



Houghton County Land Bank Authority 2024 Annual Report

Board of Directors:

Lisa Mattila, Chairperson;

John Haeussler, Secretary; James Hainault, Treasurer;

Glenn Anderson; Tom Tikkanen.

The Houghton County Land Bank Authority Board of Directors (LBA) met four (4) times in 2024: February 15, May 7, July 23, and October 2.

The board elected to retain the 2023 officers with Director Haeussler serving as secretary and Director Hainault serving as treasurer. Chairperson Mattila arranged for a recording secretary to take minutes at meetings, which was greatly appreciated by the board. Directors Haeussler and Tikkanen were reappointed by the Houghton County Board of Commissioners to three-year terms expiring December 31, 2026.

Entering 2024 the LBA had thirty-nine (39) parcels in its inventory. The LBA continues to monitor a lien for a property transferred prior to 2024 for which the development agreement has not been satisfied but for which the work is slowly progressing.

The Houghton County treasurer foreclosed twenty-two (22) parcels in 2024. The LBA discussed the tax-foreclosed parcels and the majority of them were visited by one or more directors for visual inspection. Prior to the first public tax sale auction the LBA purchased three (3) of the 2024 tax-foreclosed parcels from the Houghton County treasurer for the purpose of blight elimination. (Table 1, Parcels 1-3.) One of these parcels was subsequently sold. (Table 1, Parcel 3.)

The LBA sold two (2) additional parcels from its inventory in 2024. (Table 1, Parcels 4-5.)

Much of the LBA's 2024 efforts focused on blight elimination in the form of both demolition and stabilization projects. The LBA continues to expend funds received from the Michigan State Land Bank Authority and the Houghton County Board of Commissioners (via the American Rescue Plan Act) to this end. The LBA also received substantial contributions from several municipal partners in 2024 to assist with blight elimination within their municipalities: \$50,000 from the Charter Township of Calumet, \$25,000 from Torch Lake Township, \$9,000 from Chassell Township, and \$3,000 from the Village of Calumet. Demolition and stabilization projects are scheduled to continue throughout 2025 and likely well beyond.

The Houghton County Board of Commissioners appropriated \$6,000 to the LBA in the County's 2023-24 budget and \$5,000 in 2024-25.

The Bring Back Calumet initiative, which received a 2023 Governor’s Award for Historic Preservation, was honored with the 2024 Advocacy Award by the Vernacular Architecture Forum. The initiative is a collaborative effort by the LBA, Village of Calumet, Calumet Downtown Development Authority, Mainstreet Calumet, Keweenaw Economic Development Alliance, Keweenaw National Historical Park, and Keweenaw National Historical Park Advisory Commission focusing on the revitalization of Calumet.

The LBA continues to maintain a vital relationship with the Keweenaw Economic Development Alliance (KEDA). KEDA Executive Director Jeff Ratcliffe works closely with Chairperson Mattila to administer grant funds; vet potential developers and contractors; oversee demolition, stabilization, redevelopment, and rehabilitation projects; prepare requests for bids; and organize community volunteers. Jeff and KEDA Business Retention Specialist Sam Stonelake are routinely first on the scene and responsible for the bulk of the manual labor at many LBA properties. KEDA’s contributions to the LBA cannot be overstated.

The LBA is also grateful for the assistance it received in 2024 from Leah Polzien of the Calumet Downtown Development Authority, recording secretaries Jason Coffey and Chelsea Rheault, and the community volunteers who answered the call to assist at LBA property sites. Thank you!

At the close of 2024 the LBA has thirty-nine (39) parcels in its inventory. (Table 2.) Four of the parcels are set aside for future sale and redevelopment. (Table 2, Parcels 1, 7, 35, and 39.)

Table 1: 2024 LBA Property Transactions	
<u>Property Address</u>	<u>2024 Transactions</u>
1. Parcel 31-002-402-082-00 25764 Agent Street Calumet (Calumet Township)	2024 tax foreclosure. Purchased from the county treasurer for \$3,933.08 plus 2024 summer taxes. [July 23, 2024] Fire-ravaged residential home to be demolished.
2. Parcel 31-014-543-004-00 52290 Duncan Avenue Hubbell (Torch Lake Township)	2024 tax foreclosure. Purchased from the county treasurer for \$2,654.97 plus 2024 summer taxes. [July 23, 2024] Blighted and hazardous commercial building to be demolished.
3. Parcel 31-010-514-005-00 19585 Frue Street Dodgeville (Portage Township)	2024 tax foreclosure. Purchased from the county treasurer for \$3,118.15 plus 2024 summer taxes. [July 23, 2024] Blighted residential home subsequently sold to adjacent property owner for \$4,470.09. New owner demolished structure and cleaned up property.
4. Parcel 31-002-520-004-70 25608 D Street Calumet (Calumet Township)	Vacant land. Assessor's Plat of Raymbaultown. Blighted home has been demolished. Sold to Copper Country Habitat for Humanity for \$2,000.00 for the purpose of constructing a residential home. [July 23, 2024]
5. Parcel 31-002-120-016-00 26364 Atlantic Street Laurium (Calumet Township)	Vacant land. Florida's Addition to Laurium. Blighted home has been demolished. Sold to Houghton County residents for \$10,030.00 for the purpose of constructing a residential home. [October 2, 2024]

Table 2: 2024 LBA Property Inventory	
<u>Property Address</u>	<u>Comments/Status</u>
1. Parcel 31-001-400-111-00 Sixth Avenue Trimountain (Adams Township)	Vacant land. Assessor's Plat of Trimountain. Candidate for cleanup and redevelopment. Purchase agreement in place for \$2,000.00 sale to Copper Country Habitat for Humanity for the purpose of future construction.
2. Parcel 31-002-402-082-00 25764 Agent Street Calumet (Calumet Township)	Fire-ravaged residential property. Plat of Hecla II. Priority candidate for demolition.
3. Parcel 31-002-420-111-00 57435 Fourth Street Calumet (Calumet Township)	Vacant land. Assessor's Plat of Blue Jacket Location. Blighted duplex has been demolished.
4. Parcel 31-002-420-112-00 57437 Fourth Street Calumet (Calumet Township)	Vacant land. Assessor's Plat of Blue Jacket Location. Blighted duplex has been demolished.
5. Parcel 31-002-420-120-00 6. Parcel 31-002-420-121-00 Fifth Street Calumet (Calumet Township)	Vacant land. Assessor's Plat of Blue Jacket Location. Part of blighted commercial building has been demolished. Property is adjacent to parcels 15 and 16.
7. Parcel 31-003-208-001-00 42108 Willson Memorial Drive Chassell (Chassell Township)	Blighted and collapsed commercial property. Chassell. Formerly Chassell Mercantile. Approved redevelopment agreement in place; property sale/transfer pending.
8. Parcel 31-003-221-007-00 42299 Hancock Street Chassell (Chassell Township)	Residential home. First Addition to Chassell.
9. Parcel 31-003-221-008-00 42291 Hancock Street Chassell (Chassell Township)	Blighted and collapsed church. First Addition to Chassell. Priority candidate for demolition.
10. Parcel 31-004-006-003-00 Crystal Lake Road Sidnaw (Duncan Township)	Sliver of vacant land. Approximately 0.1 acre. Candidate for side lot disposition.
11. Parcel 31-010-524-004-00 18870 Superior Location Houghton (Portage Township)	Vacant land. Village of Superior.
12. Parcel 31-014-543-004-00 52290 Duncan Avenue Hubbell (Torch Lake Township)	Blighted and hazardous commercial property. Paine, Fisher, and McIntyre's Addition to Grover. Priority candidate for demolition, which has commenced.

Table 2: 2024 LBA Property Inventory (continued)	
<u>Property Address</u>	<u>Comments/Status</u>
13. Parcel 31-014-657-014-00 Arcadia (Torch Lake Township)	Vacant land. Village of Arcadia. Candidate for side lot disposition.
14. Parcel 31-014-660-010-00 Arcadia (Torch Lake Township)	Vacant land. Village of Arcadia. Candidate for side lot disposition.
15. Parcel 31-041-105-014-00 16. Parcel 31-041-105-015-00 426 Fifth Street Calumet (Village of Calumet)	Vacant land. Village of Calumet. Large blighted commercial building has been demolished. A berm of soil and small debris remains on the property. Property is adjacent to parcels 5 and 6.
17. Parcel 31-041-108-001-00 18. Parcel 31-041-108-002-00 112 & 120 Fifth Street Calumet (Village of Calumet)	Vacant land. Village of Calumet. Part of 2021 Fifth Street fire area.
19. Parcel 31-041-108-003-00 20. Parcel 31-041-420-146-00 108 Fifth Street Calumet (Village of Calumet)	Vacant land. Village of Calumet. Part of 2021 Fifth Street fire area.
21. Parcel 31-041-109-007-00 102 Sixth Street Calumet (Village of Calumet)	Roofless sandstone structure. Village of Calumet. Herman Flats. Priority candidate for stabilization and renovation. A Certified Local Government (CLG) grant application for stabilization was submitted to the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), but was not selected for funding.
22. Parcel 31-041-121-010-00 439 Pine Street Calumet (Village of Calumet)	Commercial property and environs. Village of Calumet. Formerly The Rose & The Thorn. These seven (7) parcels include an unoccupied storefront on the northeast corner of Fifth Street and Pine Street and several adjacent vacant lots within the Village of Calumet. Partial demolition and stabilization of commercial building completed in 2023.
23. Parcel 31-041-121-010-10	
24. Parcel 31-041-121-010-20	
25. Parcel 31-041-121-010-30	
26. Parcel 31-041-121-011-00	
27. Parcel 31-041-121-012-00	
28. Parcel 31-041-121-013-00 451 Pine Street and environs Calumet (Village of Calumet)	
29. Parcel 31-041-128-007-00 511 Fifth Street Calumet (Village of Calumet)	Former shophouse. Village of Calumet. Priority candidate for renovation. Could potentially be moved to the 400 block of Fifth Street.

Table 2: 2024 LBA Property Inventory (continued)	
<u>Property Address</u>	<u>Comments/Status</u>
30. Parcel 31-041-128-009-00 501 Pine Street Calumet (Village of Calumet)	Vacant land. Village of Calumet. Large blighted commercial building has been demolished.
31. Parcel 31-041-129-004-50 425 Fifth Street Calumet (Village of Calumet)	Blighted sandstone building. Village of Calumet. Priority candidate for continued stabilization and renovation. Roof replacement completed and other stabilization work ongoing.
32. Parcel 31-041-131-015-10 322 Seventh Street Calumet (Village of Calumet)	Blighted residential property. Village of Calumet. Candidate for restoration.
33. Parcel 31-041-131-016-00 336 Seventh Street Calumet (Village of Calumet)	Vacant land. Village of Calumet. Formerly St. John the Baptist Church, destroyed by fire in 2018. Cleanup of rubble completed.
34. Parcel 31-041-131-016-50 334 Seventh Street Calumet (Village of Calumet)	Vacant land. Village of Calumet. Blighted rectory has been demolished.
35. Parcel 31-042-101-014-00 106 Ahmeek Street Copper City (Village of C City)	Vacant land. Village of Copper City. Purchase agreement in place for \$2,000.00 sale to Copper Country Habitat for Humanity for the purpose of future construction.
36. Parcel 31-044-104-005-00 116 Osceola Street Laurium (Village of Laurium)	Vacant land. Village of Laurium. Blighted, fire-ravaged home has been demolished.
37. Parcel 31-044-116-002-00 206 Hecla Street Laurium (Village of Laurium)	Mixed-use building. Village of Laurium. Priority candidate for renovation.
38. Parcel 31-044-118-018-00 127 Kearsarge Street Laurium (Village of Laurium)	Residential duplex. Village of Laurium.
39. Parcel 31-045-107-014-00 29 First Street South Range (Village of S Range)	Vacant land. Village of South Range. Previous structure has been demolished. Purchase agreement in place for \$2,000.00 sale to Copper Country Habitat for Humanity for the purpose of future construction.

Other than the grants, gifts, and appropriations noted herein, the LBA receives no outside funding for its operations. At the close of 2024 the LBA's bank account contained a balance of \$169,981.61, some of which has already allocated toward continuing demolition and stabilization projects.

Copies of LBA meeting minutes are available at the Houghton County treasurer's office.

Questions regarding this report should be addressed to:

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