

## TC ↔ CHX Trail: Village of Elk Rapids Routing Public Input Summary

The Village of Elk Rapids hosted a public open house on September 16, 2019 to help inform trail routing of the Traverse City ↔ Charlevoix Trail through the Village of Elk Rapids. An online comment form was available through the first week of October for those who could not attend. Approximately 30 members of the public attended the meeting and 13 comment forms were received online. Input received through the open house and online forms are included below.

### 1. What opportunities and/or constraints do you identify with:

#### **SOUTH BAYSHORE DR**

##### Opportunities:

- Scenic; great introduction to Elk Rapids
- Art Park, beaches, scenic views of the bay
- Pretty; Takes folks through town; Day Park
- Encourages traffic through town – coffee shops, restaurants, shops
- More direct route; off busy highway
- Minimal # of streets intersecting S. Bayshore
- S. Bayshore will be the preferred route for those who come from the south as ER has the facilities for a break and possibly a turn-around – like TC to Suttons Bay
- Logical route – it is the old US-31; Traverse to Cedar to Dexter is safer
- Use Traverse St. to Cedar instead of River St. – less conflicts with parking
- Currently the CCCC Bike Club (of TC) and all major bike events take Elk Lake Rd into ER, cross US-31 at Fourth, then, 1) Bridge St, or 2) 4th to Cedar or Pine to 2<sup>nd</sup> St. to S. Bayshore to Oak St to River St. But with new trail west of US-31, then S Bayshore makes sense
- A survey of 40 riders participating in the West Shore tour indicated that most (2-1) preferred entering the Village at S. Bayshore for the ambiance
- Safer ride. Less traffic. Stops at beaches/parks.
- Scenic, light traffic and room for a pathway
- Ideal
- Access to the art park, nice restroom facilities, more desirable scenery
- Beautiful representation of our village
- Ideal, but needs widened shoulders; this is a much prettier entrance to the village than Bridge St. and could familiarize people with the Day Park as an alternative trailhead, so as not to overwhelm Dam Beach.
- I ride there all the time, traffic is always light, good choice. Turns into Ottawa, take left on Oak, then curved around to river street, loads of shopping and food, and public bathrooms for resting. Turn left on Cedar, right on Harbor, then left on north bay shore, then have set back from 31
- Opportunities along S. Bayshore include trailhead amenities (water, restrooms/bathhouse, beach, parking) at the Day Park - could advertise downtown businesses there. Opportunities on Bridge St. include EZ Mart and the prior Speedway property as a potential "resting area" but this doesn't route people to downtown businesses.
- Shopping, restrooms, restaurants, views, access to water . Merchants will be visible and able to gain from this route.

### Constraints:

- Shoulders narrow; will be crowded in summer by park
- Too narrow now; driveways and trees are a conflict
- Needs a “wide” shoulder on the west side
- User conflicts if beaches are used as staging areas
- Trespass problems near Dam Beach
- Dangerous with residents backing out of driveways; Narrow shoulders
- S. Bayshore would be nice, but there is a safety concern as Bayshore has a fairly steep hill heading north from US-31/intersection – too steep for families with little kids
- Residential area, many safety concerns
- Long distance bike riders would probably prefer to keep moving along a trail that follows the highway rather than get routed and weaving through town. Many bikers in the Holland area still ride on the roads even though there are trails running alongside the same stretch because they feel the straight road is safer. I think “serious” bikers will find weaving through the village to be too slow and unsafe considering all the vehicle and pedestrian traffic.
- I believe users will use shoulder of US 31 to bypass Elk Rapids.

## **BRIDGE ST**

### Opportunities:

- Wide street; does allow for detour into town, food, shopping, etc.; pretty when get down to Dexter
- Utilize already existing US 35; easy access to business
- Wider street; allows for most direct access to town and restaurants, gas station; less traffic on Bridge St. than S. Bayshore
- Use old Speedway for trailhead
- Preferred route
- Separate wooden bridge over upper harbor
- The only route chosen by Parks and Rec and supported by the Village Council over five years ago. the commitment to this route was cemented with the Villages purchase of the US35 bike route signs. Commercial district ripe for development. Spurs off of this main route was recommended by TART when this route was chosen. Bicyclists are already familiar with this route. Leelanau Trail uses US 35 bike route thru Suttons Bay too.
- Still close to US 31 but inside the village
- This is more practical, more direct, less intrusive to village residents.
- Opportunities are to keep biking through, rather than being directed through business district. Also, cost would be less, if you look at cost per mile, as I understand it.

### Constraints:

- Can bypass “downtown”
- Bridge to river – right new path over bridge
- Bridge looks industrial
- Significant number of interesting streets
- Please do not consider crossing US-31 at 4<sup>th</sup> street: terrible intersection, many accidents
- Conflict with boat launch traffic and municipal vehicles.
- Busy and very commercial
- Not as ideal
- Kinda ugly
- Ok. This has more driveways than you think. We counted this with the police chief.
- Bridge is more dangerous with much more car traffic coming off 31.

## What would a “win” for trail routing through the Village look like from your lens?

- Avoiding US-31 as much as possible, and riding along the scenic Bayshore as much as possible
- Avoid user conflicts by prohibiting staging/parking at Veterans and Dam Beach lots
- Increased usability of Elk Rapids; help with designation as Trail Town; increase sales, retail, food
- Must not overwhelm Village’s existing overcrowded bathrooms – consider restroom on Old Speedway property on 31
- Safe for recreational and family bike rides. Make it easier for Loren people to visit ER
- Safest route
- A fully functioning, supported route
- Across and down 31 needs a safe path
- A trail that cyclists seek out because of ease of use and beauty of the experience.
- Avoid residential areas as much as possible and promote commercial development on Bridge St. The Kmart building has been sold and developers according to the Record Eagle plan to capitalize on its location along the proposed TART trail.
- Access to village and ames businesses
- Not all bike traffic would be funneled through town but the option would be available to the casual biker.
- Economic development - routing to downtown and promoting downtown amenities along the route (Pure Michigan Trail Town designation efforts are in the works); family friendly for residents, visitors and marina guests.
- Win is the beautiful ride on South Bayshore with light traffic.
- Go along Bridge Street, where people can easily divert to downtown areas if they wish, but if they are biking long distance, they need not go downtown.

## What is your preferred route through the Village?

<i>Bridge St:</i>	10 (33%)
<i>S. Bayshore Dr:</i>	18 (60%)
<i>US-31:</i>	2 (7%)

## Other:

- US-31 route option opportunities:
  - Wide street
  - Use old Speedway station for parking area
  - Next to Chamber community parking (trailhead) and Rotary Park; already available and established
  - Build wooden bridge across river
- US-31 route option constraints:
  - Need safer
  - MDOT bridge
  - Separated? What happens when bridge is MDOTs? Can it be widened?
- Dam Beach is not opportune for bathrooms or parking for bikers; already too busy because of fishermen and beach parking
- What other requirements are needed for TART Trail e.g. trailhead restrooms and parking
- I think that making the main route along 31 and an alternate route through town is the better option as mentioned above. Just like a business route of a normal highway.
- On many bike trails, the in town route is not marked. For instance, the trail would stay on US31 only and individual bikers would choose where to enter the Village.
- Need to reduce bike traffic on River Street, and eliminate River/Bridge St. intersection from route. In other words, if people ride S. Bayshore or Bridge into town, they should be routed down Traverse Street to either Spruce or Elm for Veterans Memorial Park, and routed down Cedar to downtown businesses.
- Do we know how many more bikers/trail users will be routed through the Village?
- What is bridge replacement date? Will it be enlarged?
- Trailhead locations? Trailhead should be major consideration