

RE-DRAFT FROM MARCH 23, 2009 STUDY SESSION

Employee Benefit and Cost Issues

Goal Statement

The City of Traverse City will attract and retain the best human resources possible. However, that must be managed within the context of long-term financial sustainability.

Specific steps include the following: 1) Efforts must be initiated to reverse the trend lines for the cost of employee pensions and health insurance costs. 2) Future retirement benefits should be addressed. 3) A Wage and Classification Study should be completed to ensure that the wages that Traverse City pays are reasonable in the market place.

Fire Department Issues

Goal Statement

The City of Traverse City will provide quality fire prevention and suppression services. However, that must be managed within the context of reduced costs and a recognition of the regional resources available.

Specific steps include the following: 1) Initiate discussions with the Metro Fire Department and other service providers regarding the possible consolidation of the fire departments or service delivery. 2) Revisit operations to look at what and how services are provided. 3) Obtain public input regarding the level of services with related costs. 4) Review regional options to provide fire services to surrounding entities. 5) Through attrition, reduce the size of the department to a size comparable with similar communities in Michigan. 6) Within a reasonable timeframe, ensure that the cost and revenue for providing services to the Airport are neutral. 7) Consider the possible consolidation of police and fire into a Department of Public Safety.

Police Department Issues

Goal Statement

The City of Traverse City will provide quality police public safety services. However, that must be managed within the context of reduced costs and a recognition of the regional resources available.

Specific steps include the following: 1) Initiate discussions with the Sheriff's Department or other service providers regarding the integration of additional services such as road patrol. 2) Revisit operations to look at what and how services are provided. 3) Obtain public input regarding the level of services, with related costs. 4) Review options to provide police services to surrounding entities. 5) Through attrition, reduce the size of the department to a size comparable with similar communities in Michigan.

DDA/TIF Issues

Goal Statement

The City of Traverse City will maintain and enhance a vital downtown as a core regional asset that creates jobs and tax base. Recognizing the significant local tax dollars involved, DDA issues must be managed within the context of benefiting the entire community.

Specific steps include the following; 1) Examine and report on the available alternatives regarding the term and structure of the TIF Districts. 2) Examine and report on the costs and benefits of contracting out APS and available alternatives. 3) Examine and report on alternatives to transition TIFs and the DDA when the TIF terms expire.

Economic Development Issues

Goal Statement

The City of Traverse City will maintain and enhance its role as the economic core of the five-county region. However, that role must be managed with a recognition that the neighborhoods and corridors outside of the downtown are central to Traverse City remaining a community with a high quality of life for its residents. Community Development must become a larger part of Economic Development.

Specific steps include the following: 1) Create a new Community Development Office within the City organization to focus efforts on the vitality of the neighborhoods and corridors outside of the DDA, bringing the services currently contracted to the EDC in-house. 2) Create specific goals for the new Office and review the status and effectiveness of the Office after one year. 3) When considering local tax incentives for new developments, ensure that the benefits outweigh the cost of the local incentives.

Infrastructure Issues

Goal Statement

The City of Traverse City will maintain its infrastructure to enhance the quality of life in the City. It will manage its assets in a way that is long-term cost effective. Infrastructure includes the streets, sidewalks and other non-motorized paths, the storm water system, the water and sewer systems.

Specific steps include the following: 1) Budget not less than one (1) mill per year in this and future budgets for street and sidewalk repair and maintenance activity. 2) Revise special assessment provisions as necessary to eliminate the negative impact on repair and maintenance activity. 3) Design and implement a 10-year strategy for asset management. 4) Work with MDOT on Division Street improvements that value both motorized and non-motorized transportation users for a possible 2010 project.

The Bayfront, Parks and Open Space and Regional Issues

Goal Statement

The City of Traverse City values its Bayfront, parks and recreational facilities and other regional assets that contribute to its unique Quality of Life. The City will work both independently and cooperatively with Regional jurisdictions to maintain and enhance these assets, recognizing that equity requires redistribution of some of the costs of regional assets.

Specific steps include: 1) Initiate necessary actions to begin implementation of the Bayfront Plan, 2) Consider regional funding opportunities for regional assets including a) the Senior Center, b) Hickory Hills, c) the Opera House and d) the Heritage Center. 3) Consider greater regional cooperation in the operation of the water and sewer operations. 4) Consider greater regional coordination for active recreational programs.

Other

In addition to the above, the City of Traverse City will continue current efforts to 1) complete the Master Plan, 2) address affordable housing, 3) complete the Solid Waste Services Study, 4) complete the Old Towne Parking Deck, 5) address West Front Street parking and continue other ongoing activities.