

NORTHWEST MICHIGAN COMMUNITY HOUSING NETWORKS

BENZIE COUNTY

Advocates for Benzie County

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Advocates for Benzie County is a group of volunteers that is working to promote a better quality of life for all Benzie County residents. Current plans and activities include work towards workforce housing, infrastructure improvements, education, and year-round employment - topics that are closely connected and interdependent. ABC is currently working with partners including Northwest Michigan Works, Michigan Regional Council of Carpenters, and Benzie Habitat for Humanity to teach the building trades while increasing the number of affordable housing units in Benzie County.

FRANKFORT AREA HOUSING ADVISORY COUNCIL

Josh Mills, City of Frankfort

Bob McNabb, Chair, Frankfort Area
Housing Advisory Council
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The Frankfort Area Housing Advisory Council was established by the Frankfort City Council in 2018 to gather information and address issues related to housing in the City. A short, informal survey distributed in the Frankfort area in 2018 underscored residents' difficulty in finding affordable housing, as well as related issues like short-term rentals and economic challenges facing employers throughout the area. Informed by survey results and local initiatives, the Frankfort Area Housing Advisory Council is now working with a range of government and local employers, State partners, and other stakeholders to identify and address the potential impacts on housing resulting from infrastructure, zoning, tax incentives, financing, and other issues. In addition, the group has emphasized the need for relevant, updated data to aid in decision-making, and to build relationships between the City and legislators or other policy makers to advocate for locally-driven and sustainable housing solutions.

CHARLEVOIX COUNTY Boyne Housing Solutions

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The City of Boyne City and the Boyne Area Chamber of Commerce have taken proactive roles in working with partners to address housing needs, convening, leading, and supporting community-wide conversations about housing needs and solutions. City officials have identified housing as a priority issue, and have worked to adopt and promote policies supporting housing development. A 2017 Boyne City Housing Summit, along with a Chamber-led event in 2018, have focused on educating local officials and the public about housing needs, opportunities, and solutions. In 2018, with leadership from the Chamber, community members are working to identify and support high-priority actions around infrastructure, zoning, and publicly-owned property.

EMMET COUNTY
Little Traverse Bay Housing Partnership

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The Little Traverse Bay Housing Partnership is a group of volunteers including private business interests, the Petoskey-Harbor Springs Area Community Foundation, and housing stakeholders. The objective for the Partnership is to bring together key members of the housing “community”—land owners, developers, construction companies, financial institutions, local governments, major employers, property managers, nonprofit agencies, technical training institutions, realtors, architects, foundations, and others—to identify and acknowledge constraints on housing development and together develop plans for specific projects to address them. Goals include adding between 50-100 residential units in the Petoskey-Harbor Springs area that are affordable to, and that meet the needs of, employees of area businesses and their families - including duplexes or apartments, efficiency or studio apartments, or “tiny homes,” within multi-family, multi-income, multi-use developments close to employment, services, shopping and entertainment, and public transportation.

A substantial financial gap exists to make affordable housing projects feasible. Therefore, an additional focus of the Partnership will be to explore and catalyze development of new, locally-based financial and organizational mechanisms that can help bridge this gap.

LEELANAU COUNTY
Leelanau Housing Action Committee

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The Leelanau County Board of Commissioners approved the creation of a housing committee in 2017. The Housing Action Committee (HAC) began its work as a sub-committee of the County Planning Commission, with members from local government, housing organizations, business, and the public. It focuses on regulatory barriers to housing, and how to help communities become “housing ready” with appropriate planning and zoning. The HAC is currently using a Housing Ready checklist as they conduct local government outreach, attending local meetings on request, and working to identify resources for technical assistance to local governments. The HAC also interacts regularly with related housing partners like the Northwest Michigan Housing Solutions Network, Leelanau REACH, and County boards and committees including the Board of Commissioners, the Planning Commission, and the Land Bank Authority.

WEXFORD COUNTY
Wexford AES Leadership Group

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A number of City representatives and private sector partners in the Cadillac area have worked towards developing partnerships and resources around workforce housing. In partnership with the Alliance for Economic Success (AES), the group has completed a housing needs assessment to support developer interest in housing projects in the downtown.