

**Building Upon Community Assets:**

*A 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness in  
Marquette and Alger Counties*

**10-Year Plan to End Homelessness in Marquette and Alger County  
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## I. INTRODUCTION

Marquette and Alger Counties are set in a rural region resting on the southern shores of Lake Superior. Many residents refer to it endearingly as “God’s Country”. People living here love their families, neighbors, community, and the place they call home. Unfortunately, not everyone has a place to call home. By our standards, this is unacceptable. We believe that one homeless person in our community is simply one too many.

Although progress has been made towards ending homelessness in Marquette and Alger Counties, we continue to encounter the major obstacles of sparse housing resources and the lack of coordinated community services for homeless individuals and families. Most private rental units within the area’s economic bases are not affordable to those who earn wages at or near minimum wage. Many homeless individuals are not eligible for the limited public subsidized housing units due to criminal histories, poor credit histories, or poor rental histories. For those who obtain housing choice vouchers, they potentially face the significant challenge of securing housing that meet affordability and housing quality standards set forth the by voucher administrator and near their children’s schools and place of employment. Transportation into these economic bases presents another obstacle, as public transportation in Marquette County does not accommodate early morning or late evening work schedules. Some homeless re-enter the cycle of homelessness as result of lack of support services once in housing.

***The vision for our community is that every individual and family has access to permanent, safe, affordable, housing regardless of circumstances.*** We have chosen this vision because Marquette and Alger counties are dedicated to ending homelessness for everyone and seek to create a solid foundation, from which, no individual or family will face homelessness. **Our mission is to eliminate homelessness in Marquette and Alger Counties by the year 2016.**

Marquette and Alger Counties are joining the national campaign to end homelessness in the next ten years. We support the movement of transitioning from a system that manages homelessness primarily through the utilization of emergency shelters to one that ends homelessness through the provision of permanent housing. Combating homelessness is not new for Marquette and Alger counties. Rather, we have a proud tradition of addressing the needs of people who are experiencing homelessness and the obstacles they face while trying to obtain housing.

The Emergency Needs and Homeless Coalition (ENHC), has served as the Advisory Board for the Marquette and Alger County 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness. The ENHC **“exists to identify and address the short and long-term needs for emergency services, as well as housing and shelter needs of homeless individuals and families in Marquette and Alger Counties. The ENHC continues to be a community-based body of concerned individuals and organizations operating within the Marquette and Alger County area”**.

It is the intent of the ENHC, through this planning process and subsequent implementation of its goals, to end homelessness within the next 10 years by preventing the entry of people into the homelessness system and by providing rapid re-housing services to those who enter the system. *The ENHC recognizes that a primary focus on quick access to housing, transition support, crisis intervention, rapid re-housing, follow-up case management, and housing support services to prevent the reoccurrence of homelessness will be essential in the path towards ending homelessness.*

This document presents a comprehensive plan to further our communities' progress toward ending homelessness. Our plan's framework outlines a strategic course of action aimed at attaining established goals in the following categories:

- A.** Increasing the supply of affordable housing
- B.** Expanding ability to rapidly re-house residents who are homeless
- C.** Expanding prevention initiatives to eradicate homelessness
- D.** Building capacity to prevent homelessness
- E.** Expanding upon public awareness initiatives

Our ten-year plan reflects the *Housing First* movement that has emerged in recent years. We are embracing the concept that the solution to ending homelessness is to provide safe, affordable, permanent housing and link this housing with supportive services. We also believe some of the dollars historically spent on emergency shelters would be more effectively spent providing permanent housing.

## II. HISTORIC RESPONSE

Service providers in Marquette and Alger Counties have historically addressed the problems of homelessness by providing a broad range of services to their targeted populations. Service providers were brought together in 1994 when the Marquette/Alger Section Eight agency in Marquette County was chosen by the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) to pilot the HUD Family Self-Sufficiency Initiative. This initiative brought together supportive agencies (through Memorandums of Agreement) to serve rental assistance clients as mentors and counselors. This allowed our local agencies to assist individuals and families in becoming self-sufficient. Presently, the Marquette MICHIGAN WORKS! Office is the facilitator of this program working directly with the Lansing MSHDA Housing Choice Voucher (HCV). A strong referral network flourished, continued and now continues to support the Homeless programs in Marquette and Alger counties.

In 2003, MSHDA chose Marquette and Alger counties as one of only three counties in the State to pilot the HOMELESS PREFERENCE PILOT. This decision to target our communities was based on our strong community network. As required, by January of 2004, 20 homeless were housed in permanent housing in Marquette County.

The initial CoC group consisted of :

- Lutheran Social Services (LSS) Welcome Home Program (lead agency)
- LSS Voices for Youth
- Pathways
- The Women's Center
- MSHDA Marquette/Alger HCV Rental Assistance Agency
- Marquette Alger Regional Educational Service Agency

The success of the initial Homeless Preference Pilot gave way for the **Homeless Assistance Recovery Program (HARP)** which is now piloting in 23 counties throughout the State. Communities target Housing Choice Vouchers to persons and families who are homeless and receiving services for 28 days. In some cases these vouchers are linked to other sources of temporary rental assistance including Tenant Based Rental Assistance (TBRA), Shelter Plus Care and HUD Supportive Housing Project (SHP).

This collaboration has been a learning experience that has brought this group closer to understanding the causes and needs of the homeless population and enabling concise networking with service providers within Marquette and Alger counties. The CoC is now a working group within the ENHC which serves as a central organization with representatives of those who are generally responsible for meeting the numerous needs of homeless individuals and families. *A detailed description of some of the key programs addressing homelessness in this 10 year plan can be found in the Appendix.*

### **III. HOMELESSNESS IN MARQUETTE AND ALGER COUNTIES**

It is difficult to quantify the level of homelessness in Marquette and Alger Counties, as is the case in most rural communities. The homeless typically do not live on the street and, other than the Harbor House (a shelter for the victims of domestic violence), the Voices for Youth Transition Shelter, and the Janzen House (for single men and women), and MSHDA funded programs, we have no way of knowing, and counting the number of people experiencing homelessness.

Despite the difficulty of achieving a reliable count of those experiencing homelessness in Marquette and Alger Counties, the ENHC has gained a sense of the amount of homelessness through actual counts, various agency reports and by inference from national data. The data is highlighted in the two following sections.

#### **A. Scope of the problem**

On a national basis, families, particularly single mothers with preschool children, are the fastest growing segment of the homeless population. According to the National Alliance to End Homelessness, 600,000 families are estimated to be homeless each year and 1.35 million children are at risk of becoming homeless in a given year. Half of the homeless population are members of a family.

In the past three years, the MSHDA Marquette/Alger HCV Rental Assistance Agency has had face-to-face contact with 107 homeless individuals and families, of which, 60 were permanently housed and of those, 60 - 29 have terminated tenancy due to various reasons (i.e. eviction, abandonment, program violations, etc.). The MSHDA Marquette/Alger HCV Rental Assistance Agency currently administers 345 total vouchers. Presently, this Agency has 35 vouchers designated for the homeless population for *permanent* housing, which are consistently filled and also administers 20 supportive needs units (homeless and people with disabilities) Project Based Vouchers to the Preserve at Orianna Ridge [one of two Tax Credit establishments in Marquette County] in collaboration with the Alger Marquette Community Action Board (AMCAB).

Homeless Referrals Percentages for 2006:

- 50% from Shelters
- 50% from Transitional Housing

A market study conducted on August 10, 2006 for Marquette's Affordable Housing, Inc. (in Marquette County) states, "Population estimates and projections for the Proposed Market Area (PMA) show that declines witnessed during the 1990s are expected to reverse through 2011. Between 2000 and 2006, the PMA's population increased by 2.2% rising from 30,088 to 30,738. The PMA's population is expected to continue its increase through 2011. By then, the population is expected to be 31,280, a change of 4.0% from its 2000 Census population. The city [of Marquette] is projected to grow at a slightly higher rate, while the county [Marquette County] will fall further." Occupancy rates in the market in this same area are quite high, despite the age of the construction. Across the market, the occupancy rate was 99.5%.

The two Tax Credit establishments in Marquette County, Lost Creek and The Preserve at Orianna Ridge, had an occupancy rate of 98% while the six subsidized projects had a 99.7% occupancy rate. Meanwhile median household incomes in Marquette County for 2006 are \$42,212. The average one-bedroom rent in this market niche is \$390 and the two bedroom average is \$472.

The Marquette and Alger CoC body conducted a point-in-time survey on January 25, 2005. The results of this survey showed there were 34 Homeless Individuals and persons in households without children. Of those 34, 20 in emergency shelter, 11 in transitional housing and 3 unsheltered. Of the persons in Homeless Families with children, 11 were in emergency shelter, 36 in transitional housing and 6 unsheltered. The total number of homeless persons was 81.

Of the 81 homeless persons identified in the point-in-time survey, the following subpopulations were identified:

Chronically homeless	6
Severely Mentally Ill	8
Chronic Substance Abusers	6
Survivors of Domestic Violence	30
Veterans	1

The above numbers clearly show the picture of homeless for the people that were counted at that time. What it does not clearly show are the “hidden homeless” and those who are precariously housed. Within our rural area, the face of homelessness is often hidden and undocumented. Due to economic hardship, some families share housing or are “doubled up” with friends or relatives. In the aforementioned market study, 202 of the 17,990 owner households and 127 of the 7,777 renter households surveyed reported overcrowding or doubling up.

## **B. Contributing Factors**

Some people with disabilities lack suitable housing options due to affordability and accessibility. Many individuals with disabilities lack supports and services they need to live independently and be productive members of their communities. Some may find themselves living with aging parents who can no longer provide services to their family members. Veterans may be combating post-traumatic-stress and other forms of mental illness and physical disabilities that jeopardize securing and sustaining safe and permanent housing. Individuals being discharged from correction, mental health, healthcare, and substance abuse facilities, as well as youth aging out of foster care, may not have a place to “go home to”.

There are various reasons families may have lost their housing. They may be unemployed or underemployed. Some cannot escape poverty because they lack the education, or skills to find suitable employment. The working poor may be working full time at a minimum wage job, yet still be unable to afford housing at fair market rental

rates. Those addicted to drugs, find their chronic and progressive disease trumps everything, and consequently they fall behind on their rent, utility bills and eventually face eviction. Domestic violence, including child abuse, remains a cause of homelessness. Domestic Violence is the number one reason that women and children are homeless. The victims of domestic violence are stuck between two living nightmares, abuse and homelessness.

Another rural issue is one of people who “couch surf”. They constitute a large portion of unaccompanied homeless youth and adults who survive just under the ‘radar screen’ of local service agencies. Many homeless youth who run away from home, do so to flee an unsafe/unhealthy living environment and half of them are victims of abuse. Reluctantly, some of the other unaccompanied youth are homeless because of one reason or another, their family chooses to no longer provide them shelter. They are cast out of their home to fend for themselves.

Also, the federal poverty income level that MSHDA utilizes in order to qualify for services is precariously low. An individual and a household of two who makes minimum wage and works 40 hours a week is over this income level and does not qualify for services. Under the guidelines, an individual who is working 40 hours per week could only make \$4.71 an hour (less than the current minimum wage). Additionally, single people with no dependents do not qualify for assistance such as car repairs, heating assistance or utility payment assistance. The Women’s Center often sees people in this position who are trying to make ends meet, but are at extreme risk for homelessness.

The issue of discharge into homelessness has been addressed during meetings of both the Alger and Marquette Community Collaborative Boards and the ENHC. During these meetings, it has been recognized that without adequate discharge planning from publicly funded institutions or systems of care, there is potential to increase the number of homeless individuals and families in our continuum area.

In addition to the above stated factors, the location of Marquette and Alger counties on the southern shore of Lake Superior has wooed an increasing number of upper income retirees to our community. The comfortable pace of the community attracts both retirees as well as wealthy urbanites seeking refuge from the hustle and bustle of metropolitan life. Because the housing on the lakeshore tends to be more expensive and thus provides better profit margins for builders, few contractors in the area have had an interest in the development of affordable housing in recent years.

At the same time, there are many in the up and coming generation whose life trajectory is aimed head-on with homelessness. Without timely and effective intervention, children and youth living in poverty, suffering from chronic abuse, with an undetected learning disability or mental illness, failing in school, and/or addicted to drugs are likely to be the next homeless generation. Unless we stem the tide, they will likely be caught in the undercurrent of these numerous problems. They will be at-risk of

becoming homeless unless they are set free from the shackles of poverty, violence, and school failure.

### **C. Infrastructure Issues**

The Marquette Housing Commission has 50 Housing Choice Vouchers. We have never been permitted to increase this number despite our attempts to do so. Additionally, due to the pro rata need set forth by HUD, Marquette and Alger Counties are unable to develop new or expand existing current supportive housing projects.

Additional budget cuts at federal and state levels have limited the resources for mainstream programs. The length of time to qualify for SSI or other public benefits creates additional barriers for homeless. In particular, most do not have the appropriate documents needed to qualify for public assistance or by the time they obtain the documents plus the length of time it takes to receive benefits, many have returned to the streets. Furthermore, most of our mainstream institutions do not have discharge policies that ensure that the homeless will not be returning to the streets. The ENHC has made headway towards these issues, additional efforts will continue.

Poverty and a lack of affordable housing are intertwined causes of homelessness. It's a case of the classic relationship between the chicken and egg. Which comes first? In the end it doesn't matter which condition predisposes the onset of the other. Perhaps most importantly is the fact that homelessness reflects the structural and dysfunctional nature of problems created by poverty and the rising cost of housing. When incomes are so low that a family cannot afford housing, something is wrong.

The recently stagnant minimum wage, when combined with rising housing costs, often results in homelessness. According to National Alliance to End Homelessness, many poor families pay more than 50 % of their income for rent. "As the demand for affordable housing grows, [families] the ones that need the most help—will find themselves priced out of the housing market." Many individuals and families will be forced to live in unstable and unsuitable housing, leaving these families at high risk of homelessness.

According to Mortimer Zuckerman in "*For a Fairer America*":

"Since the 1970's, inequality of income and wealth has increased dramatically... The income gap between the richest and poorest Americans has never been wider. .... increases in income have fallen significantly behind increases in fixed costs for home mortgages, car payments, health insurance and education.....Inequality and insecurity have simply become too pervasive a feature of American life. The American Dream shouldn't just be a dream."

Rural homelessness is most pronounced in rural regions that are primarily agricultural and whose economies are based on declining extractive industries such as mining, timber and fishing. Marquette and Alger counties fit that description. The economy is

largely based on mining industries, the regional health care system, a university, and tourism.

#### **IV. TEN YEAR PLAN**

##### **A. Vision to End Homelessness**

We are dedicated to ending homelessness for everyone and seek to create a solid foundation from which, no individual or family will have to face homelessness. ***Our vision for our community is that every individual and family has access to permanent, safe, affordable housing regardless of circumstances.*** Our mission is to eliminate homelessness in Marquette and Alger Counties by the year 2016.

It is the intent of the ENHC to engage the community in the process of ending homelessness within the next ten years. Through this planning process and the subsequent implementation of its goals, we seek to end homelessness within the next 10 years. We believe that through preventing the entry of people into the homelessness system and by providing rapid re-housing services to those who enter the system, we can realistically achieve this goal. *The ENHC recognizes that a primary focus on quick access to housing, transition support, crisis intervention, rapid re-housing, follow-up case management, and housing support services to prevent the reoccurrence of homelessness will help end homelessness.*

##### **1. Benefits of Housing Stability**

The advantages of establishing a system that assures permanent housing for people experiencing homelessness are well documented. Across the state and nation, nonprofit providers of permanent supportive housing have demonstrated that homeless families and individuals can be permanently housed with the proper combination of services, income supports and availability of affordable housing.

Most homeless families require an affordable housing unit, a need that can be met with a rental or ownership subsidy permitting recipients to access apartments or single-family homes within the private housing market. For others, including those with disabilities such as mental illness, substance abuse, and developmental disabilities, support services are required to ensure housing stability.

##### **2. Cost-Effectiveness of Housing First Approach**

Doing whatever it takes to make sure everyone has a place to call home is the right thing to do. While it may seem a daunting task, failure to do so is even more daunting. Doing the right thing is sometimes priceless. However, according to the National Alliance to End Homelessness, “The annual cost of an emergency shelter is approximately \$8,076, more than the average annual cost of a Section 8 housing voucher. It costs the taxpayer more money to place a family in an emergency shelter than in permanent housing on a monthly basis. The cost of sheltering homeless families is estimated to be between \$1.9 and \$2.2 billion annually.”

One need only imagine the potential impact those billions of dollars could have on assuring that everyone, regardless of circumstances, has a place to call home. The wealthiest most powerful nation in the world is not powerless over homelessness. On both social and moral grounds, we can't afford ***not*** to end homelessness.

## **B. Strategic Response**

### **1. Planning Structure**

The Alger-Marquette ENHC formally began the process of developing this particular *10-Year Plan to End Homelessness* in May 2006. The ENHC (along with the signatories of our original MOU with the State of Michigan) has served as the Advisory Group for the 10 Year Plan Partnership. We have had monthly meetings since May to work on the development of this plan.

On September 6<sup>th</sup>, Approximately 45 people attended the Building Upon Community Assets Forum, including but not limited to representatives from the following:

- Alger Marquette Community Action Board
- Department of Human Services
- Women's Center
- Marquette Housing Commission
- Lutheran Social Services
- MSHDA
- Catholic Charities
- Marquette County Administration
- Great Lakes Center for Youth Development
- Michigan Works
- NMU
- Michigan State Extension
- United Way
- Marquette Alger Regional Educational Service Agency
- General Public

Robert Brown (MSU Office of Outreach and Engagement) gave a presentation on: **“Capable Communities: *Building Assets to Support Positive Change*”**. As stated in the invitation, the purpose of the meeting was twofold: 1) Gain an understanding of a strength based framework designed to help communities build upon their strengths/assets; and, 2) Consider the viability of using the framework locally.

Essentially the framework can be used by a single organization, a group or coalition of parties working on numerous issues or a single issue (e.g. ending homelessness, preventing violence, etc.). It would lend itself useful to our groups such as the community collaborative bodies that address a broad range of issues. At the forum Robert Brown demonstrated the use of the framework to end homelessness.

The majority of those attending the forum indicated that they found the framework to be viable for local use. Most likely, the Alger and Marquette Community Collaboratives will find the framework most useful in building upon our existing

partnerships and coalitions. Other organizations may find it useful in transitioning from networking to collaboration.

## **2. Participating Organizations**

The following organizations have provided oversight in the development of the *10-Year Plan to End Homelessness*:

- Marquette Community Collaborative Partnership
- Alger Marquette Community Partnership
- Women's Center
- Marquette Housing Commission
- Alger Marquette Community Action Board
- Alger and Marquette Department of Human Services
- MSHDA Housing Choice Voucher (*HCV*) (*section eight*) Program.
- Lutheran Social Services
- Alger Marquette Community Action Board
- Marquette Alger Regional Educational Services Agency
- Superior Alliance for Independent Living

## **3. Community Engagement**

The ENHC has a history of engaging the community. Examples of these ongoing activities include, but are not limited to the following:

- Regular letters to the editor regarding homeless topics
- Bi-Annual Homeless Summits
- Candlelight Vigils
- Marathons
- Community Walks
- Fundraisers
- Backpack projects
- Televised interviews about homelessness
- NMU Homeless Awareness Forum
- Homeless Simulation Exercises
- Poverty Simulation Exercises
- Conferences (e.g. Framework for Understanding Poverty)

Members of the ENHC will continue to raise awareness and engage community stakeholders during the next phase of the 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness. Members will determine the best method of obtaining community input in the next phase of the 10 Year Plan. In addition, in the second phase of this initiative, ENHC members will reach out to elected officials to obtain input and seek support for the proposed plan.

## V. GOALS, STRATEGIES AND ACTION STEPS

Marquette and Alger counties seeks to end homelessness in 10 years by working on accomplishing goals in the following categories:

- A. Increasing the Supply of Affordable Housing
- B. Rapid and Permanent Re-housing
- C. Prevention
- D. Public Awareness
- E. Capacity Building

We intend to accomplish our goals through the delivery of early intervention for those who are precariously housed, by developing sufficient affordable and supportive housing to meet the needs of county residents, by facilitating entry into the shelter services network for those in immediate need of permanent housing, and by increasing the availability of services and coordination among service providers.

- A. Increase the Supply of Affordable Housing – Increase the supply of affordable housing in Marquette and Alger Counties by up to 250 units over the next seven years.**

**Strategy 1: Increase the supply of affordable housing in Marquette and Alger Counties.**

### Action Steps

1. Apply for MSHDA initiatives for chronically homeless, victims of domestic violence, youth and families
2. Develop 150 new affordable family rental units by 2013
3. Create 25 new affordable homeownership units by 2013 for MAHPI
4. Develop 75 two bedroom affordable rental units in an existing structure by 2013
5. Target the development of housing in areas that facilitate access to services and are close to the economic base
6. Expand role of Superior Alliance for Independent Living (SAIL) to facilitate the development of housing in collaboration with public and private interests
7. Work with local developers to utilize tax credits and other governmental incentives to build affordable housing
8. Educate local governmental councils about the need for affordable housing
9. Seek avenues to increase developer fees to promote interest in affordable housing development
10. Reduce regulatory barriers to the development of affordable housing addressing needs with local planning commissions and work with local governmental bodies to permit higher density housing in targeted areas

**Strategy 2: Increase the supply of affordable family rental housing in Marquette and Alger Counties by increasing the availability of funding for homeowner rehabilitation and rental rehabilitation of existing housing.**

**Action Steps**

1. Provide technical and political assistance to qualified multi-family development organizations who are seeking to develop family rental housing in Marquette and Alger Counties
2. Inform developers about market opportunities/needs and market concerns in Marquette and Alger Counties to assure quality development that is consistent with the needs of the county and the local community
3. Develop mechanisms to regularly evaluate potential market demand for affordable family rental housing by community and rental cost

**Strategy 3: Develop an additional ten units of permanent supportive housing for persons with disabilities in three years.**

**Action Steps**

1. Create sufficient permanent supportive housing for disabled adults in each community in the county
2. Integrate permanent supportive housing into the general population to avoid the creation of isolated supportive housing units
3. Create a L'arche Community with up to 5 homes with 30 beds.

**Strategy 4: Increase the supply of affordable single-family housing units in Marquette and Alger Counties by five units within the next seven years.**

**Action Steps**

1. Provide technical assistance to local units of government toward the development and enactment of zoning ordinances and building codes that encourage creativity in the development of new single-family housing that supports the development of quality, affordable housing to a wider range of county residents
2. Explore opportunities to assure the long-term affordability of new housing development using the Community Land Trust model

**Strategy 5: Increase the amount of public funding available for rent support in the private market.**

**Action Steps**

1. Increase the number of rental support vouchers available in Marquette and Alger Counties especially time-limited vouchers that will assist in the transition to permanent housing
2. Request additional Housing Choice Vouchers for Marquette and Alger Counties
3. Conduct periodic market analysis in both Marquette and Alger counties to assure the Fair Market/Payment standards are realistic to the area

**B. Rapid and Permanent Re-Housing - Assure that homeless individuals and households seeking service are permanently re-housed within 48 hours by 2016.**

**Strategy 1: Establish a Revolving Loan Fund under the administration of an ENHC designated member agency to provide short-term loans to individuals and households in need of assistance.**

**Action Steps**

1. Fully develop the details of a Revolving Loan Fund program that provides ready access to short-term loans to be used for rental arrearages, foreclosure, and utility cutoffs
2. Work with local churches, financial institutions, and public entities to provide seed money for the Revolving Loan Fund
3. Investigate grant opportunities for seed money for the Revolving Loan Fund

**Strategy 2: Increase transitional and permanent supportive housing units that are designed to lead to housing for people with disabilities.**

**Action Steps**

1. Support AMCAB's efforts to develop new permanent supportive housing units in Alger counties
2. Support Marquette's Affordable Housing, Inc. efforts to develop permanent supportive housing within the city of Marquette

**C. Prevention - Expand prevention initiatives that promote housing stability to include, mediation services, financial assistance to pay for back rent or utilities, emergency assistance with food, clothing, transportation, budgeting and credit counseling.**

**Strategy 1: Consolidate re-housing activities into the ENHC by 2007**

**Action Steps**

1. Assure adequate staffing resources to meet the needs for rapid intake and re-housing
2. Provide public information to assure that agencies and the general public are aware of the existence of the ENHC
3. Survey the population of Marquette and Alger Counties to determine the level of awareness the extent of homelessness in the two counties
4. Educate all agencies serving the homeless, including schools, churches and other human service providers about services available for the homeless and precariously housed

**Strategy 2: Establish and maintain a mediation system to enable early intervention when tenants demonstrate difficulties in making rental payments.**

**Action Steps**

1. Support the efforts of the ENHC to engage landlords and tenants in mediation
2. Seek grant funds to support mediation intervention
3. Engage local mediation and resolution services and local landlords in dialogue to design a mediation program
4. Encourage the development of service coordinator positions in private and public housing sectors

**Strategy 3: Create and maintain a listing of rental units in Marquette and Alger Counties by 2008.**

**Action Steps**

1. Work with the Marquette and Alger county landlords to develop an efficient method of updating information about available units
2. Create a website where the listing of rental units can be accessed by the general public
3. Encourage all landlords register their rental properties and include rental amount and accessibility

**Strategy 4: Develop a system to assure the immediate availability of affordable housing for homeless individuals and families by 2008.**

**Action Steps**

1. Work with the Marquette and Alger county landlords to strengthen their relationship with the ENHC and to facilitate rapid re-housing of homeless individuals and families in Marquette and Alger counties
2. Work with the Marquette and Alger county landlords to develop innovative programs that provide incentives to landlords to accept tenants with poor rental records in return for a guarantee of payment if problems develop
3. Improve the coordination between service providers to assure that problem renters are referred to ENHC specified member agency
4. Provide information to landlords about Section 8 Housing vouchers

**Strategy 5: Provide financial counseling and information about good tenancy.**

**Action Steps**

1. Expand the capacity of the ENHC designated members to provide financial counseling, information about good tenancy, case management, and related support services
2. Increase the capacity of the ENHC member agencies to provide support services through expanded staffing and facilities funded through inter-agency contracts, expansion of state funded “fee for service” contracts, and expansion of grant funding

**Strategy 6: Assure that all clients in need of additional job training and education are referred to the appropriate agency.**

**Action Steps**

1. Provide support for employment-related transportation needs (i.e., repairs, insurance, volunteer drivers, car purchase)
2. Encourage growth of specialized training to meet local employment demands
3. Advocate for policy changes that enable people to complete their education and training programs while maintaining interim cash assistance
4. Work with the employer community to expand access to year-round employment opportunities
5. Support all other employment and training support service needs (i.e., daycare, work/training uniforms, etc.)
6. Increase funds to support training, job development, and all other employment-driven needs
7. Facilitate the increased employment of people with disabilities by educating employers

**Strategy 7: Assure that all clients with a substance abuse issue are referred for service to a local substance abuse treatment agency.**

**Action Steps**

1. Provide information about opportunities for substance abuse treatment, including access to permanent supportive housing after treatment is completed, to all agencies serving individuals with substance abuse issues
2. Assure that ENHC member agency staff is well informed about substance abuse issues, including the identification of individuals with substance abuse issues during the screening process
3. Utilize “Harm Reduction Model”, models for the delivery of substance abuse services in a permanent housing context.
4. Secure funding to maintain the current substance abuse homeless prevention program

**Strategy 8: Establish a Revolving Loan Fund under the administration of an ENHC designated member agency to provide short-term loans to individuals and households in need of assistance.**

**Action Steps**

1. Fully develop the details of a Revolving Loan Fund program that provides ready access to short-term loans to be used for rental arrearages, foreclosure, and utility cutoffs
2. Work with local churches, financial institutions, and public entities to provide seed money for the Revolving Loan Fund
3. Investigate grant opportunities for seed money for the Revolving Loan Fund

**Strategy 9: Increase homeless prevention funding.**

**Action Steps**

1. Advocate for changes in public policy, especially with the Department of Human Services, that require issuance of foreclosure before assistance is available to clients
2. ENHC member agencies will create innovative avenues to utilize existing prevention funding

**D. Capacity Building - Build the capacity of Marquette and Alger Counties for a homelessness assistance network by soliciting the involvement of local, state, and national public and private organizations.**

**Strategy 1: Respond to all appropriate grant opportunities issued by MSHDA, HUD, and private foundations, especially those that are targeted to housing issues in rural areas.**

**Action Steps**

1. Regularly review notices of public and private funding opportunities

**Strategy 2: Inform local churches, foundations, and governmental agencies of the needs of homeless individuals and households in Marquette and Alger Counties.**

**Action Steps**

1. Continue to make regular presentations to the public
2. Solicit funding and active involvement in homelessness issues by encouraging congregations to identify homelessness as a mission of the church

**Strategy 3: Improve the coordination among agencies, consumers, and citizens to more effectively serve the homeless.**

**Action Steps**

1. Develop improved methods of documenting the extent of homelessness in Marquette and Alger Counties through Point-in-Time surveys
2. Expand the ENHC to include active participation of two additional stakeholders per year.

**E. Public Awareness - Increase public awareness of homelessness issues in Marquette and Alger County.**

**Strategy 1: Maintain frequent contact with the county Board of Commissioners and local city commissions regarding homelessness issues.**

**Action Steps**

1. The ENHC will at least annually invite the county and local municipalities, not already regularly participating in ENHC activities, to appoint a representative to the ENHC
2. The ENHC will at least annually deliver a report on ENHC and related activities to the governing boards of the county and local municipalities

**Strategy 2: Prepare articles for publication in local media regarding the extent of homelessness in the county and activities addressing the issue.**

**Action Steps**

1. The ENHC, working in concert with its member agencies, will ensure at least quarterly placement of appropriate information and/or advocacy articles and/or advertisements in available local media

**Strategy 3: Assure public awareness of the activities of the ENHC.**

**Action Steps**

1. Working in concert with the ENHC and its member agencies, maintain current public awareness efforts including the placement of posters throughout the county and at least quarterly ad placement in available local media
2. The ENHC will annually assess the effectiveness of existing public awareness efforts and recommend additional and/or alternate strategies. Where possible the ENHC will engage outside public relations resources to assist in meeting this objective

## V. CONCLUSION

**“The American Dream shouldn’t just be a dream.”**  
-Mortimer B. Zuckerman, U.S. News and World Report

In conclusion, our proposed plan is another positive step forward in focusing current and future community initiatives aimed at ending homelessness in 10 years in Marquette and Alger counties. We firmly believe that this is a “living” document that is embraced by many in our communities. Under the leadership of the Marquette and Alger County Emergency Needs and Homeless Coalition, we are excited to put this plan into action and expand our stakeholders to include all concerned citizens who live in our counties. The reviewing and revising of this plan will be an ongoing process that we look forward to addressing at annual meetings and community forums. This plan is but a “guide for progress” which will translate our vision to end homelessness into a reality.

**APPENDIX**  
**Community Collaborative Information**

**Lutheran Social Services (LSS) of Wisconsin and Upper Peninsula of Michigan, Inc.**

Director of UP Programs: Richard Kochis  
290 Rublein  
Marquette, MI 49855  
Phone: (906) 226-7410  
Fax: (906) 226-9800  
Website: [www.lsswis.org](http://www.lsswis.org)

Lutheran Social Services (LSS) of Wisconsin and Upper Michigan is the social ministry arm of over 800 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America congregations in Wisconsin and Upper Michigan. Our mission is *"Motivated by the compassion of Christ, we help people improve the quality of their lives."*

Each year, LSS touches the lives of over 100,000 people through a variety of compassionate social services from adoption to counseling to older adult services. Our programs and services are offered to all, regardless of faith. As a non-profit agency, LSS relies on the generous support of churches, corporations, foundations and thousands of individuals to continue our mission.

People of all faiths benefit from the wide range of services we provide such as: adoption, foster care, alcohol and drug treatment, correctional services, disaster response, family preservation services, home health care, individual and family counseling, older adult services, refugee resettlement, residential care, services for people with disabilities and much more. At LSS, our vision is be the first choice of people seeking creative and caring service.

**Alger-Marquette Community Action Board (AMCAB)**

Executive Director: Earl Hawn  
1125 Commerce Drive  
Marquette, MI 49855  
Phone: (906) 228-6522 or 1 (800) 562-9762  
Fax: (906) 228-6527  
Website: <http://www.amcab.org>

The mission of AMCAB is to support families and individuals in improving their quality of life. AMCAB is a local Community Action Agency serving residents of Alger and Marquette Counties in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. AMCAB is incorporated as an IRS Private, Non-Profit Corporation (501(c)3) in 1965, AMCAB is one of 30 Community Action Agencies (CAA's) that serve the 80 counties in Michigan.

CAA's were formed as "umbrella" organizations to house a variety of programs under one administrative roof. This umbrella concept was formulated to keep administrative costs down thereby freeing up more funds to directly help those in need. The CAA network in Michigan provides the largest network of human services outside of State government. Our organization provides a wide array of human services that are funded by

federal, state and local governments. Our services are also supported by private and corporate contributions to help expand our services and meet new community needs.

Eligibility for our programs varies from age to income. Please don't assume you are either eligible, or not eligible, for any specific program. By simply giving us a call, we can begin the first steps to determine what programs we have that may help you. AMCAB takes action to help people become self-sufficient and to help our communities grow stronger. We do this in partnership with those we serve. By extending a helping hand, together, we continue to improve the quality of life through the following programs:

**Affordable Housing** - AMCAB has partnered with a private for profit development company to build two affordable housing developments in Marquette County starting in 1997. The first development is Lost Creek Apartments and Town Homes, which is a senior housing development, located in Marquette Township on County Road 492. Lost Creek is a 151-unit development for seniors, 55 years or older. Rental rates are based on income for 90 of the units, while the other 60 units have no income qualifiers and rents are based on the current market. Lost Creek offers residents an attractive senior community in a rural setting and includes amenities such as library, beauty/barber salon, crafts room, and comfortable lounge areas. It also includes a 7,000 sq. ft. community building which houses an AMCAB community nutrition congregate meal site and a meal preparation kitchen for home delivered meals.

In 2000, AMCAB received the prestigious "Peterson Award" for the best supportive housing provider in Michigan for its work at Lost Creek.

**The Preserve at Orianna Ridge** is the second development in AMCAB's portfolio. It is an 80 unit affordable family development located in the City of Marquette on Pioneer Road. It is a mix of 1 and 2 story apartments and town homes. All rents are based on household income. Twenty of the units were constructed and are set-aside for residents with special needs. A collaboration with other service providers in the area allows these individuals with developmental disabilities the opportunity to live independently and also receive assistance with their day-to-day living needs. The Preserve at Orianna Ridge won an honorable mention in the 2005 national award program sponsored by the Affordable Housing Tax Credit Coalition.

**Home Weatherization Program** - The Home Weatherization Program, has been funded primarily by the Federal Department of Energy since 1979. Additional funding is also provided by the Federal Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program and the Michigan Public Service Commission. Low-income homeowners and renters are provided services such as weather stripping, caulking, and insulation of attics, walls and crawl spaces. The goal of the Home Weatherization Program is to lower energy costs to the individual thereby freeing up precious income that can be applied toward another living expense or to make paying the high energy bills more attainable through energy efficiency measures.

A great deal of technology is involved with testing the homes and developing a “game plan” under this program. An extensive energy audit is performed on each home along with a “Blower Door Test,” which indicates the number of air changes per hour in a given dwelling. A house that is too tight can cause indoor air quality problems, and may result in respiratory ailments; while a house that is not tight enough will allow too much cold air infiltration. We examine and test the efficiency of the heating units in a home, and also test for the amount of carbon monoxide in the ambient air of the home. A compilation of all of these tests then determines what weatherization measures will be installed in a home, based upon the savings to investment ratio.

During 2005, 71 homes were weatherized at an average cost of \$2,439. Since the program began in 1979, we have received \$9.4 million of funds and weatherized approximately 5,200 homes in the two-county area.

**Alger County Home Rehabilitation Program** - On behalf of Alger County, AMCAB administers the Alger County Home Rehabilitation Program that is the Community Development Block Grant Housing Rehabilitation Program funded by the Michigan State Housing Development Authority. This program is available only to homeowners who reside in Alger County. Extensive work such as roofing, wells, septic systems, heating systems, electrical wiring and plumbing are offered. All work contracted is performed by local licensed private contractors.

Eligibility for the Housing Services Programs is based upon gross household income and the number of occupants in the home. Written verification of income is required. The funds spent to rehabilitate a dwelling under the Community Development Block Grant program must be repaid when the house is sold or the applicant moves out.

During the past year, 8 homes were repaired or rehabilitated for an average cost of \$9,391.00 per home. Since the program began in 1980 we have received \$3 million of funds and rehabilitated approximately 440 homes.

AMCAB's Outreach workers are the "people link" to a variety of federal, state and local programs throughout Marquette and Alger counties. The Outreach Workers provides the direct coordination and follow-up to many programs provided by all human service agencies, including AMCAB, in the Alger-Marquette counties that are assist individuals and families. Beyond linking individuals and families with other human service agencies, the Outreach workers also coordinate various direct services provided by AMCAB.

The Outreach worker provides "one-on-one" contact to better understand all of the needs of the individual or family. AMCAB's Outreach workers will also conduct a home visit the individual or family that can't get out of the home in order to better understand how AMCAB can assist the person.

In the past few years, AMCAB has received funding for emergency heating and utility assistance for those individuals who have shut-off notices or are in danger of running out of fuel. A call to our Outreach staff can help determine if funding is currently available.

Our outreach staff has also been trained and has assisted individuals in e-filing their income taxes for the Earned Income Tax Credit. To see if you qualify, simply contact our Outreach staff. The service is free and this past year almost ½ million dollars in tax refunds was put back into the hands of our clients .

**Commodity Foods or CSFP Supplemental Food Program** (Commodity Supplemental Food Program of Michigan) - AMCAB distributes a monthly 40-pound box of healthy and well-balanced shelf-stable foods to over 1000 low-income elderly and families with children under age six who are not eligible for the WIC program. Distributions are made monthly at 17 convenient sites located throughout Alger and Marquette Counties. Please see the list below for the location nearest you.

### **The Women's Center**

Executive Director: Gail Nelson  
1310 South Front Street  
Marquette, MI 49855  
Phone: (906) 225-1346  
Fax: (906) 225-1370  
Website: <http://www.wcmqt.org>

The Women's Center was formed in 1973 as a primarily volunteer organization focusing on the recruitment and training of women. The goal of the organization was to help women of all ages reach their full potential. The Women's Center remained at Northern Michigan University (NMU) until November of 1980. The Women's Center underwent many changes over the years until 1980, when NMU funding cuts threatened the stability of the program. Through a variety of support from grant funds, community organizations and concerned citizens, the Women's Center began its life as a non-profit organization. The Women's Center was housed in the basement of a local church and was able to utilize the space for fund-raising events that complimented programming for several years until 1985, when the organizations services created a greater need for office space.

After a lengthy search, the Women's Center moved into the building where it is currently housed at 1310 South Front Street and in the following year, opportunities arose that allowed for the purchase of the building. The building included rental space that provided monthly income to the Women's Center. Also included in this space was a large area that was renovated into a bingo hall that allowed the Women's Center and a variety of local service organizations to host weekly games which resulted in much needed income for the domestic violence shelter and the Women's Center programs. During the transition into the new building, the Women's Center also took on the local domestic violence shelter as a major responsibility. The shelter (named the Harbor House) is now run through the Women's Center allowing the community access to "one-stop" services for women in transition from abusive relationships into successful, independent lives.

In 2004, the need for Harbor House shelter services prompted the Women's Center to begin the process of expanding the shelter to allow for much needed expansion of the

shelter. A loan from the USDA Rural Development was applied for and received in 2005, which prompted the purchase of a home that will be renovated in 2006. Today, the Women's Center continues to provide services to women under a variety of programs and services that are free to everyone. The services provided today include counseling, Rape Crisis Intervention, Sexual Assault Response, housing transition, court advocacy, outreach advocacy, children's services, crisis intervention, emergency services and counseling. These programs are provided by several staff members within the Harbor House Domestic Violence Shelter and the Women's Center. Two programs specifically address housing at our organization; they are the Families in Transition (FIT) Housing Program which provides rental assistance and emergency funding for women with children for up to two years with support services. To qualify for this program, you must be fleeing from a domestic violence relationship and that they have or are within 30 days of obtaining custody of their children. The Women In Transition (WIT) Housing Program does the same for single women. There are a total of twelve spots, with eleven support service recipients.

#### **2004-05 Women's Center/Harbor House Domestic Violence Shelter Statistics**

- \* Marquette County 2,528 Shelter Nights
- \* 493 Adult Clients/121 Child Clients
- \* Alger County 29 Shelter Nights
- \* 27 Adult Clients/2 Child Clients
- \* Women's Center Resale Shop - 367 Vouchers supplied to individuals
- \* Emergency Assistance to 83 individuals
- \* Hotel Vouchers for shelter overflow - 25
- \* Food Bank - \$4,471.20

#### **Child and Family Services of the Upper Peninsula, Inc.**

Chief Executive Officer: Danny Peterson  
706 Chippewa Square, Suite 200  
Marquette, MI 49855  
Phone:906.228.4050  
Fax:906.228.2153  
Website: <http://www.cfsup.org>

Child and Family Services of the Upper Peninsula, Inc serves to strengthen families by providing quality social service programs that empower individuals with skills to care for themselves and others. Provide a range of services throughout the Upper Peninsula to meet the varying needs of children and families in the region. Employ a professional social-service staff, which is headed by a full-time Chief Executive Officer. Offer services at little or no cost to clients and to not deny services due to a client's inability to pay. A variety of programs are administered to various counties in the Upper Peninsula of Marquette and either directly or indirectly serve the homeless and potentially homeless in our counties. The following programs are only some of the programs that we offer:

- The Supportive Housing for Youth Program (SHYP) began in 2001 as an effort to provide housing for homeless youth. While homelessness can be a narrow definition, SHYP is able to serve youth ages 16-20 that are living in inappropriate or uninhabitable housing; are being evicted; or are without a program, a home or shelter. The program also assists those youth transitioning out of foster care or those being emancipated from their families. SHYP Specialists receive referrals from local homeless youth representatives, continuum of care, school personnel, alternative school, as well as other sources. Once a referral is received, the SHYP Specialist assesses eligibility, and opens the case once proper documentation has been completed. SHYP Specialists received 99 referrals during the fiscal year 2005 and 32 of these were placed in SHYP housing.

- Success Oriented Direction & Achievement (SODA) - Project SODA is a prevention/intervention program offered to youth in the Upper Peninsula who are at risk for running away from home. Trained specialists meet individually with youth, ages 13 through 17, and their families for a period of three months.

Referrals to SODA can come through the court, local schools, community members, family members, and friends of the youth. Currently there is a SODA Specialist serving every county of the Upper Peninsula. The SODA Specialists help youth and families to problem solve and work to equip participants with the skills they need to be successful both at home and in school.

- Wraparound is a strength-based process that centers on the family unit. Wraparound Coordinators work with families that have at least one child at-risk for out of home placements.

Coordinators help families fortify their strengths and problem-solve weakness areas. Both formal supports (such as counseling) and informal supports (such as meetings with friends or neighbors) are used to build caring networks around the participating families. The goal of Wraparound is to help children remain safely in their parent's or guardian's home. Child and Family Services currently offers Wraparound services in Marquette, Alger, Delta, Dickinson, Iron, Mackinac, and Menominee Counties.

**Department of Human Services**

Marquette County DHS  
Courthouse Annex  
234 W. Baraga Ave.  
Marquette MI 49855  
Director Julia Hadas

Alger County DHS  
Alger County Courthouse  
101 Court St.  
Munising MI 49862  
Director Robyn Loviska

This State Agency administers the cash assistance programs, food, emergency, medical, and daycare assistance. The Family Independence Program (TANF called FIP in Michigan) provides a cash grant for families with children and positive reinforcements to adults to encourage self-sufficiency. The State Disability Assistance (SDA) program provides cash assistance for disabled individuals without dependent children. The Food Assistance Program (FAP), formerly called food stamps, is in the form of cash

compensation accessed using the “Bridge Card” and increases the food purchasing power of the household. The State Emergency Relief Program (SER) provides limited assistance to individuals and families facing emergencies that threaten their health and safety. Medical Assistance (MA) provides medical care coverage for FIP, SSI recipients and other low-income individuals under age 21, pregnant, disabled, blind, age 65 or older and additional Medicaid categories of programs to assist with medical expenses. Child Development and Care (CDC) assists with child day care expenses for eligible families with children in need of daycare due to employment, education, and/or a health/social condition for which treatment is being received. DHS also administers a variety of Services Programs. The Children’s (CPS) and Adult Protective Services (APS) programs investigate and/or remedy abuse, neglect and/or exploitation of vulnerable children and adults. Children’s Foster Care (CFC) provides out-of-home and/or in-home services for children in cases of abuse or neglect when deemed necessary by the Family Court-Juvenile Division. Juvenile Justice Services (JJ) provides supervision, placement and counseling to youth and their families to facilitate a positive reintroduction to their home and community after completing terms of their probation. Adult Community Placement (ACP) provides community-based placement coordination services for licensed residential care for aged, physically handicapped or developmentally disabled adults who are unable to live alone. Independent Living Services (ILS) provides case management, supportive services and adult home help to enable MA-eligible individuals to remain in their homes.

DHS typically does not provide housing services as a stand-alone program but has included them within the other services programs. In years past, DHS, known then as Department of Social Services, had programs called *Basic Family Services* and later *Prevention Services*, and offered assistance to families on a voluntary basis. Subsequent policy shifts led to the incorporation of Prevention Services into Children’s Protective Services and most recently the tasks have been assigned to the Family Independence Specialists, FIS, as part of their family self-sufficiency focus.

### **Pathways - Community Mental Health**

#### **Marquette County**

200 West Spring, Street

Marquette, MI. 49855

(906) 225-7210

fax (906) 225-7204

Chief Executive Officer: Douglas C. Morton

1-888-PATHWAY (728-4929) \*24 hour crisis management

Website: <http://www.pathwaysup.org>

#### **Alger County**

601 West Superior, Street

Munising, MI. 49862

(906) 387-3611

fax (906) 387-4212

#### ***Our Mission is to provide quality Services to those we are uniquely entrusted***

***to serve.*** Pathways is a community mental health center serving more than 4,000 people in Alger, Delta, Luce and Marquette counties in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. It takes a strong person to seek the help they need and follow through on it. The first step is always the hardest step to take. Most people feel some relief just by making that first phone call.

At Pathways, we have caring staff who will listen to your concerns. We do our best to help you get connected to services that meet your needs—at Pathways, or in the community. With proper support and treatment, you can gain a new quality of life. At Pathways, we are focused on serving our neighbors who need us most, regardless of their ability to pay for services. Our services are geared toward adults and children with severe disabilities, such as: Schizophrenia, Bipolar disorder, Major depression, Developmental disabilities and People in crisis. People with mild depression, anxiety disorders, relationship problems or other concerns should contact other community providers.

**Superior Alliance for Independent Living (SAIL)**

Executive Director: Amy Mayes  
129 West Baraga Avenue, Suite H  
Marquette, MI 49855  
Phone: (906) 228-5744 or 1 (800) 379-7245  
Fax: (906) 228-5573  
Website: <http://www.upsail.com>

The Superior Alliance for Independent Living (SAIL) promotes the inclusion of people with disabilities into our communities on a full and equal basis through empowerment, education, participation and choice. The Superior Alliance for Independent Living is a center for independent living located in the heart of Michigan's Upper Peninsula.

SAIL is a non-profit organization run by people with disabilities who have both the training and the personal experience to understand the needs of people with disabilities to live independently. SAIL assists people with disabilities to achieve and maintain independent lifestyles. One of SAIL's missions is to operate an information and referral network for issues, programs, and opportunities available in the Upper Peninsula. Independent living is people having the opportunity to make their own choices in their community.

SAIL is the only Center for Independent Living in the Upper Peninsula. Funding was received in 1999 through Title VII of the Rehabilitation Act. SAIL is administered by people with disabilities who have both training and personal experience who know what is needed to live independently such as services, affordable, and accessible housing. SAIL's mission is to promote the inclusion of people with disabilities on a full and equal basis into their communities. We teach people to advocate for themselves by providing education, peer support, programs that support safe affordable and accessible housing; we encourage active involvement on local and state boards to make the changes necessary to improve their quality of life.

Many people with disabilities have experienced poverty, (i.e. SSI can be less than \$600 a month,) domestic violence, and homelessness. We believe that pulling together community resources, capacity building, and working toward a common goal will enhance the quality of life for everyone in our communities.

## **Marquette Housing Commission**

Director: Bonnie Pelto

316 Pine Street

Marquette, MI 49855

Phone: (906) 226-7559

Fax: (906) 226-8633

Website: <http://www.mqthc.org>

Founded in 1969, the Marquette Housing Commission is chartered under the laws of the State of Michigan to provide and administer affordable housing programs for the citizens of Marquette. The Housing Commission receives policy guidance and operational approval from its five member governing Board of Commissioners who are appointed by the City. All funding is provided by the Federal Government through the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

Located in Central Upper Peninsula of Michigan near beautiful Lake Superior, the Marquette Housing Commission (MHC) provides 254 units of public housing in the city limits of Marquette. The Section 8 program administers 50 housing vouchers in city of Marquette. MHC staff consists of 10 full-time positions and 1 part-time position.

We are committed to providing quality customer service to our residents. In addition, we wish to provide every opportunity available so that residents may fulfill their personal and career goals. Education is at the top of the list as we pride ourselves in providing educational opportunities for every age group.

So check out the links and find out more about our agency and the best kept secret in Central Upper Peninsula of Michigan- Marquette!