilization project is undertaken at Historic Barns Park to preserve and protect the two largest buildings on the site, the majestic dairy barns known as the Cathedral Barn (c. 1934) and the Historic Barn (c. 1900). The project includes new roofing for both barns to stop leaks, ceiling insulation for the Cathedral Barn, the installation of a French drain to protect both foundations, and the installation of secure window coverings.

**2005:** Environmental work also begins at Historic Barns Park, with extensive testing of soils and buildings to determine any cleanup needs from the past farming operations of the State Hospital.

**2005:** A management plan is created for Hickory Meadows in cooperation with the Grand Traverse Conservation District (GTCD) and the Hickory Meadows Advisory

Committee (HMAC), a volunteer citizen committee. Accomplishments in the early years include the addition of bridges, benches, trailheads, and informational kiosks to the property; the removal of trash and barbed wire; and efforts to control and remove invasive species.

**2007:** The Authority leads a comprehensive public input process titled “Brainstorming the Barns” to create a community vision for the Barns and surrounding property.

## BRINGING BACK THE BARNES (2008-2013)

**2008:** Modern sewer and water infrastructure is brought to Historic Barns Park to ready the buildings for redevelopment.

**2008:** The Authority solicits proposals from community organizations to help execute the public’s vision at Historic Barns Park, leading to today’s on-site partnerships with The Botanic Garden at Historic Barns Park, SEEDS, and TC Community Garden.

**2009:** Modern electric and natural gas service is brought to Historic Barns Park to ready the buildings for redevelopment.

**2009:** A Master Site Plan is developed and adopted for Historic Barns Park that includes land allocations and guiding principles for the site based on the public vision. The new partners in the park enter into a formal Management Agreement with the Authority.

**2010:** In line with the public vision for the site, a Business Plan is developed for Historic Barns Park centered on a facility rental enterprise based in the Cathedral Barn. The Business Plan also introduces the “Energy Farm” concept to the site, in which the Authority and its partners on the site will pursue energy efficiency and renewable energy demonstrations on the site.

**2010:** After years of planning, the Authority launches a three-year capital fundraising campaign in cooperation with The Botanic Garden and the Grand Traverse Regional Community Foundation. The campaign sets a target of \$1.5 million for the initial phase of capital improvements at Historic Barns Park, with major goals of opening the Cathedral Barn to event use and the launch of the Botanic Garden Visitor Center in the old farm granary building.

**2011:** Through considerable public input and a contribution of \$130,000 from the Authority, the South Campus Entrance to the old State Hospital grounds is constructed and opened. The new roadway connects Franke Road to Silver Drive near the entrance of Historic Barns Park, improving public access to the park and immediately boosting usership of the site.

**2012:** The first Energy Farm project, a geothermal heating and cooling field, is installed at Historic Barns Park. The project is largely funded by contributions from three utility providers, including Consumers Energy, Cherryland Electric Cooperative, and Traverse City Light and Power.





**2012:** In cooperation with the Grand Traverse County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority, the Minervini Group (developers of the Village at Grand Traverse Commons) and several other stakeholders, the Authority secures \$200,000 in brownfield cleanup funds from the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality. The funding is used to begin the removal of lead paint and asbestos from buildings at Historic Barns Park, to demolish two obsolete structures, and to prepare the Pavilion and the Walled Garden structures for public use.

**2013:** In partnership with Garfield Township, a \$300,000 grant from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund helps to build a commuter

trail across Historic Barns Park, filling a critical gap in pedestrian infrastructure and connecting Garfield Township's most populous neighborhoods with downtown Traverse City.

**2013:** On its second try, the Authority secures a \$200,000 Brownfield Cleanup Grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to continue brownfield cleanup work at Historic Barns Park. This funding will pave the way for public reuse of the remaining buildings on the site.

**2013:** The Phase I Capital Campaign exceeds its goal and raises \$1.6 million for improvements at Historic Barns Park.



## FROM ASPIRATIONS TO OPERATIONS (2014-PRESENT)

These years kick off with a flurry of construction at Historic Barns Park, preparing the Cathedral Barn and the Botanic Garden Visitor Center for public use.

The Authority contracts with an event facility manager and the Cathedral Barn opens for events in 2015. Thanks to many donors and countless volunteer hours, the Barn has been transformed into a fiscally self-sufficient venue, which was

a goal of the public vision for the building established in 2007. As of January 2019, the Cathedral Barn has hosted more than 160 events including weddings, fundraisers, festivals, proms, corporate retreats, corporate dinners, barn dances, concerts, annual meetings, event showcases, birthday celebrations, high school sports banquets, and school band concerts. From 2015-2018, an estimated 20,000-plus guests attended events at the Barn. The venue has earned numerous awards, including 2016 Best New Wedding Venue from Michigan Meetings + Events Magazine and the 2018 Red Hot Best Wedding/Event Venue from MyNorth Magazine.

Environmental cleanup on all of the buildings is completed at Historic Barns Park.

Fundraising continues for major capital projects remaining at Historic Barns Park, including universal access for both barns and replacement of the park's road and stormwater systems.

The Authority works with the City on collaborative stormwater and wastewater plans for the redevelopment of the City-owned Hickory Hills Ski Area next to Hickory Meadows. Collaboration extends to winter grooming of multi-use trails at the Meadows.

The Recreational Authority begins to look to its future, with its initial operating millage and bond debt both set to retire in 2024. In addition to strategic planning and branding efforts, user surveys and trail counters are instituted at Hickory Meadows. The Authority engages

both the City and Township in contingency planning for the three parklands.

**In 2018**, the Authority conducts its first major public visioning effort since 2007, seeking citizen input on the preferred future for the Authority, its parklands and its projects, and the potential for a millage renewal.

The success of the Recreational Authority could not have been possible without significant financial and energy investments from non-profit management groups, the Conservation District, and the Hickory Meadows Advisory Committee. The following summarizes a few of the numerous initiatives undertaken by these partners:

## BOTANIC GARDEN

The non-profit Botanical Garden Society of Northwest Michigan broke ground on its public garden at Historic Barns Park in 2012. The nonprofit has enjoyed considerable success, including restoration of the 1885 Granary as a visitor center built to high efficiency standards, establishment of eight ADA gardens with more than 30,000 new perennials, shrubs, bulbs and trees, and two new gardens are under construction in 2019. Since 2012, the Botanic Garden has hosted over 100,000 visitors from all over the world.

The Botanic Garden has cultivated a mighty force of 300 volunteers to maintain the grounds, provide free daily tours from April through October, operate the Visitors Center, and offer dozens of classes and workshops for children and adults. The Botanic Garden board of directors has raised almost \$3 million in grants and donations.





## SEEDS

SEEDS has hosted a Farmer Residency program at Historic Barns Park since 2010, providing encouragement and exposure to organic farming for the next generation. Garlic from the SEEDS Farm earned the competitive, Best in Show, from a juried panel hosted by Crosshatch!

SEEDS Energy & Environment staff authored the white paper: Historic Barns Park Conceptual Design for Energy Action Planning. This report offers a quantified road map of the top ten Clean Energy strategies for the entire campus including energy efficiency standards, renewable generation goals, and carbon

sequestration technologies that would position the Park as a premier showcase of smart energy and carbon management technologies. SEEDS Youth Conservation Corps helped to install the Park's first solar array, a 2.5 kW system used to power irrigation pumps for the SEEDS Farm and TC Community Garden.

Over the years, SEEDS staff and volunteers have introduced the Park to thousands of individuals. Focusing especially on learners ages 6-26, SEEDS has offered regional community members well over 15,000 hours of on-the-job training, field trips, and events focused on ecological literacy, organic farming, green building, and clean energy.

## TC COMMUNITY GARDEN

In just six and a half short years, Traverse City Community Garden has provided a place for over 250 members to grow produce and flowers for personal consumption. Its volunteers have led over 120 hours of educational classes on sustainable gardening practices, donated nearly 10,000 pounds of organic produce, donated 60 organic bouquets, invested nearly \$128,000 in infrastructure improvements to approximately 1.6 acres of management area including fencing, irrigation, hose hangers, and the green roof shed, and invested immeasurable hours of sweat equity in daily maintenance and minor improvements.

## HICKORY MEADOWS ADVISORY COMMITTEE & GRAND TRAVERSE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

In 2006, the partners developed a mission statement, goals, and a management plan to guide long-term management of Hickory Meadows. This plan was based on public input as well as a Floristic and Natural Features Inventory. The GTCD and volunteers have made improvements to the pond area, including installation of steps and benches. They have also installed an ADA crushed gravel pathway from the Randolph Trailhead to the Wayne St. Trailhead through grants from Grainger and the Traverse City Track Club Endowment. With leadership from the GTCD, the Hickory Meadows Invasive Species Management Plan was developed. GTCD actively manages invasive species and fosters native trees, plants, and grasses.



# Community Priorities

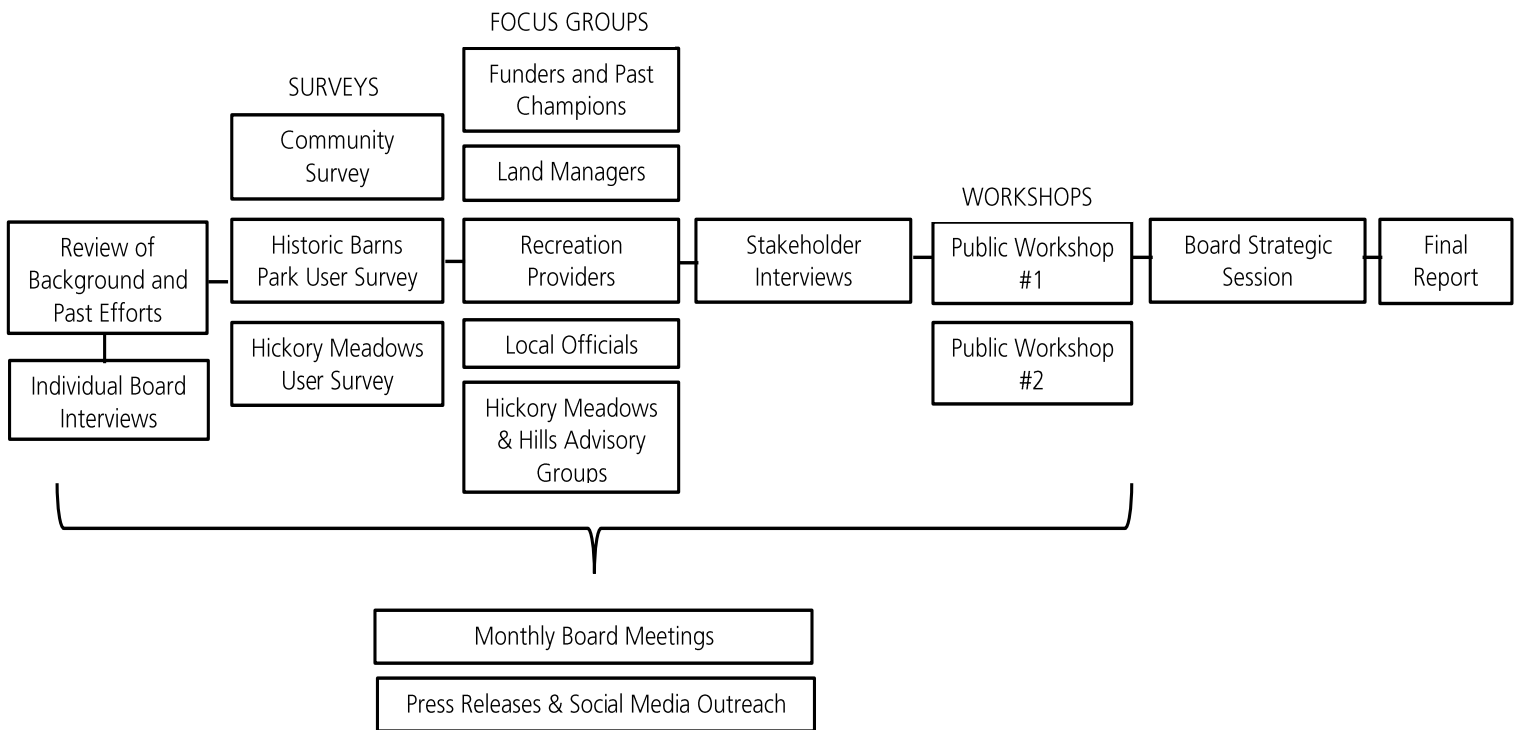


Input collected from residents, recreation users, and Authority stakeholders formed the foundation for the recommendations presented in this report. Through a series of surveys, focus group discussions, stakeholder interviews, and public visioning workshops, the project team gathered feedback to craft a series of recommendations for the Authority.

A project website was developed to serve as a two-way communication tool between the public and the Authority Board. The website housed background documents, preliminary recommendations, survey results, and provided a place for input to be submitted. Extensive media outreach was conducted through press releases, paid media outlets, and social media.

A number of different engagement methods were used to solicit input and ideas from a diverse representation of community members. This chapter summarizes the themes and priorities identified through the various outreach methods.

**FIGURE 4: Visioning Process**



## FIGURE 5: Engagement Statistics



A total of 700 people contributed to the visioning process.



625 people completed the community survey.



42 people participated in a focus group or stakeholder interview; 8 focus group discussions were facilitated.



User surveys were completed by 146 park users—117 of these as part of the Hickory Meadows effort and 29 at Historic Barns Park.



2 Public Visioning Workshops were held at the Cathedral Barn, with approximately 45 attendees at each.



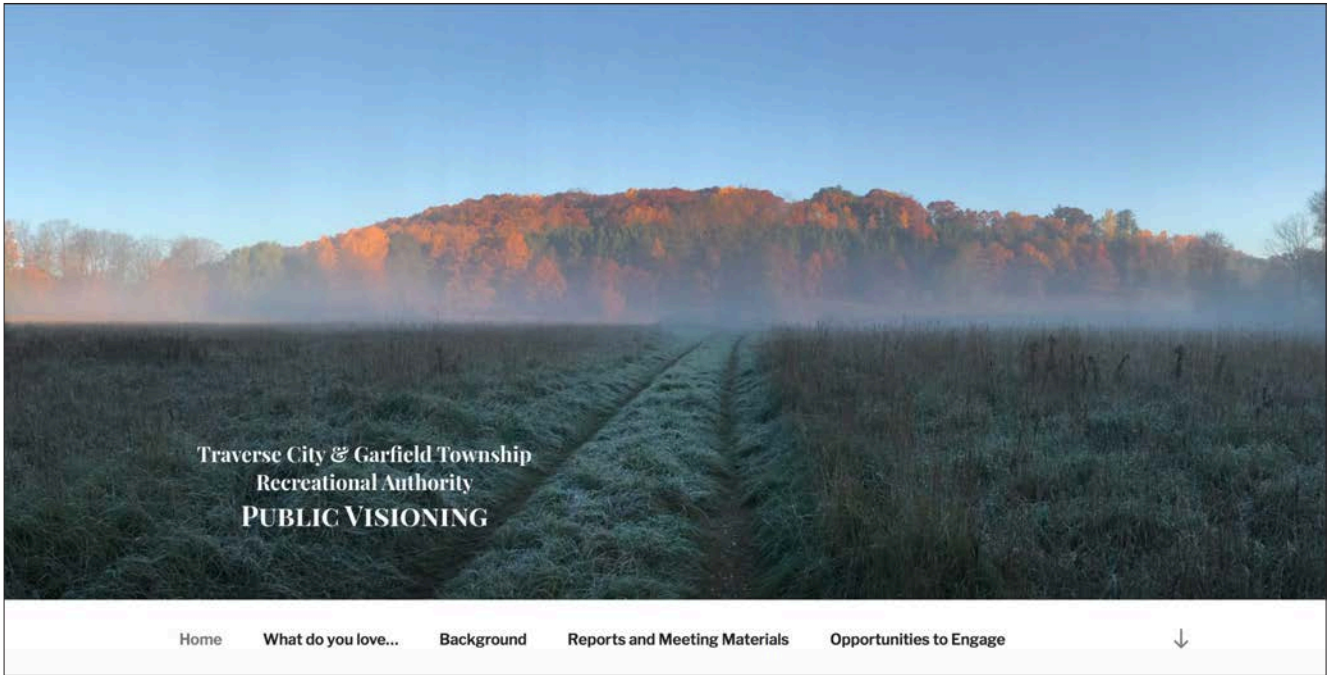
3 public media releases resulted in 5 local articles, radio announcements, and television coverage.




Approximately 30 social media posts promoted the visioning process by partner organizations and user groups.







Home What do you love... Background Reports and Meeting Materials Opportunities to Engage



**WHAT DO YOU LOVE...**  
Edit

What do you **love** about the Recreational Authority? What could be improved?

Please send us your thoughts.

**Name \***

First Last

**Email \***

**Comment or Message \***

*The project website was used to communicate with stakeholders, host the community survey, and gather input on the future of the Recreational Authority from residents.*

## SURVEYS

The purpose of the surveys was to help the Authority understand who is using the park properties and how the properties are being used, as well as to serve as an educational tool to inform citizens about the properties administered by the Authority. Two surveys were conducted as a part of this visioning effort: (1) an online community-wide survey targeted toward all residents of Garfield Township and Traverse City; and (2) an on-site user survey targeted toward parks users at Historic Barns Park and Hickory Meadows.

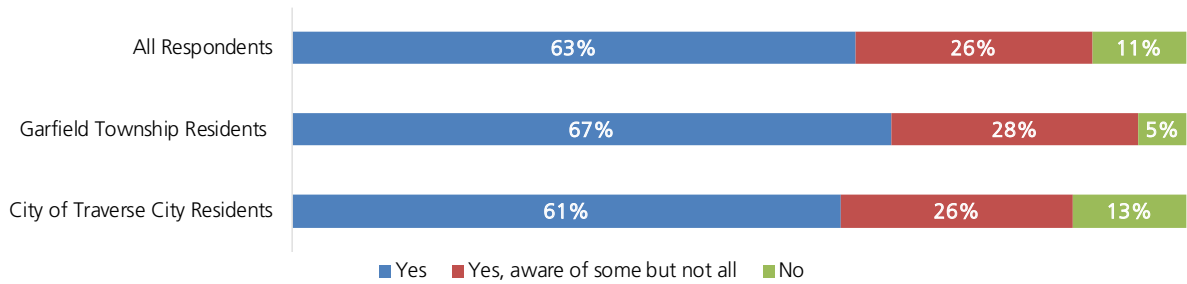
### Community Survey

A total of 625 people responded to the online community survey for the Recreational Authority visioning process, 232 of whom reside Traverse City and 95 of whom reside in Garfield Township. One-hundred ninety-six (196) respondents live in other communities; the majority are within Grand Traverse County. The survey remained open from August 6 until September 21, 2018. Most survey respondents were

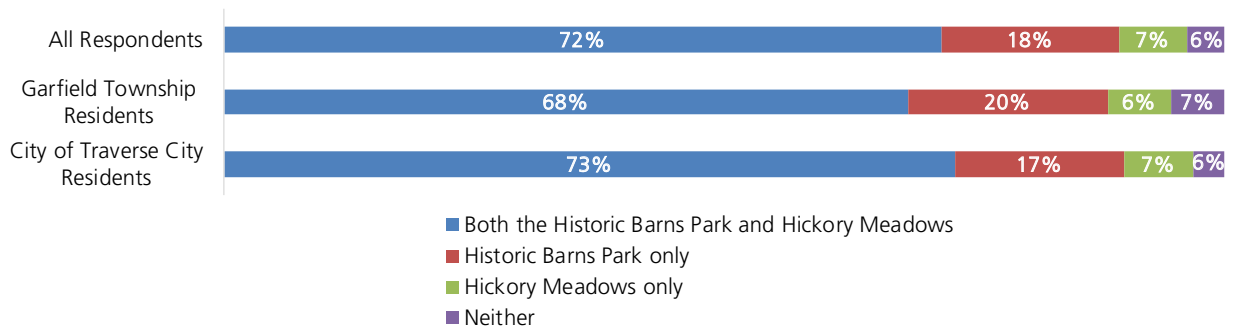
aware of the Recreational Authority but were a little unclear about the exact details of the properties and management structure. At both Historic Barns Park and Hickory Meadows, the most popular activities were hiking. When asked about the prospect of expanding services and amenities, there was general support for maintenance of local non-motorized trails, implementation of local recreation plans, and exploring the purchase of additional land for recreation and preservation. Survey respondents were also asked to provide feedback on broad recreation-related goals for their community. Goals that rose to the top in importance include an accessible and interconnected trail network, public access to water, and passive recreation opportunities. Natural spaces, connected trails, and accessible environmentally friendly spaces are the key attributes of parks and recreational amenities ranked in the highest importance amongst survey respondents. The following graphics summarize the community survey results.



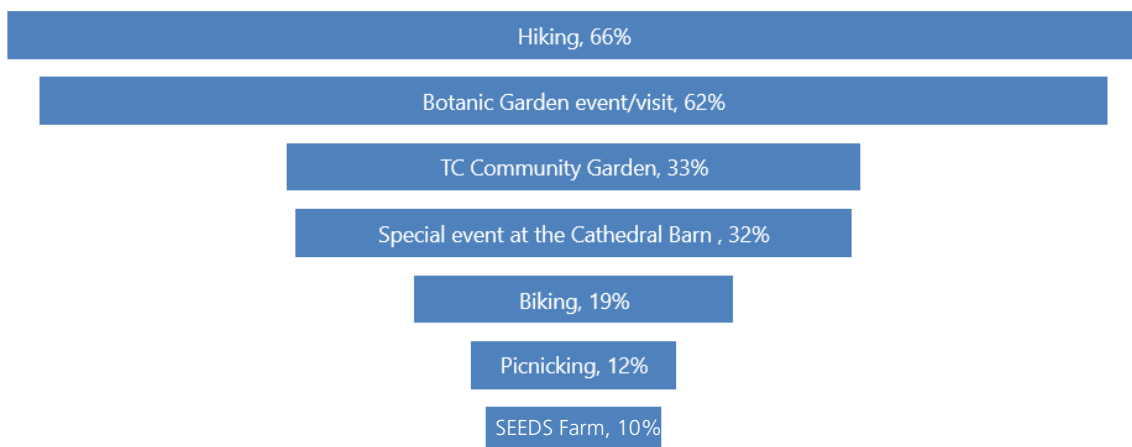
Are you aware of the three public park properties owned and managed by the Authority?



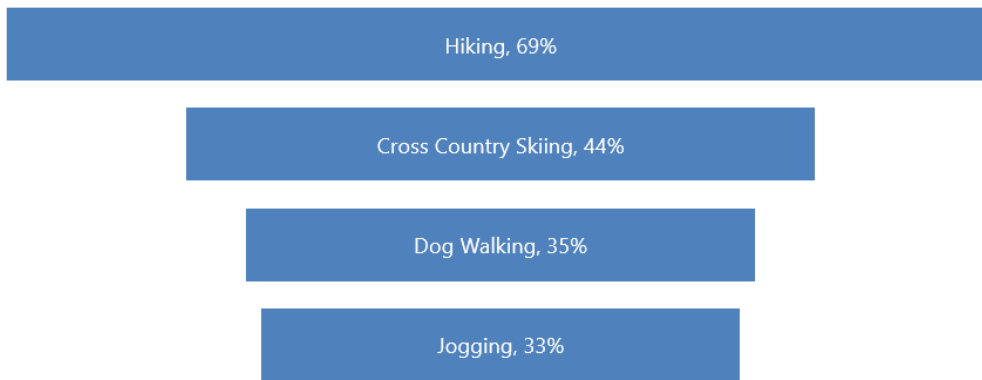
Which of the following parks have you visited in the past 5 years?



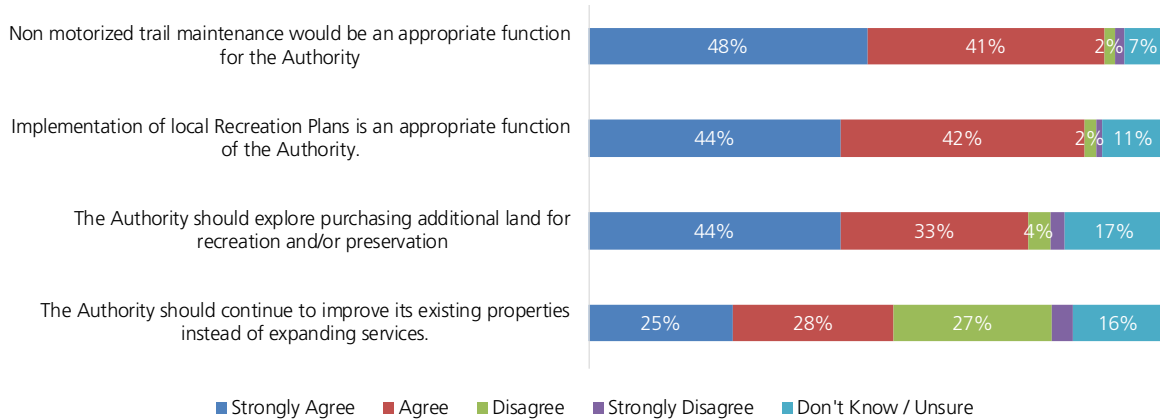
Of the people who visit Historic Barns Park, we asked, "What activities do you enjoy at the Historic Barns Park?"



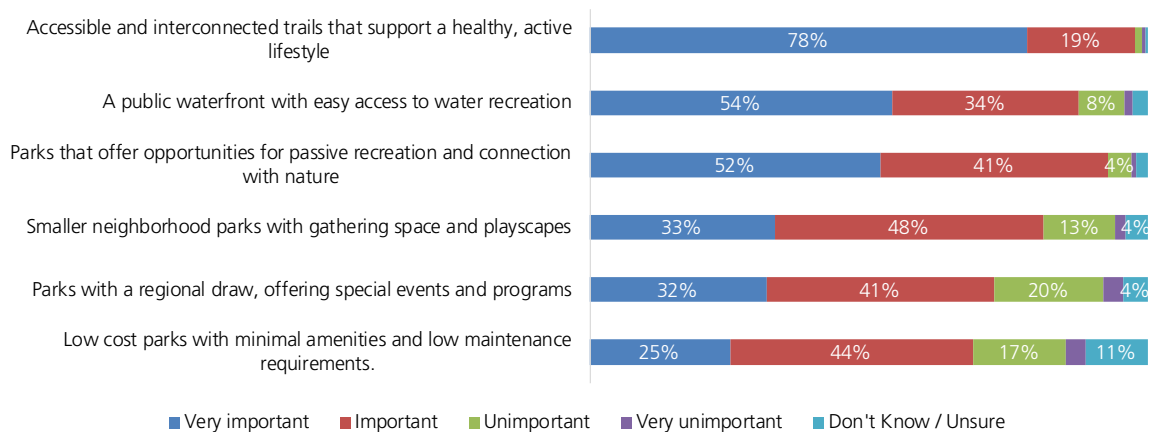
Of the people who visit Hickory Meadows, we asked “What activities do you enjoy at Hickory Meadows?”



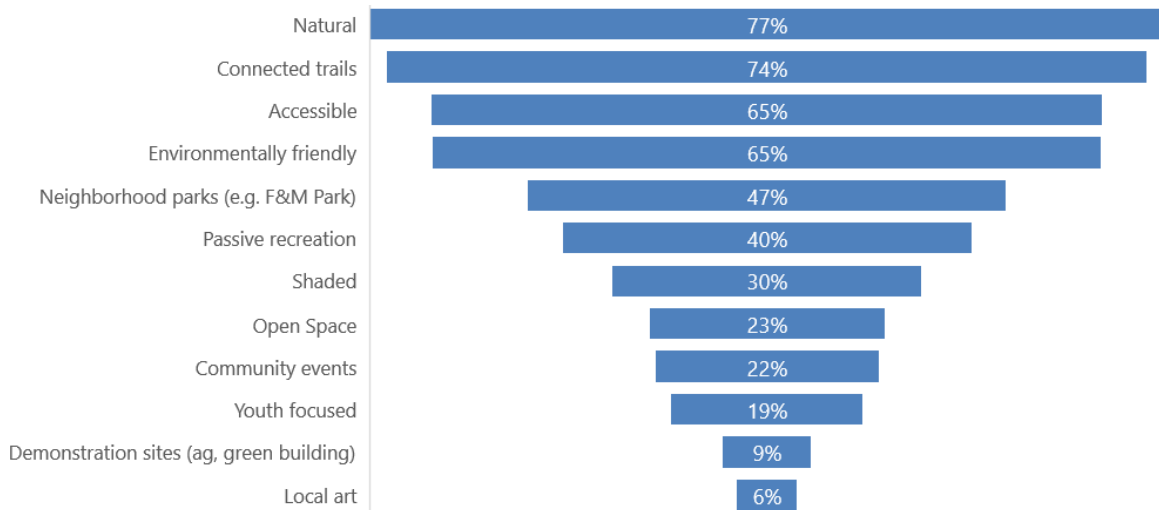
The Recreational Authority is exploring the possibility of expanding its focus to other areas in Traverse City and/or Garfield Township. Thinking about existing recreational amenities and services in the city and township, please rate your level of agreement with the following statements.



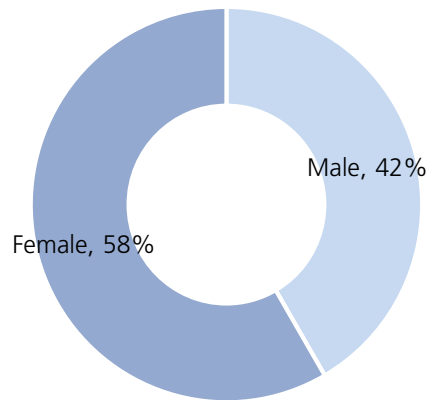
The following goal statements have been developed after reviewing the City and Township’s Recreation Plans. Please rate the overall importance of the following.



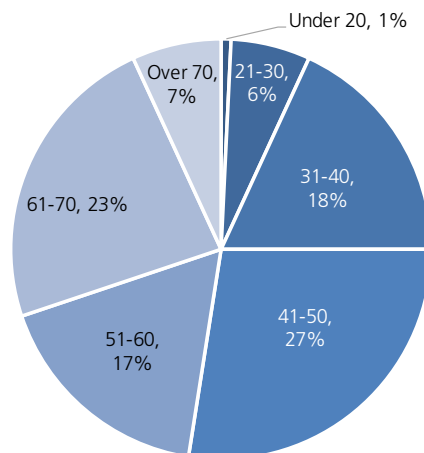
In your opinion, what are the most important attributes of parks and recreation amenities in Traverse City and Garfield Township? Please select 5.



What is your gender?



What is your age?



## User Surveys

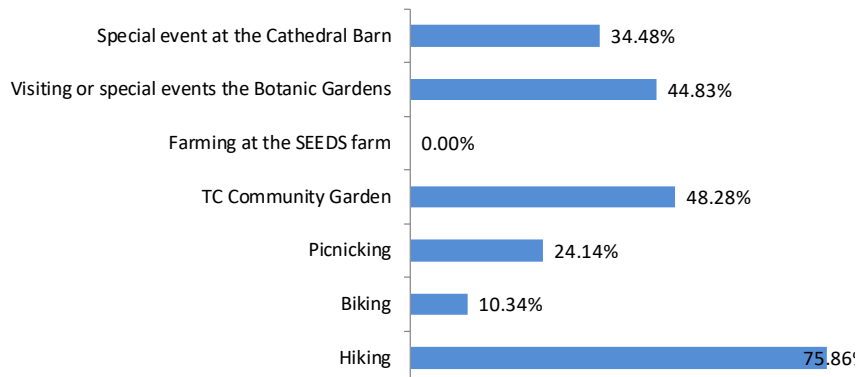
To better understand how both Historic Barns Park and Hickory Meadows are used, on-site intercept surveys were conducted at each location to survey park users. Because a concurrent effort to survey park users spearheaded by the Hickory Meadows Advisory Committee was already underway at Hickory Meadows, the project team has incorporated those survey results into this report to eliminate duplication of efforts.

The user survey at Historic Barns Park began in early August 2018 and ran through the end of September.

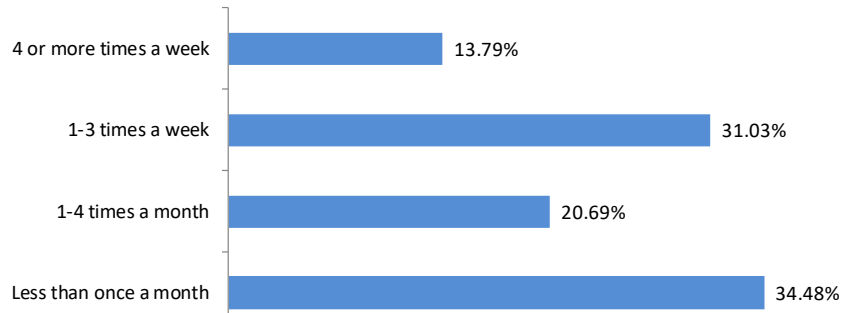
Hard copies of the survey were distributed through the Botanic Garden and Cathedral Barn in Historic Barns Park. Signs were posted with a CMS text message code on the paved Pathway by the Community Garden, at the Botanic Garden Entrance, and at the Trailhead behind the Cathedral Barn. Members of the project team also spent time doing intercept surveys with the trail users. A total of 29 people responded. It is recommended that the Authority consider re-issuing the user survey to improve the response rate. The following summarizes the results for the Historic Barns User Survey.



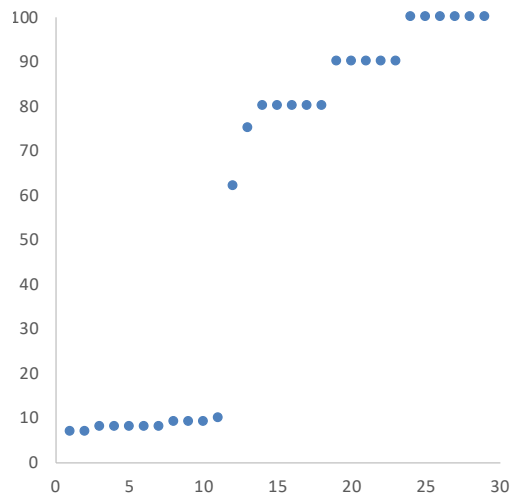
What activities do you enjoy at the Historic Barns Park?



How often do you visit this park?



How well do you feel the Historic Barns Park is maintained? (0 meaning poor and 100 meaning great)



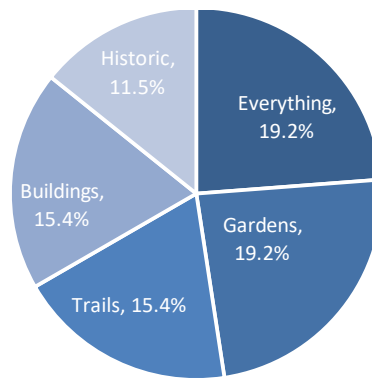
What improvements would you like to see at this park?



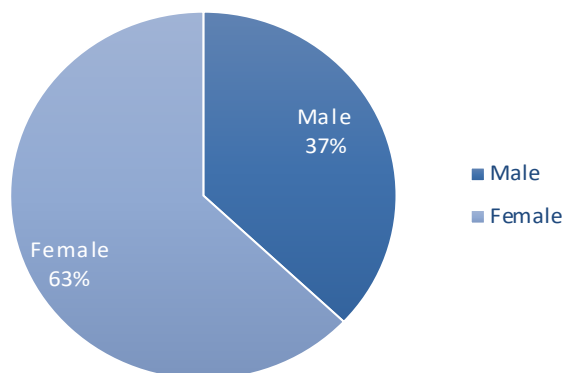
26 individuals answered this question. The word cloud above shows the most prominent responses that were provided. Seven respondents said they would not change a thing, while five individuals noted the need for better roads. Specifically, they stated the need for paving, better parking options, and better stormwater management. Three respondents stated they would like to see trail improvements. A couple people noted support for green infrastructure. Other suggestions are summarized as follows:

- Bathrooms, better lighting, and more seating areas
- Playground
- Continued development
- Classes on native plants and sustainability
- Improved facilities for Community Gardeners (e.g. storage space)
- More educational signage

What would you like to see stay the same at this park?

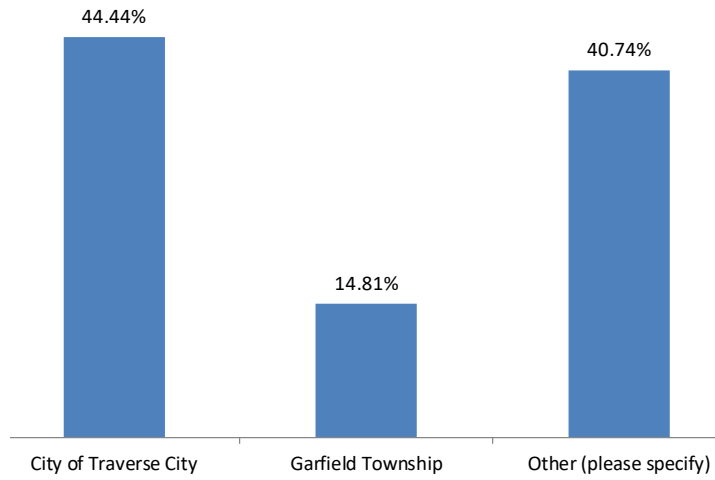


What is your gender?

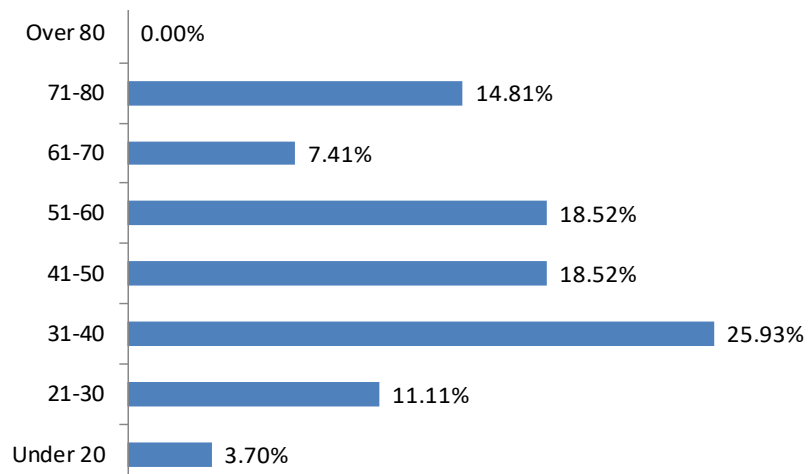




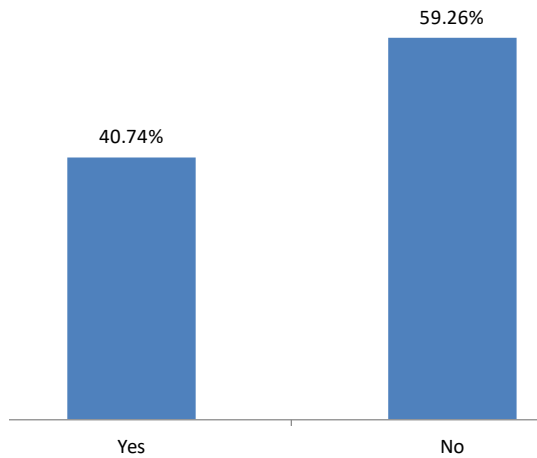
Where do you reside?



What is your age?



Are you familiar with the Recreational Authority?



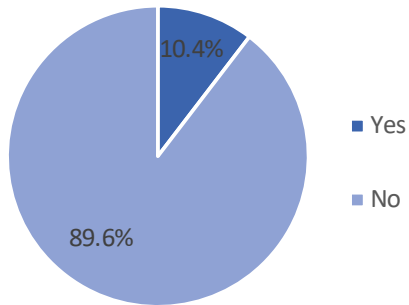
As noted previously, the Hickory Meadows User Survey was offered in hard copy format and was administered separately from the visioning process. There were collection sites stationed at trailheads in the park where the surveys could be returned.

Volunteers also spent time doing intercept surveys with the trail users. Survey collection began before the visioning process and will likely continue through March 2019. The following summarizes 117 preliminary responses received.

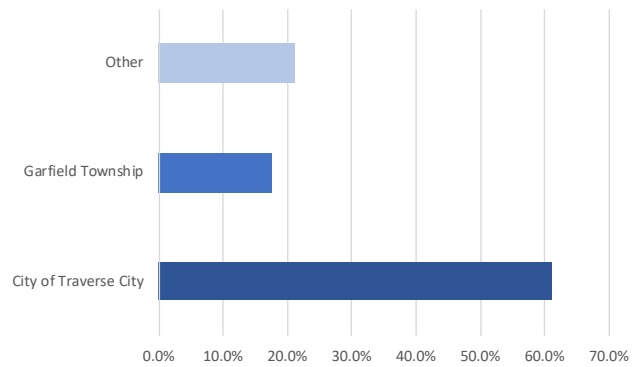


*Photo courtesy of Carl Ganter*

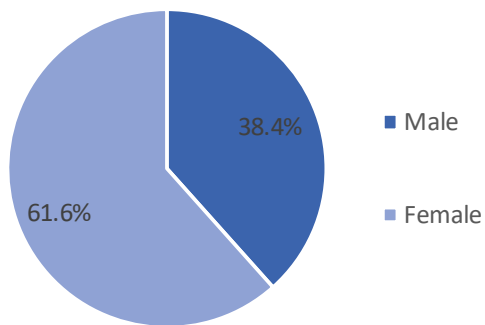
Have you completed this survey in the past 12 months?



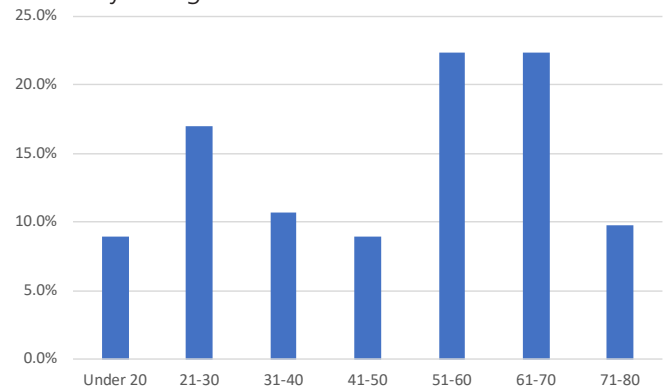
Where do you reside?



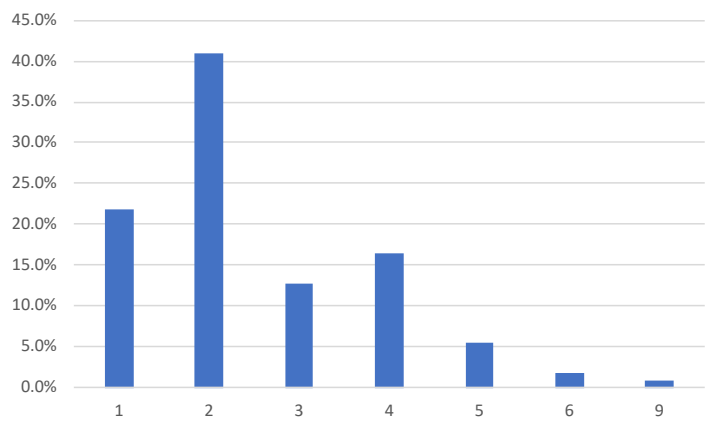
What is your gender?



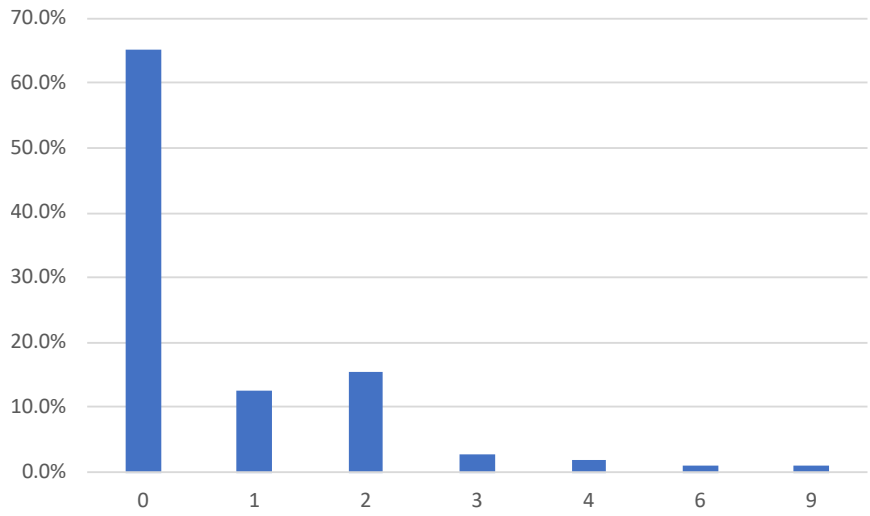
What is your age?



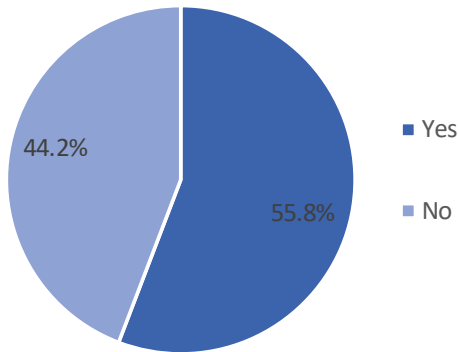
How many members of your household use Hickory Meadows?



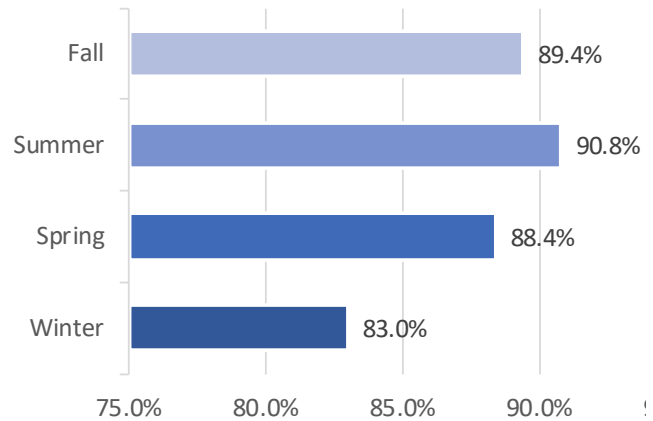
How many of these members are under 18 years of age?



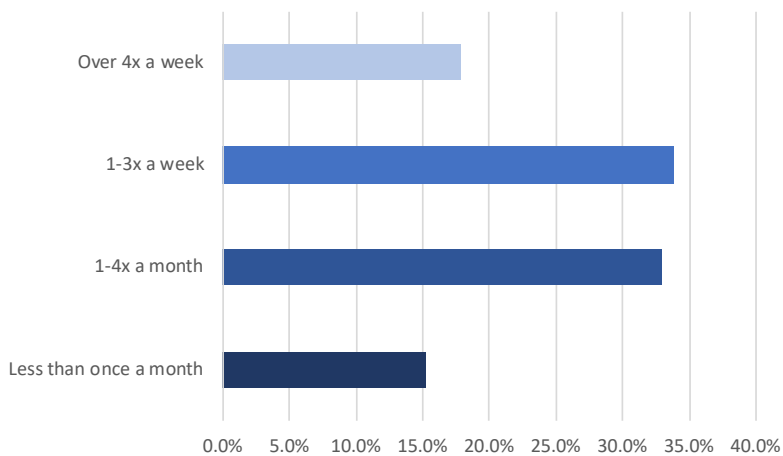
Were you aware before this survey that Hickory Meadows and Hickory Hills are owned and operated by two separate entities?



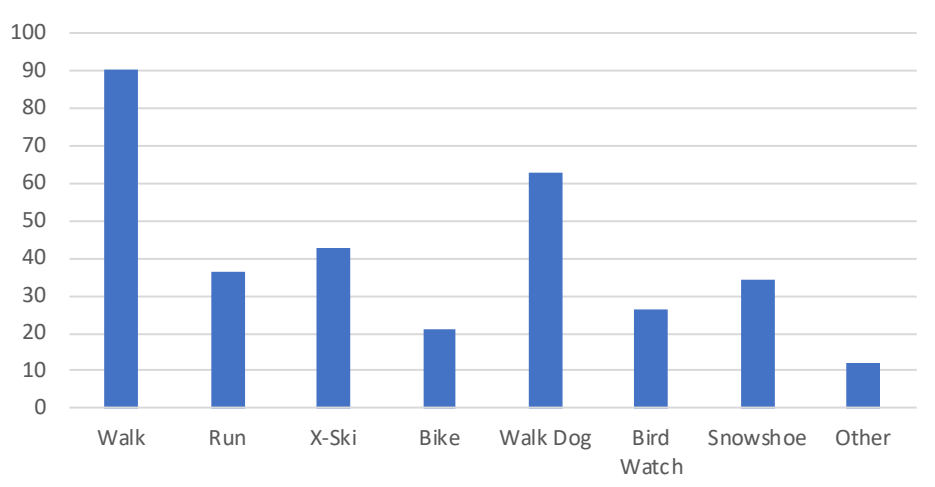
Which seasons do you use Hickory Meadows?



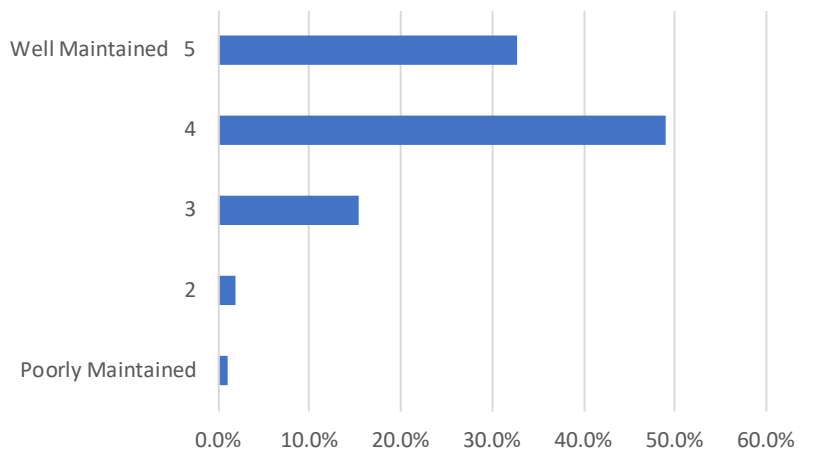
How often do you visit Hickory Meadows?



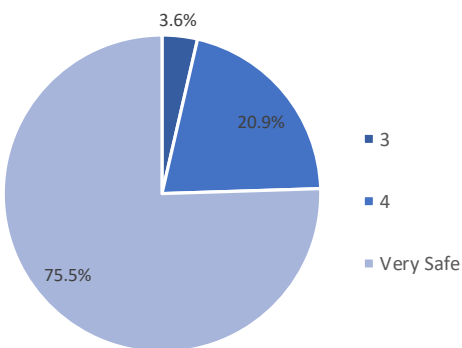
What activities do you enjoy at Hickory Meadows?



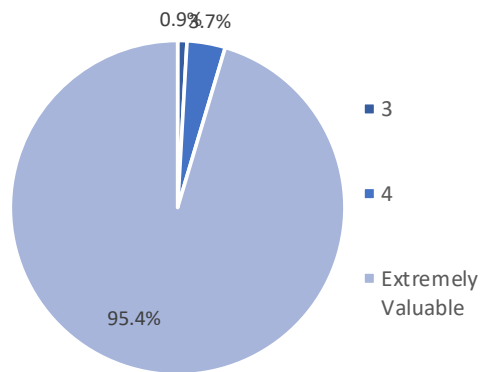
How well do you feel the Hickory Meadows trails are maintained?



How safe do you feel when using the Hickory Meadows property?



In your opinion, how valuable is Hickory Meadows to the community?



## FOCUS GROUPS AND STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

Eight focus group meetings were held in September through December of 2018. The project team also met separately with key stakeholders who were unable to attend the focus group meetings. A total of 42 individuals participated in a focus group and/or stakeholder interview. Representatives from the following groups were invited to participate: (1) Funders and Past Champions; (2) Land Managers and Land Management Organizations; (3) Community Recreation Providers; and (4) Local Officials. The purpose of these discussions was to secure input from various interests about the vision, mission, and role of the Authority in anticipation of a future millage request for capital and operating resources. Two additional focus group meetings were added to the scope halfway through the process with representatives of

Hickory Hills and Hickory Meadows to identify opportunities for collaboration and coordination.

In response to the vision of the Authority, the most common response was that the Authority should stay the course and complete the original goals of the Authority. However, many participants also shared the sentiment that the Authority should consider a carefully planned and managed expansion in its scope to spread the benefits of recreational development and management, provided that the original intent and goals are not compromised. Respondents who supported staying the course felt this could include leadership in alternative energy demonstrations; improving and expanding trails at Historic Barns Park and Hickory Meadows; completing the roads, restorations, and improvements at both barns; and having the Authority serve as a convener to support the



success of the community groups at each park.

There were some individuals who supported a significant expansion. With this potential expansion came the caveat of completing what was initially started and being sure not to expand beyond the capacity of the organization. Ideas for a significant expansion included responsibilities such as:

1. The facilitation and implementation of updates to five-year recreation plans in the surrounding communities
2. Acquiring, developing, and managing new park properties that connect with existing properties
3. Assuming responsibility for maintenance of the Boardman Lake Trail
4. County-wide or regional geographic expansion of the Authority to preserve and protect key undeveloped areas in the community.

The individuals who supported a significant expansion for the Authority noted that a key benefit would be streamlined and efficient recreational services for the region. This coordinated approach to recreational service provision could reduce overlap of services and amenities; reduce the impacts associated with turnover resulting from local elections; create a consistent look, feel, and management of recreational facilities; and create economies of scale to optimize productivity in expending operating funds.



## PUBLIC WORKSHOPS

Approximately 40 community members came together in October and November 2018 to contribute their ideas and insight to help define the future of the recreational authority. These public visioning workshops were held on-site at the Cathedral Barn.

The purpose of the first workshop was three-fold: to educate community members about the Recreational Authority; to better understand values related to recreation in the city and township; and to identify possible projects and initiatives for the Authority to undertake in the future. This meeting began with a short educational

presentation about the history of the Authority and a summary of survey input received to date. Following the presentation, workshop attendees had the opportunity to participate in a real-time voting activity to help the project team better understand recreational values and preferences. After the voting activity, attendees circled around the barn to a number of different input stations to answer questions about projects and priorities at each of the three properties.

The purpose of the second visioning workshop was: to educate

community members about the Recreational Authority; to gather input on a series of alternatives; and to identify a feasible, preferred alternative model for the Recreational Authority. This workshop built on the first workshop and provided the opportunity for attendees to develop a vision statement for the Authority 20 years in the future, identify positive and negatives associated with expansion of the Authority, and provide guidance on a future millage campaign. A summary of the input received at both public workshops can be found the Appendix A.

**Traverse City & Garfield Township  
Recreational Authority  
PUBLIC VISIONING**

Come share your ideas for the future of  
the Recreational Authority!

November 14, 2018  
6:00 PM – 8:00 PM  
Historic Barns Park at the Cathedral Barn  
1500 Red Dr, Traverse City, MI 49684



Residents will have one final opportunity to shape the future of the Traverse City and Garfield Township Recreational Authority in a public workshop setting. After a short presentation, attendees will have the opportunity to participate in breakout sessions to identify a long-term vision for the Authority. Light refreshments will be served.

Questions? Please contact Claire Karner at 231-649-1065





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## PROPERTY OPPORTUNITIES

Input has reaffirmed strong public support for the functions of the Authority and its properties even though many interests do not understand or recognize the existence or important role of the Authority. Both Hickory Meadows and Historic Barns Park have rich identities and committed user groups. Similarly, the West Bay waterfront property contributes to the uninterrupted public waterfront identity in downtown Traverse City.

**Hickory Meadows:** Hickory Meadows user groups are committed to protection and preservation of this unique natural area in an urban setting. As Hickory Hills develops and more people desire to use the park, more pressure will be put on the trails. Minor conflicts arise between passive recreation and active recreation. Additional conversations between Hickory Hills and Hickory Meadows will reduce conflict areas and help this be one unified recreational area with different user experiences throughout.



*Photo courtesy of Carl Ganter*



**Historic Barns Park:** HBP user groups share common values and vision for the Park. More work needs to be done to articulate the action steps necessary to achieving this vision. Road improvements are the highest priority amongst general citizens. This is a huge piece of property that hosts a rich and diverse array of recreational opportunities while holding great potential for expansion. Expansion opportunities include: universal access improvements, energy demonstrations, and learning landscapes to improve ecological literacy. Plans for the second Barn are not well understood, nor is the responsibility for establishing those plans. It seems to be misunderstood that millage dollars are being used for the considerable improvements at the Botanical Gardens and Historic Barns Park instead of grants and donations.



**West Bay Waterfront:** People are generally satisfied with the West Bay Waterfront property as is. Some believe it should be given to the City, some believe not. Many feel that the Authority continues to have a role and responsibility to ensure this property is maintained in its natural state.

# Recommendations



*Photo courtesy of Carl Ganter*

The Recreational Authority was created as an innovative solution to a unique opportunity—and resulted in the permanent protection and public ownership of three important properties. Moving forward, the Recreational Authority will need to re-articulate its vision and mission and chart a path for getting there.

Based on public and stakeholder input, the following future-focused guiding principles for the Authority could include:

- 1. A mission driven by documented local need and demand;**
- 2. Stewardship;**
- 3. Appreciation for history;**
- 4. Connecting recreation, ecology, & community health;**
- 5. Fostering regenerative landscapes;**
- 6. Protecting & restoring natural habitat;**
- 7. Champion for sustainable recreation;**
- 8. Carbon neutral;**
- 9. Convener and collaborator; and**
- 10. Financial sustainability**

## Action Plan

In December 2018, the Board held a strategic planning session to review all public input to date and identify a preferred course of action moving forward. Given the current state of projects and priorities at the existing properties, the preferred approach from board members is to move forward with an operational millage request in 2020 and a capital bond request in 2024. While both existing millages are set to expire in 2024, the board felt it was important to go out for a millage renewal in 2020 for two reasons.

First, the established purposes of the Authority have been largely realized and the Authority needs to understand public support and direction as it considers extending the millage. Second, in the event that a millage campaign was unsuccessful in 2020, voters would have the opportunity to reconsider their vote in 2022 or 2024 (pursuant to the State Act, authorities can only go out for a public millage in even election years). The board anticipates a slight increase in the operational millage from what it is currently (just under 0.1 mills) to about 0.2 mills. Based on 2018 taxable property values, we could expect to see an increase of approximately \$180,000 in revenue per year, for a total of \$360,000 per year.

The board identified a number of advantages to this approach of pursuing a slight increase in an operational millage before going out for a capital bond. These advantages include:

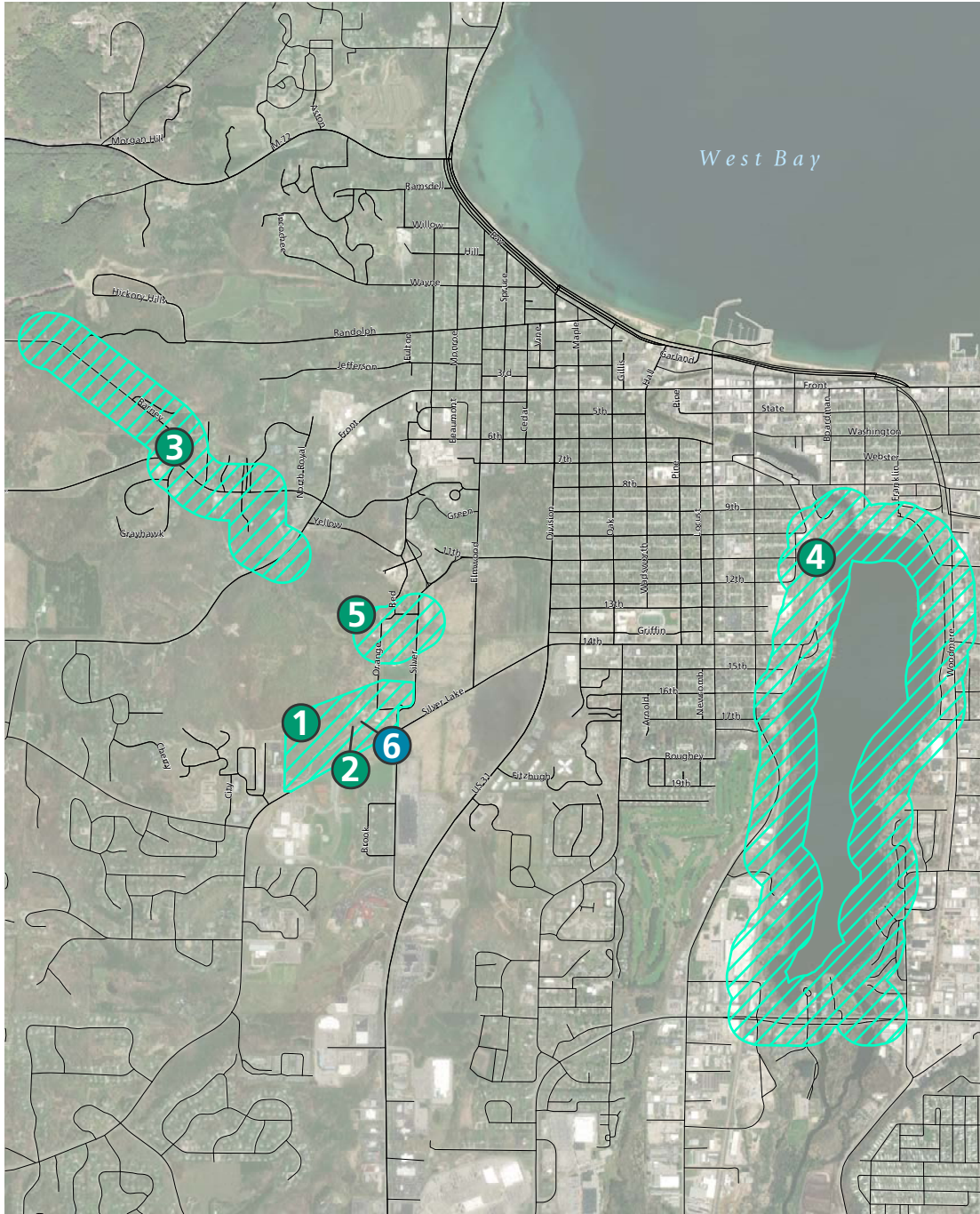
- The Authority does not have to decide now what projects it will take on over the next 20 years.
- Ensures current projects are completed before moving on to new projects and retires property debt before considering another bond request.

The following table summarizes priority projects that the Authority plans to explore based on public input. Phase 1 projects could be undertaken with a simple increase in operational funds, coupled with grants, while the phase 2 projects would likely require additional capital funds through a bond or something similar. Details on the more complex projects are discussed following this table.

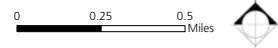
**FIGURE 6: Proposed Project Details**

Proposed Projects	Details	Funding Sources
<b>PHASE 1: 2020 OPERATIONAL MILLAGE (~.2 MILLS)</b>		
Fix the Roads at Historic Barns Park	Approximately \$500,000	Operational millage and grants (MDARD)
Complete Phase II of Cathedral Barn (elevator, connector, mezzanine, first floor, amphitheater)	Approximately \$700,000 for elevators and connector plus \$825,000 for the rest, about \$1.5 million in total. \$237,000 already raised.	Grants and operational millage
Trail Connector – Hickory Hills and GT Commons (Phase 1)	Approximately \$8,400. A 4 ft. unimproved trail, with right-of-way preserved for wider, paved trail in future. Phase 1 within existing easements and public property/right-of-way.	Grants for trail construction, millage funding toward securing easements with private property owners.
Boardman Lake Trail Maintenance	Approximately \$23,000 per year	Endowment, potentially supplemental from operational millage
Safe Routes to School Connector	Connection between 14th & Division and the Buffalo Ridge Trail, with improved drop-off locations for Greenspire students	Safe Routes to School, City/Twp match, Operational Millage
<b>PHASE 2: 2022 or 2024 CAPITAL BOND</b>		
Second Barn	Future public visioning tied to use of the site, then send it out for bids	Operational millage for visioning process, capital campaign/grants/outside sources for renovation
Trail Connector – Hickory Hills and GT Commons (Phase 2)	10' wide asphalt trail is estimated to cost \$385,000 excluding engineering and any easement acquisition. Easements costs vary widely, but an engineering cost estimate would be approximately \$42,500.	Property acquisition through MDNR Trust Fund grants
Other Land Acquisition	As opportunities arise. This could necessitate a capital millage and potentially expansion of geographic boundary.	MDNR Trust Fund, Capital/Operational millage
Remaining capital projects from Phase 1	Potential to fold any outstanding work into a capital bond ask	Capital millage, grants

FIGURE 7: Proposed Projects Map




THE CITY OF TRAVERSE CITY AND CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF GARFIELD RECREATIONAL AUTHORITY







## Proposed Projects

Data Sources: State of Michigan Geographic Data Library, Grand Traverse County GIS, City of Traverse City GIS, ESRI Basemap

 Proposed Project Areas

Phase 1 Projects:

-  Road Improvements at Historic Barns Park
-  Phase II of Cathedral Barn
-  Trail Connector

 Boardman Lake Trail Maintenance

 Greenspire School Connector

Phase 2 Projects:

 Second Barn



### HICKORY HILLS AND GRAND TRAVERSE COMMONS TRAIL CONNECTOR

This connector would likely be a four-foot nature trail intended for use by hikers and mountain bikers and would establish a much-needed connection between two important recreational areas: the Grand Traverse Commons and Hickory Hills/Hickory Meadows. The project emerged as a high priority due to the fact that this connection has been in the works for some time. Both TART Trails and the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy have put effort toward developing a preferred route. Due to the fact that this trail would connect two important Recreational Authority properties, there is interest from the Recreational Authority in partnering to implement this project. Further efforts would need to focus on finalizing a preferred route for the trail, design and engineering for the trail connector, securing grants for trail construction, and working with the conservancy and private property owners to

secure easements and possible land acquisitions.

### GREENSPIRE SCHOOL CONNECTOR

Greenspire School is growing and thriving. With this growth comes added traffic to the Grand Traverse Commons area. A possible trail connection would establish a non-motorized route for Greenspire students to walk from a remote drop-off location to alleviate drop-off traffic at key intersections (see the map in Figure 8). This land is currently owned by the Minervini Group. Building on planned Safe Routes to School connections in the vicinity, this connection could further connect the sidewalk network for students and others. Benefits from this project could include reduction of non-park traffic at Historic Barns Park, improvements in non-motorized connectivity to make the Grand Traverse Commons area more pedestrian friendly, and potentially provide a way for Greenspire to expand its enrollment.



## BOARDMAN LAKE TRAIL MAINTENANCE

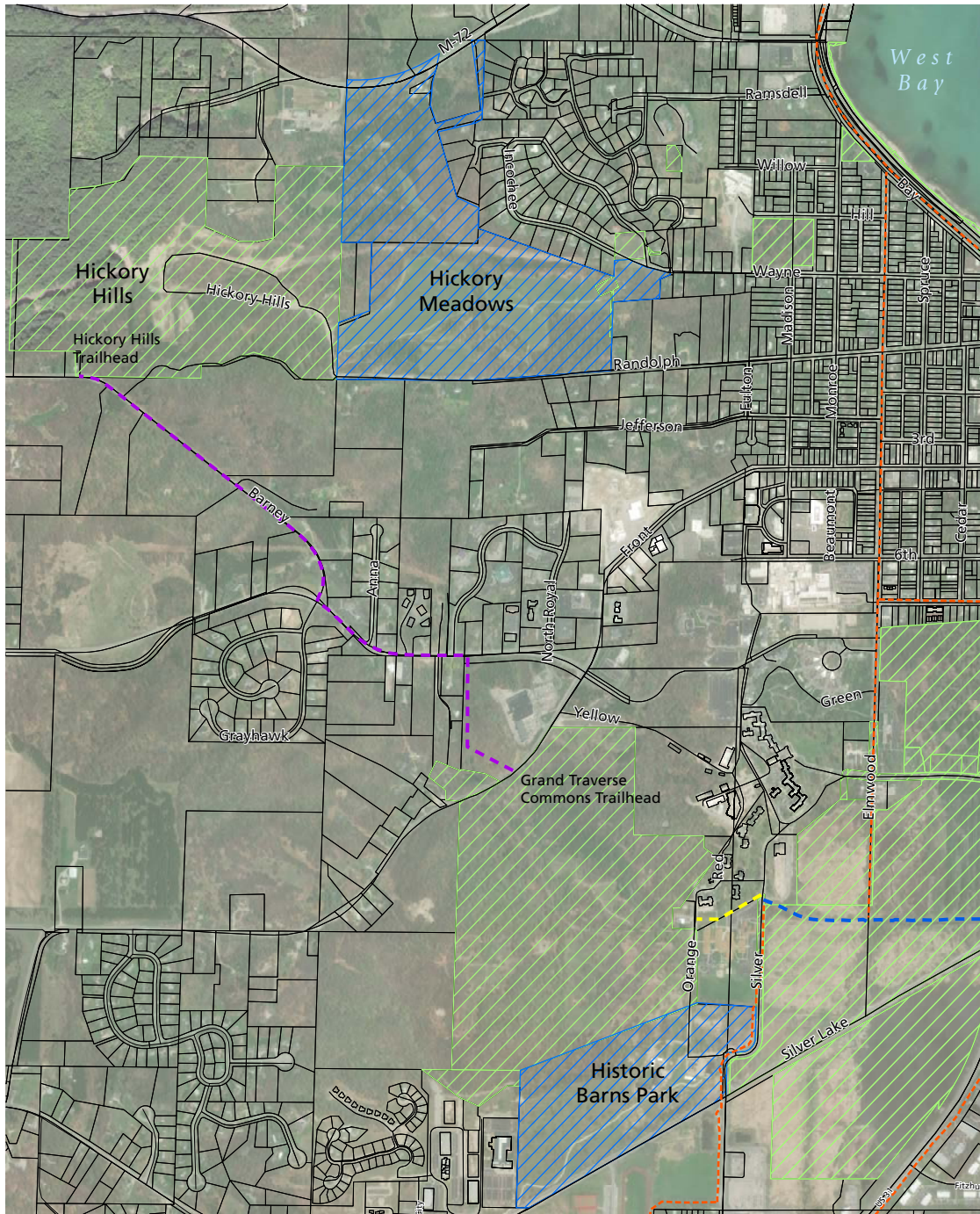
Expanding non-motorized trails and connections rose to the top of the list of priorities throughout the recreational visioning process. The idea of having the Recreational Authority coordinate the regular maintenance for the soon-to-be completed Boardman Lake Trail has been a topic of conversation amongst local leaders for some time. As part of the funding and development of the Boardman Lake Trail, an \$800,000 maintenance endowment was created to ensure there is a long-term source of funds for the maintenance of the entire loop, including snow removal. The City, County, Township and TART Trails developed a maintenance agreement to ensure the entire Loop is well cared for and preventative care is taken to extend the life of the trail. The Recreational Authority is open to exploring taking on this responsibility in the future.

## COMPLETION OF THE SECOND BARN

While restoration of the Cathedral Barn is mostly complete, the second barn has simply been stabilized to prevent further deterioration but remains vacant and unimproved. Numerous ideas have been floated for future uses of this barn. Development of this barn would likely be cost prohibitive unless significant capital funds can be identified. As part of phase 2, the board plans to facilitate a community visioning process for how the second barn could be used. After a community vision has been developed, the Board will likely go out for competitive bid process to identify future tenants and the entity to lead the redevelopment process.









FIGURE 8: Proposed Trail Projects



THE CITY OF TRAVERSE CITY AND CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF GARFIELD RECREATIONAL AUTHORITY

## Proposed Trail Projects - Recreational Authority & Partners

Data Sources: State of Michigan Geographic Data Library, Grand Traverse County GIS, City of Traverse City GIS, ESRI Basemap

-  Recreational Authority Properties
-  City / Township Owned Parks
-  Phase 1 Commons to Hickory Connector
-  Safe Routes to School Planned Trail Connection
-  Potential Greenspire School Nonmotorized Connection
-  Other Existing Trails

 Parcels

0 0.15 0.3 Miles



## Other Initiatives

In addition to the more tangible projects discussed previously, public input also indicated support for some minor changes to the organizational and administrative roles and responsibilities of the Authority. Although they do not involve large capital expenditures, these additional responsibilities would require additional board and staff time.

### OUTWARD COMMUNICATIONS

Each property has a strong identity, committed user groups, and passionate advocates. The results from the public visioning effort indicated a strong need for the Authority to better tell the story of its successes. Moving forward, the Authority should develop strategies for educating the community about its roles, plans, and accomplishments. For a successful millage, the Authority may also consider refreshing the brand, look, and feel of the organization through a coordinated branding and marketing process.

### CATHEDRAL BARN PUBLIC EVENTS

There seems to be a desire for more community-focused events at the Cathedral Barn. The board may want to explore strategies for increasing use of the barn by non-profits and other community groups. While fiscal sustainability and self-sufficiency is important, getting more people in to enjoy the space will increase public support for future millage asks.

### HICKORY MEADOWS

The current Hickory Meadows Advisory Committee seems to be made up predominately of neighborhood advocates living near the property. The Authority owes much of the success of the Meadows to the tireless commitment to preservation and protection by these advisory members. However, in the future, the Board may consider recruiting a broader geographic and more diverse user-group cross-section of the community to ensure a community-wide perspective and to address any perception that the Park is guided by relatively exclusive interests of neighbors. Additionally, given the recent development at Hickory Hills, the Board may consider leading or co-sponsoring a separate community-wide visioning process for Hickory Hills and Hickory Meadows to create a joint management plan that optimizes the strengths and diversity of both properties while establishing cooperative initiatives or policies for matters that are of shared impact or concern.

### ADDED SUPPORT FOR MOU PARTNERS & ADVISORY COMMITTEE

There seems to be interest from the Recreational Authority board to take a more active role in supporting the professional development of the non-profits operating at Historic Barns Park and the Hickory Meadows Advisory Committee. Support for these entities could include:

- Technical, planning and evaluation support;

- Fund development;
- Shared learning and professional development opportunities with an emphasis upon capacity building to address gaps; and
- Recreational Authority serving as a convener for visioning, execution, and coordinated communications.

### RECREATIONAL AUTHORITY BOARD ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

The Recreational Authority Board is a committed group of volunteers whose energy and time investment can be directly credited for the many successes of the Authority over the years. Like any organization, the roles and level of engagement from individual board members has ebbed and flowed. One unique aspect of this board is that most current members were involved in the capital campaign to raise money for improvements at Historic Barns Park. Given the countless volunteer hours many board members dedicated to ensuring the success of that effort, there seems to be some level of fatigue amongst the board.

There was a notable desire from user groups to have more direction and engagement from Board members in creating clearly defined desired outcomes for all properties under the purview of the Board to ensure accountability and that the public trust is being upheld. The following recommendations, many of which are considered board governance best practices, could be adopted by

the Board and integrated into the Authority's regular operations.

- An annual board and executive director review could help clarify objectives, foster transparency in goals, and set a defined course for strategic discussions. 360 evaluations allow each board member to evaluate members and staff to identify areas for future focus.
- Considering shifting the agenda of Board meetings to: a) cover matters of routine under a consent agenda, relying upon staff to see that ongoing operational needs are being met; b) include brief monthly reports and make them part of the consent agenda; and c) use the majority of time in Board meetings to discuss matters of strategic importance to the future of properties as they relate to serving the public interest.
- Establish concise goals for professional development of Board members and the executive director. This could include learning opportunities with and through other recreational authorities or other bodies in Michigan.
- Establish a clear process to evaluate expansion opportunities, considering current and future public benefits. Invite the expertise of other groups and individuals in developing processes and methods.

# **Appendix A: Public Visioning Workshops**

**Traverse City & Garfield Township  
Recreational Authority  
PUBLIC VISIONING**

The Recreational Authority held a public workshop on October 10 to gather input for three park properties. Approximately 40 people attended this interactive workshop. Participants were asked a variety of questions about what improvements they would like to see at the three properties and how they should be operated. The responses are listed below.

## General Comments

In addition to what they are already doing, are there other parks and recreation services the Recreational Authority could provide for our community? If so, please list below.

- Consolidate trails, parks, areas into one structure as viewed by public: website, marketing, rules. Ownership can stay complex/fragmented, but present uniformly to public.
- Further enforce leash requirements or created designated fenced dog areas.
- Support/fund classes and workshops on properties.
- I think it's important to acquire "open lands" for recreation and preservation while open land is still available. Safe accessible bike trail from Interlochen. Coordination with those who manage Garfield Township portion of Commons (conservation district?) to prevent erosion, explosion of social trails, unplanned bike trails in the rest of the park. It's obvious where Rec. Authority manages erosion on trails and where erosion isn't thought about.
- Consolidate all recreation authorities in Grand Traverse County to one.
- Much more trail grooming at Hickory.
- Guided hikes on the trails, identifying native plants and trees.
- Trail maintenance should be the prime function of the joint rec.
- Support sustainable. Maintain biking, skiing, running and hiking trails in the commons.
- Support and improve east-west trail and nature area connections.
- Get ahead of growth and create connected trail and natural areas that connect communities.
- Support trail development and maintenance in TC & Garfield Township.

Goal Statement	Very Important	Important	Un-important	Very Unimportant	Don't Know/Unsure
Accessible trails connecting parks and recreation assets	19	1	0	0	0
Parks with a regional draw, offering special events and programs.	4	5	7	4	0
Smaller neighborhood parks with gathering space and playscapes.	1	8	6	0	0
Parks that offer opportunities for passive recreation and connection with nature.	22	1	2	0	0
A public waterfront with easy access to water recreation.	14	2	1	0	1
Low cost parks with minimal amenities and low maintenance requirements.	5	12	1	0	1

## Historic Barns Park

Participants were asked to allocate \$100 toward the eight projects/initiates listed below.

Projects/Initiatives	Money Allocated	Percentage
Renovation of the Second Barn	\$525	17.5%
Phase 2 completion of the Cathedral Barn	\$435	14.5%
Completion of the Amphitheater	\$220	7.3%
Road improvements and paving	\$1,041	34.7%
Street lighting	\$128	4.3%
Energy & Sustainability Demonstration Projects	\$229	7.6%
Campus-wide zero waste initiative	\$278	9.3%
Other (please list) <i>Public Restrooms</i>	\$145	4.8%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$3,001</b>	<b>100%</b>

The following values have been identified through past planning efforts at Historic Barns Park. Are these still relevant?

Value	Yes Relevant	Moderately Relevant	Not Relevant	Unsure
Agriculture	8	1	0	0
Art & Healing	4	2	1	0
Recreation	8	0	0	0
Historic Preservation	8	0	0	0
Ecological Preservation	9	1	0	0
Sustainability	9	1	0	0
Education & Demonstration	6	3	0	0
Fiscally Self-Sustaining	5	0	2	0
Other Values		0	0	0
<i>Horticulture - Gardens</i>	5			
<i>Equity in Partners</i>	1			

## Hickory Meadows

What is one word you would use to describe Hickory Meadows?

### TODAY

- A great neighborhood space
- Enforce better police protection of vandals, drug partners and homeless from camping in the woods.
- Passive
- No off-road bikes in Hickory Woods or Meadows.
- Rejuvenating
- Needs more civility with and between dog walkers.
- Natura and low key
- Potential.
- Fun for all
- Peaceful

### IN THE FUTURE

- Pastoral
- Perfect
- Wild
- Flow
- Essential (2)



- Passive
- Natural
- Perfect
- Terrain for ski trails
- Inclusive
- Keep it natural, keep it clean.
- Ski trails

### What improvements (if any) would you like to see at this park?

- Skiers & hikers/dogs side by side in winter. Multi-use
- Additional receptacles for dog waste
- Groom trails for cross country and hiking/dog walking by leaving an ungroomed strip between the two trails.
- Groom classic trails in the forest, very little impact.
- Restroom.
- Maintain the openness, naturalness. Bathrooms would help. Aware of erosion control.
- Keep the park natural as taxpayers intended.
- Intimate, low impact connector trails for hiking and snowshoeing.
- Implement the trail designed by John Morton would make this area a complete jewel.
- Expand low impact xc ski classic trails compatible with snowshoe and interconnected to Hickory.
- Manage for folks who might camp on the site and leave tp in the woods.
- Ski trail that are fun, flow and safe.
- Low key
- Trail connectivity

Participants were asked to place a sticker on the photo that best illustrates the type of experience they want to see at this park in the future.

1. Dogs – 4
2. Snowshoeing – 13
3. Cross country Skiing – 15
4. Mountain biking – 2
5. Snow Shoe racing – 2
6. Passive Meadow – 16



Participants were asked to let us know their thoughts on the trail system.

#### Do you want more trails?

- Yes
- No
- More tracked xc trails. Encompass entire park and tie into new xc trails at Hickory Hills.
- Ski and Multiuse trails professionally designed.
- More groomed xc ski trails. These are great for hiking and running too.
- Full area, multi-use
- Keep the trail low key and geared to walking
- Somehow develop a system of enforcing dog walkers to clean up after their dogs and fine those that don't.
- No. I think it's important to maintain existing trails. Prevent erosion. I'm not for wider lighted trails.
- No. Keep the users informed and unstructured.

#### If so, where?

- Whole park
- Map of Morton Trail design. Morton tried to leave the original trail for walkers of dogs alone. It usually just crosses them.
- XC ski trails as designed by Morton trails 11/15.
- Enforce dog rules, waste and leashes
- More Trail through wooded areas
- Hiking
- Develop small thoughtful, low impact trail loops in hidden meadows. Intimate narrow trails
- The 2015 Morton design for ski trails does not impact or include current trails.

#### For what activities?

- Low key passive hiking
- Multiple users with coordinated trail planning
- Better connection to M72 and Leelanau trail and the Meadows
- Multi use – Run, Hike, and Walk
- Better connected trails and neighborhoods
- Promote passive non-invasive recreation.

# West Bay Waterfront

## How should this property be managed in the future?

- Open space/picnic location. Keep the view and the trees.
- Maintain property to keep invasive species at bay.
- Public Restroom
- Low impact and keep it natural
- No change
- Improve lighting and visibility. Secluded are scary. I love the easy access to the water.
- I like it open and undeveloped. TART reroutes & its not a sharp turn and offer free play a bit more.
- Join with City to put signage. Police keeping dogs off the beach.
- Keep it like it is.
- Leave as is.
- Open Space.
- Keep it open.
- Keep Hammocks out of trees and keep tents and homeless better controlled/supervised.
- No change.
- Erosion control, picnic area, smoke free area.
- Plant more trees and keep as is.
- Picnic space, signage
- Leave it alone.
- Leave it as is.
- Small permanent sign identifying it as a Rec Authority property.
  - For Name recognition. Possibly naming opportunity.
- Keep it simple, but add two picnic tables

# Recreation Authority Public Workshop

November 14, 2018

## How should public use of our land and water look different in 20 years because of the Authority?

1. Bigger vision of land surrounding current land
2. Connections to land and nonmotorized trails
3. Access points increased and improved
4. Improve existing trails and signage
5. Integrate education
6. Target market user groups for public/private partnership
7. Preserve history and educate people of the history
8. Accessibility improvements
9. Social gathering spaces with restrooms
10. Eradicate invasive species
11. Reduce growth impact
12. Good to look at additional lands to preserve
13. Like trail idea – connecting Historic Barns Parks and Hickory Meadows
14. Connected at areas to preserve
15. Unmet needs, Hickory Meadows groomed, less technical
16. More collaboration equals more holistic system of land and water
17. Do not harm or over develop. Heal it.
18. Optimism
19. Finish what we've started
20. Broader base for more resilience
21. Healthier community
22. Model for expansion, growth from within/adjustment
23. Clean transportation system between destinations, influencing community development
24. Variety of eco systems at Barns and Hickory Hills
25. Forestry management, no net loss of trees because of forestry management and planting
26. Not divided
27. Successfully managing erosion
28. Safe pedestrian access
29. More nonmotorized access
30. Multi model business
31. Open space – more connected with surrounding areas
32. Open space more cohesive
33. Common branding
34. Open space with people, what type of infrastructure
35. Any open space can evolve but set aside for purpose

## What is your vision for the Authority in 20 years?

1. Good communication with all groups (City, Township, Authority)
2. Share resources
3. Structure board to include representatives from each group
  - a. City Parks and Recreation
  - b. Township Parks and Recreation
  - c. Hickory Meadows
  - d. Historic Barns
4. More public, get the word out better
5. Continue land preservation
6. Define boundaries of existing properties (hard to tell where the property lines are)
7. More population, pressure, more amenities for a growing population
8. Hickory Hills and Hickory Meadows – opportunities for growing population, cooperate to groom trails.
9. Nature in trails, education, passive recreation
10. Focus on existing assets
11. Expansion should further connectivity of existing recreation assets. This will make these assets feel better
12. Trail Signage and connectivity
13. Connectivity expands the impact, reduces parking need. Connectivity could include safe crossing, recreational corridors.
14. Collaborative – take to the next level, requires community.
15. Reduce the duplication of efforts
16. Waterfront - Would be nice to have more policing of activities, security, better lighting.
17. Concern is erosion through the commons – mountain biking.
18. Celebrated
19. Recognized
20. Convenes for collaboration (example: schools)
21. Independent – non-partisan
22. Mission driven
23. Participant in community planning
24. Planned growth while supporting partners
25. Sufficient operating budget
26. Model for other Authorities
27. Build support for Authority
28. They are telling the story - advocating
29. Sustainability
30. Champion – plays a roll in implementing projects.
31. Taxing Authority, write recreation grants, acquire, improve, maintain parks
32. Continue on trajectory – Barns/Botanical Gardens, Hickory continue, SEEDS. Get money to do it properly
33. Flexibility with opportunities
34. May require capacity and resources
35. Accessibility universal design
36. Clear Structure to define opportunities that Rec Authority should take on
37. Success – finish what we started, attracts opportunity and support
38. Concern for dilution of resources
39. Love to see the plan. Master/Phase Plan and vision for what is planned now.

## Visioning Statement

1. Communicate, collaborate and preserve land for appropriate community use and visibility.
2. Regional entity that supports outside experience, recreation connections, collaborative recreation management for generation to come. Protect natural assets – protected in perpetuity – passive recreation.
3. Finish what’s been started and do a little more management of natural environment, minor expansion. Millage – finish and maintenance. Narrative what does it do for the tax payers.

## What are the positives and negatives associated with staying the course?

## What are the positives and negatives associated with expanding?

Positives for Staying the Course	Negatives for Staying the Course
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Authority committed to the tax payers, therefore need to follow through</li> <li>• Goals have been good</li> <li>• Good for Authority marketing and visibility to have good results for the voters and future funding</li> <li>• More opportunity to complete projects</li> <li>• Resources more concentrated</li> <li>• Create higher quality experiences</li> <li>• Conservative approach</li> <li>• Fulfill promise to community</li> <li>• Fulfill promise to the partners and users</li> <li>• Focused on what doing now, clear path</li> <li>• Strengthens status for millage</li> <li>• Finishing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gets stale and loses draw</li> <li>• May lose opportunities to connect lands and trails</li> <li>• Lose opportunities to preserve open space, development pressure</li> <li>• Lose base of support</li> <li>• Overuse of properties</li> <li>• Loss of opportunities</li> <li>• Loss of interest</li> <li>• Jeopardize millage vote</li> <li>• Opportunity cost</li> <li>• Not sure what the course is?</li> <li>• Vague notion of what course is (everyone knows pieces)</li> </ul>
Positives for Expanding	Negatives for Expanding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More visibility</li> <li>• Keep momentum</li> <li>• Get fresh ideas from other/more user groups</li> <li>• More Rec opportunities</li> <li>• Save land now</li> <li>• Give people rec opportunities where they live</li> <li>• Increase exposure – help with millage</li> <li>• Expand revenue opportunities</li> <li>• Enhance interconnectivity</li> <li>• Tap into trust fund – take advantage with plan</li> <li>• New rec opportunities</li> <li>• Preserve more open space</li> <li>• Celebrate more success</li> <li>• Build on good results</li> <li>• More/new stakeholders</li> <li>• Symbolic private sector</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited resources</li> <li>• Losing focus</li> <li>• Unfinished projects</li> <li>• Rec Authority is still so new</li> <li>• Too much growth could be a challenge</li> <li>• Organizational chaos</li> <li>• Overspending</li> <li>• Loss of mission</li> <li>• Development tension</li> <li>• Feed into anti -public property perspective</li> <li>• Partner neglect</li> <li>• Losing direction</li> <li>• Burnout</li> <li>• Confusing</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nothing</li> <li>• Staffing could give more attention</li> <li>• Saving tax payers money</li> <li>• Consolidation of parks responsibility</li> <li>• Could force clarification of values</li> <li>• Invigorating</li> <li>• Rec Authority has narrow scope now, could champion park management like no municipality could</li> </ul>	
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**What form would that expansion take?**

1. Connecting tyo other recreation land and trails
2. Good design for parks and trails
3. Walkability/bike ability to amenities (restaurants and stores)
4. Wayfinding signage
5. Be very selective

**In your opinion, what are the elements of a successful millage request by the Authority?**

1. Show accomplishments
2. Benefits to voters
3. Infrastructure good, more programming lead by Recreation Authority
4. Show vision
5. Advertise/Visibility
6. Continuity and cohesiveness
7. Increase connectivity between recreation facilities
8. Support from TART and other credible groups
9. Many agricultural opportunities
10. Cooperation between Hickory Hills and Hickory Meadows
11. Messaging – visuals, enthusiasm
12. Boardman lake Trail
13. Let public know exactly why they are getting
14. Option agreement for trail connecting Historic Barns Park and Hickory Meadows
15. Articulate what’s been accomplished
16. Articulate what is next 20 years
17. Visuals of projected improvements
18. Visibility (Is, Does, Done)

IS

- Fosters partnerships
- Vehicle for acquiring use of properties
- Making community better place to live
- A model achievement

DOES

- Owns property

- Protects properties
- Convenes government to foster recreation
- Sets and approves policies
- Accountability

## DONE

- Good value for rec money
- Leveraged energy/resources of non-profits
- Created very special places before and after
- Created safe places
- Created opportunities for community
- Preserved the past
- Involvement of kids
- Story telling

19. Term of 20 years

20. Assure voters finished projects

21. Spend on maintenance

22. Business plan – Some of the revenue generated by facility fees

23. Renewal

24. Use of millage money for public events

25. Millage marketing plan

26. Vote centers narrative

27. Fiscally providing WHAT to taxpayer



