



## GRAND TRAVERSE COUNTY Equalization/GIS Department

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*Grand Traverse County provides mandated and necessary services that ensure safety and add value to our community.*

**\*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE\***  
**County Shares Property Data with Partner Organizations**

February 9, 2016

**Traverse City** – Grand Traverse County Department of Equalization Director James Baker recently signed data sharing agreements with two County partner organizations, the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy and TART Trails. According to the agreements, geographic information systems (GIS) spatial data will be shared with each entity “to enhance emergency services, delivery, and planning efforts.”

In place for the next two years, the agreements authorize data to be shared with both organizations “as-is”. Because TART Trails and the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy, both non-profit organizations, meet specific criteria outlined in Grand Traverse County’s “Enhanced Access to Records Policy, the information will be provided at no cost.

The County Board, the Parks and Recreation Commission, and the Parks Department all have long-established collaborative partnerships with TART Trails and the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy. That is why, according to Baker, the data sharing agreements “just make sense.” Said Baker, “Sharing data will enhance and further support our partner organizations’ tremendous planning efforts on behalf of our community.”

According to TART Trails Executive Director Julie Clark, the agreement to share data is significant, because the information can be used to identify parcel boundaries in the county that border the TART Trail. Said Clark, “This will improve our collective ability to plan for non-motorized trail opportunities, assess and improve area trail infrastructure management, and help us more effectively communicate with property owners and trail neighbors.” TART Trails has built and maintains over 60 miles of trails in Grand Traverse and Leelanau Counties.

Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy Land Stewardship Specialist Jon Throop said, “We are excited and pleased with this agreement, because it greatly assists with the Conservancy’s efforts to continue to protect land in our area.” For 25 years, individual donors, foundations, volunteers, and local, state, and federal agency partnerships have helped the Conservancy protect over 39,000 acres of land and 121 miles of shoreline.

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