



EMMET COUNTY NEWS RELEASE

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Emmet County Provides Office for Housing North's Program Director

Housing North has found a professional home for its recently hired Housing Ready Program Director with the help of Emmet County government officials.

Earlier this year, Andrea Jacobs joined Housing North, a ten-county nonprofit organization that works to build awareness, influence policy, and grow capacity and resources for housing solutions in Antrim, Benzie, Charlevoix, Emmet, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, Leelanau, Manistee, Missaukee, and Wexford counties. In her position at Housing North, Jacobs is tasked with spearheading efforts to expand housing in Emmet County.

Since the progress Jacobs will have in finding solutions to housing issues depends on working with local units of government, Emmet County Administrator Michael Reaves offered to provide Jacobs with office space inside the County Building.

"The issues facing our area when it comes to workforce housing and affordable housing are obviously not going away any time soon and will take an ongoing, collaborative effort to see improvements," said Reaves. "When the Board of Commissioners hosted a housing summit last summer, it showed how leaders in government, business, and nonprofit organizations are exploring various paths to stimulate the increase in housing availability. Having an office for Andrea in the County Building will give her the opportunity to build some synergy with County staff as ideas and solutions are pursued."

Efforts to attract people and businesses to the area have been, and continue to be, successful as indicated by the 2020 U.S. Census, which showed the county's population increasing by more than 2000 people in the past decade. Without adequate housing, local leaders know businesses will continue to struggle finding employees to fill the hundreds of open positions across all industry sectors in northern Michigan.

"This contribution from the County is a great way to support the area's housing efforts," said Yarrow Brown, Housing North's Executive Director. "We're excited to add Emmet County to our list of contributors that are making this position possible."

Brown said that though Jacobs will have office space at the County Building, she also plans to continue to work remotely as needed to connect with prospective developers, other local governmental units and nonprofit organizations.

"I am grateful for the County to have offered an office for the Housing Ready Program," Jacobs said. "It gives me the opportunity to work closely with many of the offices and individuals involved in the process of reducing barriers to residential development. My work takes me all over the county, cooperating with many stakeholders in the villages and townships, but a base in the County Building helps me to remain in the holistic mindset of the larger community."

Jacobs is expected to begin using the County office space in early April. To learn more about the housing ready efforts in Emmet County, contact Jacobs at andrea@housingnorth.org or explore more about the organization online at www.housingnorth.org.

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