



TART Trails, Inc. 3-5 Year Plan

Launch Date: February 2010

Mission and Vision
<p>Mission</p> <p>Enriching the Traverse region by providing a network of trails, bikeways and pedestrian ways; and encouraging their use.</p>
<p>Core Values</p> <p>We believe in...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outdoor recreation - Get outside and exercise. Experience wildlife, enjoy the natural environment, breathe fresh air and have fun. • Making connections - To nature, to work, to school, to people, to places, to ourselves- now and forever. • Sustainable transportation - Empower individuals and decision makers to make choices that benefit personal and community economics and the environment. • Equitable access - Always open and safe for everyone. • Improving health - Active transportation and outdoor recreation improves community health and personal well-being.
<p>Long-Term Vision</p> <p>Happy, active people enjoying a world-class trail system.</p> <p>The whole region will be connected by world-class trails, bikeways, and pedestrian-friendly streets linking people to the beauty of the Traverse area year round. Platinum Bicycle-Friendly, the Traverse area will be known for its natural surroundings, active, healthy outdoor lifestyles, and vibrant town centers where everyone has sustainable transportation options. We will be a world-renowned outdoor recreation and four-season destination.</p>

Analysis/Assumptions
<p>Accomplishments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 60 miles of trail projects are on the ground. Recent highlights include: Boardman Lake Trail east & north, TART-Leelanau Connector, TART-Boardman Lake Trail Connector, Three Mile Trail, TART extension east, Leelanau Trail mortgage paid & more miles paved. • Collaborations with stakeholders help further our mission. TART serves on the TC-TALUS Board of Directors. • Increase in special event success (Smart Commute Week, Tour de TART, Leelanau Harvest Tour, and others). • Traverse City Bike Friendly Designation-Bronze level. Recognized for encouragement programs that were led by TART. • The organization has grown considerably since 2002 with a professional staff and board, a successful capital campaign, increased programs, projects, advocacy and communications.
<p>Challenges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding for operational support is always a challenge. • The lack of a comprehensive long-term trail maintenance plan is limiting municipalities from building more trails. • Committee structure, board meetings not always making best use of time and talents. Internal operations could be improved. • Easements and final trail alignments are time consuming to secure. • Ability to prioritize projects.
<p>Trends/Opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to capture, tell stories of how TART has made a difference and make sure donors know TART's role. Utilize social media. There is a growing health consciousness, greater recognition of need for more active living. • More people want to live in town. Rural communities are also starting walkable initiatives. Energy and health issues may redefine transportation and encourage more incentives for active transportation. Place-making is a focus of economic development thinking. Having a world-class trail system, pedestrian-friendly streets and connecting people to the area's beauty all contribute to sense of place. Grand Vision brought to light people's desire for biking/walking facilities. • Donations are down in this economic downturn, but as the economy improves, there may be opportunities if we position ourselves for growing. On the plus side, the economic downturn has decreased development pressure and large tracts of land remain intact. • There are state and national movements to adopt Complete Street policies for new construction. • More funding sources for bike/ped projects (Federal Transportation bill changes, foundations that support health/active living, etc.)

Strategies/Goals		2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Strategies	Specific Goals/Activities					
Achieve Silver Bicycle-Friendly Designation	Work on 5 E's: Engineering, Education, Enforcement, Evaluation and Encouragement	O		Δ		
Continue/Increase education programs that promote TART values.	Support Smart Commute, Bike Safety Education, Safe Routes to Schools	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Capture/tell the stories of how TART has made a difference	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Explore opportunities to partner with other organizations on education/outreach	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Increase advocacy and identify collaborative opportunities	Increase municipal involvement- master planning, zoning for trails, sidewalks and pathways. Promote trail policy	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Advocate for complete streets/policies	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Maintain active involvement in the implementation of the Grand Vision	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Stabilize operational funding by segmenting our markets and diversifying funding sources	Define our programs, tell story, so people can identify their key interests and support them	Δ	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Restructure the Development Committee to appoint project champions	Δ				
	Develop tracking system (e.g. Moves Mgt.)	Δ				
	Expand donor base	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Increase grant-writing. Focus on bigger grants. Invest in staff training or contract services	O	✓	✓	✓	✓
Position region for achieving long-term vision	Complete regional non-motorized plan for trail expansion. Establish process, criteria for setting priorities	O		Δ		
	Map the dream trail system	Δ				
	Complete current projects*, focus on securing easements and financing	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Develop comprehensive strategy for maintaining trails year-round	Update MSU Trail User Survey- goal of doubling our annual users to 400,000		O	Δ		
	Create Trail Management Council	O				Δ
Maximize Human Resources	Ensure our trails are safe and accessible	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Expand our volunteer base	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Rethink board committee and meeting structure	Δ				
	Improve internal operations	Δ	✓	✓	✓	✓

✓ Ongoing	
O Proposed Start	● Actual start
Δ Proposed completion	▲ Actual Completion

Follow-up/Unresolved Issues
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5-county geography • What are the useful high-level measures for the overall organization? Each committee evaluated their programs and came up with measures/targets.

Future Budget Implications
<p>2010 and 2011 will include intense capital fundraising with the possible SBHT project and perhaps in 2012 or 2013 TART will embark on a TART-wide capital effort to complete existing projects and begin new endeavors. This will most likely result in a need to increase staff. Increase in program workload to accomplish this 3-5 Year Plan will also most likely result in a need to increase staff, office space, technology, etc.</p>