



NORTHWEST MICHIGAN COALITION TO END HOMELESSNESS

# HOUSING and HOMELESSNESS TASK FORCE

NOV - DEC 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.

The **Leadership Team** met on November 14th to **review progress** across Safe Harbor, Goodwill Inn, the Community Cares Coalition, and Drop-in Day Services, stressing the need to **align with anticipated City and County funding** for the draft shelter consolidation budget. **Advisory Council logistics were adjusted**, moving the next meeting to December to focus on Emergency Shelter issues, and a briefing from the Housing North Northwest Michigan Housing Summit was summarized to **inform regional strategy**. Progress on Task Force **recommendations and survey results** was captured, with **key insights and action items identified**. Clear next steps were outlined to **integrate funding prospects, refine program alignment, and establish implementation timelines**.

On December 9th, the Leadership Team **conducted a quick check-in** to assess progress by the **Emergency Shelter and Services work group** and to plan for the upcoming Advisory Council meeting, **confirming priorities and cross-group coordination**. The December 18th session provided a **detailed review** of Advisory Council feedback, highlighted **key Task Force recommendations**, and **established a process for prioritizing funding**, with **separate plans** for Emergency Shelter and Deeply Affordable Housing. Guidance was given on **pursuing future City and County funding requests**, and a **planning meeting with OrgCode** for the Emergency Shelter work group was conducted.

**Public-facing planning** continued, with **updates on a potential Code Blue Policy** for Grand Traverse County and **public input sessions scheduled for January 21st** at 2:00 pm and 6:00 pm at the Governmental Center. Progress also included **reporting on the partnership** with Central United Methodist and Jubilee House, and **advancing collaborative shelter and housing efforts** within the region.

The **Emergency Shelter and Services work group** met on December 5th to **refine priorities, clarify partner responsibilities, and add a contingency plan** for 30 additional beds if consolidation proved infeasible. The Task Force neared completion, while coordination among Safe Harbor, Goodwill Northern Michigan, and the Community Cares Coalition persisted, **ensuring ongoing planning and alignment across initiatives**.

# Task Force Goals and Draft Recommendations

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 Recommendations

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.

**EDITED:** Maintain current year round shelter operations in Grand Traverse County while planning for shelter consolidation with key partners such as Safe Harbor and Goodwill Northern Michigan and the Community Cares Coalition for 24/7, 365 day operations with 165 beds (likely, the most feasible option is at Keystone Rd.) If that proves not feasible we will look at other options including a new location or adding 30 beds at Safe Harbor.

### Housing Solutions - Support Services Recommendations

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 Permanent Supportive Housing through the development of a comprehensive/ integrated care team.

### Housing Solutions - Housing Development Recommendations

Expand deeply affordable housing availability and Permanent Supportive Housing options.

Explore innovative financing mechanisms, such as Brownfield Housing TIF, variable Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOTs) tied to Average Median Income, affordable housing millages, etc.

**EDITED:** 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.

### Safety Net Services Recommendations

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.

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

**EDITED:** Increase access to mobile health and mental health services including mobile med and the new crisis center, and create a model for regional implementation

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 three times during November and December 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.

## Members:

**Nate Alger** - Grand Traverse County, **Benjamin Marentette** - 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

At the **November 14<sup>th</sup> meeting**, the Leadership Team **reviewed progress being made** with Safe Harbor, Goodwill Inn, Community Cares Coalition, and Drop-in Day Services, noting the **need to align with anticipated City and County funding** for the draft shelter consolidation budget; Advisory Council logistics were adjusted with the next meeting moved to December to focus on Emergency Shelter issues; they completed the review of **Task Force recommendations** and survey results, capturing **key insights and action items**; a briefing from the Housing North Northwest Michigan Housing Summit was summarized to **inform regional housing and shelter strategy**; and next steps were outlined to **ensure integration of current funding prospects, program alignment, and implementation timelines**.

On **December 9<sup>th</sup>**, the Leadership Team met for a **quick check-in** to discuss progress being made by the **Emergency Shelter and Services work group**, and to plan for the upcoming **Advisory Council meeting**.

Finally, on **December 18<sup>th</sup>**, the group **reviewed progress and feedback from the Advisory Council**, highlighted the current Task Force recommendations with emphasis on which were key, and **outlined the process for prioritizing recommendations** for funding. Separate funding plans are being developed for Emergency Shelter and Deeply Affordable Housing, and guidance was provided on **how to approach future City and County funding requests**. A **planning meeting with OrgCode** for the Emergency Shelter work group was scheduled, updates were provided on a **potential Code Blue Policy for Grand Traverse County**, and **public input sessions** were set for Wednesday, January 21st at 2:00 pm and 6:00 pm at the Governmental Center. Progress was also reported on a partnership with Central United Methodist and Jubilee House.

# Working Groups

## 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.

## Members:

**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

While most of the groups have completed their efforts, the **Emergency Shelter and Services** work group met on **December 5<sup>th</sup>** to review their three recommendations. They amended their third recommendation to **provide clarity on their priorities** and to **identify partners and their responsibilities**. They also added a plan for meeting the **need for 30 additional beds** in case the shelters aren't able to consolidate and expand.

The Task Force is winding to a close, but **planning and collaboration continues** to happen among the members, including Safe Harbor, Goodwill Northern Michigan, and the Community Cares Coalition.

## 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.

## Members:

**Nate Alger** - GT County, **Chris Barsheff** - Garfield Township, **Becca Binder** - Northwest Michigan Supportive Housing, **Dan Buron** - Goodwill Northern Michigan, **Rick Bellingham** - Facilitator, **Warren Call** - Traverse Connect, **Randy Fewless** - GT County Sheriff Dept., **Karl Fulmer** - Traverse City Housing Commission, **Ashley Halladay-Schmandt** - NW Coalition to End Homelessness, **Ryan Hannon** - Central United Methodist Church, **Jennifer Holm** - TC Police Dept., **Michele Howard** - Traverse Area District Library, **Sarah Hughes** - Northwest Michigan Community Action Agency, **Terri LaCroix-Kelty** - Munson Medical Center, **Deb Lake** - Goodwill Northern Michigan, **Bailey LaPan** - Goodwill Northern Michigan, **Jen Leaf** - Michigan State Housing Development Authority, **Pat Livingston** - Safe Harbor, **Benjamin Marentette** - City of Traverse City, **Alison Metiva** - GT Regional Community Foundation, **Angela Mikula** - Lived Experience of Homelessness, **Connor Miller** - Aspire North, **Christie Minervini** - NW Michigan Coalition to End Homelessness, **Chief Matt Richmond** - TC Police Dept., **Kendall Rodriguez** - Networks Northwest, **Sakura Takano** - Rotary Charities, **Chief Jim Tuller** - TC Fire Dept., **Megan Wick** - Community Cares Coalition

On **December 11<sup>th</sup>**, the Advisory Council met to **review progress** with a focus on "Understanding the Housing and Urban Development Continuum of Care Competition Changes and Local Impacts." The discussion emphasized a clear Call to Action and a review of **Roles and Responsibilities to ensure accountability**, while evaluating Safety Net Services' and Housing Solutions' recommendations to **strengthen coordinated support** and **accelerate affordable housing efforts**. In the Emergency Shelter and Services work group, the council **examined capacity and coordination with health and social services**, and took a closer look at recommendations to "Maintain current year-round shelter operations in Grand Traverse County while planning for shelter consolidation with key partners (Safe Harbor, Goodwill Northern Michigan, and the Community Cares Coalition) for 24/7, 365-day operations with 165 beds, noting Keystone Rd as the most feasible site; if infeasible, alternative options such as a new location or adding 30 beds at Safe Harbor" were considered. Small group representatives **reported out on these deliberations**, and next steps were outlined to **advance implementation and partner alignment**.