

**HOUGHTON COUNTY**

**CORONAVIRUS State & Local Fiscal Recovery Fu** **\$6,931,199.00**

<u>DEPARTMENT</u>	<u>VENDOR</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>APPROVED</u>
SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT		(5) PATROL CARS (2) VEHICLES	\$220,000.00 \$105,000.00	BOC APPROVED NOVEMBER 16, 2021 MEETING BOC APPROVED AUGUST 22, 2022 MEETING
SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT	WATCH GUARD	BODY CAMERAS BODY CAMERAS ANNUAL INVOICE	\$70,287.00 \$10,281.60	BOC APPROVED MAY 26, 2022 MEETING BOC APPROVED MAY 26, 2022 MEETING
SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT	MOTOROLA SOLUTIONS	PORTABLE RADIOS	\$101,880.76	BOC APPROVED MAY 26, 2022 MEETING
SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT	AXON ENTERPRISES	TASERS	\$12,056.86	BOC APPROVED MAY 26, 2022 MEETING
SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT	INDUSTRIAL GRAPHICS	MOBILE COMMAND HEADQUARTERS VINYL WRAP	\$13,044.00	BOC APPROVED MAY 26, 2022 MEETING
SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT	REJ CONTRACTING	DOOR REPLACEMENT	\$10,454.00	BOC APPROVED MAY 26, 2022 MEETING
SOLID WASTE TRANSFER STATION	U.P. TRUCK CENTER	2023 WESTERN STAR TRACTOR	\$160,066.00	BOC APPROVED MAY 26, 2022 MEETING
SOLID WASTE TRANSFER STATION	INTERGRITY CUSTOM CONC	(2) CONCRETE APRONS	\$15,000.00	BOC APPROVED MAY 26, 2022 MEETING
SOLID WASTE TRANSFER STATION	BENLEE	2023 ROLL-OFF TRAILER	\$151,234.00	BOC APPROVED MAY 26, 2022 MEETING
SOLID WASTE TRANSFER STATION	CONTRACT WELDING	80 YD ROLL OFF CONTAINER	\$48,805.00	BOC APPROVED MAY 26, 2022 MEETING
SOLID WASTE TRANSFER STATION	DSI RECYCLING SYSTEMS INC	CLEAN BURN FURANCE	\$12,174.00	BOC APPROVED MAY 26, 2022 MEETING
ROAD COMMISSION	TOWNSHIPS	COUNTY ROAD REPAIRS	\$1,128,105.00	BOC APPROVED JUNE 3, 2022 MEETING
ROAD COMMISSION	TOWNSHIPS	OSCEOLA TOWNSHIP ROAD REPAIRS	\$190,497.00	BOC APPROVED JUNE 3, 2022 MEETING
TRAIL SIGNS	JOE SCHNELLER	TRAIL SIGNS (\$11,000 signs, \$4,000 gas)	\$15,000.00	BOC APPROVED AUGUST 9, 2022 MEETING
COURTHOUSE MAINTENANCE	KEWEENAW CHEVROLET	TRUCK W/PLOW	\$47,000.00	BOC APPROVED AUGUST 22, 2022 MEETING
COURTHOUSE IT			\$180,000.00	BOC APPROVED AUGUST 22, 2022 MEETING
COURTHOUSE IT SECURITY		CYBER SECURITY	\$130,000.00	BOC APPROVED AUGUST 22, 2022 MEETING
COURTHOUSE SECURITY		SINGLE POINT ENTRY	\$250,000.00	BOC APPROVED AUGUST 22, 2022 MEETING
COURTHOUSE MAINTENANCE		LED LIGHT UPGRADES	\$28,500.00	BOC APPROVED AUGUST 22, 2022 MEETING
COURTHOUSE MAINTENANCE		ELEVATOR UPGRADES	\$155,250.00	BOC APPROVED AUGUST 22, 2022 MEETING
COURT UPGRADES		JAVS	\$70,000.00	BOC APPROVED AUGUST 22, 2022 MEETING
COURTHOUSE BUILDING		AC REPAIR/REPLACEMENT (2) UNITS	\$75,000.00	BOC APPROVED SEPTEMBER 29, 2022 MEETING
LAND PURCHASE		SHARON AVE PURCHASE	\$1,200,000.00	BOC APPROVED SEPTEMBER 29, 2022 MEETING
LAND BANK		BUILDING DEMOLITIONS	\$350,000.00	BOC APPROVED OCTOBER 11, 2022 MEETING
CLERK'S OFFICE		OFFICE UPGRADES	\$20,000.00	BOC APPROVED OCTOBER 19, 2022 MEETING
CHILD CARE		CHILD CARE EXPANSION	\$200,000.00	BOC APPROVED OCTOBER 19, 2022 MEETING
DISTRICT COURT/MAGISTRATE'S OFFICE		SECURITY UPGRADES	\$400,000.00	BOC APPROVED OCTOBER 19, 2022 MEETING
SHARON AVE		SHARON AVE. PROPERTY	\$500,000.00	BOC APPROVED OCTOBER 19, 2022 MEETING
AIRPORT		AIRPORT TERMINAL STUDY	\$200,000.00	BOC APPROVED NOVEMBER 15, 2022 MEETING
COURTHOUSE		PARKING DECK & 5TH FLOOR AC	\$25,000.00	BOC APPROVED NOVEMBER 15, 2022 MEETING
EMERGENCY MEASURE		SPILL RESPONSE UNIT	\$30,000.00	BOC APPROVED NOVEMBER 15, 2022 MEETING
SHARON AVE PROPERTY		ENGINEERING/PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	\$25,000.00	BOC APPROVED JANUARY 17, 2023 MEETING
<b>TOTAL OBLIGATIONS</b>			<b>\$6,149,635.22</b>	1/17/2023
<b>REMAINING FUNDS</b>			<b>\$781,563.78</b>	

# BRIGHT START - HOUGHTON COUNTY

## A CHILDCARE INCUBATION PROGRAM PROPOSAL

### Contact Information

Iola Brubaker - [lola@KFRCKids.org](mailto:lola@KFRCKids.org)

(906) 482-9363

Abbey Carlson - [greatstartparent@gmail.com](mailto:greatstartparent@gmail.com)

(906) 482-9365

Robin Meneguzzo - [robin@keweenawgives.org](mailto:robin@keweenawgives.org)

(906) 482-9673

Jeff Ratcliffe - [Jeff@KEDAbiz.org](mailto:Jeff@KEDAbiz.org)

(906) 482-6817

Deb Dupras - [debdupras@4cofup.org](mailto:debdupras@4cofup.org)

(906) 228-3362

**Childcare shortage in Houghton County**

Houghton County is facing a significant shortage of early childhood care and education (childcare) slots.

Needs Analysis by First Children’s Finance showed:

- 1,302 children under age 5 with all adults in the household in the workforce reside in Houghton County
- Houghton County only has 377 licensed childcare slots that operate year around
- An additional 240 slots are available during the school-year through Head Start or Great Start Readiness Program (state funded 4-year-old preschool)
- Head Start/Early Head Start and Great Start Readiness have income-eligibility requirements that exclude moderate income level households from having access
- **This leaves over 600 children without access to licensed childcare programs**

The cost of care is burdensome to families:

- Average cost of care for a home-based program in Michigan is \$640 per month for each child
- That amount increases to \$853 for a center-based program
- A high-quality program like Little Huskies at MTU is close to \$1,000 per month for a single child
- 7.5% of a household’s income is considered affordable by the State of Michigan
- The state offers several childcare assistance programs, they often have income caps making them inaccessible to some working families
- A family making \$100,000 per year with 2 children in care can expect to pay 15-25% of their income each month

**The Impact of Childcare Shortages**

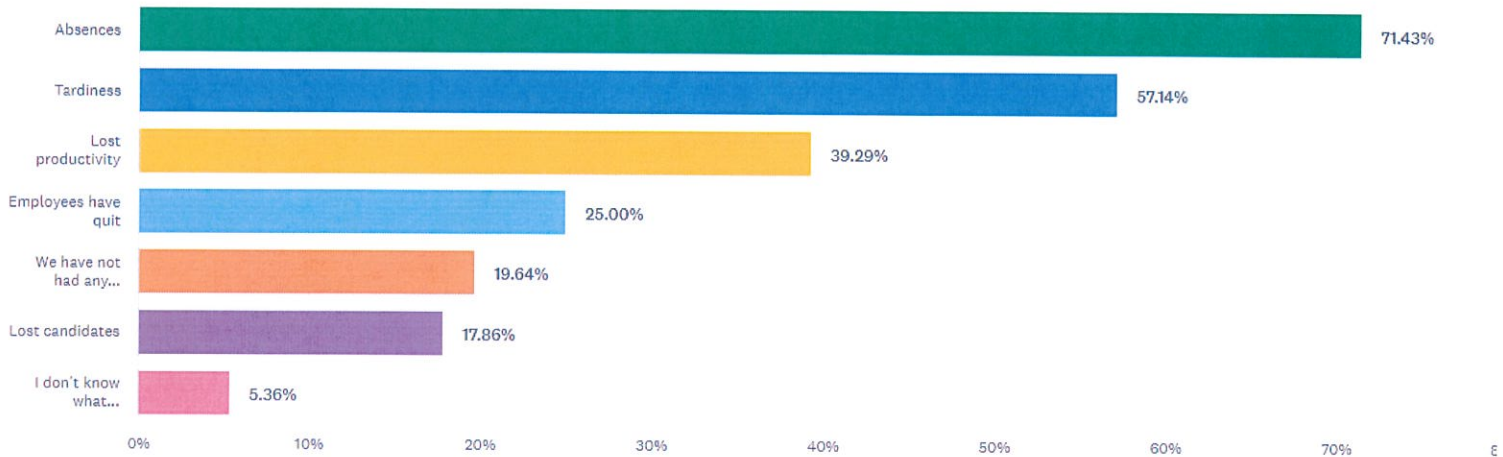
This childcare shortage has a far-reaching impact on our community’s economy, education system and social well-being. Without high-quality early childhood care and education, employers are unable to recruit and retain high quality staff, working parents are not able to access and maintain employment and our children are less prepared to succeed in school and in tomorrow’s workforce. The State of Michigan averages a 60% Labor Force participation rate while the Labor Force participation rate in Houghton County is only 43.8%. A survey of Houghton County Parents showed that over 40% of parents had to leave a job due to a lack of childcare. Over 30% of those same parents indicated that they were forced to reduce the number of hours they worked due to a lack of childcare.

UP Early Childhood Education Task Force Parent Survey - Houghton County Responses	
Childcare Impacts on Employment	
Been distracted, stressed, or worried at work	86.36%
Had to leave job	40.91%
Missed work, arrived late, left early	95.45%
Reduced regular work hours or changed from full- to part-time	31.82%
Turned down job offer, promotion, reassignment, or further education/training	31.82%

The childcare shortage impacts the community’s ability to provide necessary services to the community and support economic growth. Multiple employers have indicated that the lack of childcare in the community is impacting their ability to retain and recruit a highly trained workforce. In a survey about childcare challenges, 83% of Houghton County employers did not believe there was adequate childcare available and 71% of employers believed it to be a factor in their ability to retain employees. That same survey showed that the lack of childcare has significant consequences on local businesses.

**What consequences have you experienced as a result of your employees' childcare challenges? (Select all that apply.)**

Answered: 56 Skipped: 0



Employer Survey of Childcare Challenges

We see the shortage impact the public schools, medical services, universities, large and small businesses, mental health services and the community as a whole. Living in a childcare desert is known to affect labor force participation, which hurts the overall economy.

**Our Solution**

UP Early Childhood Education Task Force along with the Copper Country Great Start Collaborative have collected data through surveys, interviews and focus groups from three key groups of stakeholders, parents, employers and childcare providers. The data shows that the following are contributing factors to the childcare crisis:

1. Cost of Care
2. Early Childhood Workforce Shortage
3. High Cost of Starting and Maintaining New Programs

The Houghton County Childcare Workgroup has researched several possible solutions to help address these contributing factors and has identified a possible solution – a small business incubator and training program designed to support new in-home and small center-based early childhood education and care start-ups. This model is based on similar programs in other communities including Marquette County.

**History**

In 2022, Marquette County secured funding through private sources and an allocation of County ARPA funding to address the childcare shortage in their community. The funding was used to design and launch Childcare SPARK, an innovative, first-of-its-kind program business accelerator model. Childcare SPARK combined expertise from business development, childcare operations, and childhood development organizations to help childcare entrepreneurs to be equipped to establish successful home-based childcare businesses. Marquette County used a grant from the Council of Michigan Foundations to hire a consultant to develop a model based on a successful program in Maine, the Child Care Business Lab by CEI. Marquette’s Childcare SPARK program has successfully completed one cohort of new providers with the results of opening 2 new in-home

childcare centers. They recently began their second cohort of new providers. Marquette is willing to share curriculum, program plans and lessons learned during the process with our county.

### **Houghton County Childcare Business Incubator**

Based on the success of the Marquette County Childcare SPARK program, The Houghton County Childcare Workgroup is recommending that a modified business accelerator program be developed for Houghton County. BRIGHT START Houghton County would be a childcare business incubator that works to recruit and support new individuals to understand, start, operate and grow additional early childhood education and care businesses in our community.

While based on the Marquette model, BRIGHT START Houghton County would utilize a highly qualified individual to be a one-on-one coach for childcare business entrepreneurs rather than the 16-week structured class used in Marquette. BRIGHT START Houghton County would allow childcare entrepreneurs to quickly access the support they need to start a new childcare business while ensuring each entrepreneur has access to information, education and peer learning and support that will make their program successful. The program model will help meet the demand for affordable, flexible and high-quality care while developing a trained early childhood education and care workforce.

BRIGHT START Houghton County will hire a highly-qualified individual with early childhood business experience to provide individual mentoring, support and education to new and struggling childcare business entrepreneurs. The coach would assist in navigating LARA and the licensing process, one-on-one mentoring in best practices for childcare business operations and connections to professionals that can help with business planning, marketing, accounting practices and knowledge of child development. Houghton County participants will also be provided with an opportunity to connect with other early childhood education and care professionals through networking events. The networking events will strengthen the early childhood education and care system by providing child development training, models for best practices and a network of peers that can support each other's childcare businesses.

### **Program Summary**

Mission: BRIGHT START Houghton County exists to recruit and support individuals to understand, start, operate and grow additional early childhood education and care businesses in Houghton County to help meet the demand for affordable, flexible and high-quality care.

### **Objectives:**

1. Recruit and equip individuals with the knowledge and skills needed to start and manage their childcare businesses successfully.
2. Offer ongoing mentorship and guidance to new early childhood education and care providers, connecting them with experienced childcare professionals and business experts.
3. Provide navigation support for new early childhood education and care providers to access resources, business planning tools, funding opportunities, and regulatory support.
4. Facilitate networking opportunities to help providers build a support network and share best practices within the industry.

### **Program Outline:**

1. Entrepreneurs are paired with an early childhood business coach.
2. Coach meets weekly with new entrepreneurs to provide one-on-one support and mentoring
3. Entrepreneurs will be assigned training modules and assignments to be completed that will help them successfully operate a childcare business. Topics may include:

- a. Licensing and Regulation Basics
  - b. Business Planning
  - c. Marketing
  - d. Staffing
  - e. Budgeting and Financial Planning
  - f. Introduction to Child Development and Early Learning
  - g. Health and Safety
  - h. Day to Day Operations
4. Work with area professionals to provide additional support on topics as needed
  5. Monthly networking events for new and current early childhood education and care professionals that build a supportive network and share best practices

### Timeline

Fall 2023	Secure Funding
Dec-Feb 2024	Complete Program Planning & Development
March 2024	Marketing and recruitment efforts for BRIGHT START Houghton County First Houghton County Networking Event
April 2024	Launch program and enroll first participants – Ongoing enrollment on a rolling basis
Aug 2024	Graduation - First participants ready to open their own childcare businesses – Ongoing
Nov 2024	Evaluation and Review of Program (repeated annually)

### Project Partners

***Keweenaw Family Resource Center (KFRC):*** A family-centered non-profit with more than 30 years of experience working to support and strengthen families with young children in the Copper Country. KFRC will serve as the project lead and fiduciary for the BRIGHT START Houghton County. They will be responsible to hire and maintain a highly qualified early childhood coach and provide regular updates to the GSC Childcare Workgroup, project partners and the commissioners.

***Copper Country Great Start Collaborative – Childcare Workgroup:*** A collaborative workgroup that is part of the larger Copper Country Great Start Collaborative (GSC). The GSC works to build system change in the Copper Country to improve early childhood outcomes. The Childcare Workgroup includes members from the community with invested interest to improve access to early childhood education and care in Houghton County including employers, parents and early childhood educators. The workgroup meets quarterly and will be responsible to monitor the progress of BRIGHT START Houghton County and make recommendations for changes.

***Great Start to Quality UP Resource Center (GSQUPRC):*** The Resource Center has served as the lead for child care providers across the Upper Peninsula for the past 45 years. They support providers through the licensing process, as well as their professional development, engagement in the Great Start to Quality system, MiRegistry, and use of a fifteen county wide lending library. GSQUPRC will support this project as a thought partner in the development of the model, provide staff support with regards to child development, licensing, business sustainability, and connecting participants to agencies that will support the process of their becoming a licensed home provider.

***Keweenaw Community Foundation (KCF):*** KCF works to strengthen all aspects of the Keweenaw including providing support to developing new innovative projects like SMART START Houghton County. The foundation will lend its expertise on project facilitation and evaluation to help ensure the sustainability of the project beyond the initial funding.

***Keweenaw Economic Development Association (KEDA):*** Recognizes the importance of access to affordable child care to the development of the region. KEDA has the ability to provide flexible small business loans to small businesses like in-home and center-based childcare centers. In addition, KEDA will support BRIGHT START Houghton County with expertise in small businesses and community development.

### Budget

REVENUE	Year 1 – 2024	Year 2 – 2025	Year 3 (8 months) 2026	TOTAL REVENUE
Houghton County ARPA Funding	\$ 79,000	\$ 75,000	\$ 46,000	\$200,000
Copper Country Great Start – in-kind match staff time for project coordination	\$ 9,500	\$ 9,500	\$ 7,200	\$26,200
Other Community Support	\$ 2,500	\$ 5,000	\$ 7,500	\$ 15,000
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$ 91,000</b>	<b>\$ 89,500</b>	<b>\$ 60,700</b>	<b>\$ 241,200</b>
EXPENSE	Year 1 – 2024	Year 2 – 2025	Year 3 (8 months) 2026	TOTAL Expenses
Early Childhood Coach (0.75 FTE)	\$ 44,000	\$ 45,000	\$ 31,000	\$120,000
Meeting & Project Coordinator (0.25 FTE)	\$ 9,500	\$ 9,500	\$ 7,200	\$26,200
Supplies and Materials	\$ 1,800	\$ 1,800	\$ 1,200	\$4,800
Professional Fees for Consultants	\$ 6,000	\$ 6,000	\$ 3,000	\$15,000
Incentives for participants (\$500/participant)	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 4,000	\$14,000
Technology for Coach	\$ 1,800	\$ 350	\$ 200	\$2,350
Networking Events Food & Supplies (\$300/event)	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,600	\$ 2,400	\$9,000
Marketing	\$ 4,000	\$ 2,500	\$ 900	\$7,400
Evaluation	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	\$ 4,500
Transportation (Mileage for Coach)	\$ 400	\$ 400	\$ 300	\$1,100
Childcare & Mileage Costs for program Participants (\$85/participant)	\$ 850	\$ 850	\$ 650	\$2,350
Small Grants for new programs to help with unexpected costs (Max \$1,000/participant)	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 3,000	\$13,000
Program Administrative Fees (Approx. 10% of Project Budget for financial and management services excluding in-kind)	\$ 8,150	\$ 8,000	\$ 5,350	\$21,500
<b>TOTAL Expense</b>	<b>\$ 91,000</b>	<b>\$ 89,500</b>	<b>\$ 60,700</b>	<b>\$ 241,200</b>



**Keweenaw Conservation District**  
**205 Michigan Street - Office #2**  
**Hancock, MI 49930**  
**906 482-0214**

November 26, 2023

Mr. John Switzer  
Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development  
P.O. Box 30017  
Lansing, MI 48909

Dear Mr. Switzer:

The purpose of this letter is to request that the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD) provide the Houghton Keweenaw Conservation District (HKCD) with a Forestry Assistance Program (FAP) starting in fiscal year 2024 or 2025.

HKCD continues to receive requests for landowner assistance and information, and MDARD has requested HKCD review and assess whether Qualified Forestry Program (QFP) plans are following program regulations and practicing sustainable forestry.

HKCD would like to review these plans and provide forestry services for these people and many other constituents in Houghton and Keweenaw Counties, but we do not have a forester on staff. Private forests are a large component of our land base and helping people manage their forests effectively would be beneficial for landowners, the health of our forests and local economy, and the State.

It is time that our constituents receive the services that they are supporting with their hard-earned tax dollars. Other counties in the state have been receiving this funding continually, but HKCD has not had a FAP Forester for fifteen years. We know that many Conservation Districts around the state have enjoyed having a FAP Forester continually for decades. If the budgetary support is not increasing to allow for more FAP positions, we would suggest rotating funding from Districts that may be saturated with FAP services, to HKCD that has been without these services for a long time. We know that our constituents are starving for objective, free information from a professional forester who connects them to vital forestry resources in the community. And our community supports sustainable forestry and outreach. Michigan Technological University has a well-regarded forestry and natural resources school and HKCD was able to also provide local employment to some of these graduates. HKCD currently relies on a volunteer board and other dedicated volunteers to provide the natural resource related services we can for our constituents. An educated forester could advise on forest management plans, wildlife habitat management, QFP, CFR and make referrals to local consulting foresters and loggers. Overall, the private landowner education and connection to forestry resources and industry that a FAP Forester



## Houghton Keweenaw Conservation District

provides would be invaluable in our District. An HKCD forester would be a major asset for our community.

Please provide funding for a FAP program to the Houghton Keweenaw Conservation District soon so we can hire a forester and begin again to serve the forestry-related natural resource needs of our constituents. The QFP plan review, landowner requests for site visits, and more resource requests are all indicators why HKCD should have a forestry program.

The HKCD board meets next on December 21, January 18, and February 15 at 5:15 PM and we would like to involve you in conversation about hiring a FAP forester, and the likelihood of HKCD receiving such funding. In the interim, if there are other actions HKCD must undertake to receive funding for a forestry program, please call me directly at (906) 201-0418.

Thank you for your help with this matter.

Sincerely,

Rachel Tarpey  
Board Chair, Houghton Keweenaw Conservation District  
(906) 201-0418

Copied to:

Kurt Lehman, Region 1 MACD  
Benjamin Schram, MDARD FAP Coordinator  
Rachael Guth, MDARD Regional Coordinator  
Greg Markkanen, 110<sup>th</sup> District MI Representative  
Ed McBroom, 38<sup>th</sup> District MI Senate

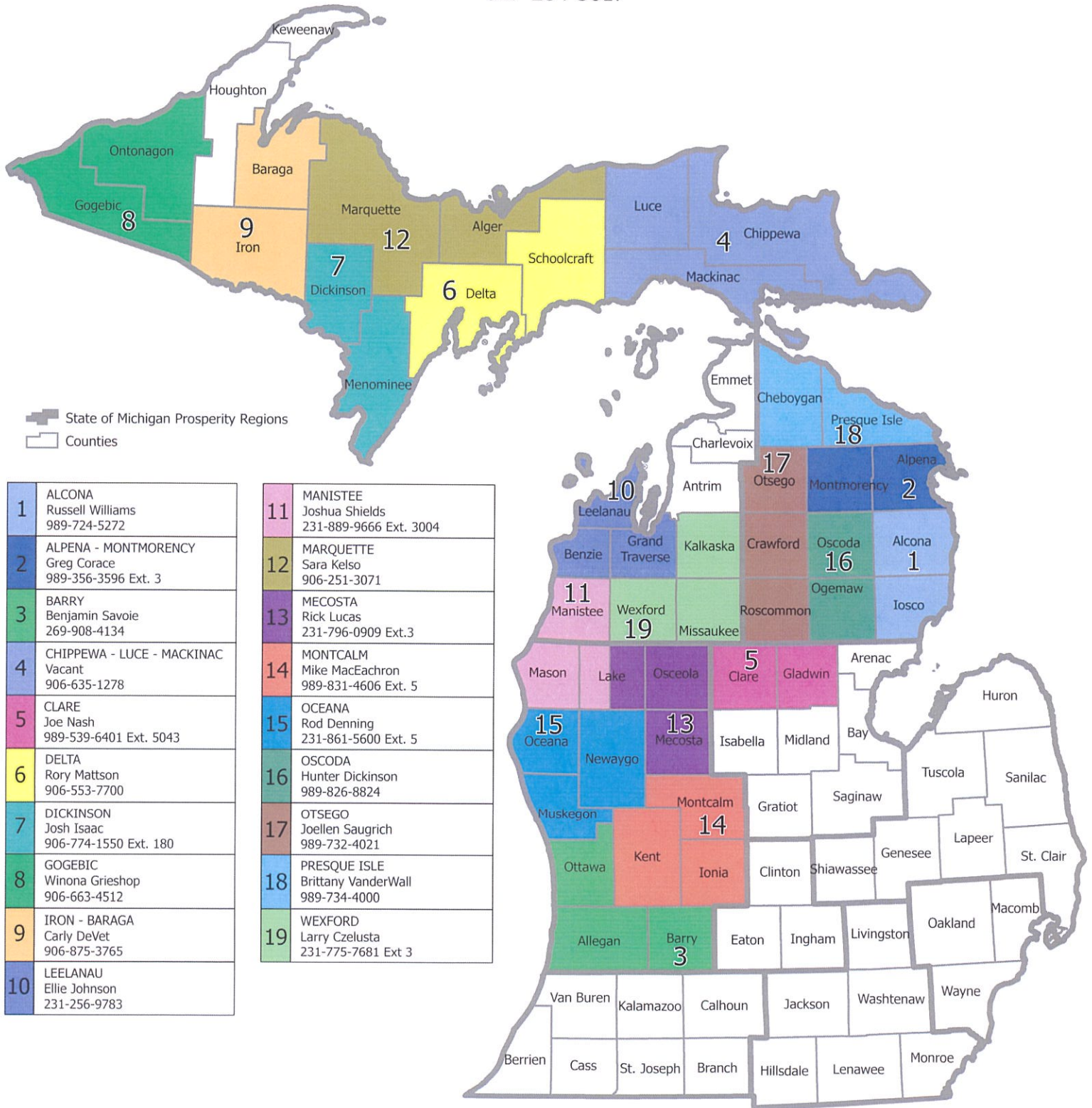
Steve Siira, HKCD Board Director  
Tom Collins, HKCD Board Director  
Doug McKenzie, HKCD Board Director



MDARD-ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP DIVISION  
FORESTRY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM  
FY 2023



JOHN SWITZER, PROGRAM MANAGER  
517-284-5606  
BEN SCHRAM, PROGRAM COORDINATOR  
517-284-5617



1	ALCONA Russell Williams 989-724-5272
2	ALPENA - MONTMORENCY Greg Corace 989-356-3596 Ext. 3
3	BARRY Benjamin Savoie 269-908-4134
4	CHIPPEWA - LUCE - MACKINAC Vacant 906-635-1278
5	CLARE Joe Nash 989-539-6401 Ext. 5043
6	DELTA Rory Mattson 906-553-7700
7	DICKINSON Josh Isaac 906-774-1550 Ext. 180
8	GOGEBIC Winona Grieshop 906-663-4512
9	IRON - BARAGA Carly DeVet 906-875-3765
10	LEELANAU Ellie Johnson 231-256-9783

11	MANISTEE Joshua Shields 231-889-9666 Ext. 3004
12	MARQUETTE Sara Kelso 906-251-3071
13	MECOSTA Rick Lucas 231-796-0909 Ext.3
14	MONTCALM Mike MacEachron 989-831-4606 Ext. 5
15	OCEANA Rod Denning 231-861-5600 Ext. 5
16	OSCODA Hunter Dickinson 989-826-8824
17	OTSEGO Joellen Saugrich 989-732-4021
18	PRESQUE ISLE Brittany VanderWall 989-734-4000
19	WEXFORD Larry Czelusta 231-775-7681 Ext 3

December 13, 2023

Mr. John Switzer  
Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development  
P.O. Box 30017  
Lansing, MI 48909

Dear Mr. Switzer:

The purpose of this letter is for the Houghton County Board of Commissioners (the Board) to offer its support for the Houghton Keweenaw Conservation District (HKCD) request for a Forestry Assistance Program (FAP) grant to the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD) starting in fiscal year 2024 or 2025.

It has recently come to our attention that HKCD has been requesting these funds for the last five years from MDARD. As local elected officials, we believe our constituents need and deserve this service, that most forested communities around the state enjoy. Private forests are a large component of our land base and helping people manage their forests effectively would be beneficial for landowners, the health of our forests and local economy, and the State.

It is time that our constituents receive the services that they are supporting with their hard-earned tax dollars. Other counties in the state have been receiving this funding continually, but HKCD has not had a FAP Forester for fifteen years. We know that many Conservation Districts around the state have enjoyed having a FAP Forester continually for decades. If the budgetary support is not increasing to allow for more FAP positions, we would suggest rotating funding from Districts that may be saturated with FAP services, to HKCD that has been without these services for a long time. We know that our constituents are starving for objective, free information from a professional forester who connects them to vital forestry resources in the community.

Our community supports sustainable forestry and outreach. Michigan Technological University has a well-regarded forestry and natural resources school, and the forestry consulting businesses are plentiful. HKCD currently relies on a volunteer board and other dedicated volunteers to provide the natural resource related services we can for our constituents. An educated forester could advise on forest management plans, wildlife habitat management, QFP, CFR, and make referrals to local consulting foresters and loggers. Overall, the private landowner education and connection to forestry resources and industry that a FAP Forester provides would be invaluable in our District. An HKCD FAP Forester would be a major asset for our community.

Please provide funding for a FAP program to the Houghton Keweenaw Conservation District soon so that our community can have a Forester dedicated to helping our private forest landowners. The Board joins State Representative Markkanen, and State Senator McBroom in affirming that our community needs and deserves the Forestry Assistance Program. Thank you for your help with this matter.

## Houghton County Board of Commissioners

Sincerely,

Tom Tikkanen  
Chairperson, Houghton County Board of Commissioners

Copied to:

Roy Britz, Commissioner  
Joel Keranen, Commissioner  
Glenn Anderson, Commissioner  
Gretchen Janssen, Commissioner

Benjamin Schram, MDARD FAP Coordinator  
Rachael Guth, MDARD Regional Coordinator  
Greg Markkanen, 110<sup>th</sup> District MI Representative  
Ed McBroom, 38<sup>th</sup> District MI Senate

Steve Siira, HKCD Board Director  
Tom Collins, HKCD Board Director  
Doug McKenzie, HKCD Board Director

# Materials Management Planning Preparation

## *What Counties Need to Know*

WUPPDR Overview, November-December 2023

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# Decisions, decisions....

**Any time now, EGLE will initiate the process by sending a “call for new materials management plans” (to county board chair and clerk)...**

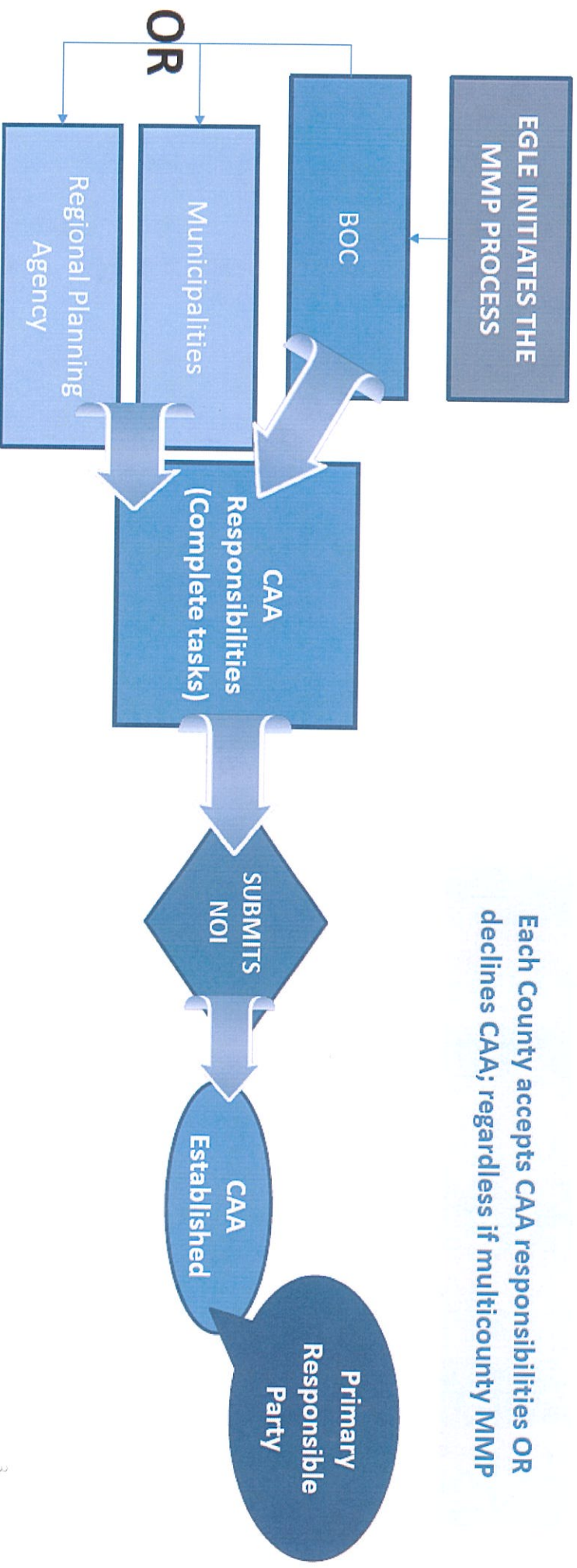
**Then, within 180 days you must submit a *notice of intent (via online form)* and make some important decisions:**

- 1. Will you take **primary responsibility** for the materials management plan?**
- 2. Do you want to have a multi-county/**regional** plan?**
- 3. Either way, **who will develop it** (WUPPDR, county staff, or a consultant)?**

# Decision 1:

## Will you be the County Approval Agency (CAA)?

This entity has primary responsibility for the plan.



## Decision 2:

Will you go multi-county?

**Step 2**  
Multicounty Planning  
Consideration



- DOCUMENTATION NEEDED
- Letters from each County
  - Initial Letter & the Letter from the Adjacent County
  - Meeting Minutes with Official Votes

**Step 2a**

Develop Interlocal Agreements  
Multicounty MMP (if applicable)

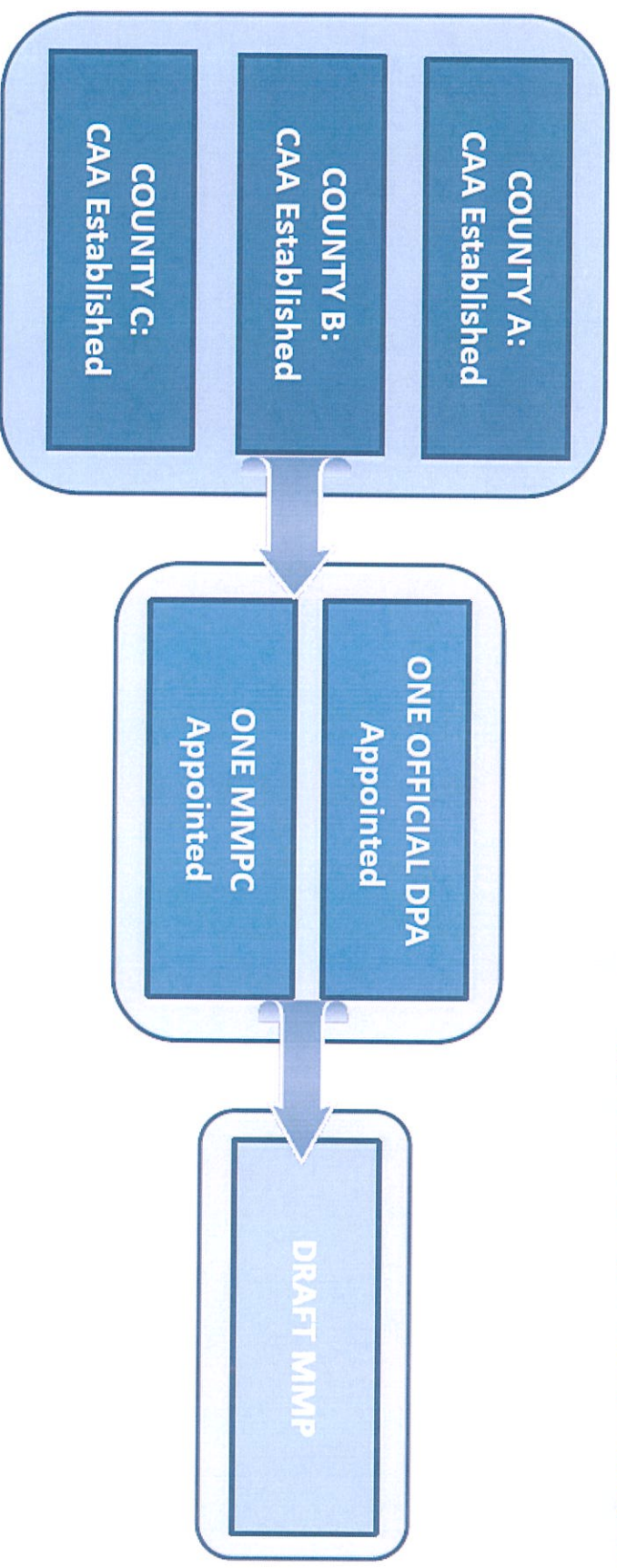


- SIGNED INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT
- Between each Multicounty MMP (if applicable)



For regional MMP, there would only be one committee (MMPC), one DPA, and one plan

*CAA Filed NOI – EACH COUNTY*

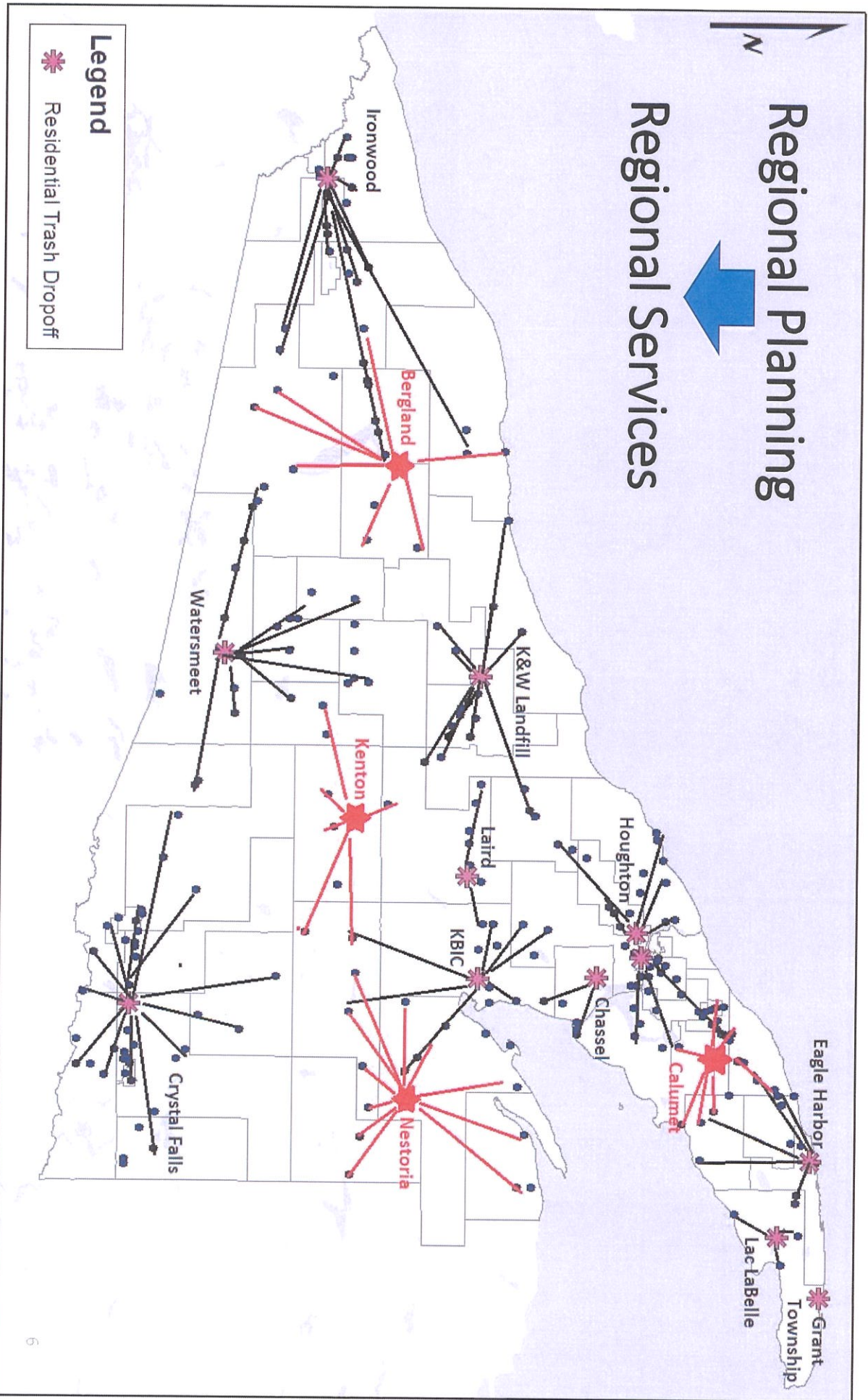


Appointments per Interlocal Agreement

# Regional Planning



# Regional Services



**Legend**

 Residential Trash Dropoff

## Decision 3:

If the county is the CAA, who will develop the plan?

WUPPDR recommends that the county submit a notice of intent that it will act as the CAA, then, either alone or with other counties, enter into agreement with WUPPDR to develop the plan. WUPPDR then becomes the *designated planning agency (DPA)*.

If the county declines to act as CAA, then either of these parties (first come, first served) may submit a notice of intent to act as CAA:

1. **ALL municipalities** in the county, acting jointly (highly unlikely)
2. Regional planning agency (RPA) (**WUPPDR**)

## And regional comes with more money...

...for the planning process, as well as implementation actions (possibly including physical infrastructure).

**Single-county:** \$60,000 + per capita allocation for each of the first three years (then continuing funds less per capita)

**Multi-county:** Extra \$10,000 per county

If county acts as CAA and WUPPDR (or someone else) is DPA, county may choose to retain *some* funds to support costs of participation.

**But after the CAA is determined, there is more work before the planning grants.**

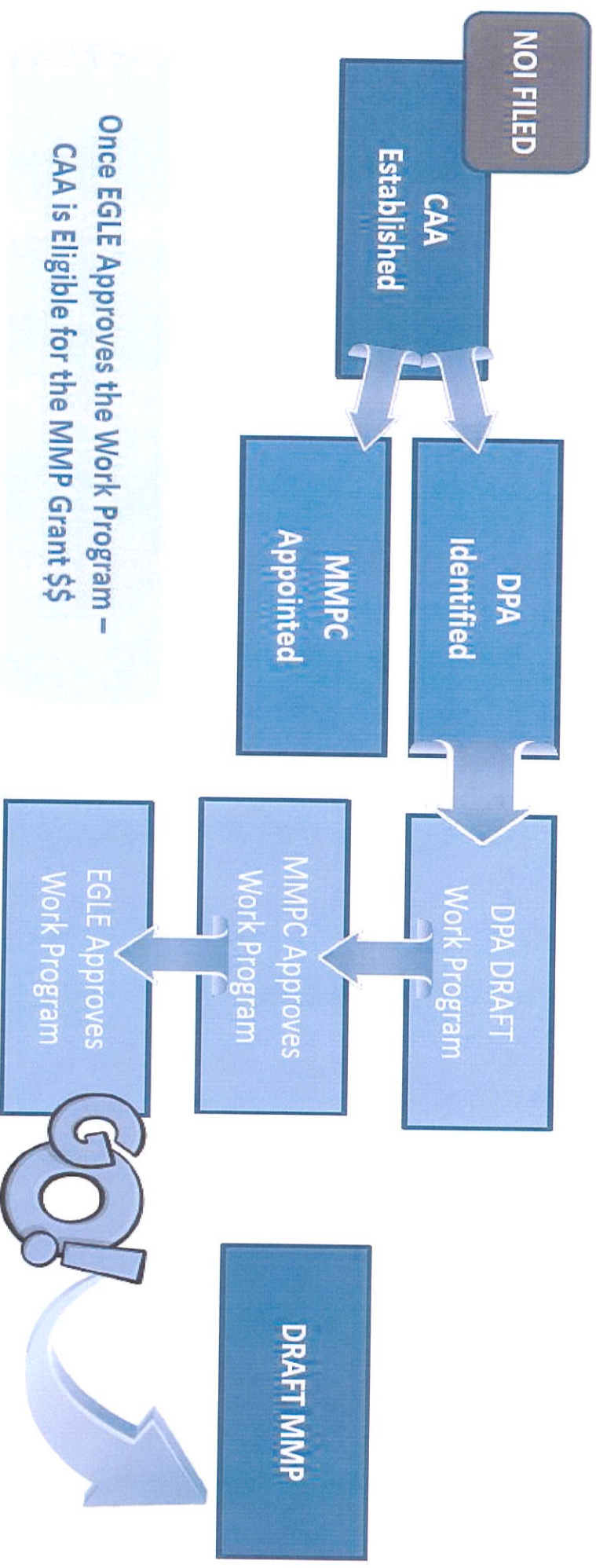
- For a multi-county plan, an **interlocal agreement** must be developed (WUPPDR can assist)
- A **committee(s)** must be appointed (several types of entities must be included – local officials, haulers, facilities, etc.)
- A **work program** must be developed and submitted to EGLE and approved

**As things stand, this all must be done prior to grant eligibility.**  
(Unclear if or how costs of the work can be recouped)

# NOI to Draft flowchart

CAA Filed NOI

(THE CAA HAS 180 DAYS TO COMPLETE ALL TASKS BELOW)



Once EGLE Approves the Work Program –  
CAA is Eligible for the MMP Grant \$\$

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# MMPC composition

## SINGLE COUNTY Materials Management Planning Committee

1. Solid waste facility
2. Hauler
3. Materials recovery facility
4. Composting facility
5. Waste diversion, reuse or reduction facility
6. Environmental interest group from area
7. County elected official
8. Township elected official
9. City or village elected official
10. Business generating “managed materials”
11. Regional planning agency
12. One member of adjacent community outside planning area (optional)

## MULTI-COUNTY Materials Management Planning Committee

1. Elected official from each county or municipality in planning area
2. Business generating managed materials in each planning area

*Members appointed to the committee for a five-year term*

# Timeline

<b>1</b>	Letter received from EGLE; county decides whether CAA	<b>2</b>	If CAA, county decides whether single/multi-county plan	<b>3</b>	Complete voluntary pre-NOI survey (if available from EGLE)	<b>4</b>	Resolutions and interlocal agreements	<b>5</b>	Submit NOI
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# Timeline

<b>6</b>	At or after NOI submission, CAA appoints DPA	<b>7</b>	CAA appoints MIM planning committee	<b>8</b>	Committee approves DPA's work program	<b>9</b>	Work program submitted to EGLE for approval	<b>10</b>	CAA becomes eligible for MIMP Grant funding
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## Primary Contacts:

Jerry Wuorenmaa, Executive Director

[iwuorenmaa@wupppdr.org](mailto:iwuorenmaa@wupppdr.org) 906-482-7205 ext. 111

Lisa McKenzie, Regional Planner

[lmckenzie@wupppdr.org](mailto:lmckenzie@wupppdr.org) 906-482-7205 ext. 118

# Questions?

## Assisting:

Rachael Pressley, Senior Regional Planner

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Evan Lanese, GIS/Planning Technician

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Michael Stanitis, Assistant Regional Planner

[Mstanitis@wupppdr.org](mailto:Mstanitis@wupppdr.org) 906-482-7205 ext. 113

**HOUGHTON COUNTY NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC**

**TO ALL INTERESTED CITIZENS:** The Houghton County Board of Commissioners is accepting applications for the following board appointments:

**HOUGHTON COUNTY LAND BANK AUTHORITY**

Two members from the community are needed.

Applicants must be a Houghton County resident.

Applications are available at the Administrator's Office,

5<sup>th</sup> Floor, Houghton County Courthouse,

401 E. Houghton Ave., Houghton MI

Or on our website

[www.houghtoncounty.net](http://www.houghtoncounty.net) under Employment.

Deadline for submittal is 4:30 PM

Monday, December 11, 2023

To the Administrator's Office

Thomas Tikkanen, Chairman

Houghton County Board of Commissioners

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To: Daily Mining Gazette Ad Dept.

Fax: 483-2219

From: Benjamin Larson, Houghton County Administrator

Date: November 30, 2023

Please place as a block ad for December 4 & December 5, 2023.

Thank you.

## **ALLOCATION BOARD MEMBERS**

1. The County Treasurer
2. The Chair of the County Board's finance committee
3. The Intermediate school superintendent or a representative
4. A Citizen of the county to be chosen by the presiding probate judge. If the county has more than 1 municipality with a population of 10,000 or more, the judge must select a resident of 1 of the municipalities. But, if there is only 1 such municipality, the governing body of the municipality, rather than the judge, makes the choice and the person chosen must be a member of the governing body or 1 of it's officers.
5. A person, selected by the County Board of Commissioners, who is not officially connected with or employed by an County or local unit.
6. A township supervisor who is chosen by a majority of the township supervisors in the County.

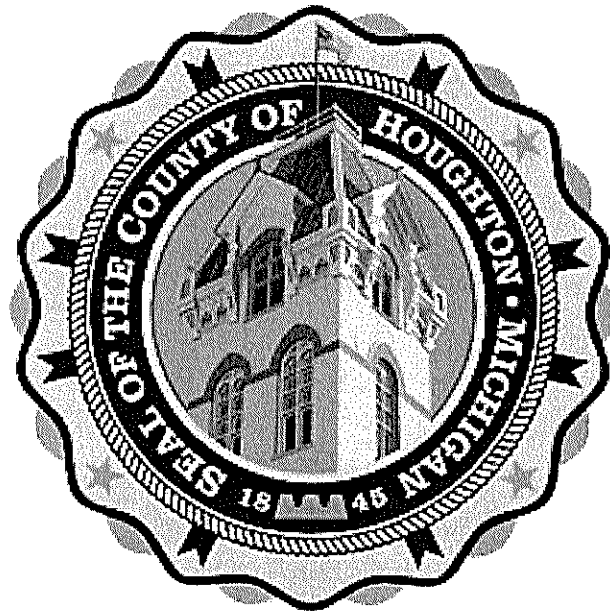
## **2024 ALLOCATION BOARD**

1. Lisa Mattila
2. Tom Tikkanen
3. James Rautiola (906) 482-4250, Ext.185
4. TBD
5. TBD
6. TBD

Jennifer-I serve as the Clerk of the Board.

Letters were sent to Judge Strome, the County Administrator to go on the December Agenda, and to Mary Sears. 11/22/23-Jennifer

Houghton County  
*DRAFT* of Five Year Recreation Plan



December 7, 2023

# Acknowledgments

The purpose of this plan is to set forth a recreation strategy for Houghton County that addresses the forces of change, confronts future challenges, and provides direction for decision-making regarding investment in recreation projects within the County. This plan was developed in accordance with the guidelines for a five-year, DNR-approved Recreation Plan that is necessary for governmental entities to pursue DNR-administered grants.

## **Houghton County Board of Commissioners:**

Tom Tikkanen —Commissioner, Chairman, District 1

Joel Keranen –Commissioner, District 2

Glenn Anderson – Commissioner, District 3

Gretchen Janssen – Commissioner, District 4

Roy Britz – Commissioner, Vice Chairman, District 5

## **Houghton County Planning Commissioners:**

Allan T. Aho, Chassell Township-Agriculture & Forestry, Land Use

John Larson, Hancock Township-Education

Ron Kilpela, Franklin Township-Local Governmental Planning and Zoning

Timothy Sears, Franklin Township-Sanitation, Environmental Health, Housing & Human Services

Benjamin Larson, County Administrator

Joel Keranen, District 2, Houghton County Board of Commission

Steve Aho, Hancock Township-Economic Development & Tourism

Michael Erickson, Osceola Township-Environment

Horst Schmidt, Torch Lake Township-Recreation & Culture

This plan was prepared by the County of Houghton Administration.

## Introduction

Recreation plays an important role in the daily life of Houghton County residents, and it is a spark plug and vital component of the broader economy. Houghton County, like much of the Upper Peninsula, is blessed with an abundance of clean air, natural outdoor amenities, world class motorized and non-motorized recreation trails, scenic forestland and shorelines, crystal clear Lake Superior water, a myriad of streams and inland lakes for boating and fishing, and so much more. This environment offers residents and visitors unparalleled, year-round opportunities to enjoy the outdoors in a one-of-a-kind natural setting. This experience has continued to entice a growing number of tourists to what has become a **Destination Location** for our area, and stimulates the economy with spending activities on items such as Lodging, Restaurants, motor sports, silent sports, and at a variety of our other local Merchants and Businesses. Recognizing the value of these amenities and what our area has to offer, economic development organizations and many employers are leveraging our outdoor recreation assets to attract and retain employees to our region. With the pandemic changes to the workplace, a growing number of remote and work from home residents have infused another segment of the growing population that wants to call Houghton County home.

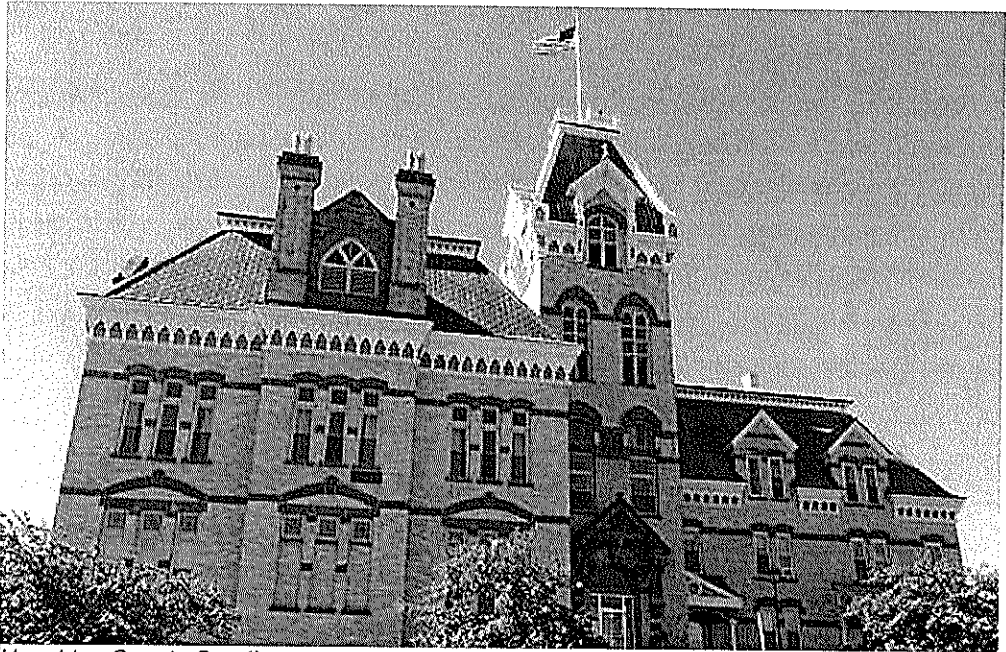
Houghton County is one of many local and regional recreation asset stewards, with the broader network of assets owned and maintained by local governments, nearby counties, state and federal agencies, conservancies, institutions of higher education, non-profit organizations, recreation organizations, and private entities. It is home to Michigan's F.J. McLain and Twin Lakes State Parks, the Keweenaw National Historical Park, the Isle Royale National Park Visitor Center and Ranger III staging and boat dock, the Copper Country Trail National Byway, and numerous parks, trail systems and conservation lands. The combination of these assets affords residents and tourists with an abundance of recreational opportunities, and makes Houghton County an incredibly unique destination for outdoor enthusiasts. It also emphasizes the importance of regional partnerships and collaborations, particularly on projects which cross Municipal, County, State, and Federal boundaries.

Because recreation is important to local livelihoods and lifestyles, Houghton County has developed this 2024-2028 Houghton County Recreation Plan to consider and guide future recreation development and improvements.

# Part 1: Community Description

This Five Year Recreation Plan is designed for all of Houghton County, and in support for the Cities, Townships, and Villages within the County. Houghton County is located on the Keweenaw Peninsula, and in the Western Upper Peninsula of the State of Michigan. It is made up of 667,900 acres (1,044 square miles), with 139 inland lakes and 51 miles of Lake Superior shoreline. The county's population is 37,361 as of the 2020 U.S. Census data. Houghton County is made up of 14 townships, two incorporated cities, and five incorporated villages. It has numerous unincorporated small former copper mining communities ("locations"), which are remnants of past larger settlements.

The county's population is concentrated in the northern half of the county. This includes two primary population centers, 1) the Cities of Houghton and Hancock, opposite each other on Portage Lake/Canal near the center of the county, and 2) the Villages of Calumet and Laurium in the northern tier of the county. The City of Houghton is the County seat.



*Houghton County Courthouse*



The population of the Western Upper Peninsula reached its peak in the 1920s and 1930s when mining and lumbering activities were booming. Since that time there has been a considerable out-migration of residents in response to the decline of those industries. Houghton County's population stabilized around 1970 and achieved moderate growth due to the continued expansion of Michigan Technological University (MTU), along with government and service sectors. This trend has continued in recent decades, with Houghton being the only Upper Peninsula County to see population growth from 2010 to 2020. The County also has a relatively youthful population by Western Upper Peninsula standards. The largest employers in the area are comprised of K-12 and Higher Education, Healthcare, Government, and mid-sized to smaller businesses. Tourism is a growing and also major contributor to the area's economy.

Commercial air service is available at the Houghton County Airport, with twice daily flights to Chicago on United Airlines. The Cities of Houghton and Hancock and the Baraga-Houghton-Keweenaw Community Action Agency operate public transit systems serving the large communities. Transportation by boat to Isle Royale National Park is available on The Ranger III, making round trips to the island during the park season. Isle Royale Seaplanes are flying a growing number of passengers out of Hancock, and this mode of transportation offers a much quicker commute to the Island.

While the landscape varies greatly within the county, northern hardwoods characterize the predominant forest cover, covering approximately 338,155 acres, or 50 percent, of the county. This supports a strong forest products industry while also providing for numerous recreational pursuits such as camping, mountain biking, hiking, ATV riding, and snowmobiling in areas permitting them.

The wildlife within the county consists of whitetail deer, and a wide variety of smaller animals and bird species. Outside the developed areas species such as black bear, fox, otter, cougar, and beaver are also present. Less common, but occasionally seen, are wolves and moose. The region's many lakes and streams offer abundant habitat for many types of fish and other aquatic animals. Fishing enthusiasts delight in catching lake trout, walleye, perch, pike, whitefish, salmon, and many others species of freshwater fish.

## Part 2: Administrative Structure

The five-members of the Elected Houghton County Board of Commissioners are responsible for all County-owned recreational facilities. The County Administrator has responsibility for day-to-day operations and budgeting for these facilities and activities.

Houghton County occasionally provides financial support to and serves as a grant applicant for local recreation development projects. The County also encourages and supports the efforts of local governments in addressing their recreational objectives. There is no County Parks and Recreation Commission nor Committee at this time. The County Board of Commission has the sole authority to commit funds for parks and recreation, accept grants, and purchase and sell land on behalf of the County.

With the sale of the Houghton County Arena property to the City of Houghton in January of 2023, the only County owned Recreational Facility is the Houghton County Marina. The County run Marina is located in Ripley, and it is adjacent to the Portage Lake Lift Bridge on the "Hancock" side of the main population center of Houghton/Hancock. The County Marina is described in greater detail later in this document. The Board of Commission approves the County Marina budget and operations. There are no County run parks or facilities to report on. The County works closely with the State Parks and National Parks groups, and all of the municipalities and local recreation groups, but has no ownership nor oversight for any of them.

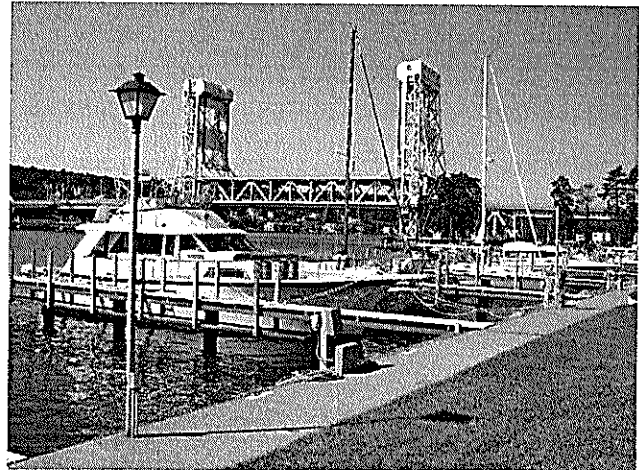
## Part 3: Recreation Inventory

The following section examines and inventories the recreational facilities that are currently available in Houghton County. While Houghton County only owns one recreational facility, the public has access to a wide variety of parks, other sites, and trails through the villages, townships, cities and state and federal government properties (see inventory beginning on page 9).

Accessibility assessments and rankings are provided for each County-owned site based on the parameters outlined in the “DNR Guidelines for the Development of Community Park, Recreation, Open Space, and Greenway Plans” as follows:

- 1=none of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines
- 2=some of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines
- 3=most of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines
- 4=the entire facilities/park meets accessibility guidelines
- 5=the entire facilities/park was developed/renovated using the principles of universal design

More than just an item on a checklist, universal design is an integral part of recreation facility development. The approach helps to maximize the return on investment in recreation by making facilities as safe and user-friendly as possible. Assessments were completed by members of the Houghton County Recreation Committee with support by WUPPDR staff.



*Houghton County Marina*

### Facilities Owned by and Located in County

#### **Houghton County Marina**

The Houghton County Marina is located on Portage Lake, part of the Keweenaw Waterway, a body of water connected to Lake Superior at the Northwestern and Southeastern access points. The County marina is situated on the north side of the waterway, just east of the Portage lake Lift Bridge that connects the cities of Houghton and Hancock. It is located immediately off of

DNR Multi-Use Trail #3, which connects Hancock to the nearby communities such as Dollar Bay and Lake Linden, and is near the historic Quincy Smelter.

- Accessibility Rating: 2 = some of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines
- Type: Marina (boat docking/storage)
- Size: Approx. 2.25 acres
- Service Area: Houghton County; seasonal tourists

The following information provided below is intended to remain eligible for grants from the DNR Waterways Program.

- General Purpose: The marina is full-service, offering 54 slips, gas and diesel fuel, transient slips, a pump-out station, concrete boat launch ramp, picnic facilities for boaters and the public, laundry facility, restroom and shower facilities, and nautical charts and a lounge area. The site allows for parking (both vehicle and trailer), and the Harbormaster is on duty from May 1st through October 31st.
- ADA: The facilities on site are still in need of upgrades to comply with ADA standards and improve individuals' access to site amenities. Reducing on-site access barriers has been identified as a priority for the County. The County will be seeking DNR and EGLE Grant opportunities Deficiencies include:
  - Lack of access space at doorways into the restrooms
  - Lack of an accessible shower and toilet stall
  - Lack of wheelchair lifts for watercraft users
- Right Sizing: The Houghton County Marina was last expanded in 1976. Historically, the marina has a long waiting list for seasonal slip rentals, and past surveys indicate growth in Lake Superior and local waterway boating and boat ownership. An improved marina facility would definitely attract additional seasonal slip rentals. Any major expansion of the Marina would require Grant Funding, and the County will be exploring both DNR and EGLE Marina Development grants to look at ADA compliance issues, and the possibility for expansion if funds are available. Adding slips by considering additional piers that would extend out into the Waterway, and then parking smaller boats to the pier and not the shoreline would provide for additional users and slip leases. This would require a study, and if Grant Funds are received also the local matching dollars from the Marina budget.
- Dredging: A storm-water outlet/intermittent stream flows between slips 25 and 26. This has resulted in the accumulation of sediments and shallow water depths at these piers, especially since the Father's Day Flood of 2018 from unstable ground on the hillside above the Marina. During the summer flood of 2018, debris and sediment were

deposited, and required dredging to regain use of the slips. Through great partnership with the Army Corps of Engineers and EGLE, a six year permit to take care of this annual issue has been obtained. The State of Michigan DOT has partnered with the County Road Commission, and as they have licensed contractors for other digging work they have offered dredging services free of charge to the County along this storm water outlet and spillway.

- Maintenance and Infrastructure Replacement Schedule:

- *Annual maintenance schedules:* the Houghton County Harbor Master is responsible for the regular maintenance and operations of the marina Annual maintenance includes updating or maintaining existing equipment, picnic areas, walkways, restroom and shower facilities, and grounds.
- *Capital improvements schedule:* Several items of concern have been addressed, and more work will be completed soon.
  - A new roof was installed on the Harbormaster's Building in 2021.
  - LED light upgrades have been installed throughout the Marina Facility.
  - Upgrades to high speed Internet and Security Cameras have been installed to completely cover the property, parking lots, and slips. This included tunneling under the parking lot to connect the Harbormaster building with UP.net high speed fiber in 2021. Connecting the WIFI to both ends and the middle of the Marina happened in 2023, and Security cameras were also installed to provide coverage to the whole Marina in 2023. Credit card payments are now secured, and the old way of getting them from across the water through cellular networks has now been stopped.
  - Cyber security is now completed on all transactions, and monitoring of the internet and security cameras has turned into a 24/7 operation with live and taped footage.
  - The bathhouse roof is starting to show its age, and this roof is also being considered for replacement.
  - The ADA compliance issues for the restrooms and shower facilities persist, and the County hopes to address this in the near future. A reinvestment of the annual surplus generated from the Marina can provide the local match to hopefully get this addressed.
  - A wheelchair lift assist for those who have compliance issues is being considered, and grant funds will be required for such an improvement. With the DNR and EGLE Marina Development Grants available, the County will be pursuing funds to expand our services to these boaters.

- The future of electric recreational vehicles should also be considered, and possibly adding some charging stations-if grant funds become available-for motorized vehicles.

## Non-County Owned Facilities Located within Houghton County

Table 1: Adams Township recreation assets

<i>Establishment</i>	<i>Ownership Entity</i>	<i>Type/Facilities</i>
Atlantic Mine Playground	Adams Township	Playground
Baltic Recreation Center	Adams Township	Indoor ice rink, basketball court, and senior citizens center
Jeffers High School Playground	Adams Township Schools	Playground (located behind post office)

Table 2: Calumet Village recreation assets

<i>Establishment</i>	<i>Ownership Entity</i>	<i>Type/Facilities</i>
Agassiz Park	Calumet Village	Basketball court, picnic area, restrooms, benches
Calumet Theatre Park	Calumet Village	Historical marker
CLK Football Field – Track	Calumet School District	Football/track stadium
Italian Hall Park	National Park Service	Benches & historical markers
Red Jacket Road Park	Calumet Village	Benches

Table 3: Calumet Charter Township recreation assets

<i>Establishment</i>	<i>Ownership Entity</i>	<i>Type/Facilities</i>
Calumet Colosseum & Community Center	Calumet Township	Indoor ice rink, event room, and concession stand
Calumet Dam Area	Calumet Township	Campsites & walking trails & disc golf
Calumet Schools	Calumet School District	Gymnasiums (4) & playground
Centennial Heights Playground	Calumet Township	Playground
Centennial School	Baraga-Houghton-Keweenaw Child Development	Playground & future nature trail
CLK School Forest	CLK S	
Copper Country Curling Rink	Copper Country Curling Club	Indoor curling facility

<i>Establishment</i>	<i>Ownership Entity</i>	<i>Type/Facilities</i>
Douglas-Houghton Falls	State	Waterfall
Legion Field	Calumet Township	Soccer/baseball field
Railroad Depot	Calumet Township	Historic site
Lions Club Park	Calumet Township	Picnic site, walking trail, greenspace, paddle craft launch
Gardenview Garden	Private	Assisted living center facility for senior citizen use
Swedetown Ponds	Calumet Township	Fishing & picnic tables
Swedetown Trails	Calumet Township	Cross-country ski, snowshoeing, hiking and mountain biking trails, sledding, lights, toilets, concession
Waterworks Park	Calumet Township	16 acre park with 1,600 feet of Lake Superior shoreline, pavilions (3), picnic sites, playground, horseshoe pits, baseball field, basketball court. Site includes a 43 acre wooded parcel adjacent to lake frontage with nature trail, primitive campsite
Wolverine Ballfield	Calumet Township	Baseball field, toilets, concession

Table 4: Chassell Township recreation assets

<i>Establishment</i>	<i>Ownership Entity</i>	<i>Type/Facilities</i>
Chassell Ski/Snowshoe Trails	Chassell Township	10+ km ski & snowshoe trails (1-km lighted)
Chassell Township Centennial Park	Chassell Township	Boat launch, docks, fishing, picnic area, pavilion, playground, horseshoe pits, toilets
Chassell Township Schools	Chassell Township School District	Playground & multi-purpose field
Ice Rink	Chassell Township	Ice rink with warming shack
Misslitz Field	Chassell Township	4-acre grounds; ballfield & playground
Sturgeon River Sloughs Access Site	State	Boat launch, pier, picnic area, nature trail

Table 5: Copper City Village recreation assets

<i>Establishment</i>	<i>Ownership Entity</i>	<i>Type/Facilities</i>
Village Hall	Copper City Village	Community building

Village Park	Copper City Village	Playground equipment
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**Table 6:** Duncan Township recreation assets

<i>Establishment</i>	<i>Ownership Entity</i>	<i>Type/Facilities</i>
Lower Dam Lake	U.S. Forest Service	Waterfront access (former campground) & bench
Sparrow Rapids Campground	U.S. Forest Service	Rustic campsites (5) & access to river
Sparrow-Kenton Wayside	U.S. Forest Service	Picnic area, access to river, toilet

**Table 7:** Elm River Township recreation assets

<i>Establishment</i>	<i>Ownership Entity</i>	<i>Type/Facilities</i>
Clear Lake Access Site	State	Boat launch & toilet
Elm River Township Public Access	Elm River Township	Boat launch & playground
Emily Lake State Forest Campground	State	Campsites, boat launch, toilet
Pike Lake	State	Boat launch & toilet
Sandy Lake	State	Boat launch & toilet
Twin Lakes Recreation Center	Elm River Township	Indoor basketball court (summer) & ice rink (winter)
Twin Lakes State Park	State	Campsites (62), restrooms, swimming, boat launch
Wyandotte Hills Golf Club	Private	Golf course & club house

**Table 8:** Franklin Township recreation assets

<i>Establishment</i>	<i>Ownership Entity</i>	<i>Type/Facilities</i>
Boston Pond	State	Boat access & swimming
Mount Ripley	Michigan Tech	Downhill skiing, chairlift, t-bar, terrain park
Paavola Wetlands Nature Area	Keweenaw Land Trust	215 acre nature preserve with walking trails and historic features
Quincy Mine Historical Site	National Park Service	Mine Hoist and underground tours, walking tour
Ripley Location	Franklin Township	Future waterfront park (fishing, swimming, picnic facilities)



**Table 9:** City of Hancock recreation assets

<i>Establishment</i>	<i>Ownership Entity</i>	<i>Type/Facilities</i>
Driving Park	City of Hancock	Baseball/adult softball field, little league field
East Hancock Stairway Park	City of Hancock	Scenic view, benches, flag display
Hancock Beach	City of Hancock	Volleyball courts (3), horseshoes, swimming, pavilion
Hancock Campground	City of Hancock	72 campsites (58 RV sites with electric access and 14 tent sites) & restroom/showers
Hancock Elementary School	Hancock School District	Playground, outdoor basketball court, soccer field, small pavilion, gymnasium, nature trail
Hancock Trail	State	All-season recreation trail
Copper Country I.S.D. Playground	Copper Country Intermediate School District	Playground
Klondike Park	City of Hancock	0.1-acre lot
Laurin-Grove Park	City of Hancock	Outdoor ice hockey rink with warming shelter, playground, basketball court, tennis court, roller hockey, horseshoe pits
Maasto Hiihto Trails	Private landowners	Cross-country skiing/biking/hiking/snowshoeing trails (connects to Churning Rapids Trails)
McAfee Field	Private	Football/soccer field & restroom/shower facility
Memorial Park	City of Hancock	Tables, benches, war memorial
Montezuma Park	City of Hancock	Playground, benches, open field, picnic facilities
Paavo Nurmi Center	Private	Gymnasium and fitness center
Pine Park	City of Hancock	Open area, table, benches, playground
Porvoo Park	City of Hancock	Pavilion, restrooms, volleyball, fishing piers
Ryan School	Baraga-Houghton-Keweenaw Head Start	Playground

<i>Establishment</i>	<i>Ownership Entity</i>	<i>Type/Facilities</i>
Terrace Park	City of Hancock	Softball sandlot, picnic facilities, playground, tennis/basketball/volleyball courts
Third Street Park	City of Hancock	Basketball, playground, picnic facilities

Table 10: Hancock Township recreation assets

<i>Establishment</i>	<i>Ownership Entity</i>	<i>Type/Facilities</i>
Churning Rapids Trails	Private	Cross-country skiing/biking/hiking/snowshoeing trails (connects to Maasto Hiihto Trails)
McLain State Park	State	Campsites, restrooms, beach, swimming, playground, lighthouse, picnic area, and trails
Swedetown DNR Lake Access	State	Boat launch
Lily Pond Boat Launch	State	Boat launch

Table 11: City of Houghton recreation assets

<i>Establishment</i>	<i>Ownership Entity</i>	<i>Type/Facilities</i>
Bridge Street Basketball Courts	City of Houghton	Basketball courts (2)
Bridgeview Park	City of Houghton	Boat mooring facility, pavilion, viewing deck
Central Houghton Greenspace Nature Area	City of Houghton Keweenaw Land Trust	4.5 acre park, walking trail, wildlife habitat
College Avenue Park	City of Houghton	Scenic site with seating
Danielle Heights Playground	Michigan Tech	Children's playground facilities
Dee Stadium	City of Houghton	Ice rink for hockey & figure skating, event space (all indoors)
East Houghton Greenspace Park	City of Houghton	0.77 acre park with wildlife habitat and walking trail
East Houghton Waterfront Park	City of Houghton	Pavilion, boat docks, restrooms/showers, adjacent boat slips, fishing piers, picnic tables
Franklin Square and Mott's Park	City of Houghton	Planters, statue, and welcome sign
Garnet Street Park	City of Houghton	Tennis court, playground, picnic area, and horseshoe pits
Gates Tennis Center	Michigan Tech	Tennis courts (5)

<i>Establishment</i>	<i>Ownership Entity</i>	<i>Type/Facilities</i>
Houghton Elementary School	Houghton-Portage Township Schools	Playground & gymnasium
Houghton High School	Houghton-Portage Township Schools	Track/football field, gymnasium, pool; Bugni Park adjacent
Houghton RV Park	City of Houghton	Campsites (25) with hookups; picnic tables; park host
Houghton Skatepark	City of Houghton	Opening in Spring 2019; Facilities for skateboarding including ramps, rails
Huron Street Fishing Piers	City of Houghton	Fishing piers, picnic tables, gazebo
Isle Royale National Park	National Park Service	Boat dock at park headquarters
Lakeshore Drive Boardwalk	City of Houghton	A 0.5 mile boardwalk with fishing piers, picnic facilities, boat slips, and paddle craft ramp
Michigan Tech Football Field	Michigan Tech	Football stadium/track
Michigan Tech Softball Fields	Michigan Tech	Ballfields
Michigan Tech Student Development Center	Michigan Tech	Indoor recreation center
Michigan Tech Trails	Michigan Tech	35k Cross-country/biking/hiking trails (7k lighted trails), adjacent disc golf course
Nara Nature Park	City of Houghton	115 acre park offering cross-country skiing/biking/hiking/snowshoeing trails (connecting to Michigan Tech trails), boardwalk, fishing piers, chalet building
Prince's Point Park	Michigan Tech	Beach, picnic table, fire pit, volleyball court
Raymond C. Kestner Waterfront Park & Chutes and Ladders	City of Houghton	Play area, swimming beach, fishing piers, boat docks, picnic area, pavilion
Waterfront Trail	City of Houghton	4.5-mile paved multi-use trail (summer non-motorized/winter snowmobile)
West Houghton Park	City of Houghton	0.7 acre park with outdoor hockey and skating rink and warming facility
Woodhaven Park	City of Houghton	Playground equipment and soccer field
Veterans Park	City of Houghton	Memorial site with scenic views
Verna Mize Park	City of Houghton	Scenic site

Table 12: Laird Township recreation assets

<i>Establishment</i>	<i>Ownership Entity</i>	<i>Type/Facilities</i>
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Bob Lake	State	Camping, boating, canoeing, fishing, hunting, hiking
Echo Lake	State	Walk-in canoeing, fishing, hunting
Ed Tossava Ice Rink	Laird Township	Pavilion/ice rink, warm-up shed, bathrooms, grills, picnic tables
Mike Jylha Stadium Baseball Field	Laird Township	Ball field, grandstand, concession, playground, picnic facilities
North Country Trail System	State	Hiking trail access
Penegor Lake	State	Walk-in canoeing, fishing, hunting
Prickett Lake Access Site	State	Boating, canoeing, fishing, hunting
Silver Mountain	State	Hiking & hunting
Six Mile Lake	State	Fishing, hunting, walk-in canoeing
Sturgeon River Gorge Wilderness	Forest Service	Hiking & hunting
Triangle Falls	State	Hiking, fishing, hunting

Table 13: Lake Linden Village recreation assets

<i>Establishment</i>	<i>Ownership Entity</i>	<i>Type/Facilities</i>
Lake Linden Recreation Area	Lake Linden Village	Inline skating rink, volleyball, swimming, bathroom facilities, tennis court, basketball court, baseball field, climbing wall, tot lot
Marina	Lake Linden Village	Boat dock & 12 slips (8 seasonal & 4 electric)
School Playground	Lake Linden-Hubbell School District	Playground
Village Campground	Lake Linden Village	Campsites (20 electric & 6 rustic) with picnic tables & fire rings; restrooms; showers; pavilion; nature trail

Table 14: Laurium Village recreation assets

<i>Establishment</i>	<i>Ownership Entity</i>	<i>Type/Facilities</i>
Park Daniell	Laurium Village	Band shell, concession stand
George Gipp Recreation Area	Laurium Village	Ice arena, baseball fields (4), playground, tennis courts (2), basketball court, bocce court, horseshoe pits, volleyball courts
Gipp Memorial Park	Laurium Village	Fountain

Laurium Ball Fields & Playground	Laurium Village	Ballfields (3), playground, concessions
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**Table 15:** Osceola Township recreation assets

<i>Establishment</i>	<i>Ownership Entity</i>	<i>Type/Facilities</i>
Calumet Golf Course	Private	Golf course, driving range, clubhouse/restaurant
Centennial Park	Osceola Township	Sitting area
Dollar Bay Community Garden	Osceola Township	0.3-acre lot and future home to a community garden
Dollar Bay Recreation Facility	Osceola Township	Ice rink, warming hut, tennis court, basketball court, horseshoe pit
Dollar Bay Head Start Playground	Dollar Bay/Tamarack City Area Schools	Gymnasium, playground and basketball court
Electric Park	Osceola Township	40-acre historic site and former public recreation area.
Gooseneck Park	Osceola Township	4-acre green space located on M-26 just outside of Dollar Bay
Hungarian Falls	Keweenaw Land Trust	10 acres of hiking trails, waterfalls, scenic views
Quincy Dredge	Osceola Township/Houghton County Historical Society	6.4-acre site featuring a partially submerged dredge and smokestacks
Sandy Bottom Park	Osceola Township	Swimming beach, picnic area, pavilion, boat launch, fishing
Tamarack Hill Location	Osceola Township	0.5-acre lot with electricity access.
Tamarack Mill Park	Osceola Township	Basketball court, playground, and pavilion
Tamarack City Recreation Area	Private/Osceola Township	2-acre area, undeveloped green space near Tamarack Mill Park
Veterans' Field	Veterans of Foreign Wars	Baseball/soccer field & barbeque pit

**Table 16:** Portage Charter Township recreation assets

<i>Establishment</i>	<i>Ownership Entity</i>	<i>Type/Facilities</i>
Dodgeville Recreation Area	Portage Township	Covered and lighted ice rink/pavilion with warming shack, playground equipment, basketball court, horseshoe pits, restrooms
Hurontown Recreation Area	Portage Township	Playground equipment, benches, restroom (summer 2012), softball field, soccer fields, 2 tennis courts, 4 horseshoe courts

Portage Lake Golf Course	Michigan Tech	Golf course, pro shop, restaurant
Otter Lake Recreational Area	Portage Township	Pavilion/ice rink, softball diamond & dugout, playground equipment, vault toilets
Pilgrim Estates Tennis Court	Portage Township	Tennis court
Tapiola Recreation Area	Portage Township	Pavilion, ballfield, playground equipment, covered ice rink

**Table 17:** Quincy Township recreation assets

<i>Establishment</i>	<i>Ownership Entity</i>	<i>Type/Facilities</i>
Maasto Hiihto Trails	Private landowners	Cross-country skiing/biking/hiking/snowshoeing trails (connect to Churning Rapids Trails)
Hancock Middle School/Central High School	Hancock School District	Gymnasium & sports fields

**Table 18:** Schoolcraft Township recreation assets

<i>Establishment</i>	<i>Ownership Entity</i>	<i>Type/Facilities</i>
Big Traverse Boat Launch	Schoolcraft Township	Boat launch, restroom, parking
Big Traverse Campground	Schoolcraft Township	Rustic (tent) campsites, water, restroom
Big Traverse Picnic Grounds	Schoolcraft Township	Picnic facilities
Schoolcraft Township Ball Park	Schoolcraft Township	Ballfield, playground equipment

**Table 19:** South Range Village recreation assets

<i>Establishment</i>	<i>Ownership Entity</i>	<i>Type/Facilities</i>
Range Town Veterans Memorial Park	South Range Village	40-acre site; softball & baseball fields
South Range Community Park	South Range Village	Playground equipment, picnic tables, tennis court and basketball court
South Range Elementary School	Adams Township School District	Gymnasium, outdoor basketball court, playground

**Table 20:** Stanton Township recreation assets

<i>Establishment</i>	<i>Ownership Entity</i>	<i>Type/Facilities</i>
E.B. Holman School	Stanton Township Schools	Playground, basketball court, gym, baseball diamond

Freda Tennis Court	Stanton Township	Tennis court
Heikkinen School	Private	Playground
Kenner Dome & Oskar Bay Recreational Park	Stanton Township	Ice rink, basketball court, sand volleyball court
North Canal Park	Stanton Township	Primitive campsites, picnic facilities, playground equipment, horseshoe pits, beach, toilets
Stanton Township Ball Diamond	Stanton Township	Ball diamond
Stanton Township Community Center	Stanton Township	Skating rink with building (warming shack)
Stanton Township Park/Agate Beach	Stanton Township	Campsites (30 including 6 electric), pavilion, fire boxes (20), picnic facilities

**Table 21:** Torch Lake Township recreation assets

<i>Establishment</i>	<i>Ownership Entity</i>	<i>Type/Facilities</i>
Bootjack Boat Launch	State	Boat launch & toilet
"Ernie" Poisson Hubbell Park	Torch Lake Township	7.3 acre park, boat launch, docking facilities, beach area
Lake Linden-Hubbell School Forest	Lake Linden-Hubbell School District	400 acre forested lot with hiking, cross-country, and snowshoeing trails, log cabin, archery range, fire pit area, and geocache sites
Rice Lake Boat Launch	State	Boat launch & toilet
White City Park	Army Corps of Engineers (owner); Torch Lake Township (operator)	Beach, picnic facilities, DNR boat launch

### **Pilgrim River Forest Project**

South of Houghton along and between Superior and Paradise Roads is more than 1,300 acres of prime recreational land with trails, a trout stream, and peaceful woods open for public recreation. The Pilgrim River Forest Project (also referred to as the Pilgrim River Conservancy Project) is next to the Pilgrim River Community Forest and located just a few miles away from Houghton. The property includes over three miles of the Pilgrim River, including a good portion of the River's headwaters. In addition to the stretch of Pilgrim River corridor, the project area includes 1,295 acres of prime forestland with varied topography. Most of this land offers public outdoor recreational opportunities such as hunting, fishing, trapping, bird watching, hiking, cross-country skiing, wildlife viewing, and snowshoeing. The project is a result of a partnership

between DNR, the Keweenaw Land Trust, private landowners, Copper Country Chapter of Trout Unlimited and several others.

Along with sustainable forest management and public recreational access, the Pilgrim River Forest Project:

- Ensures habitat for both game and nongame wildlife species, such as black bear, white-tailed deer, bald eagle, fisher, pine marten, mink and otter.
- Protects an area internationally renowned for serving as a portion of the migratory bird flyway for both migrating raptors and songbirds crossing Lake Superior in the spring and fall.
- Protects from development 10 percent of the entire Pilgrim River watershed, including the main channel, several tributaries and streams, and wetlands.

The Pilgrim River Forest Project is important to the County because it fulfills a need for more publicly accessible recreation land, especially near areas of relatively high population. For more information visit <http://pilgrimriverwatershed.org>.

### **Pilgrim Community Forest**

The Pilgrim Community Forest was established by the Keweenaw Land Trust in the fall of 2014. The 276-acre forest is just minutes from Houghton and part of the larger Pilgrim River Conservancy Project. This conservation area has a variety of forest and habitat types, with about one mile of the Pilgrim River's main channel and a 2.5-mile recreation trail. The trail system features both loop trails and down-and-back trail types which take advantage of the area's natural contours and rolling elevation changes. Visitors



are welcome to hike, bike, snowshoe, or cross-country ski on the single-track trail that leads through the beautiful forests and riparian corridor. The Pilgrim Community Forest is open for fishing, hunting and trapping. Currently the property is accessible near the guard rail on the west side of Paradise Road at the intersection with Pilgrim Road, with a Keweenaw Land Trust trail sign identifying the path.



### **Copper Country Trail National Byway**

Copper Country Trail National Byway, first designated as a Michigan State Heritage Route in 1994, joined the America's Byways collection in 2005. Defined by its historic significance, the Byway highlights the triumphs and tragedies associated with copper mining. The 47-mile stretch of US-41 from Houghton to Copper Harbor follows the copper lode that lies deep underground and is the basis of the Byway's exciting and turbulent history. The Byway has a guiding document, The Corridor Management Plan, which highlights goals, including those for public recreation; objectives; and action items for projects in the Byway corridor.

### **Trail Networks**

Throughout the region is a network of dedicated snowmobile/off-road vehicle (ORV) and multipurpose trails, and this collection is the biggest in all of the Midwest. Official long-distance trails that traverse multiple jurisdictions include the Bill Nichols Trail from Greenland (Ontonagon County) to Houghton; the Bergland (Ontonagon County) – Sidnaw ORV Route; the Ottawa East Connector ORV Route; the Lake Linden Route from Hancock to Lake Linden to Calumet, and the Jack Stevens Trail from Hancock to Calumet. The North Country Trail, designed exclusively for hiking, crosses east – west in the southern part of the county. Many local trails are also officially and permanently established.

In the summer of 2018, a series of severe rain events washed out several local trail systems in Houghton County. With support from the Michigan DNR and our legislators, the Dollar Bay to Lake Linden Trail has just reopened, county residents appreciate the support the State of Michigan provided to reopen this important route. There are some grades that remain in states of emergency and that are closed, but the MDNR is looking at these as well, and the county hopes to get them reopened with help from our State.

The remainder of the trail system exists mainly on year-to-year easements granted by private landowners and is in danger of becoming fragmented, jeopardizing access to many popular forms of recreation. The Houghton-Keweenaw Recreation Authority was established in 2012 to address these issues and to develop a multi-use trail system that connects the region's populated areas and trail amenities.

### **Douglass Houghton Falls Park**

With great partnership from the Michigan DNR and our legislators, the Douglass Houghton Falls park is being developed right now. This local gem is the home of the State of Michigan's tallest Waterfall. Through many different hands and ownership in the past, enthusiasts have gone to

view this 110 foot cascade. With the State of Michigan purchasing the land from the owner, and now in a state of development and expansion, the County, its residents, and visitors are all excited to see what is possible, and to gain access to better parking, a viewing platform, and better safety and use as it becomes a State holding.

### **Regional Facilities**

Southern Houghton County contains large tracts of the Ottawa National Forest, a nearly one million-acre United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service landholding providing a vast area primarily for dispersed and unorganized outdoor recreation. However, facilities for camping, fishing, boating, trails, and other popular recreational activities are also available. Similar opportunities are provided in a smaller area of State-owned public land to the north, designated as the Copper Country State Forest, focused primarily on Elm River Township. Forest Service and State land are shown along with the trails in **Figure 1**.

Outside of Houghton County are numerous facilities that allow for a variety of recreational pursuits—most notably the Porcupine Mountains Wilderness and Fort Wilkins State Park. The Western Upper Peninsula also has countless additional sites offering recreational opportunities, including Isle Royale National Park, museums, mine tours, and scenic drives, hikes, swimming beaches, rockhounding sites, and more.

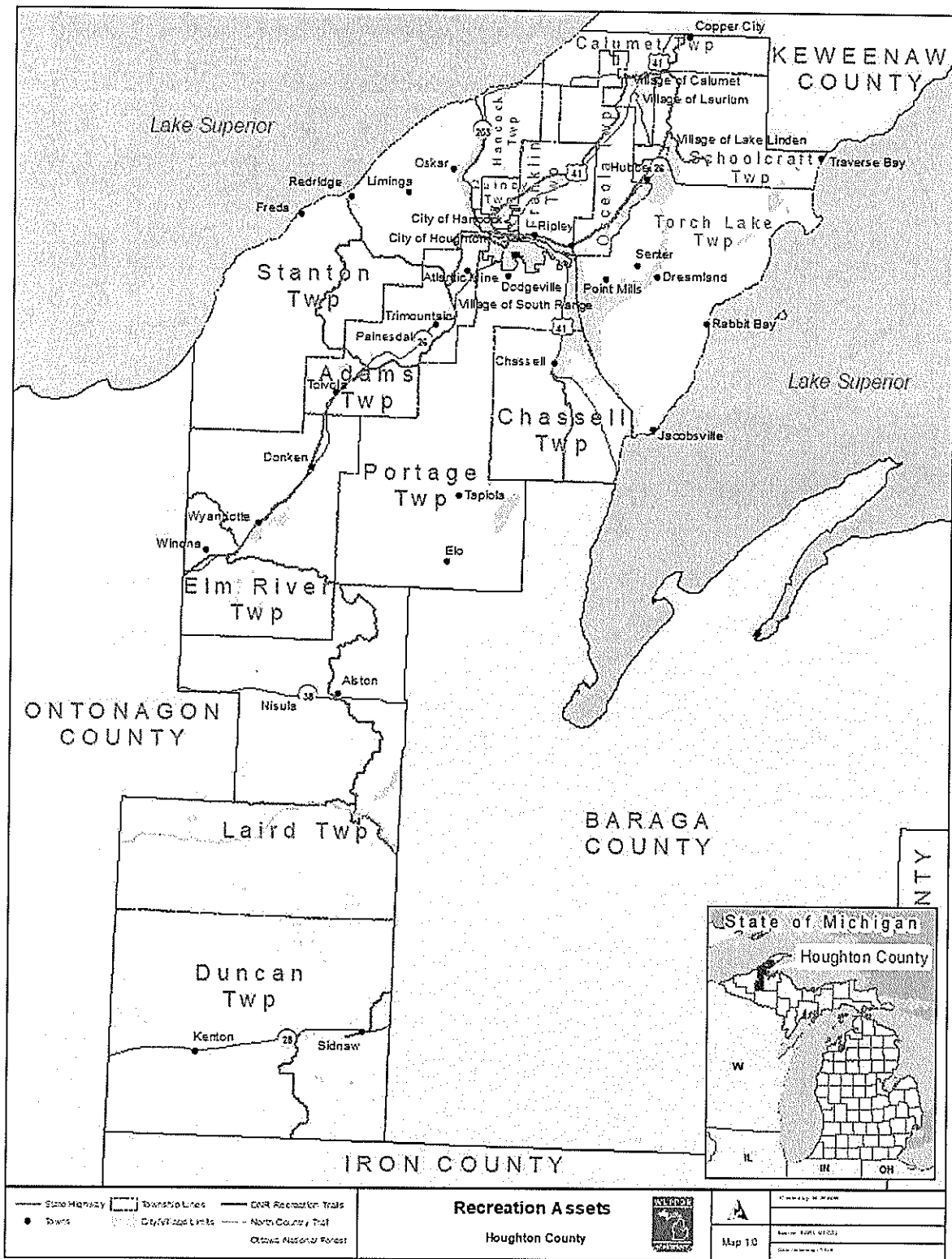


Figure 1: Regional recreation facilities

## **Part 4: Description of the Planning Process**

In order to develop the County's recreation plan, the Planning Commission and the County Administrator were tasked with reviewing and updating the 2018 Recreation Plan. The Planning Commission met and reviewed the plan, and provided feedback and edits that resulted in the Draft Plan on September 19<sup>th</sup>, 2023 and then again on October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2023. These meetings were open to the public, and were publicized and all were welcome.

## **Part 5: Public Input Process**

Public input has been solicited, and we started this process with a great framework and a past plan which was developed in 2018. A few things have changed since then, while the majority of the 2018 plan is still relevant and usable. The Draft Plan will be sent to our partners throughout the County, and adequate opportunities for review and feedback will be considered. Many of our local partners have their own Recreation Plans, so considering what is happening in each of them and how we can support them is the goal and will remain so. A public hearing will be called prior to any adoption by the County, and all Draft feedback will be considered and an open forum will be made available to all. A 30 day public review period will be conducted with the Drafted plan, and publicized and shared at prominent Community and County locations. Once the public has time to review the document, a formal resolution to adopt the Recreation Plan will be conducted at both the Planning Commission and Board of Commission meetings.

## **Part 6: Goals and Objectives**

The overarching goal of Houghton County is to promote an affordable and achievable capital improvement program for the County that will accommodate increasing use and enhance user satisfaction with recreational facilities and opportunities in the County. Houghton County has many recreational opportunities offered by a diverse group of providers (County, townships, municipalities, schools, and private entities) as identified in the inventory. In addition, the County will remain open to acquisition of new recreational sites as they become available in partnership with local governments and the State, and as we have the budget to support these transactions. Houghton County has devised the following goals as ways to best capitalize on these facilities:

- Provide recreation facilities, programs, and opportunities to satisfy recreational desires and promote healthy lifestyles for residents and visitors that provide equity based planning and access for all
- Continue to pursue all viable financial opportunities to expand and update current recreation facilities, in accordance with changing user preferences
- Provide access to recreation facilities for persons with disabilities
- Promote fiscal self-sufficiency through user fees where appropriate
- Actively seek public involvement from as many user groups as possible in planning any new County recreation facilities or projects

The following goals apply to other recreational assets in which the County may play a role:

- Seek to expand and maintain the county-wide motorized and non-motorized trail network for the long term, assisting with conflict resolution between user groups whenever possible
- Promote bicycling and walking as recreational activities and as means to commute, being mindful of safety concerns related to automobile traffic and actively supporting “complete streets” concepts and policies
- Seek to increase public access to land and access to water bodies for recreational activities
- Maintain the integrity of ecosystems and the environment wherever public access is currently provided or newly expanded
- Promote carefully controlled timber management where it occurs in close quarters with recreational activities to benefit forestry and public recreation
- Promote wildlife and habitat management programs that provide sustainable and healthy wild game and fish populations (e.g. whitetail deer, ruffed grouse, and other) to benefit Houghton County sportsmen and women and nature enthusiasts.
- Balance the interests of visitors and residents in considering recreation assets and future opportunities, recognizing the potential economic benefits of recreation development
- Promote preservation of our natural viewsheds and landscapes that give the County its inherent beauty and intrinsic value, including along the Keweenaw Ridge (the spine of small mountains and hills running northeasterly through the County from near Ontonagon toward the Keweenaw Point
- Foster and facilitate private-public partnerships to accomplish the above goals

## Part 5: Action Program

The County has determined that an ongoing need still exists to upgrade the Houghton County Marina. Expansion of the marina would include updating facilities using universal accessibility design principles to eliminate barriers for individuals with mobility challenges. Upgrades are needed for the restroom and showers, and boat/pier wheelchair access. The County will also remain vigilant in the effort to mitigate and continually remove sediment that is ejected out into the Waterway through the spillway that bisects the property.

The County has significant issues with interconnectivity and permanence of trail and pathway routes, both motorized and non-motorized. The following needs have accordingly been identified:

- Repair existing trail networks damaged by 2018 flood event
- Establish new pathways following existing roadway routes within and between population centers in order to make commuting and recreation less dangerous
- Completely connect all compatible long-distance trails by securing permanent easements by working with the Michigan DNR and the landowners
- Educate users by creating and distributing an up-to-date regional map showing trail locations and type

## Part 7: Description of Planning Process

In order to develop the County's recreation plan, the Houghton County Planning Commission and the County Administrator were tasked with reviewing and updating the 2018 Recreation Plan. The Planning Commission met and reviewed the plan, and provided feedback and edits that resulted in the Draft Plan through Open Meetings on September 19<sup>th</sup>, 2023, October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2023, and December 5, 2023. These meetings were open to the public, and were publicized and all were welcome.

Much of the statistical information and historical data was derived from the 2018 Master Plan, and those who contributed to that document.

## **Part 8: Summary of Public Review and Comment**

Feedback is encouraged and will be included as received from our County partners and municipalities. A Draft of this document was sent to all of the following on December 6, 2023 to seek input, as well as posted on the Planning Commission's Webpage on the County Website. Copies of the Plan will also be shared at Prominent Locations around the County.

City and Township Review

Other Governmental Groups

Non-Governmental Community Organizations

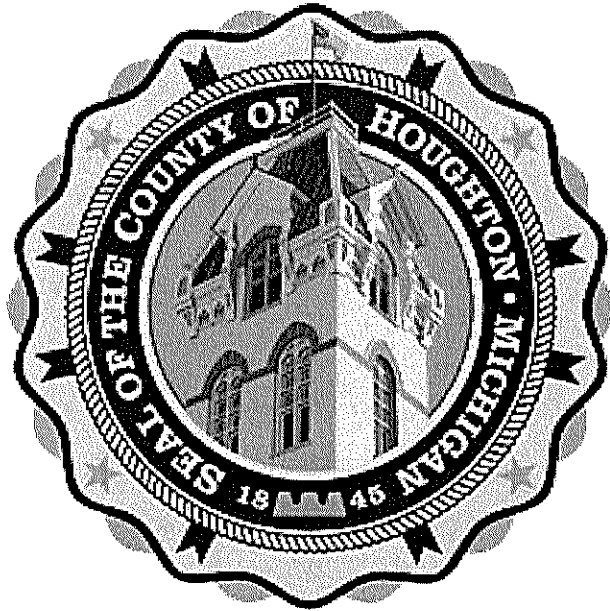
Individual Citizen Input

### **Written comments**

Summary of Public review and Comment, September, October and December Planning Commission Monthly Meetings, 2023: There was no public participation or comments offered at the time of these public meetings.

## **Part 9: Submission of Plan on MIGrants Due Feb 1, 2024**

Houghton County  
*DRAFT* of Five Year Master Plan



December 7, 2023



## **A Vision for Houghton County**

Houghton County is a special place where outstanding natural resources, scenic beauty, outdoor recreation, a four-season climate, a low density of development, extensive open space and public access, and unique historical landscapes combine to create a high quality of life for residents. The purpose of the Houghton County Master Plan is to provide a guide for Houghton County and its cities, townships and villages, to use in decision-making and coordination related to future land use, so that the qualities that make Houghton County special are not lost nor compromised for future generations.

The following statements are guiding principles for the Plan.

A comprehensive Houghton County Master Plan...

- Will be based upon the philosophy that land use regulations should be kept to a minimum except when the health, safety, and welfare of County residents are at stake.
- Will promote economic well-being while simultaneously protecting the quality of life.
- Will sustain natural resources and protect key cultural assets.
- Will consider the goals and values of our citizens.

## **Introduction**

Houghton County established a County Planning Commission in 2001 to draft a general land use and County development plan, in accordance with the Michigan County Planning Act, M.C.L. 125.101 et. seq. The Michigan Planning Enabling Act, (P.A 33 of 2008, as amended, M.C.L.125.3801 et seq) changed the title of the primary planning document for a county from the Land Use Plan to the Master Plan. This Master Plan replaces the Master Plan that was last adopted in 2018.

This Master Plan is general in tone, and forms the broadest of templates upon which zoning ordinances of local governments in Houghton County may rest. Houghton County's Board of Commissioners and the Planning Commission have repeatedly stated that Houghton County has no intention of establishing county-wide zoning; and the decision to zone is best left to the residents of individual cities, villages and townships.

This master plan addresses county-wide concerns about growth, economics, historic preservation, health, and community services. These and other land use concerns resulted in eight overall themes.

1. Protection of resources
2. Setting growth priorities
3. Economic development
4. Enhancing historic characters and identity
5. Landmarks and public art
6. Residential development patterns
7. Commercial development patterns
8. Recreational activities and woodland access – paths, trails, lake access, etc.

Note: These eight themes are best implemented at the township level of government.

A master plan is intended to be formed with community involvement, to best represent the community’s present nature and its future aspirations. This plan was shared in Draft status to all of our local municipalities on December 6, 2023.

The 2024 Master was approved by the Houghton Board of Commissioners on \_\_\_\_\_.

## Overview of Houghton County

Houghton County is located in the northwestern portion of Michigan’s Upper Peninsula, on the southern shore of Lake Superior. The county lies on the Keweenaw Peninsula, a stretch of land that extends 75 miles into the lake. There are varied perceptions of the boundaries of the Keweenaw Peninsula. Some view “The Keweenaw” as Keweenaw County; while to others it includes both Keweenaw County and Houghton County, or the landmass that lies beyond the Keweenaw Waterway. Most geologists and geographers describe the Keweenaw Peninsula as a land form jutting into Lake Superior, whose eastern base is at the head of Keweenaw Bay and whose western base is in the Porcupine Mountains region, and that stretches all the way to the tip and the very top of the Upper Peninsula and Keweenaw Point. The Keweenaw is also synonymous with the “Copper Country” in local perspectives, of which Houghton County is the epicenter.

The County was organized in 1848, and named after Douglass Houghton, Michigan’s first State Geologist, who confirmed the existence of copper on the Keweenaw Peninsula. The City of Houghton serves as the County seat, and the nerve center for the surrounding municipalities. Houghton County's history is tied to the copper mining industry, which flourished in the area from 1843 to 1968, when the Calumet & Hecla Mining Company ceased the last local copper mining operations. Due to the success of copper mining, Houghton County was once the fourth most populous county in Michigan, attracting thousands of Finnish, Scandinavian, Cornish, French Canadian, German, Slovak, Italian, and other immigrant groups. However, low copper prices and the high cost of operating deep underground mines forced the decline and eventual closure of the local mining industry. The region and area suffered economically, with population decreasing by over 50% between 1920 and 1970 (See Table 1-1).

### Historic Houghton County Population

	1920	1950	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020
Houghton County	71,930	39,771	34,652	37,872	35,446	36,016	36,628	37,035

Today government at all levels; healthcare services, construction, tourism, high-tech professional services, and retail trade have replaced mining as the major sources of employment for the County. Houghton County is the home to two institutions of Higher Education in Michigan Technological University and Gogebic Community College, and both draw students from the State, the Region, and around the world. High-tech transfer from the universities holds promise as a growing new employment sector. Major corporations and numerous other companies have either established satellite offices in the county, or employ workers remotely from Houghton County. This uses the talents of Michigan Tech engineering students and graduates, paying competitive starting salaries and helping to establish more young families in the community. The County is home to F.J. McLain State Park and Twin Lakes State Park, Keweenaw National Historical Park, and the Visitor’s Center and main dock for Keweenaw County’s Isle Royale National Park to the North. Many other local parks and outdoor recreational facilities are operated by townships or other local entities throughout the County.

The county is a popular place for a growing remote workforce, and business owners, many retirees, and those with second homes and summer cottages. The tourism industry is built around the area's historical resources, geology, and

boundless recreational opportunities. Lake Superior, the numerous inland lakes and streams, abundant forests, the various trail systems, and an annual average of 200 inches of snow make the county a destination for four-season outdoor recreation enthusiasts. These attributes attract increasing numbers of permanent residents, visitors, and seasonal home owners.

## **Population and Demographics**

Houghton County has 14 townships, two incorporated cities, and five incorporated villages. It has numerous unincorporated small former mining communities (“locations”), and remnants of larger settlements. The County’s total population is about 37,000 and it is concentrated in the northern half of the county. Population distribution is influenced by Michigan Technological University and Gogebic Community College, whose students are over 20% of the population.

Despite the county’s slight overall gain in population (2 percent) between 2000 and 2020, the population centers in the cities of Houghton and Hancock showed modest growth, while most outlying areas showed a modest decline in population. This reverses the general 1990 to 2000 trend, when population growth took place outside of cities and villages in the rural areas.

Houghton County’s age demographics tend to be younger than both the region and the state. While the median age increased substantially from 2000 to 2020 regionally and for the state overall, Houghton County’s median age decreased by about 2%. A growing number of remote workers and business owners are impacting our community as well.

Nearly 20% of the population is under 18 years of age, and 62% of the population is in the 18-65 range. The recent closing of Finlandia University in Hancock during 2023 saw some of the younger population move to other areas to continue their studies, while many remained here and continued studies at MTU or GCC. Those over 65 account for 18% of the population in Houghton County. Ninety three percent of county residents age 25 and older have a high school diploma or higher education. More than 33% have acquired a college degree. Ninety four percent of the population is white, and the remaining census groups being made up of American Indian and Alaska Natives, Asian, Hispanic or Latino, and those who come from Two or More races.

## **Geography and the Environment**

Houghton County’s 1,044 square miles (667,904 acres) are mostly highlands, upland plains, and lake border plains. Over 80 percent of this land is covered by forest, consisting mainly of upland hardwoods. Commercial timberlands cover thousands of acres in the County. Farming occurs on 7% of the county’s land. The county contains 923 miles of rivers and streams, over 20,000 acres of lakes and ponds, and 50 miles of Lake Superior shoreline. Elevation varies between about 600 and 1,600 feet above sea level. The County is divided by the Keweenaw Waterway (also known as the Portage Lake Ship Canal) which cuts through the area from northwest to southeast and connects Lake Superior on both ends.

### **Major Rivers**

Houghton County’s major rivers, are the Sturgeon, Otter, Trap Rock, Salmon-Trout, Pilgrim, Graveraet, Elm, Misery, Silver, Jumbo, Ontonagon Rivers and numerous smaller tributaries and seasonal runoff streams. There are five

watershed sub-basins within the county including: Ontonagon, Keweenaw Peninsula, Sturgeon, Dead-Kelsey and Lake Superior.

### **Climate**

Houghton County lies within the Lake Superior Basin, which has a typical continental climate characterized by cold dry winters and warm humid summers. Lake Superior can exert a strong microclimate influence on the area, which can result in cooler summers and milder winters than what is experienced several miles inland. This is due to the moderating effect of the Lake on the air temperatures and the prevailing westerly winds.

The moderating effect of the lake is experienced in spring and summer months when the cool water tends to level out temperature extremes and reduces the likelihood of frost. The areas adjacent to Lake Superior with good air drainage patterns are resistant to frost, and provide the area's longest growing season and a good potential for crops.

Lake Superior creates persistent snow fall when cold air passes over the relatively warm lake in late fall and early winter. This can cause early and heavy snow, referred to as "lake effect" snow. Trends of the last decade have seen years of both warmer and colder temps and snowfalls. These snowfall totals have kept the Lake Superior levels in constant flux.

The growing season in Houghton County is dependent on the weather; and frosts have been recorded in every summer month throughout the years. Average temperatures in January show a low of 8 degrees Fahrenheit and a high of 21 degrees Fahrenheit. In July averages temps show a low of 56 degrees and a high of 75. Annual summer precipitation averages 34.1 inches, while average snowfalls can be 200+ inches depending on elevation and the year, with records showing well over 300 inches. The ground is generally snow covered from mid-November to mid-April, and this means that the ground is rarely frozen to any depth. With that said, water pipes passing under plowed roads and in homes can and often do freeze in cold winters. The large amount of winter snowfall often results in heavy spring runoffs, fast and slow snowmelts, and even flooding and washing out of infrastructure and landmasses in extreme years. Weather conditions can vary greatly from the northern (near the lake) to the southern (away from the lake) portions of the County.

### **Geology**

A combination of geological and glacial forces have determined the area's topographic features, ranging from steep, rocky ridges and dissected glacial deposits, to gently sloping lake plains and nearly level outwash plains.

The surface geology of Houghton County is a complex collection of ground moraines, end moraines, outwash deposits, glacial lake shorelines, and outlet channels, all with related deposits. These relatively recent glacial features are superimposed on a copper-rich "spine", marking one edge of a syncline of the mid-continental rift associated with igneous rocks. The bedrock geology and glacial activity have played key roles in shaping the present topography and resulting land use patterns. Much of the landscape is dissected by drainage ways. Soils vary greatly throughout the County, with dune areas near Traverse Bay and F.J. McLain State Park, to extensive deposits of stratified alluvium and organic deposits in the Sturgeon River valley south of Chassell. Because of this diverse geology and glaciations, there are 152 soil mapping units found in the published Houghton County Soil Survey.

## **Present Land Use and Development**

Residential development is concentrated in established communities in the northern part of the county, with the largest numbers in Houghton/Hancock and Calumet/Laurium. Low-density homes, cabins, cottages, and camps are found in

rural areas throughout the county. The waterfronts are dominated by residential development, except for more rural areas of the County where road access is unavailable.

Business development tends to be centered in Houghton/Hancock and Calumet/Laurium with commercial development radiating outward from these business cores. Downtown areas continue to play a significant role in local commerce, but chain store and franchise restaurant developments outside of the downtowns have also had an increasing impact on the area.

The Commercial Forest Act (Public Act 94, 1925) offers a specific tax incentive for private forest landowners interested in long term forest management for a future timber harvest or just long-term investment. The program is voluntary and applies to forest land used for growing commercial forest crops on 40 contiguous acres or more. The land must be managed for the continuous production of timber crops and not be used or obligated for commercial purposes other than for the production of timber.

Land under this Act is removed from the general property tax roll. The landowner pays an annual reduced specific tax per acre to the township where the land is enrolled. The State of Michigan pays Houghton County a specific amount per CFA acre enrolled. In 2011 there were 185,787 acres of CFA land enrolled in Houghton County, whose total surface area is 667,904 acres. This is approximately 28% of the total area in Houghton County. Land listed under the Act must be left open to the public for hunting, fishing, and trapping. This provides a sizeable, accessible area for sportsmen and women. Other recreational activities on CFA lands are only allowed with land-owner permission.

The Ottawa National Forest in southern Houghton County occupies the majority of the land in Laird and Duncan Townships, and 23 percent of the entire county. Copper Country State Forest is made up of three large parcels in Elm River, Laird, Portage, and Chassell Townships. Two small portions of Baraga State Forest are located in Chassell and Torch Lake Townships. There are 44,200 acres of land in the state forests. In addition, F.J. McLain State Park and Twin Lakes State Park occupy nearly 600 acres. Altogether, 202,912 acres, or 30 percent of Houghton County is part of a state or national forest, park, or recreational area.

Land use and development is directed by planning and/or zoning regulations in the following municipalities: City of Hancock, City of Houghton, Village of Calumet, Village of South Range, Calumet Township, Chassell Township, Duncan Township, and Portage Township. There are no zoning ordinances for the Village of Laurium, Village of Lake Linden, Adams Township, Elm River Township, Franklin Township, Hancock Township, Laird Township, Osceola Township, Stanton Township, Schoolcraft Township, Torch Lake Township or Quincy Township.

## **Housing and Community Development**

Houghton County Housing Units as of the 2020 Census numbered 18,807. Median housing values were \$115,300, and building permits issued were 336. At the time of this plan's writing, the current year shows building permits in excess of 380, so the desire to build here is reaching all-time highs and more building permit applications are happening every day. The "lower" local housing cost leads to a higher homeownership rates for our citizens, and relative to other areas of the Country and the State living in Houghton County still is a "good" and attainable goal. A growing number of Air BnB and VRBO homes are being built or have been designated from existing stock, and this has had an impact on housing availability as well for the County and its residents. Several of the local homes are seasonal, with owners who call other areas Home while spending the summer or several seasons here in Houghton County at a second home.

## **Schools**

There are ten school districts in Houghton County, which are served by the Copper Country Intermediate School District. High School graduating classes range in size from 30 to 120 in these districts. Except for K-8 Schools in

Copper Harbor and the newly established Copper Island Academy, students in Keweenaw County mostly attend the Public Schools of Calumet-Laurium-Keweenaw. Formal arrangements are in place for students in far southern Houghton County in the school districts of Baraga, L'Anse, Ewen-Trout Creek and Ontonagon.

## **Higher Education**

Michigan Technological University and Gogebic Community College are the two post-secondary education institutions in Houghton County. Both institutions contribute significantly to the educational as well as economic and cultural climates of the area.

Michigan Technological University is a Michigan public university, founded as the Michigan College of Mines in 1885. The University's main campus is located on the south shore of Portage Lake starting near Houghton's eastern city limit and extending to College Avenue. Michigan Tech also stewards many important land resources including Portage Lake Golf Course, Mont Ripley Ski Area, the Michigan Tech Recreational Trails and various smaller properties in the area. Notable facilities include the Student Development Complex and MacInnes Ice Arena, Sherman Field and the Amjoch astronomical observatory property in Atlantic Mine. The University has also developed the Great Lakes Research Institute along the campus waterfront, and is constructing the new HSTEM building and a dormitory at the current time, and is partnering with a local developer for an additional apartment complex. Michigan Tech has an active School of Forest Resources and Environmental Science and Social Sciences Departments, and a number of MTU faculty are active in the field of Land Use policy.

Gogebic Community College is a two year community college located in Ironwood, with a satellite location at the Copper Country Mall in Houghton. There is a growing number of students who are attending this satellite location in Houghton.

Finlandia University was a private liberal arts educational institution founded in Hancock, Michigan. The recent closing of the school has had an unfortunate impact on the City of Hancock and the area. At the time of this writing, several of the buildings are in receivership status, and have pending liens and other financial delays to redevelopment and new ownership.

## **Historic Features**

At one time Houghton County was dotted with mine shafts, rock houses, stamp mills, smelters, and communities that were all dedicated to the processing and mining of copper. Many remnants of these activities remain and are visible on the landscapes around the County. These historical ruins and sites are rich with history; and any development should be sensitive to the historic character of the area and site.

Keweenaw National Historical Park (NHP) located in Calumet, Michigan, was established in 1992 to preserve and interpret the copper mining heritage on the Keweenaw Peninsula, the only place in the world during the mid-1800s where commercially abundant quantities of native elemental copper occurred. The copper mines were critical to the industrial development of the United States, and were America's first large scale hard-rock industrial mining operations and boom. Several mine shafts in the area reached deep in the earth, with several over 9,000 feet in depth. The park consists of 1,870 acres within the Calumet and Quincy units. Most of the park is and will remain in private ownership; while the National Park Service (NPS) currently owns six buildings and 142 acres in the two units.

The NPS maintains formal partnership agreements with the 21 Keweenaw Heritage Sites, spanning more than 100 miles from Copper Harbor in Keweenaw County to the Porcupine Mountains in Ontonagon County. Within Houghton County, these sites include: the A.E. Seaman Mineral Museum on the Michigan Tech campus in Houghton, the Calumet Theatre in downtown Calumet, the Chassell Heritage

Center, the Copper Range Historical Museum in South Range, the Coppertown Mining Museum in Calumet, the Finnish American Heritage Center in Hancock, the Houghton County Historical Museum complex in Lake Linden, the Keweenaw Heritage Center at St. Anne's in downtown Calumet, Laurium Manor Mansion in Laurium, the Quincy Mine Tours on US-41 just north of Hancock, the U.P. Firefighters Memorial Museum in downtown Calumet, Carnegie Museum in Houghton, and the Michigan Technological University Archives.

The NPS also partners with dozens of other government, nonprofit, and commercial entities in Houghton County and throughout the four-county area of the 'greater' park, as described above. The Keweenaw NHP Advisory Commission, a seven-member volunteer citizen-based panel appointed by the Secretary of the Interior, is authorized to conduct programs for preservation and interpretation of the copper mining story across the four-county area. The Commission implements the intent of Congress for Keweenaw NHP to operate as a functional partnership, unique among America's national parks. The Advisory Commission owns the Quincy Smelting Works (or Quincy Smelter) in Ripley, The Quincy Smelter is the only facility of its type left in the world, and it plays an important role in telling the copper story.

## **Employment and Industry**

### **Income and Poverty**

In 2021 the median household income in the County was \$48,623, and 14% of our population is deemed to be in poverty. The County is home to 873 employer establishments (as measured also in 2021), with a total annual reported payroll of \$3,524,560. Reported total retail sales for the County in 2021 was \$3,901,230

Based on measures of both employment and total earnings, the public sector plays the leading role in the economy, and provides economic stability, allowing Houghton County to be less subject to business cycle changes than other counties. In addition to traditional city and county government units, local government employment is found in universities, K-12 schools, road commissions, airports and other transportation services, medical care and other human services.

Over 50% of the county's private sector employment is in three classifications: food/drink service, healthcare and social assistance, and retail. Over the past decade, ambulatory healthcare and hospital services have made up an increasing share of employment. Although hospital and healthcare services are mostly structured in private, non-profit enterprises, those entities are heavily dependent on government fees and transfer payments. Manufacturing accounts for 9.6% of total county jobs, with professional and technical services (5.7%), and construction (4.4%) rounding out top industry categories.

### **Business Size**

Aside from public and non-profit employers, almost all of the employers in the county are mid-sized to smaller businesses. Just two employers in the county held more than 500 employees in 2015: Michigan Technological University and UP Health System – Portage.

## **Roads**

Houghton County is crossed by several State and US highways. Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) maintains approximately 110 miles of trunk line roads in Houghton County. Thirty-four miles of US-41, which starts in the northernmost part of the Keweenaw Peninsula and runs 1,990 miles to Miami, Florida, are in Houghton County. M-26 starts in Copper Harbor in Keweenaw County and runs southwest until it intersects US-45, about five miles beyond Mass City in Ontonagon County. Forty-six miles of M-26 are in Houghton County, including a four-mile stretch shared with US-41. Twelve miles of M-38 traverse central Houghton County, passing through Nisula en route from Baraga to Ontonagon. M-28, which spans virtually the entire Upper Peninsula, runs from I-75 in the east to US-2 at the City of Wakefield in the west. Fifteen miles of M-28 cross southern Houghton County passing through Kenton and Sidnaw. To reach the southern portion of Houghton County via State or National Highway, it is necessary to drive through other counties. In addition to these major routes, there are 847 miles of roads owned and maintained by the Houghton County Road Commission.

The Houghton County Road Commission operates from 5 locations, with their headquarters in Ripley and garages in Calumet, Elo, Alston, and Kenton. The county has many miles of seasonal roads with a number in southern Houghton County built and maintained by the U.S. Forest Service. The Houghton County Road Commission primarily uses Michigan Transportation Funds (MTF) (gas tax) to fund the maintenance of the roadways under its jurisdiction. The County also has a road millage of 1.3 mills that is distributed between the Houghton County Road Commission and the 7 incorporated cities and villages. The incorporated cities and villages maintain streets within their city/village limits.

Townships do not have jurisdiction over public roads in Michigan; there are no “township roads” recognized by state law. Furthermore, townships are not legally required to contribute to the construction, reconstruction, or maintenance of county roads. However, Section 14 (6) of Act 51 does permit townships to contribute to the cost of maintenance or improvement of the local county road system, and many of the 14 townships in the county do provide such funding to supplement county road commission funds.

Furthermore, Section 12 (15) of Act 51 limits how much MTF revenue a county road commission can spend on local county road construction (50% of the project cost), and local county road bridge construction (75% of project cost). Costs not covered by MTF revenue must be provided by other sources often from township contributions but occasionally by private citizens. Townships contributed over \$800,000 in road improvements in 2023.

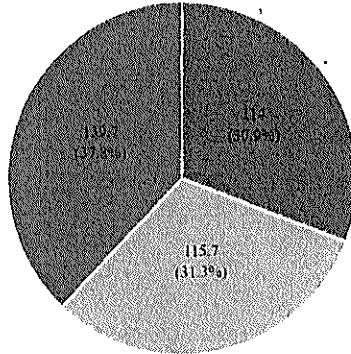
US-41 has been listed as the Copper Country Trail National Byway from Hancock to Copper Harbor, including the Brockway Mountain Drive.

The condition of Federal Aid Paved Roads in Houghton County in 2021-22 (Michigan Transportation Asset Council) is shown below, followed by the 2023 Houghton County Road Projects and the Houghton County 5-yr Transportation Improvement Plan. After the 2018 Father’s Day Flood, approximately \$46 million of road repairs were completed to Road Commission roadways and drainage structures.



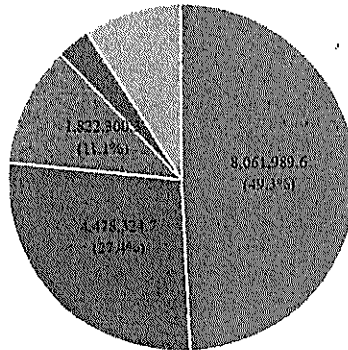
Federal Aid Rated Pavement Conditions  
 County - Houghton, All Roads, 2021 - 2022

Contributed Miles Good    Contributed Miles Fair    Contributed Miles Poor



Expenditures  
 County - Houghton, 2021

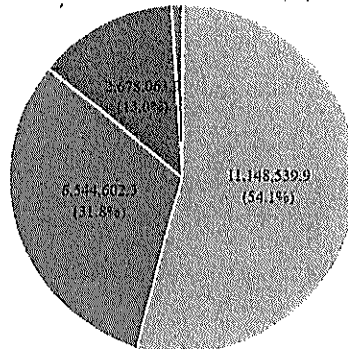
GCI    PSI    Routine Maintenance    Winter Maintenance (Routine)    Trunkline Maintenance (Trunkline)    Administrative    Other



Total Expenditures: \$16,363,832.19

Revenue  
 County - Houghton, 2021

State Sources    Federal Sources    Contributions from local units    Other    Charges for services



Total Revenue And Other Revenue Financing: \$20,589,281.46

HOUGHTON COUNTY 2023 to 2027 Transportation Improvement Plan (Approved at 13A Task Force Meeting January 24, 2023)

PROPOSED PROJECTS			TEDF - CATEGORY "D" FUNDING			RURAL "STBGP" FUNDING		
PROJECT LOCATION	DESCRIPTION OF WORK	Length (miles)	TEDF "D" 80%	MATCH	TOTAL AMOUNT	RURAL STBGP 80%*	OTHER 20% or more.	TOTAL AMOUNT
END 2022 FUNDS AVAILABLE			\$ 104,782			\$ -		
2023 ALLOCATION			\$ 104,782			\$ 796,740		
2023								
BEGINNING 2023 FUNDS AVAILABLE			\$ 209,564			\$ 796,740		
Lakeshore Drive (M-203 to Calumet Water Works Road)	Pulverize, reshape, drainage & surfacing	3.31				\$ -	\$ 1,150,000	\$ 1,437,500
Included in approved Federal 2023 Budget								
Calumet Water Works Road (Lake Shore Drive south)	Pulverize, reshape, drainage & surfacing	0.28				\$ 76,240	\$ 19,060	\$ 95,300
Valley Road (BooJack Rd to Gay Rd)	Overlay and pavement marking	1.40	\$ 168,000	\$ 42,000	\$ 210,000			
Tires for Transit						\$ 2,000		\$ 2,000
Computers for Transit						\$ 6,500		\$ 6,500
North Cloverland Road (Anderson Rd south)	Reconstruction, drainage & surfacing	1.31				\$ 712,000	\$ 178,000	\$ 890,000
Obenhoff Road (Erickson Drive to Allouez St)	Small Urban Project	0.76						\$ 468,750
2023 END BALANCE			\$ 41,564			\$ -		
2024 ALLOCATION			\$ 104,782			\$ 785,000		
2024								
BEGINNING 2024 FUNDS AVAILABLE			\$ 146,346			\$ 785,000		
Taplola Road (Chassel Painesdale Rd to Valley Road)	Reconstruction, drainage & surfacing	3.30				\$ 785,000	\$ 188,250	\$ 881,250
Federal Fund Exchange (MDOT @ 90%)								
Gay Road (Valley Rd east)	Overlay and pavement marking	1.00	\$ 100,738	\$ 25,185	\$ 125,923			
Countywide	Pavement Marking					\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
BooJack Road (M-26 to Valley Road)	Small Urban Project	0.60						\$ 481,250
2024 END BALANCE			\$ 45,608			\$ -		
2025 ALLOCATION			\$ 104,782			\$ 801,000		
2025								
BEGINNING 2025 FUNDS AVAILABLE			\$ 150,390			\$ 801,000		
Superior Road (Boundary Road to Main Street)	Pulverize, reshape, drainage & surfacing	2.50				\$ 801,000	\$ 200,250	\$ 1,001,250
Transfer TEDF "D" back to Baraga CRC			\$ 150,390					
2025 END BALANCE			\$ -			\$ -		
2026 ALLOCATION			\$ 104,782			\$ 817,000		
2026								
BEGINNING 2026 FUNDS AVAILABLE			\$ 104,782			\$ 817,000		
Superior Road (Chassel Painesdale Rd to Boundary Rd)	Pulverize, reshape, drainage & surfacing	2.40				\$ 768,000	\$ 192,000	\$ 960,000
Elm Street (4th Street to Mine Street)	Small Urban Project	0.32						\$ 481,250
Pavement Marking - County Wide						\$ 49,000		
2026 END BALANCE			\$ 104,782			\$ -		
2027 ALLOCATION			\$ 104,782			\$ 817,000		
2027								
BEGINNING 2027 FUNDS AVAILABLE			\$ 209,564			\$ 817,000		
North Laird Road (N. Laird Heights Rd east)	Pulverize, reshape, drainage & surfacing	1.50				\$ 426,392	\$ 106,598	\$ 532,990
Taplola Road ( Moscow Road to Valley Road)	Reconstruction	2.20	\$ 209,564	\$ 52,391	\$ 261,955	\$ 390,608	\$ 97,652	\$ 488,260
END OF (2027) 6 YEAR PROGRAM			\$ -			\$ -		

January 24, 2023

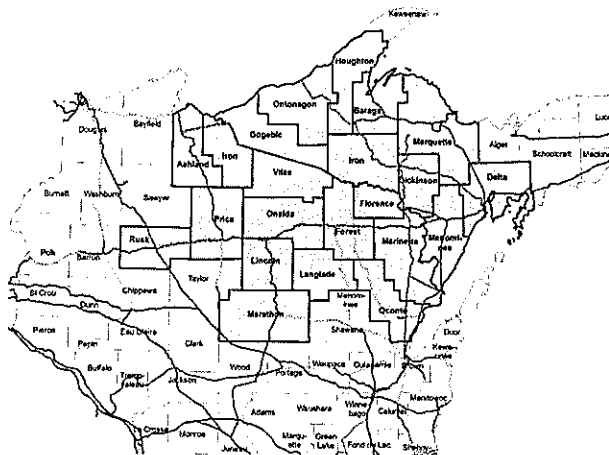
*This section was developed by Kevin Harju, Highway Engineer, Houghton County Road Commission.*

## Rail

Although rail service played a critical role in the development and economic growth of the Keweenaw Peninsula, tracks that connected the Keweenaw's population centers, mines, and ports have been removed. Today the rail banked corridors between the Village of Baraga and City of Houghton and from Hancock to north of Calumet as well as many other former rail lines now serve as snowmobile, off-road vehicle, hiking and biking trails.

Houghton County is still served by one short line operator, the Escanaba & Lake Superior Railroad (E&LS). The E&LS has track and log landings in the southern portion of the County and it is part of its line that ends at Mass City. The E&LS also maintains tracks from Sidnaw east to Nestoria that connect to the Canadian National Railway (CN) and are currently used for car storage. The E&LS also maintains trackage rights over the CN line from Nestoria to Baraga. While the amount of rail in Houghton County is limited to the E&LS line in the south, the UP forest products industry still relies on moving Houghton County's logs by rail from the E&LS yards and CN yards located in L'Anse.

The Northwoods Rail Transit Commission (NRTC) has been formed by 13 counties in northeastern Wisconsin and seven counties in the U.P, including Houghton County (see map below). The Mission of the Northwoods Rail Transit Commission is to sustain and enhance safe, reliable and efficient rail service critical to the businesses, communities and economies in northern Wisconsin and the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. The Commission has been meeting regularly to see if freight rail service can continue in the region. CN is the main freight rail server in the region. There have been rumblings from the rail company about service cutbacks.



The harvesting and transporting of logs throughout the Great Lakes Forest Region has long suffered from an inability to effectively compete for sufficient private sector investment to provide an adequate fleet of railcars dedicated to transportation of logs forest-to-mill in the Region. Establishment of a Great Lakes Forest Log Car Fleet will contribute to improving the health of the Region's forests, to a more effective

and efficient use of the Region's highways, to highway safety and to the welfare of communities; generally, by reducing highway miles, fuel consumption and emissions necessary for transporting logs from forest-to-mill.

## **Ports**

Domestic port facilities are available in Houghton and Hancock. The Keweenaw Waterway provides refuge to ships/boats seeking an alternate route when waves on Lake Superior discourage passage around the Keweenaw tip. Ships up to 600 feet in length navigate the Waterway, with the limit being the 104 foot vertical clearance of the Lift Bridge. The National Park Service's *M/V Ranger III*, providing service to and from Isle Royale National Park, operates from a dock in Houghton. Seaplane service is also offered by the Isle Royale Seaplanes in Ripley. The Houghton County Marina is just to the east of the Lift Bridge, on the Hancock side. The City of Houghton is now prepared to welcome and receive Passenger Cruise Ships with the new dock along the Portage Canal waterway in downtown Houghton.

## **Airports**

Houghton County Memorial Airport (CMX) is located four miles northeast of Hancock at an elevation of 1095 feet. The airport is owned by Houghton County and operates year-round. The airport maintains two paved runways; the primary runway, 13/31 is 6,501 feet long and the secondary runway, 7/25 extends 5,196 feet. The county has an Airport Zoning Ordinance in the immediate vicinity of the airport (10 mile radius), restricting the height of structures and objects of natural growth. FAA regulations prohibit wildlife attractants i.e. garbage facilities, recycling center, manmade ponds, etc. from being constructed within a 5 miles radius of the airport.

Commercial air service is provided by United Airlines via SkyWest Airlines with two daily nonstop flights to Chicago's O'Hare Airport serving approximately 50,000 passengers annually. Approximately 15,000-20,000 corporate, charter, and general aviation aircraft use the airport annually. Air Cargo service is provided daily by UPS and FedEx. Combined, UPS and FedEx move approximately 800,000 pounds of freight annually through the airport. A critical care air ambulance is stationed on the airport serving the community to provide emergency life flights when needed.

The airport is served by a single story terminal building totaling approximately 12,550 square feet. The Terminal building provides air service passenger facilities, rental car facilities, and administrative offices for the Transportation Security Administration (TSA), Federal Aviation Administration (FAA Navigational maintenance), Veterans Affairs, and Airport Operations/Administration office and conference room. Transient pilot facilities and heated hangars are available for use. The Airport owns three seven unit T-Hangars (10,200 square feet each) leased to owners of smaller aircraft, one large Aircraft Storage Hangar (14,400 square feet) and a smaller Fixed Base Operations (FBO) maintenance hangar (6,000 square feet). In addition two privately owned hangars, 8,300 and 4,700 square feet, respectively, are located on the airfield and are primarily used for aircraft storage, maintenance, and office space. Aircraft fueling, parking, and maintenance are also provided.

Currently the Airport is one of 9 airports in the state of Michigan receiving funding under the Essential Air Service (EAS) program. The EAS Program was established in response to passage of the Airline Deregulation Act of 1978 (ADA). This federal program provides operating subsidy to airlines in order to maintain, at a minimum, a basic level of commercial air service. EAS is all about connecting smaller

communities to the national transportation system. By facilitating economic development, educational opportunity, health care, emergency transportation, recreation, and tourism; the program provides an enhanced quality of life for our residents. The program also works by providing a return on investment for the County and the State of Michigan by creating airport revenue for airport operations, jobs, and capital improvements. The necessity for EAS is justified by providing worldwide accessibility and promoting economic growth within the community. Elimination of the program would eventually restrict economic growth, cut jobs and erode airport infrastructure.

The Airport Capital Improvement Plan (ACIP) serves as the primary planning tool for identifying and prioritizing critical airport development and associated capital needs while enhancing safety and reliability. Funding for ACIP projects is provided by Federal, State and local grant funds through the FAA Airport Improvement Program.

Projects scheduled for the next 10 years are as follows:

2024	Design	Passenger Terminal Building CBR and Design
2025	Construction	Terminal site preparation, removal and relocation of buildings
2026	Construction	Terminal Building, Wildlife Hazard Assessment
2027	Acquire	Passenger Loading Ramp, Construct Hangars
2028	Construction	Remove old terminal building, Design ARFF/SRE Building
2029	Construction	ARFF/SRE Building Site Work
2030	Construction	ARFF/SRE Building
2031	Design	Taxiway B Rehabilitation, Acquire SRE – High Speed Rotary Plow

The Houghton County Memorial Airport is approximately 2,400 acres and hosts a 204 acre Industrial Park with the necessary infrastructure and utilities ready for hookup. The industrial park is easily accessible from Highway 41 providing tremendous location and exposure for developing or established businesses. The Industrial Park can be used for manufacturing, warehousing, industrial, distribution and research and development. Currently 15 businesses and a school are located in the Airpark, employing approximately 300 seasonal, part-time and full time employees. Land is also available for lease adjacent to the airport entrance road, aprons and taxiways. The airport also owns large parcels of land to the north which could be developed for qualified businesses. Over 400 acres are currently leased for testing and research and development of ground vehicles.

Pricket-Grooms Field Airport (6Y9) is located one mile northeast of Sidnaw at 1372 feet. It is privately owned and operated. There are several private airstrips in Houghton County that may create possible conflicts regarding communication and wind-generation towers.

*This section was developed by Dennis Hext, Manager, Houghton County Memorial Airport.*

## **Internet Access**

Affordable access to the internet is vital for economic development, education, and emergencies. It is important that there be cooperation between government and the private sector to provide affordable cellular and broadband access to all parts of Houghton County.

The Regional Educational Media Center (REMC) of the Copper Country Intermediate School District provides access to high-speed internet to all of the Houghton County K-12 schools, plus

Stanton Township schools (K-8), and the Western UP Health Department. The Northern Michigan University Educational Access Network (EAN) provides K-12 students, college students, and lifelong learners with affordable access at home. Currently, EAN has only one tower in Houghton County near Shopko in Houghton with a 4-6 mile radius. EAN provides learning modules for building various skills to degree seeking students, community members, and educational partners. Starlink also offers internet service to local citizens.

Various parts of Houghton County can obtain high speed internet access from Charter (Spectrum), Baraga Telephone Company, Pasty.net, and ShoreWaves, Star Link and others. There are some parts of the rural, low-population density areas of Houghton County that have limited or no access to an affordable high-speed internet.

The Peninsular Fiber Network (PFN) is a joint effort between Baraga Telephone and Hiawatha Telephone to provide high-speed internet access to the Upper Peninsula, Northern Lower Michigan, and Northern Wisconsin. The goal is to bring a fiber backbone within close proximity of rural users.

Cellular communication in the county, including mobile data at 5G LTE speeds, is provided by Verizon and AT&T. While cell service is improving, there remain gaps in service due to terrain, lack of tower coverage, and sparse areas of population.

## **Public Review and Participation**

The Michigan Planning Enabling Act, (P.A 33 of 2008, as amended, M.C.L.125.3801 et seq) requires that members of the Planning Commission be appointed as representatives of the community. Public participation is an on-going part of planning in Houghton County.

The people of Houghton County will have an Open Forum and the chance to make comments and offer suggestions for this plan through December 31, 2023. This plan will be posted on the Houghton County Planning Commission's page, and we have solicited feedback from all who would like to have their thoughts, ideas, and commentary heard and considered as the plan was written.

During the fall and winter of 2023 this Plan was written and reviewed. The Draft of the plan was placed on the Houghton County website and hard copies were sent to each township on December 5th. A Public Hearing will be scheduled for January 2024 where the Public will be encouraged to offer feedback. A hard copy will be sent to each Township, City and Village within the County to ask for their review and feedback.

On January 9th, 2024 the Planning Commission will offer the Master Plan to the Houghton County Board of Commissioners for approval of the draft plan. Copies of the draft plan were placed in the County Controller's office and the Portage Lake District Library, and electronic copies were made available on the county's web site.

The Planning Commission is seeking feedback and participation from any County citizen and municipality. All comments received by the commission will be evaluated and utilized if appropriate, and considered prior to adoption.

## **Planning in Harmony with Winter**

Winter affects Houghton County in many ways and snow cover may last from mid-November until late April or early May. Taking advantage of the positive aspects of winter encourages the use of a unique natural asset, and improves the area's appeal for new businesses and residents.

- Outdoor recreational opportunities, including downhill and cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, ice fishing, snow shoeing, ice skating and hockey.
- Indoor arts, culture and social activities.
- Winter tourism, special events, and festivals including MTU's Winter Carnival, including using ice and snow for civic art and a celebration of Winter
- Hancock City's Heikkinpaiva Finnish Celebration.
- The CopperDog 150 sled dog race in Calumet
- The Great Bear Chase in Calumet Township

Specific considerations:

- Cost of snow management for public and private sectors.
- Mobility issues, especially for seniors and the disabled, on foot or in automobiles.
- Increased heating costs and energy consumption.
- Support for ice fishing

Recommendations for planning:

- Generate local pride in our winter culture and promote winter tourism
- Foster innovative efforts in the community to design facilities and buildings suited to the winter season.
- Consider lighting treatments for winter conditions, lighting of trailways and walking paths to improve access and increased opportunities for recreation and tourism.
- Support winter recreation opportunities such as ski trails and snowmobile/multi-use trail corridors, and support multi-seasonal recreational use of existing public land and parks.
- Support for Snowmobile Trail Grooming is now a main concern. With the most extensive and largest collection of snowmobile trails in the Midwest, caring for them and the snow grooming machines will continue to be a huge need. The Keweenaw Trails Service group is working hard to construct a Maintenance Building in Calumet Township, and are heading to completion of their new facility. Retiring the unheated and limited current facility in Mohawk in Keweenaw County is the goal, and if the new facility gets completed it will be important for Winter Tourism and all of the trails throughout the Keweenaw Peninsula.

# **Land Use Planning Trends and Development Issues Facing Houghton County**

## **Changes in the Houghton/Hancock area**

In the early part of the Twentieth Century, much of the economic activity of the Keweenaw Peninsula was centered in the Calumet area. The Houghton and Hancock area was the major transportation hub for the region, providing facilities for rail and maritime services. There were modest commercial districts in both Houghton and Hancock, and the population was about half of what it is today. The Calumet area had a population more than double that of the present time and was a much more significant focus for commerce in the Keweenaw.

The close of the Twentieth Century found the economic roles of the Calumet area and the Houghton-Hancock area reversed. The major economic engine for the Keweenaw is now centered in the Houghton-Hancock area. The university and community college, one of the two hospitals, most governmental offices, the major shopping centers, many cultural and arts venues, most of the newly constructed residential and commercial property, the convergence of the two major access highways -- are now found in the Houghton and Hancock area.

The resulting growth pressures have been handled reasonably well within the cities of Houghton and Hancock. New commercial and residential development in these cities has generally been in accordance with current community development principles. Much of the area within the two cities has now been either developed or planned for development.

## **Decreasing Government Funding and Consolidation of Services**

Decreasing state and federal spending for public services, and an increase in state-owned properties, properties owned by conservation groups and land conservancies are decreasing the amount of tax revenue and population in the area and increasing the property tax for private land owners. Businesses and non-homestead landowners are then left with fulfilling the property tax shortfalls caused by the decreased tax revenue the state and conservation group-owned properties have caused. This, combined with an emphasis by state leaders on improving local government efficiency has significant implications for the county. Local government and public services at all levels (municipalities, townships, county offices, school districts, state and federal branches located in the county etc.) will increasingly respond to financial incentives or legislative dictate to consolidate services, expand across boundaries and reduce programs. Demographic shifts, such as falling numbers of school age children, will amplify the pressure created by diminishing support for local services.

## **Waterfront Development**

Houghton County has miles of Lake Superior shoreline, numerous inland lakes, and the Keweenaw Waterway system including Torch and Portage Lakes. Significant amounts of new residential development have occurred along waterfront areas since the early 1990s. This has included frontage on Lake Superior and Keweenaw Waterway, as well as inland lakes and streams. In the last 20 years, waterfront property values have increased five-fold in some areas. Seasonal cottages are being converted to year round residences. Vacant lots are being developed with homes, many of them large. In some areas, remediated stamp sands will increase the supply of available lots.



## **Trails and recreational access**

Tourism and recreation play an important role in the Houghton County economy. Recreational trails are important for residents as well as visitors. Trails, over land and over water, date back to the earliest human use of the Keweenaw.

Today, Houghton County has both land and water trail systems. The North Country National Scenic Trail traverses the southern reaches of Houghton County, primarily on lands of the Ottawa National Forest. This wild route contrasts with the paved trail on the old Soo Line grade along Houghton's waterfront, running nearly four and half miles. Some years ago community members installed a short, wheelchair-accessible trail through the Houghton School Forest. There are numerous short trails, such as at the Nara Nature Trails, the Michigan Tech University Recreational Trail System, the Maasto Hiihto and Churning Rapids Trails in Hancock, the Swedetown Trails in Calumet Township, the Paavola Wetlands trail, the Sturgeon River Sloughs and Chassell Trails, and the Silver Mountain Tail in the southern part of the county.

There is an extensive formal trail system, primarily using old railroad grades or logging roads, that is professionally groomed for snowmobiling in the winter. Houghton County and the snowmobile trails that traverse the county is part of the largest collection of snowmobiling trails in the whole Midwest. Many of these routes are used by ATVs or mountain bicycles in the warmer months. There is an extensive network of well-groomed cross-country ski trails in Houghton County. Many of these also provide summer mountain biking and hiking opportunities. Many of the primary and secondary roads in the county are suitable for road biking and see significant use in this way.

The county has numerous abandoned rail grades and old road traces that are informally used for snowmobiling, ATV riding, mountain biking, walking, running, cross-country skiing, snow shoeing and sled dog mushing. However, few of these trails have permanent easements or fee ownership. The impact of this is that a trail long used may suddenly become unavailable for public use. Changes in land use, ownership and attitudes have the potential to close down important and irreplaceable trail segments. In addition, there is potential for placing motorized trails in locations unsuitable because of adjacent land use, such as residential neighborhoods.

The Keweenaw Waterway, in addition to its use by motorized vessels up to 600 feet long, is part of the Keweenaw Water Trail, which permits small craft such as canoes and kayaks to explore the natural and cultural heritage of the Keweenaw from the water. Since the tip of the Keweenaw Peninsula, from Hancock northeasterly, is an island, the Water Trail is a loop trail. The Hancock City Campground provides a convenient starting and ending point for Water Trail users. Numerous inland lakes and several area rivers also provide water trail opportunities.

## **Portage Lake Lift Bridge**

The Keweenaw Waterway connects both ends of Portage Lake with Lake Superior. One third of Houghton County and all of Keweenaw County lies north of the waterway.

A single bridge has connected this man-made island with southern Houghton County since 1875. The current structure was built in 1959 and is maintained and owned by the Michigan Department of Transportation. The Portage Lake Lift Bridge is the heaviest dual deck aerial lift bridge in the world. Although it has never been out of operation for more than several hours, the possibility of a mechanical failure or of an impact by a wayward vessel exists. At best a bridge outage of any duration is disruptive, and if the outage is prolonged it can become a threat to public health, public safety, and the region's economy.

The effect of an extended bridge outage on the population both north and south of the existing bridge has been studied extensively. There are various conveyances that can be placed to alleviate problems caused by a failure of the Lift Bridge, and plans to mitigate a bridge failure are reviewed and revised on an ongoing basis by emergency responders and other stakeholders. Given the importance of its function, the Portage Lake Lift Bridge has been identified as a critical piece of infrastructure for both Houghton and Keweenaw counties.

Past development in the area has placed both acute care hospitals, the sole EMS provider, most of the physician clinics, the Michigan State Police post, many of the county's fire units, the U.S. Coast Guard, the area's only rescue hovercraft, the airport, the health department, and all home health agencies on the island portion of north Houghton County.

The only emergency service providers located south of the bridge are Michigan Tech Public Safety, Houghton County Sheriff, Houghton City Police, and many of the fire departments. In addition to inhibiting emergency services from traveling from the island to the south, an extended bridge malfunction would also prevent necessities like food, medicine and fuel from reaching the population on the north of the Keweenaw Waterway. MDOT has completed updates and some needed maintenance on the lifting motors recently, and also some deck and connecting teeth work on the roadway.

As of the end of September 2023, a permanent CFR was written and adopted by the 9<sup>th</sup> District Commander for the Coast Guard for the bridge. This new CFR restricts lifts to the half hour, meaning that for pleasure craft lifts will only be executed on the top and bottom of the hour, and not in between. Large commercial and governmental vessels will continue to get lifts on demand and as needed. Local leaders and the Upper Michigan MDOT had asked for longer restrictions and closing the bridge to lifts for the busiest parts of the day and several hours, but that request was denied. Getting it restricted to lifts does allow for vehicle traffic to plan for crossings, and for boats to do the same.

It is the consensus of this Commission that future county decision makers will have to continue work with state and federal partners to develop alternative solutions and that local agencies, businesses, and members of the community should have their own plans in place in the event of a prolonged outage. A second crossing has been talked about many times, and development of a second crossing or alternate route is recommended.

## **Scenic, Historic, Cultural Resource Preservation and Management**

Houghton County has an unusually rich concentration of nationally significant scenic, historic and cultural resources: Douglass Houghton Falls, Queen Anne Falls, Hungarian Falls, Redridge Falls, the Sturgeon Gorge Wilderness on the Ottawa National Forest, the Quincy and Calumet Units of the Keweenaw National Historical Park, and the headquarters complex for Isle Royale National Park, and many others

that you can find around the county. Two units of the Michigan State Park System (F.J. McLain and Twin Lakes), along with significant lands protected by the state forest system, are located within the county.

In 2005, the U.S. 41 corridor north and east from the Portage Lake Lift Bridge was designated by the federal government as the Copper Country Trail National Scenic Byway, one of the few in the nation.

The Quincy and Calumet Units of the Keweenaw NHP are designated National Historic Landmarks, and there are numerous properties and districts within the county listed on, or eligible for listing on, the National Register of Historic Places.

The Keweenaw Ridge, the spine of small mountains and hills running northeasterly through the County from Ontonagon all the way to Keweenaw Point, forms part of the unique viewshed and landscape of our County that gives it its inherent natural beauty and intrinsic value. The Keweenaw Ridge highlands extend through the communities along the Copper Range and under threat by proposals for wind farm development.

The people of Houghton County are asked to be the resident caretakers of these important resources by the people of Michigan, and all the citizens of the United States. This is both a privilege and an obligation.

There are not many counties in the United States with such a rich mix of significant resources. These enhance the quality of life and help attract and retain businesses that recognize the strategic value of an excellent quality of life for their employees.

## **Forestry and Timber Products**

Forests in Houghton County have made a remarkable resurgence in the decades since the decline of mining and the subsequent loss of population. Indeed, the major landowners in the county are predominantly forest product businesses and government agencies. Most timber harvesting is done by multiple small companies under contract to timberlands management companies. Log transport is often done by individuals and small companies. Mills which accept pulp wood have declined in recent years with the overall contraction of the economy, and today there are no pulp mills in Houghton County. Local value-added forest product processing, such as arena flooring at Horner Flooring continues to exist, despite the long journey to market for the finished products. There is a highly selective market for maple veneer logs with the "bird's eye" structure. A prime, single eight foot log can bring \$10,000 or more for export. The lack of value-added processing of forest products is a major concern in the region, therefore it is recommended that any such value-added timber related industries would be advocated for and encouraged.

## **Brownfield Sites, Land Bank, Blighted Properties**

Houghton County has a Brownfield Redevelopment Authority, and through their efforts and working with developers they consider multiple sites within Houghton County can be reclaimed and put back on the tax rolls. A growing interest in Brownfield Developments has seen an uptick recently, and several sites are being considered at this time. The County helps to lead a Houghton County Land Bank Authority, and this group considers blighted properties, foreclosed properties those that fall into states of need, and

redevelopments that help to revitalize communities in our County. In 2023 the Houghton County Land Bank received recognition and honor from the Governor for their leading work in this area.

## **The Potential for Growth and Rural Lifestyles-**

A concept which has received some interest among urban planners and demographers is the observation that some in higher socio-economic groups now have the ability to make a life-style choice to locate outside the confines of developed urban areas. The reputation of a lower cost of living, the perception of simpler and healthier lifestyles, improved winter driving as a result of better vehicles, and especially the ability to work in remote areas served by high speed internet, has given a boost to population growth in some rural areas. The growing opportunities for remote work arrangements where people enjoy high paying professional jobs and the quality of life in Houghton County is a growing trend. These remote workers have families who attend our schools, live here and invest in our communities, fly to and from of our County Airport, and link us to other areas of our state, country, and the world. This will have an impact on the County Airport, so plans to modernize the terminal and to keep a focus on having a good facility at CMX remains an important focus if we are to continue to serve this new segment of the population that are choosing to take their jobs with them and make Houghton County their home.

These rural areas (which are attractive to such groups) tend to have open space, uncongested roads, clean air and water, and rather than core cities, a network of farms, open space, tiny villages and larger towns diffused throughout a county. Rather than being connected to cities, they are typically three to four hours from metro hubs and are economically independent from them. Attractive rural areas flourish in communities with colleges, good infrastructure, available capital and human resources, strong public services, and an emphasis on environment, recreation and life style, and artist communities.

In Houghton County, rural residential growth typically occurred on small lot splits and land divisions along existing road systems. Very few new roads were constructed for this development, and most lots are not platted, but are land divisions with few restrictions or requirements. Most rural residential is constructed with short driveways because of snow issues. The result is a strip of residential land use visible along many roads in the county.

New residents, whether locating in cities or outside of incorporated municipalities, will bring important consequences for public services, community infrastructure, and the tax base that comes with them when they choose to locate in Houghton County.

## **Solid Waste Reduction and Recycling Programs**

In 2014, the Planning Commission identified goals for solid waste reduction and improved recycling programs and formed a working group to explore the issues, Houghton County owns a solid waste transfer station located in Atlantic Mine, and in addition to trash processing the facility that has also collected scrap metal and waste oil for many years. The transfer station has fee schedules to charge for waste collection by the bag or by the ton. County-owned tractor trailers haul compacted waste to a landfill in Greenland, MI that is owned and managed by Waste Management Corporation. The Copper Country Recycling Initiative (CCRI) was formed as an outcome of the Planning Commission's working group to more actively pursue waste reduction and recycling success in the region. The CCRI is a collaborative, citizen-based group that intends to serve as an information clearinghouse and catalyst for recycling and waste reduction efforts in the Copper Country. The CCRI working group maintains a website and a Facebook page to provide

information, and share announcements relevant to waste reduction and recycling events, trainings, and other opportunities.

As of 2020, the County worked with the CCRI to bring Single Stream Recycling to the County. This effort is a partnership with Waste Management who hauls the recycled goods to the Marquette Recycling Facility (MRF), and now several tons each month are taken out of the trash streams and into the recycling streams as a result. The CCRI remains in close communication and partnership with the County, and new ideas for increased recycling in Houghton County are continuously being considered.

## **Future Economic Development**

Houghton County's economic development activities aim to improve the economic well-being of the county through job creation and retention, tax base enhancements and quality of life. These values are driven by strategies, policies, and programs led by various public and private organizations. Among the County's priorities for individual prosperity are available employment, decent housing, good health and access to human services and recreation. The business climate in Houghton County supports all types of businesses.

Frequently mentioned factors that provide Houghton County with a favorable business climate include business and income tax levels, low crime, cost of living, quality of life, and real estate costs relative to other areas. Challenges include workforce availability, energy costs, housing shortages, and local market size.

Houghton County has factors of its business climate that may be viewed as strengths or weaknesses, depending on the need of the particular business such as:

- Infrastructure (e.g., available deep water port; lack of interstate highways)
- Environmental regulation
- Permitting, licensing, and various reporting regulations
- Access to financing and capital (e.g., venture capital)
- Incentives (e.g., tax credits)
- Quality of services and transportation (e.g., dependability of air service)

Considering the complexity of economic development, the Houghton County Master Plan serves to highlight certain aspects of the community as they relate to the above areas, but does not intend to direct or emphasize any particular efforts over another.

## **Economic Development Entities**

Houghton County draws from an array of traditional and emerging economic development tools. A few of them include:

- **Downtown Development Authority (DDA)** – The city of Calumet, the City of Houghton and the City of Hancock each have a designated DDA provided by Michigan Law.
- **Local Development Finance Authority (LDFA)** – Established in 2002, the Cities of Houghton and Hancock formed a joint LDFA for the provision of tax funds for economic development.
- **Michigan Core Communities** – In June of 2000 the State of Michigan initiated an effort to spur private development in its urban communities and traditional centers of commerce. The incentives, unique to

Core Communities, target critical needs of older communities through new housing development, redevelopment of obsolete facilities and development of contaminated properties. The city of Houghton is designated as a core community, enabling access to brownfield redevelopment incentives, neighborhood enterprise zones, and obsolete property rehabilitation exemption.

- **Business Incubation** – Business incubation is a business support process that accelerates the successful development of start-up and fledgling companies by providing entrepreneurs with an array of targeted resources and services. These services are usually developed or orchestrated by incubator management and offered both in the business incubator and through its network of contacts. A business incubator’s main goal is to produce successful firms that will leave the program financially viable and freestanding. These incubator graduates have the potential to create jobs, revitalize neighborhoods, commercialize new technologies, and strengthen local and national economies. Houghton County has two business incubation organizations that include:
- **MTEC SmartZone (SZ)** — MTEC SmartZone is one of 15 SmartZones in Michigan. MTEC SmartZone helped create over 250 direct jobs in eight years through programs and support to entrepreneurs and small businesses in the technology sector. In addition, MTEC SmartZone has created a new business model for Fortune 500 Companies, allowing them to access Michigan Tech’s student engineering talent. This model has brought jobs back from overseas and benefited companies like Ford Motor Company and GE Aviation in many ways.
- **Entrepreneur Support Center (ESC)** — Operated by MTEC SmartZone, the ESC is a resource center that provides entrepreneurs with a place to work, with direct guidance from business counselors to foster ideas, and start and develop businesses into companies that create jobs for the local community. ESC has helped launch about two companies a month since it opened in April 2011.
- **Keweenaw Economic Development Alliance (KEDA)**— Keweenaw Economic Development Alliance takes a leadership role in Houghton, Keweenaw and Baraga Counties, helping expand and diversify the area’s economic base. KEDA designs and implements proactive, sustainable programs focused on retaining and expanding existing firms, starting up new businesses, attracting entrepreneurs and companies to the Keweenaw and initiating projects that create conditions for future economic growth.
- **Michigan Small Business and Technology Development Center (SBTDC)** — SBTDC provides a broad range of support services to local companies through local business counselors housed at KEDA and Michigan Tech, regional business counselors based in the Escanaba SBTDC office, and technology company specialists located throughout the state.
- **Superior Innovations at Michigan Technological University (SI)** — SI is a private, for-profit company established by Michigan Tech under the non-profit Michigan Tech Entrepreneurial Support Corporation (MTECSC). Both MTECSC and SI serve as tools to help transition early stage discoveries from University labs into successful commercial enterprises.
- **Western Upper Peninsula Planning & Development Region (WUPPDR)** — WUPPDR provides a wide range of services including technical assistance to local units of government, grant writing and administration. Fostering stable and diversified economies in the Western Upper Peninsula, WUPPDR also serves as the regional clearinghouse for federal and state funded programs. Through this

role, WUPPDR enhances intergovernmental coordination and encourages opportunities for public comment on projects of regional significance.

- **USDA Regional Development** – Assists regions in creating self-sustaining, longterm economic development in rural areas through visioning and strategic planning. Provides communities seeking information on USDA Rural Development and other federal community and economic development programs. Promotes partnerships at the local and state levels to assist communities in advancing their strategic or economic development plans. Promotes coordinated planning among Rural Development programs to address specific projects in a community or regional strategic plan.
- **Western Upper Peninsula Michigan Works** – The Houghton One Stop Center provides a complete array of employment and training services to the residents of the Copper Country area. Computers are available for use by job seekers to work on their resumes or to search for jobs through various internet resources. Free career resource materials are available as well as a display of job application forms from over 50 Copper Country employers.
- **Keweenaw Chamber of Commerce** – The Keweenaw Chamber of Commerce strives to enrich the overall business and economic climate of Houghton and Keweenaw counties through a variety of programs and services.

#### **Other Economic Development Features**

- **Houghton County Renaissance Zone** – Over 400 acres of Houghton County has been reserved in two different locations to serve as Renaissance Zones. By 2007, 18 companies have been taking advantage of the tax-free incentives that these areas offer.
- **HUBZone Certification** – Available throughout Houghton County, the **Historically Underutilized Business Zones** (HUBZone) program helps small businesses in urban and rural communities gain preferential access to federal procurement opportunities. These preferences go to small businesses that obtain HUBZone certification in part by employing staff who live in a HUBZone. The company must also maintain a "principal office" in one of these specially designated areas.

Credits: Information in this section was contributed by International Economic Development Council, Keweenaw Chamber of Commerce and Western Upper Peninsula Planning & Development Region, Michigan Economic Development Corporation, National Business Incubator Association, U.S. Small Business Administration, USDA Rural Development, and Western Upper Peninsula Michigan Works.

## **Living the Plan**

Houghton County recognizes that decisions about zoning are best made at the city, village or township level. This master plan may serve as one base for an individual township to develop a zoning ordinance. Houghton County has no intention of attempting to implement county-wide zoning.

## **Projected Land Use Descriptions by Township**

The attached maps are based on existing land uses in Houghton County, and demonstrate future use possibilities. They are not intended to be restrictive or proscriptive; rather they will help orient future planning by political sub-units within the county. No line or color on the map is absolute. These maps show the major categories of future land use which allow for growth while protecting values identified by members of the public.

The following land uses are shown on the maps:

- Forest (private, public)
- Commercial/Industrial
- Agricultural
- Recreation (non-forest)
- Rural Residential (includes year around, second home, lake shore, camps – not dense. Year around access limited by local residents.)
- Stream Preservation
- Residential (more dense, communities, villages, small towns) • Urban (areas inside cities)

Several Townships requested that their existing zoning and planning maps be used. Note that many of the cities, townships and villages have, or are establishing, web sites with much more specific information about their jurisdiction. Please refer to these township's websites for the most current map.

**Discussion for Houghton County Townships**, starting in the southern part of the County. Level of detail generally goes to the Section level only; finer detail when appropriate.

**Duncan Township** Duncan Township is impacted by the Ottawa National Forest. A small industrial area west of Sidnaw is identified with a good confluence of highways, railroad, and an airport. Wise management of forest land is best done with large tracts of non-fragmented land. Hwy M28 passes through E-W; FH16 N-S. Rural Residential exists, but is not encouraged for significant future growth along Goldenglow Road and Lake 13 Road, coming down from the Silver Mountain tracts in Laird Township. Maintaining land in large tracts is most conducive to maintaining and developing trail systems. Duncan Township has a zoning ordinance.

**Laird Township** Laird Township is dominated by the Ottawa National Forest and the Copper Country State Forest; an agricultural strip roughly along M-38; and rural residential areas along the Pike Lake Rd and in the Silver River/Silver Mountain Area. Two population concentrations are at Nisula and Alston with small commercial/industrial areas around them. Wise management of forest land and agricultural land is best done with large tracts of non-fragmented land; these encourage multiple recreational uses such as trails. Prickett Lake area is a key recreational area whose future land use should be maintained (primary mission of the impoundment remains power production).

**Elm River Township** Elm River Township preserves land which is a mix of public and private forest but has rural residential around the lakes and along the M-26 corridor and the major county roads. A commercial section is shown along M-26 in the Twin Lakes area, and recreational use on Lake Roland with Twin Lakes State Park, the golf course and Emily Lake.

**Adams Township** Adams Township shows rural residential continuing from Elm River Township to Toivola, a forest corridor along M-26 north of Toivola and south of Painesdale, and between the established communities of Painesdale and Trimountain and the Village of South Range to maintain a



“northwoods feeling” approaching the Houghton/Hancock area. New residential development is encouraged within the existing communities, which have appropriate infrastructure. This helps preserve the “northwoods feeling” and a sense of the area’s mining heritage. The Cole’s Creek drainage as it approaches the Keweenaw Waterway at the north edge of the township has a stream preservation emphasis.

**Stanton Township** Stanton Township shows a mix of agricultural, rural residential, and forest in the inland portions. A mix of rural residential, recreational, and some agriculture uses exists along the Keweenaw Waterway and Lake Superior shoreline, as well as the Salmon-Trout River and Coles Creek. Coles Creek serves as an important DNR benchmark for cold-water trout fisheries. There are three areas of agricultural land in the township that have unique micro climates conducive to fruit crops. These areas, even if forested, should be considered appropriate for agricultural use. Stanton Township plays a very important role in Houghton County’s recreational access to Lake Superior, with significant public park development at North Entry and Agate Beach. Recreational Use is identified for the township’s widely known Covered Road. Rural residential runs along the Lake Superior shoreline from the edge of the Township Park at the north entry to the Southwest, as far as Graveraet River. Beyond that point the lake shore will be preserved primarily for public recreation.

**Chassell Township** Chassell Township is rural residential along the Canal and Portage Lake, and recreational land just inside the rural residential land along Portage Lake. Agricultural land is west of US 41 and south of Snake River Hill; these are traditionally good berry lands. Rural residential is shown along most county roads and a stream buffer is along the Sturgeon River where flooding may occur during snow melt. Chassell Township has an existing Land Use Plan and zoning ordinance in effect. Several culverts under US41 in Chassell are blocked or partially blocked. A future flood has the potential to wash out portions of US41. The township is working with MDOT, the Houghton County Road Commission, and the Houghton County Drain Commissioner to try to resolve the problems before a major flood occurs. There are four private airstrips in Chassell Township; protecting their safe approaches has implications for the development of wind energy and the construction of communication towers.

**Charter Township of Portage** The Charter Township of Portage has a land area of 112.6 sq. miles and a water surface area of approximately 3.9 sq. miles with a population of 3,156 comprised of 33% urban and 67% rural residents. The Township sits immediately adjacent to the City of Houghton, which is the largest population center in Houghton County and home of Michigan Technological University, well known nationally for its engineering programs. The Township has a great mix of outdoor recreational opportunities. For instance, the vast majority of the Pilgrim River Watershed is largely located in Portage Township. The watershed is 15,546 acres in size with a total stream length of 31.8 miles. The Pilgrim River Watershed Project (PRWP) is solely located in Charter Portage Township and it comprises 1,600 acres of that watershed total. It was recently completed with the efforts of silent sports enthusiasts, wildlife lovers, natural resource managers, and watershed neighbors collaborating with the Copper Country Chapter of Trout Unlimited, Northwood Alliance, Partners in Forestry, Copper Country Audubon, Houghton-Keweenaw Conservation District, Keweenaw Land Trust, Keweenaw Trails Alliance, and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. The abundant outdoor recreational activities found in Charter Portage Township which is located immediately adjacent to the City of Houghton and Michigan Technological University enhance the “quality of life” experience for our residents and make the Township a very attractive place to live and do business.

**Franklin Township** Franklin became a township on October 19, 1863. Its roots can be found amongst the mining heritage that is the Copper Country. Its quaint communities erected to house masses of immigrants who were looking for a better life for themselves and their children. Franklin Township is home to some of the most iconic images making up our region. The Quincy mine hoist majestically sits atop Quincy Hill, beckoning to visitors and locals alike to come and explore her tunnels, experiencing the depths and darkness that was everyday life for our founders, and the SISU that kept them going.

**Quincy Township** Quincy Township is relatively small, undergoing significant annexation pressures from Hancock. It has a significant portion of the Quincy Unit of Keweenaw National Historical Park. The snowmobile trail corridor is an important community asset. The recent designation of U.S. 41 as a National Scenic Byway through this township is an economic stimulus to the County. Controlling adverse development is a key strategy. Rural residential development along several county roads allows for continuing growth supporting the Houghton/Hancock area.

**Hancock Township** Hancock Township is one of the fastest growing townships in the county. F. J. McLain State Park is located in Hancock Township and has considerable canal and Lake Superior frontage, while the DNR maintains a boating access to the Portage Ship Canal at Lily Pond. Hancock Township also provides recreational trails for adjoining populations, as private trails in Hancock Township connect to the Maasto Hiito trails in the City of Hancock. While there will be continuing pressure for rural residential development along the road corridors in this Township, the water resources in this area are spotty, some wells have run dry, and there are concerns that additional growth will adversely affect the available water resources. There is also a large gravel excavation site and blacktop plant located in the township. Further excavation of large gravel resources should be carefully studied before implementation since expansion could impact both recreation and water resources. Although Hancock Township does not have zoning, it has several ordinances affecting development and all property owners or prospective property owners are encouraged to discuss potential purchases and projects with township officials.

**Osceola Township** Osceola Township is a long, narrow township that ranges from Torch Lake on the south almost to the Houghton County line on the north. The snowmobile trail corridor is a community asset. The recent designation of U.S. 41 as a National Scenic Byway through this township is an important economic stimulus. Controlling adverse development within this corridor is a key strategy to be undertaken by this Township. Osceola snakes around and through intensive residential development in the Calumet area, requiring extensive cooperation among units of government. Rural residential characterizes the Torch Lake waterfront, a part of the Torch Lake Remediation project. Inland areas of the Township support agricultural uses. The airport sits partly in Osceola Township.

**Torch Lake Township** Torch Lake Township is divided by Torch Lake. Most of the county roads support Rural Residential use; the exception being along seasonal roads. Torch Lake Township has extensive Lake Superior frontage with sections that should be preserved for public recreational access. Most of the interior of the Township is either forest or agricultural. The Rice Lake shoreline supports Rural Residential. The area of Point Louis should be preserved for public recreational use.

**Charter Township of Calumet** Calumet Township has an extensive Land Use Planning and zoning process in place. The area around Douglass Houghton Falls is recreational in the hope that this scenic area might potentially gain public access. Rural Residential is shown along some county roads, with agricultural areas along other roads preserving scenic values and agricultural potential. Industrial uses are shown to support the existing Renaissance Zone and also the existing industrial sites at Osceola #13,

Centennial #3 and #6, Calumet Electronics, Royale Machine, and gravel operations at various sites. Calumet Township is an important component of the Keweenaw National Historical Park.

**Schoolcraft Township** Extensive areas of Schoolcraft Township are agricultural. Forested land is along the eastern edge of the Township. Rural residential is shown along the entire Trap Rock Valley area, as well as along Torch Lake and the Rice Lake/Grand Traverse area, reflecting long standing patterns. Recreational use is in the Superfund remediation area.

### **Preparation of this plan:**

This plan was prepared by the Houghton County Planning Commission and the County Administration.

The members of the 2023 planning commission are:

Allan T. Aho, Chassell Township-Agriculture & Forestry, Land Use  
John Larson, Hancock Township-Education  
Ron Kilpela, Franklin Township-Local Governmental Planning and Zoning  
Timothy Sears, Franklin Township-Sanitation, Environmental Health, Housing & Human Services  
Benjamin Larson, County Administrator  
Joel Keranen, District 2, Houghton County Board of Commission  
Steve Aho, Hancock Township-Economic Development & Tourism  
Michael Erickson, Osceola Township-Environment  
Horst Schmidt, Torch Lake Township-Recreation & Culture

Much of the statistical information and historical data was derived from the 2018 Master Plan, and those who contributed to that document.

**Summary of Public Review and Comment: Feedback is encouraged and will be included as received from our County partners and municipalities. A Draft of this document was sent to all of the following on December 6, 2023 to seek input, as well as posted on the Planning Commission's Webpage on the County Website. Copies of the Plan will also be shared at Prominent Locations around the County.**

**City and Township Review**

**Other Governmental Groups**

**Non-Governmental Community Organizations**

**Individual Citizen Input**

**Written comments**

**Summary of Public review and Comment, September, October and December Planning Commission Monthly Meetings, 2023:** There was no public participation or comments offered at the time of these public meetings.

APPLICATION for COUNTY BOARDS & COMMISSIONS

Michael J. Erickson, Current Houghton County Planning Commissioner

55902 N. Cloverland Rd., Calumet, MI 49913 734-604-7044

BOARD OR COMMISSION APPLYING FOR:

Houghton County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority

In the following space state your reasons for wanting to serve on the above named Board/Commission:

Contribute to planning efforts for improvement of our county drawing from my experience in the civil and environmental engineering profession. Being raised locally and graduating from Calumet High School and Michigan Tech, and my father a former deputy sherriff of Houghton County, I have a deep vested interest in preserving our quality of life in Houghton County and helping with responsible planning and development and representing the interests of community members who enjoy the outdoors and our environment in all ways.

List any training, experience or expertise that would be valuable to the above named Board/Commission:

28 years experience as a practicing Environmental Engineer in Michigan and the U.S. Currently senior vice president at Arcadis, a large international consultancy. Professional Engineer. M.S.Civil Engineering and B.S. Environmental Engineering from Michigan Tech, 1995/96. Expertise in surface water quality, dredging, sediment remediation, shoreline restoration/development, mining sites, permitting, etc.

3 years experience on Hamburg Township Environmental Review Board downstate. Extensive experience with State and Federal agencies on projects around the Great Lakes.

**COUNTY OF HOUGHTON**  
Controller's Office  
401 E. Houghton Avenue, Houghton, Michigan 49931  
PHONE (906)482-8307 FAX (906)482-7238

**APPLICATION**  
**for**  
**COUNTY BOARDS & COMMISSIONS**

**NAME:** Pamela Que

**ADDRESS:** 336 8<sup>th</sup> Street, Calumet, MI 49913

**PHONE:** 906-281-1878

**DATE:** December 6, 2023

**BOARD OR COMMISSION APPLYING FOR:** Brownfield Redevelopment Authority

In the following space state your reasons for wanting to serve on the above named Board/Commission:

I was asked by our local economic developer to serve and agreed that that my experience and background might be useful to the BRA and their decision making.

List any training, experience or expertise that would be valuable to the above named Board/Commission:

I have served on the Groveland Township planning commission (chair for five years), Chaired the Board of Zoning Appeals for five years and currently serve on the Calumet Village council president pro tem, Village planning commission and Historic District Commission. I also have 40 years of experience in the construction industry including concrete, masonry and sand and gravel, general contractor on three new home builds and concrete project coordinator on two 6 million square foot Amazon distribution center builds.

NOTE: Supporting documents and letters can be attached to the application.