



## Leelanau Township Community Foundation Housing Priorities Survey Fact Sheet September 25, 2023

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In June and July 2023, the Leelanau Township Community Foundation conducted a Housing Priorities Survey in partnership with Avenue ISR, an independent market research and polling company based in Traverse City, Michigan. The purpose of the survey was to better understand stakeholder attitudes toward housing options as well as willingness to support potential housing changes and investments.

The Community Foundation worked hard to make the survey available to all year round and seasonal residents of Leelanau Township, along with employers based in the Township and employees working for Leelanau Township based businesses.

Here are significant findings and results from the survey:

- 456 people responded to the survey, including 387 residents of Leelanau Township, which represents more than 20% of the adult population of the Township; this group was broadly representative of the adult population of the Township based on age, gender identity and household income, compared to United States Census results;
- In addition, 39 Leelanau Township based employers and 80 employees of Leelanau Township businesses participated

### Key Findings

#### 1) Finding housing in Leelanau Township is challenging.

- Of the 15% of current Township residents who tried to find housing in the last two years, more than two-thirds (68%) were not able to find a home that met their needs
- Of the 31% of employees of Leelanau Township businesses who tried to find housing in the last two years, 91% were not able to find a home that met their needs
- The most widespread reasons for not being able to find a home are overall cost (90%), a lack of year round rental options (49%) and a lack of any kind of rental housing (26%)
- This is impacting local businesses, many of whom serve the community
  - 28% of Leelanau Township employers offered employment to someone who did not accept the position because of a lack of housing options in or near Leelanau Township.
  - 22% of Leelanau Township employers have experienced one or more employees resigning because they could not afford to live in or near Leelanau Township.

**2) Most Leelanau Township residents and stakeholders understand the challenges and would like to work toward solutions.**

- Current Leelanau Township residents agree that:
  - It is harder for people to afford to live in Leelanau Township than it was 20 years ago. (95% strongly or somewhat agree)
  - It is important that firefighters, deputies, teachers and health care workers be able to live in our community. (94% agree)
  - It is important that service workers such as grocery workers, restaurant employees, lawn care employees, house cleaners and people who work in the building trades be able to live in our community. (91% agree)
  - I want to live in a community where my children and grandchildren could afford to live or return. (91% agree)
  - A variety of housing options, rental and owned, are important tools promoting economic development. (90% agree)
  - We need additional housing options in Leelanau Township. (88% agree)
- While most respondents are supportive of a number of changes to create more housing options, some (52%) agree that “we need to guard against too much growth and development in our community,” and some write in comments urge local decision makers to balance making progress on housing while ensuring positive aesthetics and compatibility with existing Township character

**3) The majority of Leelanau Township residents and stakeholders are open to a number of approaches to create more housing options in Leelanau Township – even in their own backyards.**

- Current Leelanau Township residents would like to prioritize the following actions to create more housing options within Leelanau Township:
  - Use tax breaks and other public-sector incentives to encourage development of workforce housing (66%)
  - Allow increased use of accessory dwelling units (ADUs), commonly referred to as “granny flats”, for long-term rental (62%)
  - Support more housing density in some areas (61%)
  - Change zoning to allow more multi-unit projects to be built (61%)
  - Promote tiny homes (<700 square feet) or other small houses (54%)
  - Reduce acreage requirements for housing in agricultural areas (currently 10-acre minimum parcel) (50%)
  - Further restrict use of short-term rentals (<30 days) (49%)
  - Make infrastructure investments (e.g. sewer, water) to support new housing development (49%)
  - Create a network of “empty nesters” and other people who are willing to rent rooms within their homes to seasonal or year-round workers (41%)
- Current Leelanau Township residents are open to a number of different housing types, at least in some zones within Leelanau Township:
  - Single Family Home (99% in one or more zones in the Township, including residential and commercial areas)
  - Duplex or Triplex (94% in many zones in the Township)

- Tiny house (<700 square feet) (86% in most zones in the Township)
- Row house, town house or other attached home (86% but only in some selective areas of the Township)
- Apartment or Condo building (85% but only in some selective areas of the Township)
- Mobile home (68% largely in agricultural or industrial areas)

**4) Many survey respondents are willing to be actively involved in developing housing solutions within Leelanau Township.**

- The majority (57%) of all respondents report being willing to attend public meetings related to housing options
- Significant numbers of respondents are also willing to:
  - Become a Housing Advocate within my community (29%)
  - Donate skills (construction skills, business skills) in support of housing projects (21%)
  - Make a financial contribution to support creation of housing options (17%)
  - Build an accessory dwelling unit (ADU) on my property for long-term rental (17%)
  - Donate or sell land to support housing projects (4%)
  - Rent a room in my home to a seasonal/summer worker (5%)
  - Rent a room in my home to a year-round worker (3%)
  - Rent a home or apartment I own but don't live in as a long-term rental (9%)
  - Subsidize a portion of employees' housing costs (15% of employers)

**Ultimately, Leelanau Township Residents and other key stakeholders understand that there is a housing problem in the Township, would like to see changes that support a number of new housing options and in many cases are willing to help.**