

Grand Traverse Area Land Use & Transportation Study

Fact Sheet September 2006

Background

In the spring of 2005, \$3.3 million in federal transportation dollars were reallocated to the Grand Traverse area for the creation and implementation of a comprehensive, multimodal transportation plan. To guide the planning process, Grand Traverse County appointed a Coordinating Group comprised of local government, environmental, business, educational, institutional, human service, and surrounding county representatives for the purpose of:

- Defining the mission of the study's visioning process;
- Developing a Request for Proposals;
- Interviewing and recommending a world-class consultant;
- Assisting with broad public input in the visioning process.

The Land Use & Transportation Coordinating Group's mission: *"To use a transparent and citizen led discussion and process to ensure the development of a community vision, plans for the future, and projects that address land use and transportation challenges facing the region."*

The Coordinating Group uses a consensus model for making decisions, with facilitation from the Community Reconciliation Services of Traverse City. Traverse City Transportation and Land Use Study (TC-TALUS) and the Northwest Michigan Council of Governments (NWMCOG) provide staff support and technical assistance to the group. TC-TALUS is also responsible for administering the federal funds for the development of the plan.

A Citizen-Led Process With Tangible Outcomes

One of the study's objectives is to hire a consultant that will facilitate a comprehensive, citizen-led land use and transportation planning process with considerable consideration given to the impacts in Antrim, Benzie, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, Leelanau, and Wexford Counties. Components of the planning process will include reviewing and analyzing past studies, conducting public awareness and engagement activities, assessing community values, inventorying the transportation system and natural features, evaluating existing land use policies as they relate to transportation, evaluating travel demand, and developing and evaluating transportation and land use scenarios. The resulting plan will provide an implementation strategy with policies and projects that will guide the community in creating its vision for transportation and land use.

Next Steps

TC-TALUS has released a Request for Proposals to solicit bids from consultants. Initial projections of the study process estimate a cost of \$1 million. In order to access the federal funds, a 20% local match has been secured. The consultant will be hired this winter, following a comprehensive, publicly visible selection process. Over the next few months, Coordinating Group members, along with representatives from TC-TALUS and NWMCOG, will meet with stakeholders to explain the process and encourage involvement in the planning effort. The study process will officially begin once the consultant is hired.

For More Information

- Contact Matt Skeels, Executive Director of TC-TALUS (231-922-4573)
- Visit the Grand Traverse Area Land Use and Transportation Study website: www.landuseandtransportation.org.
- Attend the Coordinating Group's meetings – First Tuesday of each month from 2 – 4 PM at the Traverse Area District Library.
- The Group's meetings are televised on TC-TV 2.