



MEMORANDUM

Date: February 13, 2014
To: Jered Ottenwess, Traverse City Manager
From: John Hall, Chairman, Rotary Camps & Services Board of Trustees
Marsha Smith, Executive Director
Re: Surplus Property

Traverse City Light & Power and the City Commission face an important decision regarding the future use of a valuable public asset, the former TC Coal Dock in Elmwood Township. As you know, The Discovery Center Great Lakes and Rotary Camps & Services have presented a proposal for future use of the property. We are interested in opening this under-utilized asset up to the public and creating another jewel on West Bay's waterfront.

We understand that as responsible leaders you must carefully consider all of the options and we respectfully suggest you might consider these key questions:

"What is the highest and best public benefit that this property can provide to our citizens?"

" Will the long term public benefits of maintaining public use of this asset outweigh the short term benefits of selling the asset for private use at market value?"

As I stated in my public comments at the Joint Study Session on February 10, 2014, establishing a set of criteria against which to measure all of the options and proposals will help assure a fair and transparent process that will result in the greatest community good. It will also serve as a consistent way to evaluate future acquisitions and dispositions of publically held land. I would like to offer some ideas about criteria that might be considered to help address those key questions.

Does the proposed use for the now publicly owned asset:

- Align with the citizen's vision and goals?
- Provide public access?
- Address unmet public needs?
- Leverage public and private funds?
- Provide significant economic impact for the region?
- Provide an operationally sustainable model that will not be financially dependent on City revenues?

We believe our vision for a community pier, harbor and marina addresses all of these criteria. We implore the City Commission to make a wise decision that is in alignment with the vision that the citizens of Traverse City and our region have consistently told us for years- **“Keep our bay front open for the public”**.

For over 50 years the City of Traverse City has listened to the citizens and worked systematically to open our bay front for public use. This thoughtful and visionary framework has led to a world class waterfront that is accessible to all, regardless of economic status or physical ability. It has been the catalyst for adjoining units of government in Acme and Elmwood Townships to do the same.

We believe that it would not be in the best long-term interest of the community to reverse this trend and sell this currently under-utilized frontage on West Grand Traverse Bay to a private developer for the highest commercial market value.