

Chapter 11

HUMAN SERVICES AND FACILITIES

INTRODUCTION

Within the context of the **Leelanau General Plan**, human services and facilities include an array of services typically aimed at providing specialized assistance to individuals and families to improve their productivity as members of society and/or improve their quality of life. These services are characterized by programs for the elderly, employment services, financial assistance, domestic violence intervention, shelters, mental health services, and similarly related support assistance.

Human services and facilities are critically important to the peninsula for a variety of reasons. First and foremost, these services and facilities provide assistance to individuals, children and families in need. Availability of a "safe haven" and/or helping hand is often necessary for individuals and/or families who are not capable of resolving a conflict or crisis themselves. And, the assistance provided by these services and facilities has the potential to benefit the peninsula beyond just those receiving the services. Many of the services of-

fered enable individuals to become active and productive residents of the peninsula and thus limit the demand on revenues for long term public assistance due to unemployment, disabilities, mental illness, and other difficulties. This can result in both a higher level of services delivered as well as more revenues available for other needed services and programs. The Peninsula's human services and facilities are also available to serve the many migrant workers who temporarily reside in the peninsula during the growing and harvesting seasons and whom, by their transient nature, may be in particular need of special services and programs. Without these services, agricultural operations could not be competitive.

ISSUES

Lack of Reliable Data

Historically, a significant issue facing the county in the delivery of human services was the lack of reliable data regarding particular human service needs. This was in large part



Benodjenh Headstart/daycare center and Strongheart Civic Center in Peshawbestown

due to the lack of a reliable and comprehensive demographic profile of the peninsula, and the resulting limited baseline data upon which services were to be delivered and evaluated. As a result, it was not clear as to: 1) the extent to which the human services needs of the peninsula were met; 2) the degree to which duplication of services between agencies existed; 3) whether the services currently provided were in fact necessary; and 4) whether the services currently being delivered were effective.

The completion of the **Leelanau County Human Services Review** (March 1993), prepared by the Northwest Michigan Council of Governments, ended a substantial portion of the data drought. This study compiles all of the relevant 1990 census data and displays it in both tables and maps. The mapped data is largely displayed at the block group level. In addition, a comprehensive survey of human services provider organizations was conducted. The results are displayed in a series of tables. The report finds very little duplication of services, but many gaps and a need for future collaboration in service provision to improve effectiveness and efficiency.

Another document, prepared annually, is the Quality of Life Index for the Grand Traverse

Region. This program is coordinated by the Grand Traverse Regional Community Foundation and the Northwestern Michigan College. Each report contains the current year's information and results of prior years. Some of the topics for data included in the report are culture and recreation, economy, education, health, public safety, and natural environment. This is a useful reference because it presents comparative, information and change over time.

Another important development for services evaluation was a "community plan" created by the Leelanau County Family Coordinating Council. The Family Coordinating Council is a coalition made up of members from a multitude of human service agencies such as the Department of Community Health, the Family Independence Agency, hospitals, volunteer groups, the Leelanau County court system, and many others. The Community Plan was developed to identify needs, evaluate resources, and improve services to the community. The Council works to continuously monitor those needs and implement the Plan.

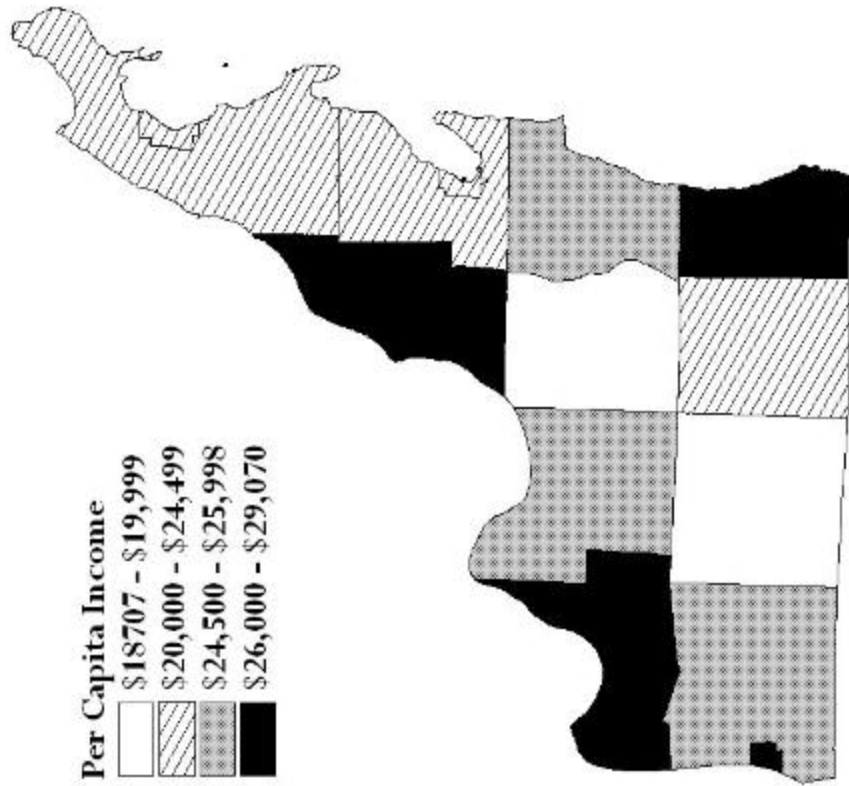
Limited Fiscal Resources

Also impacting the current delivery of human services on the peninsula is the comparatively

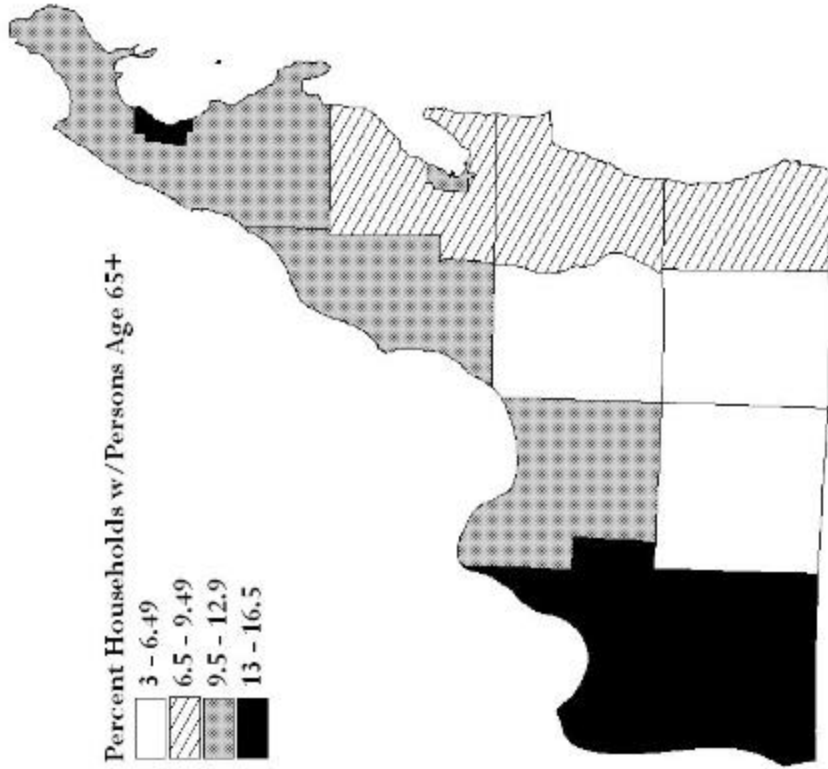


2004 Senior Expo, an event organized by the Commission on Aging

**Map 11-1
Per Capita Income**



**Map 11-2
Percent of Population Age 65 and Over**



limited amounts of money available for such programs. Leelanau County significantly trails behind the state in per capita allocations by the state to the county for human services. In fact, the county received only between one half and two thirds of the per capita allocations for human services compared to the statewide average. Map 11-1 shows per capita income by township.

Needs of Special Populations

One group significantly affected by the scope and quality of human services are area senior citizens. See Map 11-2. This population is commanding a growing share of the national, state, and peninsula population. The elderly are faced with numerous day-to-day challenges which, in turn, challenge the human services delivery system. Economic stability, health and nutrition, transportation and mobility, and self sufficiency are all very real and pressing issues which must be addressed.

Many of the challenges being faced by the elderly are, to varying degrees, also confronting other special populations of the peninsula. While many senior citizens are physically disabled, so are many other younger persons. Insufficient income to meet living needs often faces the elderly on a fixed income, but it also affects those persons untrained for the job market or recently laid off. While the very aged may be more prone to mental illness, anyone can experience mental distress brought about by societal or personal pressures.

Drug Abuse, Child Care and Domestic Violence

Drug abuse counseling, child care needs, and domestic violence present increasing demands upon human services systems. The rural character of the peninsula has not, contrary to what is often believed, buffered the peninsula from these challenges. The increasing number of single parent households is placing extraordinary pressures for affordable and convenient day care facilities. Drug abuse and domestic violence are now openly dis-

cussed and recognized as far too common occurrences for the welfare of the persons involved and the society as a whole.

As Working Paper #11 on Demographics documents, there are wide disparities in income and family situations for residents of the peninsula. Public programs and services designed to help individuals, children, and families meet a short term need and can dramatically improve the ability and likelihood of self sufficiency thereafter. Over time, the income gap should narrow (or at least not widen further) if human service programs are effective.

A FRAMEWORK FOR FUTURE POLICY

The foundation for the future delivery of human services on the peninsula must be based upon valid baseline data and an understanding of specific human service needs. Services should be based upon clearly identified needs, and to this end detailed demographic profiles should be developed, needs identified, and services monitored according to both quality and trends in demand.

The refinements to the Peninsula's human service delivery system should direct special attention to the needs of children and the elderly.

The refinements to the Peninsula's human service delivery system, in response to this base data, should direct special attention to the needs of children and the elderly. The Peninsula's future largely rests with the health and vitality of its children. Yet, it is the peninsula's elderly who are the fastest growing segment of the population. The Peninsula's human service delivery system should respond to the particular needs of these populations through collaborative programs. Similar efforts should be pursued in regard to services for drug abuse, domestic violence, mental health, early education, and other human services needs, including special programs for migrant workers.

Special emphasis should be directed to the basic health and nutrition needs of the entire

peninsula before other services can be effective and worthwhile. Affordable and convenient access to health and nutritional care must become paramount.

Improvements to the peninsula's human services delivery system should continue to be based upon interjurisdictional and inter-agency coordination and, more importantly, on collaboration. This collaboration should be particularly aimed at preventing unnecessary duplication of services and creating the most cost effective service delivery system. Other efforts should focus on periodic review and monitoring to identify unmet needs, and to finding the most appropriate organization(s) to address the need, as well as ways in which resources can be redirected to higher need services.

The extent to which the private sector can deliver human services in a cost effective manner in coordination with public agencies should be continually evaluated and monitored and, where appropriate, encouraged. Privatization of services, along with the examination of alternative funding structures for services should be examined as the opportunity permits.

HUMAN SERVICES AND FACILITIES POLICIES AND ACTION STATEMENTS

The following policies and action statements are intended to establish the blueprint for the **General Plan** recommendations for the future of the peninsula's human services and facilities.

Issue: Duplication and/or gaps in human services and facilities.

Policy:

Stewardship of public resources dictates that the county and local governments and human service agencies should exert every possible effort to make sure that there is a reasonable match between the needs and services; i.e., services should be based on quantifiable needs.

Action Statement:

A demographic profile of the needs of citizens on the peninsula for human services and facilities should be made available (and periodically updated) to all human service organizations as a benchmark against which to develop, deliver, and monitor the effectiveness of their programs.

Action Statement:

The Leelanau County Family Coordinating Council should continue to provide an organized method of periodic review of all human service programs to ensure the most cost effective and comprehensive delivery of needed services.

Action Statement:

Any resources devoted to program areas designated as "over-met" should be redirected to service areas identified as "under-met."

Issue: Special needs of children.

Policy:

County and local governments recognize that children are the future of the county and should make every effort to see that their basic needs are met.

Action Statement:

The Leelanau County Family Coordinating Council should continue to periodically provide a comprehensive identification of the special needs of children on the peninsula, along with an assessment of available services and delivery systems in order to compare the special needs of children with services delivered.

Action Statement:

Those governments and other human services organizations on the peninsula which provide services to children should identify, review, and evaluate alternatives to best match needs and services to optimize use of resources.

Action Statement:

In considering the appropriate service mix, state guidelines should be considered along with a special emphasis placed on those initiatives which are preventative in nature, such as

pre- and post-natal care, parenting skills, basic health and nutrition, teen pregnancy prevention. These initiatives will be the most cost-effective in the long-term.

Issue: *Special needs of the elderly.*

Policy:

Provide human service programs, sponsored by Leelanau County, that will facilitate personal development and self-sufficiency of all county residents. Such programs should assist individuals to achieve their full potential and protect and enhance their personal health and enjoyment of life.

Action Statement:

The Leelanau County Commission on Aging should continue to provide services that will permit senior citizens to remain in their own homes and to minimize their dependence on institutional care. Programs such as nutrition programs, homemaker aid, public transportation, respite care and others are appropriate means for achieving this goal.

Action Statement:

The Leelanau County Commission on Aging should continue to provide preventive services for the elderly, including but not limited to contact, physical facilities, and congregate meals.

Action Statement:

Support the involvement of volunteers, community-based organizations, non-profits, and senior citizens themselves in mounting service and educational programs.

Action Statement:

Establish funding guidelines that consider state, county and local appropriations as well as fee and charitable gift revenues, recognizing that while initial county matching contributions may be appropriate, the responsibility for operational funding of senior citizen centers should remain at the local level.

Action Statement:

The Leelanau County Commission on Aging should develop and maintain a data base of clientele for senior citizen programs from

which programmatic requirements, such as senior citizen housing, can be projected and planned.

Action Statement:

The County and the Commission on Aging should identify ways in which Leelanau County can become more amenable to senior citizens. Specifically investigate the feasibility of establishing an environment for "continuum of care" which responds realistically to the process of aging in providing the needed and desirable physical and service infrastructure.

Issue: *The needs of physically challenged county citizens.*

Policy:

Leelanau County should seek to minimize the barriers to economic and other self-sufficiency by physically challenged individuals to promote self-sufficiency by all appropriate means.

Action Statement:

The County should examine existing county programs and identify and eliminate barriers to access or use of such programs by physically challenged individuals.



Chapel at Old Settlers Park

Issue: Special needs of migrant agricultural workers.

Policy:

Recognition should be given that migrant workers are key members of the county's agricultural community and attention should be given to their needs during their annual residence in the county.

Action Statement:

A task force representing the major interests and organizations should be established to identify the special housing, health care and human service needs of migrants and the ways in which existing programs could be strengthened to cost-effectively meet those needs.

Issue: Domestic violence prevention and shelter needs.

Policy:

Every county citizen should have the right to a safe domestic environment.

Action Statement:

The County and local governments should continue to provide information to county citizens as to where to find help in cases of domestic violence.

Action Statement:

County and local governments should advocate that harsher measures be established by the state government for repeat sex and/or domestic violence offenders.

Action Statement:

County and local governments should cooperate with various agencies to encourage provision of safe havens from domestic violence.

Action Statement:

It should be recognized that substance abuse prevention is also a very effective measure in prevention of domestic violence, and that county and local governments should support efforts to prevent substance abuse.

Issue: Mental health services.

Policy:

Provide a range of mental health services which address the mental health needs of Leelanau County residents and coordinate programming with other state, county, and local agencies providing similar services or serving common clients.

Action Statement:

Conduct an annual review of the community mental health plan and ensure a reasonable relationship between the plan and the annual appropriations and needs for community mental health services on the peninsula.

Issue: Pre-school/headstart education

- **Programs for students of special needs (including gifted and talented).**
- **Programs for minorities.**

Policy:

The county, local jurisdictions and school districts should support and encourage programs for preschool/headstart as well as programs which provide a good, basic education for low income, high-risk, minorities, and students requiring special needs (including gifted and talented children).

Action Statement:

The county, local jurisdictions, human service agencies, and schools should seek out and utilize all available funds and facilities to provide such programs.

Action Statement:

Human service agencies should place more emphasis on educational programs which stress early education for those students with special needs.