

## Partnerships for Change Sustainable Communities



Michigan Townships  
Association



Land Information  
Access Association



Michigan Municipal  
League



Michigan State  
University Extension



Michigan Association  
of Planning

# Press Release

For Immediate Release

## Prestigious Grant Awarded To City of Traverse City And Garfield Township For Unique Cooperative Land Use Planning Initiative

### Local Governments Seek To Work Together To Develop New Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance For Grand Traverse Commons

The future of one of the area's most historic sites is about to get a lot clearer. Earlier this month, the City of Traverse City and Garfield Charter Township were awarded a \$60,000 service grant from the *Partnerships for Change Sustainable Communities Program* to develop a new joint master plan and zoning ordinance for the Grand Traverse Commons.

The new cooperative planning initiative is being spearheaded by the Grand Traverse Commons Joint Planning Commission. The Joint Planning Commission was established by the City and Township in May of 2007 to replace the oversight role of the Grand Traverse Commons Redevelopment Corporation for the redevelopment of the Commons.

Home to the Munson Medical Center, the Traverse Bay Intermediate School District, the Village at Grand Traverse Commons (including Building 50) and others, portions of the 484 acre campus lie within both the City of Traverse City and Garfield Township. In fact, the jurisdictional boundary separating the two jurisdictions goes through the middle of one of the former state hospital buildings.

Harry Burkholder, a Community Planner for LIAA the Land Information Access Association (LIAA) said the new master plan will retain many of the primary tenants established in the 1994 redevelopment plan. "The City and Township have worked together for nearly 25 years to oversee the development of the Grand Traverse Commons. The Joint Planning Commission has made it very clear that they will follow the land use and redevelopment strategies of the 1994 plan. However, the Commission is hoping to create a plan that more clearly articulates a number of new strategies for creating a vibrant, mixed-use, walkable neighborhood with large tracts of natural and recreational areas integrated with the surrounding community."

Burkholder went on to say, LIAA will facilitate a number of public meetings to collect input from community stakeholders and area residents. Burkholder said, a project website: [www.partnershipsforchange.cc/gtcommons](http://www.partnershipsforchange.cc/gtcommons) has been created that allows people to learn more about the planning process and voice their opinion about key questions and planning concepts.

According to Burkholder, the new zoning ordinance will establish the regulatory guidelines for the development of the area and simplify the planning and review process.

The *Partnerships for Change Sustainable Communities Program* was created by the LIAA, a non-profit community service organization in Traverse City, in cooperation with several statewide government and planning assistance organizations, including the Michigan Municipal League, Michigan Townships Association, Michigan Association of Planning and Michigan State University Extension. The program is designed to help cities, villages and adjacent townships work together to stimulate & support new multi-jurisdictional efforts to develop & adopt local land use policies that result in the preservation of valuable cultural & natural resources while encouraging urban redevelopment & discouraging inefficient, low-density development. Apparently, this is Michigan's first statewide program to support joint municipal planning and resource management.

The *Partnerships for Change Sustainable Communities Program* has awarded service grants to 13 different Michigan Communities over the last three years, helping over 35 townships and 25 cities and villages work together on cooperative planning projects that protect cultural and natural resources.

This is not the first time the City and Township have worked together toward the redevelopment of the commons area. In 2003, the City and Township established a *Recreation Authority* to oversee and fund the planning and development of the barns area at the south end of the commons along with other community projects.

The master planning project is expected to take about 10-months.

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The City of Traverse City and Garfield Charter Township have worked together for over 20 years to plan for and oversee the site.