





Administrator's Update 1/25/08

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 **Dams** The County continues to monitor the water level fluctuations in the Boardman and Sabin Dams. It's hard to believe that two weeks ago we had such an extensive thaw and days of rain, which brought the level of the pond up approximately 6 feet 8 inches. It was the first time that we were managing the dams where we had such a water fluctuation. Overall, the re-draw down of the water went smoothly, and the water has now returned to the level prior to the thaw. Many property owners expressed concern during this time that we were acting to artificially raise the level in the pond. They found it hard to believe that the water level could increase so drastically. Our engineers, who monitor the weather stations at locations throughout the river system, indicated it was the largest infusion of new water into the pond in more than 10 years. We believe that everything is back to its normal level, but continue to discourage people from venturing out onto the pond. Any time you have an unstable situation, such as a river flowing under an impoundment, there is significant risk of unstable ice.


 **Strategic Planning** This past week, the County Board held its first Strategic Planning session for 2009. The Board identified eight goals that they feel are important for 2009.


1. To preserve the beautiful and healthy environment that makes Grand Traverse County a great place to live
2. To promote issues that will ensure the safety of the community
3. To be a community that is focused on the well-being of all it's people
4. To provide a County government that collaborates with other units of government on common issues for the benefit of the community and its individuals
5. A County government that encourages risk-taking and innovation to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of our services and to better serve our constituents
6. A County government where all customers have ready and easy access to government services

7. A County government that emphasizes fiscal responsibility for its planning for today and the future
8. A county that supports the stabilization and future expansion of a diversified economy to support the constituents that live here


The County Board will be working on their more immediate work plan in the months of February and March. The Board has moved its planning up almost 12 months to allow departments to analyze the Board's goals, develop their own set of goals, and develop budgets that will meet those goals.

 **The Grand Vision** The Grand Vision Land Use and Transportation process continues. This past week, three small group sessions were held for Traverse City, Interlochen, and the Acme area. More than 300 people attended the Traverse City session, with an additional 110 to 130 people attending Acme and Interlochen. At each session, the participants looked at that specific area and made plans for what they would like to see development look like in the next 25 to 50 years. The turnout was amazing. John Fregonese, an internationally known planner who conducted this session and others in places such as Dallas and Chicago, indicated he has never seen such significant participation by the public in any of the projects he has done. This is probably somewhat attributed to the fact that we are one of the smallest areas where this has ever been done and the fact that people are much more engaged here. Regardless, he indicated that he expects very positive outcomes as a result of the significant participation from the local community. Next up, some time in the end of February or early March, will be a full transportation analysis with public involvement. In this session the public will be asked to decide where roadways should be, how rails should be used, as well as to look at bike trails and other means of transportation. If you haven't already participated in this rewarding program, please consider doing so in February. Also, we've been told that the surrounding five counties - Kalkaska, Antrim, Leelanau, Benzie, and Wexford - have all agreed to participate in this project financially, and the scope of the study will be expanded to include evaluations and workshops in each of those communities. We are hopeful that the results of this study will give us a game plan for how development will take place in the region over the next several decades.

 **Drug Court** This past week, the 86th District Court's Drug Treatment Court ("Sobriety Court") received national recognition by being named as one of four nationally recognized Academy Courts by the National Drug Court Institute. This award is given to exemplary drug courts that have demonstrated not only success, but who have demonstrated the ability to act as a model for drug courts throughout the nation. Congratulations to the District Court judges and staff for fine work in this regard.

 **Capital Improvement Program** The County continues to work under the leadership of John Sych, County Planner, on our Capital Improvement Program. The Capital Improvement Program will lay the groundwork for how we will look at utilization of properties and facilities for the next 20 to 40 years. This process started off with an analysis and inventory of all County facilities. It continued with a survey of all County

departments to analyze the expected growth over the next decade. This information was used to look at square footage needs. The whole process resulted in a plan to give the County some guidance as to how development should take place in the upcoming years. The next step will be for a public meeting with the Planning Commission where the Planning Commission will review the Capital Improvement Program as proposed. Finally, this program will be brought to the County Board in March for its consideration. When approved, this plan will be a guide as we formulate budgets and look at facility utilization in the future.

 **Board of Public Works** This Tuesday night, the Grand Traverse County Board will be meeting with the Board of Public Works, the Resource Recovery Council, and the Sewer and Water Committee of the Board of Public Works along with John Axe, our bond counsel attorney, and Michael Houlihan, our Board of Public Works attorney, to jointly discuss the present way our Board of Public Works is organized as it relates to the County Board of Commissioners. John Axe has evaluated alternatives, and a discussion will take place to determine if we are organized in the most appropriate manner or if another alternative exists. The meeting will be held at Garfield Township Hall at 6:00 p.m. The public is invited to attend.