



LAKE SUPERIOR COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

STRATEGIC

PLAN

2024 - 2026



LAKE SUPERIOR COMMUNITY
PARTNERSHIP

INTRODUCTION

This strategic plan follows a long history of strategic planning for the Lake Superior Community Partnership. Over the years, the organization has undergone significant change as it evolved in response to new challenges, economic trends, partners, and more. Change is inevitable and the LSCP will continue to face more change in the coming years.

Strategic plans are meant to be *living documents*. As such, this plan is designed to set clear guidelines for where the LSCP can provide value to its members now and over the coming three years. It is not designed to limit the LSCP's ability to capture unanticipated opportunities, but LSCP leadership should consult this document when evaluating any major change.

The plan should be reviewed annually each fall alongside the budget process. To help with implementation, annual workplans will be developed each fall as well to identify which goals and items will be a priority for the coming year and any necessary programmatic changes to pursue. This will allow incremental progress on the items outlined in this plan while respecting the organization's capacity, which isn't expected to experience significant change over the next three years.

A special thank you to the following individuals for their efforts to guide and develop this plan, in addition to the full LSCP Board of Directors, Executive Committee, and partners who took the time to provide feedback and insight.

LSCP Strategic Plan Workgroup

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LSCP Team

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PART 1: STRATEGIC PLAN MAIN CONTENT

Mission, Vision, Partner Experience, Guiding Principles

MISSION

The Lake Superior Community Partnership exists to ensure a vibrant local and regional economy.

VISION

The LSCP is the most accessible and respected local economic development organization within Marquette County. The LSCP team is considered experts in their craft, well-connected, and responsive to the needs of its members, the business community, and local governments. It provides a variety of targeted and impactful services and resources ranging from business and community development to advocacy and networking.

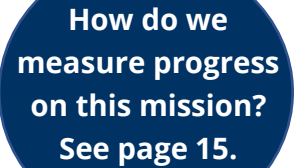
PARTNER EXPERIENCE

The LSCP is timely in its response, honest in its feedback, comprehensive in its approach, and a willing collaborator to help solve the matter at-hand. Follow up is provided with a positive, welcoming attitude.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Every day, the LSCP strives to deliver its services under these principles:

- We are accessible
- We follow through
- We collaborate with partners
- We take initiative
- We're nimble and adaptive
- We're resourceful
- We invest in our organization
- We do the right thing



How do we
measure progress
on this mission?
See page 15.

Organizational Update

Beginning in 2024, the LSCP will update its external structure to deliver its services under divisions which focus on similar services, audiences, and outcomes. Officially, all services will operate under a single entity (the LSCP); however, these sub-branded divisions will allow the LSCP to more clearly communicate its impact and customize efforts to meet a diverse partner base. It will also ultimately lead to more opportunities for investment in the organization.

LAKE SUPERIOR COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

The LSCP seeks to advance local and regional economic prosperity through connections, dialogue, subject matter expertise, and affordable services.

Products: Events & Membership Benefits | Funded by: Memberships

ECONOMIC ALLIANCE

Products:
BRE Program, Business Services, Site Selection, Impact Studies, Talent Services

Funded By: Investors & Fees

BUSINESS NETWORK

Products:
Business Directory, eBlasts, BAHs, Ribbon Cuttings, Love on Local, Key to the County, etc.

Funded By: Packages & Fees

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

Products:
Customized contracts including admin support, marketing, comm dev, etc.

Funded by: Contracts

Lake Superior Community Partnership: As the overall entity, the LSCP will serve as the membership and operations division, hosting a series of events and services aimed at fostering dialogue and information sharing around economic development issues as well as housing staff and resources. All investments in the LSCP will include a base membership fee to support the organization's work. Examples of services under the LSCP main brand include:

- Partner pricing to events & services
- Partner Engagement Events
- Economic Dev. Breakfast Series
- Brews and Bright Ideas (new)
- LSCP Annual Dinner
- Lake Superior Leadership Academy
- Ability to serve on LSCP Committees
- Other general membership services such as access to a notary

LSCP Economic Alliance: The Economic Alliance identifies and removes barriers to additional economic growth. Organizations investing at the "Investing Partner" level and above will help guide the work of this division. Programming and projects under this division tend to be more complex, longer-term, and behind the scenes. Examples of services include:

- Special studies and programs on critical issues such as housing and air service
- Targeted business retention and expansion program
- Site selector services
- Business attraction services
- Economic-development advocacy
- Additional opportunities for investors to network and collaborate

LSCP Business Network: The Business Network offers a full suite of services to elevate the business community throughout Marquette County ranging from promotions support to networking and educational opportunities. All members investing in the full base Partner level and above will have access to these services; higher investment levels will include additional base services. Many of the services under this division are tangible services that can deliver impact right now, including:

- Business After Hours
- Ribbon Cuttings*
- Love on Local Gift Card Program*
- Key to the County
- Business Directory Listing
- eBlasts and social media promotion
- Access to business support resources
- Additional marketing opportunities
- Business-related advocacy

**Currently available free of charge to any business in Marquette County*

LSCP Professional Services: The Professional Services division provides contract-based services and project work for interested entities including business development programs, economic development expertise, administrative support, community development, and more. These services are available to private, public, and non-profit entities as LSCP capacity allows. Priority will always be given to projects with the LSCP's mission.

- Economic Impact Studies
- Regional ED Contracts
- Local Government Contracts
- Backend Support Contracts
- Special Projects

Over the course of the next three years, the LSCP will explore potential avenues to grow revenue under this new structure. But in 2024, this new structure will work within the existing tiered investment structure the LSCP currently operates. Its main purpose is to better define its service areas and allow for more targeted development and communication over time.

Focus Areas and Priority Actions

Under this plan, the LSCP will focus on eight priority areas. Each focus area includes a description which will guide efforts over the next three years, identifies partners, sets measurements of success, and highlights priority tasks. This plan is not intended to be all encompassing but instead to identify essential actions to move the organization toward its vision under each focus area. The LSCP will continue to operate services and programs which may not be specifically mentioned in this section and some of these priority areas are primarily served by external partners and therefore will not include many action items.

Due to the ever-evolving nature of economic development field, the LSCP will undergo an annual process each fall to develop a **work plan** for the following year, identifying priority goals and items to achieve as well as key economic barriers and critical topics. It may also make updates to this plan in that process. The intent is to address priority action items over the next three years as resources allow.



Retaining and Growing Businesses



Creating Vibrant Communities



Encouraging Entrepreneurship



Advocating for Shared Interests



Connecting and Informing Members



Expanding Revenue
Investing in the LSCP
Actively Communicating

FOCUS AREA 1:

RETAINING AND GROWING EXISTING BUSINESSES



Business retention and growth is essential to any community. With, on average, more than 85% of new jobs created by existing businesses, the return on investment is significant. The LSCP will continue its long history of providing impactful, targeted business services and programming which help existing businesses thrive and ultimately grow into their next stage. In 2026, these services will continue to evolve to match existing needs of the business community and be as efficient as possible to maximize staff time.

Key Partners: Invest UP, Innovate Marquette SmartZone, Northern Initiatives, Small Business Development Center, Small Business Association of Michigan, Michigan Economic Development Corporation, State Departments (LEO, MDARD, MDOT, DNR, EGLE, etc.)

Ongoing Measurements of Success

- Business retention and expansion visits
- New or updated resources for businesses

Ongoing Efforts: Business Retention and Expansion Visits, Site Selection, Data Services, Critical Issue Projects

Strategic Actions Needed to Meet the Vision		
#	Description	Division(s)
1.1	Implement the Central Upper Peninsula Small Business Support Hub (if awarded)	Economic Alliance; Business Network
1.2	Implement a more detailed, targeted business retention and expansion visit strategy	Economic Alliance
1.3	Enhance the content and the ease in which the LSCP can perform economic impact studies	Professional Services
1.4	Create a comprehensive system to share businesses that are ready to go public with selling/succession.	Economic Alliance; Business Network

FOCUS AREA 2:

CREATING VIBRANT COMMUNITIES



Vibrant communities are essential for retaining and attracting population. From housing variety, childcare, good schools and parks to lively small businesses, streamlined local permitting processes, and service clubs, the resources and assets available at the local level have an immense impact on our ability to succeed economically. By 2026, the LSCP will be recognized for taking a more active role in facilitating discussions and efforts to help local governments prepare for investment to retain and attract population.

Key Partners: Local Government Officials & Staff, CUPPAD, MEDC, MSU Extension, Invest UP, Foundations, Developers

Measurements of Success:

- Number of meetings with local governments

Ongoing Efforts: Meet regularly with local governments, professional services contracts, involvement in community development organizations and efforts such as CEDAM, MAP, and the local CEDS planning process

Strategic Actions Needed to Meet the Vision		
<i>#</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Division(s)</i>
2.1	Hold an annual local government economic development summit	Economic Alliance
2.2	Implement an annual developer feedback survey in partnership with local governments and the county	Economic Alliance
2.3	Develop additional capacity to support local governments with grants	Economic Alliance; LSCP
2.4	Enhance resources and expertise for supporting both large and small developers	Economic Alliance

FOCUS AREA 3:

ENCOURAGING ENTREPRENEURSHIP



Marquette County has developed a reputation for innovative entrepreneurs. The LSCP will work in collaboration with key partners to foster and enhance the ecosystem which allows entrepreneurs to thrive. The LSCP's focus will remain on supporting entrepreneurs with affordable, impactful services which are not replicated by existing partners. By 2026, current efforts to fully integrate all entrepreneurial partner's work and services will be complete.

Key Partners: Innovate Marquette SmartZone, Accelerate UP, SBDC, Northern Initiatives

Measurements of Success

- Number of business start-up assistance meetings
- Number of meetings with entrepreneurship partners to coordinate efforts

Ongoing Efforts: Business licensing support, business plan review, financial projections, 1:1 business start-up meetings, and other similar transactional services geared toward startup businesses

Strategic Actions Needed to Meet the Vision		
<i>#</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Division(s)</i>
3.1	Pursue creation of a shared intake portal for entrepreneurial services in Marquette County	Economic Alliance; Business Network

FOCUS AREA 4:

ADVOCATING FOR SHARED INTERESTS



Advocacy is one of the most important roles the LSCP serves. The LSCP brings the business community, local governments, nonprofits, and others together to create communitywide wins through our advocacy work. We also work diligently to build long-lasting relationships with legislators and key state department officials to advocate for the needs of Marquette County. At the end of 2026, the LSCP will remain the most valued local leader in advocacy.

Key Partners: Ambassadors, Invest UP, Local Governments, State Legislators

Measurements of Success:

- Legislative contacts
- LSCP critical issue statements

Ongoing Efforts: Marquette County Ambassadors, 1:1 legislative meetings, legislative tracking, legislative alerts

Strategic Actions Needed to Meet the Vision		
<i>#</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Division(s)</i>
4.1	Develop “critical issue” statements to clearly communicate the organization’s position and recommendations on key topics	LSCP

FOCUS AREA 5:

CONNECTING AND INFORMING MEMBERS



Fostering connections and information sharing is at the heart of the LSCP's work. It is also a vital part of its history and elevates the other work the organization conducts. By the end of 2026, the LSCP will have an enhanced calendar of events that seek to build connections, share information, and promote the success of our investing members.

Key Partners: InvestUP, DDAs, Innovate SmartZone

Measurements of Success:

- Average attendance at Business After Hours
- Number of LSCP Partners
- Overall attendance at LSCP-sponsored events

Ongoing Efforts: Business After Hours, Ribbon Cuttings, Key to the County, Love on Local, Lunch n' Learns, Business Listing, eBlasts, Business Resources, etc.

Strategic Actions Needed to Meet the Vision		
<i>#</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Division(s)</i>
5.1	Implement a quarterly Economic Development Breakfast Series	LSCP
5.2	Develop business 'communities' to better foster connections and networking	Business Network
5.3	Host an economic development hub event to connect businesses to economic development resources	Business Network

FOCUS AREA 6:

EXPANDING REVENUE



The LSCP has made significant strides in diversifying its revenue model over the past decade, but more can and needs to be done. Continued investment in the organization is essential for ensuring it delivers the most impactful services possible. By the end of 2026, the LSCP will have increased its annual revenue to meet inflation-adjusted revenue targets, as compared to 2012, via a range of new and expanded revenue sources.

Key Partners: Other membership-based organizations and all our existing partners

Measurements of Success:

- Increased overall annual revenue
- Percentage of months in positive cash flow
- Sufficient operating reserves

Ongoing Efforts: Annual dues renewals, new partner recruitment, Chairman’s Circle, fundraising, shared services, professional service contracts

Strategic Actions Needed to Meet the Vision		
<i>#</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Division(s)</i>
6.1	Implement an evergreen funding program (multiyear commitments)	LSCP
6.2	Develop additional investment levels to account for and attract larger investment amounts	LSCP; Economic Alliance
6.3	Develop new fee-for-service opportunities	All
6.4	Secure additional shared services contracts with other local economic development organizations in the region	Professional Services
6.5	Implement project-tracking procedures to ensure all professional services contracts are providing a net positive return	LSCP / Professional Services
6.6	Pursue new shared membership agreements	LSCP

FOCUS AREA 7:

INVESTING IN THE LSCP



The LSCP is only as good as the team it attracts and maintains. By the end of 2026, the LSCP will maintain a set of modern human resource policies, compensation strategies, professional development approaches, and internal tools which maximize staff's impact on behalf of Marquette County businesses and partners and make the LSCP a premiere place to work.

Key Partners: Internal, but will collaborate with other economic development partners when possible to elevate investment in all our teams

Measurements of Success:

- Staff longevity
- Staff satisfaction
- Professional development activities

Ongoing Efforts: Flexible workplace policies, team outings, professional development funds, investments in technology

Strategic Actions Needed to Meet the Vision		
<i>#</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Division(s)</i>
7.1	Implement updated HR and Payroll Software	LSCP
7.2	Develop a clear, consistent, and competitive compensation policy	LSCP
7.3	Update the LSCP Employee Manual	LSCP
7.4	Develop a clear policy for career progression	LSCP
7.5	Implement an internal professional development program	LSCP
7.6	Secure funds to hire an Office Professional to support the LSCP team	LSCP
7.7	Develop a formal orientation program for new hires	LSCP
7.8	Implement an annual programmatic review process to determine the effectiveness and impact of each service	All

FOCUS AREA 8: **COMMUNICATING CLEARLY AND OFTEN**



Communication is key to the success of any organization. This rings especially true for organizations such as the LSCP which offer a wide variety of services which impact a wide variety of audiences. By 2026 the LSCP will have developed a robust set of communication channels and tools to tell the story of each business area in a proactive way which is looked at as a model for other economic development organizations.

Key Partners: Internal, but will collaborate with other economic development partners to amplify messaging whenever possible

Measurements of Success:

- Media interactions
- Social media engagement
- Community presentations

Ongoing Efforts: LSCP Perspectives, LSCP Partner Highlights, Radio, Social Media, Community Presentations

Strategic Actions Needed to Meet the Vision		
#	Description	Division(s)
8.1	Expand use of video sharing platforms to spread awareness of our work	All
8.2	Update the LSCP Website	LSCP

MEASURING SUCCESS

No plan is complete without clear direction on how to measure success. The LSCP will measure individual metrics set under each goal on the previous pages. Additional measurements may be added in specific years. Each of the internal measurements will be reported quarterly and aggregated annually.

Additionally, there are signs we can track to indicate progress toward our mission to create a vibrant local and regional economy. These indicators of success include:

- Increasing Population
- Increasing workforce Participation Rates
- Increasing Number of Jobs
- New Investment
- Rising Median Household Income
- New Business Start Ups
- New Building Permits

Overall economic indicators will be reported in the LSCP Annual Report.