



# Grand Traverse County Treasurer 2019 Annual Report



**Treasurer**  
**Heidi M. Scheppe, MBA, CPFO**  
Cindy Green, Chief Deputy  
Sarah Gum, Deputy Treasurer  
Kristen Lambert, Deputy Treasurer  
Patti Leasure, Deputy Treasurer



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# TO COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

## Mission Statement

The mission of the Grand Traverse County Treasurer is to serve taxpayers with respect, professionalism and commitment to customer service above and beyond what is expected.

## Appointments

The County Treasurer is elected to a four-year term and serves as the custodian of all County funds. The Treasurer is a member of the Plat Board, Elections Commission, County Apportionment Commission, Treasurer of the Grand Traverse County Building Authority, Treasurer of the Brownfield Redevelopment Authority and Chair of the County Lank Bank Authority.

## Responsibilities

The Treasurer's Office core responsibilities include:

- Handling and reconciling cash for a 145 million dollar budget.
- Investing County funds while considering fund security, cash flow requirements and adherence to Public Act 20.
- Purchasing and collecting delinquent property taxes for 13 Townships, 2 Villages and the City of Traverse City.
- Working with the local unit Treasurers and Assessors to process any property tax adjustments and report accurate values to the State of Michigan and taxing jurisdictions.
- Selling and maintaining accurate records of all dog licenses in the County.
- Providing Tax Deed Certifications and Delinquent Tax Search services.
- Providing passport processing services.

June 1, 2020

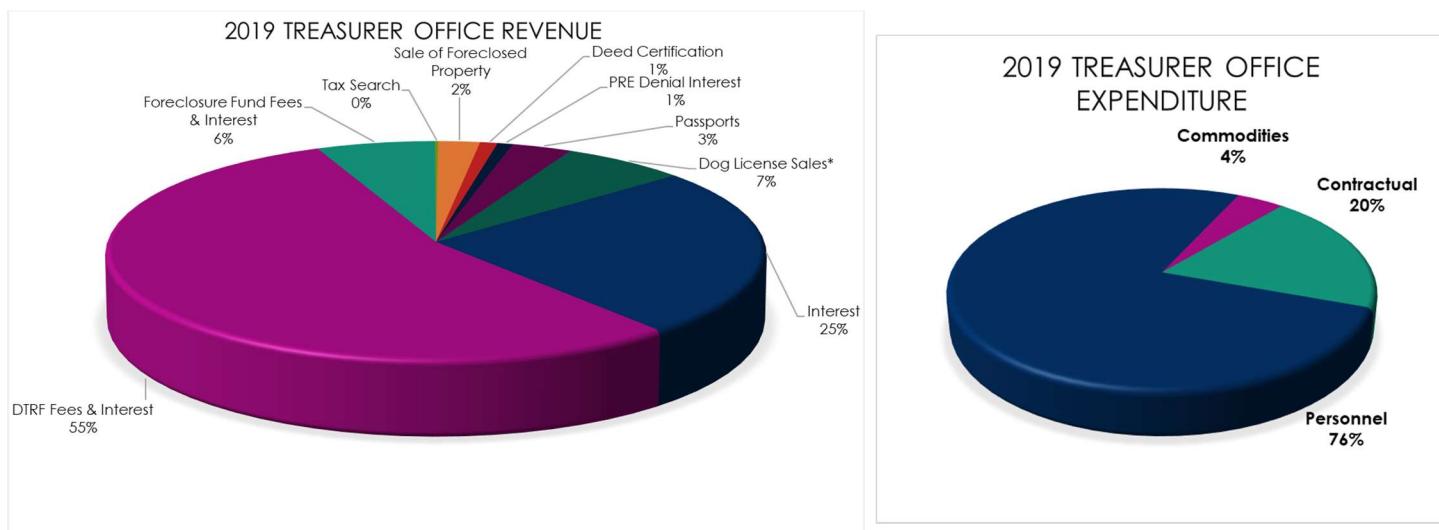
*I hereby submit this annual report to the County Board of Commissioners. I hope you find it informative; and I encourage you to contact me with any questions or comments. Please note the 2019 information contained in this report is unaudited.*

*Respectfully submitted,  
Heidi Scheppe*

# TREASURER'S OFFICE REVENUE VS EXPENDITURE

2019 Total Treasurer Revenue		2019 Total Treasurer Expenditure	
Interest	\$ 470,799.87	Personnel	\$ 336,585.82
DTRF Fees & Interest	\$ 1,030,418.79	Commodities	\$ 18,728.11
Foreclosure Fund Fees & Interest	\$ 118,317.89	Contractual	\$ 36,907.22
Tax Search	\$ 3,143.57	<b>General Fund</b>	<b>\$ 392,221.15</b>
Sale of Foreclosed Property	\$ 41,750.00		
Deed Certification	\$ 17,425.60	Personnel	\$ 91,697.81
PRE Denial Interest	\$ 15,175.75	Commodities	\$ 5,062.13
Passports	\$ 60,165.00	Contractual	\$ 72,026.58
	<b>\$ 1,757,196.47</b>	<b>Foreclosure/PRE Fund</b>	<b>\$ 168,786.52</b>
Dog License Sales*	\$ 124,785.00		
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$ 1,881,981.47</b>	<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>\$ 561,007.67</b>

\*Collected in office for Animal Control



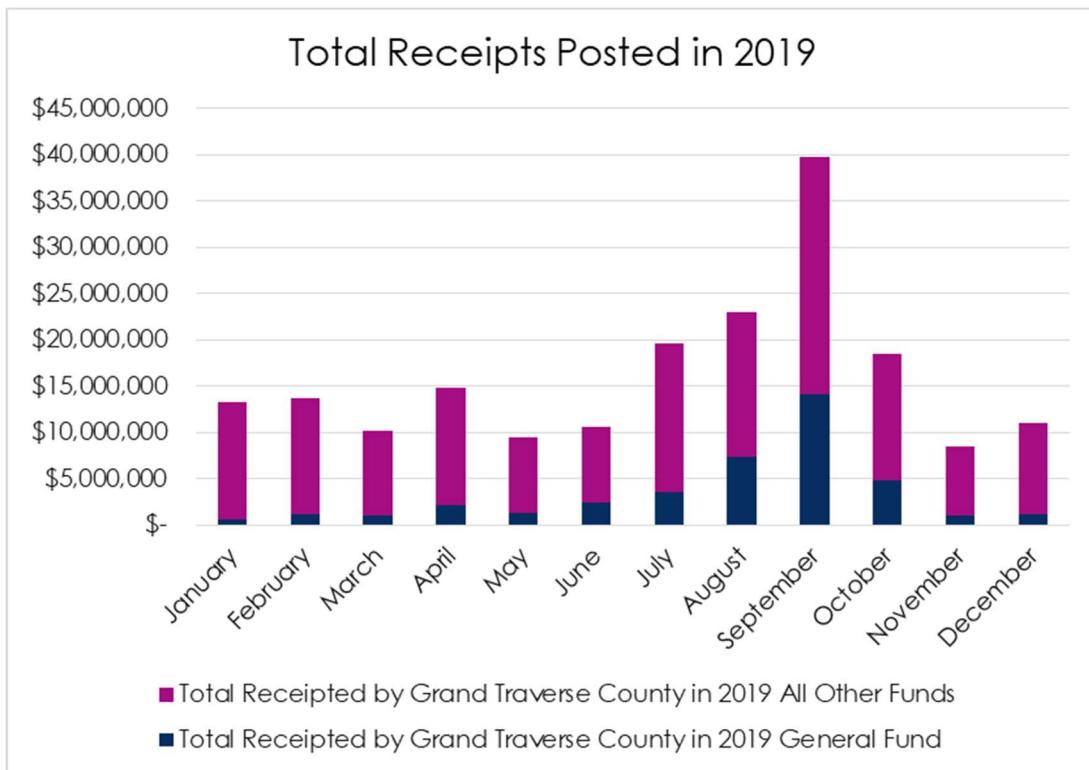
## New in 2019

- The 2019 delinquent tax buyout was about 21,000 less than 2018 totals. Luckily, this was processed before the COVID-19 economic shutdown which means many people were able to pay their taxes on time before the crisis.
- In 2019 the County was selected by the State of Michigan to be audited by Treasury personnel for the next 3 years. The State issued 184 PRE denials in 2019 which were processed by our office. This generated an increase of PRE interest retained by the County due to the increase in denials. This interest is expected to decrease once our audit is complete due to the loss of County PRE Audit personnel in 2017 when the position was eliminated.
- The cost of our BS&A delinquent and tax software was paid by the Foreclosure Fund again in 2019 to help the General Fund budget.

# COLLECTION OF MONEY BY TREASURER

- The County Treasurer's Office is the depository for all county funds in accordance with Act No. 40, Public Acts of Michigan 1932.
- It is the responsibility of the Treasurer's Office to receipt all money coming into the County. We maintain and reconcile over 50 bank accounts to properly track and account for these funds.
- Functions associated with this procedure include receipting invoice payments processed through the mail, counting and receipting department money, verifying distribution line items, posting to general ledger and receipting all monies received as EFT's and credit card distributions through our bank accounts.

Below is a graph showing the cash flow throughout 2019.



<b>Total Receipted by Grand Traverse County in 2019</b>		
	<b>General Fund</b>	<b>All Other Funds</b>
January	\$ 618,756.82	\$ 12,596,419.44
February	\$ 1,125,795.84	\$ 12,547,798.76
March	\$ 970,034.76	\$ 9,178,765.86
April	\$ 2,131,362.03	\$ 12,647,414.95
May	\$ 1,290,219.04	\$ 8,185,236.53
June	\$ 2,493,939.70	\$ 8,042,447.17
July	\$ 3,580,596.79	\$ 16,061,731.53
August	\$ 7,353,421.13	\$ 15,694,346.56
September	\$ 14,110,977.33	\$ 25,690,769.05
October	\$ 4,771,756.10	\$ 13,674,867.22
November	\$ 1,068,925.31	\$ 7,458,500.41
December	\$ 1,181,190.07	\$ 9,863,906.56
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>\$ 40,696,974.92</b>	<b>\$ 151,642,204.04</b>

# INVESTMENTS

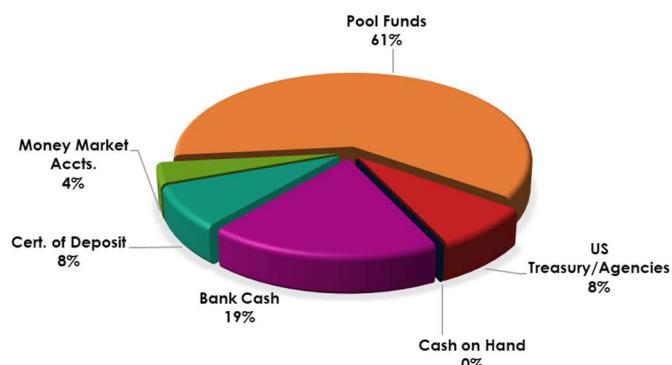
There are many pools of funds within the County each designed to collect, report and pay out the amounts available for specific purposes. The largest of the funds is the General Fund, which is the primary operating fund of the County.

- **Year End Portfolio** provides a breakdown of where County Funds were invested at 12/31/19.
- **Diversification by Investment** shows the percentage of the funds held in each investment type.
- **Common Cash Balances** graph is used to understand trends in cash levels, and provides a multi-year running look at the total dollars in the common account at month end.

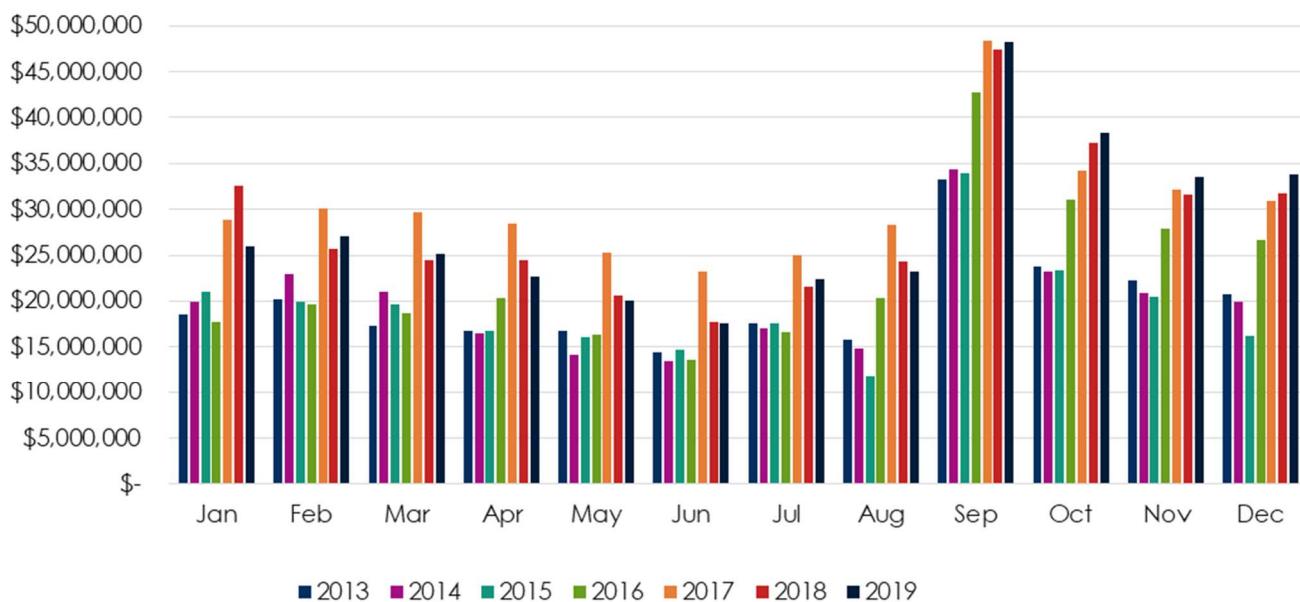
## 2019 Year End Portfolio

Cash on Hand	\$ 9,425.65
Bank Cash	\$ 9,265,934.20
Cert. of Deposit	\$ 4,013,851.45
Money Market Accts.	\$ 1,939,157.31
Pool Funds	\$ 30,444,946.98
US Treasury/Agencies	\$ 4,030,000.00
Total	\$ 49,703,315.59

2019 DIVERSIFICATION BY INVESTMENT TYPE



## Common Cash Balances



- Average monthly carrying balance in Trust & Agency is 3.4 million, down from 3.8 million in 2018.
- Average monthly carrying balance for the Pavilions is 8 million, up from 7.65 million in 2018.

### New in 2019

We paid out 5.9 million from the General Fund towards MERS retirement debt in January 2019.

# DELINQUENT TAX

It is the responsibility of the County Treasurer to collect delinquent real property taxes. Functions associated with delinquent taxes include receipting payments, processing adjustments to prior year tax rolls (for up to 20 yrs.), and processing bankruptcy claims, along with being the Foreclosing Governmental Unit.

Beginning March 1st of each year the County Treasurer “purchases” delinquent real property taxes from the local units utilizing the cash in the delinquent tax revolving fund. We collect payments on the delinquent parcels for a period of not less than 24 months. During that time we follow an extensive State mandated notification process which includes regular postal mail, certified mail, personal service (visit/hand deliver) to the property, and publication in the local newspaper. We file a petition for foreclosure with the 13<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court. If payment is not received by the 3rd year of assessment we foreclose on the parcel and attempt to sell the parcel at auction. Prior to the auction, per Public Act 123 of 1999, the State is granted the right of first refusal to purchase any foreclosed parcels, local units and County Land Bank have a right of refusal, after the State, for any parcels in their jurisdiction.

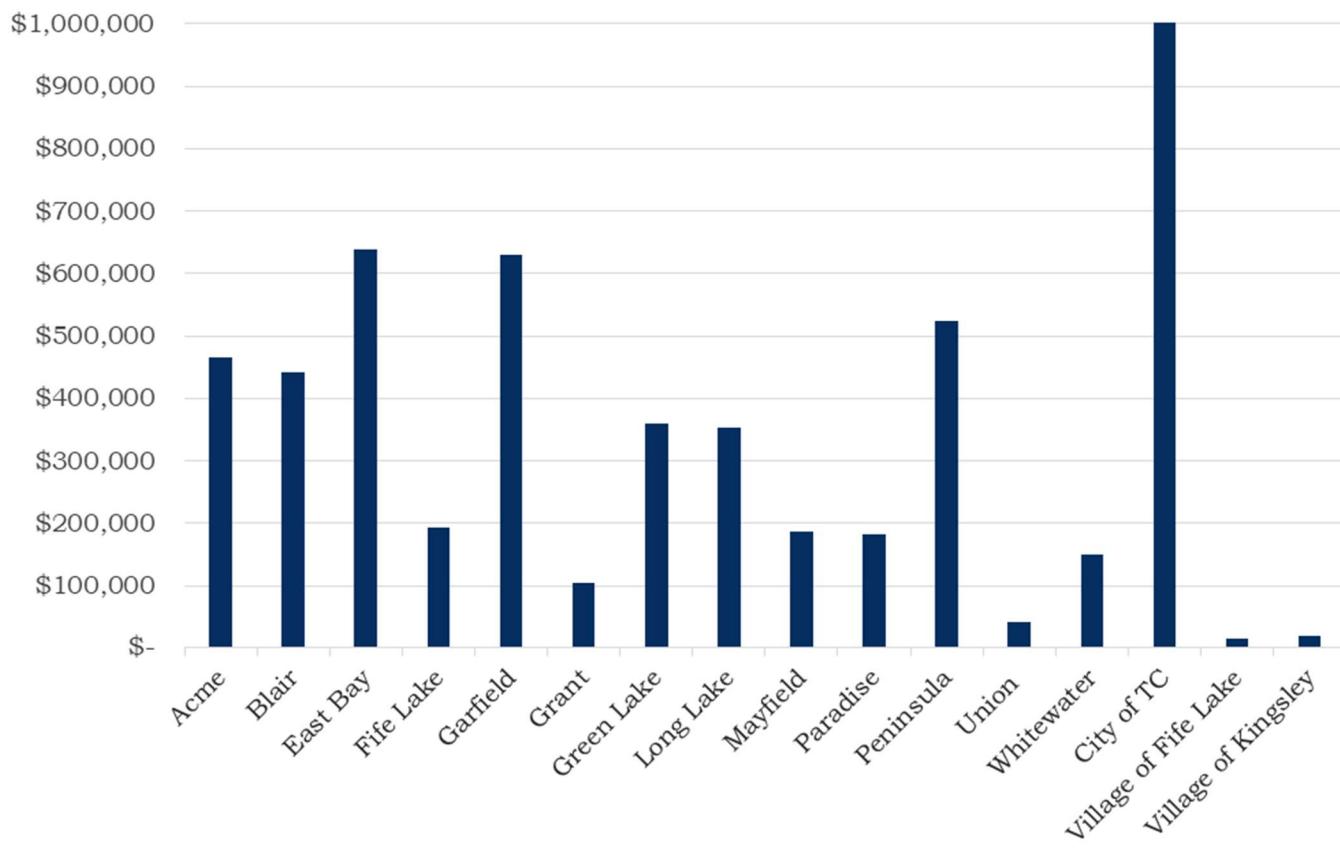
The performance measurements for delinquent tax administration are designed to: increase efficiencies to be better able to manage additional workload without staff additions, to reduce unit costs in managing forfeitures and foreclosures, and to institute foreclosure prevention programs. One of the prevention methods provided by the Board is a Hardship Extension, which gives those taxpayers that have had an unusual circumstance in their life, time to set up a payment plan to keep from losing their property. It was used to protect 10 properties from foreclosure in 2019. In addition to the Hardship Extension, we directed at risk taxpayers to the MSHDA Step Forward Program providing assistance to 1 taxpayer generating \$4,412.13 in tax payments. In addition to these programs, we provide taxpayers with a variety of payment options: cash, check, credit/debit card, electronic funds transfer, and an ACH payment option, which provides the taxpayer the ability to make weekly or monthly payments.

## Personal Visits

Our office performed PA 123 inspections on 213 parcels in September. This physical site visit to each parcel is required to provide parcel description information to Title Check, LLC for future potential foreclosure. Parcels that were found vacant/abandoned or unoccupied at time of visit required posting of property in a visible area. If occupant was present, we advised the occupants of their rights and the foreclosure process. We had many conversations with taxpayers, explaining the tax law, due dates and opportunity for assistance with delinquent taxes.

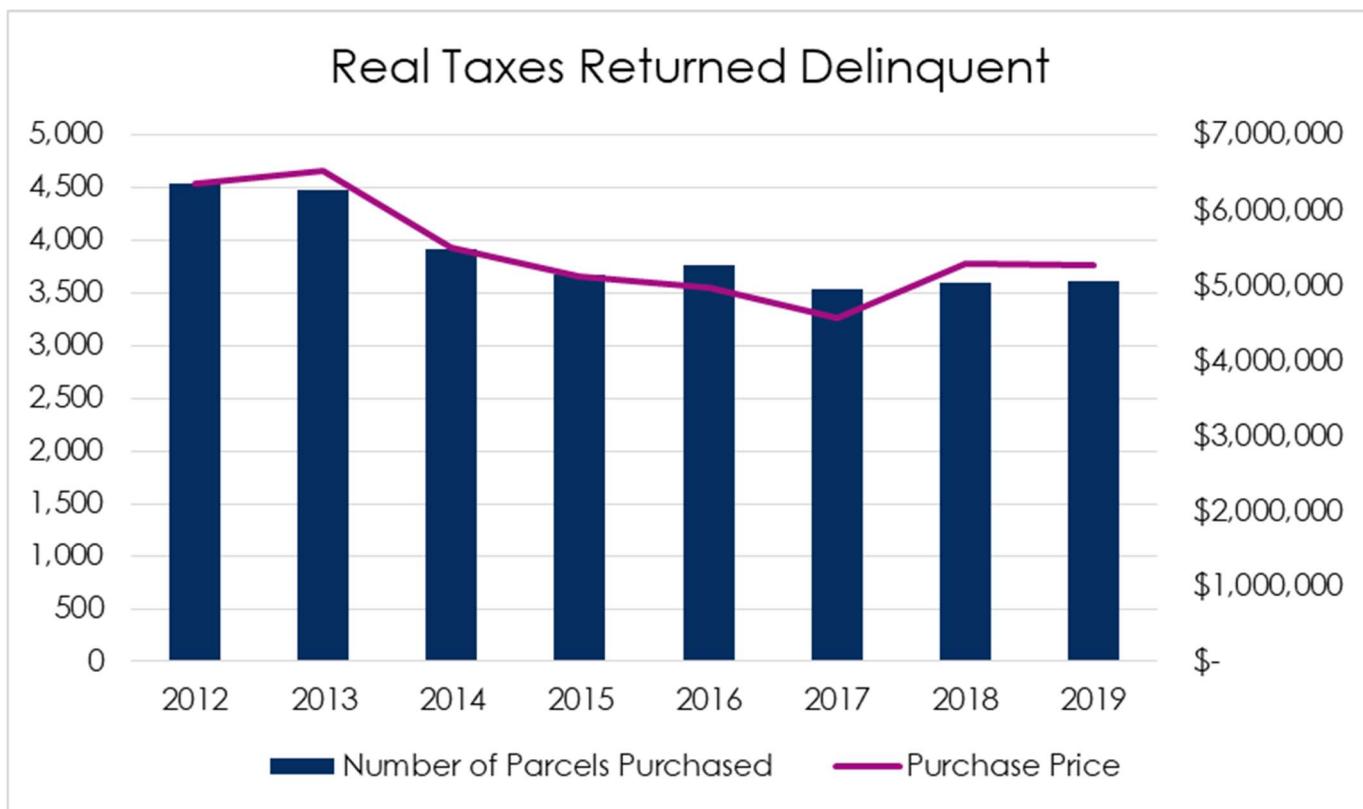
Real Taxes Returned Delinquent						
Tax Year	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014
No. of Properties	3604	3602	3540	3756	3670	3915
Amount Purchased	\$ 5,275,556.84	\$ 5,297,426.25	\$ 4,568,613.02	\$ 4,973,605.30	\$ 5,120,958.18	\$ 5,504,078.62
Tax Collections, Calendar Year						
Year	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014
No. of Receipts	4889	4631	5029	5068	6197	5898
Delinquent Tax Collected	\$ 5,065,658.34	\$ 4,839,787.47	\$ 5,353,198.62	\$ 5,079,212.45	\$ 6,725,269.79	\$ 8,340,799.70
Interest & Fees	\$ 879,942.28	\$ 882,581.68	\$ 953,283.81	\$ 781,586.12	\$ 1,227,032.74	\$ 1,322,479.66
Credit Cards / EFT	\$ 920,735.47	\$ 744,136.65	\$ 725,525.32	\$ 622,639.08	\$ 623,706.31	\$ 325,132.30
Tax Roll Adjustments, Calendar Year						
Michigan Tax Tribunal, Board of Review, PRE Denials Etc.	676	398	456	524	690	607
Forfeiture/Foreclosure, Calendar Year						
2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	
Properties Forfeited	429	416	453	494	556	848
Properties Foreclosed	10	4	22	15	21	24
Hardship Extension	10	10	8	9	16	15

## 2019 Delinquent Taxes "Purchased" by Unit

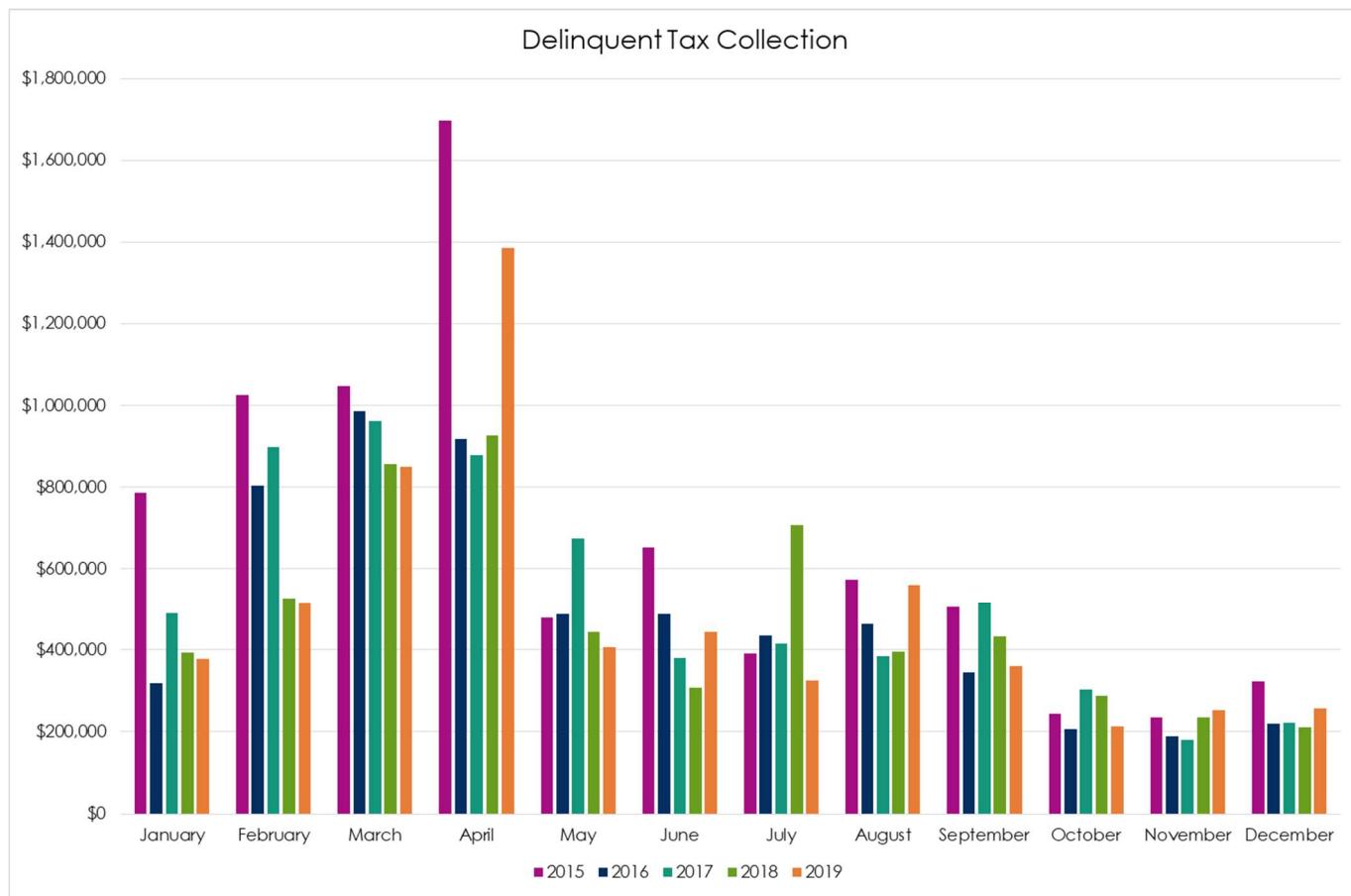


Township	2019		Payments Made at Township/Village	Amount "Purchased" by County	Balance to Collect by Township/Village (Personal Property)
	Total	Adjusted Levy			
Acme	\$ 12,302,644.41	\$ 11,849,863.20	\$ 464,735.67	\$ 5,539.65	
Blair	\$ 10,466,238.34	\$ 10,023,803.35	\$ 441,104.28	\$ 15,670.58	
East Bay	\$ 20,623,927.31	\$ 19,999,181.43	\$ 638,693.37	\$ 10,846.95	
Fife Lake	\$ 2,011,561.92	\$ 1,819,584.47	\$ 192,366.01	\$ 2,070.21	
Garfield	\$ 34,309,976.63	\$ 33,671,002.63	\$ 630,827.71	\$ 28,778.51	
Grant	\$ 1,758,104.40	\$ 1,653,902.52	\$ 105,581.49	\$ 866.99	
Green Lake	\$ 10,122,501.79	\$ 9,767,741.24	\$ 360,596.26	\$ 6,175.05	
Long Lake	\$ 15,568,845.25	\$ 15,224,377.66	\$ 354,106.98	\$ 5,100.86	
Mayfield	\$ 1,813,963.68	\$ 1,627,800.41	\$ 186,383.48	\$ 3,172.70	
Paradise	\$ 3,890,653.14	\$ 3,707,170.76	\$ 183,513.38	\$ 3,146.38	
Peninsula	\$ 23,702,613.49	\$ 23,193,196.25	\$ 524,235.88	\$ 2,541.44	
Union	\$ 884,723.88	\$ 842,342.79	\$ 42,966.42	\$ -	
Whitewater	\$ 6,579,278.30	\$ 6,435,669.25	\$ 149,404.55	\$ 73.14	
City of TC	\$ 50,059,760.21	\$ 48,904,835.63	\$ 1,001,041.36	\$ 195,085.08	
Village of Fife Lake	\$ 122,834.60	\$ 108,528.22	\$ 14,030.16	\$ 276.22	
Village of Kingsley	\$ 306,523.22	\$ 287,248.73	\$ 18,161.92	\$ 1,112.57	
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$ 194,524,150.57</b>	<b>\$189,116,248.54</b>	<b>\$5,307,748.92</b>	<b>\$280,456.33</b>	

\*\* Amount purchased includes 6% summer interest not included in Adjusted Levy.



Total number of delinquent parcels purchased compared to tax amount owed.



Total amount of delinquent tax revenue collected by month.

## COUNTY TAX MILLAGES

Grand Traverse County's L-4029 authorizes the millages the County will assess on property within Grand Traverse County for the tax year. Millages are voted on by the voters and assessed for a set period of time based on the ballot language of the millage. Below are some historical values that show the tax millages assessed and the corresponding tax dollars that were collected as a result of that millage. A portion of collected tax revenue can be diverted by approved capture. Some tax revenue is captured by entities like the Downtown Development Authority (DDA), Tax Increment Finance Authority (TIF), Brownfield or Land Bank. This amount is identified as the captured amount in the numbers presented below.

COA				
TAX YEAR	MILLAGE	LEVY	CAPTURED AMOUNT	TOTAL MILLAGE RECEIVED
2019	0.4916	\$ 2,648,265.77	\$ (85,926.98)	\$ 2,562,338.79
2018	0.4939	\$ 2,527,079.73	\$ (72,525.90)	\$ 2,454,553.83
2017	0.4958	\$ 2,418,655.79	\$ (62,915.94)	\$ 2,355,739.85
2016	0.4998	\$ 2,349,249.54	\$ (46,312.60)	\$ 2,302,936.94

SENIOR CENTER				
TAX YEAR	MILLAGE	LEVY	CAPTURED AMOUNT	TOTAL MILLAGE RECEIVED
2019	0.0982	\$ 528,800.86	\$ (17,160.18)	\$ 511,640.68
2018	0.0987	\$ 504,797.76	\$ (14,490.78)	\$ 490,306.98
2017	0.0991	\$ 483,216.70	\$ (12,569.42)	\$ 470,647.28
2016	0.0999	\$ 469,324.90	\$ (9,252.13)	\$ 460,072.77

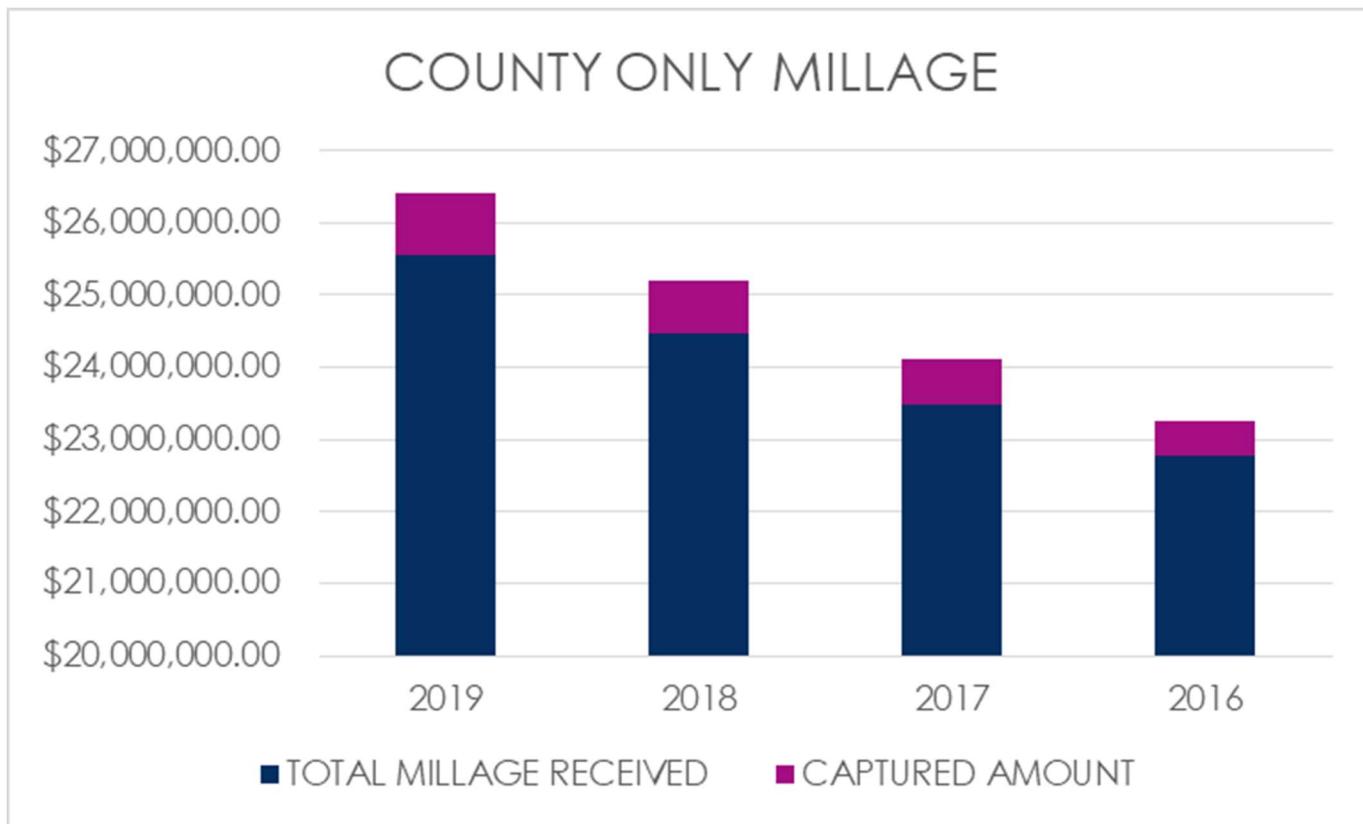
ROAD COMMISSION				
TAX YEAR	MILLAGE	LEVY	CAPTURED AMOUNT	TOTAL MILLAGE RECEIVED
2019	0.9835	\$ 5,298,412.79	\$ (171,912.60)	\$ 5,126,500.19
2018	0.9881	\$ 5,055,957.73	\$ (145,869.27)	\$ 4,910,088.46
2017	0.9918	\$ 4,838,546.37	\$ (125,865.01)	\$ 4,712,681.36
2016	0.9997	\$ 4,698,877.99	\$ (92,636.05)	\$ 4,606,241.94

VETERANS				
TAX YEAR	MILLAGE	LEVY	CAPTURED AMOUNT	TOTAL MILLAGE RECEIVED
2019	0.0800	\$ 430,773.37	\$ (13,978.69)	\$ 416,794.68
2018	0.1185	\$ 606,116.03	\$ (17,398.47)	\$ 588,717.56
2017	0.1190	\$ 580,319.34	\$ (15,094.82)	\$ 565,224.52
2016	0.1200	\$ 563,712.61	\$ (11,116.38)	\$ 552,596.23

ANIMAL CONTROL				
TAX YEAR	MILLAGE	LEVY	CAPTURED AMOUNT	TOTAL MILLAGE RECEIVED
2019	0.03680	\$ 198,007.21	\$ (6,426.92)	\$ 191,580.29
2018	0.03700	\$ 189,076.42	\$ (5,430.29)	\$ 183,646.13
2017	0.00000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
2016	0.00000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -

## COUNTY TAX MILLAGES CONT.

COUNTY				
TAX YEAR	MILLAGE	LEVY	CAPTURED AMOUNT	TOTAL MILLAGE RECEIVED
2019	4.9019	\$ 26,409,269.00	\$ (857,330.23)	\$ 25,551,938.77
2018	4.9246	\$ 25,199,225.00	\$ (721,919.31)	\$ 24,477,305.69
2017	4.9429	\$ 24,112,302.00	\$ (632,326.35)	\$ 23,479,975.65
2016	4.9823	\$ 23,264,500.15	\$ (487,974.15)	\$ 22,776,526.00



\*\* The numbers presented reflect actual settlement numbers and are not updated for any subsequent Board of Reviews, Michigan Tax Tribunals or any other adjustments.

## DOG AND KENNEL LICENSE PROGRAM

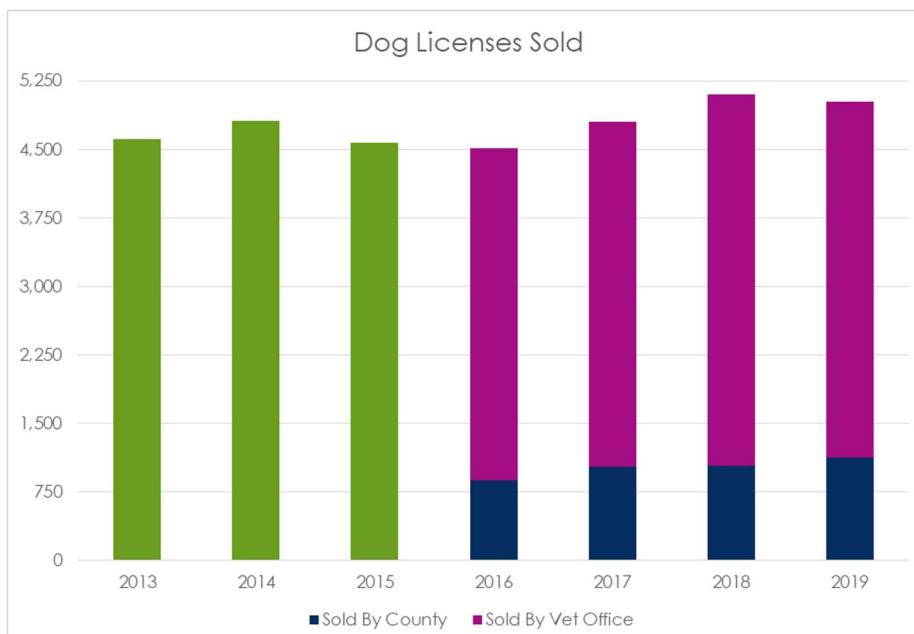
The County Treasurer's Office manages the dog and kennel licensing revenue per state statute, Act 339 of 1919. Per Act 339 it shall be unlawful for any person to own any dog 6 months old or over, unless the dog is licensed as hereinafter provided. A County dog license provides ownership information, verifies the dog is currently vaccinated for rabies, and is in compliance with State Law. In 2016 our office researched statewide county rate structures and presented a new rate and license structure that was approved by the Board of Commissioners and became effective 1/1/2017. This rate increase has provided additional revenue to support the Animal Control Program in Grand Traverse County.

2019 Rates	Spayed/Neutered	Intact
Puppy 8 mo. old and younger	\$ 8.00	\$ 8.00
1 year	\$ 15.00	\$ 30.00
3 year	\$ 30.00	\$ 60.00

We are hoping to switch to the Tyler permit program in 2020 for better tracking and reporting capabilities for dog licenses. We continue to provide an online dog license lookup on our website to help reunite lost dogs with their owners.

Revenue Year	No. of Licenses	Dog Licenses	Kennel Licenses
2013	4615	\$ 75,815.00	\$ 350.00
2014	4811	\$ 80,665.00	\$ 320.00
2015	4580	\$ 78,980.00	\$ 280.00
2016	4519	\$ 79,460.00	\$ 255.00
2017	4803	\$ 118,136.00	\$ 235.00
2018	5110	\$ 125,918.00	\$ 210.00
2019	5030	\$ 124,785.00	\$ 215.00

Our office sells dog licenses year round. We also partner with most of the local Veterinarian offices to sell our licenses as well. This creates an easy avenue for citizens to purchase a dog license at the same time they are vaccinating their dog for rabies. Veterinarians provide monthly sales details to our office which we audit, enter into AS400, and send out official receipts to citizens detailing the license information as mandated by State law. Veterinarians who partner with the County to sell licenses on our behalf receive a commission based on the number/type of licenses sold. In 2019 our licensing partners sold/issued 78% of our total license sales.



Commissions paid to licensing partners	
2013	\$ 8,825.00
2014	\$ 9,174.00
2015	\$ 9,200.00
2016	\$ 8,506.00
2017	\$ 10,467.25
2018	\$ 11,489.25
2019	\$ 10,541.75

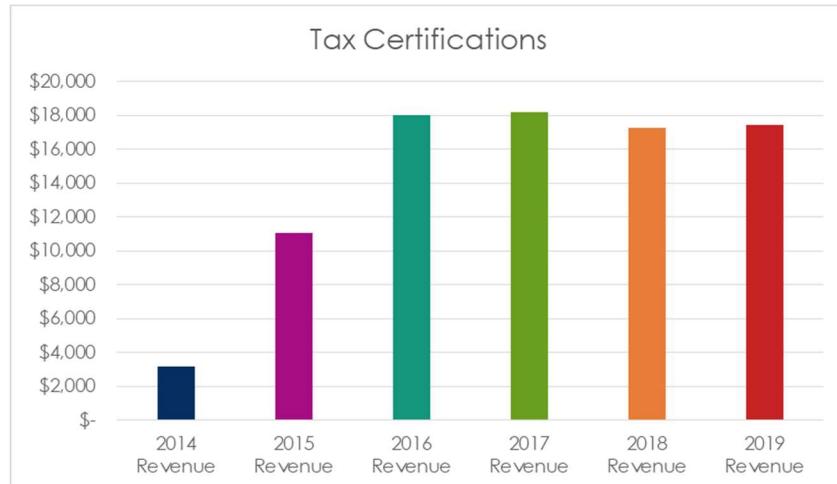
\*2017 increase in veterinary commissions due to implementation of new license fee structure.

# TAX CERTIFICATIONS AND SEARCHES

It is the Treasurer's Office responsibility to certify that all property taxes are paid on instruments transferring real estate in Grand Traverse County prior to them being recorded with the County Register of Deed's Office (State Statute MCL 48.101.) Tax certification requests can be submitted in person or by electronic filing

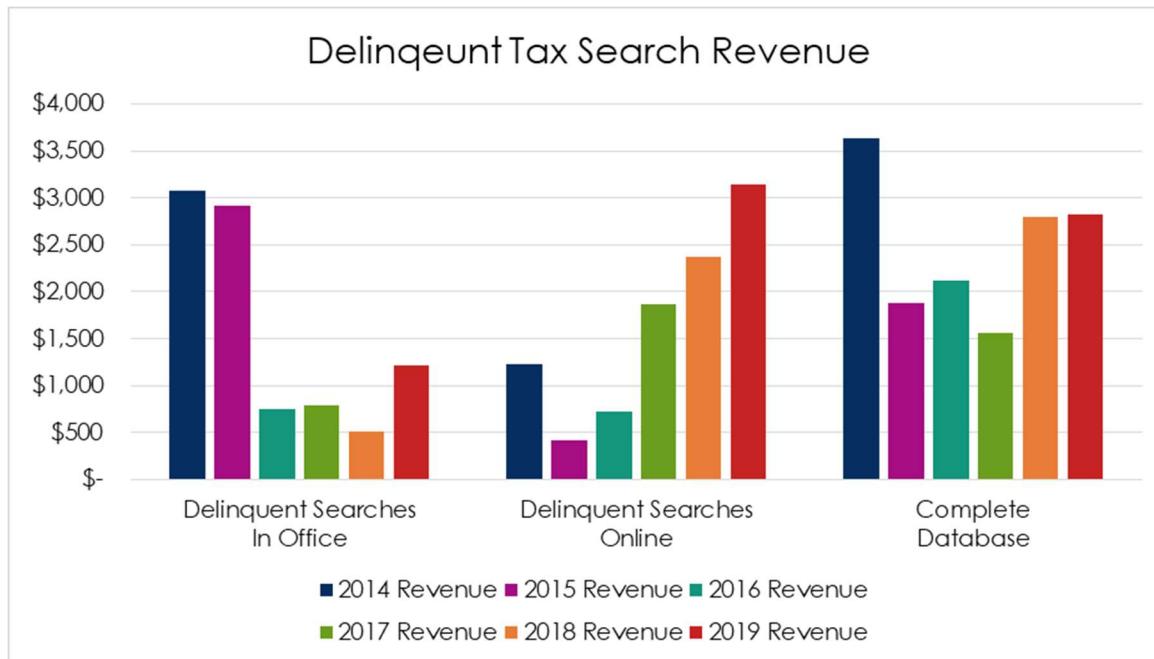
Certifications	
2014 Revenue	\$ 3,154.60
2015 Revenue	\$ 11,036.60
2016 Revenue	\$ 18,025.00
2017 Revenue	\$ 18,188.40
2018 Revenue	\$ 17,259.00
2019 Revenue	\$ 17,425.60

\* Tax certification fee increased from \$1.00 to \$5.00 in July of 2015 causing the significant revenue increase.



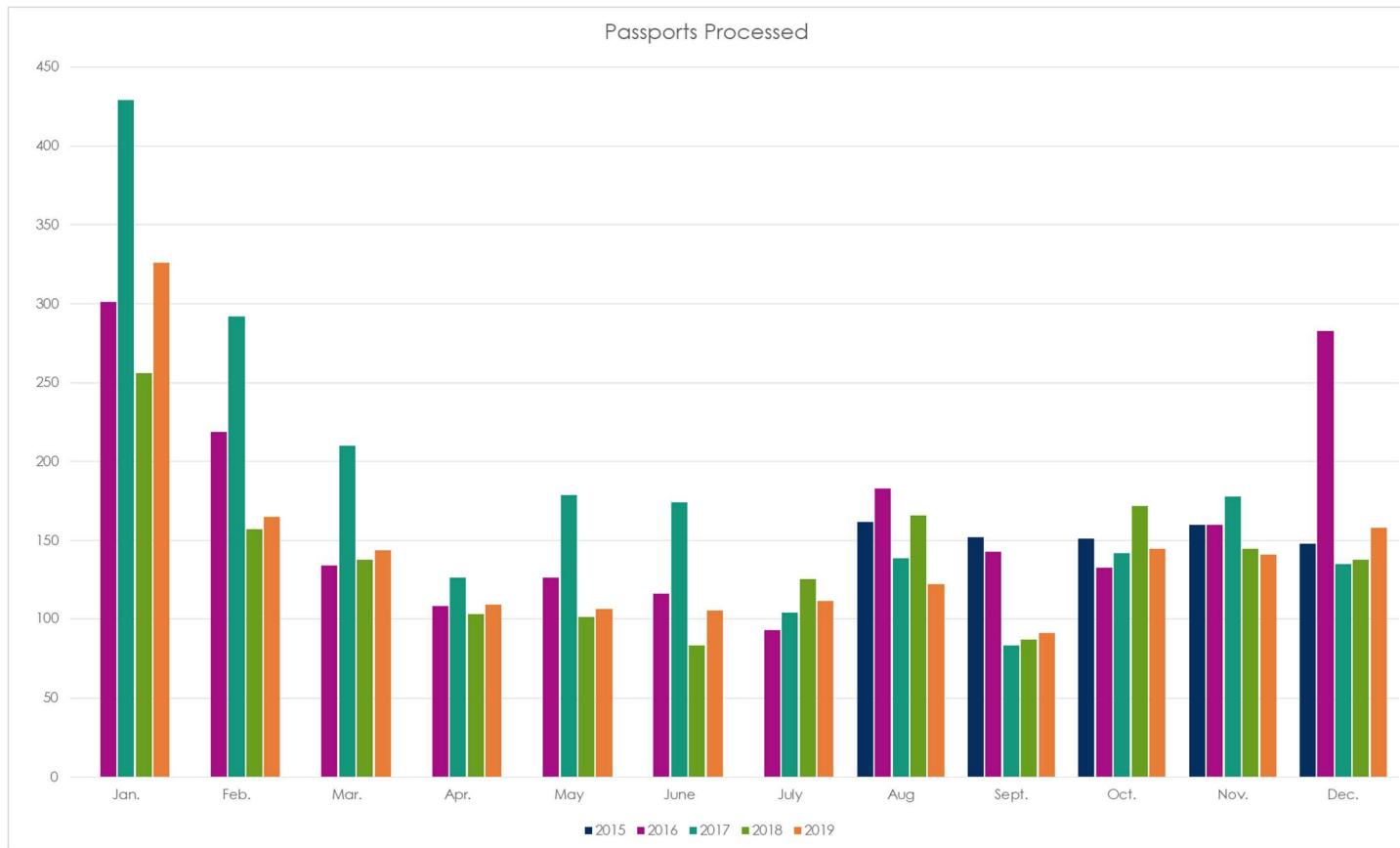
A tax search is a written tax status verification from the Grand Traverse County Treasurer's Office. The tax search requests are received by mail, FAX, and email. We offer delinquent tax look up online where owners can research their own properties for free or a \$2.00 fee for properties other than their own. A public terminal is located in the Governmental Center for the public to do their own property tax search free of charge.

	Delinquent Searches In Office	Delinquent Searches Online	Complete Database
2014 Revenue	\$ 3,078.00	\$ 1,229.60	\$ 3,633.75
2015 Revenue	\$ 2,911.00	\$ 415.60	\$ 1,879.25
2016 Revenue	\$ 749.00	\$ 721.80	\$ 2,122.00
2017 Revenue	\$ 787.00	\$ 1,871.97	\$ 1,557.50
2018 Revenue	\$ 506.25	\$ 2,373.14	\$ 2,801.25
2019 Revenue	\$ 1,213.44	\$ 3,143.57	\$ 2,820.00



# PASSPORT PROCESSING

The County Treasurer's Office is a certified US Department of State Acceptance Facility providing passport processing services Monday thru Thursday 8:30am–4:00pm. The office accepts and processes new applications which requires review of applications and required documentation (identity, citizenship, and parental relationship for applicants under the age of 16) for completeness and accuracy. Once reviewed, staff fully executes and submits the application according to US Department of State guidelines. We also provide reviews of renewal applications free of charge. An annual re-certification process is required for all staff members by the US Department of State to keep up to date on changing guidelines and processing effectiveness.



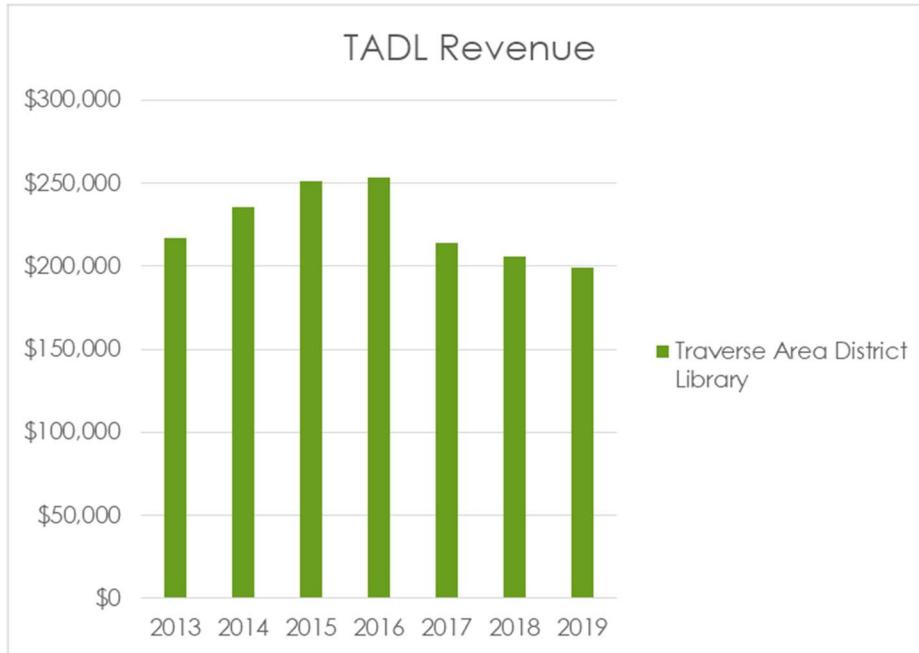
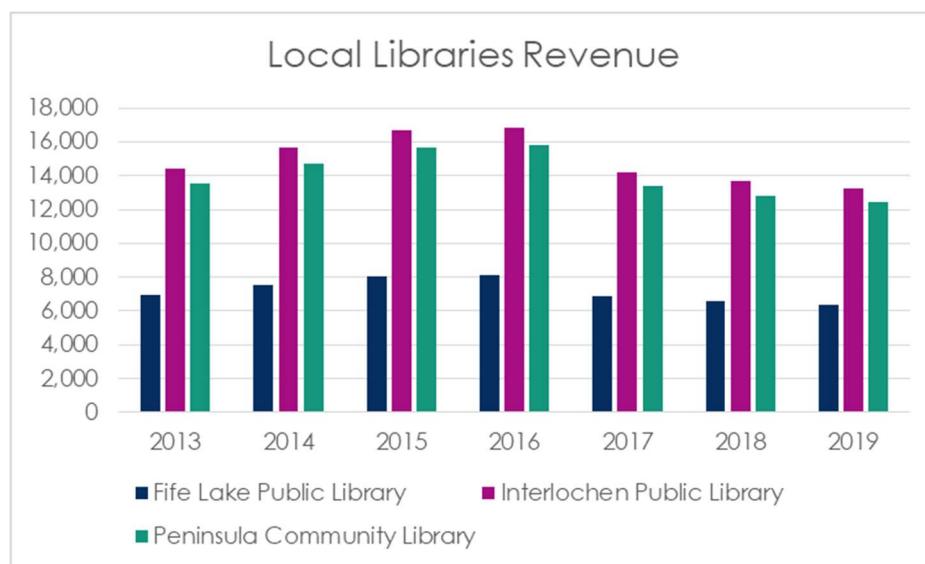
Year	Revenue	Applications Processed
2015	\$ 41,168	773
2016	\$ 52,400	1,999
2017	\$ 54,625	2,191
2018	\$ 52,950	1,671
2019	\$ 60,165	1,723

In April 2018 The U.S. Department of State increased the processing fee charged, and retained by our office, from \$25.00 to \$35.00 per application.

## LIBRARY PENAL FINES

The Michigan Constitution of 1963 requires penalties collected for violations of State penal law be divided by court costs, statutory fees, and penal fines. Fines are deposited into a library fund to support public libraries as required by Public Act 59 of 1964. The Michigan Department of Education sends a listing of eligible libraries and their associated service population, according to the 2010 census or subsequent special federal census, to the Treasurer's Office in July each year. The County Treasurer is required to pay local libraries their share of the total collected funds and interest by August 1st.

Library	Population Served	Percentage	2019 Amount
Fife Lake Public Library	2,791	2.7635%	\$ 6,382.37
Interlochen Public Library	5,784	5.7271%	\$ 13,226.67
Peninsula Community Library	5,433	5.3795%	\$ 12,424.01
Traverse Area District Library	86,986	86.1299%	\$ 198,916.85
<b>Totals</b>	<b>100,994</b>	<b>100.0000%</b>	<b>\$ 230,949.90</b>



## BROWNFIELDS

Funds captured in a Brownfield will only be on specific parcels identified in the Brownfield plan and has a limited timeframe for capture not to exceed 30 years. In addition to local tax capture a Brownfield usually has the added value of **State Tax Capture**. This means that the County gets to keep State funds in the community to help clean up any environmental issues that were found during a project. The best example of this is the cyanide plume that was remediated at the Hotel Indigo. The cost to clean the cyanide from the soil was great, but held a greater benefit to the area in keeping the plume from traveling into West Bay.

The remediation of old buildings, like the Commons, or underdeveloped property with environmental issues, such as Rivers Edge will also help the area develop and grow.

Below is a map of current Brownfield plans in Traverse City and their expected plan end dates. In addition to the plans in the City, we also have Brownfields in Long Lake, Garfield and Blair townships.

