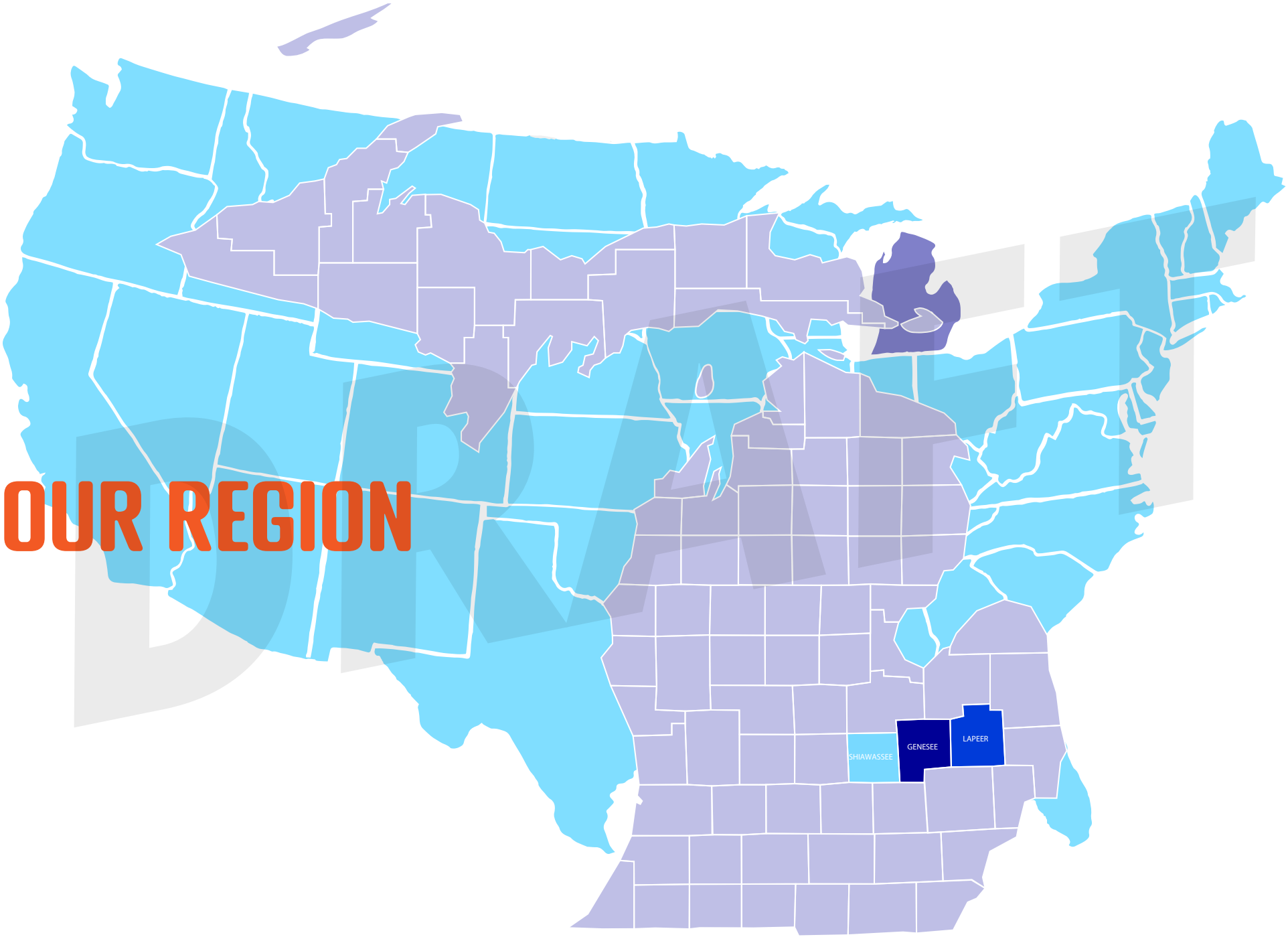



2023-2028

# COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Genesee • Lapeer • Shiawassee

# OUR REGION




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# 1 INTRODUCTION

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

GLS Region V comprises 3 counties in eastern central Michigan: Genesee, Lapeer, and Shiawassee counties. The region features both urban and large rural areas, creating a diverse population and opportunities for economic growth. The region has experienced economic and social downturns in the past 60 years, as manufacturing and the automobile industry have vacated from the region as well as impacts of the Flint Water Crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic.

This 2023 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for the region was developed to set forth a plan of action to drive economic growth, strengthen regional collaboration and capacity, and address economic and social resilience to natural and man-made stressors. This plan builds on previous economic development plans this region has been a part of, while being the first CEDS to be created for GLS Region V. Background information including socio-economic, demographic, and economic statistics, as well as an asset inventory, were collected to understand the current and past state of the region. Utilizing a diverse CEDS Steering Committee of 36 members and public input, a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis was performed to inform the goals and objectives for the next 5 years and beyond. Five main goals were identified through this process: Infrastructure Development, Business Development, Workforce Development, Regional Capacity Building, and Placemaking. Throughout these goals, objectives focus on how to improve these areas in an efficient, equitable and resilient manner.

By leveraging collaborations with the Genesee County Metropolitan Planning Commission, Lapeer Economic Development Corporation, and Shiawassee Economic Development Partnership, along with steering committee representatives encompassing economic development entities, education, government, philanthropic groups, industries, nonprofits, and transportation agencies, the execution and evaluation of this CEDS will occur over the next 5 years. Regular evaluations will ascertain the realization of goals and objectives, primarily centered around establishing an Economic Development District (EDD) within the locality, and whether the CEDS needs to be updated as the economic and social environment changes.

During this process, we will establish and enhance new partnerships and collaborations to guarantee the ongoing growth and prosperity of GLS Region V in the years to come.

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# WHAT IS A CEDS PLAN?

A Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is a locally-based, regionally-driven economic development planning process designed to build capacity and guide the economic prosperity and resiliency of a region.



The CEDS provides a way for individuals, organizations, local governments, institutes of learning, and industry to engage in a meaningful discussion about what capacity building efforts would best serve economic development in the region.

The CEDS should take into account and, where appropriate, integrate or leverage other regional planning efforts, including the use of other available federal funds, private sector resources, and state support which can advance a region's CEDS goals and objectives.  Regions must update their CEDS at least every five years to qualify for EDA assistance under its Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance programs. In addition, a CEDS is a prerequisite for designation by the Economic Development Administration (EDA) as an Economic Development District (EDD).



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# PURPOSE OF A CEDS

The CEDS planning process brings together diverse interests, including both public institutions and private businesses, to develop a strategic plan that will help drive investment priorities and shape the future of Michigan communities in Genesee, Lapeer, and Shiawassee counties over the next five years.

In addition, the CEDS:
- Provides a regional perspective for identifying and capitalizing on economic advantages, including strategies to reduce unemployment and increase incomes in the Region.
- Provides a more widespread understanding of the Region's economic development work program, including an opportunity for public review and input.
- Provides a forum for identifying and prioritizing investment projects.

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# EDA INVESTMENT PRIORITIES



Equity



Workforce Development



Environmentally-Sustainable Development



Exports & Foreign Direct Investment



Manufacturing



Recovery & Resilience



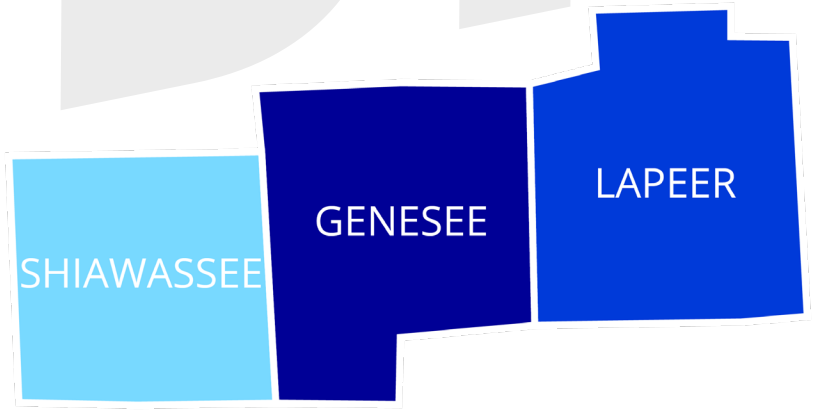
Technology-Based Economic Development

# GLS REGION V

The Genesee-Lapeer-Shiawassee (GLS) Region V Planning and Development Commission serves as the Regional Planning Organization (RPO) for Genesee, Lapeer, and Shiawassee counties in mid-Michigan providing planning assistance to county and local units of government within the region related to transportation, economic development, hazard mitigation, recreation, solid waste, environmental, and general planning. The Genesee County Metropolitan Planning Commission (GCMPC) serves as staff to the GLS Region V PDC to implement the commission's programs and services.

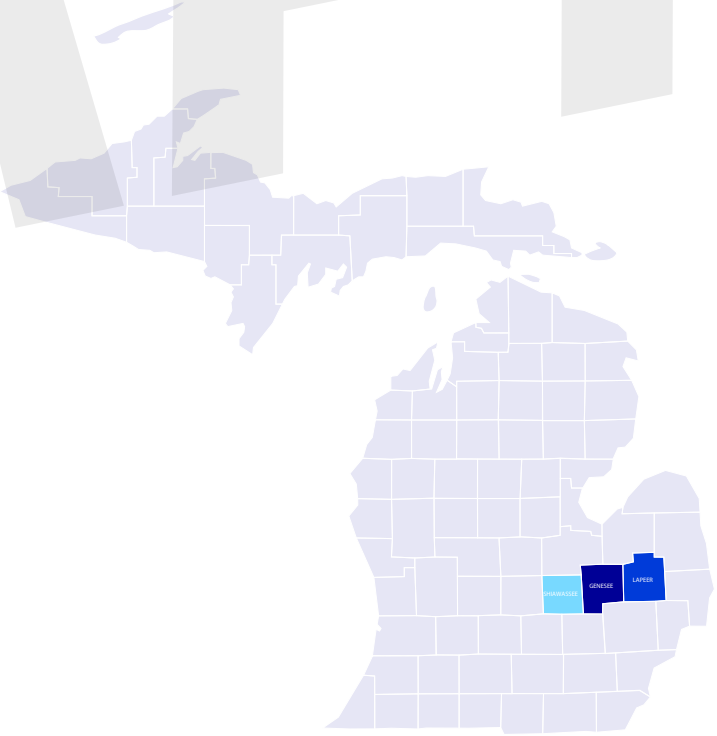
This CEDS plan is for Genesee, Lapeer, and Shiawassee counties. The organizations leading the plan are Genesee County Metropolitan Planning Commission, Lapeer Economic Development Council, and Shiawassee Economic Development Partnership.

The Genesee County Metropolitan Planning Commission's mission is to provide a framework and encourage development that enhances the quality of life in Genesee County.




The Lapeer Development Corporation (LDC) was established in 1981. This community based, 501(c)(3), non-profit economic development organization was created to lead and coordinate economic development throughout Lapeer County. It also provides a link between federal, state, and local governments and businesses interested in locating or expanding in Lapeer County.

The mission of the Shiawassee Economic Development Partnership is to improve Shiawassee County's economy through business attraction, retention and expansion.



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# THE FUNCTIONS OF GLS REGION V AND UM-FLINT'S EDA UNIVERSITY CENTER



**GLS Region V Planning and Development Commission (PDC)**

GLS Region V PDC serves as the Regional Planning Organization (RPO) for Genesee, Lapeer, and Shiawassee counties in mid-Michigan providing planning assistance to county and local units of government within the region related to transportation, economic development, hazard mitigation, recreation, solid waste, environmental, and general planning.

Community Development • Environment • Transportation



**EDA University Center for Community and Economic Development**

The mission of the University of Michigan-Flint EDA University Center for Community & Economic Development is to coordinate, inform,and contribute to economic development efforts that (1) cultivate innovation, (2) create a path for proof-of-concept development and commercialization, and (3) provide employer-identified workforce development programs needed to build and sustain a resilient and inclusive economy throughout the I-69 Thumb region of Michigan.

Economic Development • Community Development • Innovation and Entrepreneurship

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# EXISTING PLANS IN THE REGION



**Accelerate: A Plan for Regional Prosperity**

A seven-county regional plan for the I-69 Thumb region that is designed to create a roadmap for growth that will achieve the greatest impact for businesses and residents. The plan builds upon strong alliances, regional projects, and a unique infrastructure.

The plan can be found at: tinyurl.com/i69accelerate



**Forward Together Plan**

Forward Together was led in 2019 through a unique partnership between the City of Flint, Genesee County, and the Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce (now Flint & Genesee Group). The collaborators set out to identify a county-wide and community-owned vision for economic vitality. This statement would be supported by goals and actions tied to measurable outcomes. While each of these partners has completed dozens of plans independently, this new collaboration has a broader focus and resulted in a new type of community plan. Built through the priorities and best thinking of the partners with the insight and intuition of the public and stakeholders, Forward Together lays out a new, united vision for the county.

The plan can be found at: forwardtogethergenesee.org/

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**Genesee: Our County, Our Future**

Genesee: Our County, Our Future is a comprehensive planning document that establishes a vision for the area's next 20 years. This vision is developed by analyzing land use, transportation, housing, environment, and infrastructure, along with gathering input from the public and local stakeholders.

The plan is available at: ourfuturegenesee.org/



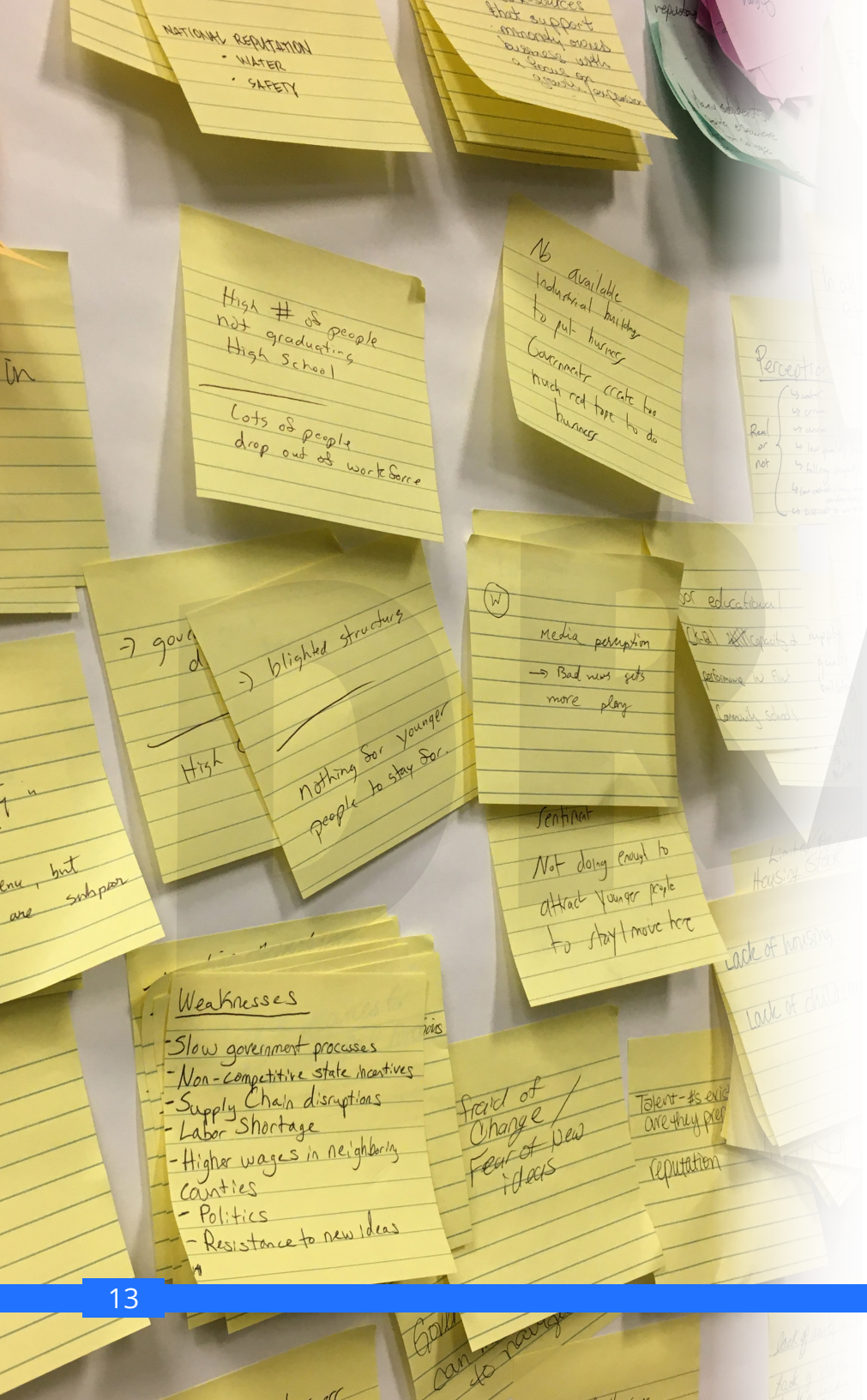
**Shiawassee Economic Development Partnership 2022-2026 Plan**

Shiawassee Economic Development Partnership 2022-2026 plan focuses on supporting the expansion and diversification of the county's employer base for future business development; continuing to build the workforce development talent pipeline to ensure the county's companies have the labor they need in the present and future, increasing career opportunities that will elevate incomes and improve the county's standard of living; and address real estate development needs including a housing and industrial facilities shortage which is limiting growth.

A summary of the plan is available at: tinyurl.com/SEDP2226

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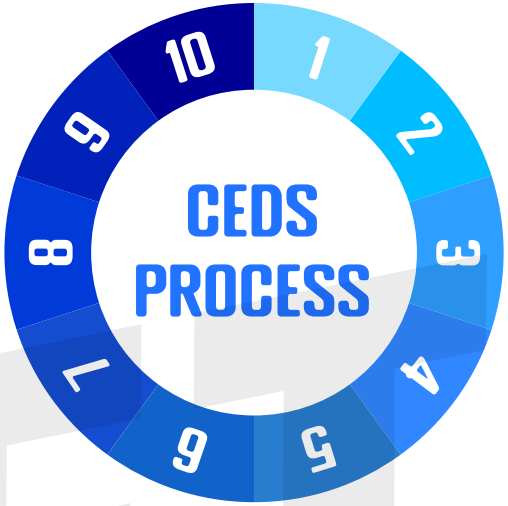
# THE PLANNING PROCESS AND PARTNERS






# PLANNING PROCESS

UM-Flint EDA University Center led the CEDS Plan process and development of the plan. Updates, documents, and the plan are available at *go.umflint.edu/gls-regionv-ceds*




# THE CEDS PROCESS

1. Develop Summary Economic Background & Framework
2. Establish CEDS Steering Committee
3. CEDS Kickoff Meeting
4. SWOT Analysis
5. Community Input Sessions
6. Develop Vision Statement, Goals/Objectives, Action Plan
7. Draft CEDS
8. CEDS Plan Public Review
9. Final CEDS
10. Continued Evaluation & Performance Reports

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# PARTNERS

UM-Flint's Economic Development Administration (EDA) University Center led the CEDS Plan process and development of the plan. Updates, documents and the plan are available at: mistartgate.com/comprehensive-economic-development-strategy-ceds/

Community Image Builders (CIB) was contracted to lead the SWOT analysis and public input session. CIB is a community planning consulting firm that offers a wide range of innovative planning, zoning, and development consulting services. CIB's mission is to deliver uncommon planning, marketing, and development solutions, meeting community needs and challenges, helping them to prosper. For more information about Community Image Builders, please visit https://www.cibplanning.com/

The Steering (Strategy) Committee helps to analyze economic conditions of the three county region, suggests actionable strategies, identifies objectives and strategies that will improve the region, and creates and implements the CEDS Plan.

This committee is composed of regional stakeholders from economic development organizations, education, government, philanthropic, industry, nonprofits and transportation agencies including representatives from: Flint and Genesee Economic Alliance, Shiawassee Economic Development Partnership, Lapeer County Community Foundation, Community Foundation of Greater Flint, UM-Flint, Kettering University, Mott Community College, Genesee County Land Bank Authority, Michigan Small Business Development Center, City of Montrose, Metro Community Development, Inc., GST Michigan Works!, Huntington Bank, The State Bank, Connected Nation Michigan, Shiawassee Family YMCA, YWCA Greater Flint, Neighborhood Engagement Hub, Arab American Heritage Council, United Way of Genesee County, Flint River Watershed Coalition, Mass Transportation Authority Flint, WIELAND Corporation, and ROWE Professional Services Company.

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# AREAS OF FOCUS

- HEALTH CARE
- WORKFORCE
- CLIMATE
- ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
- EDUCATION
- INNOVATION
- COMMUNITY
- PLACEMAKING
- INFRASTRUCTURE
- GOVERNMENT
- FACTORIES
- SUSTAINABILITY
- INDUSTRY 4.0
- AGRICULTURE
- DATA
- EQUITY & INCLUSION

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# STEERING COMMITTEE ROLES

**Analyze** — Analyze the economic conditions of the Genesee, Lapeer, and Shiawassee counties.

**Suggest** — Suggest actionable strategies.

**Identify** — Identify objectives and strategies that will improve GLS Region V.

**Create** — Create a CEDS Plan for GLS Region V.

**Evaluate** — Evaluate and execute CEDS Plan fulfillment through 2028.

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# CEDS PLAN FACILITATORS

## AT UM-FLINT'S OFFICE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



**PAULA NAS**
Director



**NIC CUSTER**
Innovation Services Manager



**DAVID MÉROT**
EDA University Center Director



**PHILLIP THOMPSON**
Community Relations Manager



**KELLI CATRELL**
Administrative Specialist



**SHELBY COATES**
Marketing & Communications Coordinator



**TROY ROSENCRANTS**
GIS Center Manager

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# STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS



**LAURA ARCHER**
Shiawassee Family YMCA



**HEATHER DAWSON**
UM-Flint



**NANCY BOXEY**
Lapeer County
Community Foundation



**CHENNELLE DISMOND**
JP Morgan Chase



**DEREK BRADSHAW**
Genesee County Metropolitan
Planning Commission and GLS
Region V



**JEFFREY FERWEDA**
Sedgewick + Ferweda Architects



**COLLEEN BROWN**
City of Montrose



**SAMANTHA FOUNTAIN**
Mundy Township

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**PATRICIA FRANKLIN-LINDSEY**
Huntington National Bank



**LUCINE JARRAH**
Arab American Heritage Council



**MICHAEL FREEMAN**
Genesee County
Land Bank Authority



**JONATHAN JARRETT**
The State Bank



**JAMIE GASKIN**
United Way of Genesee County



**BRENT JONES**
Shiawassee Economic
Development Partnership



**JUSTIN HORVATH**
Shiawassee Economic
Development Partnership



**JODY KERBYSON**
GST Michigan Works!

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**DAN MANNING**
Connected Nation Michigan



**SAM MOORE**
Lapeer Economic Development Corporation



**JOE MARTIN**
Uptown Reinvestment Corp.



**JANIS MUELLER**
Michigan Small Business Development Center, Kettering University



**JASMINE MCKENNEY**
Flint & Genesee Economic Alliance, East Michigan APEX Accelerator



**STEVE OPPER**
Wieland



**ADIL MOHAMMED**
International Center of Greater Flint



**SUE PETERS**
Community Foundation of Greater Flint

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**MARCUS RANKINS**
Metro Community Development



**SARAH SCHEITLER**
Michigan Department of Health and Human Services



**RHONDA ROBERTS**
Ascension Genesys



**DAVID SCHULTE**
Shiawassee Regional Education Service District



**TYLER ROSSMAESSLER**
Flint & Genesee Economic Alliance



**DOUG SCOTT**
ROWE Professional Services



**MICHELLE ROSYNSKY**
YWCA Greater Flint



**DENISE STEELE**
JP Morgan Chase

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**JACK STOCK**
Kettering University



**DALE WEIGHILL**
Mott Community College



**PHYLLIS SYKES**
International Center of Greater Flint



**TOM WYATT**
Neighborhood Engagement Hub

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# GLS REGION V SUMMARY BACKGROUND

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# SECTION BREAKDOWN

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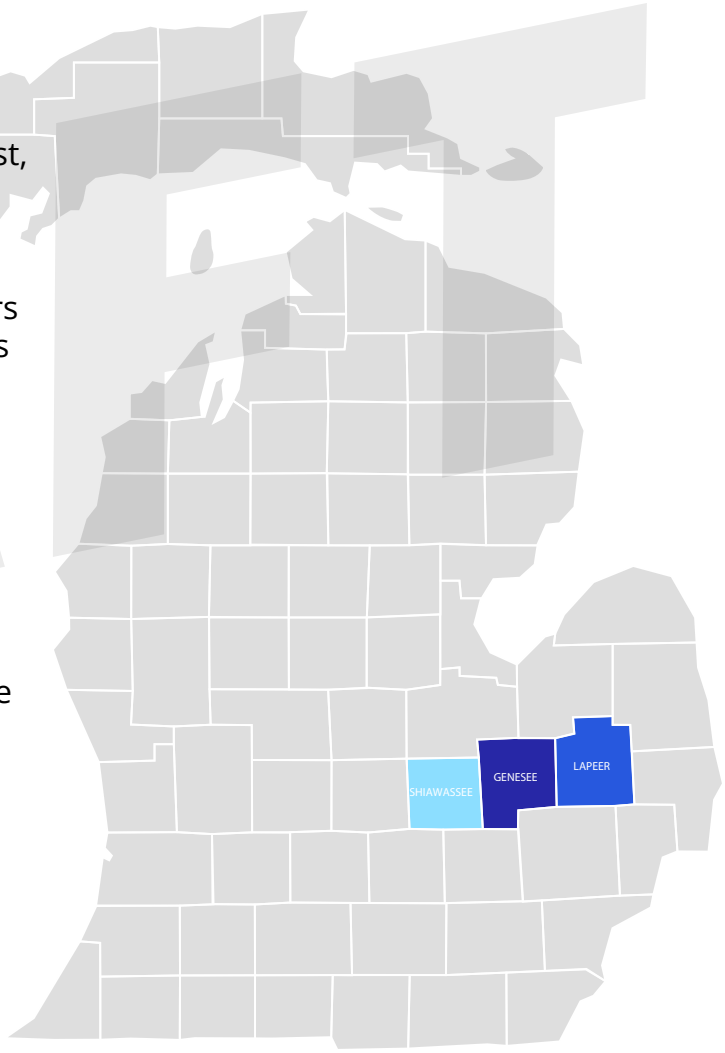
# OVERVIEW

GLS Region V comprises 3 counties:  Genesee, Lapeer, and Shiawassee counties. These counties have population centers of the City of Flint, City of Owosso, and City of Lapeer and have a total population of 562,924, a 3.7% decrease in the past 10 years.  The region is approximately 14.2% urban and 85.8% rural as of the 2020 Decennial Census (13% urban and 87% rural in 2010).  Through the 3 counties, two major interstate highways:  I-75 north and south, I-69 east and west.  Interstate 75 provides access to the Detroit Metropolitan area and I-69 runs to Canada in the east, providing an international corridor in the region.

Historically, this region had a large manufacturing industry, predominantly around automobiles, with General Motors being founded in Flint.  However, General Motors began closing facilities in the region in the 1980s, which led to economic downturns and population loss in the area that the region has not quite recovered from.

In fall of 2015, the City of Flint also had a water crisis, where high amounts of lead were found in the drinking water.  This crisis led to a distrust with government officials as well as population loss.

Since March 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic has had a large impact on the region, state, and nation.  The pandemic has shifted how businesses operate and worker expectations.  Many businesses had to shift to a virtual work environment and have since kept that work setting even as the pandemic has been less of a health emergency.  In addition, during the pandemic, a variety of other socioeconomic issues have come up, including working conditions, minimum wage, “the Great Resignation”, etc.  All of these issues have set up our region for where it is in 2023.



# RECREATION

GLS Region V has a variety of outdoor recreation opportunities. The three counties maintain 33 parks, with more parks being run by local communities. Lapeer County also has a state recreation area located at Metamora-Hadley Recreation Area, which consists of 723 acres with an 80-acre lake in the center. The region will also be home to Chevy Commons, the newest state park at the site formerly known as Chevy in the Hole along the Flint River in Flint.. The park is 60 acres and potential amenities may include an amphitheater and a canoe/kayak launch. It will connect the University of Michigan-Flint, Kettering University, Flint Cultural Area, and the Iron Belle Trail. The region also has many lakes, ponds, and rivers for fishing/kayaking/canoeing/tubing, such as Holloway Reservoir, Flint River, and Shiawassee River.

# HIGHER EDUCATION

In the region, there are three universities/colleges: University of Michigan-Flint and Kettering University in Flint and Baker College in Owosso. University of Michigan-Flint is a regional campus operating under the University of Michigan Board of Regents and offers multiple Bachelor's degrees, as well as professional, Master's, and Doctorate programs. Kettering University is a private university that offers Bachelor and Master's degrees in STEM and Business fields. Baker College is a private college that offers Associate's/Bachelor's/Master's degrees in Business, IT/Engineering, Health, and Nursing. Michigan State University also has a presence in all three counties with extension offices in Flint, Lapeer, and Owosso that bring university resources to area communities.

| Name | 2020 Enrollment | 2015 Enrollment | Percent Change |
|---|---|---|---|
| Kettering University | 1659 | 1841 | - 9.9% |
| University of Michigan-Flint | 5424 | 6868 | -21.0% |
| Mott Community College | 5920 | 8399 | -29.5% |

Table. Enrollment Numbers

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# ANCHOR INSTITUTIONS

GLS Region V has a variety of anchor institutions that assist communities in the region.
These anchor institutions include hospital systems, local foundations, universities, and large employers.

### Hospitals

- Ascension Genesys - Grand Blanc (Genesee)
- Hurley Medical Center and Children's Hospital - Flint (Genesee)
- McLaren - Flint (Genesee), Lapeer (Lapeer)
- Memorial Hospital - Owosso (Shiawassee)

### Universities

- University of Michigan-Flint - Flint (Genesee)
- Kettering University - Flint (Genesee)
- Mott Community College (Genesee, Lapeer, & Shiawassee)
- Baker College - Owosso (Shiawassee)

### Foundations

- Charles S Mott Foundation
- Ruth Mott Foundation
- Community Foundation of Greater Flint
- The Shiawassee Community Foundation
- Cook Family Foundation
- Lapeer County Community Foundation
- Four County Community Foundation

### Cultural Areas

- Flint Institute of Arts
- Flint Cultural Center
- Sloan Museum
- Durand Union Station and Railroad History Museum
- Curwood Castle
- Corunna Historical Village
- Calkins-MacQueen House
- Shiawassee County Historical Museum
- Gallery 194

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# INFRASTRUCTURE

## TRANSPORTATION

The region is well connected to the rest of Michigan, United States and Canada. The three counties are located along the I-69 international trade corridor, offering ample opportunity for international trade via land, air, and rail. Genesee County is home to Bishop International Airport, serviced by four airlines, American, Delta, Allegiant, and United. This makes both regional and international travel accessible to nearby counties. Allegiant Air recently established a new hub in Flint, demonstrating their dedication to the region through a 77-million-dollar expansion at Bishop. Flint Michigan, located in Genesee County, also marks the intersection of two major national interstates. I-69 runs east-west through the center of the 3-county region, with 1-75 running north-south. Genesee County is also home to the Mass Transportation Authority (MTA) that has 14 bus routes emanating from the transit center in downtown Flint that traverse throughout the city, with one route going to the Airport and one route going to nearby Grand Blanc.  The MTA also provides regional routes to Brighton, Howell, and Great Lakes Crossing Mall in Oakland County, as well as rides for residents to health centers and grocery stores.

## ENERGY

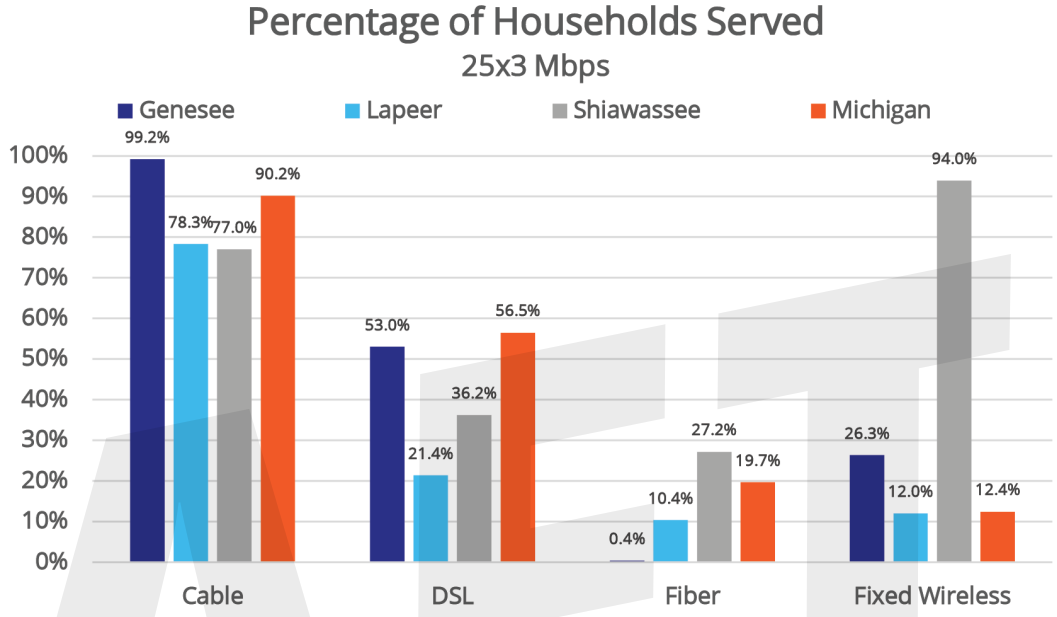
Much of the region being previously cleared farmland offers opportunity to invest in new wind and solar projects. While the climate isn't the most ideal for the installation of wind turbines, there are many new solar developments in the region. Five solar projects came online in early 2021 in Genesee County.  The most notable installation, Ranger Power's Assembly Solar Farm, was established in Shiawassee County in Hazelton and Venice Townships. The facility is currently the largest in Michigan and will continue to grow over the course of two expansions.

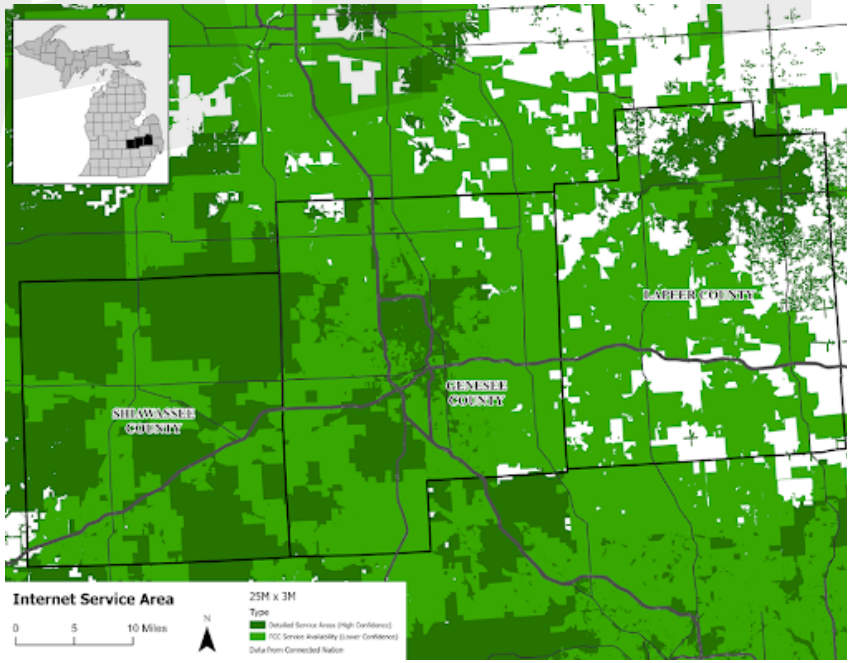
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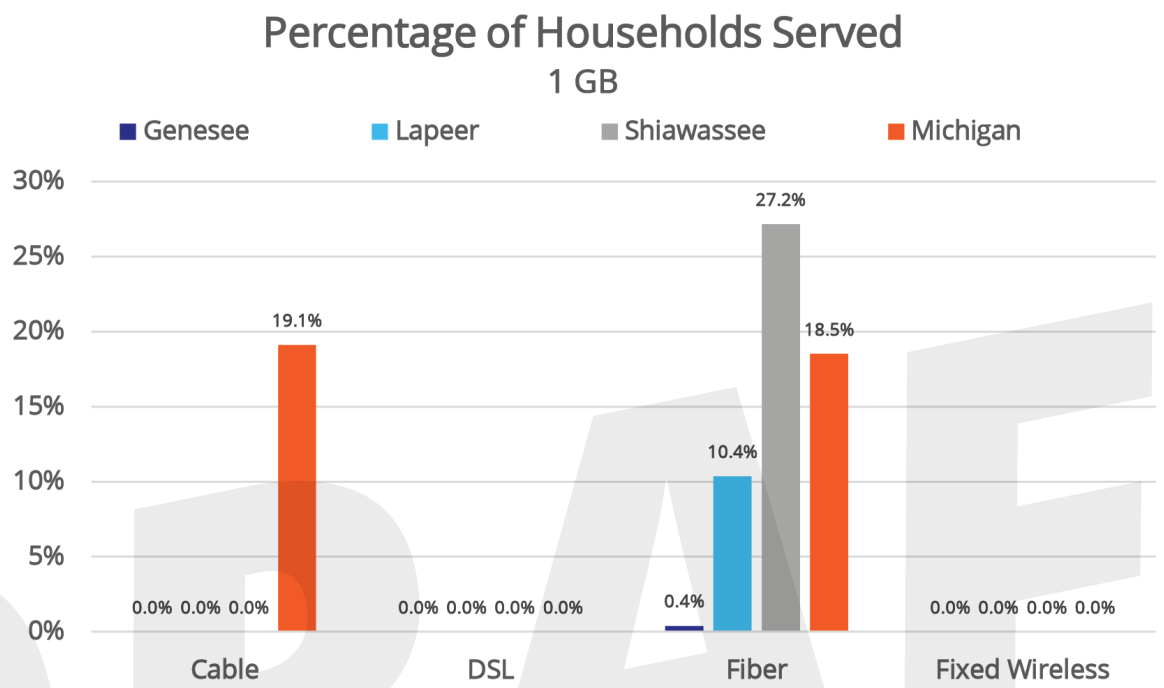
# BROADBAND

Efficiency of broadband data is measured in different download and upload speeds. The Federal Communications Commission defines high speed as 25 x 3 Mbps.

Genesee County exceeds both Lapeer and Shiawassee counties in cable and DSL. It also has a higher percentage of the population with those broadband connections, as compared to Michigan. For fiber and fixed wireless connections, Shiawassee County exceeds Genesee and Lapeer County in the percent of households served with those broadband connections.






Broadband speed of 1GB is a faster broadband connection and one that is increasingly becoming common in households across the United States. According to analysis, even though certain counties in Michigan provide 1GB broadband connections via cable and fiber methods, it is not common in every household in Genesee, Lapeer, and Shiawassee County. For fiber, 18.52% of households in Michigan have 1GB broadband speed connections, but only 0.38% of households in Genesee County have that connection, followed by 10.35% in Lapeer and 27.67% in Shiawassee County. No counties in Michigan have a 1GB fixed wireless and DSL connection and 19.12% of households have a 1GB connection through cable.

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# POPULATION DEMOGRAPHICS

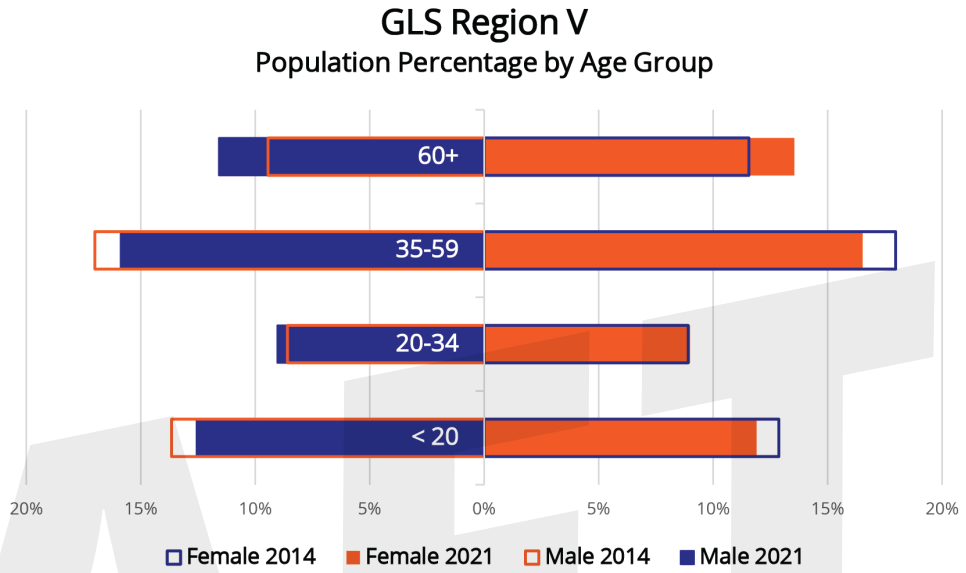
According to the 2020 Decennial Census, GLS Region V has decreased in population with Genesee and Shiawassee counties also decreasing (Population Table). Lapeer County increased its population by 300 people. The region is predominantly white with the largest minority population being Black/African American. However, a large majority of the Black population is located in Genesee County. Hispanic and multiracial populations are the next largest minority groups.

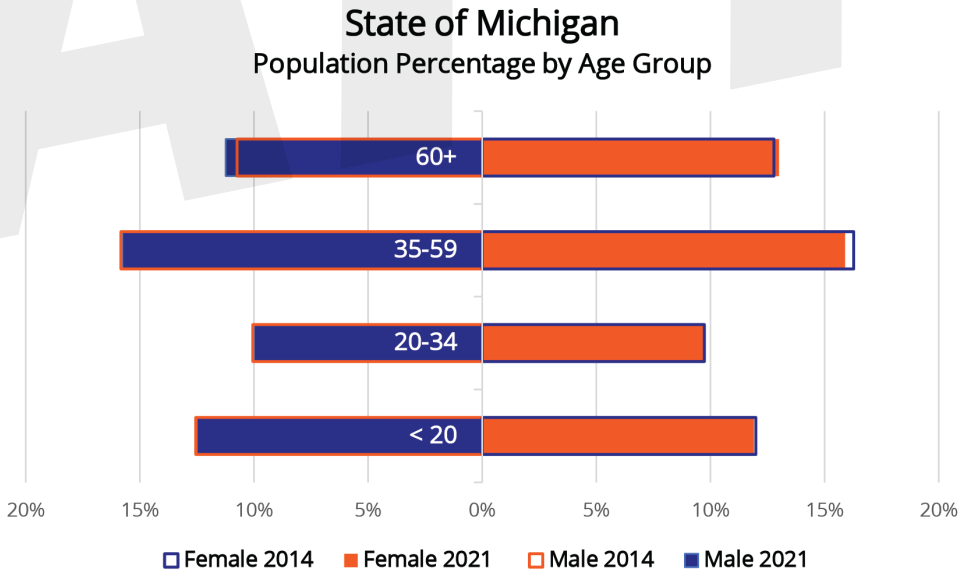
| | Region Wide | | Genesee | | Lapeer | | Shiawassee | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **2020 Population** | 562,924 | -3.70% | 406,211 | -4.60% | 88,619 | 0.34% | 68,094 | -3.60% |
| **2010 Population** | 584,757 | | 425,790 | | 88,319 | | 70,648 | |
| **2020 Race Breakdown** | | | | | | | | |
| **White** | 424,593 | 75.43% | 283,483 | 69.79% | 78,871 | 89.00% | 62,239 | 91.40% |
| **Black or African American** | 80,365 | 14.28% | 79,080 | 19.47% | 966 | 1.09% | 319 | 0.47% |
| **American Indian and Alaskan Native** | 1,891 | 0.34% | 1,391 | 0.34% | 277 | 0.31% | 223 | 0.33% |
| **Asian** | 4,725 | 0.84% | 4,041 | 0.99% | 396 | 0.45% | 288 | 0.42% |
| **Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander** | 143 | 0.03% | 116 | 0.03% | 8 | 0.01% | 19 | 0.03% |
| **Other** | 1,828 | 0.32% | 1,390 | 0.34% | 250 | 0.28% | 188 | 0.28% |
| **Hispanic** | 22,527 | 4.00% | 16,259 | 4.00% | 4,244 | 4.79% | 2,024 | 2.97% |
| **Multiracial** | 26,852 | 4.77% | 20,451 | 5.03% | 3,607 | 4.07% | 2,794 | 4.10% |

According to the American Community Survey, from 2014-2021, the population in the region became older, with a higher percentage of the population being 60+ years old, and the percentage of the population under 20 years old decreased. Compared to the State of Michigan, our region's age cohorts have changed while statewide has stayed relatively constant.

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According to the the American Community Survey, from 2014-2019, the population in the region became older, with a higher percentage of the population being 60+ years old. GLS Region V did not age proportionally to the larger 7-county I-69 Thumb Region but did change similarly to the entire State of Michigan.

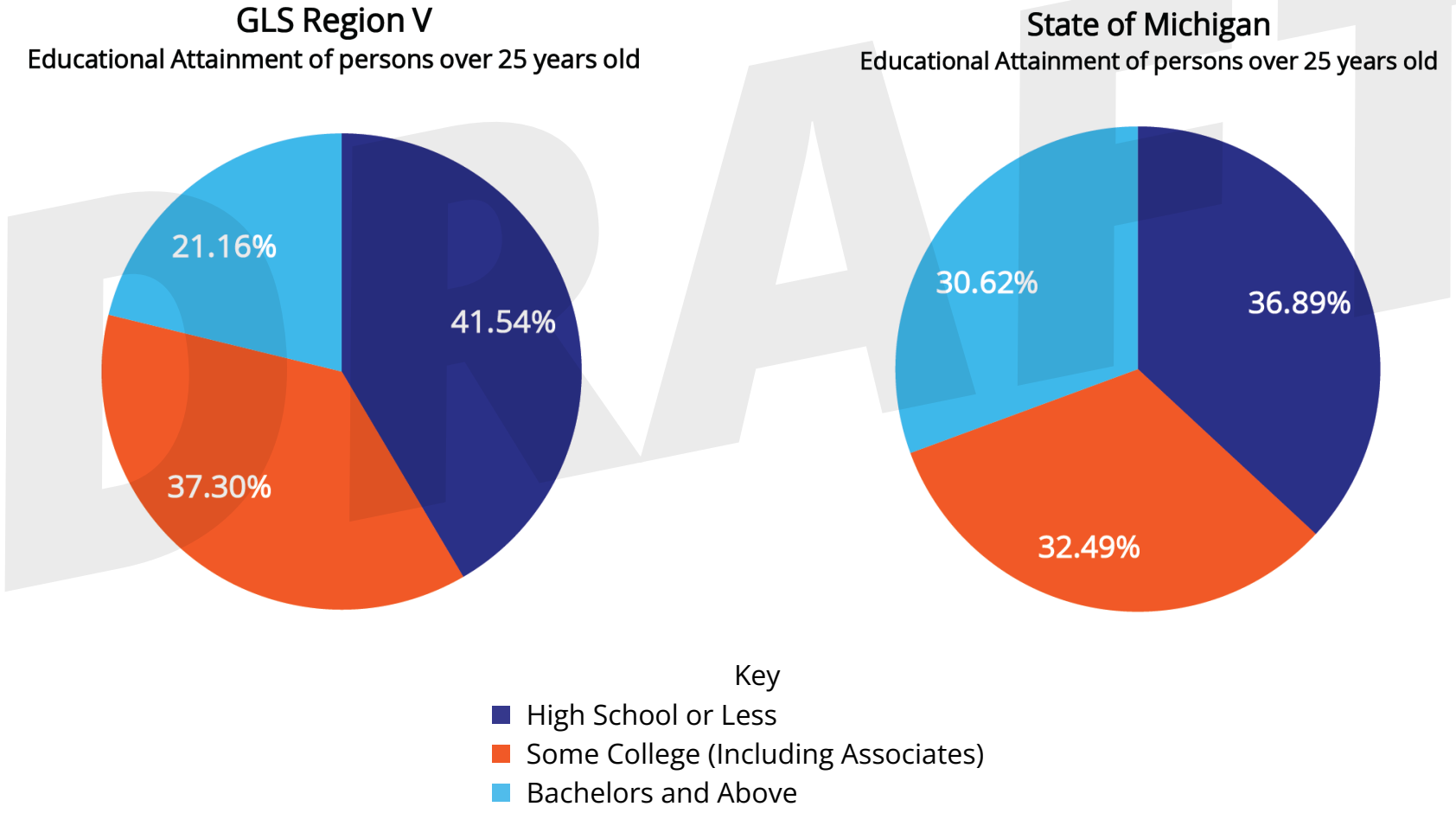



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# EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

GLS Region V has a larger percentage of persons over 25 years old that have had some college, including Associate's degrees, than the State of Michigan as well as a higher percentage of people that have a high school degree or GED. However, our region has around 10% less people with a Bachelor's degree or higher compared to the State of Michigan.

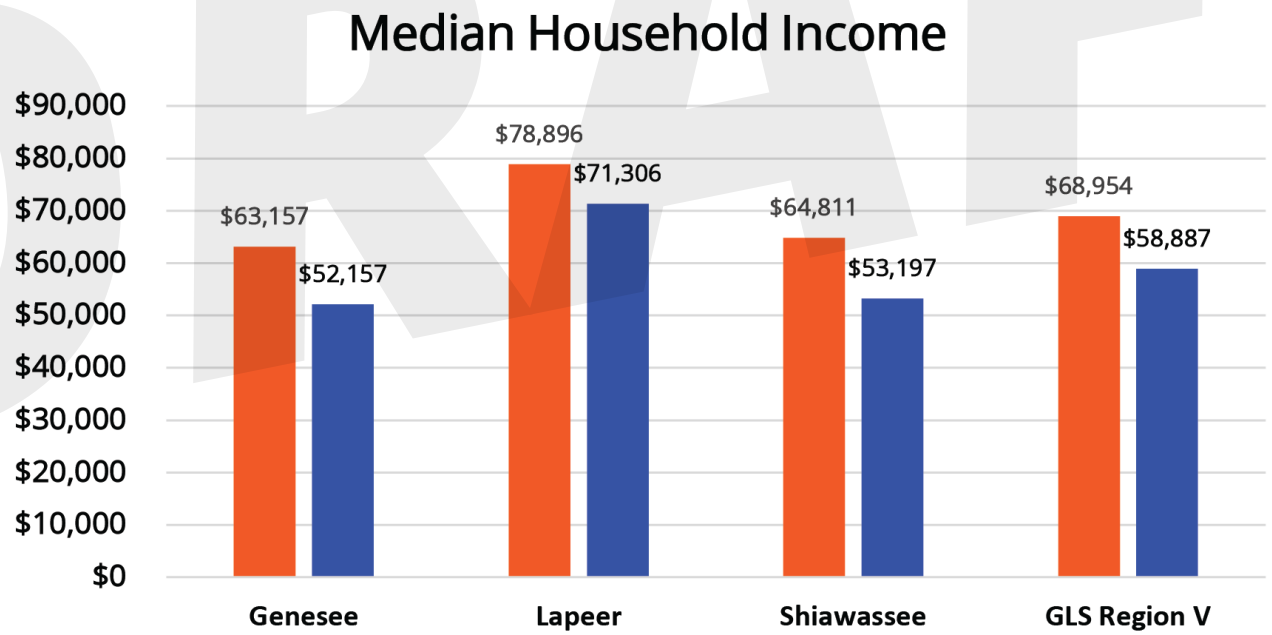



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# ECONOMIC INDICATORS

## INCOME, POVERTY, AND ALICE HOUSEHOLDS

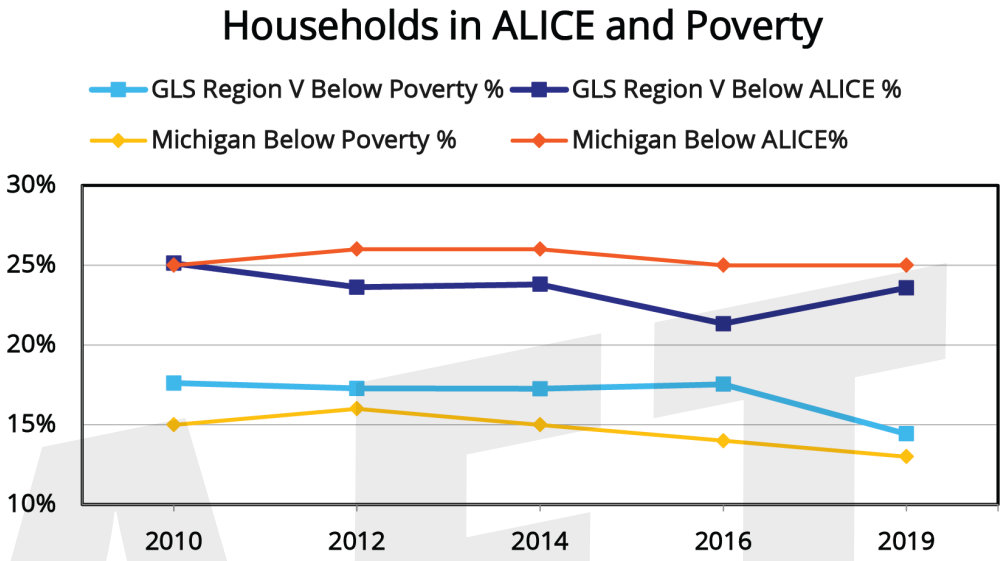
Median household income within the region is about $58,887. Median incomes in Genesee, Lapeer and Shiawassee counties were $52,156, $71,306, and $53,197, respectively, by 2021 American Community Survey estimates (MHI graph). When comparing to 2000 median household income adjusted for 2021 dollars (using BLS inflation calculator), our region has lost income. When 2000 median household income is not adjusted for inflation, there is an increase in median income in all counties and the region. So within our region, our residents are not able to keep up with the cost of living increases that we are currently experiencing.

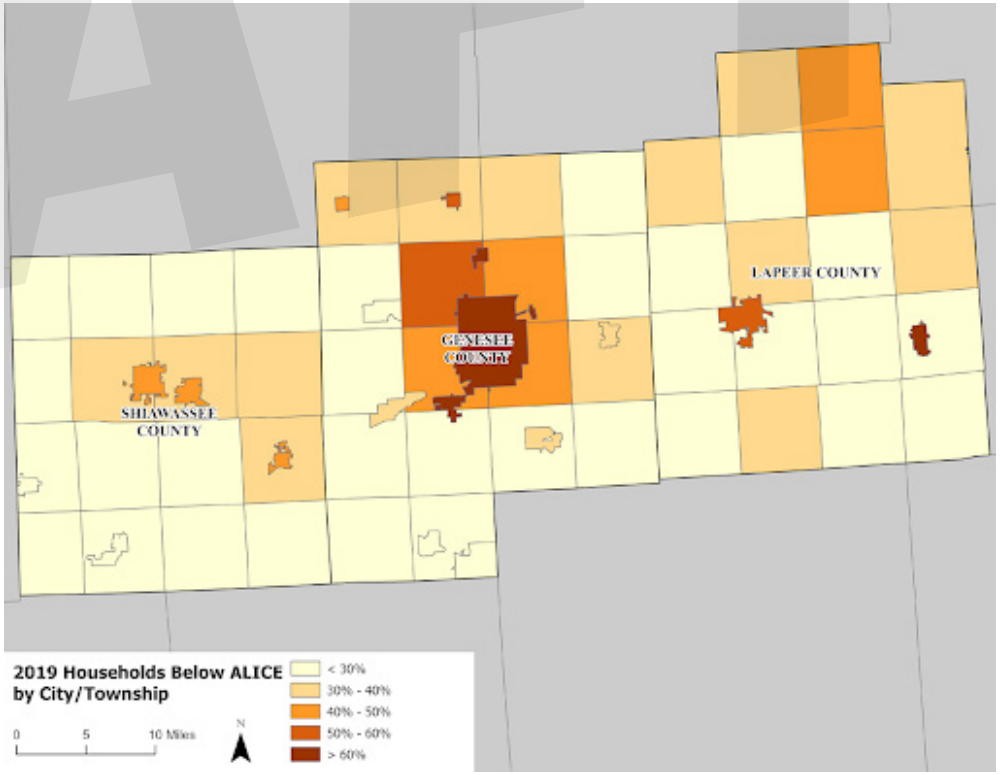



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Our region has been relatively stable in the percentage of households below poverty and below ALICE levels. ALICE stands for Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed and represents the minimum income level necessary for survival for a household. It is a value that is adjusted for household size and composition within each individual county. Within our region, the percentage of households below poverty has hovered 18% until 2019 when it dipped below 15%, compared to the state percentage hovering around 15% the entire period of 2010-2019. However, our region's percentage below the ALICE threshold is lower than the State of Michigan's during the period of 2010-2019. Our region has been at or below 25% with the state being at or above 25% of households.

Looking at households below the ALICE threshold geographically gives a sense of where within our region has the higher areas of households living paycheck to paycheck (ALICE MAP). In 2019, a higher percentage of households were in Genesee County, specifically in Flint (64%) and the surrounding cities/townships. In Shiawassee and Lapeer counties, the population centers of Owosso/ Corunna/Durand for Shiawassee and Lapeer/Imlay City for Lapeer had the highest percentages.

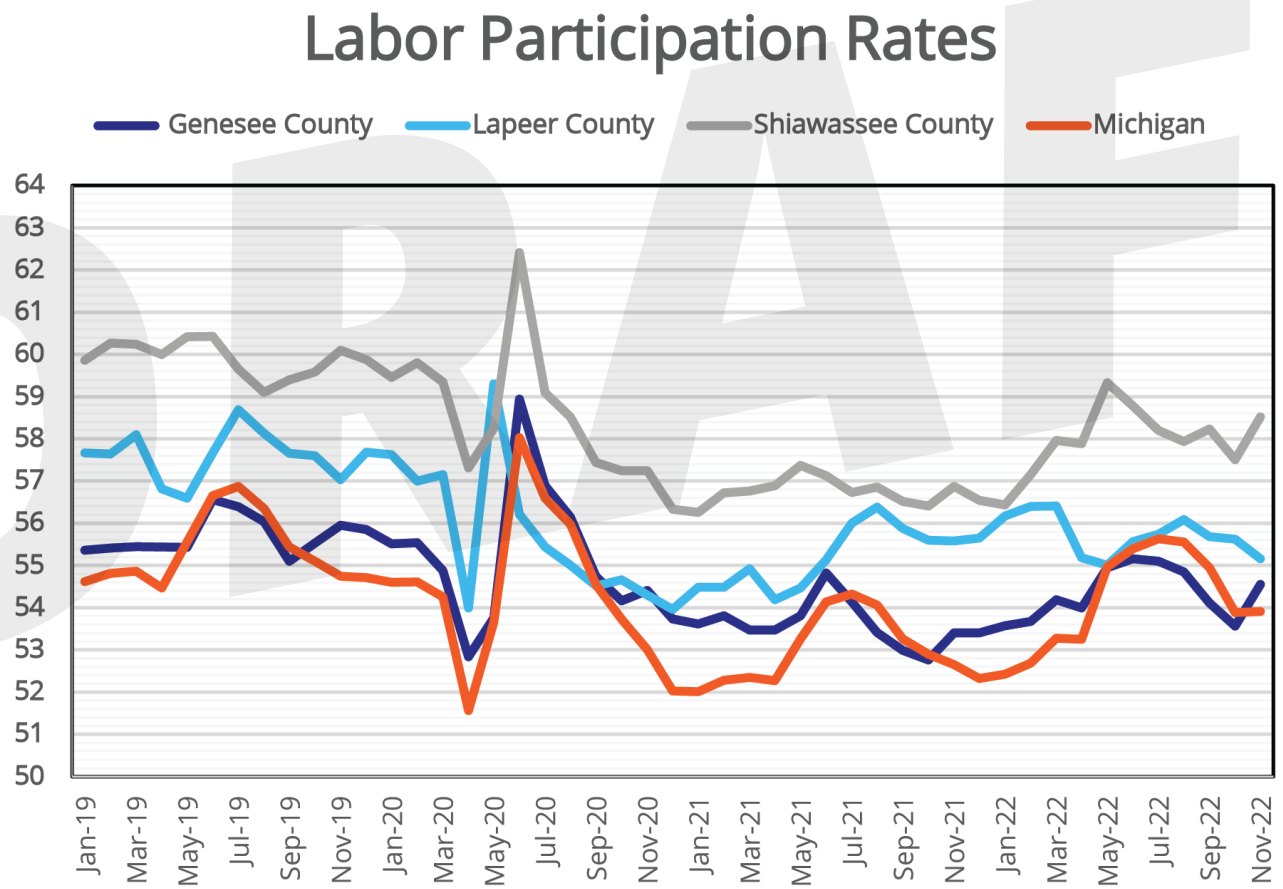



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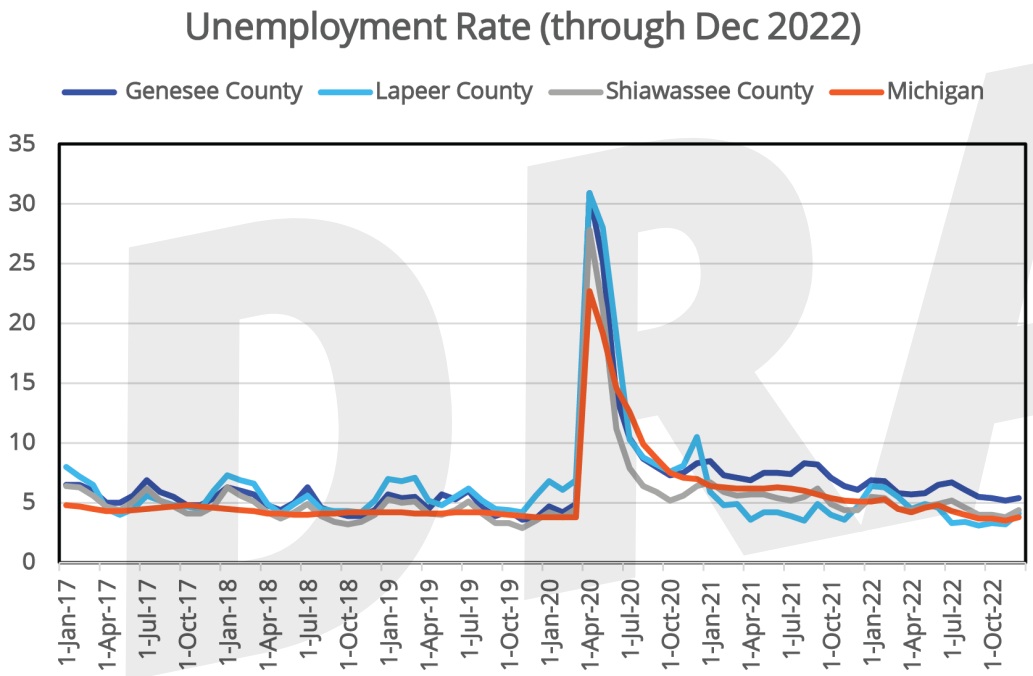
# EMPLOYMENT

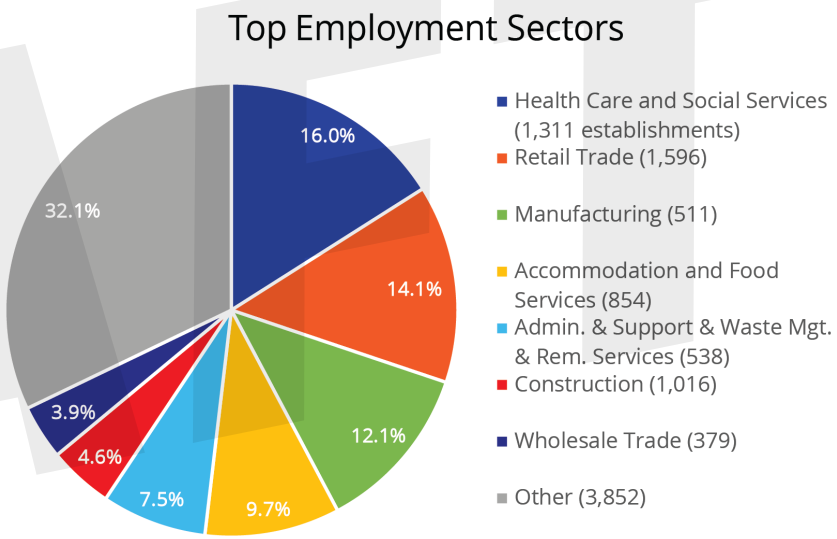
Within our region, the labor participation rate, calculated as the percentage of civilian people over the age of 16 that are working or actively looking for work, has followed similar trends to the rest of Michigan. Genesee County has had similar rates as the state, as Shiawassee and Lapeer counties have had higher participation rates than the state. However, all three counties are below the national rate of 62.5% (January 2023).




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GLS Region V's unemployment rate followed the state of Michigan in the last 5 years. Each county had fluctuations from January 2017 to January 2020 but once the pandemic hit, Genesee and Lapeer counties hit a peak unemployment rate of 30.9, while the State of Michigan reached a rate of approximately 23. The state and region's unemployment rates have come down to pre-COVID-19 pandemic levels, though there is more variation between the counties than before. In the three counties, the largest employment sectors are:  Health Care/Social services (16%), Retail Trade (14%), and Manufacturing (12%).




In the three counties, the largest employment sectors are: Health Care/Social services (16%), Retail Trade (14%), and Manufacturing (12%).

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# INDUSTRY TRENDS

Over the last 5 years, a majority of industries across our region are stable or are shrinking with only a few industries growing in Lapeer and Shiawassee counties. The chart below displays data from the NERDE County Dashboard on the top 8 industry trends in each county as it relates to wage, establishments, and employment location quotient. Location quotient refers to a region's industry specialization compared to the nation. For example, in Lapeer County, the wage location quotient shows growth in Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting, meaning that industry has grown in its share of wages in the region's economy. In Shiawassee County, other services except public administration (e.g., automotive services, personal care services, civic and social organizations, etc.) has had a growth in shares of wages, employment, and establishments in the county. A majority of industries in our region, however, are shrinking in size and share of the region's economy.

| Growing ↗ Stable → Shrinking ↘ | Top 8 Industry Trends - Wage | | Top 8 Industry Trends - Establishments | | Top 8 Industry Trends - Employment | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Sector | Trend | Sector | Trend | Sector | Trend |
| Genesee County | Retail Trade | → | Healthcare and Social Assistance | → | Healthcare and Social Assistance | → |
| | Manufacturing | → | Administrative and Waste Services | → | Retail Trade | → |
| | Healthcare and Social Assistance | → | Wholesale trade | → | Accomodation and Food Services | → |
| | Accomodation and Food Services | ↘ | Manufacturing | → | Construction | ↘ |
| | Administrative and Waste Services | ↘ | Other services accept public administration | → | Other services accept public administration | ↘ |
| | Other services accept public administration | ↘ | Accomidation and food services | → | Manufacturing | ↘ |
| | Construction | ↘ | Construction | → | Wholesale trade | ↘ |
| | Wholesale trade | ↘ | Retail Trade | ↘ | Administrative and Waste Services | ↘ |
| | | | | | | |
| Lapeer County | Agricultural, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting | ↗ | Administrative and Waste Services | → | Manufacturing | ↗ |
| | Manufacturing | → | Accomodation and Food Services | → | Administrative and Waste Services | → |
| | Administrative and Waste Services | → | Manufacturing | → | Agricultural, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting | → |
| | Accomodation and Food Services | ↘ | Other services accept public administration | → | Retail Trade | → |
| | Retail Trade | ↘ | Retail Trade | → | Accomodation and Food Services | → |
| | Construction | ↘ | Agricultural, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting | → | Construction | ↘ |
| | Other services accept public administration | ↘ | Construction | ↘ | Mining, Quarrying, and oil and gas extraction | ↘ |
| | Mining, Quarrying, and oil and gas extraction | ↘ | Mining, Quarrying, and oil and gas extraction | ↘ | Other services accept public administration | ↘ |
| | | | | | | |
| Shiawassee County | Other services accept public administration | ↗ | Other services accept public administration | ↗ | Other services accept public administration | ↗ |
| | Construction | → | Healthcare and Social Assistance | → | Construction | → |
| | Agricultural, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting | → | Construction | → | Retail Trade | → |
| | Retail Trade | → | Accomodation and Food Services | → | Agricultural, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting | ↘ |
| | Manufacturing | ↘ | Transportation and warehousing | → | Healthcare and Social Assistance | ↘ |
| | Accomodation and Food Services | ↘ | Retail Trade | ↘ | Accomodation and Food Services | ↘ |
| | Healthcare and Social Assistance | ↘ | Manufacturing | ↘ | Manufacturing | ↘ |
| | Transportation and warehousing | ↘ | Agricultural, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting | ↘ | Transportation and warehousing | ↘ |

# COMMUTING PATTERNS

According to the Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics data from the US Census Bureau, our region has had a shift occur in where people are living vs where they are employed. Within our region as a whole and Genesee/Shiawassee counties, there has been a decrease from 2002 in the number of people that are living and employed within those areas. In Lapeer county, there was a decrease from 2002 to 2010 but then since 2010 that has increased slightly. This means that there is more dynamic movement between where residents live and work. Our region has higher percentage of employed persons that live outside of the 3 counties and a higher percentage of people living in our region that are leaving for employment compared to 2002 and 2010.

| Genesee County | 2002 Count | 2002 Share | 2010 Count | 2010 Share | 2019 Count | 2019 Share |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Employed in the Selection Area | 158,202 | 100.00% | 122,973 | 100.00% | 134,915 | 100.00% |
| Employed in the Selection Area but Living Outside | 60,017 | 37.90% | 48,393 | 39.40% | 57,182 | 42.40% |
| Employed and Living in the Selection Area | 98,185 | 62.10% | 74,580 | 60.60% | 77,733 | 57.60% |
| | | | | | | |
| Living in the Selection Area | 181,723 | 100.00% | 142,826 | 100.00% | 162,784 | 100.00% |
| Living in the Selection Area but Employed Outside | 83,538 | 46.00% | 68,246 | 47.80% | 85,051 | 52.20% |
| Living and Employed in the Selection Area | 98,185 | 54.00% | 74,580 | 52.20% | 77,733 | 47.80% |
| **Lapeer County** | **2002 Count** | **2002 Share** | **2010 Count** | **2010 Share** | **2019 Count** | **2019 Share** |
| Employed in the Selection Area | 20,044 | 100.00% | 16,610 | 100.00% | 20,956 | 100.00% |
| Employed in the Selection Area but Living Outside | 9,699 | 48.40% | 8,564 | 51.60% | 10,651 | 50.80% |
| Employed and Living in the Selection Area | 10,345 | 51.60% | 8,046 | 48.40% | 10,305 | 49.20% |
| | | | | | | |
| Living in the Selection Area | 34,992 | 100.00% | 32,843 | 100.00% | 39,525 | 100.00% |
| Living in the Selection Area but Employed Outside | 24,647 | 70.40% | 24,797 | 75.50% | 29,220 | 73.90% |
| Living and Employed in the Selection Area | 10,345 | 29.60% | 8,046 | 24.50% | 10,305 | 26.10% |
| **Shiawassee County** | **2002 Count** | **2002 Share** | **2010 Count** | **2010 Share** | **2019 Count** | **2019 Share** |
| Employed in the Selection Area | 17,156 | 100.00% | 14,266 | 100.00% | 16,581 | 100.00% |
| Employed in the Selection Area but Living Outside | 6,212 | 36.20% | 6,172 | 43.30% | 7,524 | 45.40% |
| Employed and Living in the Selection Area | 10,944 | 63.80% | 8,094 | 56.70% | 9,057 | 54.60% |
| | | | | | | |
| Living in the Selection Area | 31,410 | 100.00% | 25,598 | 100.00% | 29,257 | 100.00% |
| Living in the Selection Area but Employed Outside | 20,466 | 65.20% | 17,504 | 68.40% | 20,200 | 69.00% |
| Living and Employed in the Selection Area | 10,944 | 34.80% | 8,094 | 31.60% | 9057 | 31% |
| **GLS Region V** | **2002 Count** | **2002 Share** | **2010 Count** | **2010 Share** | **2019 Count** | **2019 Share** |
| Employed in the Selection Area | 195,402 | 100.00% | 153,849 | 100.00% | 172,452 | 100.00% |
| Employed in the Selection Area but Living Outside | 65,065 | 33.30% | 63,129 | 41.00% | 75,357 | 43.70% |
| Employed and Living in the Selection Area | 130,337 | 66.70% | 90,720 | 59.00% | 97,095 | 56.30% |
| | | | | | | |
| Living in the Selection Area | 248,125 | 100.00% | 201,267 | 100.00% | 231,566 | 100.00% |
| Living in the Selection Area but Employed Outside | 117,788 | 47.50% | 110,547 | 54.90% | 134,471 | 58.10% |
| Living and Employed in the Selection Area | 130,337 | 52.50% | 90,720 | 45.10% | 97,095 | 42.90% |

Employed in the Selection Area - Works within county/region
Employed in the Selection Area but Living Outside – Works in county/region but does not live within county/region
Living in the Selection Area – Lives within county/region
Living in the Selection Area but Employed Outside – Lives in county/region but does not work in county/region
Employed and Living in the Selection Area – Works and lives within county/region



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# SWOT ANALYSIS

# SECTION BREAKDOWN


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# SWOT PARAMETERS

In order to assess the region, a SWOT analysis was conducted of Genesee, Lapeer, and Shiawassee counties. Community members and steering committee members listed strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats for the region. Two lists were created: one from those at in person input sessions and another from those attending the SWOT analysis sessions remotely.

## IN-PERSON LIST

| STRENGTHS | WEAKNESSES | OPPORTUNITIES | THREATS |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Infrastructure** | **Housing** | **Business** | **Business** |
| **Business and Economic Development** | **Place** | **Government/Civic** | **Community** |
| **Institutions** | **Government** | **Housing** | **Environment & Climate** |
| **Place** | **Education** | **Infrastructure & Water** | **Government/Civic** |
| | **Infrastructure** | **Placemaking & Tourism** | **Economics** |
| | **Business** | **Workforce, Talent, & Education** | **Health** |
| | **Talent** | **Transportation** | **Housing** |
| | **Institution** | | **Infrastructure** |
| | | | **Workforce, Talent & Education** |

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# REMOTE LIST

| STRENGTHS | WEAKNESSES | OPPORTUNITIES | THREATS |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Business** | **Business** | **Infrastructure** | **Government/Institutions** |
| **Community** | **Community** | **Housing** | **Community** |
| **Infrastructure & Transportation** | **Government/Civic** | **Workforce/Talent** | |
| | **Housing** | **Government/Institutions** | |
| | **Infrastructure** | **Industry** | |
| | **Workforce, Talent & Education** | **Become an EDA certified region** | |

A more detailed list strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats from both the in-person and remote sessions can be found in the appendix.

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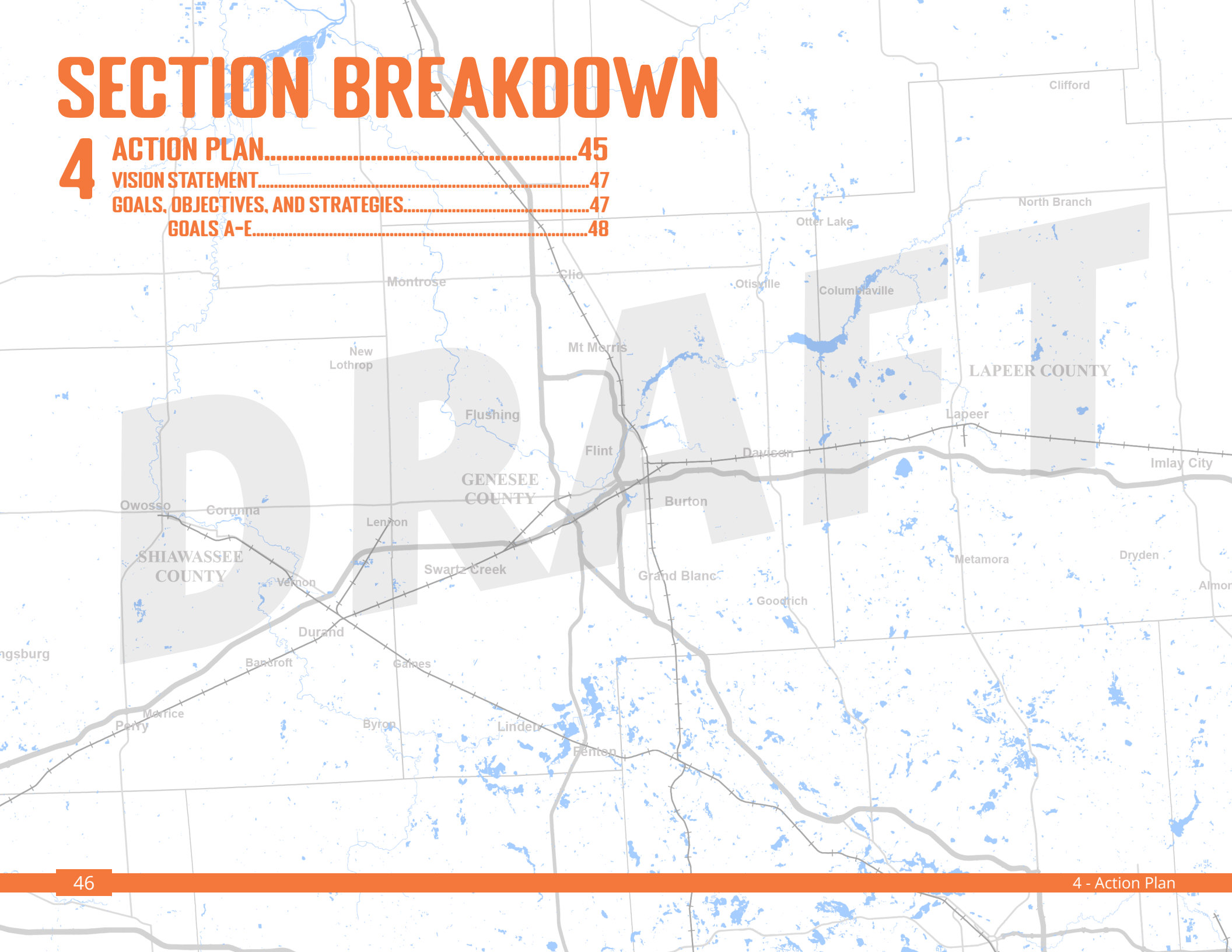


# ACTION PLAN

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# SECTION BREAKDOWN


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# VISION STATEMENT

GLS Region V will strive to build a strong, diverse, and equitable economy in the 3-county region by supporting infrastructure needs, expanding workforce and business development, and building regional capacity to improve the quality of life for its residents.

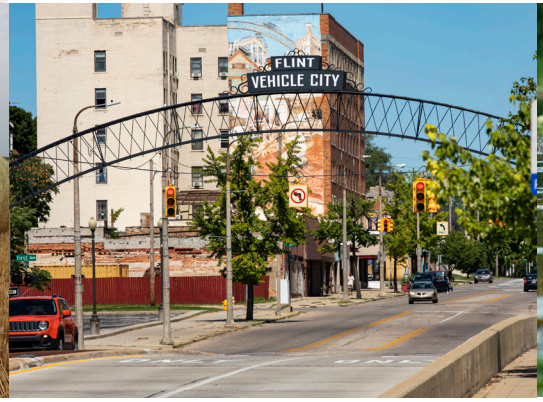
# GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND STRATEGIES

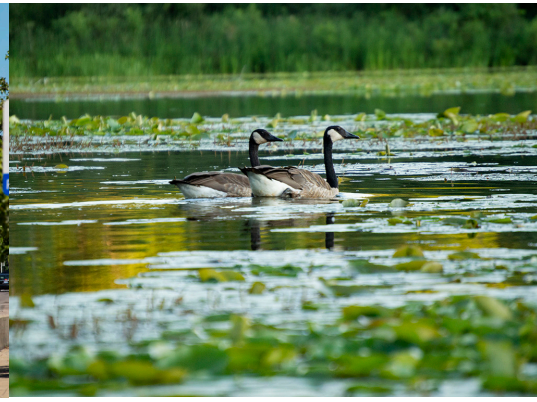
The CEDS Planning team, in conjunction with the Strategy Committee and community/municipal leaders, developed the following goals and objectives. These goals and objectives are based on potential opportunities and projects identified by those involved to assist in the vision of GLS Region V.

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# GOAL A - INFRASTRUCTURE

Strengthen and expand infrastructure across the region to create and diversify opportunities for community and economic development.

## OBJECTIVES

A. Perform an Infrastructure Needs Assessment to understand gaps in current infrastructure and feasibility of future infrastructure

i. Examine all areas of infrastructure: broadband, transportation, water, sewer, electricity

ii. Determine potential costs to improve and expand existing infrastructure

B. Advocate for the utilization of existing airports and railroads

C. Promote the use and/or creation of resilient, clean, and efficient infrastructure

D. Pursue funding from all sources to advance infrastructure goals

## POTENTIAL PARTNERS & FUNDERS

-Michigan Economic Development Corporation

-New Economic Development District

-Shiawassee Economic Development Partnership

-County Governments

-Subcontracted Specialists

-Housing Agencies

-Municipalities

-Detroit Regional Partnership

## EVALUATION METRICS

-Number of completed infrastructure needs assessments

-Amount/type of funding applied/received for county-specific and regional infrastructure projects

-Percentage awarded of regional Economic Development Administration funding allocation

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# GOAL B - BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Develop an equitable environment in the region to attract, retain, and develop businesses and entrepreneurship.

# OBJECTIVES

A.Expand startup and entrepreneurial resources
- i. Develop and grow access to training, workshops, consultation services, and staffing capacity
- ii. Diversify offerings to urban and rural businesses

B. Assist businesses expanding their access to capital and funding
- i. Align entrepreneurs and business owners with state and federal programs.
- ii. Expand Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) opportunities
- iii. Aid matchmaking with available commercial space

# POTENTIAL PARTNERS & FUNDERS

-Community Development Financial Institutions

-Economic Development Organization

-Small Business Development Center

-Small Business Administration

-Institutions of Higher Education

-Banks and Credit Unions

# EVALUATION METRICS

-Number of jobs created/retained as result of Economic Development Administration investments

-Amount/type of assistance provided

-Amount/type of capital investments by Community Development Financial Institutions and regional funders

-Number of funding opportunities applied for to support rural businesses

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# GOAL C - CAPACITY BUILDING

Create an equitable and resilient region through capacity development across the region.

## OBJECTIVES

A. Create an Economic Development District (EDD) for the 3-county region
    i. Determine organization to implement and evaluate the CEDS plan

B. Develop innovative staff solutions to increase expertise and capacity
    i. Hire regional grant writing team to seek, write, and administer staffing and related funds
    ii. Fund planners to assist in moving projects forward

C. Work with all levels of government within the region to improve communication and ordinance creation (i.e., zoning plans, permit process)

D. Improve disaster preparedness throughout the region
    i. Expand asset inventory through data collection and geographic information system tools
    ii. Support local government and businesses to understand their ability to cope with and respond to a man-made and/or natural disaster
    iii. Educate and train communities in environmental justice and equity

## POTENTIAL PARTNERS & FUNDERS

-Municipalities

-Third Party Grant Writers

-Philanthropic Partners

## EVALUATION METRICS

-Creation of Economic Development District

-Number of applications for funding from various sources

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# GOAL D - WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Provide avenues to strengthen and retain a strong, diverse workforce.

## OBJECTIVES

A. Convene employers, train providers to talk about skills needed and determine solutions to gaps
   i. Determine credentials needed for employers
   ii. Determine what certification and degree completion programs exist to fulfill employer needs regionally

B. Increase exposure to students through apprenticeships, internships, and on the job training
   i. Increase Human Resources capacity and talent recruitment
   ii. Improving branding of employer values and culture
   iii. Expose K-12 students to larger breadth of potential careers

C. Increase number and diversity of Career Technical Education (CTE) programs in the region

D. Increase access to childcare to improve availability of workforce
   i. Promote child care programs, such as MI Tri-Share

E. Increase access to resilient housing options for all residents

## POTENTIAL PARTNERS & FUNDERS

-GST Michigan Works!

-K-12 School Districts

-Mott Community College Workforce Development

## EVALUATION METRICS

-Number of jobs created/retained as result of Economic Development Administration investments

-Population growth rate (net in-migration)

-Percentage of wage and benefit growth

-Number of K-12 partnerships with regional colleges and universities

-Number of new housing starts (growth rate in new housing units)

-Percentage of population with credentialed educational attainment

-Number of people/dollars invested in workforce development programs

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# GOAL E - PLACEMAKING

Build a greater sense of community within the region through placemaking to attract and retain workforce.

# OBJECTIVES

A. Increase regional and localized placemaking opportunities
    i. Promote placemaking in downtown areas of local cities

B. Diversify housing options to attract young adults (i.e., mixed-use, higher density housing)

C. Partner with local organizations to assist the international community
    i. Expand programs to remove barriers in language, housing, and transportation

D. Improve outdoor recreation infrastructure and tourist attraction, including green infrastructure

# POTENTIAL PARTNERS & FUNDERS

-Community Groups

-Local Non-Profit Organizations

-Philanthropic Foundations

-Downtown Development Authority

-Genesee County Small Cities and Villiages Association

# EVALUATION METRICS

-Growth rate of property values

-Amount applied for to support county-specific and regional placemaking

-Evidence of regional collaborations and partnerships

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# APPENDICES

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# SECTION BREAKDOWN


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# PROJECT LIST

## REGIONWIDE PROJECTS

**Public-Private Partnerships**

- Designate the three-county region comprised of Genesee, Lapeer, and Shiawassee as an EDA-designated region with a goal to identify the intermediary group or association for oversight and management for project implementation
- Regionwide Infrastructure: Electrical, Gas, Broadband Analysis and Needs Assessment
- Implementation of regional broadband strategy involving utility providers and local leadership
- Innovative regional child care needs assessment and action plan to support greater workforce participation
- Workforce housing needs assessment and development action plan to address target housing development areas, gap funding solutions, types of housing formats, repurposing of corridors, and key structures/vacant buildings/schools that could be prioritized for new housing redevelopment across the three-county region
- Work-based learning opportunities and training models between public high schools, universities and colleges
- Regional training/vocational center
- Grant writing for projects—need capacity to implement EDA grants
- University support of Regional Economic Development (UM-Flint, Baker College, Mott, Kettering and others)
- Phased expansion of UM-Flint College of Innovation and Technology Center (CIT) to increase programming, expand regional economic vitality
- Financial support for expansion of the Mott Community College Regional Technology Center (RTC) and Fabrication Lab, including satellite locations across the three regions
- Regional support for refugees and immigrant population including long-term affordable housing, cultural placemaking and messaging
- Fresh water supply opportunity and impact study including housing, industry and climate change migration
- Expansion of Karegnondi Water Authority (KWA) to Shiawassee County and southern Genesee County
- PFAS digestors/evaporators throughout region
- Participation in Build Back Better and the Global Mobility Cluster to address workforce development and mobility
- Regional energy generation and sustainability assessment and action plan

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# REGIONWIDE PROJECTS

**Government**

- Regional land-use planning to better define land use and growth areas
- Region-wide economic development marketing strategy promoting the region to investors, developers, potential residents, and visitors with customized strategies and messaging per each county, and designate committee for management and oversight

**Transportation**

- Regional public transportation assessment and needs analysis

**Economic Development**

- Regional eco-tourism and expansion: Development and conservation of the Shiawassee River and Flint River as National River Trails, kayak and canoe launch development and links to bike trails
- Municipal staff sharing across the three regions to lend support, share resources, increase communication
- EDA funded industrial park development (across 3 counties) (lack of usable industrial buildings)












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# GENESEE COUNTY PROJECTS

**Business / Infrastructure / Sites**

- Stewart Street bridge reconstruction
- Linden Road water treatment facility (needs large scale investment)
- KCI (Kersley Creek Interceptor Project)--Sewer on east side of Genesee County—increase capacity from Oakland county to Davison including Atlas, Goodrich, multiple townships
- Sites for preparation for development and infrastructure upgrades (priority)
- Racer Trust (Stanley Road, Coldwater Road, Buick City) (Funding for Remediation for PFAS and other environmental concerns)
- DELPHI
- Baldwin & Holly/I-75
- Central High School
- Flint Northwestern (50 acres)
- Former Zimmerman School (Corunna Road Corridor)
- Bishop Airport Expansion (inland port)
- Maple & Linden roads MEGA Site
- Swartz Creek Raceway Industrial Park and Technology Center – including road infrastructure
- Industrial park road, sewer, water, and storm sewer infrastructure build-out at Lehman and Taylor Drive vicinity in Mundy Township, including potential addition of exits on I75 nearby
- Brownfield Remediation for mixed-use building development in City of Grand Blanc
- Mundy Miracle Commons park on Hill Road in Mundy Township including a handicap accessible Miracle League baseball field, an on-site senior center, an amphitheater, and other features.
- Diplomat Pharmacy Campus
- Genesee Valley Mall Housing and Redevelopment Plan
- GM Assembly/Truck and Bus
- Expansion of cultural and educational opportunities for K-12 programming from a regional perspective including at the Flint Cultural Center and Flint Children's Museum
- City of Montrose Industrial Park
- City of Fenton Business Park
- Holly Rd water and sewer to tech village
- Baldwin Rd overpass to make it all-season
- Genesee Valley Mall redevelopment
- Sidewalks on Saginaw St in Grand Blanc
- Road improvements to industrial park near Flint Bishop International airport
- Pirates Park redevelopment on Miller Rd
- Thompson Road I75 interchange project and water infrastructure for industrial park
- Local Development Finance Authority Hi-Tech/Business Park Redevelopment – road infrastructure improvements and lighting

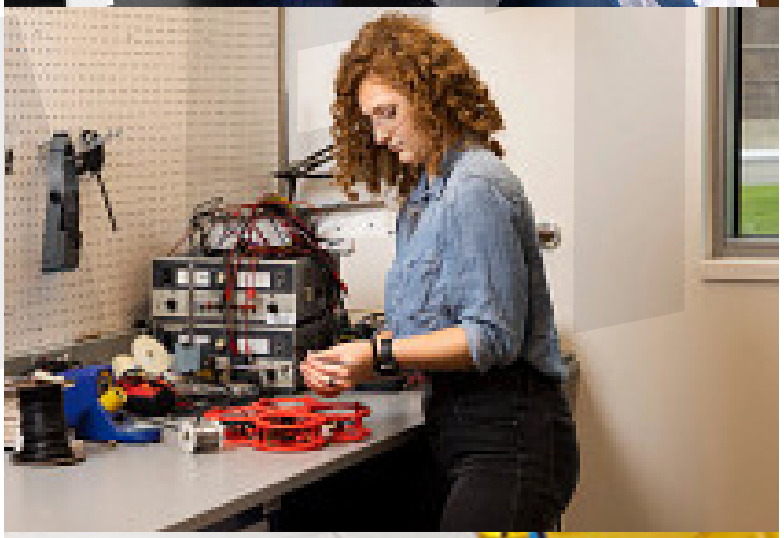
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# LAPEER COUNTY PROJECTS

**Business / Economic Development / Infrastructure**

- Broadband
- Rail expansion
- Water system back-up
- Water and sewer expansion in Almont to locate health care facility
- How to handle wastewater on an industrial scale
- Makerspace
- Business Center space
- Regional training facilities
- Childcare support
- Update zoning ordinance
- Focused vocational training
- Access to trade schools in region
- Early education improvement
- Solar energy
- Broadband/road infrastructure improvements for Industrial park buildout in Almont
- Any project outlined in a current or future community specific approved Capital Improvement Plan
- Regional utility expansion multiple community collaboration to include roads and traffic controls.









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# SHIAWASSEE COUNTY PROJECTS

**Sites (Land Bank Facilitation as Development Partner)**

- Parmenter Road (120-130 acres)
- Project Tim Area (1000-1400 acres, needs water and sewer)
- Delaney & M52/M21 corridor (needs long-term infrastructure plan)
- Development of Shiawassee County wastewater facility (Expand facility in Perry)
- Planning and pre-permitting of development ready sites
- Multi-modal logistics facility

**Business / Economic Development / Infrastructure**

- Identify priority broadband area and action plan (mapping)
- Street lighting installation at the I-69/M-52 interchange and along Lansing Road in the commercial district
- Reed Road upgrade to activate large city acreage
- Creation of Police Authority to cover City of Perry, Village of Morrice and Perry Township
- Increase capacity of water/wastewater systems with new lines and water storage tower on Lansing Road corridor in Perry Township
- Farm to table USDA certified slaughter and food processing, packaging and distribution facility
- Supply chain needs analysis and implementation strategy (county and region)
- Identification of Makerspace/Incubator (EDA Needs Assessment) for fabrication, Ideation and small business development
- Long-term Infrastructure Plan for the county
- Regional vocational and tech center
- Diverse workforce housing development (apartments and single-family homes, duplexes, etc.)
- Recycling Center or materials recovery facility
- Wild Rose Industrial Park road improvements
- Infrastructure (roads, water, wastewater, etc.) for expansion of industrial park in Owosso
- Road upgrades on M-21 to better handle traffic due to Owosso Speedway expansion
- Infrastructure expansion for housing development and wastewater infrastructure improvements – City of Laingsburg

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# DETAILED SWOT ANALYSIS

## STRENGTHS

**Infrastructure**

- Transportation Routes (10)
    - I-69
    - I-475
    - I-75
- Water sources – KWA
- Lots of excess capacity for raw water and drinking water and wastewater/sewer (5)
- Rail access to national and international ports
    - Strong short-line companies
- Bishop International Airport (4)
- Alternative energy – solar
- Available commercial infrastructure
- Strong supply chain infrastructure and supports (3)

**Business and Economic Development**

- Location to larger markets – Detroit, Grand Rapids, Chicago, Toronto, Lansing (6)
- Inexpensive property for businesses to move into (2)
- Vacant land available (6)
- Untapped workforce
- Manufacturing history (6)
- Strong agricultural ties and history (Lapeer and Shiawassee)
- Significant agricultural production (4)
- History of entrepreneurship and ingenuity
- Great Economic Development ecosystem
- Business perseverance
- Creativity
- Talent (12)
- Low risk of climate impacts and natural disasters (4)
- Lots of resources to the business community
- Growing small businesses and startups
- Low tax rates
- Diversity of businesses (7)
- Agricultural amenities
- Regional Economic Development Partnerships
- Large labor pool
- Highly skilled workforce

**Institutions**

- Healthcare centers and hospitals (10+)
    - McLaren
    - Ascension
    - Hurley
    - Memorial Health System
- Comprehensive plans to engage community health disparities
- Greater Flint Health Coalition
- Great Emergency room service & Trauma Centers
- Flint Promise Grants

**In-Person List**

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# STRENGTHS

**Institutions (Cont.)**
- Educational support partnerships
- Colleges and Universities (10+)
    - U of M Flint
    - Kettering
    - Michigan State
    - Mott
    - Northwood
    - Central Michigan
    - Baker Shiawassee
- Education resources
- Flint Cultural Center
- Philanthropic Organizations and Foundations (6)
- Non-profit support networks (6)
- Workforce training support network
- Local governments that support development

**Place**
- Flint River Trail
- Flint River restoration
- Excellent recreational opportunities across the region (10+)
- Access to great outdoor spaces – parks, trails, rivers and rail trials (6)
- Great quality of life
- Lower cost of living (3)
- Community sentiment
- Walkable/attractive downtowns (4)
- Strong downtown and Main Street development across the region
- Downtown Flint revival
- Access to affordable housing
- Low cost to entry for living in many communities
- Can do attitudes
- Large Metro area

**In-Person List**



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# WEAKNESSES

**Housing**
- Housing market availability – lack of housing choices (10+)
- Unaffordable housing
- Draw to community – unable to attract new residents to Flint area
- Aging housing stock in many communities
- Cost of housing construction

**Place**
- Apathy of citizens
- Mistrust of powers that be
- Perception of crime rate in Flint and what it means to growth (correct or not)
- High Crime
- Flint water crisis narrative (6)
- Blight in some communities/Blighted Structures
- Buildings that need redevelopment
- Low tax base in some communities
- Some communities operate in perpetual crisis mode
- Lack of affordable childcare (5)
- Lack of opportunities in most rural areas
- Negative perception of area
- Negative media coverage for Flint and metro region
- Nothing for young people to stay for
- Not doing enough to attract young people to the region
- NIMBY'ism
- Lack of diversity outside of Flint
- Aging population
- Some members of "community" being left behind during periods of progress

**Government**
- Cumbersome approval processes
- Slow government processes
- Too much red tape
- Political infighting (Flint)
- Local government disfunction (5)
- Afraid of change (3)
- Fear of new ideas
- Politics/Political climate (4)
- Lack of resources for basic municipal functions
- State revenue sharing is broken
- Negative Stereotypes (6)
- Anti-growth sentiment
- Ineptitude of government (Fed, State, Local) (4)
- Poor relations between community, Government and Law Enforcement
- Lack of vision
- Lack of leadership
- Poor agency responses to community
- Lack of diverse representation in leadership positions

**Education**
- Lack of Education providers outside of Genesee County
- School system quality – great in areas, not great in others
- Flint education system/Talent pipeline

**In-Person List**

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# WEAKNESSES

**Education (Cont.)**
- Negative stereotypes
- Low graduation rates in some districts

**Infrastructure**
- Aging quality of infrastructure in many areas (5)
- Dilapidated/lack of infrastructure in areas (3)
- Many land sites lack appropriate infrastructure for industry (4)
    - Water
    - Sewer
- Lack of shovel ready project sites
- High utility costs
- No available industrial buildings
- Lack of building square footage
- Lack of public transportation options across region (except for a few areas)
- Lack of available and reliable broadband in many areas (5)

**Business**
- Not enough business diversification
- Too focused on GM
- Too focused on manufacturing in the region
- Not enough support for entrepreneurs and small businesses (4)
- Pipeline of successful new companies
- Lack of exit companies/public IPO's
- Not enough capital for startup businesses
- Lack of angel investors
- Supply change disruptions
- Higher wages in neighboring counties
- Low incomes
- Non-competitive state incentives
- Legacy of industrial pollution
- Lack of or availability of resources to support minority businesses

**Talent**
- Labor shortages
- Talent numbers exist but they aren't skilled enough (5)
- Shrinking labor pool
- Retiring workforce
- Brain drain
- Lack of White Collar workers

**Institutions**
- Competition for funding vs collaboration (non-profit sectors)

**In-Person List**

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# OPPORTUNITIES

**Business**

- Business owner and law enforcement relationships to help reduce crime
- Angel investors for micro businesses
- Create new business model for childcare where business and community subsidize childcare (more affordable for families and higher pay scale for credentialed staff)
- Red tape reduction through two zones—less permits, regulation, licenses, requirements
- Invest heavily in our local innovators/dreamers/artists
- Speculative industrial buildings
- Large land sites for industrial development
- Leverage proximity to Canada to potential businesses
- Employers invest in housing, childcare and transportation to attract and retain talent
- Collaboration that brings organizations and institutions together that leverage the resources of funds and intellect
- Urban agriculture
- Technical Park
- Flint needs to implement land use plans
- Increased brownfield redevelopment
- Assemble three mega sites (1,000+ acres) and make shovel-ready (zoning, utilities, roads, etc.) (2)
- Build community wealth via two companies that have exits valued over $1 billion each
- Small business development programs
- Expand opportunities to grow own food and agriculture sector and craft business
- Support business development by repurposing existing structures before becoming dilapidated (churches, schools, large homes)
- Opportunity for wind and solar developments across the region
- Redevelop business corridors
- Improve support for entrepreneurial ecosystems
- Healthcare innovation, clinical research with collaborative approaches
- Battery/Electric Vehicle sector growth
- Reshoring of manufacturing to Michigan
- Brownfield development and TIF
- Vacant land can be used to establish manufacturing sites; exploiting abandoned land vs vacant land
- Have new GHS child services building to draw more client to the area
- New technology manufacturing such as EV batteries and semiconductors
- Recruit GM to expand
- Continued and increased support of small businesses
- Small business incubator spaces (temporarily) for retail with storefronts to assist with proof of concept

**Government/Civic**

- Increased Redevelopment Ready Community Training and Designation support
- Increased governance and services
- Cultivate young, new and diverse leaders (2)

**In-Person List**

DRAFT

# OPPORTUNITIES

**Government/Civic (Cont.)**
- Invest wisely with ARPA and federal funds
- Immigration and support for new residents (2)
- Teach people how to make government work for them and get involved in local politics
- Encourage and support regional collaboration with a cohesive vision throughout region (4)
- Safer communities through intentional engagement and trust building between residents, local government, law enforcement (3)
- Enhance inter-regional outreach in Detroit, Ann Arbor, Grand Rapids, Mid-Michigan, Canada
- Willingness to fund Flint due to infamous issues

**Infrastructure & Water**
- Large water source availability (KWA)
- Instead of replacing obsolete gray infrastructure, re-envision green infrastructure and low-impact development
- Regions could be a major center where solar cells and wind turbines are created
- Develop a new regional economic development infrastructure
- Broadband throughout the region
- Utilize ARPA funds and combine with other initiatives to provide solutions to rural connectivity
- Utility build-outs to support industry as well as new housing
- Explore possible county/city managers to streamline services like public safety, parks, etc.
- Significant funding for broadband expansion coming available at federal and state levels
- Cheap raw water

**Housing**
- Mixed use space (childcare, affordable housing, retail, commercial)
- Use of land bank to build new housing using TIF funding
- Creative solutions around housing—tiny home solutions to increase availability and affordability
- Senior housing opportunities—stop them from moving to Florida
- Uncover opportunities for housing developments in our downtowns to attract young workers
- Reconfigure neighborhoods with greenspace from vacant land
- invest in affordable housing projects (2)

**Placemaking & Tourism**
- Significant available urban land for development once Flint demos are complete
- Connect and develop natural recreation resources across region "you don't need to go up north"
- Placemaking features in the region including parks, activating rivers--enhancing tourism projects centered around the Michigan seasons
- Agricultural and breweries as tourism drivers
- Rebrand the area as a unified region (2)

**In-Person List**

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# OPPORTUNITIES

**Placemaking & Tourism (Cont.)**
- Intentional placemaking outside downtown and when building new housing
- Market and showcase the region's strengths to attract people and investment
- Increase tourism by recognizing and promoting natural resources and outdoor recreation
- Social enterprise venture fund
- Improve functional greenspace
- Eliminate blighted buildings
- Flint voted best place to live for seniors so can recruit more to live in city
- Use placemaking as an economic development tool

**Workforce, Talent & Education**
- Trainable workforce/partnership with colleges and institutions
- Regional cooperative purchasing program exclusively for businesses in region to drive down cost, keep funding in region
- Utilize immigrant populations for workforce; welcoming communities could be stronger (2)
- Reimagine K-12 curriculum to include more creative thought
- Increase funding for apprenticeship and vocational opportunities (2)
- Can become leader/hub in health system workforce training
- Expand collaborations between universities (2)
- Incentivize training in skilled trades
- Educational pipeline programs
- Retraining and attracting international talent (will need federal immigration reform)
- Bring co-ops back to local high schools to encourage talent for employers and businesses, retaining talent and strengthen career pathways
- Diversification of training and educational resources to prepare youth and aging community members for changing economy
- Council for Opportunity in Education for autonomous vehicle development partnering with Kettering, UM-Flint College of Innovation & Technology, Mott Regional Tech Center
- More high school pathways into careers such as the Genesee Early College to accelerate and forge strong connections to our sectors and employers
- Recruiting good students to our area
- Outreach/marketing information about the type of careers available
- Use investments in early childcare after water crisis to become the hub of quality learning
- More social services to support young people, address teen pregnancy and options to rise up out of poverty; career options and training
- Major initiative to improve digital equity and digital literacy skills of area residents

**Transportation**
- Region-wide public transportation so low-income people aren't stuck in one geographical area

**In-Person List**

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# THREATS

**Business**
- Antiquated business models & practices (ie childcare credentialed workers make less than sandwich artists)
- Non-profits can't "charge more" to remain competitive—huge gaps in services as a result of closure
- Economy/possible recession causing businesses to slow growth/limit pay increases
- Discounting the importance of small businesses play to the local economy
- Competition and better incentives in other states for international businesses
- Political and policy environment not supporting businesses
- Lack of resources and money to make opportunities happen
- New brick and mortar but lack of money for maintenance
- Not enough venture capital available for tech industry
- Stiff competition (ie in manufacturing)
- Supply chain

**Community**
- Inability to overcome negative reputation (6)
- Crime
- Apathy
- NIMBY-ism preventing future growth
- Not enough focus on supporting needs of the younger generations
- Converting national image to be less dependent on automobile industry
- Structural racism (2)
- Failing public school system

**Environment & Climate**
- Environmental risks will scare away new investment
- Harsh winters
- Natural disaster

**Government/Civic**
- Lack of funding
- Lack of political willingness to work together (5)
- Competing objectives in neighboring municipalities (2)
- Outdated ordinances that limit expansion and uses
- Red tape
- Dysfunction
- Dysfunctional city council (4)
- Low capacity of critical city departments
- Lack of long-term thinking (focus on economic constraints and what is cheapest vs. what's best for our planet long-term)
- Lack of community engagement in large-scale development during visioning phase
- Power and money concentrated into too few hands
- Territorialism
- Continually doing the same thing with the same organizations and expecting different results
- Leadership valuing recognition over collaboration
- Lack of urgency and unity of elected officials
- Sustained budget deficits due to legacy cost
- Misalignment of state government agencies (MEDC, MSHDA on housing)

**In-Person List**

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# THREATS

**Government/Civic (Cont.)**
- State budget hurting local budgets, reduced revenue sharing
- Lack of transparent and consistent collaboration on local government bodies impending the development of strategic plans and implementation
- Trump running for president again
- Anti-immigration politics
- Not enough good people running for political positions
- Long term impact of ARPA budget shift and offset
- Elected officials with no vision and personal agendas
- Ineffective city governance
- City and county cooperation (2)
- Dysfunctional school board
- Poor management of budgets (2)
- Eroding tax base
- Strain on nonprofit sector due to Covid
- Thinking all development is good development--some is extractive more than additive
- National & International Economics
- Inflation (3)
- Recession (3)
- War: huge supply shocks, inflation, energy cost, increased interest rates
- Demographic trends continue
- Impact of the electric vehicle on the conventional/existing industry
- Lack of attention to economic diversification—looking for the next GM

**Health**
- Another pandemic (3)
- Continued global health crisis
- Environmental contamination and remediation requirements
- Another water crisis

**Housing**
- Property tax reform in older industrial areas for housing
- Unmet needs for middle-income housing
- Housing shortage hinders industry growth

**Infrastructure**
- Increased cost of utilities, gas
- Supply chain disruptions
- Reduced funding
- Disfunction of regional broadband efforts

**Workforce, Talent & Education**
- Brain and talent drain as collage grads leave the region (5)
- Funding goes to more collaborative and innovative regions
- Continued downward trends related to undergraduate enrollment
- Low revenue pools with colleges
- Diminishing population of high-school graduates projected until 2030
- Increased cost of education and student debt
- Reduced funding for basic education

**In-Person List**

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# THREATS

**Workforce, Talent & Education (Cont.)**

- Decrease in birth rate causing reduction in future workforce (5)
- Educational systems not able to respond to current business needs
- Reduced priority for science, innovation, research and development at a local and state level
- Poverty
- Underemployment
- Brain drain due to perceived better opportunities elsewhere (3)
- Aging population
- Decline in birth rates

**In-Person List**




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# STRENGTHS

**Business**
- Broad mix of land uses across the county and diverse economy (urban, rural, large commercial, industrial) (2)
- Strong nonprofit sector
- Philanthropic Organizations and Foundations that invest in area
- Vacant property
- Centrally located in state

**Community**
- Flint Cultural Center (3)
- Strong neighborhood groups

**Infrastructure & Transportation**
- Transportation--rail/road/air (3) MTA
- Influx of ARPA dollars
- Good broadband infrastructure (in some areas)

**Remote List**



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# WEAKNESSES

**Business**
- High concentration of chain and national stores vs. local retail

**Community**
- Lack of support and access to resources for families
- Lack of affordable and safe childcare (2)
- Concentrated areas of poverty
- Decreasing tax base
- Blight
- Gun violence, lack of safety
- Food deserts

**Government/Civic**
- Poor city government
- Dysfunctional elected officials
- Over regulation and time for permitting
- County and state red tape

**Housing**
- Lack of quality, safe, affordable housing (2)

**Infrastructure**
- Lack of broadband access by more rural residents and businesses
- High costs to maintain and repair infrastructure

**Workforce, Talent & Education**
- Brain drain (2)
- Lack of workforce
- Lower wages than other parts of the country
- Aging population
- Lack of access to good public schools and career training
- Low educational attainment
- Lack of living wage jobs and employee training (3)

**Remote List**

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# OPPORTUNITIES

**Infrastructure**
- Cheap raw water
- Brownfield development
- Brownfield TIF
- Exploiting abandoned land vs. greenfield/vacant land
- Funding for broadband expansion coming available from Federal and State sources

**Housing**
- Invest in affordable housing projects
- Set new model for affordable housing and mixed-use projects

**Workforce/Talent**
- More high school pathways to careers such as the Genesee Early College
- Can recruit leading students to area
- Educational pipeline programs can be developed and implemented
- Develop a stronger outreach/marketing program to inform residents about the availability of careers in the area

**Government/Institutions**
- Explore possibility of County/City mergers to streamline services (parks, safety, schools…)
- New GHS Child Services Center is an attraction for the area
- Major initiatives to improve digital literacy and equity
- Create more social services to address teen pregnancy and other challenges that prevent people from exiting poverty

**Industry**
- Recruit and expand GM business
- Explore opportunities for EV manufacturing and support
- Increase support for small businesses
- Expand small businesses incubation
- Utilize vacant land for new manufacturing sites

**Become an EDA certified region**

**Remote List**

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# THREATS

**Government/Institutions**

- Eroding tax base in some communities
- Elected officials with narrow visions or personal agendas not aligned with community
- Non-effective government/services
- Lack of city and county cooperation/collaboration
- Different levels of government not working together/silos
- Poor management of budgets and resources
- Municipal budget shortfalls
- Failing/struggling/strained public school system (some communities more so than others)
- Dysfunctional school board (Flint)
- Structural racism throughout system and inequitable distribution of resources and services
- Public image of region both internal and external
- Another water crisis
- Strain on non-profit sector due to covid, competition and budget shortfalls

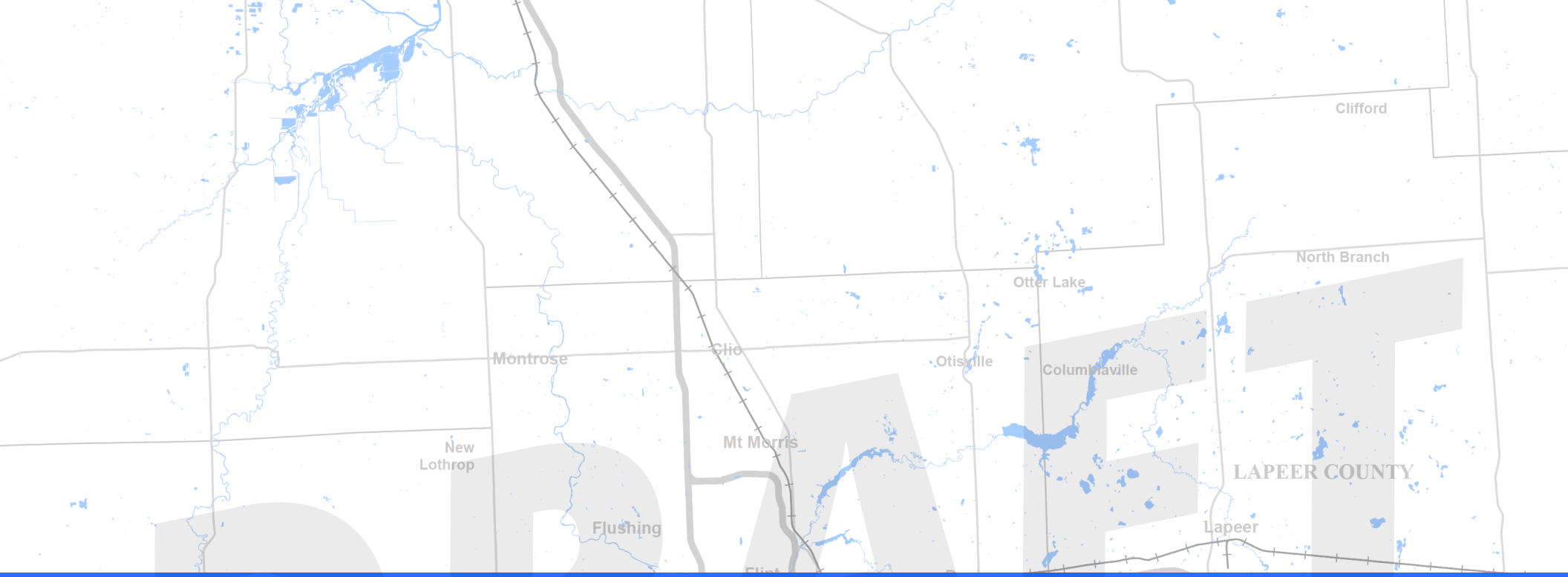
**Community**

- Aging population and low birth rates not keeping up with societal and workforce demand
- Housing shortages impacting affordability, in-migration and industry
- Another pandemic
- Natural disasters
- Harsh winters

**Remote List**



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2023-2028

# COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Genesee • Lapeer • Shiawassee





