



Organization, programs and trail descriptions

TART Trails, Inc. organization and programs

** The name *TART Trails* is an acronym based upon the full legal name *Traverse Area Recreation and Transportation Trails*. However, the trail's short name also pays tribute to one of the best-known agricultural products of the Traverse City area, the tart cherry or pie cherry.

The mission of TART Trails is: Enriching the Grand Traverse area by providing an interconnected network of trails, bikeways and pedestrian ways; and encouraging their use.

To fulfill this mission, TART Trails has established the following goals:

- Provide safe and accessible trails for walking, biking, running, cross-country skiing, in-line skating and nature study for all ages and abilities.
- Work to expand the network of trails and interconnected bikeways and pedestrian ways.
- Promote the health, environmental, and transportation benefits of walking and biking to work, school and other destinations.
- Provide trails to enhance the local economy by serving as a destination for outdoor recreational activities by residents and tourists alike.
- Preserve public corridors to maintain ecological "greenways" and retain a part of our rich transportation history.
- Coordinate maintenance and management activities with various user groups and governmental organizations.
- Collaborate with local, state and national partners.

TART is governed by a 15-member board of volunteer directors and includes a staff of 3 full-time employees and 1 part-time employee. The board is made up of people who have valuable skill sets and an interest in trails and pedestrian advocacy. We currently have representatives in the following fields: fundraising, law, engineering, media, accounting, medical (physicians), business and finance. TART also a position on the board dedicated to an appointed member from the Grand Traverse County Board of Commissioners. Past board presidents include: Lois Bahle, Kaye Krapohl, Tom Phillips, Bob Wick and John Robert Williams.

TART also runs several committees including: Executive, Development, Outreach, Transportation Initiatives, Safety Operations and Maintenance and several event subcommittees.

The Executive committee meets monthly and goes over financial statements, makes decisions on behalf of the TART board and directs the organization in between the quarterly board meeting.

The Development committee is the fundraising arm of TART. Members on the committee work on a fundraising strategy for operations and for capital projects.

The goals of the Safety, Operations and Maintenance committee are to develop maintenance checklists, plan annual workbees and meet with local units of government regarding trail maintenance annually.

The Outreach committee also has many objectives. Some of which are: develop a Trail Ambassador Program and volunteer resource update, update TART's web site, 2008 trail survey project, promote trail use and healthy lifestyles and develop a marketing plan.

The Transportation Initiatives committee strives to tie together a grid of transportation options including trails, sidewalks, shoulders and bike lanes. The committee is working with local units of government regarding their non-motorized plans. The committee is also working on creating a region-wide map showing gaps in the non-motorized network, creating trail connections to Benzie, Wexford, Kalkaska and Antrim/Charlevoix counties.

TART also organizes several events including Tour de TART, Smart Commute Week, Turkey TART, etc. that are run as subcommittees of the Outreach committee.

The TART board adopted a 5-Year work plan on January 12, 2005. Work plan priorities were developed based on a May 2004 retreat and the adoption of a new Mission Statement and Goals in November 2004. The work plan prioritized projects and goals for the organization. The updated project scope includes: complete development of the Leelanau Trail, extend Leelanau Trail one mile north of Suttons Bay, extend TART Trail remaining 5.5 miles to Williamsburg, complete west-side 2.5 miles of the Boardman Lake Trail and extend the Three Mile Trail to Hammond Road.

TART Trails regularly collaborates with many entities in the area to advocate for trail expansion and maintenance, and to promote trail usage.

- City of Traverse City
- Cherry Capital Cycling Club
- Downtown Development Authority, Traverse City
- Elk Rapids Rotary Club
- Garfield Township
- Grand Traverse County Road Commission
- Grand Traverse County
- Grand Traverse Regional Community Foundation
- Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy
- League of Michigan Bicyclists
- Leelanau Conservancy
- Leelanau County Road Commission
- Michigan Department of Natural Resources
- Michigan Department of Transportation
- Michigan Land Use Institute
- Michigan Trails and Greenways Alliance
- Northwest Michigan Council of Governments
- Suttons Bay Chamber of Commerce
- Traverse City Area Chamber of Commerce, Transportation Committee
- Traverse City Land Use and Transportation Study
- Village of Kingsley
- Village of Suttons Bay

The Vasa Pathway

Managed under agreement with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Grand Traverse County, and TART Trails, the Vasa Pathway is located amid the pristine beauty of the Pere Marquette State Forest. The Pathway, utilized by cross country skiers, mountain bikers, walkers, and naturalists, features a series of loops and trails that offer both challenging and easier routes for every level of user.

TART maintains the trail year-round and provides cross-country ski trail grooming services on the trail in the winter months.

The trail features 3, 5, 10 and 25 kilometer loops and the trailhead is located in Acme Township. The trail is marked with wayfinding signs. Detailed maps available at trailhead. **Directions:** US31 to Bunker Hill, Right on Bartlett, Left into trailhead parking area.

The Boardman Lake Trail

The 2-mile east-side Boardman Lake Trail was completed in October 2005. The Boardman Lake Trail is an intimate trail right on the lake. The north half of the trail is paved with the remaining trail surface of crushed limestone and boardwalk.

The trail will be expanded around Boardman Lake. Eventually, it will connect to the TART Trail, city neighborhoods, the public library, and the Grand Traverse Nature Education Reserve. The long term vision includes a trail extension down the Boardman River Valley and beyond.

The trail is flanked by community parks. **Directions:** The trail can be accessed at Hull Park (Woodmere to Hannah Ave.) on the north end and at Medalie Park (off S. Airport Rd. near Logan's Landing) on the south end.

The TART Trail

The eleven mile long TART trail is a non-motorized path that extends from the west side of Traverse City to Acme Township. There is a non-contiguous 2-mile TART trail extension that extends from Lautner Road to Bates Road (along the railroad.) It is a paved urban transportation corridor that offers easy accessibility to the Grand Traverse Bay, downtown Traverse City, neighborhoods, parks, beaches, hotels, restaurants, shopping, marinas, bike shops and museums. The trail is a favorite of families, visitors, bicyclists, runners, walkers, in-line skaters and commuters.

The trail intersects other non-motorized trails in greater Traverse City, including the Boardman Lake Trail that skirts the eastern side of Boardman Lake, the Leelanau Trail with a connection to Suttons Bay and the Vasa Pathway, a system loop trails in the Pere Marquette State Forest east of Traverse City.

The original TART Trail was constructed in 1991-1995. It was enlarged and extended several times in 1995-2005.

The TART Trail and Leelanau Trail were connected in 2004, which results in a 26-mile non-motorized pathway from Suttons Bay to Acme Township.

TART commissioned artist Verna Bartnick to create a life-size bronze sculpture depicting an adult teaching a child to ride a bicycle. The statue is titled “Time to Let Go” and is located on the TART Trail in Clinch Park. The sculpture is the first piece of public art to be added to Traverse City’s bayfront. A brick plaza around the sculpture features a garden, seating and donor recognition: a bronze plaque and engraved bricks list major donors of our 2003 Capital Campaign. The sculpture and plaza were created as a recognition site for our Campaign donors. There is room for future donor recognition to occur at the site for future campaigns.

Auto parking available at numerous parks and Traverse City public parking lots.

The Three Mile Trail

The Three Mile Trail is a non-motorized pathway that is located along Three Mile Road on the east side of Traverse City. Phase I of the Three Mile Trail project was complete in 2006. It is a 2-mile north-south trailway that intersects with the existing TART Trail at Parsons Road. The trail starts at US-31 (near the State Park beach) and ends at South Airport Road.

An engineering and planning study is scheduled to be completed for the Phase II trail extension to Hammond Road. Eventually, TART hopes to work with the cluster of schools at the Hammond/Three Mile intersection on making trail connections to their campuses.

Directions: There are two parking areas near the trail: 1) on the corner of Three Mile Road/Parsons Road and 2) at the State Park Beach off US 31.

The Leelanau Trail

The Leelanau Trail is a 15-mile non-motorized pathway that extends from Traverse City to Suttons Bay. Stretching through the last of the Leelanau County railway corridors, the trail route features rolling hills, lush forests, picturesque orchards, peaceful meadows, and an aquatic medley of streams, lakes, and ponds.

The trail is paved from Carter Road to Lakeview Road in Elmwood Township. The trail is a hard-packed two-track for 7 miles and is paved from Revold Road in Bingham Township to the depot in Suttons Bay.

The Leelanau Trail and TART Trail were connected in 2004, which results in a 26-mile non-motorized pathway from Suttons Bay to Acme Township.

Directions: There are **three trailheads** located off Cherry Bend Road, Fouch Road and 4th Street in Suttons Bay.