Acme Shores

a placemaking strategy for the US-31 shoreline corridor

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Acme Township Placemaking Leadership Team

Erick Takayama, Trustee
Wayne Kladder, Supervisor
Sharon Vreeland, Manager
Jean Aukerman
Jeremy Nearing
Marcie Timmins
Virginia Tegel

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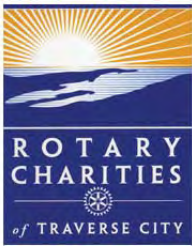

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Welcome To
Acme

INTRODUCTION

The Acme Township community leaders and citizens have embarked on a planning project to create a Placemaking Plan for the community. The Placemaking Plan started out as a citizen-driven strategy for the existing and newly-acquired shoreline park properties and shoreline corridor along US-31. The community anticipated forging beneficial connections between local businesses and the emerging new public space, therein providing mutual economic, functional and aesthetic benefits. Early in the planning process, it was evident that the shoreline corridor was and will be greatly influenced by traffic and development plans outside of the immediate area. As such, the planning study geographic boundary was expanded to include the M-72 corridor east to Lautner Road and south on US-31 to the Township Boundary.

As the community values a citizen driven process, early work involved public meetings with commercial property owners, residential property owners, business owners and the community at large to solicit input on the community's preferred future. Planning and design illustrative drawings were then generated with the input of those groups, community officials and the Leadership Team established to guide this study. The community was invited to see the resulting planning and design illustrative drawings and to provide further feedback and input on the proposed recommendations. The outcome of these meetings and input shaped the resulting recommendations included in this report.

The recommendations in this report are intended to benefit and consider residents and visitors to the Township, as well as current and future township businesses. The recommendations depict a long-range plan for the transition of the Acme Township shoreline corridor and parkland, accomplishing multi-dimensional objectives supported by approved local plans and consensus vision. The solidification of this vision and the development of Low Impact Design recommendations, coupled with supporting regulatory tools, will invite future investment and facilitate streamlined project review. These recommendations also incorporate important linkages to other community assets and activity centers, enhancing the functional and aesthetic value of the greater community and region. The improved amenities suggested and the strategic preservation of natural and scenic resources will communicate community pride and establish Acme Township as a destination and a "Place" in its own right.

"The improved amenities suggested and the strategic preservation of natural and scenic resources will communicate community pride and establish Acme Township as a destination and a "Place" in its own right."

Table 1: Collective Priorities

Noncommercial Property Owners on US-31	Community-Wide Public Meeting	"Meet Your Beach" Day
Balance of residential, commercial, recreational uses	US-31 bypass to the east	Access via foot and bicycle
Beach resembling state park at 3 Mile Road	Complete streets with walking and biking trails	Cleaner beach, including vegetation
Walkability / bikeability; link with TART	Open, pristine, beautiful beach and improved marina	Amenities: playground, buoys, picnic tables, accessible mat, restroom

Table 2: Community Feedback

Likes	Concerns	Other Ideas
Local US-31 bypass option; reduced lanes and speeds on US-31	Traffic: roundabouts, impact of lower speed on tourism	Parking area suggestions, including for trailers
Walkability and bikeability	Cost: can taxpayers afford it, loss of tax base to parkland	Encourage concerts, festivals, restaurants
Integration of nature, development, open space	Whether boat launch would work as expected	More kid-friendly areas
Aesthetic and swimming improvements	Parking for commercial district and boat launch	Nonmotorized water launches
Boat launch and associated parking		Process: establish "authority" for implementation; measure expectations so they can be delivered upon; continued regional collaboration
Process: consensus master plan		

Community members discuss their collective priorities

Community Engagement

In keeping with the concept of "placemaking" as a way to form lasting connections between people and spaces, community engagement methods used for the Acme Township Placemaking Project were both frequent and varied. As part of the initial set-up, a website was launched to track the progress of the project at www.acmeshores.org. This site, which had received 2,201 pageviews from 475 unique visitors at the time of this writing, hosts general information, a calendar of events, a photo gallery, and project documents. During the active period of community engagement and project design, it also provided a direct link to Leadership Team members and consultants to answer questions and field comments from the public.

Project progress was tracked online at www.acmeshores.com

To gather input about the priorities of the redeveloped shoreline's potential users, a meeting was held with noncommercial property owners along US-31 in addition to a community-wide public meeting. Leadership Team members also hosted a public "Meet Your Beach" day on the redevelopment site, at which they spoke one-on-one with attendees and collected comment cards. Notice of the community-wide events was distributed via posters, township newsletter, press release, web calendars, and a direct postcard invitation to every Township resident (Acme Township had 4375 residents at the time of the 2010 US Census). They were well-attended: about 72 citizens came to the public meeting, and about 80 shared their opinions at the beach. The top priorities from each session are summarized in Table 1.

Community members gather to discuss the future of Acme Township

After the plans and drawings for a revitalized Acme Township were completed, the public was again invited via postcard to a community meeting and offered the opportunity to provide feedback. This time, over 100 citizens came to view the drawings in person, and 223 unique visits were made to their page on the website. Comment cards were distributed which gave an overview of the project, listed the public priorities incorporated in the plan, and presented small versions of the overall and park plan drawings. In addition to providing their positive and negative preferences, respondents also offered some additional ideas, summarized in Table 2.

A public open house provided a forum to give feedback on the project

ACME TOWNSHIP PLACEMAKING

Existing Conditions

0 150 300 600 900 1200

Existing Public Lands

Aquired Public Lands
Not Yet Developed

Flexible Properties

Fixed Properties

Stormwater Areas of Concern

Developmental Limitations

Very Restricted R.O.W.

Less Restricted R.O.W.

US-31

M-72

Mt. Hope Rd

Bunker Hill

East Arm
Grand Traverse Bay

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The study area of the Acme Township Placemaking project centers on the intersection of M-72 and US-31. This intersection, along with US-31 heading south, benefits from the incredible scenic beauty of the East Arm of Grand Traverse Bay. Few communities enjoy proximity to such a unique and magnificent natural resource. That visual access, and perhaps even more so physical access, has been limited in the past by private development between US-31 and the waterfront. Acme Township has recognized access to the bay as a potential asset to the community and has, therefore, begun to acquire a number of properties along the shore. The existing public lands, along with those that have been recently acquired, begin to show the potential for significant public access to the lakeshore, which can be a very strong component, if not the centerpiece, of Acme's brand and sense of place.

Grand Traverse Bay

In considering development and redevelopment of the project area, it is useful to consider what properties might be fixed and what properties might be flexible. Fixed properties are those that are in good condition and well-suited to their context and the vision of the preferred future. Flexible properties are those that might have a higher or better use being redeveloped, perhaps due to condition, land-use or current development character, lending them to more positively contribute to the preferred future through a deliberate redevelopment strategy.

Public lake access

As the Grand Traverse Bay has been identified as one of Acme Township's most important natural resources, the protection and preservation of the shore and water quality are of the utmost importance. Residential and commercial development, along with storm water runoff, have altered and impacted not only the shoreline, but also the water quality in the past. The shoreline, therefore, has been identified as an area of concern. Greater public land adjacent to the bay will result in increased potential for implementing best management practices and sustainable design techniques to further protect the bay.

Some properties lack dimensional depth

A limiting factor in the development and redevelopment of the US-31 portion of the study area is the dimensional limitations of the commercial properties along the east side of the roadway. Many of these properties lack dimensional depth, especially south of Mt. Hope Rd. North of Mt. Hope Rd., the property dimensions are more generous, but the rear of the properties is prone to poor or wet soils, which similarly limits the size of potential developments, though does afford a potential area for storm water management considerations.

A major factor in the existing conditions of the study area is the M-72 and US-31 roadways. Both are heavily trafficked thoroughfares for passing between Traverse City, Elk Rapids, Grayling and other regional destinations. The sheer volume of traffic creates an opportunity for Acme Township to capitalize given the exposure of the community to such a significant quantity of motorists. However, the high traffic volume also serves as a detriment, especially in areas where the right-of-way is limited in width due to high vehicular speeds and a lack of non-motorized amenities. These traffic issues, to a large extent, define Acme's existing character and, more importantly, limit the type of development that can and will occur along US-31. A change in the culture and character of US-31 is paramount to a change in the culture and character of Acme Township.

Large traffic volumes on US-31

ACME TOWNSHIP PLACEMAKING

Character Zones

0 150 300 600 900 1200

- A US-31 North / Resort
- B US-31 Core / Fragmented Commercial
- C Mt. Hope
- D M-72 Corridor
- E Grand Traverse Town Center
- F M-72 / Lautner Commercial Zone
- G US-31 South / Shorline

US-31

M-72

Mt. Hope Rd

Bunker Hill

East Arm
Grand Traverse Bay

CHARACTER ZONES

To better understand the opportunities for placemaking in Acme Township, it is important to first understand the character of the existing community. Toward that end, a Character Zone Map was developed.

A. US-31 North / Resort

The US-31 North / Resort Zone is the northern portion of the study area defined by very large land uses including the main entrance to the Grand Traverse Resort, Tom's Grocery Store and K-Mart. These developments have very large setbacks from the roadway with expansive, sometimes heavily landscaped and manicured, lawn terraces that are visually attractive and inviting. Traffic moves quickly in this area as drivers enter from or exit to the more rural area of the Township to the north.

B. US-31 Core / Fragmented Commercial

The US-31 Core / Fragmented Commercial Zone includes the intersection of M-72 and US-31 plus geographic area to the north, south and east consisting of fragmented commercial land uses mixed with residential and public land uses. The fragmented nature of the land uses results in a lack of physical and visual cohesion to the core area. Traffic volumes are heavy and completely vehicular in nature with limited or no pedestrian or non-motorized amenities. Views to the bay are a positive aspect of this zone, but physical access is currently limited.

C. Mt. Hope / Acme Village

The Mt. Hope Zone / Acme Village is a planned and approved mixed-use development along the Mt. Hope roadway corridor.

D. M-72 Corridor

The M-72 Corridor Zone is the entry to the core area from the east. Its character is primarily rural in nature, with agricultural fields along the south and the Grand Traverse Resort's golf course along the north, yielding to commercial and residential land-uses on approach to the core area. The planned and approved heavily retail, but mixed-use, development of the Grand Traverse Town Center will change the character of this zone in the future, though large setbacks and manicured landscape terraces will ensure a positive image to this important entry zone.

E. Grand Traverse Town Center

The Grand Traverse Town Center Zone is a planned and approved mixed-use development along the M-72 roadway corridor. The development's initial phase is expected to begin construction in 2013 and will serve as a regional retail destination, impacting traffic in the study area accordingly.

F. M-72 / Lautner Commercial Zone

The M-72 / Lautner Commercial Zone is a site zoned for commercial development. In concert with the Mt. Hope / Acme Village Zone and the Grand Traverse Town Center Zone, planned and future commercial development will occur east of US-31 and south of M-72. With transportation planning in concert with this land-use planning, traffic patterns can shift off of the US-31 corridor, especially north of Mt. Hope, to facilitate the change in culture and character to the core area.

G. US-31 South / Shoreline

The US-31 South / Shoreline Zone is the southern area of the township along US-31 where the roadway runs immediately adjacent to the shoreline. This circumstance of a roadway in such close proximity to Lake Michigan for over a mile is unique and affords motorists a completely uninterrupted view of the bay. However, traffic speeds are very high in this stretch of roadway and no pedestrian or non-motorized facilities are present, although the TART Trail parallels US-31 closely to the east.

ACME TOWNSHIP PLACEMAKING

Development Types

0 150 300 600 900 1200

- Existing Public Lands
- Expanded Public Lands
- Errand-Oriented Commercial
- Mixed-Use / Office
- Mixed-Use / Destination Commercial
- Future Destination Commercial Development

US-31

M-72

Expanded Park

East Arm Grand Traverse Bay

Errand-Oriented Commercial

Mt. Hope Rd

Grand Traverse Town Center

Future Destination Commercial Development

Village at Acme

Errand-Oriented Commercial

Bunker Hill

DEVELOPMENT TYPES

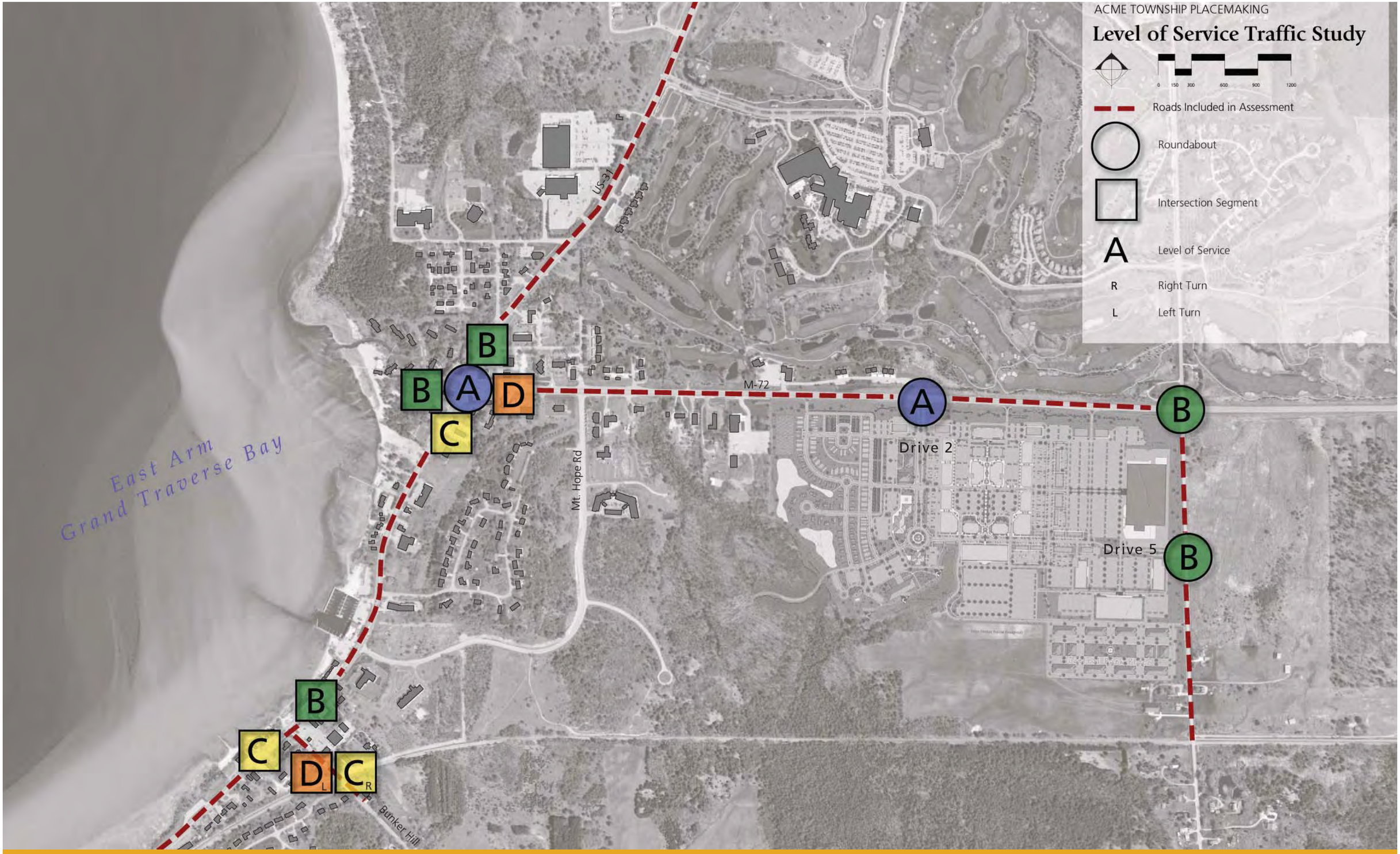
A concerted effort by Acme Township to purchase land along the Grand Traverse Bay lakeshore has resulted in significant public property along this important natural resource. Additional properties should be purchased to link large swaths of public land to provide for managed public access, as well as preservation and conservation of this sensitive environment. With land uses identified for the immediate and long-term future, vehicular traffic patterns begin to surface that will result in reduced volume on US-31 north of Mt. Hope Road. Essentially, a new east-west corridor will be created to facilitate access to the regional destinations that will be realized with the commercial and mixed-use developments, beginning with the Grand Traverse Town Center and Acme Village.

The significant office, retail and destination commercial developments that are planned limit the need for substantial similar development along US-31. However, errand-oriented commercial would remain and should continue to develop in the core area of US-31 north of Mt. Hope and south of M-72. These businesses can be similar to those that already exist serving the local community with neighborhood commercial needs such as a small hardware store, salons and spas, insurance sales, medical offices and the like. However, in order to increase the density and activity within the US-31 core area, vertical mixed-use is recommended.

The table below highlights the type and amount of proposed uses that have been approved by the Township through various reviews, special use permits, and planned unit developments. The majority of the proposed uses will be developed along the M-72 corridor between US-31 and Lautner Road as components of the Acme Village and Grand Traverse Town Center developments. The total build-out cost for the Grand Traverse Resort & Spa, Acme Village, Grand Traverse Town Center and other high density central areas is estimated to be $4.2 billion.

Table 3: Proposed Additional Build-Out

	Total Build-Out	Acme Village	Grand Traverse Town Center	Grand Traverse Resort	LochenHeath Development	Windward Ridge
Retail / Commercial (Square feet)	794,400 SF	28,900 SF	765,500 SF			
General Office (Square feet)	113,800 SF	113,800 SF				
Office / R&D (Square feet)	64,000 SF	64,000				
Hotel (Rooms)	250		250			
Civic / Institutional (Square Feet)	127,200	59,200	68,000			
Single-Family Residential (Units)	983	24	90	617	500	42
Multi-Family Residential (Units)	526	96	430			
Mixed-Use Residential (Units)	228		228			
Townhouse / Condo (Units)	1,038	10	146	882		
Senior Housing (Units)	150		150			
Total Square Feet	1,041,800	265,900	833,500			
Total Units	3175	130	1294	1499	500	42


ACME TOWNSHIP PLACEMAKING
Level of Service Traffic Study
0 150 300 600 900 1200
Roads Included in Assessment
Roundabout
Intersection Segment
A Level of Service
R Right Turn
L Left Turn
East Arm
Grand Traverse Bay
US-31
M-72
Mt. Hope Rd
Bunker Hill
Drive 2
Drive 5
A
B
C
D
L
R

LEVEL OF SERVICE TRAFFIC STUDY

A significant element of the review and approval of the Grand Traverse Town Center (GTTC) site plan review was the assessment of traffic impact on the US-31 and M-72 network, Lautner Road and Bunker Hill Road. MDOT and the Grand Traverse County Road Commission (GTCRC) requested a network assessment factoring in the Phase 1: Meijer Store and full build-out of the Grand Traverse Town Center, as well as incorporation of current and proposed projects with vested development rights which rely on the same network. The Traffic Assessment, prepared by Progressive AE, very thoroughly addresses the parameters required by MDOT and GTCRC; it revealed that without operational enhancements to key intersections there would be network failure as future projects are developed. As a result, the preferred option was to construct roundabouts at M-72 and Lautner Road, and at Lautner Road and "Drive 5" into the Meijer Store project as phase 1 improvements. As the GTTC project proceeds into later phases an additional roundabout would be constructed on M-72 at "Drive 2" (the main entrance) and depending on land availability a roundabout may be constructed at the US-31 and M-72 intersection. The Level of Service (LOS) map illustrates the level of service at full build-out with proposed intersection modifications. The US-31 and M-72 intersection shows the LOS with traffic signalization improvements or with the installation of a roundabout. In all instances, the roundabouts have a higher operational efficiency thus indicated by the higher LOS rating.

The Level of Service Traffic Study depicts the traffic impact that the built-out condition will have on the existing roadway system, as modeled by Progressive AE for MDOT as part of the Grand Traverse Town Center development review. The built-out condition refers to the proposed land uses that have been approved by the Township through various reviews, special use permits and planned unit developments, as depicted in the spreadsheet on Page 10. The Level of Service Traffic Study, however, does not take into account the roadway modifications that are anticipated and recommended in subsequent sections of this report, which are meant to further mitigate and address the impact of the traffic that will be generated with these developments.

The Level of Service designation pertains to signalized and roundabout controlled intersections. At MDOT's request, the intersection of US-31 and M-72 was modeled with both a traditional traffic signal and a roundabout with resulting Level of Service for both options depicted. The Level of Service definitions are as follows:

Level of Service Definitions - Signalized Intersections (2000) [1]

Level of Service A: Describes operations with very low average stopped delay, i.e., less than 10.0 seconds per vehicle. This occurs when progression is extremely favorable, and most vehicles arrive during the green phase. Most vehicles do not stop at all. Short cycle lengths may also contribute to low delay.

Level of Service B: Describes operations with an average stopped delay in the range of 10.0 to 20.0 seconds per vehicle. This generally occurs with good progression and/or short cycle lengths. More vehicles stop than for LOS A, causing higher levels of average delay.

Level of Service C: Describes operations with an average stopped delay in the range of 20.1 to 35.0 seconds per vehicle. These higher delays may result from fair progression and/or longer cycle lengths. Individual cycle failures may begin to appear in this level. The number of vehicles stopping is significant at this level, although many still pass through the intersection without stopping.

Level of Service D: Describes operations with an average stopped delay in the range of 35.1 to 55.0 seconds per vehicle. At Level of Service D, the influence of congestion becomes more noticeable. Longer delays may result from some combination of unfavorable progression, long cycle lengths, or high v/c (volume/capacity) ratios. Many vehicles stop, and the proportion of vehicles not stopping declines. Individual cycle failures are noticeable.

1 Traffic Impact Study Village at Grand Traverse Acme Township, Michigan, November 2011, prepared by Progressive AE.

ACME TOWNSHIP PLACEMAKING

Motorized Plan

0 150 300 600 900 1200

Major and Minor Roads

Roundabout

Signalized Intersection

C Civic Building

F Fire Station

East Arm
Grand Traverse Bay

Expanded Park

Errand-Oriented Commercial

Mt. Hope Rd

Grand Traverse Town Center

Future Destination Commercial Development

Village at Acme

Errand-Oriented Commercial

Bunker Hill

MOTORIZED PLAN

In the preferred future plan, the motorized network is greatly increased in Acme Township south of M-72 between US-31 and Lautner. This is primarily a result of the extensive planned commercial and mixed-use developments already planned and approved there. As stated previously in this report, those developments, and the resulting roadway systems that are created within and to serve them, will ultimately remove measurable traffic from US-31 and M-72 if the connection between Acme Village and Grand Traverse Town Center is established. Motorists will have alternative routes to choose from in reaching their retail destination, thereby allowing some parts of US-31 to transition to a less vehicle-centric and more complete street. This is the underlying and most important factor in order to achieve a complete linkage between the East Bay waterfront and commercial and residential areas.

Signalized intersections along US-31 at both M-72 and Bunker Hill will remain. However, a new signal at Mt. Hope will be added to further facilitate the transition of Mt. Hope into a significant contributor to the vehicular circulation system. The proposed plan also envisions the installation of tabletop intersections of US-31 at Mt. Hope Road and Bunker Hill Road. These are recommended to facilitate a safer environment for pedestrians crossing US-31 to the waterfront.

Roundabouts currently planned along M-72 at Lautner and at the future entrance to the Grand Traverse Town Center will be expanded to include the M-72 and Mt. Hope Road intersection, the main entrance to the Grand Traverse Resort on US-31, as well as main intersections within the future commercial and mixed-use developments. Roundabouts have been deliberately focused outside of the core area because they are traffic moving devices, not traffic calming devices. They will maintain a free flow of traffic, while still safely accommodating turning movements.

Based on the traffic assessment prepared for the Grand Traverse Town Center (GTTC) project the installation of roundabouts at M-72 / Lautner Road, M-72 / Drive 2 (the main entrance to the GTTC), and Lautner / Drive 5 will provide higher level of service than conventional intersections. The map entitled, "Level of Service Traffic Study" highlights the forecasted peak-PM operational condition of the area wide network.

"... those developments... will ultimately remove measurable traffic from US-31 and M-72, if the connection between Acme Village and Grand Traverse Town Center is established."

A road through a sensitive natural area

ACME TOWNSHIP PLACEMAKING

Non-Motorized Plan

0 150 300 600 900 1200

- Existing TART Trail
- Proposed TART Trail
- Shared Use Pathway
- Sidewalks
- Medians
- Tabletop Intersection
- T — Pedestrian Tunnel
- B — Pedestrian Bridge
- P — Park
- H — Historic Park

East Arm
Grand Traverse Bay

US-31

M-72

Mt. Hope Rd

Proposed TART

TART

Bunker Hill

TART

US-31

5 Mile

Beckett&Raeder

NON-MOTORIZED PLAN

Acme Township has not enjoyed significant non-motorized transportation options thus far. While the TART Trail currently ends in Acme Township at Bunker Hill and is planned to continue along the railroad corridor, it does not connect to any primary retail or business destination. Further, sidewalks are in many cases non-existent and traffic speeds and volume along US-31 and M-72 makes shared use of the roadways by bicycles unsafe.

The Non-Motorized Plan depicts a network of shared-use pathways and sidewalks to promote walkability and non-motorized transportation in the project area. The shared-use pathways would allow for both non-motorized and pedestrian use, whereas sidewalks would be limited to pedestrian use. Through this network, users of the TART Trail would be able to access the waterfront area of US-31, the core area of US-31 north of Mt. Hope, the Grand Traverse Town Center, and beyond. The network would deliberately link commercial and recreational areas.

Wherever possible, any new roadway construction or renovation should consider the addition of bike lanes. Bike lanes can often be added when lanes are reconfigured or reduced. Where that is not possible, such as along US-31 south of Mt. Hope, a mixed use path outside of the roadway would be constructed at AASHTO-recommended widths to accommodate multiple modes and directions of non-motorized traffic. Where right-of-way width is limited, easements on private property will need to be sought to maintain connectivity.

Other non-motorized improvements include the addition of a pedestrian bridge over US-31 near 5 Mile Road from the TART Trail over to the MDOT Roadside Park, as well as a pedestrian tunnel connecting the Grand Traverse Town Center to the Grand Traverse Resort property and the north side of M-72. While formidable barriers, US-31 and M-72 crossings will allow better connectivity between primary nodes and destinations.

Non-motorized improvements also entail modifications to the roadway that cue drivers to slow down as they enter a more developed area with multiple modes of transportation. As such, medians are introduced on M-72 near the Grand Traverse Town Center and on US-31 near the Grand Traverse Resort entrance. These areas have limited drive approaches and ample right-of-way, making a median treatment feasible. Another modification intended to cue drivers to diminish their speeds is the introduction of tabletop intersections along US-31 at both Bunker Hill and Mt. Hope Roads. This treatment will transition the roadway pavement up to top of curb pavement elevation within the intersection, including the crosswalk area. The vertical transition plus the introduction of special pavement, such as pavers or stamped concrete, elicit slower driving speeds and alert the driver to proceed with caution. This is an important initial cue, especially to northbound drivers on US-31 as they enter the core area north of Bunker Hill.

"The Non-Motorized Plan depicts a network of shared-use pathways and sidewalks to promote walk-ability and nonmotorized transportation in the project area."

Existing TART Trail

ACME TOWNSHIP PLACEMAKING

Grand Traverse County

Master Plan

September 2012

0 150 300 600 900 1200

MASTER PLAN

The Master Plan depicts the preferred future of Acme Township. The roadway system has been illustrated to reflect the additional infrastructure brought about for the planned and approved commercial and mixed-use developments south of M-72 between US-31 and Lautner Road. Additionally, the relocation of US-31 north of M-72 as an extension of Mt. Hope Road is also depicted. These changes will allow US-31 north of Mt. Hope to dramatically transition to a more pedestrian-friendly environment. The east side of US-31 would maintain its errand-oriented commercial land use, though redevelopment is recommended with increased density allowing residential on the second floors of those new developments. The lower lying area east of those developments can serve as collective bioretention areas to treat and store storm water generated from those developments.

Along the lakeshore, large areas of public land result in park-like treatments for the majority of the shoreline, with a continuous multi-modal path along the west side of US-31. A small, non-motorized and accessible launch for canoes and kayaks is proposed near the terminus of Bunker Hill, as well as a small public beach between there and the Marina. Ample open space is allotted and affords opportunity for stormwater management and treatment between the roadway and Lake Michigan.

Closer to the US-31 and M-72 (former) intersection, Bayside Park would also be expanded and become a more significant recreational destination and primary contributor to the brand and sense of place that Acme Township wishes to portray. North of M-72 and west of relocated US-31 the former grid system of roadways can be restored with commercial and residential developments remaining mostly without impact. The northern project area receives beautification with the addition of a median and non-motorized paths to better facilitate connectivity to and between Grand Traverse Resort, Tom's, K-Mart and the nearby residential properties.

The Village at Grand Traverse is depicted at full build-out to illustrate the magnitude of commercial and residential development that is envisioned. Pedestrian amenities, including the tunnel near the Village at Grand Traverse and the bridge over US-31 near 5 Mile Road are also shown.

Greater detail of some of the areas depicted on this Master Plan are depicted and described on subsequent pages of this report.

"Along the lakeshore, large areas of public land result in park-like treatments for the majority of the shoreline, with a continuous multi-modal path along the west side of US-31."

Existing TART Trail

ACME TOWNSHIP PLACEMAKING

Grand Traverse County

Marina Park Master Plan

September 2012

MARINA PARK MASTER PLAN

Near the intersection of Mt. Hope Rd. and US-31, the existing marina area can be improved to enhance the variety of recreational opportunities offered in Acme Township. North of the Marina, a public-private partnership would allow the expansion of the current parking lot to accommodate a greater number of visitors to the beach, which would be better defined by a non-motorized path and large, sweeping bioretention areas as storm water management to mitigate erosion and improve water quality.

The parking lot to the east of the marina will be transformed into a relaxing picnic area with winding paths and bioretention areas. The privately-owned marina will be improved with the addition of public shoppers' docks for visiting boaters. Further bioretention areas, naturalized shoreline areas, and a small beach with potential swimming area will be implemented to the south of the marina, along with the continuation of a shared-use path that winds down the length of US-31 from M-72 to Five Mile Road and connects to the TART Trail.

Near the intersection of Bunker Hill and US-31, a small parking lot will serve an accessible canoe and kayak launch to provide water access to visitors. The intersections near Bunker Hill Rd. and Mt. Hope Road will both have raised table-top signalized intersections to increase pedestrian safety when crossing to the streetscape on the east side of US-31 and to diminish traffic speeds in those areas. Potential development such as a hotel and a mixed-use errand-oriented commercial area will be of greater density than currently exists and provide residents and visitors with the goods and services they need for a pleasant life in or visit to Acme Township.

Streetscape improvements will include street trees, special pavement at intersections to enhance the importance of pedestrians, and site furnishings such as benches and decorative street light fixtures. North of Mt. Hope, the number of parking lanes will reduce from five to three, allowing the addition of parking on the east side of the roadway and bike lanes on both sides. The TART trail will connect to this area down Bunker Hill Road as well as behind the properties lining US-31 between Bunker Hill and Mt. Hope Road.

"...the existing marina area can be improved to enhance the variety of recreational opportunities offered in Acme Township."

ACME TOWNSHIP PLACEMAKING

Grand Traverse County

Bayside Park Master Plan

September 2012

0 50 100 200 300 400

Brick Paver Bump-outs at Intersections

Proposed Decorative Street Light

Mixed-Use Building

Proposed Crosswalk, typ.

Proposed Mast-Arm Signalized Table-Top Intersection

Proposed Entry to Parkwith Park Sign and Spacial Paving

140 TOTAL SPACES

Existing Wooded Area to Remain

31 TOTAL SPACES

101 TOTAL SPACES

Mid-Block Crossing

33 TOTAL SPACES

Proposed Bioretention

BEACH

Adaptive Re-use of Existing Building for Watersports Vending

Proposed Splash Pad

Proposed Play Structure with Safety Surface

Proposed Picnic Area (Lawn Area may be Flooded for Winter Ice Skating)

Proposed Multi-Purpose Pavilion with Amphitheater Seating

Proposed Volley Ball Court

Proposed Retaining Wall with Accessible Beach Access and "Mobi-Mat" Water Access

Proposed Pier for Transient Docking and Watersports Vending including Kite Boarding & Windsurfing

Proposed Viewing Platform and Shade Structure

Proposed Naturalized Shoreline

Non-Motorized Path Continues to the South

GRAND TRAVERSE BAY

Beckett&Raeder

BAYSIDE PARK MASTER PLAN

Bayside Park is located near the intersection of M-72 and US-31. Following the acquisition of existing private properties, the proposed improvements to Bayside Park will allow beachgoers of all ages and abilities to enjoy the beauty of the bay. Ample parking at the entrance to the park brings visitors within easy walking distance of both active and passive activity areas. A flexible multi-purpose pavilion is positioned at the heart of the park, with both amphitheater seating for community events and picnic tables for spontaneous relaxation.

Adjacent to the picnic and pavilion area is a playground and splash pad for the younger crowd. The play area has easy access to the beach and a public restroom. The groomed beach has ample room for sunbathing, a volleyball court, and memorable days spent on the bayside. The beach is bordered by a low wall to contain the sand and define the beach area, but access to the water for all is ensured with ramps leading down from the sidewalk to a "Mobi-Mat" for ease of wheelchair movement on the sand and into the water. An adaptive re-use of an existing building along the south property line allows for vending of water sports equipment, increasing the recreational opportunities of the park. A proposed pier with a viewing platform and shade structure will facilitate the water sports activities such as windsurfing and kite boarding, as well as a place for boaters to park their boats and shop in Acme Township.

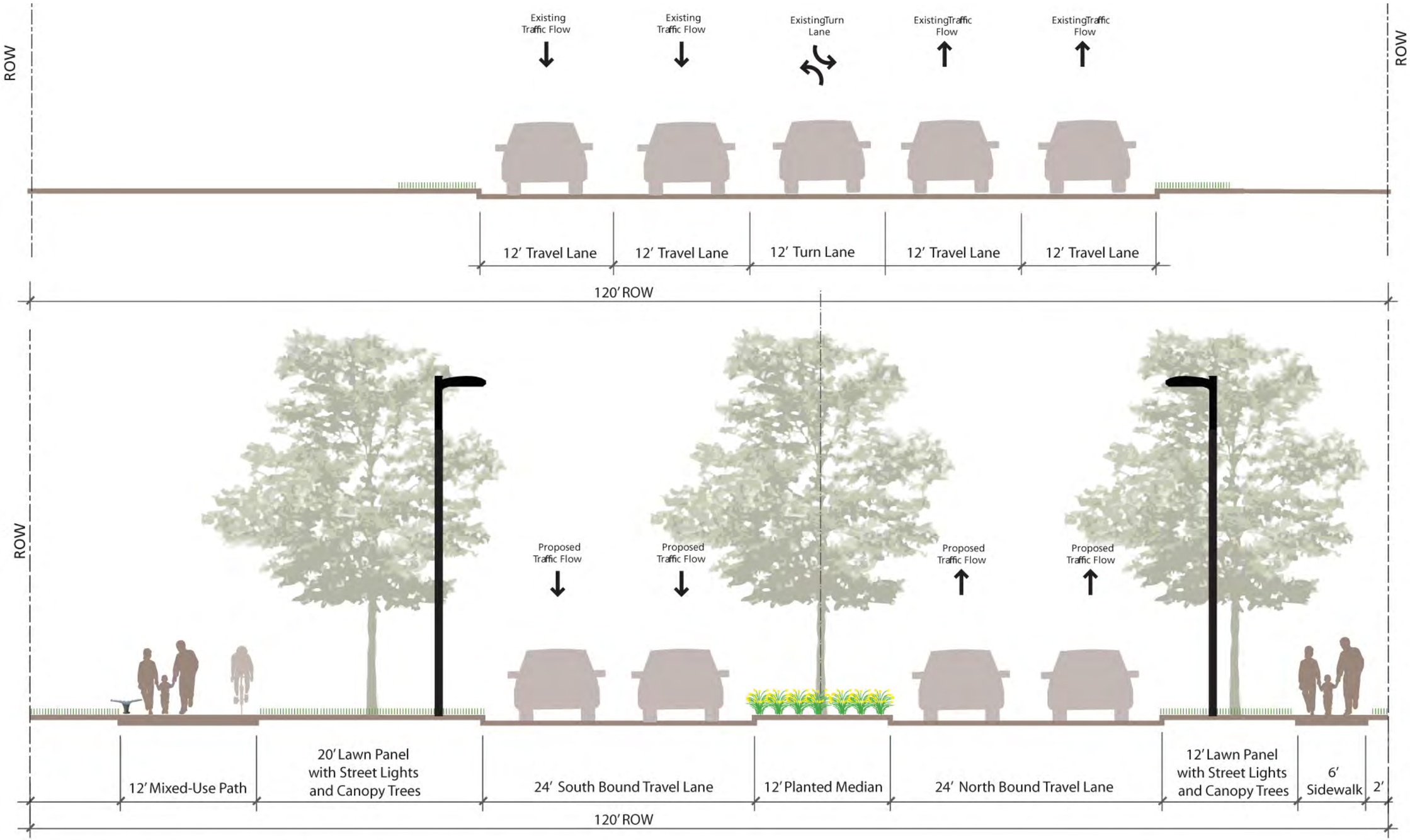
Much of the park has been kept in its natural state or even restored; on the north side of the park, nature trails weave through the existing woods, flow along a naturalized shoreline, and provide connectivity via a pedestrian footbridge to the Deepwater Point Natural Area to the north. Extensive bioretention areas are planned to slow, cool, and cleanse storm water runoff before it enters the bay. An artesian well that currently exists in the park will be given a clear path to flow into the lake and opportunity for nature interpretation and education.

The frontage of Bayside Park will allow for continuation of the non-motorized path along the west side of US-31, as well as streetscape improvements. Pedestrian safety in crossing the intersections of US-31 and M-72 is improved with a table-top signalized intersection with special pavement. Additionally, a mid-block crossing with a median will afford visitors a safe crossing without the need to venture all the way to the signalized intersection.

On the east side of US-31, higher density errand-oriented commercial buildings with residences on the upper floors will define the edge of the streetscape. Streetscape amenities will include street trees, decorative street light fixtures, and site furnishings such as benches and litter receptacles. The lane reconfiguration from five traffic lanes to three, with the addition of parking on the east side and bike lanes continues to this area of US-31.

"... the proposed improvements to Bayside Park will allow beachgoers of all ages and abilities to enjoy the beauty of the bay."

A pier with overlook



Cross Section - Median

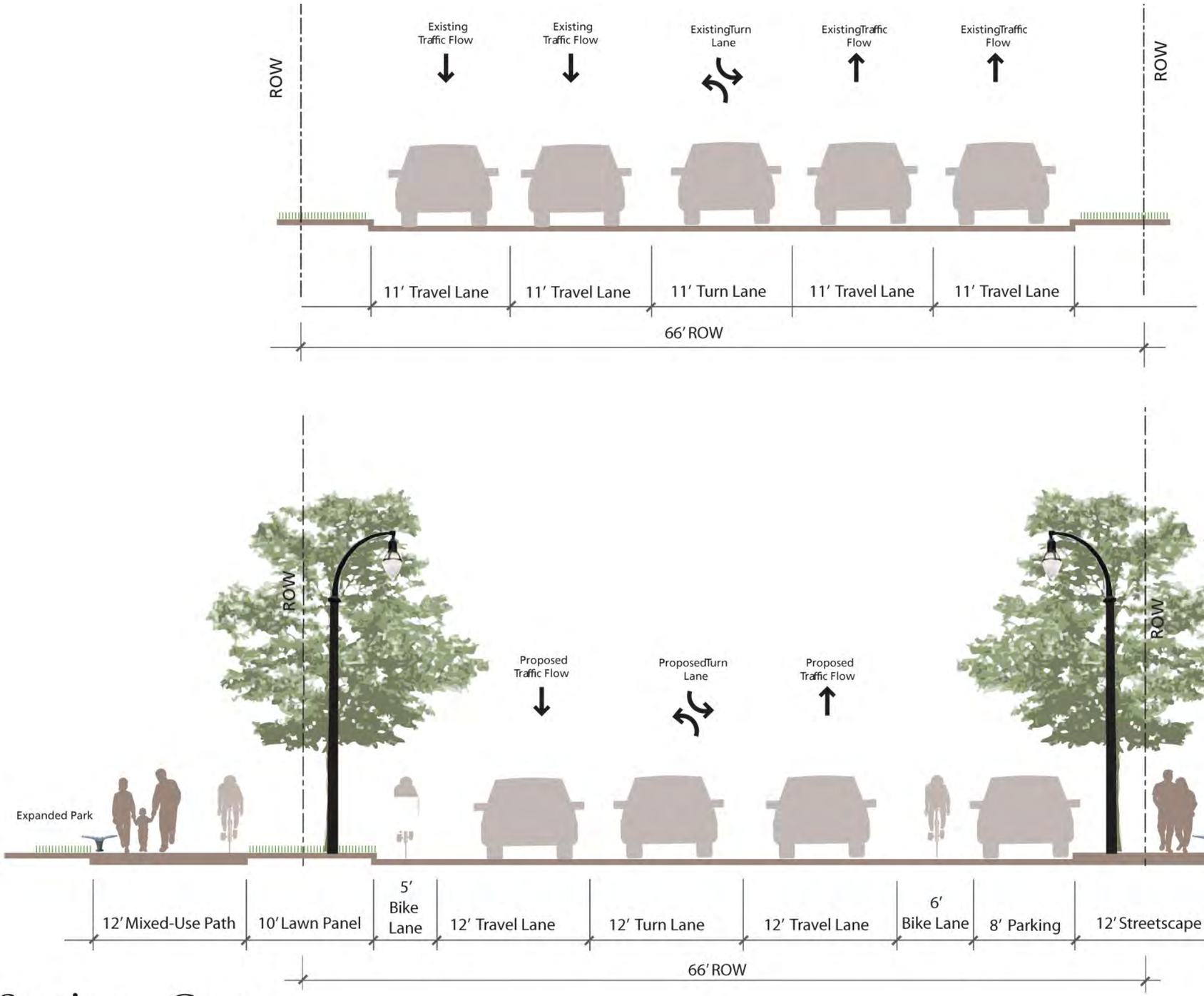
Scale: 3/8″ = 1′-0″

Four Lanes with Planted Median and Sidewalks

MEDIAN CROSS-SECTION

As traffic enters the more developed areas of Acme Township from more rural areas, traffic speeds are relatively high and few vehicles are turning. In this zone, a planted median is proposed in place of the center turn lane. This median will not only provide a safe haven for pedestrians crossing US-31, such as near the Grand Traverse Resort entrance, but will also serve as a traffic calming and beautification measure using trees and other plantings to make the space visually narrower.

Street trees planted in lawn panels that line the street will also provide shade and a physical buffer from vehicles for pedestrians and bicyclists utilizing the proposed mixed use path and sidewalk. Street lights will improve safety of motorists and pedestrians. This boulevard design will signal to the visitor that they have entered the resort and commercial areas of Acme Township and will contribute a strong first impression of the area.



Cross Section - Core

Scale: 3/8″ = 1′-0″

Three Lanes in Errand-Oriented Commercial

CORE CROSS-SECTION

In the core of Acme Township where the errand-oriented commercial buildings meet the shoreline parks, a streetscape environment is proposed. The five lanes of vehicular traffic will be reduced to three lanes (two travel lanes and one center turn lane) with bike lanes on both sides of the road and parallel parking on the east side. This is made possible by the re-direction of traffic from US-31 to Mt. Hope Road and Acme Village, the Grand Traverse Town Center, and M-72.

On-street parking will provide opportunities for quick trips to the errand-oriented businesses and create a buffer between moving vehicles and the pedestrians walking along the streetscape. Pedestrians can enjoy the shade of street trees and rest on a bench outside the shops, looking across to the parks along the bay. Decorative street lights will enhance the pedestrian-oriented character of the streetscape. Bicyclists will enjoy dedicated bike lanes on the street as well as a shared-use path on the west side of US-31, which is buffered from the road by a wide lawn panel planted with street trees. Pedestrians and cyclists on this path can travel freely from park to park along the bay, enjoying all that the area has to offer.

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.com

"...the proposed improvements will have a transformative effect on the character of Acme Township."

EXISTING CONDITIONS

This graphic depicts the dramatic change that can be realized on US-31 north of Mt. Hope where the existing condition is dominated by vehicular traffic and does not cater to pedestrians.

PROPOSED VISION

On the contrary, the proposed improvements will have a transformative effect on the character of Acme Township. With reduced vehicular traffic, increased amenities for pedestrians and bicyclists, an improved errand-oriented commercial area, and aesthetic enhancements along the corridor such as street trees and updated light fixtures, Acme Township will be a memorable place to enjoy Northern Michigan's natural beauty.

ACME TOWNSHIP PLACEMAKING

Grand Traverse County

Plan Components

September 2012

0 150 300 600 900 1200

Beckett&Raeder

PLAN COMPONENTS

A Acme Village / GTTC Connector

A new roundabout and road connecting Mt Hope Rd with the Grand Traverse Town Center and M-72 will create a strong vehicular link to guide through-traffic around, rather than through, the core of Acme Township to the commercial areas.

B Bayside Park

Proposed improvements to Bayside Park will accommodate a wide variety of active and passive recreational activities for visitors of all ages and abilities while protecting the Grand Traverse Bay watershed with portions of naturalized shoreline and bioretention of stormwater. Connectivity to adjacent parks is also improved.

C Marina Park

Expanded parking for automobiles and boats, picnic areas, small beach areas, an accessible canoe/kayak launch and swimming lanes are all included in the plan for the Marina Park, as well as bioretention areas and sections of naturalized shoreline.

D Waterfront Mixed-Use District

Mixed-use development that includes errand-oriented commercial opportunities as well as residential development on upper floors is proposed for the east side of US-31 between M-72 and Mt. Hope Rd.

E Acme Village Mixed-Use

Acme Village, a planned development located near the intersection of Mt. Hope and US-31, will provide increased density in the area in the form of mixed-use buildings.

F US-31 Realignment

US-31 can be realigned to direct the majority of through-traffic away from the core of Acme Township to Mt. Hope Rd and M-72.

G M-72 / Mt. Hope Roundabout

A roundabout at the intersection of M-72 and Mt Hope will allow traffic to progress smoothly between these major roads.

H US-31 / M-72 Intersection Improvements (Roundabout)

At the intersection of US-31 and M-72, a roundabout will allow traffic to continue with minimal delay between these two routes.

I US-31 / Mt. Hope Road Intersection Tabletop

Pedestrian safety is improved with the addition of a table top with special pavement at the intersection of US-31 and Mt. Hope.

J US-31 / Bunker Hill Road Intersection Tabletop

Similar to the intersection of US-31 and Mt. Hope, pedestrian safety is also improved at the intersection of US-31 and Bunker Hill with the addition of a raised table top with special pavement.

A waterfront play structure

Marina Park

Mixed-Use Buildings

Roundabout

Tabletop Intersection

ACME TOWNSHIP PLACEMAKING

Grand Traverse County

Plan Components

September 2012

0 150 300 600 900 1200

Beckett&Raeder

PLAN COMPONENTS, CONTINUED

K US-31 / Five Mile Road Pedestrian Bridge

A barrier-free pedestrian bridge will cross over US-31 near the intersection of 5 Mile Rd, allowing cyclists and other users easy travel along the shared use path.

L TART Trail Expansion along Rail Right-of-Way

An expansion of the TART Trail along the rail right-of-way connects existing portions of the trail and creates a continuous nonmotorized route for transportation and recreation.

M M-72 Pedestrian Tunnel

Pedestrians will be able to safely cross under M-72 via a pedestrian tunnel near the entrance to the Grand Traverse Town Center.

N Business District LID Stormwater Facility

Clustering development near US-31 provides the opportunity for large-scale stormwater collection and bioretention behind the new development. Here, stormwater from the core of Acme Township can be naturally retained, cleansed, and infiltrated back into underground aquifers.

O Mt. Hope Road Reconstruction

The addition of a center left turn lane on Mt. Hope will increase the carrying capacity of the roadway and allow traffic to be redirected away from US-31 between Mt. Hope and M-72.

P US-31 North Median

Replacing the center turn lane of US-31 north of Shore Rd along the Grand Traverse Resort with a planted median improves the visual character of the corridor and can have a calming effect on traffic.

Q Acme Creek Pedestrian Bridge

A pedestrian bridge over Acme Creek creates a nonmotorized connection between Bayside Park and Deepwater Point Natural Area.

R US-31 Lane Reconfiguration

With traffic directed away from US-31 to Mt. Hope Rd and the Grand Traverse Town Center, US-31 between Mt. Hope and M-72 can be reconfigured from five lanes to two travel lanes, bike lanes on both sides, a center left turn lane, and on-street parking on one side.

Pedestrian bridge

TART Trail expansion

Pedestrian tunnel

Stormwater collection facility

Pedestrian foot bridge

Table 4: Action Plan Sequence Strategy

Component	Action Required	Involved Parties	Supports Plan Components
D	**Waterfront Mixed Use District** — In order to create a vibrant business district a new zoning district is necessary. This district encourages more compact horizontal development and vertical mixed-use opportunities for multi-story buildings. In addition, the district would allow for shared parking, centralized low impact design stormwater treatment, and encourage greater flexibility in design.	Acme Township and US-31 business community.	E, N and R
B	**Bayside Park** — The development of Bayside Park becomes the icon for community reinvestment in the business district. Without public investment it is hard to convince the private sector on the need to invest and develop quality projects.	Acme Village, Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy, and MDNR	D, Overall Placemaking Plan and Recreation Plan
C	**Marina Park** - The development of Marina Park provides additional public access to East Bay and helps links the entire waterfront between Bayside Park and MDOT rest area.	Acme Village, Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy, and MDNR	D, Overall Placemaking Plan and Recreation Plan
A	**Mt. Hope Road Extension** — this will provide an internal collector road between Acme Village and the Grand Traverse Town Center. Installation of this road segment will provide another option to access both developments without relying on US-31 or M-72 depending on the origin of the trip. It will also help reduce the amount of traffic on US-31 and M-72 which is needed to justify the lane reconfiguration.	Acme Village, GTTC, MDOT, MDEQ, and Acme Township	D, E, and R
Q	**Acme Creek Pedestrian Bridge** — This connects the Deepwater Point Natural Area with Bayside Park and provides a continuous connection along the waterfront.	Acme Township and Grand Traverse Band	D, B, C and Recreation Plan
I	**US-31 / Mt. Hope Intersection Tabletop** — The reconfiguration of the Mt. Hope intersection to include a traffic signal and tabletop pedestrian platform is critical for safe pedestrian access to Bayside and Marina Parks. When component A is completed this intersection will provide direct access to Acme Village and GTTC developments. Traffic on this road segment will increase and require a traffic signal to manage traffic turning movements and provide a safer pedestrian crossing.	MDOT and Acme Township	B, C, D, E, and R
P	**US-31 North Median** — This will establish the north entrance and gateway to the waterfront district and enhance the north US-31 business district and entrance to Grand Traverse Resort. This project will also complement median improvements planned for M-72 between Lautner Road and the Williamsburg Dinner Theater.	MDOT and Acme Township	B, C, and D
J	**US-31 / Bunker Hill Road Intersection Tabletop** - The reconfiguration of the Bunker Hill Road intersection to include a tabletop pedestrian platform is critical for safe pedestrian access to the Marina Park.	Acme Village, MDOT, and Acme Township	B, C, D, E, and R
M	**M-72 Pedestrian Tunnel** — This project will link the Grand Traverse Resort with GTTC, Acme Village, the Waterfront Business District and Bayside Park. It establishes the skeletal network for the non-motorized system in the Township.	MDOT, GTTC, GTB, and Acme Township	B, D, and L
F	**US-31 Realignment** — The realignment of US-31 to tie in with Mt. Hope Road will improve traffic and safety by removing the acute intersection at US-31 and M-72. It will also move the proposed US-31 and M-72 roundabout east to the Mt. Hope intersection. It will require acquisition of several properties that are located close to the existing road right-of-way.	MDOT, GTB, and Acme Township	D, G, H and P

ACTION PLAN

The overall success of the Acme Township Placemaking Plan will be determined by how many of the recommendations have been implemented. This linkage between plan acceptance and its eventual implementation is often the weakest link in the planning and community building process. All too often we hear that familiar phrase – "the plan was adopted and then sat on the shelf." The plan is cited as the failure, however, the real culprit was the failure to execute or implement the plan. The degree of success is predicated on three factors: clarity and not wavering from the original vision, leadership which effectively employs the financial and personnel support needed to leverage available funding programs, and the ability to collaborate with other agencies and funders. Note that cost is not a factor. The implementation of the Acme Township Placemaking plan will take years to accomplish and will likely involve funding sources, both public and private, that are not even available or known at this time.

The Action Plan for the Acme Placemaking project is outlined in the adjacent table. It identifies critical components of the master plan which, if not implemented, will have a significant impact on the success of the overall plan.

Table 5: Potential Improvement Costs[1]

Project	Potential Construction Cost
Bayside Park	$1,500,000 – $2,000,000
Marina Park	$900,000 – $1,300,000

1 Does not include PITA (Professional, Inspection, Technical and Administrative) costs which are typically 22-25% of construction costs)

"The overall success of the Acme Township Placemaking Plan will be determined by how many of the recommendations have been implemented."

B R i
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