
**Resolution Proclaiming Water and Sanitation as Basic Human Rights,
and that Water Shall Remain in the Public Trust**

BECAUSE, water is a necessary component of human life and all known living beings; and

BECAUSE, clean drinking water and sanitation is a human right essential for the full enjoyment of life and economic prosperity; and

BECAUSE, only a small percentage of the Earth's water is available freshwater, which is often compromised by pollution, and excessive withdrawal from lakes, rivers, aquifers, and other water bodies that put those watersheds at risk; and

BECAUSE, the United Nations estimates that by 2025, 1.8 billion people will be living in regions impacted by water scarcity, and two-thirds of the world's population could be living in water-stressed areas due to over-use of water, climate change, and population growth; and

BECAUSE, on December 7, 2020, a water futures market was launched for California water, creating the world's first water futures market that allows traders, banks, hedge funds, and others to bet on future water prices and availability; and

BECAUSE, treating water as another tradable commodity, like gold and oil, benefits some but disproportionately excludes other segments of society, such as low-income communities, small-scale farmers, and others without the financial ability to access such markets; and

BECAUSE, water futures markets represent the financialization of life itself, and fail to distinguish the value of water beyond finances, such as between usage for non-essential swimming pools and essential sanitation; and

BECAUSE, privately-owned water utilities are not necessarily more cost-effective, nor are they saving residents money compared with publicly-owned utilities, as privately-owned water utility customers pay an average of 59% more for drinking water services and 63% more for sewer services, according to Food & Water Watch; and

BECAUSE, additionally, according to the United Nations, access to a robust and hygienic water supply can save approximately 360,000 infants worldwide from death each year. Currently, it is estimated that one out of every three people, approximately 2.2 billion people, live with contaminated drinking water, often containing feces and other harmful pollutants; and

BECAUSE, equal access to clean water is affected by many factors including climate, financial stability, and proximity to a water source; and

BECAUSE, the value of water is immeasurable, as water shapes every component of our lives. Valuing water improperly leads to neglect of this valuable resource, which ultimately contributes to the degradation of the environment, and is a dominant element in global illness and famine; and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that we, the Board of Commissioners of the City of Traverse City, do hereby recognize water and sanitation as basic human rights; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we, the Board of Commissioners of the City of Traverse City, do hereby affirm that the waters of the Great Lakes, which is 20 percent of the world's fresh surface water and the drinking water source for 40 million people including the source of our drinking water in the City of Traverse City, should be held in the public trust for the people of the Great Lakes region; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that this Resolution be spread upon the permanent Record of Proceedings of the Board of Commissioners of the City of Traverse City.

I certify that this resolution was adopted by the City Commission for the City of Traverse City at its December 6, 2021, regular meeting, conducted in compliance with Michigan law and all other pertinent regulations.



Benjamin Marentette, MMC, City Clerk