



Administration  
400 Boardman Ave. Suite #305  
Traverse City, MI 49684  
231-922-4780

July 21, 2021

Mr. Jason Wentworth, Speaker of the Michigan House  
Capitol Building, Room 164  
PO Box 30014  
Lansing, MI 48909-7514

Speaker Wentworth,

Grand Traverse County relies on our plentiful resources to serve our citizens and visitors alike. Many of our residents have chosen to live in our County because of the natural beauty of our region. Likewise, our local businesses depend on our natural resources. We would like to do what we can to protect our residents and industries from being impacted adversely, and protect our natural resources from being damaged forever, caused by pollution, and inadequate and aging infrastructure. One way we can ensure this is to protect our vast water resource.

Grand Traverse County has 81 lakes (not including Lake Michigan), 2 rivers, and approximately 40 creeks within its borders. The Boardman River watershed only includes over 100 miles of river and tributary streams and covers over 200 square miles. These wonderful bodies of water are under a constant threat of pollution, sedimentation, and overdevelopment. The various municipalities within Grand Traverse County have opportunities to help protect and preserve our water resources. Projects that manage storm water, enhance sanitary sewer systems, and provide municipal water supply to residential, manufacturing, and industrial developments, will significantly improve the county's ability to protect our water resource.

These efforts are normally costly and require partnerships to complete. Grand Traverse County would like to offer grants to our municipalities to assist them in completing projects that address stormwater, resilient water supply, and new and updated sanitary sewer systems. We are requesting aid from the State of Michigan in the amount of \$20 million dollars, to help protect our valuable water resources. Grand Traverse County would use the aid to offer a 50% match to those municipalities in Grand Traverse County that engage in related activity. This match would entice new resilient infrastructure, repairing or replacing aging infrastructure, and encourage large scale activity and multi- municipality cooperation.

An example of a potential project is an improvement of the 14<sup>th</sup> Street Corridor in the City of Traverse City. Recent flooding events have been exacerbated due to the ineffective storm water management system in the 14<sup>th</sup> Street area and has allowed storm water to repeatedly flood parts of Garfield Township and Traverse City, causing sewage to enter Grand Traverse Bay. Please see the attached letter from City Manager Martin Colburn detailing the concept and associated \$20 million dollar cost estimate.

Other potential projects are much needed improvements to the Grand Traverse County Septage Treatment Facility, estimated to be \$3.8 million dollars. These improvements include capacity enhancements and improvements and much needed maintenance and upgrades.

The Grand Traverse region has a significant shortage of housing and manufacturing developments. Projects such as the extension of municipal water systems and sanitary sewer systems to undeveloped parcels in East Bay Township, Blair Township, and Garfield Township to promote much needed housing and manufacturing developments would be eligible for matching dollars from the state aid while addressing a significant need in our region.

I would like to thank you for your assistance in securing aid from the State of Michigan to help secure our water resources.

Sincerely,

Robert Hentschel,  
Grand Traverse County, Chairman of the Board of Commissioners

CC: Senator Wayne Schmidt  
Representative John Roth