# WATERFRONT MASTER PLAN

NOVEMBER 2016



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Special thanks to the Town of Gibraltar residents and businesses who participated in workshops, meetings, online discussions, and informal conversations. The project steering committee included all members of the Town Board and Harbor Commission.

# TOWN BOARD

Richard Skare, Chairman Steve Sohns, Supervisor Brian Hackbarth, Supervisot Karl Stubenvoll, Supervisor Brian Merkel, Supervisor Barb McKesson, Supervisor



## HARBOR COMMISSION

Dave Harris, Chairman Paul Woerfel Brian Merkel Greg Swain Rick Hecker

# PLAN COMMISSION

Linda Merline, Chair Tom Blackwood Tom Young Wendy Minten Brian Hackbarth

# CONSULTANT TEAM:



# CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION	PAGE 5
PLANNING PROCESS, KEY ISSUES, AND FUTURE VISION	
DOOR COUNTY AND TOWN OF GIBRALTAR	
FISH CREEK	
2. ANALYSIS	PAGE 19
FISH CREEK	
LAND USE	
WATEFRONT OPERATIONS	
CIRCULATION	
PLACEMAKING	
3. MASTER PLAN	PAGE 47
CIRCULATION, PARKING, WAYFINDING	
FISH CREEK	
TOWN BEACH	
HARBOR AREA	
PROPERTY ACQUISITION	
4. IMPLEMENTATION	PAGE 63
FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES	
SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS	
APPENDICES	PAGE 71
SUMMARY OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION RESULTS - PDF	





Figure 1. Clark Park & Town Dock

Balancing public and private access to the watefront is a critical issue facing Fish Creek

# PLANNING PROCESS PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

The purpose of the Plan is to identify enhancements to Fish Creek's waterfront areas with a focus on the Town Dock, boat launches, Town Beach, and Fish Creek. It provides a blueprint for the Town of Gibraltar and its public and private partners to invest in the future. In so doing the Master Plan seeks to balance the need for a forward-looking vision for the Town's waterfront public spaces with the need for a cost-effective built reality that balances many public and stakeholder demands.

The Plan was developed through an inclusive, open, and transparent process over the period late summer 2015 to summer 2016. Community engagement efforts included the following components:

- Community workshops
- Design workshops
- Resident & property owner survey
- Visitor survey
- Town dock user survey
- Waterfront business focus group
- Open houses
- Steering Committee Meetings
- Presentations to the Town of Gibraltar Town Board
- Key stakeholder meetings with business owners, private property owners, and public agencies











A summary of public involvement efforts and results is provided in the Appendix 'Summary of Public Participation Results.' Several key issues were identified based on public and key stakeholder input, as well as discussion with the project steering committee.

This Plan aligns with many of the goals, objectives, and policies contained in the Town of Gibraltar's Comprehensive Plan (10-year revision, December 2015) including those related to cultural resources, economic development, transportation, utilities, community facilities, and land use.

### KEY ISSUES IDENTIFIED

- Congestion
- Water Quality
- Walking & Biking
- Ecological Restoration
- Wayfinding
- Public Access

### CONGESTION

One of the key issues in Fish Creek is congestion. During the height of the tourist season heavy vehicular traffic leads to congestion along Main Street and throughout the downtown area, including at the Town's boat launches. Congestion causes safety concerns, as bikers and pedestrians vie for space among cars, boats, and delivery vehicles. Congestion also limits access, as parking spots quickly fill up and visitors find it difficult to access Fish Creek's shops, restaurants, and waterfront areas.

### WATER QUALITY

Water quality has been an issue at the Town Beach, with bacterial outbreaks leading to summer time beach closures. Storm water runoff also negatively impacts water quality more generally, as more and more impervious surfaces such as parking lots and driveways are built within the watershed, carrying silt and other pollutants into the bay.

### WALKING & BIKING

Residents and visitors value how walkable downtown Fish Creek is and desire more connectivity. However, they also have concerns over pedestrian and bicycle safety. A key concern is getting bicyclists safely to and from downtown Fish Creek, with many bicyclists using overcrowded sidewalks or Main Street to make the journey back and forth from nearby destinations such as Peninsula State Park.



Figure 2. Spruce Park provides public access to the waterfront



Figure 3. The Town dock provides amenities to residents and tourists alike



Figure 4. There is a strong desire to enhance the Town Beach area



Figure 5. Fish Creek is a destination for many visitors



Figure 6. Signage directs visitors to the boat trailer parkinig lot



Figure 7. There is a desire to provide additional public access to the waterfront

### ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION

Fish Creek's namesake drains a large watershed, emptying into the bay between the Town Beach and Peninsula State Park. However, the creek has been degraded over time through channel straightening and down-cutting in the vicinity of the STH 42 concrete box culvert. In particular, an approximate 18 inch drop in the channel bottom occurs at the edge of the downstream concrete apron, causing a significant barrier to fish passage.

### WAYFINDING

Welcoming and orienting visitors to Fish Creek is seen as an issue. Certain areas, such as the Town Center and Noble House parking lots, are not well marked and difficult to find. Arriving from the South there is a lack of coherent informational signage welcoming and guiding visitors to key destinations.

### PUBLIC ACCESS

Public access to waterfront recreational opportunities, including access and enjoyment of the Town Beach and Fish Creek waterfront are seen as critical issues by many residents. While the number of launches is excessive compared with peer communities, the existing boat launch configurations are seen as inadequate, as are the level of amenities at the Town Beach. A majority of survey respondents indicated they would like to see additional public access to the waterfront as well as beach improvements.

### KEY FORCES & ISSUES

Early in the planning process a set of key issues were identified and graphically incorporated into a Forces and Issues map. The purpose of the map is to develop a common understanding of the key issues, or challenges, facing Fish Creek's various waterfront areas.

## Fish Creek Waterfront Forces & Issues

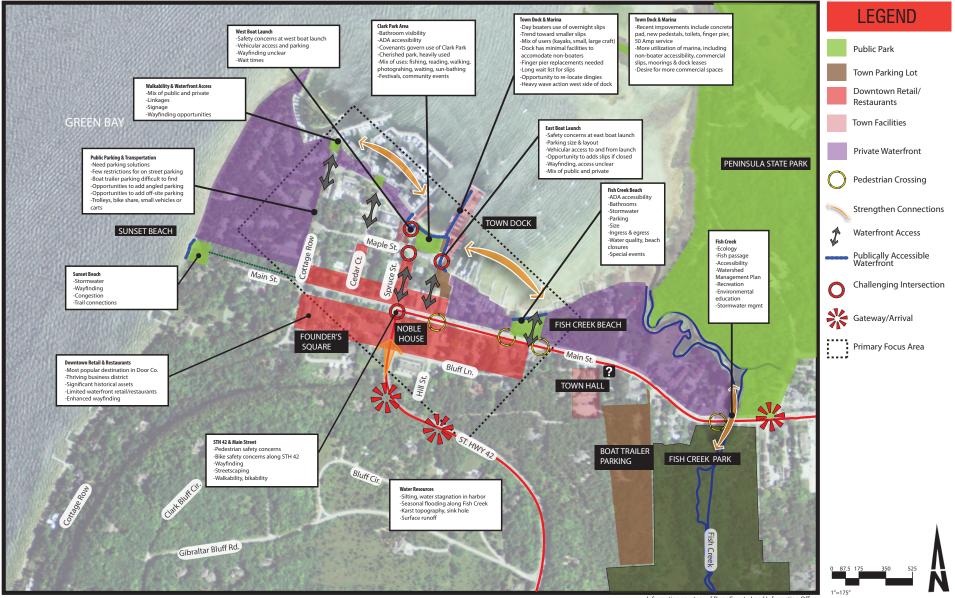


Figure 8. Fish Creek forces and issues diagram

Information courtesv of Door County Land Information Office

## VISION AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Vision Statement is an overall expression of intent which is used to guide Plan development and Plan implementation.

### "Fish Creek is a welcoming, and accessible community whose downtown & waterfront work together to provide an unmatched visitor experience and quality of life for year-round residents"

To support the vision a set of guiding principles were developed. These principles were used in the evaluation of alternatives during Plan development, and should be considered important factors as the Town implements this Plan.

- 1. Keep the quaint, charming character of the community
- 2. Maintain economic vibrancy and sustainable return on public investments
- 3. Shared commercial and non-commercial use
- 4. Increase and enhance connections
- 5. Enhance walkability and bikeability
- 6. Embrace the waterfront
- 7. Educate, promote, and maintain historic heritage
- 8. Protect and restore the natural environment

### KEEP THE QUAINT, CHARMING CHARACTER OF THE COMMUNITY

Fish Creek has a charming quality which is very attractive to both its residents and visitors. People value its walkability, its mix of shops and restaurants, and its physical beauty. Throughout the planning process community members, elected officials, visitors, and others stressed the importance of maintaining the existing character of the community. This Plan does not propose any major land use or other improvements that would drastically change the feel of the community. Rather, it embraces and incrementally builds upon what already makes Fish Creek a special place: its visitor experience, its walkability, its diverse mix of retail, restaurants, and lodging, its small parks and open spaces.

### MAINTAIN ECONOMIC VIBRANCY AND SUSTAINABLE RETURN ON PUBLIC INVESTMENTS

Downtown Fish Creek, unlike many similar sized downtowns, is filled with successful retail, dining, lodging, and other commercial establishments. Visitors come to Door County for its natural beauty but they have many choices when it comes to shopping or dining after they arrive. It is the overall experience of Fish Creek that attracts them downtown. This Plan proposes to enhance that experience by addressing key issues such as congestion, access to the water, and wayfinding. New trails, better signage, expanded off-site parking, beach enhancements, and improved access to the water are all proposed. Many of these improvements can be done relatively inexpensively, while others are more costly. This Plan proposes a phased approach rather than implementing large scale improvements all at once.





### SHARED COMMERCIAL AND NON-COMMERCIAL USE

One of the challenges of highly successful, tourismbased communities such as Fish Creek is achieving a balance between commercial activities and uses, and non-commercial activities and uses. This Plan proposes a mix of enhancements (trails, parks, parking, wayfinding, etc...) designed to support both commercial and non-commercial activities. For example, new trail segments and connections will benefit both businesses by making their locations more accessible, while also providing a quality of life benefit for residents. Similarly, greater waterfront access is intended to enhance the resident and visitor experience, while also benefitting existing businesses and providing new business opportunities as well.

### INCREASE AND ENHANCE CONNECTIONS

Visitors to Door County are increasingly looking to stay in and visit places which are walkable and provide biking opportunities. Therefore, Fish Creek's location at the entrance to Peninsula State Park makes it a highly desirable destination. The Park has a well-developed network of walking and biking trails. This Plan proposes to strengthen downtown's linkages to the Park through additional trail connections and amenities.



Figure 9. What three words best describe Fish Creek twenty years from now?

# ENHANCE WALKABILITY AND BIKEABILITY

A community's walkability is dependent upon four system conditions which must be satisfied in order to make walking the preferred option for an individual. First, the walk must be useful, meaning that most aspects of daily life are sufficiently close by and accessible. This Plan proposes new trail segments which will make Fish Creek destinations more accessible by foot and bike. Second, walkers must feel safe, with streets designed to give pedestrians a "fighting chance." This Plan proposes changes to the Spruce Street & STH 42 intersection which would create safer conditions for pedestrians. Third, the environment must be comfortable, meaning that the landscape and urban form create a sense of enclosure that make people feel like they are walking through an "outdoor living room." This Plan proposes maintaining the town's intimate feel by retaining existing buildings even as additional public waterfront access is achieved over the long-term. Finally, walkable places are interesting places. This Plan respects the uniqueness of Fish Creek's buildings while identifying small scale, interesting enhancements such as a new park, public art, a pedestrian overlook, and access to Fish Creek.

### EMBRACE THE WATERFRONT

Residents involved in the planning process expressed strong support for additional waterfront access and green space along the water's edge. The existing boat launch configurations, though numerous, are also seen as inadequate, as are the level of amenities at the Town Beach. 60% of survey respondents indicated improved beach access should be a priority. There was also widespread support for more fully embracing the creek, through habitat restoration and enhanced pedestrian and bicycle access. Opportunities to embrace the waterfront also include additional silent sports activities, such as kayak rentals, educational efforts to highlight the history of the bay, and establishing stronger visual connections to the water. This Plan identifies strategies for Fish Creek to embrace its waterfront including proposed improvements to Fish Creek, the Harbor Area/Town Dock and the Town Beach.

### EDUCATE, PROMOTE, AND MAINTAIN HISTORIC HERITAGE

Fish Creek's history is an important part of what makes the community a special place to live and visit. Residents and visitors to Fish Creek place tremendous value on the existing character of the community. Protecting and preserving the cultural resources are seen as a priority. Residents and visitors value Fish Creek's quaintness, walkability, and history. They want to preserve the small town feel of the community, including the scale and character of the buildings and small businesses which call downtown Fish Creek home. This plan does not call for large scale interventions which would undermine what makes Fish Creek a unique and special place. The consultant team heard loud and clearly from the community that they "like things the way they are now." Therefore, the projects identified in this Plan are intended to be smaller scale in nature and mesh into the existing fabric of the community versus calling for large scale change.



Figure 10. Survey responses to question "What do you like most about Fish Creek?"

more landscaping charm walkability town ars nestaurants Peninsula park szellent remain downtown provide beach non all want Small all want chan szime all want chan szime all want signal all want chan szime atural Fish schnesse et good people to parks older enough like over Main most both scasonal wares beauty green water both scasonal ware both water both scasonal bot

Figure 11. Survey responses to question "What about Fish Creek should not change"

# PROTECT AND RESTORE THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Protecting and restoring the natural environment are both seen as priorities. Water quality has been an issue at the Town Beach, with bacterial outbreaks leading to summer time beach closures. Fish Creek's namesake drains a large watershed, however the creek has degraded over time, as increased run off has led to channelization and erosion carrying silt and other pollutants into the bay. A box culvert dam prevents upstream fish passage throughout most of the year. This Plan identifies storm water management strategies to reduce the amount and quantity of storm water runoff, while also prioritizing the development of a comprehensive watershed management plan to help inform land use decision making over time. Finally, it illustrates ways to leverage improvements for greater pedestrian connectivity to and from the State Park.

# LOCAL AND REGIONAL CONTEXT

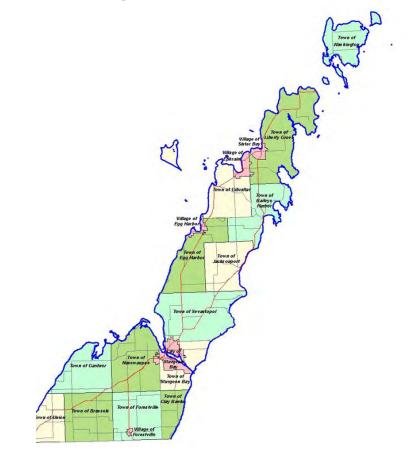
### DOOR COUNTY AND TOWN OF GIBRALTAR Geography

Door County is known for its water and its topography. The Niagara Escarpment runs up the spine of the county, providing exceptional views to both Green Bay and Lake Michigan. There are over 300 miles of rocky shoreline and sandy beaches along its coast.

### NATURAL RESOURCES

The Town of Gibraltar is located within the Upper Door priority watershed. County-sponsored goals for the area include protecting groundwater, decreasing well contamination, and improving and protecting the water quality of streams and lakes.

There are five sub-watersheds within the Town, including large areas in the western side of the Town which drain to Green Bay. The Fish Creek watershed drains a majority of the central and northwestern portions of the Town.



### FISH CREEK

Fish Creek is located at the southern entrance to Peninsula State Park. Its location adjacent the deepest, protected bay in northern Door County has played a strong role in its development, as has its location along State Highway 42 (STH 42).

Consistently rated as a top small town tourist destination, Fish Creek is known for its charming downtown, restaurants, shopping, arts, and thriving cultural scene. Its proximity to Peninsula State Park and Lake Michigan provides many opportunities for outdoor adventure and exploration.

### HISTORY

Fish Creek got its start in the mid 1850's when Increase Claffin, Door County's first settler, built his second home in the county. Soon after, Asa Thorp arrived and set up a wood loading dock to provide fuel for the steamboats making their way to and from Green Bay. Farmers and fishermen soon arrived and the town grew slowly.

The tourism industry got its start as larger homes were built with extra rooms for travelers, some of which eventually converted to hotels. Steamboats brought visitors from Chicago and St. Louis, fueling the development of iconic hotels including "The Casino" now known as the Whistling Swan.

As the community grew several social organizations emerged to support community development including the Fish Creek Women's Club, the Royal Neighbors, various church groups, and the Fish Creek Business Association.

Tourism remains the backbone of Fish Creek's economy, however more and more seasonal and yearround residents drawn to the area for its exceptional quality of life now bring their jobs and retirement income with them, in turn providing demand for products and services.

Today, Fish Creek, like the Town of Gibraltar as a whole, is characterized by the presence of many small businesses. Fish Creek is also home to two larger employers, Gibraltar Area Schools and the Door County YMCA. The population of Fish Creek is similar to the Town as a whole, comprising primarily older and well educated individuals.

### PHYSICAL SETTING

Fish Creek is nestled beneath and adjacent to the Niagara Escarpment, sandwiched between rocky outcroppings and Fish Creek Harbor. STH 42 runs through downtown, bringing throngs of visitors throughout the tourist season.

The commercial core of downtown Fish Creek lies along both sides of Main Street (STH 42) between Cottage Row and the Town Beach. The town is surrounded by parks and open space, with much of Peninsula State Park's stormater runoff draining back into the harbor via the creek.





Figure 12. Peninsula State Park (3,776 acres) is Wisconsin's most heavily visited State Park. Established in 1909, it includes 8 miles of shoreline, extensive northern hardwood forests, wetlands, and meadows.



Figure 13. Historic photos of Fish Creek - courtesy of Barb Mckesson.

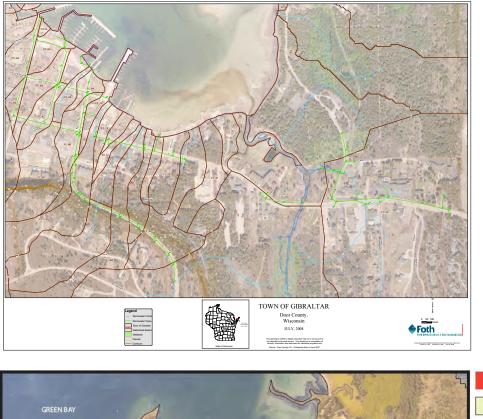
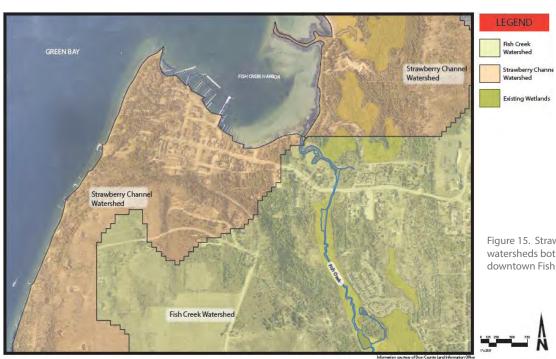


Figure 14. Downtown Fish Creek is divided into multiple subwatersheds.

#### CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION



TOWN OF GIBRALTAR WATERFONT MASTER PLAN

Figure 15. Strawberry Channel and Fish Creek watersheds both encompass portions of downtown Fish Creek.





"Fish Creek was physically straightened in the past (dredged), a short distance upstream of STH 42. Perhaps this was done in association with the construction of the STH 42 concrete box culvert or perhaps to accommodate boat passage. I do not think that any change in hydrology would have straightened the channel out. Further upstream (outside the park), the channel meanders are still observed. We would want to recreate those within the park." - Tom Sear, SEH Senior Water Resource Engineer

# FISH CREEK

### BACKGROUND

The Fish Creek watershed drains a large portion of the Town of Gibraltar. Fish Creek itself is a small 1.5 mile creek which empties into Green Bay just west of Peninsula State Park. A majority of the watershed is rural in nature, and includes a majority of Peninsula State Park. The creek is fed by both springs and storm water runoff.

The main channel of the creek is approximately 1 <sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> miles long, ranging from 2 to 6 feet wide, and normally less than 2 feet deep, with a channel grade of approximately 15 feet/mile. The creek provides habitat for a variety of plant and animal species, including Northern Pike which usually spawn in late April followed by suckers which prefer slightly warmer water. A salmon spawn which typically occurs in October.

Water entering Fish Creek bay first passes through a box culvert beneath STH 42 and flows past a private business. The area is a very popular tourist destination and visitors are often seen sitting, resting, and playing along the creek.

The creek then rounds a bend and discharges into the bay. Storm water runoff enters the creek before it discharges into the bay from several sources, including via a culvert which runs under the entrance to Peninsula State Park just to the east of the creek.

The Fish Creek Water Shed Study began in 1998 with a baseline study and ongoing monitoring of the creek, with the ultimate goal of helping the Town properly steward its resource. The volunteer

group's vision for the area is "A healthy stream that supports the environmental and economic interests of the community."

Volunteers have collected a large amount of baseline data since 1999, however the data has not been thoroughly analyzed and no formal plans have been put in place to guide long-term stewardship of the creek.

### ISSUES & OPPORTUNITIES

There are a number of issues and opportunities related to Fish Creek and its watershed. These include environmental concerns, as well as a desire for increased bicycle, snowmobile, and pedestrian access.

1. Hydrologic alterations on the landscape around the creek and within its watershed have contributed to issues now threatening the long term health of the creek, including insufficient to non-existent water flow during some periods of the year. Alterations in hydrology will continue as the community and infrastructure expand, and problems may worsen without proper strategies in place. Increasing upstream infiltration of storm water before it drains to the creek is one such strategy.

2. Insufficient water flow **impedes fish passage** and negatively impacts aquatic habitat for a va-

riety of plants and animal species.

3. Flash flooding and peak discharge events negatively impact the physical structure of the creek. The silt from bank and sheet erosion causes the creek to become wider and shallower in places, which in turn makes the temperature of the water rise. This results in **less dissolved oxygen available for the creatures who live in the creek**.

4. High water velocities associated with major rain events and past physical alterations have also led to **channelization and the undercutting of the creek's bank** in places. **Restoring natural meanders** provides an opportunity to slow down water velocity.

5. The creek is cherished by both residents and visitors, who enjoy wildlife observation, playing in the water, and even helping assist with fish migrations by carrying fish past the STH 42 culvert when water levels are low. As a highly valued asset, the Town has the **opportunity to more fully embrace the creek as part of its identity by pro-actively planning** for the protection and restoration of this resource helping ensure its long-term health.

6. Utilizing the creek as a corridor to promote tourism was also identified as an opportunity.



In December 2015 the Town updated its 20-Year Comprehensive Plan, for "the general purpose of guiding and accomplishing coordinated, adjusted, and harmonious development of the Town." The Town is under the authority of the Door County Zoning Ordinance, administered by Door County. In 2016, the Town acquired property east of the Town Beach.

# LAND USE Public parks & open space

Fish Creek is blessed with beautiful parks, trails, and open space throughout parts of downtown and much of its periphery. In addition to several Town parks, Fish Creek sits adjacent to Pensinsula State Park providing thousands of acres of nearby and accessible park land.

### **ISSUES & OPPORTUNITIES**

**The Town Beach.** While most of Fish Creek's current parks fall into the "if it ain't broke don't fix it" category, there are several concerns regarding Fish Creek Beach.

1. The Town Beach is heavily visited but does **not have adequate bathroom facilities**. The Town currently uses portable toilets to serve visitors, however providing indoor bathroom and changing room facilities is viewed as an important opportunity to improve the beach experience.

2. There are water quality and storm water discharge concerns. The storm water outfall at the western edge of the Town Beach is unsightly and discharges polluted runoff directly adjacent the swimming area. The flow of water in the harbor is also a concern, with stagnation contributing to deteriorated water quality.

3. **Parking and access were identified as issues at the Town Beach**. There is limited parking available at the beach and it does not meet ADA requirements. Vehicular access to and from the beach can also be a challenge in high traffic, and there is no direct bike trail connection to the beach.

4. Amenities such as **picnic areas and an expanded playground** were identified as opportunities. County Zoning and WDNR restrictions limit what can be added to the current site.

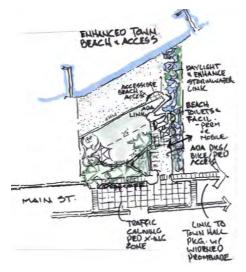
5. In 2015, the Town Beach had 10 advisories and was closed six times due to elevated bacteria. It is likely that storm water, directed to the beach via an outfall, is a primary source of bacteria and other pollutants. **Infiltrating and treating storm water runoff** before it hits the beach is an opportunity to address the issue.

6. Adding a storm water treatment device, a manhole which is put in line with the pipe to separate suspended solids and debris from the outfall, **could reduce storm water impacts**. Adding 2-foot sumps to the inlets along STH 42 provides another opportunity to treat runoff before it reaches the bay.



7. Several participants in the planning process identified a desire to provide better **kayak/si-**lent water sport access at the Town Beach.







**Clark Park** is a popular park in the heart of downtown. It is used to host events throughout the year and is a popular place for visitors to observe the marina, read, and visit with friends and family. Similar to Sunset Park there were no major issues or concerns identified during the planning process. Most people like the park just the way it is. The park land has a deed restriction in place which states that the land be used "solely as a Public Park and/or Playground." The heirs to the property would like to see the entire property remain a public park. Greater visibility and clearer access to public bathrooms were cited as opportunities.

**Sunset Beach.** Occasional traffic congestion and storm water runoff were cited as minor concerns, however most participants in the planning process did not identify any major issues at Sunset Beach. The Town has recently invested in the park, including wall repairs and benches. Incorporating landscape interpretive signage was identified as an opportunity, so that visitors would know what they are looking at as they look west across the bay. Improving trail accessibility and trolley accomodation were also cited as opportunities.

**Fish Creek Park** is a 27-acre facility bisected by the creek which bears its name. The park provides walking trails which connect to the Boat Trailer parking lot but they are not heavily used. The creek is degraded both upstream and downstream of the box culvert which carries its flow beneath STH 42. Inadequate fish passage, water quantity and quality, invasive species, and accessibility were all cited as concerns. This

Plan identifies several potential strategies to address the natural resource concerns, many of which will be studied in more detail as the Town prepares an overall Fish Creek Watershed Management Plan.

This Plan does not directly impact any other Town parks within the study area.

**Open Space.** 49% of residents surveyed said it was important to have a pedestrian walkway from the Town Beach to the marina (Clark Park) area. The consultant team met with property owners along this stretch of land and discovered that the majority were uncomfortable including the boardwalk concept in this Plan. Subsequent discussion with the project steering committee led to decision not to include the concept in the master plan. Instead, a set of principles was developed to serve as a guide for the Town as it contemplates future acquisition of private property within the study area. Termed "the playbook," the decision making principles are described in the master plan section of this report.



### COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Fish Creek's charm is due in no small part to its highly successful business community. And while the surge of visitors can feel chaotic at times, the mix of vehicles, bikes, and pedestrians helps slow down traffic making walking more enjoyable and safer "feeling" compared with other tourist destinations.

Several urban design qualities also contribute to that charm including good linkages, a human scaled environment, and a fine grained mix of land uses. The combination of a thriving local economy and good urban design creates a highly walkable environment which distinguishes Fish Creek from other Door County destinations. Walkability is a large part of what makes the community feel unique and special.







### **ISSUES & OPPORTUNITIES**

Many of the qualities which make Fish Creek such a desired destination are contingent upon a tightly interwoven mix of public and private land uses which combine together to create an attractive, welcoming environment, but which also create land use friction points.

One land use issue discussed at length during the planning process is **the boundary between the parking lot east of the east boat ramp**, recently purchased by the Town, and the private lot across the alleyway to the west. The driveway itself is under mixed ownership, complicating access to the lot.

A second friction point pertains to **shoreline access along the Alibi Dock property**. While the main piers are technically open to the public, access to the piers can require crossing private land. The walkway along the water's edge is also private, however there is agreed upon public access along the water's edge.

The consultant team reviewed recent survey data to develop an **understanding of land use friction points**. No definitive solutions to specific concerns were identified as part of the study. The Town and private property owners will need to work collaboratively before moving ahead on key projects including a preferred future use of the parking lot east of the east boat ramp.





# Parking Lot East of the East Boat Ramp

### **ISSUES & OPPORTUNITIES**

Based on public input, project steering committee discussions and reflected in the resident survey data below (%'s), there are significant differences of opinion in terms of how best to use the parking lot.

- 48% of survey respondents indicated they would like to see the land be used as a park or recreational space.
- 28% of respondents were unaware of the property or unsure how it should be used in the future.
- 19% of respondents indicated the future use should be for parking.
- 5% of respondents indicated they would like to see a combination of uses on the lot, including limited commercial use (kiosk, small business) in a park like setting.

The primary concern is to identify a preferred future use for the lot, and to then develop a preferred design for the site. An analysis was conducted to explore several alternative scenarios for the Parking Lot East of the East Boat Ramp including all park, mixed parking and park, and mostly parking. Several alternative high level concepts were identified and shown on the opposite page. With direct input from the property owner, the analysis included future potential use of the private property directly east of the parking lot (current site of Holiday Harbor Cottages). None of the concept alternatives identified in the analysis were included in this Plan. They are shown here to provide context only and to document the planning process used in the study.



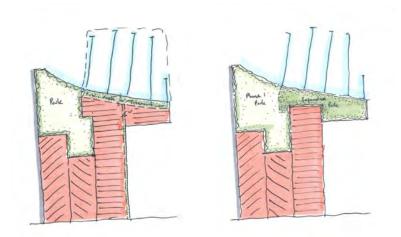


Figure 17. Illustration showing existing property boundaries (left) with proposed park in place of current parking lot. Illustration showing potential expansion of park via easement or property acquisition (right)

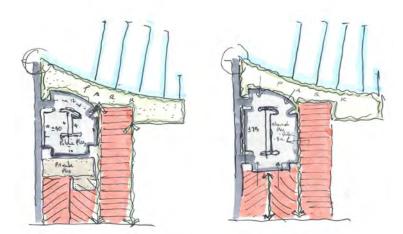


Figure 18. Illustration showing alternative future parking area combined with additional waterfront green space if easement or property were acquired. Figure on left maintains separate shared parking for existing businesses while figure on right shows single combine parking lot.

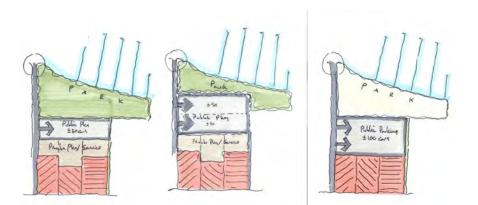


Figure 19. Illustration showing alternative parking lot and park configuration under different property acquisition or easement scenarios.

## WATERFRONT OPERATIONS

The Harbor Area provides a number of uses including a place to launch boats, recreate, eat ice cream, hold community events, and host boat visitors. Northern Door County's deepest harbor, the marina is seeing an increase in demand for smaller boats (less than 30 feet in length).

The area also provides parking for shoppers and is a destination for walkers, bicyclists, and others who come to sit and relax and watch the scenery.

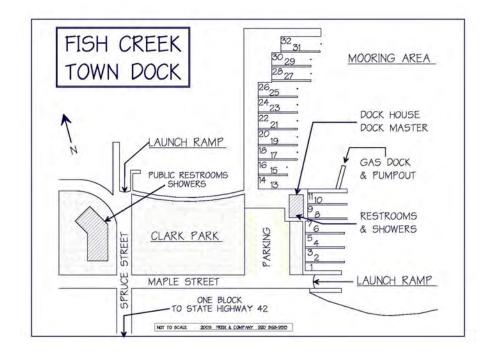
The Fish Creek Town Dock is overseen by the Harbor Commission while the Alibi Marina is privately owned and operated. The Town Dock is run as an enterprise fund and provides approximately \$100,000/year in revenue to the Town.

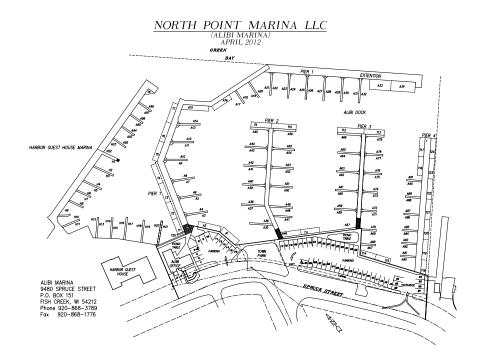
A summary of infrastructure and amenities is summarized below and includes information on private facilities in order to present an overall picture of the major waterfront operations in downtown Fish Creek.

### LAUNCHES

Fish Creek has a total of two boat ramps and one large commercial barge ramp in the harbor area, which is excessive in the consultant's opinion. Public launches include the west launch adjacent the old West dock and the east launch located just southeast of Clark Park. Both launches are heavily used during the tourist season.

Private launches include the Chambers Island barge launch, which primarily serves 52 islander house-





holds. The launch is mostly located on land owned by the adjacent Harbor Holiday Cottages but partially extends onto the Parking Lot East of the East Boat Ramp. It serves a variety of uses, including servicing Chambers Island residents (supplies, building materials, etc...) and providing fire boat access. Use of the launch is erratic, with most activity occurring in the early morning.

Nearby Peninsula State Park provides a launch ramp at Nicolet Bay on the north end of the park. Dayuse only vehicle and trailer parking is available near the ramp. Kayaks often launch at Tennison Bay, which has a shallow draft. There is also a County launch facility at Horseshoe Bay and launches in both Ephraim and Egg Harbor.

### DOCKS AND PIERS

Public docks include the Fish Creek Town Dock, which provides services to transient boaters as well as seasonal slips and other services. Half the dock wall is reservable and half is open to transient users.

The West Town Dock is currently leased on a year to year basis to a commercial operator by the Town. The Town acquired the dock lease from the Green Bay Diocese in 2014. The dock currently serves as the base of operations for Fish Creek Scenic Boat tours.

Private piers include the Alibi Marina (four piers), the Harbor Guest House Marina (1 pier), and several smaller privately owned piers including the three Harbor Holiday Cottage piers located just east of the Town Dock.

### SLIPS

The Fish Creek Town Dock maintains 32 permanent slips, including 3 commercial, providing space for boats up to 50 feet in length. They are fixed slips which are aging and do not meet ADA requirements.

The Alibi Marina maintains 150 permanent slips and 24 transient slips.

### MOORINGS

The Town Dock provides 64 moorings. As of June 2016 there were two open moorings available for the 2016 season through the Fish Creek Town Dock. Landside dinghy storage is provided.

### AMENITIES

The Town Dock provides restrooms with shower service, dinghy racks, ice and soda, WI-FI, and a dock house for guest use.

The Alibi Marina provides similar services as listed above plus laundry facilities, shuttle service to local venues, cable TV. Its onshore amenities include the Harbor Guest House, a former carriage house converted into seven 1 & 2-bedroom apartments.

### UTILITIES & SERVICE

The Town Dock provides gas service with midgrade and diesel fuel, a pump out station, 50 Amp electric service, and power and water to all slips and the dock face.

The Alibi Marina provides 30/50/100 Amp electric service with utilities and pump outs at every slip.

### COMMERCIAL OPERATIONS

In addition to the Alibi Marina, several other

private businesses have a strong interest in the harbor area. Fish Creek Scenic Boat Tours LLC provides seasonal scenic boat tours on a 69 passenger vessel, the Quo Vodis, departing from the West Town Dock. Other operators, not necessarily located in Fish Creek, provide a variety of public and private charter commercial services out of Fish Creek. Examples include Classic Boat Tours of Door County, Door County Adventure Rafting, and Door County Kayak Tours.



### **ISSUES AND OPPORTUNTIES**

Several issues and opportunities related to waterfront operations are described below. As an outcome of the planning process the project steering committee came to an agreement that a number of land-based constraints be addressed before the Town invest in any significant expansion or reconfiguration of existing Town-owned facilities.

1. A key issue identified and discussed at length during the planning process related to the **number**, **type**, **and function of the existing boat launches** and barge ramps in the harbor. Many participants acknowledged the current facilities do not provide a high level of service, however given the landbased site limitations including size of the area and amount of nearby parking, there is considerable concern over the prospect of adding capacity. Decision-making regarding the long-term configuration and possible expansion of Town-owned facilities will be contingent upon first addressing several other shorter term issues including parking, access, and future use of the Parking Lot East of the East Boat Ramp.

2. **Congestion** was cited as a concern in the harbor area, as was **safety** at the west and east launch areas, where boaters, vehicles, cyclists, and pedestrians all share the same space.

3. **Parking is a concern** which was addressed as part of the study. The current boat trailer parking is not conveniently located and poorly marked.

4. **Limited boat staging areas** in and around the west launch and east launch contribute to congestion during the peak tourist months.

5. There is a desire to **balance commercial use of the marina with an environment/quality of life** which also meets the needs of seasonal slip holders and area residents as well.

6. There is a strong support for **more public access** to the water. For example, 60% of survey respondents indicated improved beach access should be a priority. Several open-ended comments confirmed this is a desire among many residents.

7. There are **environmental concerns** for the harbor area, including stagnant water and sedimentation, especially adjacent the Parking Lot East of the East Boat Ramp. A review of area topography, watershed boundaries, and existing storm sewer suggests that storm water runoff is a potential issue negatively impacting the bay. There is an opportunity to capture and infiltrate runoff before it reaches the bay through implementation of green infrastructure including rain gardens, bio-swales, pervious concrete, shade trees and related measures.

8. Several **commercial operators expressed an interest in having more of a physical presence** in the harbor area. The Town will need to decide whether or not to continue at the current level of commercial activity, encourage more commercial activity, or attempt to limit future activity. Shared space at a kiosk and a location for a small ticket booth/staging area were both mentioned as possibilities for supporting additional commercial activity. The future use of the West Town Dock, including the terms and conditions of future leaseholders, will also have a significant impact on commercial activity.

9. Long-term, **sustainable access for Chambers Island** residents and service providers is also seen as an issue.



Figure 20. Multiple launch alternatives were explored during the October 18-20, 2015 design workshop at the old Town hall.





Figure 21. Multiple traffic flow alternatives were explored during the October 18-20, 2015 design workshop at the old Town hall.



# CIRCULATION Vehicles

The transportation network for vehicles includes both local and State facilities. STH 42 bisects the downtown, turning right at the intersection of Main Street and continuing east past the Gibraltar Area Schools in a northeast direction toward Ephraim.

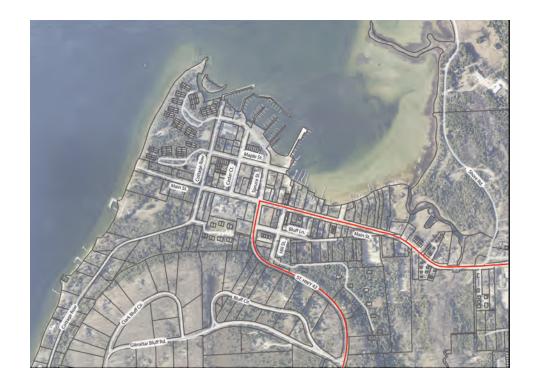
The primary street network in downtown Fish Creek is located north and west of the STH 42 and Main Street intersection and includes Main Street, Cottage Row Road, Maple Street, Cedar Street and Spruce Street. The busiest shopping areas are located west of the intersection toward Cottage Row Road along Main Street. The harbor area is located at the end of Spruce Street.

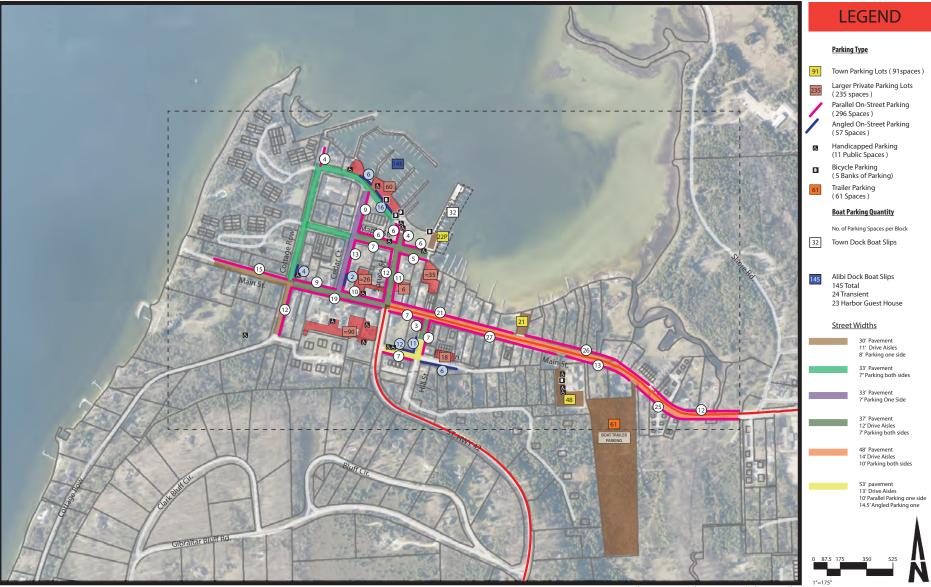
### PARKING

A parking inventory was conducted as part of the study in order to better understand existing conditions (opposite page). It identified the following supply of vehicular parking parking spaces:

- Town Parking Lots (91)
- Larger Private Parking Lots (235)
- Parallel On-Street Parking (296)
- Angled On-Street Parking (57)
- Handicapped Parking (11)
- Boat Trailer Parking (61)

In order to formulate a comprehensive strategy, more information is needed to better understand the demand for parking.





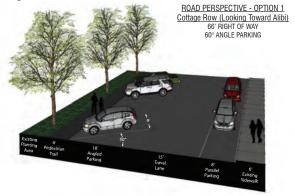
Information courtesy of Door County Land Information Office

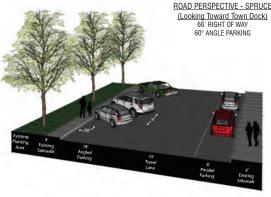
### **ISSUES AND OPPORTUNTIES**

1. **Congestion and safety concerns** at the Spruce Street and Main Street intersection were identified as key issues. Implementing a 1-way traffic flow pattern on a portion of the downtown street network may help solve both problems.

Four options were investigated to address those concerns through modifications to the downtown street network. The options were evaluated against seven relevant factors including utility impacts, traffic flow improvement, parking improvement, pedestrian and bike impacts, STH 42 intersection impact, aesthetic and cost impacts. A preferred option was not identified as part of this study.

The recommendations section of this report suggests that a traffic intersection analysis be conducted before the Town make any decision which would impact downtown vehicular flow.





Revised Parking and Traffic Flow - Option 1



Figure 22. Option #1 - Consider creating one way loop from Main Street along Spruce Street and Cottage Row with traffic flowing counter clockwise to the intersection of Main Street and Cottage Row. Re-stripe parallel parking along Cottage Road and add parallel parking along south side of Spruce Street by the Alibi. This option would add approximately thirty-one (31) parking stalls. Convert portion of existing stalls near west launch to a staging and maneuvering area for boats.

Revised Parking and Traffic Flow - Option 3



Figure 24. Option #3 - Consider creating one way loop from intersection of Spruce Street and Maple Street with traffic flowing counter clockwise to the intersection of Cottage Row and Maple Street. Restripe parallel parking along Cottage Road and add parallel parking along south side of Spruce Street by the Alibi. This option would add approximately twenty-five (25) parking stalls. Convert portion of existing stalls near west launch to a staging and maneuvering area for boats.

Revised Parking and Traffic Flow - Option 2



Figure 23. Option #2 - Consider creating one way loop from Main Street along Spruce Street and Cottage Row with traffic flowing counter clockwise to the intersection of Cottage Row and Maple Street. Re-stripe parallel parking along Cottage Road and add parallel parking along south side of Spruce Street by the Alibi. This option would add approximately twenty-five (25) parking stalls. Convert portion of existing stalls near west launch to a staging and maneuvering area for boats.

Revised Parking and Traffic Flow - Option 4



Figure 25. Option #4 - Consider creating one way loop from Main Street along Spruce Street and Cottage Row with traffic flowing counter clockwise to the intersection of Main Street and Cottage Row. Re-stripe parallel parking along Cottage Road and add parallel parking along south side of Spruce Street by the Alibi. This option would add approximately sixty-three (63) parking stalls. Convert portion of existing stalls near west launch to a staging and maneuvering area for boats. Increase in width to accommodate angled parking on west side of Cottage Road. Review and improve existing drainage including washout at Cottage Row at Main.

	Utility Impacts	Traffic Flow Improvement	Parking Improv ement	Pedestrian & Bike Impacts	STH 42 Intersection Safety Improvement	Aesthetic Impacts	Cost
Option 1	Potential need to raise overhead utility crossings.	Improve STH 42 intersection at Spruce by removing left turn and through southbound traffic movements. Additional maneuvering area and reduced traffic conflicts at west launch.	+13	Bikes would need to follow 1-way and therefore longer potential bike trips depending on starting point. Reduce pedestrian conflicts on north side of Main St and Spruce St.	Improved visibility for maneuvers at intersection of STH 42 and Spruce.	Some tree trimming required for overhanging branches on Cottage Row to accommodate boats.	Medium
Option 2	Potential need to raise overhead utility crossings.	Same as Option #1. Maintains traffic turning options at Cottage and Main.	+25	Same as Option #1 except slightly reduced trip length for bikes depending on starting point	Improved visibility for maneuvers at intersection of STH 42 and Spruce.	Some tree trimming required for overhanging branches on Cottage Row to accommodate boats.	Low
Option 3	Potential need to raise overhead utility crossings.	Additional maneuvering area and reduced traffic conflicts at west launch.	+25	Bikes wanting to ride past Alibi would need to follow 1-way system resulting in longer trips depending on starting point	No change	No change	Low
Option 4	Potential street light relocation on Cottage Row. Potential need to raise overhead utility crossings.	Improve STH 42 intersection at Spruce by removing left turn and through southbound traffic movements. Additional maneuvering area and reduced traffic conflicts at west launch.	+63	Bikes would need to follow 1-way and therefore longer potential bike trips depending on starting point. Reduce pedestrian conflicts on north side of Main St and Spruce St.	Improved visibility for maneuvers at intersection of STH 42 and Spruce.	Some tree trimming required for overhanging branches on Cottage Road to accommodate boats. Potential loss of some existing trees with pavement widening.	High

# ISSUES AND OPPORTUNTIES CONTINUED....

2. The Boat Trailer parking lot is an underutilized asset which is difficult for visitors to find and not conveniently located to serve marina and boat launch users. The site may provide an opportunity to address other non-parking related concerns including storm water runoff, lack of bike/pedestrian facilities, trail connections, and connectivity between the State Park and downtown Fish Creek. As part of this study two high level concepts were identified as alternatives for the future use of the boat trailer parking lot (opposite page).



Figure 26. The Boat Trailer parking lot feels secluded and may be difficult for visitors to find.



Figure 28. A reconfigured boat trailer parking lot could provide a strong alternative bike connection between Peninsula State Park and Fish Creek's downtown.

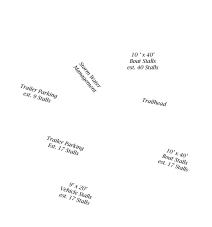




Figure 27. Stormwater runoff is a concern at the Town Center.

# ISSUES AND OPPORTUNTIES CONTINUED....

3. **Parking is a concern** in the downtown area. While the study did identify some alternatives to add parking supply including re-striping, a better understanding of parking demand is recommended before the Town implement any costly improvements to the parking system. See recommendations section of the report.



Enhanced Crossing



Figure 29. Option 1 would increase the size of the current lot by approximately 40 spaces but retain the existing feel of the current lot by minimizing tree clearing and keeping current access configuration. Additional trail connections (dotted line) include potential for a one way link to an overlook on STH 42 above Town as well as connections to Bluff Street and Main Street. The solid orange line represents existing trails within the park. Figure 30. Option 2 would increase the size of the current lot by approximately 90 spaces by widening the lot area, adding a connector at the north end of the lot, and increasing lot visibility from the Town Center. Additional trail connections (dotted line) include potential for a one way link to an overlook on STH 42 above Town as well as connections to Bluff Street and Main Street. The solid orange line represents existing trails within the park.

### BIKES AND PEDESTRIANS

As noted by several economic development professionals, visitors to Door County are increasingly looking for places to visit which are walkable and bikable. Peninsula State Park provides an extensive network of hiking and biking trails, including a 5.1 mile gravel bicycle trail (Sunset Loop) which terminates at the Fish Creek parking lot just inside the southern entrance to the park. Besides the park, bicycle access to Fish Creek is limited to road riding as there are no other dedicated off street trails.

Primary routes in and out of Fish Creek are limited. The Door County Bicycle & Other Silent Sports Map published by the Door County Visitor Bureau identifies a recommended County bicycle route connecting to Egg Harbor Rd just east of Fish Creek. The route includes connections south along Spring Rd and southeast along CTH F to CTH A. The Wisconsin Bicycle Map published by the Bicycle Federation of Wisconsin lists STH 42 as a high volume roadway with paved shoulders. Such roadways have moderately-high car and truck volumes and therefore less experienced cyclists are encouraged to use care on those segments. The map also lists CTH F as having high volume, undesirable conditions due to lack of paved shoulders.

According to the 2010 Town of Gibraltar Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan two sections of signed bicycle routes exist in the Town: Gibraltar Road and Peninsula Players Road. However neither route is well linked to other regional facilities or provides direct access to downtown Fish Creek. Biking conditions within Fish Creek are also challenging. There are few dedicated on-street bike lanes or dedicated off street bike trails. As noted at the public workshops, during project steering committees, and in the community survey (%'s), improving bicycling (75%) and walking conditions (61%) are both high priorities.

In terms of walkability, however, Downtown Fish Creek scores well. Unlike many other linear towns in Door County, Fish Creek generally provides an excellent environment for walking and exploring the community. Informal trails, sidewalks, and walkable streets provide access to numerous shops, restaurants and interesting destinations.



Figure 31. Outdoor art contributes to an interesting walk

What makes a town walkable? According to Jeff Speck, author of *Walkable City: How Downtown Can Save America*, One Step at a Time, there are four required ingredients.

1) **The walk must be useful.** Are there places to go? Are there places to shop, dine, and visit on foot or on bike?

2) **The walk must be safe**. Do people feel safe on foot or on bike? Are bikers and walkers concerned about vehicular traffic?

3) **The walk must be interesting.** Are there interesting things to see and do along the way? Are buildings and streets designed for people or just for cars?

4) **The walk must be comfortable.** Is there adequate shade? Are there places to sit and rest?

A strengths/weaknesses analysis was conducted to evaluate downtown Fish Creek's walkability.



Figure 32. Multiple destinations make the walk useful TOWN OF GIBRALTAR | WATERFONT MASTER PLAN PLAN

### The Walk Must Be Useful

### Strengths

• Variety of uses support visitors' daily needs including: things to do, places to shop, places to eat and drink, and places to stay

• Variety of uses support residents daily needs include the above list plus: professional services, government services, library, schools, churches, and gathering places

### Weaknesses

- Motor vehicles dominate the public realm
- Limited transit service
- Limited supply attainable housing
- Public open spaces poorly linked to one another

### The Walk Must Be Safe

### Strengths

- Safe environment
- Well marked cross walks on Main Street
- Mix of uses downtown activates public realm
- Residential uses keeps "eyes on the street" enhancing feeling of safety
- On street parking protects sidewalk users

### Weaknesses

- Inconsistent lighting standards
- Main Street & Spruce street intersection feels unsafe
- Inadequate cycling infrastructure has bikes using the sidewalk
- Discontinuous sidewalk network

### The Walk Must Be comfortable

Strengths

- Sidewalks and shaded walking paths
- Attractive streetscapes
- Benches and Clark Park
- Numerous shade trees on side streets
- Seating, plantings, art at several downtown destinations

### Weaknesses

- Limited streetscape furnishings beyond Main Street
- Inconsistent sidewalks
- Lack of shade trees in some areas along Main Street

### The Walk Must Be Interesting

### Strengths

- Numerous buildings with unique/attractive facades and inviting landscapes
- Historic buildings and interpretation
- Unique business signage
- Sculpture / outdoor art displays
- Alleys
- Sunset Beach, other parks
- Founder's Square, Noble House

### Weaknesses

• Limited views to water from Main Street

### **ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

By leveraging one of its key assets, walkability, Fish Creek can maintain its economically vibrant downtown while improving livability downtown. Enhancing bike and pedestrian access to and from downtown provides an opportunity to simultaneously address several concerns which impact quality of life for both downtown residents and visitors:

1. **Pedestrian safety is a concern in some areas downtown.** The intersection of STH 42 and Spruce Street, where a 3-way stop can be confusing to pedestrians and drivers alike, is one example. The areas around both the west and east boat launches, where people, boats and boat trailers vie for space during busy summer periods is another.

2. **Bicycle safety is also a concern**. Bikers entering and leaving the downtown area competing with vehicles for space on Main Street may not feel safe. The heavily congested area around Gibraltar Area Schools is on a sharp curve and hill. This area has also been identified as a hazardous area for bicyclists and pedestrians.

3. During peak months there is significant **congestion in downtown Fish Creek,** in part due to cars circling the block looking for available parking spaces. Traffic congestion was the most frequently cited issue when survey respondents were asked "what do you like least about Fish Creek." **Better bike and pedestrian access** could translate to fewer cars downtown and enhance the visitor experience by making destinations more accessible for all. 4. **The parking challenge downtown** could also be partially addressed through a focused effort to encourage higher levels of biking, walking, and public transit. Bike parking and support facilities were cited as priorities in the community survey.

5. Enhanced trail linkages between the waterfront, downtown, parking areas, and State park trails provide an opportunity to maintain the charm of downtown Fish Creek while addressing negative impacts of heavy vehicular traffic. This Plan proposes a multimodal path from the State Park through the current boat trailer parking area connecting to Bluff Street. These types of connections would increase bike and snowmobile access while also supporting efforts such as a bike share or rental program.

While beyond the scope of this study, trail connections to adjacent communities such as Ephraim and Bailey's Harbor provide additional opportunities to increase multi-modal linkages.

6. Enhance Main St. from Shore Road to Spruce St. and Main St. intersection. The Town should consider eliminating parking on one side of the highway to enhance pedestrian and bicicylist safety. One innovative concept for improving non-vehicular access would be to add a buffered bike lane along Main St. connecting Peninsula State Park to the heart of downtown. This could be done as a limited-term demonstration project with an evaluation conducted in order to help determine long-term feasibility.





Figure 33. In Bemidji, MN a bike rental program with four locations and 200 bikes was developed to provide convenient options for both residents and visitors to the popular Lake Bemidji State Park. See http://bemidji. niceridemn.org for more information.

### PUBLIC TRANSIT

Currently, there is no regularly scheduled public transit service serving Fish Creek. Door 2 Door Rides has shared taxi cabs as well as bus connector services operating out of a hub in Sturgeon Bay.

There is interest in exploring public transit alternatives as a means to improve the Fish Creek visitor experience. Other tourism oriented communities have done so successfully.

Informal discussions with area communities by the consultant team suggests there may be interest in exploring partnership opportunities to provide some level of public transit service regionally.

### **ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

1. **Shuttle services.** Slow speed electric vehicles were identified as an opportunity to provide shuttle service between the boat trailer (or other remote lots) and the downtown/harbor area. The Town recently acquired an electric vehicle charging station.

2. In the long-term, promotion of **public transit may lessen demand for pervious surfaces** (parking lots) providing opportunities to better manage storm water runoff.

3. Several workshop participants expressed interest in **exploring a downtown trolley concept**. Such a system would help address downtown congestion and parking concerns by encouraging remote parking. Visitors would park in a park and ride lot and board a trolley or other vehicle which would take them on a loop through downtown. Communities such as Breckenridge, Colorado experiencing a heavy influx of seasonal visitors have successfully implemented such systems. As part of the study a high level trolley concept was generated during the October 2015 design workshop and is shown in the Master Plan section of this report.

4. **Regional public transit.** Fish Creek has an opportunity to leverage its proximity to popular destinations such as Peninsula State Park, Door County Auditorium, and Peninsula Players Theater by helping establish a public transit system. Working with adjacent communities to develop a system of public transit would allow visitors an easy, convenient means of visiting multiple destinations without a car. Such a system could be designed to accommodate bikes, providing an opportunity for users to explore northern Door County using a combination of public transit and bikes to move around freely.

5. Water taxi service. Similar to the previous opportunity but with a focus on the water, providing a water-based taxi service could help address traffic congestion in town while creating another memorable experience for visitors looking for an alternative to driving to visit area destinations while on vacation.

### WAYFINDING

While there are many directional signs downtown, there is currently no overall program for wayfinding in downtown Fish Creek. The consultant team explored the downtown area on bike, foot, and car to assess wayfinding opportunities.

A comprehensive wayfinding program would include a broad mix of strategies beyond simply signage, including landscape treatments, streetscape design and identification of key landmarks.

### ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

1. There is an opportunity to **develop a wayfinding plan** in coordination with the planned STH 42 resurfacing project.

2. Developing a wayfinding system geared toward pedestrians and cyclists as well as vehicular traffic provides an opportunity to **reinforce Fish Creek's walkability**.

3. Some communities have used **public art as part** of their wayfinding strategy. Such an approach may work in Fish Creek while reinforcing the authentic and unique qualities of the community.

4. A wayfinding system would help the Town **better utilize its current parking assets,** including the boat trailer parking lot located just east of the Town Center.

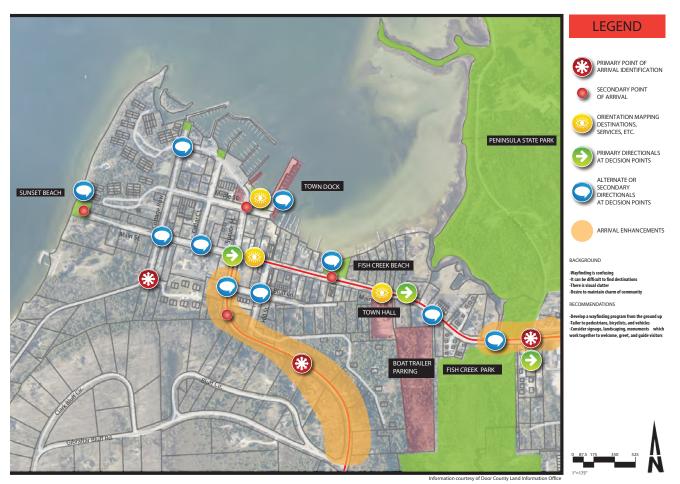


Figure 34. Fish Creek preliminary wayfinding opportunities diagram

### PLACEMAKING

At the October 2015 design workshop residents were asked to share their own ideas for enhancing the waterfront and downtown. May of the ideas shared are addressed in previous analysis above, however some ideas were not. Likewise, the community survey generated a number of individual ideas for enhancing Fish Creek. A few of these ideas which appeared to have significant support are discussed below and others are documented in the Appendices.

### **ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

1. Leveraging the artistic assets of the community is seen as an opportunity to contribute to the charm of Fish Creek. As was noted above some communities have incorporated art installations into their public works and wayfinding improvements. There is an opportunity to incorporate art into bike and pedestrian improvements as well as future plans for the Town Beach and other areas discussed in this plan.

2. Scenic overlook. As shown on the bike and pedestrian map residents at the October 2015 workshop identified the potential for a scenic overlook above town just off of STH 42. The overlook, perhaps incorporating interpretive signage, would provide a unique, interesting destination for hikers coming from Fish Creek Park.







Figure 35. Environmental signage can tell the story of the community and its efforts to rehabilitate important local assets such as Breckenridge's Blue River (top left). A staircase to an overlook above town could incorporate artistic elements such as Hidden Garden Steps in San Francisco (top right). Bike racks provide an opportunity to brand the community (bottom left).