






## Administrator's Update 3/27/08


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 **Keystone Railroad Crossing** - The County will be undertaking the construction of a new railroad crossing onto the Keystone/TBAYS Soccer Complex this spring as soon as the frost laws are lifted. Elmer's has been hired to do the construction of the new railroad crossing, which will be moved to the north end of the property. Currently, we are using an access provided by the power company, which will no longer be available. The County approved an amendment to the contract last night to do some additional crossing work. In addition to the actual crossing, a paved road will be continued to the east of the property to be connected with the existing blacktop. This project will allow better and safer access to the facility and is expected to be completed by the first of June.


 **Twin Lakes Park Project** - Last night, the County Board of Commissioners hired Mark Robinson & Associates, an architectural firm, to complete the design and be the project manager for the construction of a Twin Lakes Park lakefront accessible project for Grand Traverse County. The total cost of this project is approximately \$750,000. The County has appropriated approximately \$140,000 for this project. An additional \$500,000 has been received in grants and donations from foundations. There is still approximately \$100,000 to be raised for the final phase of the project. We are hopeful that this project will begin sometime in the middle of this summer. The project will allow facilities to be available for all types of handicapped individuals. It will provide recreational opportunities including swimming and beach facilities, fishing piers, walkways, and a gazebo. To the best of our knowledge, we are told that this is the only handicapped-accessible park of its kind north of Holland. The community has come together along with the state and the county to make this project possible.


 **Parks Director Resignation** - With sincere regret, we have accepted the resignation of Tim Schreiner as Director of Parks & Recreation. Tim has been our Parks Director for 20 years and has done a magnificent job in elevating our parks into one of the premier park systems in northern Michigan. Tim will be taking a new position with the state running the State Park in Grand Traverse County with eventual, additional parks to be added. We want to thank Tim for his years of service and his dedication to Grand Traverse County and wish him well in his future endeavors.

 **Waste Authority Exploration** - The City of Traverse City and Garfield Township have made a proposal to the County asking that we fund, through the Solid Waste surcharge, an exploration into the possibility of establishing an authority in the County for franchising waste collection, recycling, and disposal services. At this point in time, the request comes from the City and Garfield Township; although, we understand that other townships are considering joining the effort. The County will consider this over the next month. If the

County decides to allow the study to move forward, it will most likely be with the insistence that all local units of government are eligible. The theory of an authority will be that, by combining a large portion of the market, better prices will be achieved and service options will be improved. Initially, there will be an evaluation of the feasibility of setting up an authority with later steps to provide more definitive information for the possible establishment of such an authority.

 **County Board of Road Commissioners** - At last night's County Board meeting, the County Board delayed action in adding two additional Road Commissioners to the Road Commission Board. The board is comprised of three, and one month ago, the County Board changed that to five. Last night, the County Board decided not to appoint the two additional people until such a time that a joint meeting between the Road Commission and the County Board is held to discuss the current financial situation for the Road Commission, future projections for available revenues, and the condition of the County road system. I expect that the two boards will explore options to consider improvements to the road system and try to address immediate safety needs.

 **Grand Traverse County Strategic Planning** - The County Board has been working for several months on modifying and improving the strategic planning process for Grand Traverse County. They are currently working on developing a strategic plan for 2009 with the assistance of staff and Jim Wiesing, MSU Cooperative Extension Director. The strategic planning process will have two parts. Initially, the County Board will set their goals and objectives for 2009 and develop an information booklet on county strategic planning indicating where we've been over the last several years and where we intend to go in the future including long-term objectives and past accomplishments. I expect to ask the County Board to consider distributing that publicly so that people in the community are more familiar with the direction that the County is taking in general. The second part of that process is to work with the departments to develop strategic planning documents that will coordinate with the County Board's goals and objectives. Those trainings have been taking place and will continue with Department Heads meetings. The County Board's expectation is that departments will provide goals and objectives for the next year when they submit their budget for the next year. We expect over time the County will use that as a significant tool in determining resource allocations in future years.

 **Capital Improvement Program** - Last night, the County Board approved the Capital Improvement Program for Grand Traverse County. Several years ago, the County Board approved a 5-year maintenance plan for Grand Traverse County to ensure that County facilities are maintained appropriately to extend the useful life and protect the investments in those facilities. The second directive from the County Board was to develop a capital improvement program, which would allow us to evaluate property and building ownership and future building and development needs and plan accordingly. A committee was established with Planning Commission members, the public, County Board members, and staff who have worked on this project over the last eight months. The County Capital Improvement Program plan document can be viewed on the web site: [www.grandtraverse.org](http://www.grandtraverse.org). This is the first step in a long-term capital improvement program that will allow us to lay out our future County needs and coordinate it with resource allocations.