

Marquette Housing Commission Strategic Plan

December 2022

Mission: The mission of Marquette Housing Commission (MHC) is to provide and maintain quality, affordable housing free from discrimination.

Who We Serve: MHC currently serves residents of the city of Marquette at Pine Ridge Marquette and Lake Superior Village. MHC also serves residents throughout Marquette County with the Housing Choice Voucher program.

Programs:

- Pine Ridge Marquette—MHC manages 140 income-based apartments
- Lake Superior Village—MHC manages 116 income-based townhomes
- Lake Superior Youth and Family Center—MHC employs program staff to provide year-round activities for youth and their families
- Housing Choice Voucher Program—MHC issues and administers vouchers that pay a portion of participants' monthly rent for privately-owned units

Goals for 2023-2028

1. Maintain and/or improve physical condition of properties managed and/or owned.
2. Position MHC as go-to organization for property management
3. Add affordable housing units to MHC portfolio
4. Strengthen Board of Directors
5. Fund Youth and Family Center programming annually
6. Project base existing vouchers as allowed by federal statutes

Goal for 2022-2032

1. Develop succession plan for Executive Director position

Background and Context

In recent years, Marquette Housing Commission has undergone significant restructuring via the Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) Program. Participating in the RAD program allowed the housing commission to sell Pine Ridge Apartments and Lake Superior Village to Affordable Housing Solutions of the Upper Peninsula (AHSUP), a 501c3 nonprofit. When sold, the buildings were no longer public housing and could leverage the properties to utilize tax credits, loans, and bonds to renovate the buildings. MHC manages Pine Ridge Marquette and Lake Superior Village and has maintained the same employees to operate the projects. The MHC Executive Director (ED) is also the ED of AHSUP and MHC. The restructuring has opened opportunities for

public/private partnerships and different ways of adding additional housing units. There are currently four MHC board members. Three are new to the board. Two are also on the board of AHSUP.

A strategic planning retreat with the board and executive director was held at Lake Superior Village Youth and family Center on Dec. 10, 2022. Linda Remsburg of Grow & Lead facilitated a revision of the mission statement, creation of a vision statement, identification of core values and a SWOT analysis. Out of that, the group identified priorities for action and set goals for the next 3-5 years and 10 years.

Mission review: The new mission statement (above) was agreed on after discussion and revisions from the prior mission statement.

Vision: A vision statement describing the future MHC is working toward was developed and agreed upon.

MHC vision: A community where all people have access to quality housing.

Core Values: Developed and agreed on list of core values which are principles, attributes, beliefs we hold which form the foundation on which we perform work and conduct ourselves. These include:

- Fiscal responsibility
- Innovation
- Compassionate and inclusive delivery of services in compliance with Fair Housing Regulations
- Positive community impact

SWOT Analysis: The following strengths, opportunities, weaknesses and threats were identified.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexible, caring employees. Quality staff • Strong executive director • History (operating since 1968) • Consistent, equitable treatment of residents—fair housing • Staff knowledge to administer private/public partnerships • Resilience of staff • Longevity of staff (little turnover) • Good benefits provided to staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilization of existing communication pathways for residents to leadership • Some tenants misunderstanding their roles • Some tenants feel they're not being heard • ED concerned about tenants going over her head to board • Existing complaint procedure exists, but is not being followed re: tenant handbook

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relation with City of Marquette and other entities • Play well with others • Strong partnerships, collaborations • Flexible open-minded leadership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Board members are diverse and include those served by MHC • Increase in community awareness of need for affordable housing • Updated, well-maintained properties • Community's perception of MHC has improved • Safe communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role confusion – AHSUP versus MHC versus Board Members • Don't own buildings • No longer public housing units available in city of Marquette • Low funding levels from government – no multiplier based on rental rates • Lack of landlords who accept vouchers • Stigma of low-income housing and area still exist • Board inexperience, need to recruit • City appointment process, restrictions
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need more units • Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) way for public housing to become private. All administrations have supported • MHC could do more marketing of its management services including public housing outside of city; community could maintain its own board and share an ED. Less expensive than hiring ED • Vouchers are allowed outside city • Review board restrictions and possibly change so board members do not have to be residents <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ (as part of city, beneficial for staff i.e. benefits) • Jacobetti collaboration • Tall Pines motel renovation, studio apartments • Greater demand for housing • Build more public housing. MHC has 256 RAD units out of 257 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thrivent finances purchases/management – competitor • Cannot use LSV or Pine Ridge buildings to generate income • Big fish. Others have more money than us • NIMBY (Not In My Neighborhood) attitude toward low-income housing • Michigan Rental laws –Mgt companies cannot sign leases without broker on staff. We would need broker on staff and would need to be licensed real estate agents to sign leases. • Confusing laws allow room for error in becoming go-to management org. Cannot happen at this point with what we have. Management fees would have to cover broker and agents. • Zoning laws – duplexes not allowed in most areas.

<p>Faircloth limit for city. Government has decided to say no to additional. However, government may reallocate unused allocations on other cities, do a slow grab of these to create new public housing. New will be RAD again.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn process for getting units elsewhere reallocated here • High homelessness rate • Additional vouchers are available for foster children and veterans • Grant funding – housing is hot topic right now • Possible collaboration with investors i.e. churches etc. Multi-unit building outside of Marquette with less restrictions. Use a few as Air BNB and rent others as affordable housing units • Land near Fox Negaunee – Brownfield money • Habitat for Humanity, CAAM, other collaborations • Eminent domain blighted property • Brownfield provides \$ for streets/utilities so building can be done • Purchase foreclosure properties • Focus on existing buildings • Allies in Jacobetti neighborhood • Other ways to generate income – solar farm, etc. – community friendly/sustainability • Marquette BLP property • Support LSV Youth and Family Center with annual funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Air BNB and VRBO • Slumlords • College town. Lots of money to be made renting to students. • Limited land. God isn't making any more.
---	--

Based on the SWOT Analysis, the following priorities were determined:

1. Maintenance of properties at current level or better
2. Position MHC as go-to organization for property management
3. Adding housing units
4. Bolster board of directors
5. Financial support for Youth and Family Center
6. Succession plan for Executive Director position

Evaluation

- Review documentation of each grievance
 - Ask executive director whether she feels sufficiently supported in this regard
-

Goal 1: Maintain properties at current level or better

Action Steps:

1. Establish current level of work orders and turn-around time as baseline and compare annually
2. Review annual inspections

One year milestone – All items found in annual inspections are corrected within 30 days.

Evaluation

- Track number of work orders and turn-around time
-

Goal 2: Position MHC as the go-to organization for property management

Action Steps:

1. Executive director obtains real estate license
2. Contract with real estate broker once executive director obtains realtor license
3. Keep line of communication open between MHC and City of Marquette regarding

new housing developments.

4. Maintain contact with area municipalities regarding new housing developments.

One year milestone – ED obtains realtor license, MHC contracts with Real Estate Broker.

Evaluation

Goal 3: Add affordable housing units

Action Steps:

1. Explore purchasing existing housing within the city and township of Marquette to convert into apartments.
2. Explore buying a multi-unit building with units (possibly 2) to be operated as Airbnb to help fund additional units (possibly 3) to be operated as affordable housing.

One-year milestone –Create long term plan to determine financial feasibility of developing housing without government funding.

Evaluation

Goal 4: Strengthen Board of Directors

Action Steps:

1. Educate board members on roles of AHSUP/MHC
2. Provide board members with training on nonprofit board roles and responsibilities
3. Develop and/or distribute board handbook
4. Address board member terms with city
5. Develop plan for recruitment of additional board members

One year milestone – Board members clear on roles of ASHUP/MHC. Board

members attend training on nonprofit board roles and responsibilities. Board handbook developed. City approached regarding board member terms. Plan in place to recruit new members.

Evaluation

- Board member survey
-

Goal 5: Help fund Youth & Family Center programming

Action Steps:

1. Determine where funding will come from
2. Bring to an annual vote of the board

One year milestone –\$25,000 for salaries built into the budget

Evaluation

10-Year Goal 1: Develop Leadership Succession Plan

Action Steps: Obtain drafts for other housing commissions

One year milestone –

Evaluation