



# STRATEGIC PLAN FY 2025-2030

Board Approved: September 5, 2025



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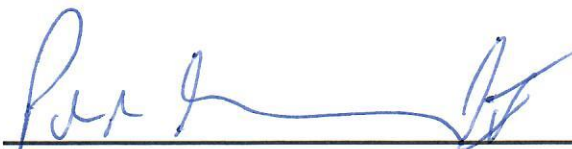
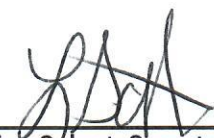
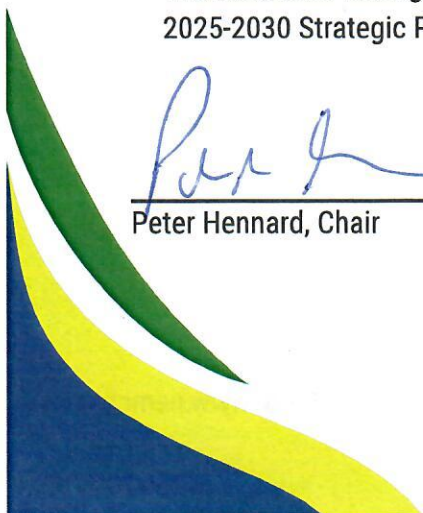
Jeffrey Schilling,

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## Board Approval of Strategic Plan

The Northeast Michigan Community Service Agency Board of Director's has reviewed and approved this 2025-2030 Strategic Plan document at its regularly scheduled September 2025 meeting.

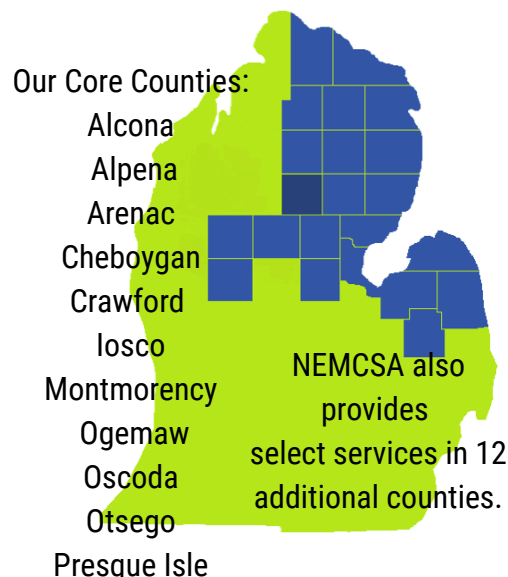
  
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Peter Hennard, Chair  
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Lisa Salgat, Secretary



# Executive Summary

The Northeast Michigan Community Service Agency (NEMCSA) has spent the past 57 years strengthening northeast Michigan by delivering programs that make a real difference. The service area covers as much land as roughly the states of Connecticut and Rhode Island combined, boasts the Huron National Forest, the AuSable River, strong farming communities and 1,850 miles of shoreline. Providing programs that span the lifetime, NEMCSA remains committed to helping residents achieve their full potential. Programs in place address homeless prevention, foreclosure and homebuyer education, weatherization assistance, self-sufficiency, children and pregnant women, school success, older adult services, volunteer programs, and poverty education. NEMCSA remains true to its mission of “Enhancing quality of life, by empowering individuals and strengthening communities,” and will use it to guide the strategic planning process.

As NEMCSA looks ahead to the next five years, it is important to reflect on the past. Through Community Needs Assessments, ROMA (Results, Oriented, Management, & Accountability) Measures, focus groups, client satisfaction surveys, and lived experiences, NEMCSA undertakes the strategic planning process eager to take on challenges facing the agency and the communities they serve.



The 2025-2030 NEMCSA Strategic plan was developed through consultant-led sessions that consisted of virtual and in person meetings. Members of the strategic planning committee consisted of NEMCSA board members, leadership team and staff from the NEMCSA divisions. The planning meetings were a complex process that required members to evaluate the organization’s past, take an honest look at its current position, and envision its desired future. The journey was not simple. Participants had to keep an open mind, face difficult truths, engage in brainstorming, follow organizational standards, and consider the needs of families, the agency, and the broader community.

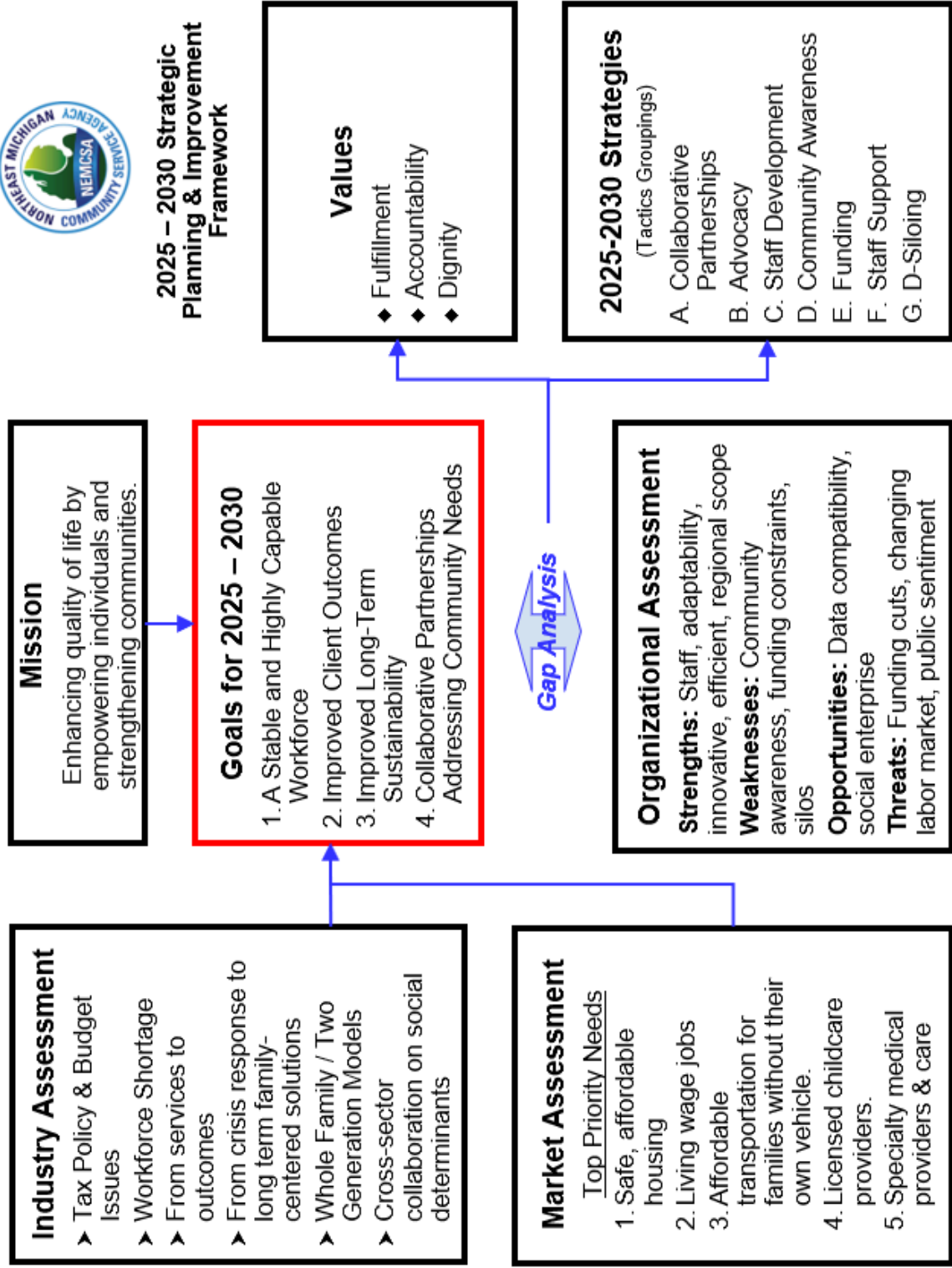
Utilizing the goals, tactics, and measures attained through the strategic planning process, NEMCSA is excited to begin taking our next steps. Holding true to our mission, utilizing our values, and remaining committed, NEMCSA will continue to work towards economic mobility for all.

Sincerely,

Lisa L. Bolen  
Executive Director/CEO



## 2025 – 2030 Strategic Planning & Improvement Framework





# Mission & Values

As with most strategic planning processes, the mission and values were reviewed to make sure they reflect NEMCSA's current state as well as our vision for 2025-2030. Guided by the Strategic Plan, NEMCSA will continue to build on a strong foundation, embrace change, increase organizational efficiency, and strengthen community partnerships.

## NEMCSA's Mission

Through a mission statement, one can see the organization's purpose, guidance for daily operations and strategies for decision making, and the stakeholder alignment of shared goals and values.

**"Enhancing quality of life by empowering individuals and strengthening communities."**

## NEMCSA's Values

At NEMCSA, values will be what drives the agency to achieving the strategic goals. The values that will continue to move NEMCSA forward are Fulfillment, Accountability, and Dignity.

### Fulfillment:

- True fulfillment happens when people have the support, tools, and opportunities to reach their potential and create stability for themselves and their families.
- For staff, fulfillment is found in knowing each interaction, service, and program can spark hope, open doors, and change lives.
- For clients, it is achieved when barriers are removed and they gain the confidence, independence, and resources to thrive.
- For partners and communities, it is realized when we work together to create lasting impact that uplifts everyone.
- Fulfillment reminds the agency that success is not only measured by numbers, but also by the joy of a parent providing for their child, the relief of a senior who feels supported, or the pride of a family reaching self-sufficiency.

### Accountability:

- Accountability means recognizing when improvement is needed, embracing change, and making decisions guided by data.
- For staff, it means communicating openly and transparently while staying consistent with policies, procedures, and commitments, ensuring client needs are met through seamless hand-offs and ongoing follow-up.
- For funders and participants, it means delivering on our promises and strengthening systems through training, performance improvement, and data mapping.
- Accountability ensures that services are effective, reliable, and worthy of trust.

### Dignity:

- Dignity is shown by treating everyone with fairness and respect—whether board members, coworkers, or program participants.
- For staff, it means holding one another accountable to act with respect, being mindful of our behavior, and valuing people's beliefs and choices.
- For participants, it means being heard, accepted for who they are, and seeing their feedback reflected in services.
- Dignity emphasizes that every individual possesses inherent worth and should be treated with care.



# Challenges

## The Areas Where We Live, Work, & Play

28.30% of the Population is Over the Age of 65

59.3% of the Houses Were Built Before 1979

22.7% of the Population Spend More than 30% of Their Income on Housing Costs

9.1% of the Population has Less Than a High School Diploma

18.4% is the Average Food Insecurity Rate for the Area

1,334:1 is the Primary Care Physician to Patient Ratio

44% of the Households Are Below A.L.I.C.E Guidelines

\$56,617 is the Median Household Income

*Data Source from the 2025 NEMCSA Community Needs Assessment.*

The NEMCSA Community Needs Assessment, conducted in 2025, identified the most pressing needs across the agency's core 11-county service area and Roscommon County. In short, the most common barriers were communities lacking: safe and affordable housing, transportation options for families that do not have their own cars, specialty medical providers, licensed childcare providers, and jobs offering a livable wage.

During the Strategic Planning Process, in addition to the CNA being reviewed, the committee also completed a Strength, Weakness, Opportunity and Threat (SWOT) analysis, a Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, and Results (SOAR) analysis, reviewed an organizational assessment, an environmental assessment, board of director surveys, client satisfaction surveys, and employee satisfaction surveys.

## SWOT Analysis Results

<p><u>Strengths</u></p> <p>Staff with a lot of heart, staff are skilled and good at what they do Experience and longevity Untapped organizational capacity Organizational stability Regional Data informed decisions Ability to innovate Adaptable and willing to change Efficient Attractive benefit package</p>	<p><u>Weaknesses</u></p> <p>Community awareness Diversifying funding streams Silos Geographic size Wage/benefits expectation and needs constrained by funding Inconsistent funding guidelines</p>
<p><u>Opportunities</u></p> <p>Data compatibility Continued effort for expanding funding opportunity Social enterprise Nature of service area/proximity (absence of career competition)</p>	<p><u>Threats</u></p> <p>Funding is uncertain Workforce competition (non-profit vs. for-profit) Public Sentiment Changing attitude related to workplace loyalty and priorities Unprecedented career choices</p>

After analyzing and discussing all pieces of information, both demographically, and agency and community related, the Strategic Planning Committee developed four strategic goals for 2025-2030.





# Goals, Strategies, & Tactics

## Goals:

The NEMCSA Strategic Planning Committee reviewed the 2025 Community Needs Assessment, a SWOT analysis, input from stakeholders, ROMA goals, and the political landscape. From this process, four goals were established to guide the agency from 2025 to 2030. The Strategic Planning Work Group and Leadership staff worked to identify a set of measures for the Goals which will be refined with the help of the Board of Director's Planning Committee and implemented once baseline values and targets are set. These can be found in Appendix II.



## Strategies:

Goals	Strategies
A Stable and Highly Capable Workforce	Improve Employee Retention and Reduce Vacancies Strengthen Staff Performance and Development
Improved Client Outcomes	Strengthen Family Well-Being Enhance Interdepartmental Communication and Collaboration Monitor Client Experience and Satisfaction
Improved Long-Term Sustainability	Strengthen Financial Stability Increase Community Awareness
Collaborative Partnerships Addressing Community Needs	Increase Access to Services Through Community Partnerships

## Tactics:

Several draft tactics were identified to achieve each strategy. It is anticipated that as the strategic plan moves forward and is reviewed, tactics may change to address changing political landscapes, outside environments, funding sources, and other factors. A full list of tactics can be found in Appendix I.



# Action & Accountability

Implementation of the NEMCSA 2025-2030 strategic plan will be lead by the Board of Directors and the Executive Director/CEO. Leadership staff at all levels will be invaluable in instilling the goals and values into program specific activities with the Strategic Planning Committee acting as stewards of the plan through review and revision if necessary.

NEMCSA aligns with the values and approaches outlined in the National Community Action Network Theory of Change. As a Community Services Block Grant Recipient, NEMCSA's 2025-2030 Strategic Plan fulfills the CSBG Organizational Standards by adhering to:

- 6.1: The organization has an agency-wide strategic plan that has been approved by the governing board within the past 5 years.
- 6.2: The approved strategic plan addresses the reduction of poverty, revitalization of low-income communities, and or empowerment of people with low incomes to become more self-sufficient.
- 6.3: The approved strategic plan contains family, agency, and/or community goals.

The Results Oriented Management and Accountability (ROMA) Cycle also guides strategic planning processes through laying out performance management processes adhered to by Community Action Agencies. Movement towards the strategic planning goals will be done with the appropriate stages of the ROMA cycle in mind to meet performance based initiatives.

The NEMCSA 2025-2030 Strategic Plan is meant to be a living document that will adhere to the agency's mission and values, while attaining the goals laid out in this plan. However, the ways in which we get there (strategies and tactics) may change over time due to review from committee and board members, outside factors, and changes in environment. NEMCSA will track, update, and record progress on the Strategic Plan to maintain its relevance in the following ways:

Ongoing:

- Data is routinely gathered, reviewed and measured against benchmarks to ensure continuous quality improvement and identify gaps in meeting targets.
- Data is reviewed and shared with necessary internal staff to address/improve client satisfaction.

Regularly:

- Senior leadership and Board of Directors get to review the Strategic Planning Scorecard (Appendix II).

Monthly:

- Staff will receive updates and progress on the plan either through e-mail, newsletter, or staff meetings.

Annually:

- The Strategic Planning Committee will assess strategies and tactics to determine if revisions need to be made to meet the four strategic planning goals.







# Appendix I: Tactics

## **Collaborative Partnership**

Open up training in E.C "best practice" to child care (private) community  
 Apply current skills to "new" programs, needs in community  
 Identify service deserts, partner to provide mobile or satellite programming.  
 Share expertise in data collection and analysis with other organizations  
 Convene cross-sector coalitions to address regional barriers

- Day Care / Child Care (including summer options)
- Affordable housing
- Transportation
- NEMCSA portfolio gaps

Develop CNA / CHNA Joint Efforts with hospitals, community mental health  
 Develop relationships with MILEAP

## **Advocacy**

More PR for who we are, what we do, data and statistics  
 Create & Implement Action Plan to Cultivate legislative relationships

- Invite elected officials to our offices

Increase political advocacy for the vulnerable population  
 Increase Board and employee engagement for advocacy

## **Funding**

Invest in donor management software and training for key staff?  
 Prepare and implement a Fund Development Plan

- Donor recruitment, retention, development
- Value proposition, impact and ROI data
- Targeted constituencies, groups, individuals
- Endowment, Memorial, Estate Planning Goals
- Well researched and targets grant opportunities
- Selective (high ROI) events, activity

Diversify funding sources through grants, contracts, and private contributions.  
 Secure state funding for BOSS program  
 Indirect rates  
 Continue productive investment strategy

## **Community Awareness**

Prepare, implement "Brand Ambassador" Plan

- multiple constituents (Board, employee, client)
- Education, tools, support

Launch a coordinated marketing and outreach campaign using digital, print, and in-person channels.  
 Engage in community meetings/events, coalitions, and advisory councils to increase visibility, support.  
 Share client program impact stories and data with the public and other stakeholders.  
 Create targeted outreach materials tailored to funders, policymakers, community members and potential clients.

## **Multiple Strategies**

Find a way for Client Follow-up after exiting the program

- Explore use of benchmarking

## **HR - Staff Development**

Workforce objectives may need to be customized by division  
 Formalize performance reviews (annual, in person, written plans, etc.)  
 Explore feasibility of flexible work arrangements (hybrid schedules, flexible hours, etc.); use as coaching tools focusing on growth.  
 College student listening sessions  
 Supervisor Committee  
 Implement regular pulse surveys to track employee morale and act on feedback.  
 Identify and "skill-up" potential leaders

- Strengthen line managers

Design & initiate Mentorship Program for newer staff

Improve recruitment and onboarding

- Increase recruiter involvement in hiring process
- Identify and replicate practices that led to best fit hires

Plan and implement retention strategies

- Plan and hold employee recognition events
- Employee-stay interviews
- Identify clear career pathways for many / all positions
- Bring back Program Lunch learns?

Increase staff awareness of the \$\$ value of their benefits (on top of wages )  
 Become A PEO (Professional Employer Organization)

## **Staff Support**

Compile and enhance staff development curriculum

- Manager training on supporting staff
- Client-facing curriculum (Poverty, Diversity, Trauma, & Support Systems)
- Confidentiality & Trust
- Leveraging new technology

Expand & enhance process / quality improvement work

- Reinforce, support use of LEAN
- Improve efficiency, decrease waste in each Department

Strengthen internal communication process

- Flatten internal communication structure
- Evaluate how we communicate with staff / dissemination of info; design improvements

## **De-Siloing**

Charter new cross-functional Committee  
 Improve internal collaboration

- Increase staff awareness of "other" department services

Create opportunities for cross program education for staff  
 Identify and support cross division collaboration work groups

Leverage multi-disciplinary teams (idea-sharing, innovation)  
 Create "success stories" share  
 Create more unified client experience  
 Simplify client "first" contact access for services  
 Align intake and assessment tools across departments where possible.  
 Embed "warm hand-off" principles and techniques for internal and external referrals  
 Achieve "flow" of information across services / reduce duplicate requests

Develop a shared client database (EmpowOR?) or communication platform to track referrals and service delivery.  
 Leverage data-sharing agreements to streamline client services and reduce duplication.  
 Explore recognition of some common client outcomes across programs and collaborate on solutions.  
 Conduct pre- and post-service surveys and focus groups to gather actionable feedback.  
 Establish a system for real-time client input (e.g., text-based). (Empowor text)  
 Use data to identify gaps in services and areas for process improvement.



## Appendix II: Scorecard

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Strategic Planning Scorecard: To be shared at a later time.