



NORTHWEST MICHIGAN COALITION TO END HOMELESSNESS

HOUSING and HOMELESSNESS TASK FORCE

OCTOBER 2025 PROGRESS REPORT



Executive Summary

The Housing and Homelessness Task Force was established to develop a **comprehensive, long-term plan** to prevent and end homelessness in Grand Traverse County. It brings together representatives from government agencies, homeless and social service providers, healthcare organizations, housing developers, and law enforcement to **coordinate efforts, share resources**, and **create effective solutions**. The goal is to **foster collaboration across sectors**, ensuring that all community efforts work together toward providing safe, stable, and affordable housing for everyone.

In October, the Leadership Team met to provide strategic direction, oversight, and accountability for the community-wide Task Force's efforts to **address and end homelessness**. The group reviewed draft **Task Force recommendations** and the **feasibility scoring matrix** for the Emergency Shelter and Services work group, weighing the top two shelter options and incorporating feedback, while considering a shift toward a **community action plan that is funded before a full implementation plan is created**. They also received updates on Jubilee House funding challenges and **daytime drop-in service possibilities**.

The Safety Net Services and Emergency Shelter and Services work groups held two meetings in October, and the Housing Solutions group met once to **refine recommendations** and **stay aligned with timelines**. The Safety Net Services group advanced plans for preventing homelessness, enhancing access to healthcare and mental health services, crisis intervention, and **housing navigation staffing**—including a **proposed screening tool** to identify individuals at risk. The Emergency Shelter and Services group finalized three recommendations, narrowed eight options to the **top two feasible paths**, and achieved consensus around the need for year-round shelter operations, 30 additional beds, and **local government funding support**.

The Housing Solutions group focused on **deeply affordable housing options** for those exiting homelessness and **partnering with developers and landlords** to advance Permanent Supportive Housing and Rapid Re-Housing. They finalized six recommendations, prioritizing **integrated behavioral health and care supports through an Integrated Care Team** and an **incentives toolkit** for planning with homelessness considerations. A third **listening session** with ten residents at the Goodwill Inn highlighted transportation, housing access, health services, safety, and community supports, emphasizing mobility, re-entry pathways, on-site mental health, and stronger resident input. The **Advisory Council**, comprising the Leadership Team, Work Group chairs, community leaders, officials, and experts, **did not meet in October**. The next meeting is scheduled for December 11th to give the Emergency Shelter Work Group additional time to refine strategy and ensure a cohesive, practical path forward.

Task Force Goals and Draft Recommendations

The goals of the Task Force are to develop a unified strategy, address systemic barriers to housing, maximize funding and resources, enhance service coordination, track progress and accountability, incorporate community perspectives and stakeholder input, and finally, to advocate for policy solutions.

To **develop a unified strategy**, we are aligning efforts across agencies, ensuring shared goals, streamlining services, and determining the most effective use of resources to prevent and end homelessness in our region.

We are **addressing systemic barriers to housing** by tackling factors such as housing affordability, mental health services, addiction treatment, and economic stability. The Task Force is working toward long-term solutions to reduce the risk of homelessness.

The Task Force is **maximizing funding and resources** by strengthening coordination of federal, state, and local funding to enhance efficiency and close service gaps. We are also advocating for additional resources to meet the growing demand for housing and support services.

By bringing together housing providers, healthcare systems, and social services, the Task Force is **enhancing service coordination** by improving collaboration and accessibility, ensuring that individuals receive the right support at the right time.

We are **tracking progress and accountability** by setting measurable goals and regularly evaluating outcomes. The Task Force is promoting transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement in local housing and homelessness initiatives.

Through targeted engagement efforts, including public input sessions and collaboration with community leaders, the Task Force is **incorporating community perspectives and stakeholder input**. We are promoting awareness, education, and support for effective strategies to address and end homelessness.

To create lasting change, the Task Force is **advocating for policy solutions** by championing strategies that expand deeply affordable housing, increase funding for services, and remove regulatory barriers that impact those experiencing homelessness.

Emergency Shelter and Services

Create a sustainable budget and funding plan for emergency and day shelter services.

Develop a consistent set of recommended service standards across all emergency and day shelters to ensure high-quality, trauma-informed, and equitable services.

Develop a clear and feasible plan for the location(s) and scope of emergency and day shelter services that balances accessibility, service quality, community concerns, and long-term system goals.

Housing Solutions - Housing Development

Expand deeply affordable housing availability and Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) options.

Explore innovative financing mechanisms, such as Brownfield Housing TIF, variable PILOTs tied to AMI, affordable housing millages, etc.

Advocate for increased density and zoning flexibility to support deeply affordable housing.

Adopt an incentives toolkit and developer checklists that consider homelessness and encourage deeply affordable housing during the planning stages.

Housing Solutions - Support Services

Sustain and stabilize HUD funded Permanent Supportive Housing programs with support for one year while providers develop long-term funding strategy.

Expand access to behavioral health and integrated care supports for those residing in PSH through the development of a comprehensive/integrated care team.

Safety Net Services

Expand Quick Response Team and Street Outreach coverage to the entire county to ensure equitable community outreach

Improve homeless response system navigation and service coordination.

Integrate trauma-informed practices in behavioral health and resilience-fostering strategies across the homeless response system as a secondary prevention strategy to prevent returns to homelessness

Increase regional access to mobile health and mental health services including mobile med and the new crisis center.

Invest in upstream prevention and early detection of high risk of homelessness while supporting programs that help people maintain housing stability.

For more information

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Leadership Team

The Leadership Team met on October 17th to provide **strategic direction, oversight, and accountability** for the community-wide Task Force's efforts to address and end homelessness. They are responsible for **setting the overall vision**, guiding the **development of the community plan**, and ensuring that Work Groups have the **resources and support** needed to succeed.

In Attendance at the October 17th meeting:

Nate Alger - Grand Traverse County, **Deb Allen** - City of Traverse City, **Ryan Hannon** - Central United Methodist Church, **Sakura Takano** - Rotary Charities., **Ashley Halladay-Schmandt** - Northwest Michigan Coalition to End Homelessness, **Christie Minervini** - Task Force Support Coordinator, and **Richard Bellingham** - Facilitator

The meeting was held to **review progress with Task Force recommendations** and to look at the **results of the feasibility scoring matrix** that was developed for the Emergency Shelter and Services work group. They spent time reviewing the **challenges and merits of the top two options**, and considered members' feedback. In addition, the Leadership Team discussed the need to focus on creating a **community action plan vs. an implementation plan** that would come out of the Task Force once it was properly funded. Finally, an update was shared regarding funding challenges at the Jubilee House, and **possible next steps** for providing **daytime drop-in services**.

Working Groups

The Safety Net Services and Emergency Shelter and Services work groups met twice in October, while the Housing Solutions group met once to further **refine and consolidate their recommendations**, and to stay on track with Task Force timelines. **There has been ongoing planning and collaboration** happening among the members, including meetings between Safe Harbor and Goodwill Northern Michigan to address the **urgent need for thirty additional shelter beds** heading into winter.

Safety Net Services

The Safety Net Services work group is developing recommendations to **strengthen support systems** that **prevent homelessness and assist those currently experiencing it**. Focus areas include access to healthcare and mental health services, crisis intervention, diversion and prevention efforts, and essential resources.

The group met on October 2nd and 24th to finalize their **five Task Force recommendations**, explore resources, and develop plans for **system navigator role** and/ or housing navigation staffing. They also discussed the need for a **screening tool or questionnaire** to help identify folks who are at risk of becoming homeless.

In Attendance at the October 2nd and October 24th meetings:

Joe Barkman - Northern Lakes Community Mental Health, **Ryan Hannon** - Central United Methodist Church, **Jennifer Holm** - Traverse City Police Dept., **Sarah Hughes** - Northwest Michigan Community Action Agency, **Dr. David Klee** - Munson Family Practice, **Bailey LaPan** - Goodwill Northern Michigan , **Paula Lapinski** - Addiction Treatment Services

Emergency Shelter and Services

The Emergency Shelter and Services work group is developing recommendations to **improve crisis response systems** and ensure **immediate, safe, and supportive shelter**. This includes enhancing emergency shelters, day services, and housing navigation efforts.

The group on October 2nd and 14th to finalize their **three Task Force recommendations**, determine **number of shelter beds** needed, agree on **criteria to rate future shelter options**, create and complete a shelter **feasibility matrix**, and reach consensus that **any long-term solutions must include**:

- Year-round shelter operations
- 30 additional shelter beds
- Local government funding support

They explored eight different options and narrowed it down to the **top two that are most feasible**:

- Expand Safe Harbor by 30 beds (no change to Goodwill operations)
- Consolidate shelter options into one location (operator to be determined) (site to be determined)

Next steps:

- Goodwill Northern Michigan and Safe Harbor will each bring these frameworks to their respective boards for discussion and feedback
- Both organizations will return to the subcommittee in early December to share reflections and potential paths forward

In Attendance at the October 2nd and October 14th meetings:

Dan Buron - Goodwill Northern Michigan, **Jessica Hamilton** - Community Cares Coalition, **Ryan Hannon** - Central United Methodist Church, **Patrick Livingston** - Safe Harbor, **Mike McCrary** - Safe Harbor, **Hannah Wescott** - Grace Episcopal/Jubilee House, **Megan Wick** - Community Cares Coalition

Housing Solutions

The Housing Solutions group is working to create **affordable housing options** for people exiting homelessness by **securing funding, partnering with developers and landlords**, and **advancing supportive housing models** like Permanent Supportive Housing, Rapid Re-Housing and other innovative housing solutions.

The group met on October 2nd to **finalize their six Task Force recommendations**, taking a deeper dive into increasing access to **behavioral health and integrated care supports** for those residing in PSH through the development of an **Integrated Care Team** with the Supports subgroup, and adopting an **incentives toolkit and developer checklists** that consider homelessness and encourage affordable housing during the planning stages on the development side.

In Attendance at the October 2nd meeting:

Becca Binder - Northern Michigan Supportive Housing, **Dan Buron** - Goodwill Northern Michigan, **Maxwell Cameron** - Grand Traverse County, **Shelly Charron** - Housing North, **Nora Dunlop** - Goodwill Northern Michigan, **Julie Ellalasingham** - St. Vincent DePaul, **Karl Fulmer** - Traverse City Housing Commission, **Sarah Hughes** - Northwest Michigan Community Action Agency, **Claire Karner** - East Bay Township, **Paula Lapinski** - Addiction Treatment Services,

Listening Session

Ten residents experiencing homelessness were interviewed at the Goodwill Inn for our **third listening session** on October 29th. The group included **7 women and 3 men**, ages ranging from 24 to 82, with about **six residents reporting some form of income**. The session explored experiences and needs across transportation, safety, legal aid, housing, health services, and community supports, offering a **snapshot of day-to-day realities** and aspirations. The open and informal format allowed for **honest dialogue**, with all participants assured of **anonymity to foster candid responses**.

Key Themes

- **Transportation and mobility**
Preserve the BATA free loop and improve coordination with other transport supports; provide real-time information and planning help.
- **Housing access and supportive models**
High housing costs persist with vouchers; re-entry and behavioral health concerns create barriers. Develop scalable housing models that blend stability with on-site services; review eligibility criteria; create clear re-entry pathways.
- **Behavioral health and addiction treatment**
Desire for on-site mental health care and stronger addiction treatment, while valuing Harm Reduction. Add an on-site mental health worker; expand addiction treatment and integrated care pathways.
- **Safety, dignity, and resident voice**
Harassment concerns and feeling unheard; need for better case-worker communication. Establish resident advisory mechanisms; strengthen safety protocols and confidential reporting.
- **Community partnerships and holistic care**
Faith-based and community partners are essential. Formalize collaborations with Safe Harbor, churches, and similar partners; map and coordinate services.
- **Long-term economic and family goals**
Rebuilding credit, returning to school, and family reunification are priorities. Integrate financial education, credential pathways, and family-support services; align with transportation and housing supports.

Advisory Council

The Advisory Council includes the Leadership Team, Work Group chairs, community leaders, local and state officials, and subject matter experts. They **review progress** from each work group, **offer input** on proposed solutions, and **help secure the necessary resources** and **policy support** to implement the community-wide action plan. They did not meet in October— their next scheduled meeting is on December 11th