

Michigan Department of Labor and
Economic Opportunity (LEO) High-Speed
Internet Office (MIHI)



State of Michigan
Digital Equity Plan (DRAFT)

July 2023

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Disclaimer: The Draft Michigan Digital Equity Plan was developed based on data and feedback collected through extensive stakeholder and community engagement completed during the first half of 2023. While this plan has been thoughtfully prepared to establish Michigan’s vision for digital equity in the context of its overarching strategy and goals, this is not the final version of the document. Responsive public comments from Michiganders of all walks of life are imperative to strengthening the Digital Equity Plan. The Michigan High-Speed Internet Office (MIHI) invites the public to review and comment on this draft version and to provide MIHI with the valuable feedback needed to help ensure that the plan meets the needs of Michiganders.

DRAFT

1 Executive Summary

Introduction to Digital Equity in Michigan

Nearly every aspect of modern life requires access to high-speed internet. Digital equity means that all individuals and communities have the tools and resources necessary to access and meaningfully connect to the internet. Currently, Michigan faces multi-faceted challenges in achieving digital equity leading to a digital divide, or a portion of the population who do not have reliable, affordable access to internet.

As of 2023, more than 492,000 households are unserved (locations without 25/3 Mbps service available) or underserved (locations without 100/20 Mbps service available)¹ by high-speed internet infrastructure. Another 730,000 households face barriers related to affordability, adoption, device access, digital literacy, or a combination thereof. Taken together, this means that approximately 30% of Michigan households struggle with some form of the digital divide². This is particularly prevalent for covered populations including low-income households, where nearly 35% of households earning less than \$20,000 annually do not have a broadband connection³, aging individuals, where more than 22% of residents aged 65 and older do not have broadband at home⁴, and racial or ethnic minorities are nearly half as likely to have a home broadband connection than non-minorities⁵. Many Michigan residents fall within these covered populations, with individuals likely falling into more than one covered population category, highlighting a need to ensure all vulnerable populations are included within the state's digital equity efforts. Moreover, many individuals lack access to internet-connected devices such as computers, creating another significant obstacle. Michigan is also a fairly rural state, with 61 of the 83 counties in the state being labeled as rural by the U.S. Census Bureau, posing challenges related to access and affordability of broadband. These complex and overlapping issues create many barriers and challenges for achieving digital equity in Michigan.

High-speed internet is essential to communities, as it provides access to information, enhances communication, and expands opportunities for its users. Additionally, education, economic development and mobility, environment, healthcare, transportation, infrastructure, and workforce development are inextricably linked to the universal availability and adoption of broadband service—its benefits reach beyond the immediate users of broadband service. The Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunities estimates expanding broadband statewide could produce significant economic opportunities for households valued between \$1.8 billion to \$2.7 billion annually⁶.

Michigan's goal to bridge the Digital Divide and increase digital connectivity also includes the aim to ensure all individuals, especially covered populations, are adequately educated, trained, and have the needed resources to utilize the internet in a productive and impactful manner.

Vision

¹ Data for number of unserved and underserved locations comes from the June 15th, 2023 data published by the Federal Communications Commission that represents availability reported by internet service providers as of December 31, 2022.

² [2021 Update to the Michigan Broadband Roadmap \(2021\), Michigan High-Speed Internet Office](#)

³ U.S. Census Bureau. (2019). 2019 American Community Survey 1-year Estimates Detailed Tables

⁴ U.S. Census Bureau. (2019). 2019 American Community Survey 1-year Estimates Detailed Tables

⁵ U.S. Census Bureau. (2019). 2019 American Community Survey 1-year Estimates Detailed Tables

⁶ [2021 Update to the Michigan Broadband Roadmap \(2021\), Michigan High-Speed Internet Office](#)

The Michigan High-Speed Internet Office (MIHI) envisions to close the digital divide by 2030 and achieve a digitally connected and inclusive state where every resident and community has an affordable high-speed internet connection available to them regardless of location, economic status, or race/ethnicity. The key to MIHI's vision is community engagement working together with the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) and other state agencies, and creating solutions distinct to communities' needs.

MIHI's ultimate goal for digital equity in the state is to ensure that high-speed internet access is available to every home, business, institution, and community. A key component of digital equity includes expanding the availability of internet-connected devices, technical assistance, training programs to ensure individuals are able to utilize the internet effectively.

Alignment with Existing Efforts to Improve Outcomes

The goals of the Digital Equity Plan are aligned to the State of Michigan's priorities and other existing or planned efforts such as the BEAD program. There is considerable overlap in prioritization of increasing the workforce, improving educational attainment, enhancing overall health outcomes, improving civic and social engagement, and increasing awareness to other essential services and programs. To best serve Michigan natives and bridge the digital divide, MIHI will collaborate with public, private, and governmental agencies on new and existing programs that coincide.

Strategy and Objectives

MIHI's goals have informed the development of key strategies aimed at bridging the digital divide and enhancing digital equity throughout Michigan. These strategic initiatives will form the foundation for measurable tactics and objectives that will guide MIHI's efforts to ensure universal access and adoption of broadband service. By aligning MIHI's goals with actionable strategies and measurable objectives, Michigan can develop a comprehensive and equitable approach to achieving digital equity. MIHI's goals for the Digital Equity Plan and to bridge the digital divide by 2030 are included the.

MIHI's Digital Equity Goals

- ① Ensure all Michiganders have access to an affordable, reliable high-speed internet connection at their homes
- ② Attract workers and employers to Michigan
- ③ Improve educational attainment including removing barriers for credentialed workers and in postsecondary achievement
- ④ Improve overall health outcomes, particularly with improvement in rural areas and in underrepresented populations
- ⑤ Educate Michiganders about the online services available to them as a citizen of the state

Asset Inventory

MIHI has taken significant steps towards improving digital equity in Michigan through its comprehensive inventory of digital equity assets, plans, and programs. This inventory utilized the Michigan Digital Inclusion Resource Map to inform its collection of available resources and is focused on asset that serve covered populations to improve the state's digital equity ecosystem. The map is based on the Michigan Statewide Digital Inclusion survey, which received responses from over 200 organizations and resources throughout the state. MIHI has aligned the survey results with the covered populations they support, as shown in Appendix A-1.

Central to MIHI's approach to developing the asset inventory was the engagement with stakeholders, communities, and Tribal leaders throughout Michigan to gather a more comprehensive understanding of the state's resources, how those assets can be better utilized, and where asset gaps currently exist. MIHI is committed to addressing the existing asset gaps that were identified, while also maintaining efforts to eliminate the obstacles and barriers related to digital equity.

Needs Assessment

With the goal of 95% statewide adoption of broadband, MIHI conducted a comprehensive community engagement strategy wherein community members and stakeholders shared their biggest broadband barriers via surveys to collect information on the barriers Michiganders face, specifically covered populations, when accessing broadband. The results of the needs assessment emphasized that the most significant barrier to internet adoption was the availability of broadband service. Affordability and the need for digital skills to effectively utilize the internet were also considered as significant concerns. These findings are guiding MIHI's efforts to develop targeted tactics and objectives that respond to the specific needs of these covered populations and to help achieve digital equity throughout Michigan.

Coordination and Outreach Strategy

Core to MIHI's coordination and outreach strategy is MI Connected Future (MICF), an inclusive engagement model that aims to facilitate stakeholder and community engagement by promoting robust outreach and input, specifically targeted to covered populations. The MICF model has four primary components - community meetings, partnership roundtables, data collection, and public comment - that are crucial to its implementation. These components are designed to gather data and feedback from community members and organizations to further improve the Digital Equity Plan.

Implementation Strategy

MIHI's implementation strategy is derived from the data and feedback gathered from community members and organizations during MICF. As a result, MIHI plans to implement a Digital Navigator program that's aim is to promote community-based solutions, address the digital divide equitably based on individual community requirements, and facilitate high-speed internet access and digital skills training opportunities in urban, suburban, and rural areas. The implementation strategy include a robust network of digital navigators deployed throughout the state and designed to support community needs. Each navigator will support the capacity building of individuals through digital skills training, by providing resources for device access, and affordability resources. Navigators will be instrumental in barrier removal for individuals and have an emphasis on supporting underrepresented communities and covered populations.

1 Introduction and Vision for Digital Equity

1.1 Vision

Broadband in the 21st century is a necessity yet much of Michigan remains without access to an affordable, or reliable broadband connection. The Michigan High-Speed Internet Office (MIHI) recognizes the importance of broadband access to its citizens which promotes economic opportunity, educational attainment, health outcomes, and civic engagement. MIHI envisions a connected and inclusive state where every resident has an affordable high-speed internet connection available to them regardless of where they live, how much money they make, or what they look like. Digital equity in Michigan looks like state-wide universal broadband availability, affordable broadband subscription plans for middle- and low-income households, at least one internet enabled device per household, inclusive training and technical support services for devices, digital skills, and personal cybersecurity.

Digital equity is not something that can be accomplished with a one-size-fits-all approach. The needs of each corner of our state vary tremendously, as do they vary from household to household. For example, the Eastern Upper Peninsula lacks broadband infrastructure apart from portions of its towns, compared to Detroit which has infrastructure, but is met with affordability barriers for many of its residents. MIHI will not be satisfied with a blanket approach to digital equity wherein each region of our state has the same solution to close the divide. Digital equity means meeting communities and people where they are, connecting them to the resources that already exist, learning about problems that persist, and providing community level technical support to encourage accessibility and promote adoption.

Communities know communities best. Our vision is to approach the digital divide by employing a grassroots strategy where communities lead the conversation and work toward solutions in tandem with MIHI and other state agencies. By building off the existing work community leaders already have in place and resources available locally, and by providing support for technical assistance, by fostering connections between communities and existing programs and services (state, regional, or otherwise), while following a coordinated approach, Michigan will close the digital divide by 2030.

1.2 Alignment with Existing Efforts to Improve Outcomes

MIHI recognizes the importance and impact of infrastructure deployment on digital equity. As such, the structure of the MIHI office is designed in an intentional way wherein members of the infrastructure team and the Digital Equity team collaborate on cross-over projects and programs to ensure infrastructure deployment is conducted equitably. MIHI will cross reference existing infrastructure with planned infrastructure and overlay it with feedback collected from the state-wide engagement tour to ensure the needs of the community are being met in a holistic manner. Details regarding specifics of infrastructure rollout strategies will be provided in the Michigan Initial Proposal (BEAD Program activity).

MIHI operates based on two strategic state goals:

1. Universal availability of reliable internet service, and,
2. 95% adoption of internet service at the home

As of 2021, 30% of Michiganders struggle with some form of the digital divide⁷, but overwhelmingly, MIHI heard from communities that the lack of availability was the biggest concern. MIHI is working to braid existing American Rescue Plan Act – Coronavirus Capital Projects Funding (ARPA-CPF)⁸ with future BEAD program dollars to support the build out of a reliable high-speed internet network throughout the state. MIHI is confident with strategic planning and collaboration with internet service providers and communities, goal one will be accomplished by 2030. Additionally, once a plan has been developed to use BEAD funding to bring affordable, high-speed broadband service to all unserved and underserved locations, BEAD funding may be used for non-deployment uses such as digital skills training, education programs, affordability program enrollment assistance, and other digital equity uses that support adoption.

While it is easy to solve the availability problem, the adoption goal becomes increasingly complex. The American Community Survey monitors households that do not have an internet connection, but there is little information available as to why Michiganders don't have an internet connection at their home. Barriers to adoption come in many forms and are evidenced in the feedback MIHI collected as part of its MI Connected Future (MICF) state-wide listening tour⁹; however, the most commonly identified barrier (second to availability) was affordability of service. MIHI is looking to solve the affordability gap through creative engagement with communities and service providers to share existing resources that support affordability of internet service for Michiganders and to explore options for provider-led affordability programs.

Additionally, as MIHI toured the state to learn from Michigander's as to why they were not online, many communities provided their community plans for digital equity and infrastructure expansion. Some of those plans are referenced later in this document, but MIHI will incorporate the content of the existing plans into the implementation of the Digital Equity Act implementation activities by working with community task forces, Tribal nations, and municipalities seeking broadband expansion and digital equity initiatives.

Economic and Workforce Outcomes

MIHI is located within the Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity (LEO). The LEO strategic plan for FY2022-FY2026 emphasizes five strategic focus areas:

1. Close equity gaps
 - a. Prioritize closure of socioeconomic/demographic opportunity gaps in all decision making
2. Protect and enhance health, safety, and economic security for workers
 - a. Ensure safe working conditions, fair wages, and labor protections
3. Educate Michiganders and grow the middle class by removing barriers to employment
 - a. Support education, training, onramps, certifications to make sustaining wages more attainable.
 - b. Address barriers including housing, transportation, healthcare, childcare, language, and placement.
 - c. Address talent shortages in current and future growth sectors in every region of the state.

⁷ [2021 Update to the Michigan Broadband Roadmap \(2021\), Michigan High-Speed Internet Office](#)

⁸ Also known as the Realizing Opportunities through Broadband Infrastructure Networks (ROBIN)

⁹ MI Connected Future (MICF), an inclusive engagement model that aims to facilitate stakeholder and community engagement by promoting robust outreach and input, specifically targeted to covered populations. See section 4 for a full description of this state-wide listening tour.

4. Create better jobs and support small businesses
 - a. Become the benchmark of economic development y supporting the creation of good and promising jobs that make Michigan’s economy more resilient, while implementing the state’s first small business strategy that includes focusing on microbusinesses.
 - b. Address talent shortages in current and future growth sectors in every region of the state.
5. Build strong communities and have great places to live
 - a. Create a strong foundation for communities to grow by making historic investments in broadband, housing, and other critical infrastructure.
 - b. Invest in developing vibrant places with rich amenities.

Worker attraction is paramount to the success of the LEO strategic plan, but to attract workers, the state must also attract employers. Many parts of rural and northern Michigan lack broadband infrastructure that makes it nearly impossible to motivate a business to locate in these areas. The growth of e-commerce, digitization of business practices, and even the automation of worker facing platforms, the internet is key to running a successful small (or large) business. MIHI also recognizes the importance of attracting workers equitably and removing barriers to entry for historically underrepresented communities, including English language learners, women, and people of color.

In addition to barrier removal, worker retraining and upskilling will be necessary to fill looming employment gaps in the trades industry which are crucial to the success of the ARPA- CPF and BEAD programs. The National Telecommunications Information Administration (NTIA) projects a labor shortfall of more than 11% over the next five years for laborers and material movers, and a shortfall of nearly 10% for inspectors. MIHI is partnering with existing state programs to elevate the importance of the trades and the programs available currently that will remove barriers to entry for Michiganders, like MiSTEM, MiYARN, and other LEO based programs.

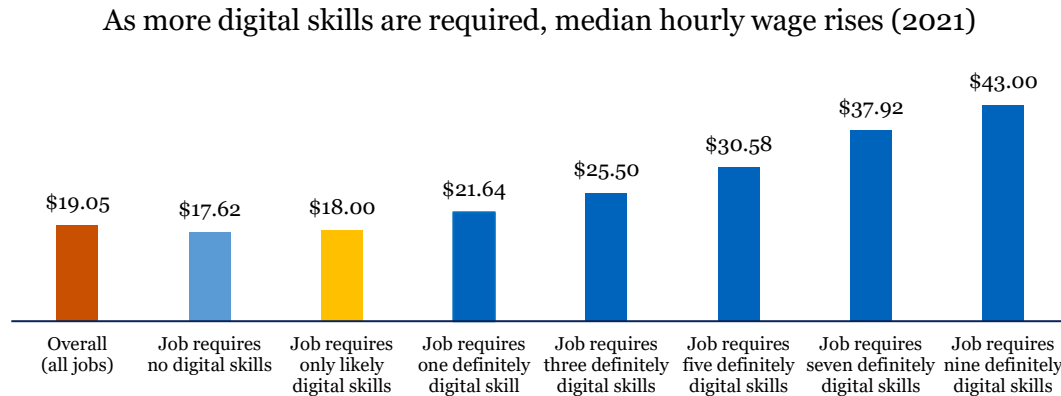
Educational Outcomes

Households with a broadband connection make, on average, over \$2,000 more per year than households that do not have a broadband connection¹⁰. Similarly, the National Skills Coalition researched the difference in wages between workers with no digital skills, compared to the wages of workers with likely digital skills and with wages of workers with up to nine digital skills (Table 1)¹¹. The wage differences between a job requiring no digital skills compared to a job requiring nine digital skills equates to a 143% difference in wages.

¹⁰ [2021 Update to the Michigan Broadband Roadmap \(2021\)](#), Michigan High-Speed Internet Office

¹¹ Closing the Digital Skill Divide - National Skills Coalition

Figure 1: National Skills Coalition Data on Digital Skills Impact on Median Hourly Wage



Source: National Skills Coalition

MIHI recognizes how foundational digital skills are to increasing household income and educational attainment and aims to incorporate digital skills standards and competencies into K-12 education settings to improve employment outcomes for workers. Employment and education are connected tremendously in this regard. The incorporation of digital skills into the classroom so that they are foundational to the success of education, means workers will have the digital skills competencies needed to attain higher wages when they enter the workforce.

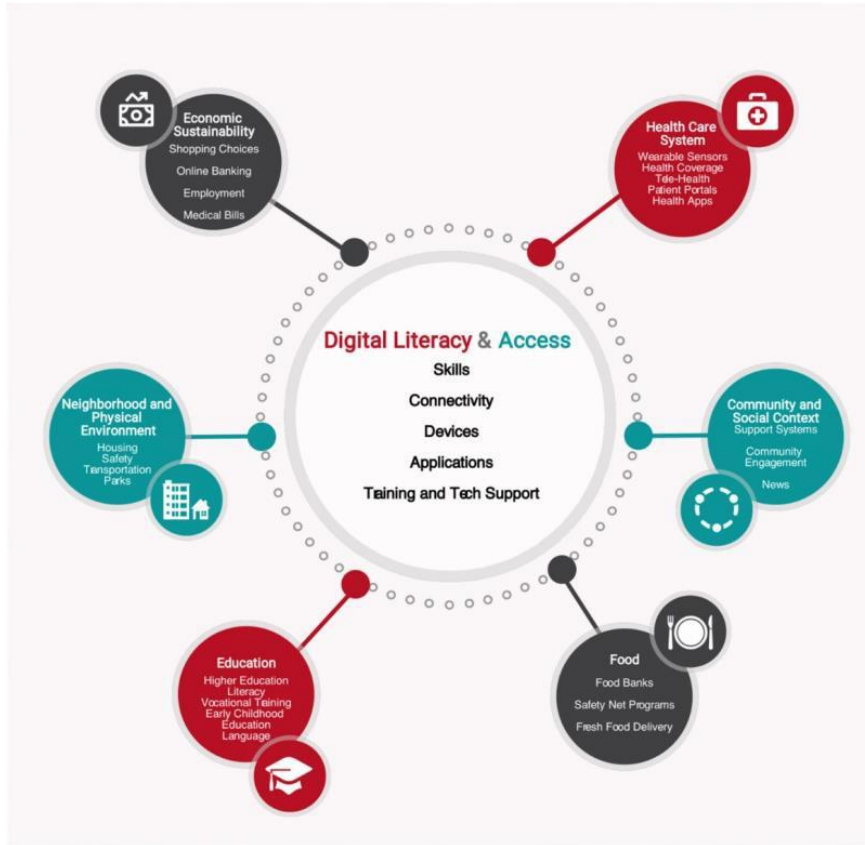
Health Outcomes

Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) elevated the connection between health outcomes and the digital divide as part of the June 2022 Health Information Technology Commission report¹². This five-year strategy roadmap emphasizes the need to address “Michigan’s digital divide to help address disparities in health care and social services if rural parts of the state.” The Health IT Commission highlights the need for online accessibility among patients and their healthcare provider, given the recent transition to many online patient management systems. Many health systems exclusively utilize online health information portals that require an internet connection and some level of digital skills in order to view and/or manage. Additionally, the Health IT Commission references challenges in a health IT system regarding consumer cybersecurity and legality of health information exchange.

The Health IT Commission also identifies the need for online data services to promote capacity building for “more complete insight into utilization, quality improvement, and evidence-based intervention design.” The purpose of this initiative is to promote holistic wellness and health outcomes and monitor the improvement of health among rural residents.

MIHI supports the use of telemedicine wherever possible to improve patient outcomes, particularly to enhance patient access, improve care, and reduce costs (direct or indirect) to the patient. Telemedicine cannot be utilized in a community lacking broadband infrastructure, or affordable access to said infrastructure and as such, health disparities will continue to occur in rural and underrepresented populations if not deployed equitably.

¹² [CY2022 Bridge to Better Health Final Draft Document \(michigan.gov\)](#)



It is also important to note there are medical researchers and medical professionals (and the National Digital Inclusion Alliance) who identify broadband access as a “super social determinant of health” because of its ability to impact all other Social Determinants of Health's (SDOH).

Civic and Social Engagement

Voter records and registrations are managed by an electronic pollbook system in Michigan which means rural communities will need sustained access to a reliable internet connection to ensure safety of the elections over the course of the nine day early voting period.

Photo ID's are a requirement to vote in Michigan. Photo IDs can be obtained by visiting the Secretary of State branches however, one must obtain an appointment to avoid spending an afternoon in a government office waiting to receive the ID. Appointments can only be booked online. The Michigan Department of State is transitioning some services online, including registering to vote and renewing one's photo ID or Driver's License. The online transition allows for expanded access for Michiganders to obtain the photo ID needed to engage in elections (among other activities) on their own time and in their own home. The same is not true however for those lacking a reliable internet connection in their home.

In addition to online civil engagement, many government assistance programs utilize online application systems for those seeking assistance. For those without internet, they are not only unable to apply for the benefits they need, but also they may be unaware that benefits even exist.

1.3 Strategy and Objectives

To accomplish the vision for Michigan, MIHI aims to employ a holistic strategy focused on meeting the needs of communities by community members themselves. MIHI will serve as a resource and provide support to remove barriers. Partnership with existing state agencies and communities will be paramount to maximizing the reach of the Digital Equity Act (DEA) and its subsequent funding.

Outlined below are the strategies in which MIHI will utilize to close the digital divide in Michigan, followed by how MIHI will measure the progress of the goals with key performance indicators (KPIs). The KPIs are crucial to measuring success of the holistic approach and effectiveness of closing the digital divide for Michiganders by focusing on the availability of and affordability of access to, fixed and wireless broadband technology, the online accessibility and inclusivity of public resources and services, digital literacy, securing online privacy of individuals, and the availability and affordability of consumer devices and technical support for those devices.

Goal	Strategy
Ensure all Michiganders have access to an affordable, reliable high-speed internet connection at their home	Collaborate and align efforts between DEA planned activities with BEAD planned activities and partner with communities, Tribal governments, and state agencies to align similar goals and timelines for infrastructure deployment and digital equity initiatives
Attract workers and employers to Michigan	Coordinate, partner, and support existing workforce development strategies and programs housed within the LEO and other relevant state agencies
Improve educational attainment including removing barriers for credentialed workers and in postsecondary achievement	Collaborate and partner with Michigan Department of Education to elevate online learning opportunities and additional pathways to digital skills development for adults
Improve overall health outcomes, particularly with improvement in rural areas and in underrepresented populations	Coordinate and collaborate with the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services to monitor health outcomes pre- and post-deployment of broadband projects in rural and underrepresented communities
Educate Michiganders about the online services available to them as a citizen	Coordinate and collaborate with the Michigan Department of State to provide trainings to Michiganders about their digital citizenship

Collaborate and align efforts between DEA planned activities with BEAD planned activities and partner with communities, Tribal governments, and state agencies to align similar goals and timelines for infrastructure deployment and digital equity initiatives

MIHI recognizes and values the work municipalities, counties, Tribal governments, and other state agencies have already done to close the digital divide in their respective communities. MIHI also recognizes the importance of collaboration in order to implement BEAD deployment dollars into the communities that need the infrastructure the most. Collaboration with local units of government is paramount to the success of the DEA and BEAD.

The structure of MIHI office is intentionally designed in such a way that the Infrastructure team works closely with the Digital Equity team to ensure both teams are aligned on timelines, upcoming projects, and existing community plans so as to not invalidate the work of community on a project. Throughout the MICF listening tour, the MIHI team heard about the work already happening throughout our state and wants to ensure projects (particularly BEAD deployment projects), align with the goals of the community task forces already in place. Universal availability cannot be accomplished without the voice of community and MIHI aims to work in tandem with community leaders to deploy infrastructure and digital equity initiatives.

Equitable implementation and alignment of the DEA and BEAD requires an equitable approach for each region of our state. The digital equity needs of the Upper Peninsula vary greatly from those of Detroit, and it is the goal of MIHI to support communities by developing a unique solution to each community's needs.

Geographic barriers are important, however they are not the only barrier many communities face when looking at solutions to closing the digital divide. Historically underrepresented communities and covered populations (aging individuals, people of color, non-English speakers to name a few), have unique barriers to full participation in the digital world. Collaboration with organizations and agencies that are comprised of, or represent covered populations are also imperative to the success of the DEA and BEAD alignment and implementation. MIHI continues to collaborate with and learn from organizations who serve covered populations so as to incorporate barrier removal strategies which may not have been initially considered.

MIHI aims to holistically align and implement efforts funded by the DEA and BEAD to the best of its ability, with the recognition that community involvement is the key to its long-term success at closing the digital divide. MIHI will actively work to elevate the voices of underrepresented communities and populations throughout the planning and implementation process for DEA and BEAD funded programs.

Additionally, MIHI collaborates with other state agencies supporting infrastructure deployment activities to ensure projects are planned with similar timelines and cohesiveness. State agencies include, the Michigan Infrastructure Office, the Michigan Department of Transportation, the Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy, the Department of Natural Resources, the LEO, and the Executive Office of the Governor.

Coordinate, partner, and support existing workforce development strategies and programs housed within the LEO and other relevant state agencies

The strategies and objectives MIHI will employ to achieve its goal of attracting workers and employers to Michigan and to improve economic and workforce outcomes for the state include emphasis on strong labor standards, the attraction, retention, and transition of skilled workers, and outlines the importance of partnership with in-house training organizations and community colleges to achieve the goal.

MIHI and the Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity (LEO) support all efforts to promote strong labor standards to ensure worker safety. The workforce and labor division of LEO focuses on “ensuring workplace safety and equitable labor relations for employees and employers.” MIHI plans to require potential subgrantees to comply with the strong labor standards outlined in the BEAD NOFO including, but not limited to, using a directly employed workforce, compliance with Davis-Bacon Act requirements (including the collection of certified payrolls), using project labor agreements, local hire provisions, union neutrality commitments from all subgrantees, and proof of an appropriately skilled and credentialed workforce. To support employers unfamiliar with Davis-Bacon Act requirements, MIHI will conduct a series of technical assistance webinars tailored to employers to prevent compliance failures. MIHI will continue to collaborate with Labor Division leadership to ensure accuracy of information and equitable outreach to industry leaders.

Additionally, LEO identifies safe working conditions, fair wages, and labor protections for workers in its 5-year operational plan. One relevant strategy to achieving this goal in the context of the DEA is through strategic promotion of the workplace rights one-stop site which emphasizes responsibilities, rights, compliance requirements, and regulations. The one-stop site is a resource for employers and employees to ensure safe working conditions and strong labor practices. MIHI will encourage subgrantees to utilize the workplace rights one-stop site and to promote it to their workforce.

LEO prioritizes talent and worker attraction within Michigan as evidenced in the LEO 5-Year operations plan. As a division of LEO, MIHI operates under the same goals. Additionally, LEO has established the Infrastructure Workforce Taskforce (IWT) following the passage of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL). MIHI is a member of the IWT which operates with the goal to “identify opportunities and develop plan for increasing talent pipeline for infrastructure jobs in order to:

1. Translate unprecedented BIL resources into good paying jobs and career pathways with diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility focus, and;
2. Mitigate labor market inflation at height of BIL investments in order to improve effectiveness economy-wide.”

The IWT is comprised of LEO division heads and representatives from the Michigan Infrastructure Office (MIO) to ensure coordinated approach to workforce attraction plans across the state.

Outlined below are relevant plans, strategies, and programs LEO and other State of Michigan Departments have in place. This list is not exhaustive in nature.

Agency	Strategy/Plan/Program
Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC)	\$34 million talent attraction and retention strategy targeting student, job seekers and industry professionals in key growth areas (i.e., EV mobility and semiconductor industries).
MEDC	STEM-Forward Internship program connects students, who attend Michigan colleges and universities, with paid internship opportunities in STEM-focused careers.
LEO - Michigan Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (MiSTEM)Network	Removing barriers to employment by increasing the implementation of project-, problem-, and place-based education-based instruction in K-12 schools in Michigan and expose 200,000 students to STEM careers.
LEO – Workforce Development, Education and Training (E&T)	Addressing talent shortages by engaging and creating customized targeted solutions to meet employer needs by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing and strengthening existing employer-led collaboratives (ELCs) • Aligning career pathways and educational credentials that lead to transferrable skills and increased wages for job seekers
LEO – E&T; MEDC	Expand talent in Michigan by upskilling and reskilling Michiganders and leverage resources resulting in 7,500 postsecondary credentials by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting tuition free pathways to obtain postsecondary credentials; • Expanding relationships with secondary and postsecondary education providers to improve job outcomes for students with disabilities; and, • Boosting apprenticeship opportunities to obtain industry-recognized credentials.
LEO – E&T; Michigan Works! Agencies	Expand Michigan’s labor force by providing job readiness services to 800 people by conducting outreach activities and supporting eligible persons experiencing barriers to employment to re-enter the labor force.
LEO – Office of Prosperity; Women’s Commission	Help 50,000 Michigan women re-enter or remain in the workforce with support of the Tri-Share Child Care program and the MI Fostering Access, Rights and Equity (MI FARE) program. MI FARE is designed to educate women workers about their employment rights and benefits.

Agency	Strategy/Plan/Program
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Michigan Department of Corrections (MDOC)	<p>MDOC operates a skilled trades training program that aims to provide a positive learning community for prisoners who are serious about completing career and technical education. Prisoners complete training at the vocational village located in the state prison facilities. Career paths include (but are not limited to):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commercial Driving License and Forklift Operation • Carpentry • Electrical • Computer Coding • Computer Numerical Control Machine Tooling and Robotics • Line Clearance and Tree Trimming
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MIHI is aware of several Internet Service Providers (ISPs) that conduct in-house training programs, as well as labor unions who support training programs. MIHI will require any subgrantee to outline their in-house training programs to determine appropriate skilling for the projects which they are seeking funding.

Workforce gaps are top of mind for Michigan policy makers and agencies, especially as Michigan is entering the time for unprecedented BIL buildouts. MIHI is plugged in to existing workforce development structures within the state given the vast network stewarded by our Workforce Development division. Partners in this space are eager to engage with MIHI to support workforce growth in their respective capacities.

MIHI partners with LEO E&T to support relationship building among the Michigan Community College Association (MCCA), the Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators (MAISA), and Michigan Occupational Dean’s Advisory Council (MODAC). Additionally, LEO houses the Michigan office of Registered Apprenticeships which provides supportive services and funding for employers of apprentices. The GoingPRO Talent fund supports employers in reskilling new workers and ensures a pathway to credentialing as part of the involvement in the program. GoingPRO is housed in the WD division. Other programs include the Michigan Youth Apprenticeship Readiness Network (MiYARN) which aims to expand youth registered apprenticeships by partnering with regional entities, the Michigan Learning and Education Advancement Program (MiLEAP) which supports in the transition from education and training programs to high-wage jobs. MiLEAP focuses on underrepresented populations, particularly that of economically distressed rural and urban areas.

Collaborate and partner with Michigan Department of Education and other state agencies, to incorporate a statewide digital skills curriculum for K-12 students, and additional pathways to digital skills development for adults

The Michigan Department of Education’s (MDE) Top 10 Strategic Education Plan was approved in August 2020 and provides direction to the Michigan education community.¹³ MDE aims to be a Top 10 education state in 10 years and employs the strategic education plan to monitor growth and progress on its eight goals. Three of MDE’s goals most relevant to the work at MIHI are:

- Expand secondary learning opportunities for all students
- Increase the percentage of all students who graduate from high school
- Increase the percentage of adults with a postsecondary credential

The following provides an overview of how MIHI can impact/influence MDE’s goals.

Expand secondary learning opportunities for all students

MDE focuses on six specific areas for secondary learning opportunities:

1. Career and Technical Education
2. Early Middle College
3. Advance Placement
4. International baccalaureate
5. Dual Enrollment
6. Secondary Transition

Closing the digital divide is important for all six focus areas and supports growth and progress not only in the number of skilled workers able to build the infrastructure needed to close the availability gaps, particularly in Michigan’s rural communities, but closing the digital divide ensures more educational opportunities for individuals looking to advance their education, but may be limited by their school districts’ course offerings.

Dual Enrollment, for example, showcases a strong argument and need for closing the digital divide. When COVID-19 shut down schools and learning transitioned online, those who were dual enrolled were now at risk of losing not only their high school credential but also their college credits or even degree, if they did not have reliable access to the internet. According to MDE, in the 2018-19 school year, 4.1% of students across all Michigan schools were dual enrolled. Enrollment declined to 3.7% during 2020-21 and remained into 2021-22. Subsequently, school districts who offered a dual enrollment opportunity also declined and have not yet met pre-pandemic numbers.¹⁴

Increase the percentage of all students who graduate from high school

¹³ [Michigan’s Top 10 Strategic Education Plan](#)

¹⁴ <https://www.mischooldata.org/dual-enrollment/>

Access to the internet and high school graduation rates may not be directly correlated, however, a recent study found that Grade Point Average (GPA) does. According to the Quello Center, students with a “fast” internet connection at home report a GPA of 3.18 compared to their counterparts with “slow” internet connections at home who reported a GPA of 3.10. Additionally, students with no internet access at home reported a 2.81 GPA and those who only had cell phone access to the internet who reported a 2.75 GPA.¹⁵ While GPA is not the sole indicator for graduation, it does play a major part.

MIHI will work with MDE to incorporate awareness campaigns for parents and students about the importance of an at-home internet connection, and provide a pathway to support the affordability of, and access to a reliable broadband connection, including affordability of and access to internet enabled devices. This holistic approach will support families with the resources needed to get online and support their scholars in school.

Increase the percentage of adults with a postsecondary credential

MDE and LEO partner to achieve Governor Whitmer’s 60x30 initiative. 60x30 is a program with the goal of supporting 60% of Michigander’s achieving a postsecondary credential or college degree by removing barriers to attainment. Educational attainment and economic growth correlate closely, particularly in the earned wages for individuals with a postsecondary degree or credential.

MIHI is working to expand the broadband skilled trades workforce through partnerships among industry leaders, and community colleges to ensure Michigan has the skilled workforce needed to build out the robust broadband network necessary to reach universal availability. This means credentialed workers will earn more in their lives, and Michigan will be one step closer to closing the digital divide.

In addition to the Top 10 in 10 strategic plan, MDE adopted a set of competencies to support consistent digital skills for k-12 schools in 2016. The International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) standards have been adopted in Michigan as the Michigan Integrated Technology Competencies for Students (MITECS).¹⁶ These competencies work to integrate technology into learning for students as a way to enhance their education. 81% of all workforce sectors indicated the MITECS competencies reflect “high” or “very high” alignment with the skills needed in their workforce.

MIHI aims to continue collaboration with MDE to meet the digital skills gap and promote workforce development for K-12 students, but will also work to ensure adult learners and covered populations have ready access to a digital skills curriculum regardless of enrollment status in a postsecondary education program. MIHI and the State of Michigan Library plan to incorporate free access to a digital skills learning platform via local libraries and Michigan Works! Associations.

¹⁵ Hampton, K. N., Fernandez, L., Robertson, C. T., & Bauer, J. M. Broadband and Student Performance Gaps. James H. and Mary B. Quello Center, Michigan State University. <https://doi.org/10.25335/BZGY-3V91>

¹⁶ [MITECS](#)

Coordinate and collaborate with the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services to monitor health outcomes pre- and post-deployment of broadband projects in rural and underrepresented communities

Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) operates with the vision to “deliver health and opportunity to all Michiganders, reducing intergenerational poverty and promoting health equity.” With broadband indicated as a super determinant of health (SDOH), it is imperative to equitably roll out broadband infrastructure and the necessary technical support to rural and underrepresented communities. Particular emphasis is to be paid to Michigan’s Tribal communities given their simultaneous rurality and historically underrepresented status.

MIHI and MDHHS will work together to support the monitoring and tracking of health outcomes in areas both pre- and post-deployment through existing health monitoring and could expand to new datasets as needed. Continued partnership with the Health IT commission is paramount to improving health outcomes for Michigan.

Additionally, MIHI will work with MDHHS to promote and improve the way in which benefits such as SNAP, FAP, Medicare, and Medicaid are accessed by improving the MIBridges portal to improve accessibility for individuals with few digital skills. MIHI and MDHHS will work to promote relevant programs to MIBridges users, such as the Affordable Connectivity Program.

Coordinate and collaborate with the Michigan Department of State to provide trainings to Michiganders about their digital citizenship

With the rise of political and civic engagement transitioning to exclusively online mechanisms, it is imperative to support covered populations in getting involved in the services provided by the state. The Michigan Department of State emphasizes equity in engagement and utilizes a team of individuals to specifically reach out to historically underrepresented communities regarding the changes MDOS is implementing and how it will effect them. MIHI and the MDOS will work closely to educate Michiganders on the tools available to engage digitally.

Additionally, to promote safety and security of covered populations, MIHI will work with MDOS to educate individuals on the importance of protecting online activities and how to do so. Many Michiganders indicate that they refrain from using online services due to cybersecurity concerns. By utilizing preventative education, the online transition will promote better civic engagement for Michigan through ease of access and barrier removal to voter registration and/or license renewals.

Key Performance Indicators:

Below are the key performance indicators by which MIHI will measure the effectiveness of the Digital Equity Act implementation plan. The goals and strategies outlined above detail the holistic ways in which MIHI will work to support the systemic changes needed to close the digital divide effectively and permanently. The goals and KPIs are designed to work in tandem, but may not initially appear to align, however they are intrinsically connected. For example, the goal of attracting workers and businesses to Michigan will be effected as MIHI improves the affordability and availability of service throughout the state, particularly rural areas. With more broadband availability, more Michiganders can work from home, which will impact their income or their options for educational advancement, and so on.

Each KPI will be measured on a scale that will indicate zero when the digital divide has been closed. The baseline for each of the below KPIs will be determined as part of the initial phase of the State Digital Equity Capacity Grant and the short-term goals will be determined following the results of the baseline, however, the long-term goal for each will be to reach zero (0) thereby indicated the digital divide has been closed. The data for KPIs is a combination of public data sources including the American Community Survey, the FCC, and the Computer Use Survey.

1. The availability of, and affordability of access to fixed and wireless broadband technology
 - a. An affordability score that combines three data sets
 - i. Internet-income ratio developed as part of Purdue University's Digital Divide Index (measured by each covered population in each region)
 - ii. The ratio between the FCC's Benchmark Rate for 100/20 Mbps unlimited internet service and what each covered population in each region would pay for home internet service
 - iii. Percentage of households who temporarily lost their internet connection due to inability or difficulty paying for the subscription (measured by each covered population in each region)
2. The online accessibility and inclusivity of public resources and services
 - a. A digital government accessibility score
 - i. Likelihood of each covered population to access government services online as compared to how likely they are to use telehealth, online banking, or online consumer services
3. Digital literacy
 - a. A digital participation score that combines two things:
 - i. Proportion of each covered population in each region that struggles to use computers or internet devices
 - ii. Likelihood of each covered population is to do various online tasks versus the overall statewide average
4. Awareness of, and the use of, measures to secure the online privacy of, and cybersecurity with respect to an individual
 - a. A Digital Security Score that combines two things:
 - i. The percentage of each covered population in each region which has refrained from one or more online activities due to cybersecurity concerns
 - ii. The percentage of each covered population in each region which doesn't use the internet at all due to cybersecurity or privacy concerns
5. The availability and affordability of consumer devices and technical support for those devices

- a. A Device Distress Score for each covered population in each region that compares:
 - i. Percentage of homes with no computing device at all
 - ii. Percentage of homes with only a smartphone
 - iii. Percentage of homes where someone was unable to use a computer five or more days during the last six months because someone else was using it/it was elsewhere/it was otherwise inaccessible

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2 Current State of Digital Equity: Barriers and Assets

2.1 Asset Inventory

The objective of this section is to provide an overview of the specific advantages that the state of Michigan has in terms of advancing digital equity for underserved communities. It aims to compile a comprehensive list of existing resources, programs, and strategies that contribute to digital inclusion and promote availability and adoption. The inventory encompasses both publicly and privately funded assets, as well as digital equity initiatives and plans initiated by various governmental entities such as municipal, regional, and Tribal governments.

By conducting this asset inventory, the state of Michigan aims to identify and highlight the key resources at its disposal, enabling the effective implementation of the Digital Equity Plan. This comprehensive approach aims to bridge the existing gaps and address the specific needs of the state in order to accomplish its goals and objectives for achieving digital equity.

2.1.1 Digital Inclusion Assets by Covered Population

2.1.1.1 Introduction and Methodology for Identifying Digital Inclusion Assets

Leveraging existing assets is a key strategy for both the Digital Equity and BEAD programs, this is why MIHI developed a [Digital Inclusion Resource Map](#) in September 2022. The map serves as a tool for:

1. Collecting information regarding existing assets from the communities
2. Understanding the current digital inclusion programs, offerings, and resources available in communities across Michigan.
3. Promoting these new and existing programs to communities

The map was developed based on responses received to the Michigan Statewide Digital Inclusion survey developed by MIHI and distributed to key stakeholders and the public throughout the state. MIHI used several channels to engage stakeholders and encourage participation in the survey, including socializing it at community meetings as part of the MI Connected Future tour, Partnership Roundtables, and in the MIHI newsletter. Additionally, the survey is easily accessible and prominently displayed on the [MIHI website](#). By targeting stakeholders, such as non-profit organizations, for-profit organizations, government agencies, colleges, universities, trade schools, public libraries, and K-12 schools, the survey seeks to determine the current state of digital equity and inclusion programs and identify key organizations involved in these efforts. Based on these insights, the Digital Inclusion Resource Map is continuously updated, providing an ongoing and up-to-date inventory of digital inclusion assets in Michigan.

In addition to the Digital Inclusion Resource Map, MIHI has independently developed a robust list of assets, plans, and programs that can support digital inclusion. As a way to identify the resource and initiatives and associated gaps in each, the MIHI office developed a robust and innovative community and stakeholder engagement process called MI Connected Future (MICF). The MICF aimed to holistically and authentically engage with communities and










stakeholders to provide the state with input and direction needed to achieve universal broadband access and a more digitally equitable state. MIHI adopted the ethos of “listen first, plan second” to ensure the needs and current challenges of communities and stakeholders were collected and incorporated into the planning process equitably. This key initiative demonstrates that Michigan is at the forefront of the efforts to promote digital equity and inclusion. MIHI will continue working towards achieving its goal of a more connected and equitable Michigan by maintaining a collaborative approach with stakeholders across the state and providing ongoing support for existing and emerging digital equity and inclusion assets, plans, and programs.

2.1.1.2 Digital Inclusion Assets

In addition to the Digital Inclusion Resource Map and MICF, MIHI has identified other assets throughout the state that can play a significant role in closing the digital divide across the state of Michigan. The assets identified in this section do not constitute an exhaustive list but represent a best effort from the MIHI Office to identify key assets across state government.

In this section, a selection of the state’s digital inclusion assets were aligned with the covered populations they support, as outlined in Table 2. Additional assets identified through the Michigan Statewide Digital Inclusion survey are summarized in Appendix A-1. For clarity and context, a definition for each of the covered population categories are presented in Table 1, sourced from the Digital Equity Act of 2021. Despite not being a covered population under the Digital Equity Act of 2021, at-risk youth category was added to the list based on the Digital Inclusion Resource Map survey, which reflected significant digital inclusion efforts in this area.

Table 1: Definitions of Covered Populations

Covered Population	Description
 Covered households	Households with income no more than 150 percent of the federal poverty threshold.
 Aging Individuals	Individuals 60 years and older.
 Incarcerated individuals	All persons in State prisons, local jails and other municipal confinement facilities, correctional residential facilities, and correctional facilities intended for juveniles. This does not include individuals who are incarcerated in a federal correctional facility.
 Veterans	All persons aged 18 years and older who served in the armed forces in the past but are no longer on active duty.
 Individuals with disabilities	A person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, a person who has a history or record of such an impairment, or a person who is perceived by others as having such an impairment ¹⁷ .
 Individuals with language barriers	This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) English learners: Individuals who speak a language other than English at home and speak English less than “very well.” b) Have low levels of literacy: Individuals below literacy proficiency
 Racial or ethnic minorities	Individuals who identify as a race other than White alone or as Hispanic or Latino of any race.
 Rural community	Individuals living outside of cities and towns with more than 20,000 residents or living outside larger cities and towns with more than 50,000 residents and their surrounding urban areas.
 At-risk youth	An individual who is less than 18 years of age who faces extreme threats to a successful transition into adulthood.

¹⁷ [Guide to Disability Rights Laws | ADA.gov](https://www.ada.gov)

Table 2: Select Digital Inclusion Assets by Covered Population

Select Digital Inclusion Assets	Covered Populations								
	Covered households	Aging individuals	Incarcerated individuals	Veterans	Individuals with disabilities	Individuals with a language barrier	Racial/Ethnic minorities	Rural community	Youth
MI Dept. of Labor and Economic Opportunity (LEO), Michigan Poverty Taskforce	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
MI Dept. of Labor and Economic Opportunity (LEO), Office of Global Michigan						✓	✓		
Michigan 2-1-1, 2-1-1 Assistance	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
MI Public Service Commission (MPSC), Wi-Fi Hot Spot Map	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
MI Dept. of Technology, Management, and Budget (DTMB), Michigan Geographic Framework	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
DTMB, Michigan Public Safety Communications System (MPSCS)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
MI Dept. of Health and Human Services, Community Information Exchange (CIE)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Southeast Michigan Broadband Navigator	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Washtenaw Community College, Fiber Optics Certifications	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Closing the Digital Gap	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Human-I-T	✓								
Michigan Public Libraries	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Michigan K-12 schools and school districts	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Community Centers	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Health Divisions/Departments	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

A more detailed description of the select digital inclusion assets are included below:

MI Dept. of Labor and Economic Opportunity (LEO), Michigan Poverty Taskforce 

The Michigan PTF is committed to finding ways to strengthen, broaden, coordinate, and streamline existing state efforts to ensure that Michigan families have access to the support they need. The Michigan PTF will work to evaluate measures and better understand poverty's impact on Michigan families and communities, identifying root causes and opportunities to bring positive change. The PTF is creating a coordinated plan to help communities address the digital

divide, which acts as a barrier for families in accessing available economic, educational, health, housing, and safety services, and it awarded funding to create a playbook for local communities to plan their broadband expansion efforts. The Michigan Poverty Task Force can help promote digital equity by identifying root causes of poverty, reducing access barriers, and streamlining efforts across the state to ensure accessibility to digital resources and technology for all covered populations.

MI Dept. of Labor and Economic Opportunity (LEO), Office of Global Michigan

The mission of the Office of Global Michigan is to empower and engage the immigrant, refugee, and international community to make Michigan the home for opportunity. The office assists immigrant and refugee communities with connectivity needs, as well as licensing, workforce training, education, housing, healthcare, and quality of life. The Office also works with state agencies that provide services to immigrants and refugees and strives to minimize or eliminate barriers to accessing those state services.

Michigan 2-1-1, 2-1-1 Assistance

Michigan 2-1-1 provides individuals with a confidential and free-to-use service (by simply calling or texting 2-1-1 or visiting their [website](#)), connecting all covered populations with local community-based organizations offering thousands of programs and services. 2-1-1 Assistance is a robust information and referral system that provides users with information on a range of services, including the Affordable Connectivity Program, and assistance with needs such as food, housing, financial aid, employment, childcare, education, healthcare, and mental health, as well as household needs and utility payments. Michigan 2-1-1 serves as a connectivity tool for individuals seeking help and resources within their community. The accessibility of this service, one of 2-1-1's guiding principles, on a digital platform helps promote digital equity and ensure that all individuals have access to critical resources.

MI Public Service Commission (MPSC), Wi-Fi Hot Spot Map

During the COVID-19 pandemic, MPSC partnered with Connected Nation Michigan to create a map of known public Wi-Fi hotspots to support those without a home connection. The resulting interactive broadband map enables all covered populations to search for broadband availability by street address, view the types of broadband available, and locate providers offering service at their home or business.

MI Dept. of Technology, Management, and Budget (DTMB), Michigan Geographic Framework

DTMB supports the business operations of state agencies through services such as the management of a variety of geospatial datasets, enterprise software licenses, aerial photography, and other remote sensing products that can be used for various purposes. The Michigan Geographic Framework serves as the digital base map for the State government and assists in maintaining core enterprise spatial assets. The Michigan Geographic Framework is an integrated and centralized place to store and maintain data, where it can also be standardized and shared with other entities to create accurate Geographic Information Systems (GIS) maps.

DTMB, Michigan Public Safety Communications System (MPSCS)

The MPSCS is a network of over 300 towers and more than 14,000 radios located throughout the state that supports public safety communications, such as first responders in their service to citizens. These towers can also be used as colocation points for wireless broadband facilities. MPSCS also provides interoperable voice and data communications to federal, state, local and private public safety agencies all over the state of Michigan.

MI Dept. of Health and Human Services, Community Information Exchange

(CIE) 

CIE is a localized effort to create and sustain the technology and relationships required to support Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) needs of both individuals and communities. CIE maximizes a person-centered approach by ensuring social care information for all covered populations is collected only as needed and is stored safely. CIE's initiatives encompass a wide range of objectives related to digital equity, including expanding broadband access, supporting digital literacy, and promoting patient agency in accessing and mediating their health and social care data.

Southeast Michigan Broadband Navigator

The Southeast Michigan Broadband Navigator is a resource that provides information on broadband availability, digital literacy, equity, inclusion, cybersecurity, funding, and programs. It is a resource for communities, governments, educators, and stakeholders by providing data and maps on broadband availability and usage. The navigator will be regularly updated and expanded to address emerging issues and respond to feedback from stakeholders. The intent of the Navigator is to help Michigan residents answer questions related to broadband access, availability, and affordability, as well as provide information on resources and policies to increase equitable broadband access.

Washtenaw Community College, Fiber Optics Certifications

Washtenaw Community College offers certification courses for fiber optic technicians, fiber specialists in testing and maintenance, and fiber specialist in splicing. The comprehensive training program combines theory and hands-on learning experiences to prepare any individual, with a high school diploma, to take the Certified Fiber Optic Technician exam.

Closing the Digital Gap (CTDG)

CTDG is a nonprofit corporation headquartered in Lansing. Closing the Digital Gap provides computer training, computer ownership and internet access to small non-profit organizations and individual in Michigan who may be unemployed, underemployed, low-income, single parents, disabled, veterans, immigrants, at-risk youth, and seniors. Its mission is to provide low-to moderate income residents of the service area the opportunity to earn or purchase a low-cost computer, receive computer/Internet training and access internet services for low-cost, along with assisting participants in making connections with community resources through referrals for further training or resources that may lead to employment and/or educational enrichment for participants and their families. CTDG further services micro-enterprises/entrepreneurs and small non-profits to support with technology and training in Michigan both online, in-person, and through a blended delivery of training, programs and services.

Human-I-T

Human-I-T is an organization that believes removing systemic social and economic barriers is essential to shrinking the digital divide. They are committed to shrinking the digital divide by providing communities with equitable access to opportunity through devices, internet access, digital skills training, and tech support. The organization has distributed 318K tech items, assisted 105K households with internet and provided digital literacy training to 7K learners. The organization runs an online store, HITConnect.org, which offers laptops, desktops, and tablets for as low as \$50 per device to Detroiters. They also offer Detroit households eligible for Comcast Internet Essentials high-speed home Wi-Fi for \$9.95 a month.

Michigan Public Libraries

Across the state, Michigan has 665 public libraries, which are integral to supporting digital equity and inclusion efforts. Michigan public libraries commonly offer public computers and free internet access through wireless connections (Wi-Fi), although the availability of services and technologies may differ across locations; the overarching aim is to provide individuals with access to resources and information, both in physical and digital formats. For instance, the Elk Rapids District Library has allowed library cardholders to access Wi-Fi hotspots for the past six years due to the high cost and unreliable nature of rural internet. Similarly, the Kent District Library provides an array of digital and technical resources, such as one-on-one technology tutoring, classes for seniors learning computer basics, and computer software tutorial courses. Hence, libraries play an integral role in building digital literacy, engaging in workforce development, and expanding access to the internet across the state.

Michigan K-12 schools and school districts

Primary and secondary institutions play an integral role in developing digital literacy skills for children and adolescents. There are a total of 899 districts in Michigan, with 3,400 public schools serving over 1.4 million students. The Michigan Integrated Technology Competencies for Students (MITECS) is a statewide effort spearheaded by the Michigan Department of Education to focus on learning enhanced by technology by integrating technology competencies across all areas. Digital literacy plays a large part in the effort, centralizing on responsible digital citizenship and the utilization of digital tools to solve problems and achieve goals in a creative, innovative, and collaborative manner. Additionally, some school districts, such as the Detroit Public Schools Community District, have a device lending program that allow students to borrow laptops and Wi-Fi hotspots to use in and outside classroom settings.

K-12 schools also play a large role in providing internet to students, faculty, and staff. During the COVID-19 pandemic, many devices such as laptops, wireless tablets, and Wi-Fi hotspots were loaned to students to complete coursework through distanced learning. Certain schools, such as schools in St. Clair County, installed wireless hotspots to provide 24-hour internet access across the county to students, faculty, and staff. K-12 institutions provide the foundation to develop digital skills through expanding training and access.

Community Centers

Community centers, including those that provide social, educational, or recreational activities, generally provide services to individuals of all-ages and often serve as locations where information and resources can be accessed. For instance, the Martin Luther King Community Center in Jackson has a dedicated computer center and provides Wi-Fi to the public. During the COVID-19 pandemic, many community centers, such as the New Troy Community Center in

New Troy and Baxter Community Center in Grand Rapids, were transformed into “Lift Zones”. Lift Zones was a partnership with Comcast where free Wi-Fi HotSpots were provided to allow for free access to the internet. Community centers are playing an increasingly large role in expanding digital equity and access.

Health Divisions/Departments

There are 43 Health Divisions and Departments across the state of Michigan, all tasked with the promotion of public health and wellness. An essential component of the promotion of public health is health equity—ensuring all individuals have access to needed resources. Hence, several Health Divisions and Departments provide services to aiding individuals with online enrollment in public assistance programs. For example, the Grand Traverse County Health Department has developed the Michigan Child Collaborative Care (MC3) Telemedicine Program, which provides psychiatric support to primary care providers in Michigan managing patients with behavioral health problems. The program supports telehealth by offering same-day phone consultations and remote psychiatric evaluation via video telepsychiatry. Moreover, the COVID-19 pandemic has increased the use of telehealth to provide needed services to the general population. Telehealth can be beneficial for many populations, such as those living in rural areas, are low-income, lack transportation, and are disabled, as many such barriers can be removed using telehealth.

2.1.2 Existing Digital Equity Plans

Creating a more digitally equitable Michigan is a significant priority for the state, and many existing plans and efforts support this goal. Listed below are several existing state, local, and regional plans and efforts that have been identified as critical components in supporting and enabling state objectives related to digital equity and inclusion. Though the list is not exhaustive, it highlights much of the state’s plans for education, economic development, healthcare, transportation, workforce development, and equity which are inextricably linked to universal availability and adoption of broadband service.

2021 Michigan Broadband Roadmap

To bridge the digital divide and improve digital equity and inclusion, MIHI has committed to implement strategies to ensure that every Michigander, business, institution, and community can meaningfully adopt high-speed internet service. In support of this mission, MIHI developed a Michigan Broadband Roadmap, which established four core goals related to digital equity and inclusion as mentioned below:

1. Ensure high-speed internet is available to every household, business, anchor institution, and community in the state
2. Create a more digitally equitable Michigan
3. Improve the state’s broadband ecosystem
4. Enhance and coordinate Michigan’s broadband related investments with other investments in social programs, education, and economic equity and development

Michigan Poverty Task Force Report

The Michigan Poverty Task Force issued its second report with recommendations aimed at lifting Michiganders out of poverty, connecting families in every corner of Michigan with economic opportunity, improving quality of life, improving outcomes, and creating real change.

The following selection of recommendations from the report are relevant to supporting the work of MIHI is undertaking in the successful implementation of the DEA and BEAD programs:

1. Increase investments in a universal benefit application so Michigan residents can apply for resources in one place, which can promote digital equity by enhancing resident's access to digital resources and services.
2. Establish a highly visible education and awareness effort to boost participation in and access to a formal network of Community-Based Education and Training Information Portals, which can establish an accessible resource for residents to access education, training, career resources, and other digital resources.
3. Develop a coordinated strategy to help communities address the digital divide, including identifying best practices and effective measures to provide digital resources, access to training and education, and other tools necessary to bridge the digital divide and promote digital equity.

The report includes other recommendations that are indirectly related to the success of the DEA and BEAD programs, and could be implemented more effectively by ensuring every home, business, and institution in the state has access to affordable and reliable high-speed internet.

Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) Five-Year Strategic Plan

The MEDC is Michigan's economic development lead with a mission to achieve long-term economic prosperity for Michiganders by investing in communities, enabling the growth of good paying jobs, and promoting Michigan's strong image worldwide. The strategic focus areas rely heavily on achieving universal broadband availability and improved digital equity by adopting the following activities:

1. Attract, keep, and grow businesses in industries that support maximum growth in jobs, wages and investments.
2. Cultivate the skills and talent needed for in-demand and high-growth occupations statewide.
3. Collaborate with local communities and partners to create places in which people and talent want to live, work, visit and play.
4. Support entrepreneurial growth to enable commercialization and new high-tech business creation.
5. Promote Michigan's image as a world-class business location and travel destination.
6. Help existing small and microbusinesses grow and thrive and improve economic prosperity for all through small business ownership.

Michigan's Statewide Housing Plan

The Statewide Housing Plan of Michigan, the first of its kind for the state, focuses on creating housing stability for all residents. The plan includes five statewide housing targets, eight priority areas, 37 goals, and 134 suggested strategies to address complex and intersecting challenges related to achieving housing stability. Feedback from thousands of residents, hundreds of organizational partners, public surveys, focus groups, meetings, and interviews informed the five-year plan. Broadband Infrastructure is a key priority with the goal of increasing affordable

high-speed internet access. One strategy is to coordinate with MIHI and others to improve accessibility and affordability of high-speed internet. The plan also includes a strategy to offer extra points when awarding contracts for projects that provide high-speed internet access, particularly in rural and low-connectivity areas.

Education Equity in Michigan Plan

Created by the Michigan Civil Rights Commission in September 2022, the Education Equity in Michigan Plan recommends that the Michigan Department of Civil Rights expand the existing Council for Government and Education on Equity and Inclusion to include representatives of the Michigan Department of Education and establish the Council as the entity responsible for implementing and overseeing the following recommendations for action:

1. Develop a Statewide Educational Equity Plan to enhance policies, accountability, and opportunities for all, using a holistic approach to inform the Michigan Department of Civil Rights, the State Department of Education, and schools statewide
2. Encourage schools across the state to create local school equity plans and contribute information and resources to encourage and support equitable practices and opportunities for schools
3. Increase internet access for students and families and develop an easily accessible electronic outreach and inclusion model that is available to everyone involved in the education process

Given the necessity of high-speed internet connectivity and digital inclusion in the P-20 environment, this plan supports the vision and mission of MIHI for the State Digital Equity Plan to create a more digitally equitable state by ensuring equity of access across several aspects of the education ecosystem.

Michigan's Top 10 Strategic Education Plan

The Top 10 Strategic Education Plan has a vision that states; “every learner in Michigan’s public schools will have an inspiring, engaging, and caring learning environment that fosters creative and critical thinkers who believe in their ability to positively influence Michigan and the world beyond.”

One of the key guiding principles of the plan states that students should be provided every opportunity to achieve the broadest range of life dreams, and a selection of key goals seek to; 1) expand early childhood learning opportunities; 2) improve the health, safety, and wellness of all learners; 3) expand secondary learning opportunities for all students; and 4) increase the percentage of adults with a postsecondary credential. While high-speed internet access isn’t explicitly called out in the plan, equitable and affordable access and use are inherent in supporting Michigan’s achievement of the goals outlined in the plan.

Health Information Technology Roadmap

This roadmap is maintained and implemented by the Policy and Planning, Strategic Engagement, and Alignment section of the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services. The Health Information Technology Roadmap identifies several relevant goals, objectives, and strategies that impact and are impacted by the state digital equity programs:

1. Address Michigan's Digital Divide by ensuring that all communities have equal access to important public health information and resources

2. Improve Onboarding and Technical Assistance by providing the necessary training and support to individuals and communities on how to effectively use digital health tools

While the deployment of universal high-speed internet service and addressing digital equity contribute to each of these objectives, the objective from the Roadmap to, “Address Michigan’s Digital Divide,” directly aligns with the vision and goals of Michigan’s Digital Equity Plan and BEAD.

Michigan Roadmap to Healthy Communities

The Michigan Roadmap to Healthy Communities aims to address the Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) through a collaborative, upstream approach to remove barriers to social and economic opportunity, improve health outcomes, and advance equity. Phase I of the SDOH Strategy promoted the alignment of efforts at the state, local, and community level and the improvement of programs and policies through an in-depth internal review. It prioritized efforts in three focus areas – health equity, housing stability, and food security. Phase II of the SDOH Strategy builds on improvement and alignment efforts from Phase I, with a focused effort on health equity through multisector collaboration and supporting holistic solutions.

A key component of the Roadmap is the development of a Community Information Exchange (CIE). A CIE is an evolving set of best practices and technology guided by the goal of identifying and addressing social needs. As identified in the plan, a successful CIE requires widespread access to broadband and technology and a workforce trained in its use, agreed protocols around data collection and coding, staff with dedicated time to facilitate the referral process, and a robust network of referral partners. The success of this plan is heavily reliant on the universal availability of high-speed internet service.

MI Healthy Climate Plan

The Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) published the MI Health Climate Plan in April 2022. This plan lays out a broad vision for fulfilling the governor’s fall 2020 commitment for Michigan to achieve 100% economy-wide carbon neutrality by midcentury – the global science-based benchmark for reducing greenhouse gas emissions to avoid the most devastating and costly impacts of climate change. The plan establishes ambitious goals and strategies for achieving the plan’s vision.

Broadband internet access is crucial to achieve the goals laid out in the MI Healthy Climate Plan as it enables people to access the latest climate science, connect human activities to climate impacts, and make informed decisions. It is important to advocate for equitable access to this information, so that all residents can make informed decisions regarding climate change.

Thirty-Year Integrated Infrastructure Plan

Developed by the Michigan Infrastructure Council, this plan includes the state’s dig-once strategy to collocate facilities during construction within state and local rights-of-way. The strategies in the Integrated Infrastructure Plan, including dig-once and ROW access, are also identified in the Broadband and Digital Equity (BEAD) Five Year Action Plan as strategies to help remove obstacles to broadband deployment and adoption in historically marginalized and underserved communities. This plan enables the efficient deployment of broadband networks and universal availability of broadband access, which are key factors to achieving digital equity. This plan is currently under development.

Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC) Strategic Plan

The mission of the MPSC is to serve the public by ensuring safe, reliable, and accessible energy and telecommunications services at reasonable rates. While the MPSC does not regulate broadband, the commission intersects with the goals, vision, and objectives of the MIHI Office, the BEAD plan, and this plan. By working towards the goal of expanding broadband access, the MPSC is supporting the overall efforts of the MIHI Office to promote digital equity and inclusion across the state. The following are selected key goals and strategies of the MPSC Strategic Plan that support the efforts of the MIHI Office.

1. Empower customers to make informed utility choices
 - a) Publish accurate information on energy and telecommunications programs
 - b) Promote Connect Michigan broadband expansion
 - c) Collaborate with other state departments and stakeholders
 - d) Develop energy and technology pilots
2. Assure safe, secure, and reliable utility services and infrastructure
 - a) Issue a Telecommunications Assessment
 - b) Define roles for telecommunications outage monitoring
 - c) Support the transition to IP-911
3. Assure accessible and affordable utility services through regulatory oversight
 - a) Administer and promote customer programs
4. Cultivate open and diverse communication and education
 - a) Establish and encourage virtual stakeholder participation in workgroups and proceedings
 - b) Engage partners on informational webinars/forums
 - c) Evaluate communication and outreach programs and efforts

Michigan Future Mobility Plan

The Michigan Office of Future Mobility and Electrification oversees the Michigan Future Mobility Plan. This plan identifies several objectives to position the state as a leader in next-generation mobility. A few of the objectives are impacted by digital equity programs, including deploying EV chargers, ensuring Mobility as a Service (MaaS), and reducing congestion and traffic crashes.

Mobility and electrification are heavily reliant on the availability of wired and wireless connections to provide real-time data, enable transactions, and monitor the electrical grid and associated systems. Universal connectivity and adoption are important for the operations of EV chargers and transit access. Having large green sites that are attractive for automotive investments in the future will mean looking outside of traditional urban areas to parts of the state that aren't connected today. The operations of intelligent transportation systems and connected/automated vehicle tech rely on the reliable availability of the Internet of Things (IoT) and edge computing across cellular-vehicle-to-vehicle/everything (CV2V / CV2X) systems. Michigan's digital equity programs directly support the success of the Michigan Future Mobility Plan.

Michigan Mobility 2045 Plan

Michigan’s State Long-Range Transportation Plan (MM2045) is an essential element of Michigan’s transportation planning and program development process. The public- and stakeholder-driven plan provides a foundation for developing Michigan’s transportation programs, including MDOT’s Five-Year Transportation Program (5YTP) and the statewide, rural and metropolitan transportation improvement programs, and presents the social and economic cases for transportation investment in Michigan.

The universal availability of high-speed internet is recognized as a key requirement for the successful implementation of the MM2045 Plan. Additionally, the plan contains the following strategies that are relevant to the digital equity programs and work of the MIHI Office:

1. Identify opportunities to expand fiberoptic, broadband, and 5G connections through coordination or partnerships.
2. Leverage technology to improve passenger transportation availability and services.
3. Invest in data, data collection, analytics, and information systems to advance data informed decisions.
4. Extend opportunities to share data and information for improved efficiency, accountability, and transparency across all of Michigan’s transportation partners.
5. Implement and expand a real-time Transportation Infrastructure Data Exchange (TIDE) system to function as a centralized platform to support continuous exchange of transportation data among MDOT and other stakeholders.

Michigan Workforce Development Plan

The Michigan Workforce Development Plan is maintained and implemented by the Employment and Training Division of LEO, the same agency the MIHI Office is part of. The plan identifies a projected worker shortage in twelve NTIA identified occupation groups. The most significant occupation groups impacted by projected shortfall are “laborers and material movers,” “trenchers,” and “inspectors” which are facing a 11.9%, 10.4%, and 9.8% shortfall respectively. The Michigan Workforce Development Plan outlines several steps to address the projected shortage that could impact the expansion and access to digital resources statewide related to digital equity:

1. Engagement of underrepresented communities, unions, worker organizations.
2. Leveraging and partnering with subgrantees, contractors, subcontractors, educational institutions, supportive service providers, and workforce/labor training providers

MIHI is actively partnering with the workforce development division of LEO to creatively solve these shortfall projections. Upcoming workforce strategies highlight the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion to expand the labor pool to those not historically represented in the construction industry.

Michigan Sixty by 30 Strategic Plan

The Michigan Sixty by 30 Initiative aims to increase postsecondary educational attainment to 60% by 2030. The Sixty by 30 program is housed within the LEO, the same agency the MIHI Office is part of. The Sixty by 30 Strategic Plan outlines several focus areas that are impacted by the work of the MIHI Office including, boosting youth college going rates, creating pathways for

immigrants and international students, and addressing barriers to success, especially for students living below the ALICE threshold.

Expanding access to high-speed internet and promoting digital equity contribute to the objectives of the Sixty by 30 initiative, which prioritizes student and career success.

Existing County Plans

Connected Nation's "Connected Community" program has partnered with 10 counties across the state of Michigan to conduct an assessment regarding the current status of broadband and to establish a broadband planning process. Through surveys of local residents, businesses, and organizations, the program aims to understand the existing resources and capabilities in place to support the access, adoption, and use of broadband technology in homes and businesses. Data obtained from this assessment is used to develop an appropriate action plan to improve the broadband ecosystem effectively, addressing the current and future broadband needs of these counties. The program's aim is to enhance the accessibility, affordability, and availability of broadband technology in the counties, leading to social and economic development. Appendix A-1 provides additional information on the Technology Action Plan development of the 10 county plans listed below.

Cheboygan County	Eaton County
Huron County	Lake County
Lapeer County	Midland County
Newaygo County	Oceana County
Sanilac County	Tuscola County

Please note that these are not the entirety of county plans that MIHI is aware of, rather, these are the 10 county plans which were developed in tandem with Connected Nation.

Washtenaw County Broadband Equity Subcommittee Final Report

Washtenaw County's Broadband Equity Subcommittee final report highlights how lack of broadband access is impacting residents across the county. The Committee suggests several activities to achieve this goal, such as defining the need, supporting best and emerging practices, seeking funding, changing or updating policies, and coordinating with local governments.

Digital Equity and Inclusion – City of Detroit

The Office of Digital Equity & Inclusion in Detroit offers solutions and resources to bridge the digital divide in the city by providing affordable and quality high-speed internet, access to devices, digital literacy training, technical support, and upgraded internet infrastructure city-wide.

The Office of Digital Equity and Inclusion developed an interactive digital dashboard that defines the needs of Detroit residents. The interactive dashboard provides transparency to the residents of Detroit concerning the allocation of resources and services geared towards closing the digital gap in the city. This data driven approach will allow for the creation of customized digital equity plans for each district and neighborhood to meet the needs of the community.

Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG)

SEMCOG developed *Broadband in Southeast Michigan*, a roadmap that identifies key challenges and opportunities, policy recommendations, and case studies for expanding

broadband throughout the region. The goal of the roadmap is to promote accessibility of high-speed broadband to homes and businesses across Michigan to enhance community and economic development, improve quality of life, provide access to education and lifelong learning opportunities, support remote work demand, and promote equitable access to health. The four goals related to digital equity include:

1. Expand high-speed broadband availability throughout Southeast Michigan
2. Improve data on broadband availability and access to reflect current conditions with accuracy
3. Ensure equitable access to broadband and support digital literacy efforts for students, seniors, and households with limited access to resources
4. Coordinate broadband efforts at the State level to support broadband development for community and economic development

2.1.2.1 Asset Gaps in Existing Digital Equity Plans

MIHI recognizes the need for additional local, regional, and county digital equity plans to ensure equitable access to digital resources and opportunities throughout the state. There should be additional focus on building partnerships and collaborations with various stakeholders to implement digital inclusion activities at the local level effectively. These efforts will help drive the development of more digital equity plans and address the current gaps in Michigan's digital inclusion landscape.

The results of the Digital Inclusion Resource Map, in Appendix A-1, revealed asset gaps primarily related to incarcerated individuals, veterans, and individuals with disabilities. Although the Digital Inclusion Resource Map is not a complete list of organizations supporting Digital Inclusion throughout the state, out of the 208 organizations that completed the survey, only four organizations covered incarcerated individuals, and five organizations covered veterans and individuals with disabilities. The organizations supporting these individuals mainly focused on providing services related to digital access.

During the partnership roundtable meetings which discussed obstacles and barriers of broadband deployment and adoption, participants were asked to share their thoughts and ideas regarding digital equity, focusing on device access, digital skills and proficiency, affordability, relevance/awareness, and inclusivity. After analyzing the feedback gathered from these discussions and responses, we identified several common themes related to asset gaps that emerged across these discussions. The following is a summary of these themes, which can guide us as we work towards addressing these issues and achieving greater digital equity and inclusion in our communities.

- Rural communities are often left behind when it comes to access to high-speed internet and other digital services due to the higher costs associated with providing these services in remote areas. This lack of access can have a significant impact on economic development, education, healthcare, and social connectivity in these rural communities.
- In addition to access issues, the cost of service is often higher in rural areas than in urban areas. Internet Service Providers (ISPs) have to invest more to build the necessary infrastructure in remote areas, and due to smaller populations, they may not be able to achieve the same economies of scale as they do in urban areas. This cost burden is usually

passed on to the consumers, making the service more expensive for those who live in rural areas.

- Many individuals do not have access to high-speed internet, which is necessary to access telehealth services. This creates a significant gap in healthcare accessibility and highlights the need for increased focus on expanding access to telehealth services for all individuals.
- Deploying broadband infrastructure is a complex and time-consuming process that requires significant investment and coordination from stakeholders. Waiting for broadband infrastructure to be deployed can result in significant opportunity costs, including lost economic development, healthcare, and educational opportunities.
- Digital literacy and training is a crucial asset gap, especially notable for older generations. Digital literacy training can include basic computer skills, internet browsing, digital data entry, and file management. Offering digital literacy training in person may be essential to serving aging individuals.
- Digital safety is another critical concern. With the risk of cyber-attacks and digital fraud, it is essential to educate people on digital safety best practices. Older generations may be particularly vulnerable to scams and fraud.

MIHI is committed to addressing the digital asset gaps that affect covered populations, including veterans, incarcerated individuals, and those with disabilities, while also prioritizing removing the obstacles and barriers related to digital equity. The asset gaps and themes identified during the Digital Inclusion Resource Map and Partnership Roundtable discussions provided key insights for addressing challenges related to broadband deployment and adoption, access and affordability, digital literacy and training, digital safety, and more. By recognizing these challenges and working together to develop comprehensive solutions, plans, and programs we can achieve greater digital equity and inclusion in our communities and bridge the digital divide.

2.1.3 Existing Digital Equity Programs

In this section, MIHI has identified various existing state and local digital equity programs, and outlined how each initiative enables or supports Michigan's digital equity and inclusion goals. Although this is not an all-encompassing list, it reflects MIHI's commitment to identify and leverage existing programs and initiatives across state and local government as part of the strategy to closing the digital divide. Understanding the strengths and potential gaps in service of these various programs is crucial in advancing Michigan's broader digital inclusion goals and ensuring a cohesive and coordinated approach to achieving digital equity across the state. By identifying areas of convergence and potential collaboration across programs, Michigan can leverage existing resources, expertise, and momentum, while avoiding duplication of efforts especially with the non-deployment aspect of the BEAD program and maximizing the impact of state investment in digital inclusion.

Affordable Connectivity Program Eligible Households

Eligible Michiganders may qualify for monthly assistance toward paying their monthly home internet bill under the federal Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP). The Affordable Connectivity Program is a \$14.2 billion benefit program that helps ensure that households can afford the broadband they need for work, school, healthcare and more. The benefit provides a discount of up to \$30 per month toward internet service for eligible households and up to \$75 per month for households on qualifying tribal lands. Eligible households can also receive a one-time discount of up to \$100 to purchase a laptop, desktop computer, or tablet from participating

providers if they contribute more than \$10 and less than \$50 toward the purchase price. The Affordable Connectivity Program is limited to one monthly service discount and one device discount per household.

Eligibility for the ACP program is based on household income. ACP-eligible households include families with incomes at or below 200% of the federal poverty level and those who qualify for Lifeline, SNAP, Free and Reduced-Price School Lunch, WIC and other government-funded programs. Essentially, the covered population that this program is geared towards is the households with lower incomes. An estimated 1,685,725 households in Michigan are eligible for the ACP program. As of April 1, 2023, 604,108 households are enrolled in the program which constitutes approximately 35.8% of the estimated eligible households.

MI Dept. of Education, E-Rate Support

E-rate is a federal program that provides reduced rates on internet access and internal connections for schools and libraries. The discount rate, which ranges between 20% and 90%, is based on the number of school children in the area who are eligible for a free or reduced lunch, and E-rate can save libraries money through lower fees for these vital services. The funding for the E-rate program is determined based on the level of demand, up to an annual cap of \$4.456 billion set by the Commission.

If a state provides eligible schools and libraries with funding for special construction charges for high-speed broadband that meets the FCC's long-term connectivity targets, the E-Rate program will increase an applicant's discount rate for these charges up to an additional 10% to match the state funding on a one-to-one dollar basis. For tribal schools and libraries, the E-Rate program will also match special construction funding provided by states, tribal governments, or other federal agencies on a one-to-one basis, up to an additional 10% for the applicant's discount rate. Total E-Rate support with matching funds may not exceed 100 percent. Discounts for support depend on the level of poverty and whether the school or library is located in an urban or rural area.

Michigan Public Service Commission, Utility Assistance Programs

The Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC) is the regulatory authority for all utility providers in the State of Michigan. The MPSC maintains a database of utility assistance programs to support consumers. The purpose of the assistance program is to establish and administer programs statewide that provide energy assistance and self-sufficiency services to eligible low-income households. Self-sufficiency services include assisting participants with the following: paying their utility bills on time, including broadband; budgeting for and contributing to their ability to provide for energy expenses, which may include enrollment into an affordable payment plan (APP); and utilizing energy services to optimize energy efficiency. Additionally, the assistance program allows low-income residents who fall behind on their gas and electric bills to stay safely in their homes and become energy self-sufficient through utility bill payment assistance and an array of other support programs, including the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP), which offers monthly assistance towards broadband or internet bills.

Michigan Public Act 95 allows the MPSC to approve a low-income energy assistance "funding factor" (a surcharge on utilities), not to exceed \$50 million dollars, every year to fund the program. In 2017, the MPSC established a monthly .93 cents per meter surcharge on all participating electric utilities who have opted-in to fund the program.

Connecting Michigan Communities Grant Program

The Michigan Department of Technology, Management, and Budget (DTMB) is providing a grant opportunity to extend broadband service into unserved areas in Michigan. The grant funds are available to middle mile and last mile projects that demonstrate collaboration to achieve community investment and economic development goals of the area impacted.

CMIC was created in late 2018 as Michigan’s first broadband infrastructure grant program and seeded with \$20M in initial funds. An additional \$14.3M was added to the program in mid-2020. The program has issued three rounds of grants with the last occurring in 2022. The program is currently housed at the MI Dept. of Technology, Management, and Budget, but recent discussion may shift administration of the program to MIHI. No additional grant awards are anticipated from the program. The intended outcome of the program is to connect more than 17,000 locations to high-speed internet.

Realizing Opportunity with Broadband Infrastructure Networks (ROBIN) Broadband Infrastructure Grant Program

ROBIN is a high-speed internet last mile and middle mile infrastructure competitive grant program with \$238M in project funds from the US Treasury as part of the Coronavirus Capital Projects Fund. ROBIN provides funds to internet service providers and public-private partnerships for the expansion of broadband infrastructure to unserved areas. Up to 35% of ROBIN funds can be used for middle-mile projects that support deployment of broadband service to unserved areas, while the remainder is dedicated for last-mile service projects. The program is designed to connect locations currently without 100/20 Mbps service. Ultimately, the goal is to connect 60,000 – 75,000 locations with high-speed internet service with this grant.

Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program (TBCP)

The NTIA’s Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program is an initiative that provides grants to support broadband deployment and adoption in tribal communities across the United States. The program offers \$1 billion in funding to tribal governments and tribal organizations to expand access to high-speed internet and improve digital inclusion. The grants can be used for a range of activities, such as building and upgrading broadband infrastructure, establishing public computer centers, and providing digital skills training. These grants will expand high-speed Internet network deployment and digital skills training to improve access to education, jobs, and healthcare on Tribal lands.

Two tribes in Michigan received grants from the TBCP. The Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the Potawatomi project was awarded about \$1.2M and proposes to upgrade existing local fiber optic infrastructure that currently serves Tribal government offices, Tribal businesses, and community anchor institutions in addition to 35 Tribal households. These upgrades will assist Tribal members in gaining better access to telehealth, distance learning, and economic and workforce development, in addition to digital inclusion efforts. In addition, Match-E-Be-Nash-She-Wish Band of Pottawatomi Indians (Gun Lake) was awarded around \$500k, which will connect 17 households in the Gun Lake tribe that lacked access to broadband to qualifying broadband service.

2.1.3.1 Asset Gaps in Existing Digital Equity Programs

Refer to Asset Gaps in Existing Digital Equity Plans.

2.1.4 Broadband Adoption

As of 2023, more than 492,000 households are unserved (locations without 25/3 Mbps service available) or underserved (locations without 100/20 Mbps service available)¹⁸ by high-speed internet infrastructure. Another 730,000 households face barriers related to affordability, adoption, device access, digital literacy, or a combination thereof. Taken together, this means that approximately 30% of Michigan households struggle with some form of the digital divide¹⁹ MIHI has actively been working with internal and external agencies to ensure that Michiganders are aware of the programs and resources that can subsidize internet service plans and internet-enabled devices.

The Affordable Connectivity Program is administered by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and provides financial assistance (\$30 per month) and a one-time discount to purchase an internet enabled device for eligible households and households on qualifying lands (FCC.gov). The Affordable Connectivity Program is open to households with an income of 200% or less of the Federal Poverty Guidelines. It is also available to households that have a member who accesses any of the following programs: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Medicaid, Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Federal Public Housing Assistance (FPHA), Veterans Pension and Survivors Benefit, Free and Reduced-Price School Lunch Program or School Breakfast Program, Federal Pell Grant (received in current award year). Tribal members involved in specific additional programs are also eligible. Tribal members who live on federally recognized tribal lands are eligible for a more significant potential benefit (up to \$75 per month). ACP also provides a one-time subsidy for the purchase of an internet-enabled device.

MIHI will support the ACP enrollment process for Michiganders, by partnering with EducationSuperHighway to coordinate a statewide ACP awareness campaign. EducationSuperHighway is a national nonprofit that has worked in the broadband space for decades and has recently shifted their focus to on the digital divide. Another program that assists in the promotion of ACP is Lifeline. Through this service, Michigan senior citizens have access to a phone landline and are also eligible for the Affordable Connectivity Program.

MIHI currently leverages a digital navigator program presently funded with Community Development Block Grant dollars from the CARES Act and administered in partnership with the MEDC. The program is hosted in three of the ten economic prosperity regions. The primary goal of this program is to increase awareness of broadband opportunities and events, to provide technical assistance for broadband related skills, and to identify resources to subsidize internet service plans. MIHI will scale the Digital Navigator program to a statewide offering covering each of the ten Prosperity Regions with a focus on underrepresented and underserved communities.

MIHI has partnered with the statewide library network and the Michigan Department of Education to leverage resources and expand digital learning opportunities for communities. For decades, Michigan's statewide libraries have provided a physical space and digital learning opportunities for community members. More recently, many libraries have also been a provider

¹⁸ Data for number of unserved and underserved locations comes from the June 15th, 2023 data published by the Federal Communications Commission that represents availability reported by internet service providers as of December 31, 2022.

¹⁹ [2021 Update to the Michigan Broadband Roadmap \(2021\)](#), Michigan High-Speed Internet Office

of loaner internet enable devices and mobile hotspots. The MDE has adopted the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) standards as digital literacy competencies that are implemented at various grade levels for students in kindergarten through secondary schools.

MIHI works to collaborate and coordinate with local nonprofit organizations that are operating in the device ecosystem, workforce and digital skill development space. One such collaboration with Human-I-T. Detroit's Human-I-T creates equitable access to technology in several ways. The most notable strategies are providing low-cost devices, internet access, digital skills training, and tech support. Human-I-T also works with companies to recycle internet-enabled devices. A multi-tiered approach will be considered to scale the work of Human-I-T to more Detroiters and Michiganders.

During the MI Connected Future Tour, MIHI learned that communities want to get involved and develop relationships that will aid in them to compete in the BEAD subgrantee process. The current landscape of broadband adoption allows MIHI to support digital inclusion virtually by way of a Digital Inclusion Playbook²⁰, which is a five-step framework to address Digital Equity in communities. The Playbook guides communities on how to identify key stakeholders, create the coalition, collect data, and establish goals. These are all critical components to creating a more digitally inclusive community.

Additionally, MIHI has created an asset inventory that allows organizations/companies to share their information including the digital services it provides. Once complete, the organization can be located by anyone inquiring about their services in an online map.

2.1.5 Broadband Affordability

MIHI provides resources and outreach toolkits that are available electronically via the Labor and Economic Opportunity website. MIHI also references the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP). Enrollments for ACP in the state of Michigan are among the highest nationally. According to EducationSuperHighway, 1,690,382 Michigan households are eligible for the ACP, yet only 636,672,007 (38% of those eligible) have enrolled. Without high-speed internet access at home, Michigan households can't work remotely, can't access healthcare, job training, the social safety net, or critical government services, and their children can't complete schoolwork outside the classroom. The MIHI website links several internet service providers directly for Michiganders to enroll in low-cost opportunities. MIHI intends to sustain a low-cost internet service plan model that is required by the BEAD program.

In addition to that household subsidy program, several organizations and municipalities were awarded federal grants towards ACP promotion through the Affordable Connectivity Outreach Grant Program. The grantees were: United Way of Southeastern Michigan, Wayne County, City of Flint and Literacy Center of West Michigan. Each of the awardees will serve as trusted community institutions that will implement strategies to reach unserved and underserved households.

The State of Michigan has provided additional support to low-income households. The Michigan Energy Assistance Program (MEAP) administers statewide programs that provide energy assistance and self-sufficiency services to eligible households. MEAP acknowledges that concerns about gas, electric, telecommunications and broadband services affects Michiganders. According to the MEAP website, self-sufficiency services include assisting eligible households

²⁰ LEO - Michigan Digital Inclusion Resources

with paying energy bills on time, budgeting for and contributing to their ability to provide for energy expenses, assistance in enrollment into an affordable payment plan, and utilizing energy services to optimize on energy efficiency. MEAP carefully outlines a step-by-step process for participants to employ and to be proactive. Additionally, MEAP outlines an outreach toolkit, links to resources, including MiBridges, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services led program. Using MEAP, Michiganders can also discover energy assistance resources available to them in their area.

2.2 Needs Assessment

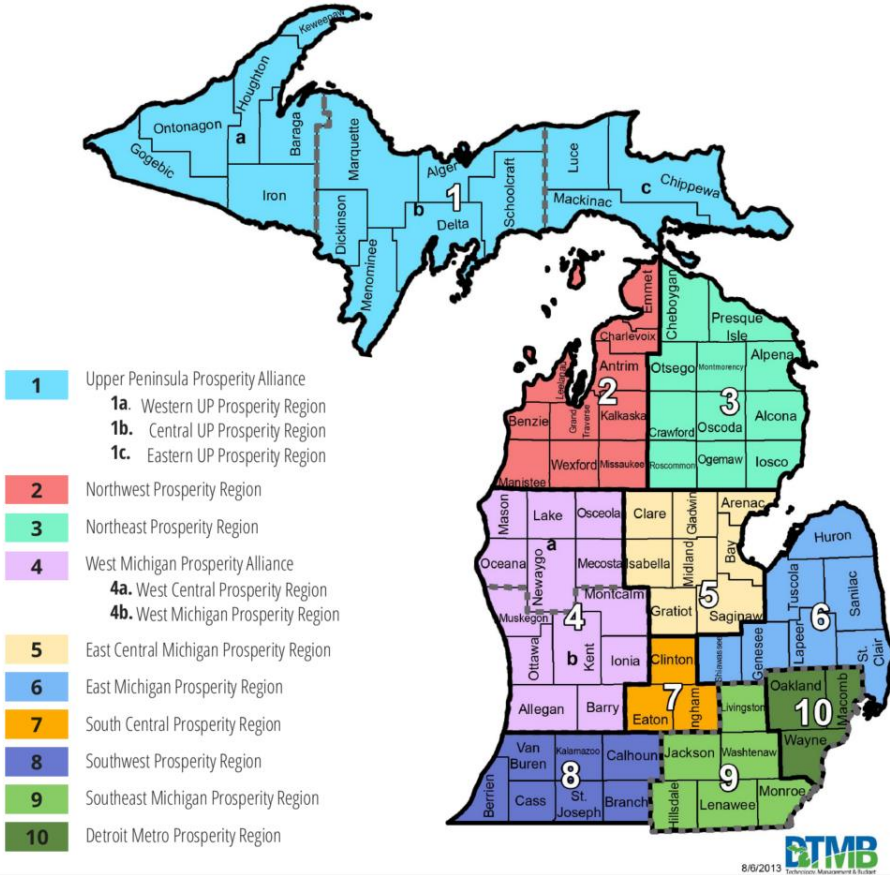
MIHI instituted a comprehensive community engagement strategy wherein community members and partnership roundtable attendees shared their biggest broadband barriers via surveys. MIHI conducted 31 community meetings, held in-person, throughout each of the 10 prosperity regions in Michigan and the data collected during these meetings is the source of the information below. Cities where each community meeting was held were targeted based on their rurality, status of internet availability, and historically underrepresented populations.

Section 3.2.1. below summarizes the results of those surveys by region and covered population including:

- Income below 150% of the poverty line
- Aging Individuals
- Veteran Status
- Disabled Individuals
- English Language Learners
- Racial-Ethnic Minorities
- Rural Residents

2.2.1 Covered Population Needs Assessment

The MIHI Office has chosen to examine its needs and gaps regionally. LEO defines ten, multi-county economic prosperity regions as a basis for analysis and implementation across programs. The map below provides the regional boundaries.



The profiles begin with that of Michigan as a whole, followed by a similar profile for each of the ten regions. The purpose of these profiles is to establish a baseline for understanding the unique digital equity and connectivity needs of the state and each region. Each profile contains a digital equity analysis that identifies the covered populations as defined by the Digital Equity Act, as well as the current state and needs for broadband availability and the priorities defined by each region during MIHI’s MCF listening tour. The following describes each of the data points found in the profiles. If a metric is highlighted in a regional profile, the rate of that metric in the region is higher/lower than the state average, which may indicate a need for additional focus on this covered population or element of digital equity.

Digital Equity Profile

The Digital Equity Profile identifies and enumerates the various Digital Equity Act covered populations within each region. These metrics are critical for identifying the unique digital equity needs throughout the state that can drive future digital inclusion program implementation.

Population: The total population of the area from the American Community Survey 2021 5-Year Estimates.

Rural: The total number and percentage of the population residing in rural areas of the region as defined by the USDA 2013 Rural-Urban Continuum Code.

Age 60+: The total number and percentage of the population aged 60 years or more in the region from the American Community Survey 2021 5-Year Estimates.

Below Poverty: The total number and percentage of the population living below the federal poverty guideline in the region from the American Community Survey 2021 5-Year Estimates.

ALICE Population: The total number and percentage of the population defined as Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed (ALICE) in the region as defined by the United Way. Data is from 2021.

Non-White: The total number and percentage of the population identifying as a race other than white, not including those of Hispanic descent, in the region from the American Community Survey 2021 5-Year Estimates.

Hispanic: The total number and percentage of the population identifying as being of Hispanic descent in the region from the American Community Survey 2021 5-Year Estimates.

Foreign-Born: The total number and percentage of the population in each region born outside of the United States from the American Community Survey 2021 5-Year Estimates.

Limited English-Speaking: The total number and percentage of the population in each region that identify as being limited English speakers. This data was derived by identifying the number of households in each region identifying as such and multiplying it by the average household size for each region to determine the estimated population that are limited English speakers. Data is from the American Community Survey 2021 5-Year Estimates.

Veterans: The total number and percentage of the population in the region that indicate past military service from the American Community Survey 2021 5-Year Estimates..

Disabled: The total number and percentage of the population in the region that indicate that they have mental or physical disability from the American Community Survey 2021 5-Year Estimates.

Living in Correctional Facility: The total number and percentage of the population in the region that is living in a correctional facility. This data comes from the 2020 Decennial Census. The data does not differentiate between those in federal or state correctional facilities.

Broadband Availability

This section identifies the total number of residential and business Broadband Serviceable Locations (BSL) identified on the BSL Fabric developed and maintained by the Federal Communications Commission. The number and percentage of unserved (locations without 25/3 Mbps service available) and underserved (locations without 100/20 Mbps service available) BSLs are included for each region. This data comes from the June 15th, 2023 data published by the FCC that represents availability reported by internet service providers as of December 31, 2022. These metrics are critical for understanding the service availability needs and gaps within each region.

Digital Equity Priorities

This data is derived from the MICF statewide community listening tour MIHI conducted in early 2023. Community meetings were held in each region and participants were asked to prioritize the importance of the four primary barriers to digital equity; 1) Availability; 2) Affordability; 3) Digital Literacy/Skills; and 4) Devices. Participants were asked to rank these topics in order of importance through a dot-sticker exercise. Votes were weighted according to their importance and the results averaged to determine the overall importance of each topic on a scale of one to four with four being the most important and one being the least important. This data helps identify the most critical issues for those living in each region of the state.

DRAFT

State of Michigan

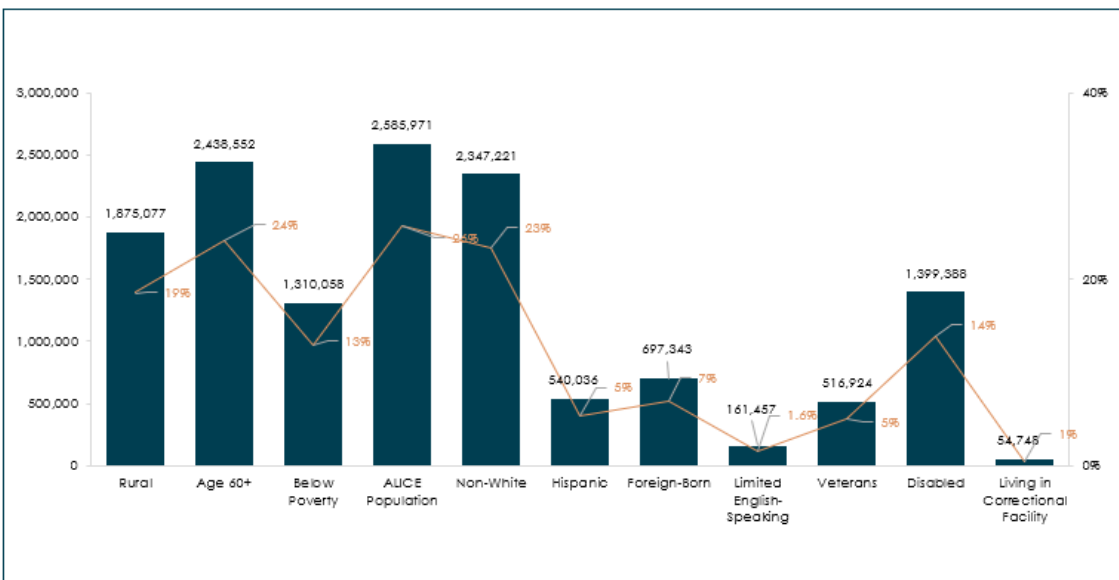
Includes all the 83 counties of the State of Michigan. Michigan has an ever-changing tapestry of residents that evokes an evolving approach to addressing the digital equity needs of the state.



Digital Equity Profile

10,062,512
Population

- Nearly one-quarter of the state's residents are aged 60 or more, and nearly one-quarter are non-white.
- Additionally, while 13% of the population lives at or below the federal poverty line, approximately one-quarter of the state's residents are part of the asset limited, income constrained, employed (ALICE) population.
- These characteristics, as well as those of the other covered populations outlined in the Digital Equity Act, suggest a set of diverse digital inclusion needs that span across the state.



Broadband Availability

4,027,591
Total Broadband Serviceable Locations



Digital Equity Priorities by Covered Population (1-4 scale)

Digital Equity Priorities	Overall Importance Rank	Income Below 150% of Poverty Line	Aging Individuals	Veterans	Disabled	English Lang. Learners	Racial-Ethnic Minority	Rural
Affordability	3.59	3.63	3.52	3.47	3.58	3.43	3.63	3.63
Availability	3.55	3.42	3.58	3.61	3.58	3.37	3.26	3.67
Devices	2.65	2.85	2.55	2.58	2.83	2.73	3.10	2.53
Digital Literacy/Skills	2.73	3.00	2.74	2.66	2.93	2.51	3.11	2.70

According to the latest FCC data, Michigan has nearly 500,000 homes and businesses that are either unserved or underserved by high-speed internet infrastructure. This is a higher proportion of un- and underserved locations than is found in other states with comparable population sizes, as evidenced by the fact that Michigan received the fourth-largest allocation of BEAD funding despite having the tenth-largest population.

Higher than state average

Prosperity Region One: Upper Peninsula

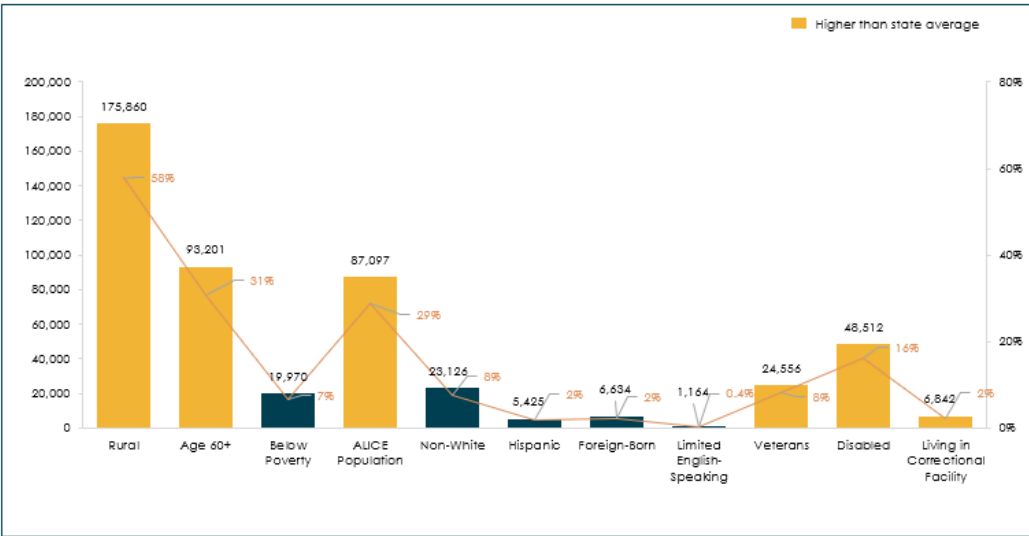
Includes the counties of: Alger, Baraga, Chippewa, Delta, Dickinson, Gogebic, Houghton, Iron, Keweenaw, Luce, Mackinac, Marquette, Menominee, Ontonagon, and Schoolcraft and represents the entirety of Michigan's Upper Peninsula.



Digital Equity Profile

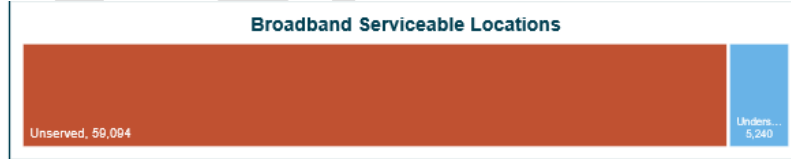
303,102
Population

The region has a significant rural population, as well as an older and less affluent one compared to the state, (the region has a lower rate of those at the federal poverty line, but a higher ALICE population). It also has a higher concentration of veterans and those with disabilities, as well as those living in correctional facilities.



Broadband Availability

180,746
Total Broadband Serviceable Locations



Digital Equity Priorities by Covered Population (1-4 scale)

Digital Equity Priorities	Overall Importance Rank	Income Below 150% of Poverty Line	Aging Individuals	Disabled	English Language Learners	Racial-Ethnic Minority	Rural
Affordability	3.63	3.57	3.52	3.45	3.67	3.60	3.64
Availability	3.71	3.64	3.60	3.64	4.00	3.73	3.61
Devices	2.61	3.07	2.39	2.73	3.00	2.80	2.62
Digital Literacy/Skills	2.86	3.15	2.64	3.00	2.38	2.79	2.81

- As expected, a more rural population equates to more un/underserved locations..
 - These data points are reflected in the region's high prioritization of availability, affordability, and digital skills during the MIHI listening tour.
- Legend: Yellow = Higher than state average, Blue = Higher than region average

Prosperity Region Three: Northeast

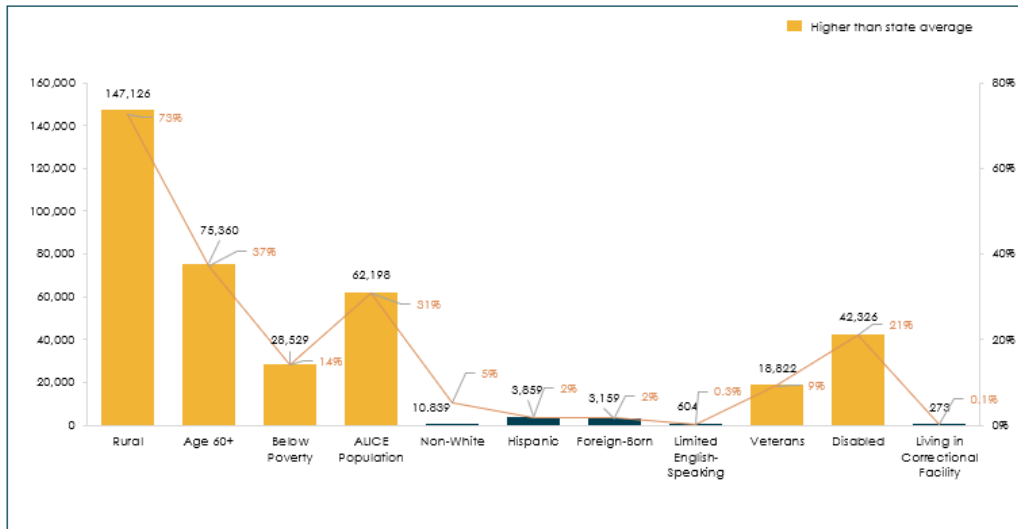
Includes the counties of: Alcona, Alpena, Cheboygan, Crawford, Iosco, Montmorency, Ogemaw, Oscoda, Otsego, Presque Isle, and Roscommon.



Digital Equity Profile

202,634
Population

The region is in the northeastern part of Michigan's Lower Peninsula and includes the cities of Alpena and Rogers City. Region Three has a high concentration of rural older, and less affluent Michiganders than the state as a whole, and a higher rate of veterans and those with disabilities than most other regions.



Broadband Availability

163,801
Total Broadband Serviceable Locations



Digital Equity Priorities by Covered Population (1-4 scale)

Digital Equity Priorities	Overall Importance Rank	Income Below 150% of Poverty Line	Aging Individuals	Disabled	English Language Learners	Racial-Ethnic Minority	Rural
Affordability	3.56	3.50	3.44	3.50	3.75	N/A	3.50
Availability	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	N/A	3.93
Devices	2.44	2.75	2.61	2.25	2.00	N/A	2.32
Digital Literacy/Skills	2.50	0.65	2.61	2.75	2.00	N/A	2.46

• While a priority for devices was not reflective in their region's priorities, there is a strong desire and priority for improving availability.

Higher than state average
Higher than region average

Prosperity Region Four: West

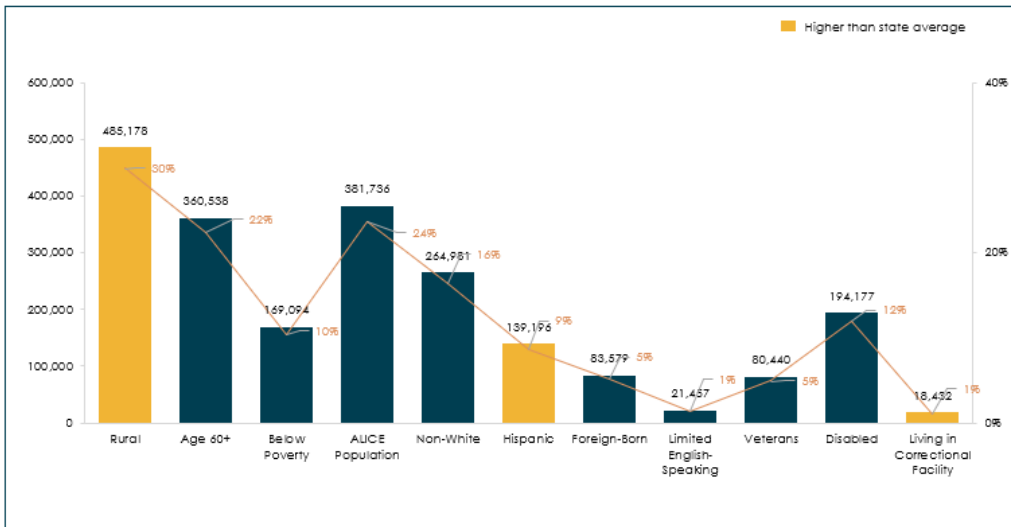
Includes the counties of: Allegan, Barry, Kent, Ionia, Lake, Mason, Mecosta, Montcalm, Muskegon, Newaygo, Oceana, Osceola, and Ottawa.



Digital Equity Profile

1,619,257
Population

The region is in the middle and western areas of the Lower Peninsula bordering Lake Michigan and includes the Grand Rapids metropolitan area. While the region has large rural areas, the majority of the population resides in the Grand Rapids area. The region has a higher proportion of Hispanic residents than the state as a whole, as well as those living in correctional facilities.



Broadband Availability

619,080
Total Broadband Serviceable Locations



Digital Equity Priorities by Covered Population (1-4 scale)

Digital Equity Priorities	Overall Importance Rank	Income Below 150% of Poverty Line	Aging Individuals	Disabled	English Language Learners	Racial-Ethnic Minority	Rural
Affordability	3.52	3.56	3.52	3.33	3.25	3.54	3.60
Availability	3.84	3.44	3.61	4.00	2.75	3.46	3.77
Devices	2.54	1.86	2.28	2.60	2.33	2.67	2.45
Digital Literacy/Skills	2.55	0.96	2.50	3.00	2.75	3.07	2.64

This reflected the region's priority for availability (higher than the state average but lower than other, more rural regions), and higher priority for devices.

Higher than state average
Higher than region average

Prosperity Region Five: East Central

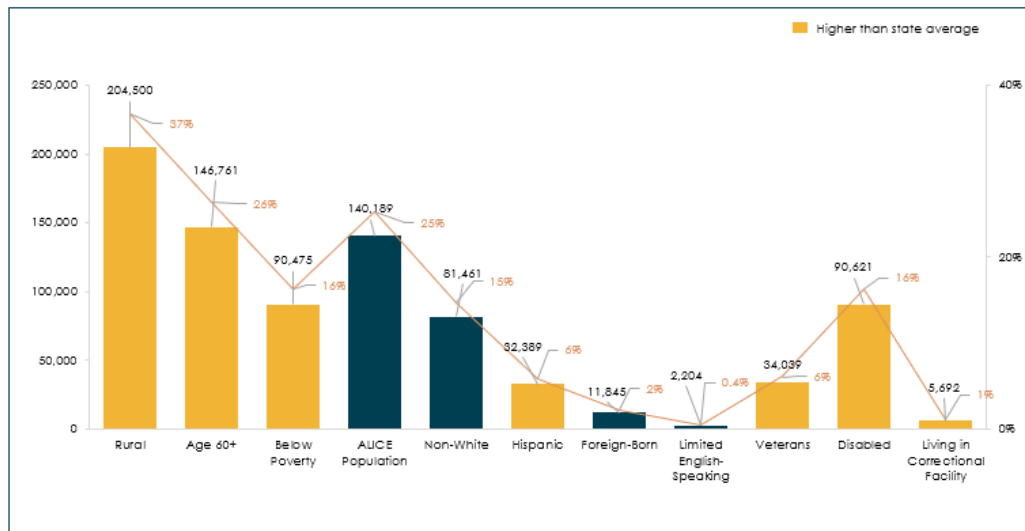
Includes the counties of: Arenac, Bay, Clare, Gladwin, Gratiot, Isabella, Midland, and Saginaw, and is located in the middle of Michigan's Lower Peninsula.



Digital Equity Profile

556,618
Population

The region is more rural than the state as a whole and has a higher concentration of aging residents. While the ALICE population is similar to the state, the region has a higher proportion of those living at or below the federal poverty line. The region also has slightly more veterans and disabled individuals than the state.



Broadband Availability

255,046
Total Broadband Serviceable Locations

Broadband Serviceable Locations

Unserviced, 32,743

Underserved, 16,512

Digital Equity Priorities by Covered Population (1-4 scale)

Digital Equity Priorities	Overall Importance Rank	Income Below 150% of Poverty Line	Aging Individuals	Disabled	English Language Learners	Racial-Ethnic Minority	Rural
Affordability	3.51	3.50	3.50	3.50	3.50	2.75	3.68
Availability	3.50	3.50	3.50	4.00	2.50	3.25	3.89
Devices	2.53	3.00	2.74	2.25	3.00	1.75	2.47
Digital Literacy/Skills	2.69	1.21	3.09	2.67	2.50	2.00	2.79

• These data points are reflected in region's prioritization of affordability, digital literacy/skills, and devices at similar rates (or lower than) that of the state overall.

Higher than state average

Higher than region average

Prosperity Region Six: East Michigan

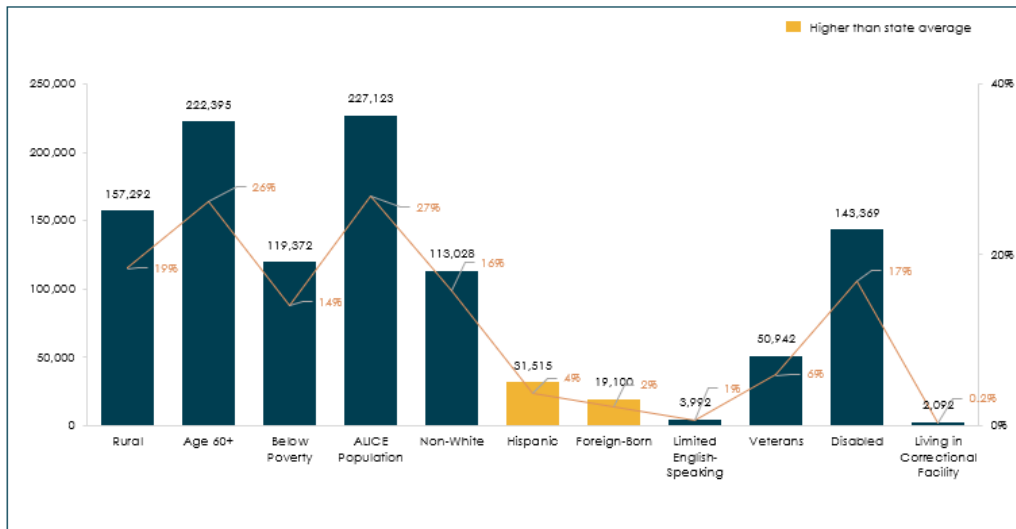
Includes the counties of: Genesee, Huron, Lapeer, Sanilac, Shiawassee, St. Clair, and Tuscola.



Digital Equity Profile

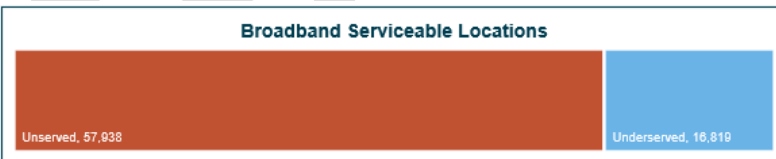
848,973
Population

The region is located in the eastern part of Michigan's Lower Peninsula, often referred to as Michigan's "Thumb," and includes the Flint metro area. The region has a smaller rural population than more northerly regions but has a higher proportion of aging individuals and those in poverty and defined as ALICE.



Broadband Availability

384,174
Total Broadband Serviceable Locations



Digital Equity Priorities by Covered Population (1-4 scale)

Digital Equity Priorities	Overall Importance Rank	Income Below 150% of Poverty Line	Aging Individuals	Disabled	English Language Learners	Racial-Ethnic Minority	Rural
Affordability	3.61	3.75	3.52	3.64	3.67	3.88	3.60
Availability	3.69	3.53	3.67	3.91	2.67	3.31	3.56
Devices	2.46	2.87	2.21	2.82	3.33	3.47	2.19
Digital Literacy/Skills	2.43	0.63	2.37	2.64	3.17	2.93	2.52

The region prioritized availability and affordability higher than the state average.

Higher than state average
Higher than region average

Prosperity Region Seven: South Central

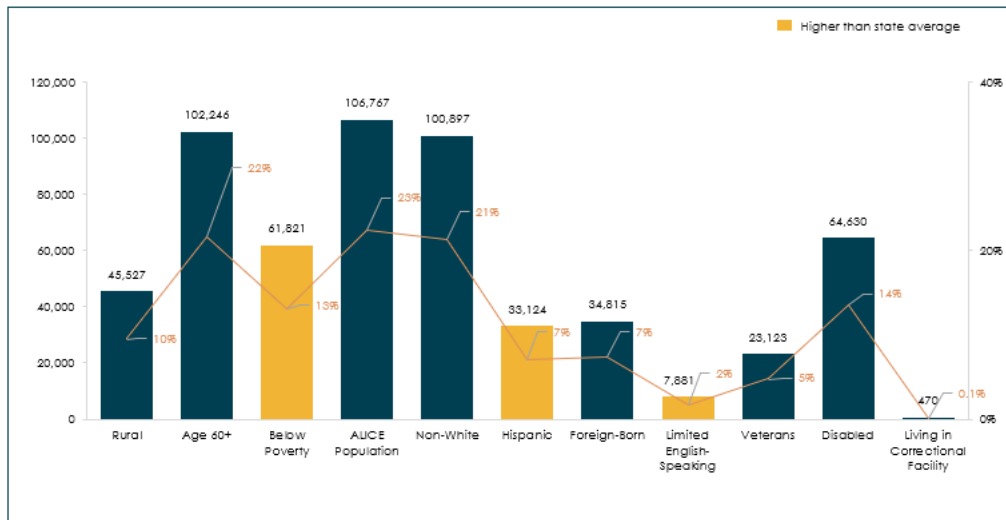
Includes the counties of: Clinton, Eaton, and Ingham and is in the southern part of Michigan's Lower Peninsula and includes the Lansing metro area.



Digital Equity Profile

473,527
Population

The region has a higher rate of poverty than the state average, as well as a higher proportion of Hispanic and limited-English speaking residents.



Broadband Availability

165,439
Total Broadband Serviceable Locations

Broadband Serviceable Locations

Unserved, 10,781

Underserved, 8,196

Digital Equity Priorities by Covered Population (1-4 scale)

Digital Equity Priorities	Overall Importance Rank	Income Below 150% of Poverty Line	Aging Individuals	Disabled	English Language Learners	Racial-Ethnic Minority	Rural
Affordability	3.46	3.63	3.30	3.25	2.33	3.67	3.67
Availability	3.58	3.13	3.43	4.00	3.33	4.00	2.67
Devices	2.44	2.63	2.55	1.75	2.00	2.83	2.67
Digital Literacy/Skills	2.56	0.97	2.80	2.00	2.67	3.00	3.33

The regional priorities are slightly elevated for availability, but overall, closely match the state average priorities.

Higher than state average
Higher than region average

Prosperity Region Eight: Southwest

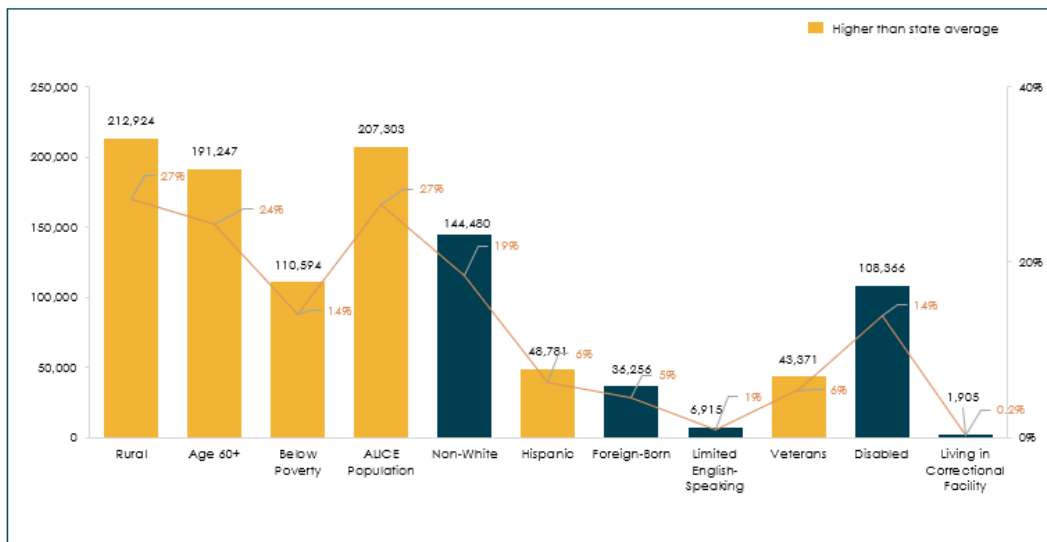
Includes the counties of: Berrien, Branch, Calhoun, Cass, Kalamazoo, Van Buren, and St. Joseph and is in the southwestern part of Michigan's Lower Peninsula.



Digital Equity Profile

782,437
Population

Region has scattered aging, rural population that's less affluent than state. The region also has high proportion of Hispanic residents and veterans.



Broadband Availability

332,518
Total Broadband Serviceable Locations

Broadband Serviceable Locations

Unserved, 23,508

Underserved, 7,682

Digital Equity Priorities by Covered Population (1-4 scale)

Digital Equity Priorities	Overall Importance Rank	Income Below 150% of Poverty Line	Aging Individuals	Disabled	English Language Learners	Racial-Ethnic Minority	Rural
Affordability	3.56	4.00	3.51	3.82	3.13	3.82	3.64
Availability	3.64	3.67	3.64	3.64	3.75	3.36	3.58
Devices	2.65	3.17	2.61	3.09	2.50	3.09	2.84
Digital Literacy/Skills	2.70	1.00	2.80	2.73	1.88	3.18	2.87

Regional priorities elevate availability over the state average, but priorities among the four digital equity priorities close match those of the state as a whole.

Higher than state average
Higher than region average

Prosperity Region Nine: Southeast Michigan

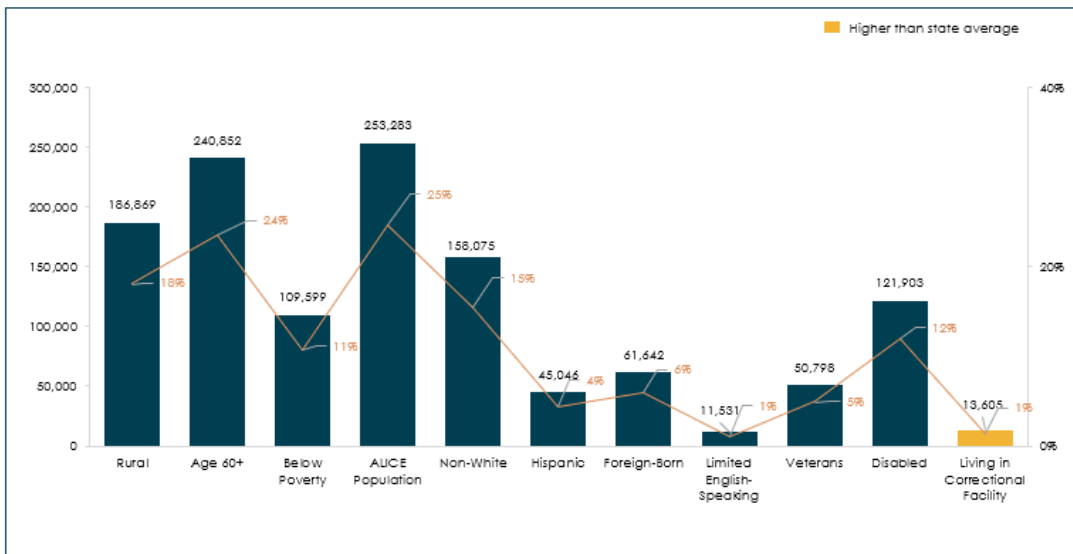
Includes the counties of: Hillsdale, Jackson, Lenawee, Livingston, Monroe, and Washtenaw and is located in the southeastern corner of Michigan's Lower Peninsula.



Digital Equity Profile

1,025,514
Population

Much of the region is representative of the statewide proportions of covered population, with the exception of those living in correctional facilities.



Broadband Availability

383,024
Total Broadband Serviceable Locations

Broadband Serviceable Locations

Unserved, 21,855

Underserved, 11,892

Digital Equity Priorities by Covered Population (1-4 scale)

Digital Equity Priorities	Overall Importance Rank	Income Below 150% of Poverty Line	Aging Individuals	Disabled	English Language Learners	Racial-Ethnic Minority	Rural
Affordability	3.52	3.50	3.40	3.50	3.00	3.31	3.63
Availability	3.47	3.50	3.43	3.88	4.00	3.31	3.13
Devices	2.59	2.25	2.43	2.75	1.50	2.92	2.13
Digital Literacy/Skills	2.64	1.15	2.79	3.00	2.00	3.00	2.13

Availability and affordability have been identified as regional priorities.

Higher than state average
Higher than region average

Prosperity Region Ten: Detroit Metro

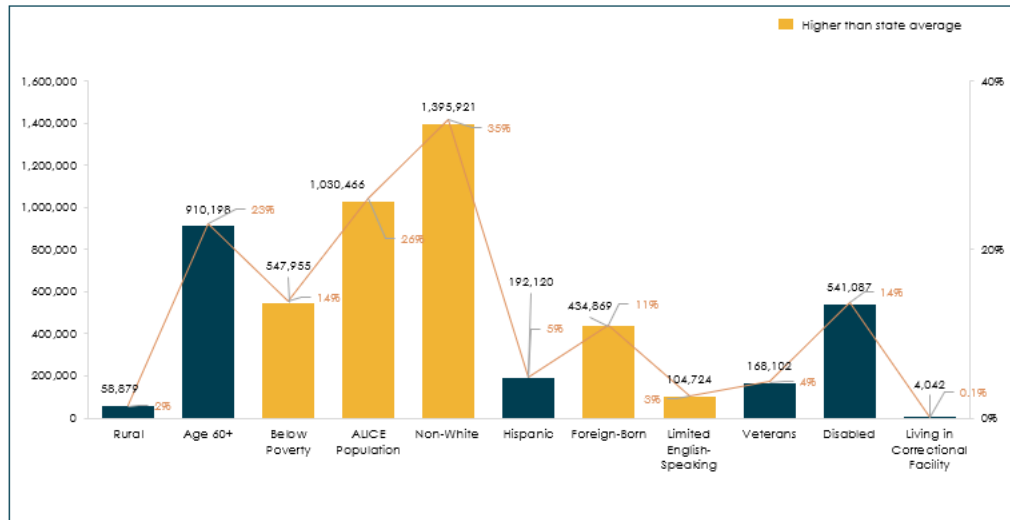
Includes the counties of: Macomb, Oakland, and Wayne and is located in the southeastern part of Michigan and is home to the state's largest city, Detroit, and its metropolitan area.



Digital Equity Profile

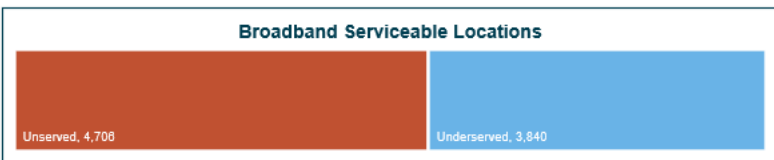
3,940,887
Population

The region has a higher proportion of those in poverty and ALICE. The region is also more demographically diverse with higher proportions of non-white, foreign-born, and limited English-speaking residents than the state as a whole.



Broadband Availability

1,359,185
Total Broadband Serviceable Locations



Digital Equity Priorities by Covered Population (1-4 scale)

Digital Equity Priorities	Overall Importance Rank	Income Below 150% of Poverty Line	Aging Individuals	Disabled	English Language Learners	Racial-Ethnic Minority	Rural
Affordability	3.66	3.56	3.68	3.64	3.50	3.67	3.00
Availability	3.13	3.00	3.17	2.81	2.91	3.01	3.67
Devices	3.27	3.17	3.31	3.29	3.18	3.31	2.00
Digital Literacy/Skills	3.29	2.04	3.43	3.52	3.09	3.31	2.33

Region Ten did not prioritize availability as high as other regions, but affordability, digital literacy/skills, and devices are more a priority for this region than the state as a whole.

Higher than state average
Higher than region average

2.2.2 Broadband Adoption

The MIHI Office recognizes that the following challenges exist for Michiganders: availability of affordable high-speed internet, accessible internet enabled devices and digital skills. Addressing these barriers across all sectors is essential. The Needs Assessment/MI Connected Future Listening Tour of 31 cities highlighted some critical data points regarding the barriers. The 778 surveys collected during the Listening Tour, produced the following:

- 553 of the attendees ranked Availability as the most challenging barrier. Availability was defined as: having internet service providers and speeds that meet the needs of the household
- Affordability was identified by 172 of the participants as the highest priority challenge. Affordability was defined as: internet service plans in the area meet the household needs of participants and fit within the household monthly budget
- 25 participants ranked having applicable digital skills (Tech Savvy) needed to use internet enabled devices as the highest priority
- Having access to internet enabled devices was ranked a high priority for 8 participants

With the goal of 95% adoption of broadband, MIHI intends to take careful consideration of covered populations, which may overlap with unserved and underserved communities. MIHI intends to prioritize the barriers above based upon the responses of Michiganders to address adoption. Additionally, MIHI recognizes that using digital skills requires the availability of internet service, having affordable options and having access to internet enabled devices. A wholistic approach to meeting the needs of covered populations is necessary. Working with trusted institutions or CAIs requires a focus on statewide, regional and local partners that are already working to improve adoption in ways previously discussed. Digital programs, digital skills-based nonprofits and library systems currently exist. By providing additional data and resources, MIHI can leverage these partnerships and scale the availability of services to covered populations. MIHI has also developed partnerships with agencies focused on aging populations, individuals with disabilities, veterans, members of racial minority groups and individuals in rural areas. Improving digital literacy and increasing broadband subscribers has also been a focus.

2.2.3 Broadband Affordability

The Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP)

The ACP is a program that allows for a thirty dollar-a-month subsidy for eligible households toward internet bills, is now utilized in 40.6% of all eligible households in Michigan⁹. To increase the remaining 59.4% of eligible households who are not yet enrolled, the State of Michigan partnered with EducationSuperHighway to coordinate an ACP seminar on June 26, 2023. The ACP faces uncertainty of continued funding with some projections showing the funds running out by early 2024. This would leave the 278,000 Michigan households that currently

receive funds and more who will apply for funding with an additional monthly cost²¹. The ACP needs to be continued to help provide internet service

Increased Technical Assistance

The MIHI office has been offering technical assistance and answering queries for Michiganders who send in questions related to the finding affordable service and signing up for the ACP. Currently, MIHI works with three Digital Navigators who are located within 3 different regions of Michigan. The state will need more Digital Navigators who can inform people about what is available as well as ask questions about what users can afford to pay for certain services. Digital Navigators will be familiar with regional ISPs, costs, and how to sign up for programs like the ACP.

Creating Different Broadband Service Plans

Michiganders attending MI Connected Future events spoke about receiving poor service quality at costs ranging from seventy dollars to over one hundred dollars a month. The cost for internet is too high. The NTIA's Internet Use survey further validates this with the fact that 18.7% of people who did not have internet pointed to the cost²². Creating more affordable plans and having a middle-class affordability plan will help to ensure that the needs are met for all Michiganders.

Lack of Standardization - Broadband Consumer Labels

While touring the state, many Michiganders expressed frustration about costs or knowledge of increased fees. For example, a modem/router combo from many ISPs will cost an additional ten dollars a month. The explanation for such information is not always simple and many internet users do not realize that purchasing their own modem and router can save money in the long term. Broadband labels not only provide information on prices, service speeds, and the type of service, but also allow consumers to compare one internet service plan with another with ease²³.

²¹ <https://acpdashboard.com/>

²² Ibid.

²³ <https://www.fcc.gov/broadbandlabels>

3 Collaboration and Stakeholder Engagement

3.1 Coordination and Outreach Strategy

Beginning in Fall 2022, MIHI developed the MI Connected Future (MICF) strategy designed to fulfill the needs of both the BEAD and DEA programs. MICF includes an innovative strategy for stakeholder and community engagement. Comprised of in-person regional meetings and partnership roundtables comprised of industry leaders and organizations representing covered populations, MICF actively supports robust community outreach and input while providing an opportunity for industry to provide additional barriers in the broadband space in a comprehensive and equitable manner.

There is particular care and intention in creating an avenue for engagement for historically marginalized populations including not only low-income, ageing individuals, and those residing in rural areas, but also refugees, members of racial or ethnic minority groups, veterans, individuals with disabilities, individuals with language barriers, and formally incarcerated individuals.

There are four primary components that are key to the execution of MICF:

1. Community Meetings;
2. Partnership Roundtables; and
3. Data
4. Public Comment

Community Meetings

Each region and community in the state is unique and approaching the needs of each in the way that serves them best promotes equity. MICF supports equitable engagement by respecting the unique needs of each community. This manifests as relationship building with community leaders prior to hosting community meetings in their towns. Buy-in is crucial for the success of MICF, and ultimately for the success of BEAD and DEA programs. In the conversations leading up to a formal community meeting, MIHI acted within its capacity to understand the issues that are important to the community, including critical context regarding past and current broadband and digital equity and inclusion activities.

MIHI divided the community meeting portion of MICF into two phases: initial data collection and public comment/feedback. Phase one consisted of 31 MICF stops throughout all 10 economic Prosperity Regions in Michigan. Phase two consisted of an additional 10 stops to collect public comment and feedback on the draft BEAD Five-Year Action Plan and the Digital Equity Plan.

Initial Data Collection

The initial data collection phase of MICF aimed to gather feedback from Michiganders regarding their biggest broadband barriers.

- 778 surveys collected
- 854 Michiganders attended
- 31 MIHI hosted meetings Dot Activity
- Availability: 553 attendees ranked this as the most challenging barrier

- Affordability: 172 attendees ranked this as the most challenging barrier
 - Tech Savvy: 25 attendees ranked this as the most challenging barrier
 - Devices: 8 attendees ranked this as their most challenging barrier
 - Other: 32 attendees ranked other as their most challenging barrier. These concerns ranged from internet reliability to lack of economic competition for ISPs
- Survey Results (4-Point Scale)
- Availability was ranked 3.49 statewide for its level of importance
 - Affordability was ranked 2.92 statewide for its level of importance
 - Devices was ranked 1.6 statewide for its level of importance
 - Tech Savvy was ranked 1.94 statewide for its level of importance

Partnership Roundtables

Concurrently, MIHI convened a series of roundtable discussions comprised of stakeholders from organizations across the state who are necessary in guiding the development of the BEAD and SDEPG/SDECG programs. These panels included representatives from community anchor institutions, tribal nations, organizations representing covered populations, internet service providers, and many others. The intent for the cross-sectorial panel format is to share information and resources, raise awareness for potential issues concerning infrastructure deployment and digital inclusion, and provide MIHI with policy and operational guidance for program implementation. These panels met regularly throughout the entire stakeholder engagement and plan development phases of MICF planning process.

Data

Quality data collection is crucial for determining the correct baseline for broadband service in Michigan. Furthermore, quality data supports an equitable deployment strategy in both the infrastructure and digital equity programs. Questions and input asked of community members will be consistent throughout the MICF Plan state-wide tour; however, the context in which the questions will be delivered will be unique to the group with whom MIHI is engaging. Following the state-wide tour, the MIHI team has analyzed feedback and engage with other professional organizations for quality analysis. Care was taken to engage with academics who work in the digital equity field and with existing digital equity indices to highlight areas of need.

After gathering community feedback, engaging with partnership roundtables, and analyzing the gathered data, the final phase of the MICF planning process is to return to communities to share results and the draft MICF plan. MIHI aims to have a draft MICF Plan completed no less than three months prior to its submission deadline to the NTIA in July of 2023. In the three-month window prior to submission, MIHI will again visit communities across the state to solicit feedback on the proposed MICF Plan.

Public Comment

Responsive public comments from Michiganders of all walks of life are imperative to strengthening the Digital Equity Plan. All comments will allow MIHI to consider input and further improve the plan. To best facilitate the public comment period MIHI contacted all individuals who attended previous sessions and those who receive MIHI newsletter recipients, partnered with local and regional organizations, used State of Michigan communications, and leveraged relationships to share the opportunity to make public comments.

MIHI knows that not everyone is online and wants to provide ample opportunities for the public to comment. Three avenues to submit public comments are available.

1. Online on the MIHI website
2. In-person at a MI Connected Future event
3. In-person at a local library after reading a physical copy of the Digital Equity Plan

Option One: Submitting a comment online allows you to submit a comment when it is most convenient for you. Upon visiting the public comment page, you download the Digital Equity Plan, research it, and then submit a public comment.

Option Two: Ten in-person events will take place over the course of five weeks with one event in each Prosperity Region of Michigan. These events will share information about gathered data from the former tour stops, allow for questions and feedback, and give all participants the opportunity to submit public comments in either a digital or physical format.

Option Three: Local libraries in Michigan will have physical copies of the Digital Equity Plan on hand for Michiganders to come in and read. After reading the plan, interested individuals will be able to submit a public comment using a computer at the library connected to the internet or write down feedback in a tangible format that will be scanned and sent to MIHI as a form of public comment.

Public Comment Outcomes

[This section will include a report on the number of comments received, some background analytics, and a summary of revisions made to the plan. A full report with public comment tracking will be placed in the Appendix.]

4 Implementation

4.1 Implementation Strategy & Key Activities

MIHI takes every effort to utilize holistic strategies to close the digital divide and remove barriers in a non-traditional manner. The digital divide looks different to everyone depending on their community, their income, their race, or their education. A person may have easy access to the internet, but not have the digital skills to advance in their career. Another may not have the money to utilize public transportation to get to a library to complete their college courses. Closing the digital divide is not a “one-size-fits-all” solution and Michigan will not approach it as one. Additionally, MIHI is aware of several local and regional partners that are currently offering digital opportunities to communities. With this in mind, MIHI intends to support and convene efforts on the local and regional level to scale programs statewide. The current digital skills programming offered may be isolated to individual municipalities or to smaller populations. Ideally, MIHI’s efforts will be coordinated in the most efficient way.

The main vehicle for closing the digital divide in Michigan will be through the implementation of a robust community Digital Navigator program. Navigators will serve communities they live in, therefore understand the needs of the digital divide in their community. Information from state agencies pertaining to online accessibility of services, new opportunities for workforce or education, and affordable internet service plans and devices will be disseminated to communities through these digital navigators. MIHI recognizes that community members know their communities best.

Digital Navigator System

During MIHI’s MICF Listening Sessions, Michiganders expressed challenges with accessing and/or utilizing high-speed internet and having the needed skills to use internet enabled devices. Each community is different and has key insights on how to solve challenges with broadband that suit their needs. MIHI staff also heard that many communities want to get involved in the digital inclusion space but are unsure of where to find appropriately scaled resources, funding for positions, and the individuals with the skills to teach others about the resources available to them.

To meet the needs of communities, and to close the digital divide, MIHI will implement a grassroots Digital Navigator program to serve as the vehicle for community-based solutions development. MIHI will implement the Digital Navigator program using the “snowflake model” of community organizing (as

seen in the image below). This model allows communities to be engaged in the work to close the digital divide in an equitable manner, and one in which suits their community best, but continues to align with the coordinated strategy led by MIHI. By utilizing partnerships with local, trusted community institutions, MIHI, as the lead, will serve as the hub and the foundation of the vehicle providing support to the navigators and coordinating initiatives from within LEO and in partnership with other state agencies. The statewide Digital Navigator Program will promote equitable access to high-speed internet and digital skills training opportunities to Michiganders in urban, suburban, and rural areas. The program will target



Figure 1: Snowflake model for community organizing

underrepresented, under-invested and underserved communities. The Digital Navigators will aim to increase adoption of broadband and the skills needed to use devices, based on the needs in the community, including physical and virtual access to identified need-based programs. In collaboration with community leaders, local businesses high quality programming will center around barrier removal for access to high-speed internet, internet enabled devices, applicable digital learning, and practical skill development. With the need for digital skills and internet use growing, Michiganders will have the training required to compete in an evolving digital society.

The digital divide is influenced by many factors beyond lack of access to a device or a broadband connection and for many Michiganders, barriers such as childcare or transportation impact

their ability to get online. The Digital navigator system will not only fund the positions for Community Digital Navigators and Regional Digital Coordinators but will support barrier removal activities such as providing bus passes or gas cards for individuals with transportation barriers, assistance devices for those with disabilities, or translation software for non-English speakers. The barriers for the individual will be unique, and as such, the removal of those barriers will be viewed by MIHI as a “strategic investment in human and community capacity.”²⁴

To scale the program throughout the state, Digital Navigators will be placed in each of the ten Prosperity Regions and in larger municipalities, e.g., Detroit and Grand Rapids. Digital Navigators facilitate need-based partnerships, programs, and digital skill development. The evolving workforce, telehealth platforms, virtual learning, and entertainment needs of covered populations in Michigan. By focusing the Digital Navigator Program on the communities that have the most need, the digital divide can be positively impacted. MIHI will provide oversight as it relates to assigning measurable deliverables and reporting requirements for the Digital Navigators.

Digital Navigators will be trained on the initiatives of the state and how to holistically implement the activities for community by the Digital Inclusion Program Manager. Initial reviews of the progress for the Digital Navigators will occur in the first 90 days of their placement and will occur every six months for the term of their placement. Navigators will be required to provide monthly reports on the status of progress for implementation including metrics aligned with KPIs.

To sustain the Digital Navigator system, MIHI will build relationships with philanthropic organizations and Community Reinvestment Act participating banking institutions. The ability to create an endowment fund with DEA funding is something MIHI is also strongly advocating for to ensure long-term sustainability of not only the Digital Navigator program, but other digital equity activities in the state.

It is anticipated this this plan will be reviewed annually to assess activities performed against those planned and make updates or adjustments to the plan, as required. The KPIs will be evaluated annually, and where possible, quarterly, and will consist of data collected from the Digital Navigators as well as reporting from the Digital Equity Director regarding the progress of interagency coordination and implementation efforts. Progress on all KPI’s, and other relevant state initiatives supporting closing the digital divide will be published in an annual report by MIHI to the residents of Michigan.

Goals and Planned Activities

Priorities, KPI, Planned Activities, Roles and Responsibilities Related to Affordability	
Priorities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empower communities through engagement and involvement • Leverage community inputs to drive program planning and implementation. • Develop an approach for communities to define infrastructure and equity programs roll out • Include evidence of community support as part of subprogram requirements and partnerships for infrastructure deployment

²⁴ State Digital Equity Planning Grant Notice of Funding Opportunity, § (C)(1)(b)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community involvement to ensure alignment between local plans and state plans
KPI:	<p>An affordability score that combines:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Internet to Income ratio as part of the Purdue University Digital Divide Index FCC’s Benchmark Rate for 100/20 mbps unlimited internet service and what each covered population in each region pay for internet service The percentage of households (per covered population, per region) who lost their internet connection temporarily due to inability or difficulty paying
Activities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital Navigators placed in statewide libraries and other CAIs to support local, low-cost broadband opportunities Utilize Intake Form for each participant to provide insight on related points for the participants’ Affordability Score Promote low-cost broadband services to community members at host site, events, etc. Participate in local broadband related events and meetings (i.e., broadband taskforce, committees) Evaluate the progress of adoption for community members who indicated affordability or availability as a barrier to adoption
Roles:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital Inclusion Program Manager will serve as the primary contact for each Regional Digital Coordinator. Will provide information on the status of the region as a baseline, the progress goals for the upcoming quarter, and the resources available for affordability and availability of broadband service to the Regional Digital Coordinator. Regional Digital Coordinator will serve as the primary contact for each of the prosperity regions and the larger municipalities in the state. Will report directly to the MIHI office. Will flow information from the Digital Inclusion Program Manager regarding resources to the Community Digital Navigator. Will also share concerns with Digital Inclusion Program Manager from Community Digital navigators as needed. Community Digital Navigator will serve as the leads in communities to support efforts to expand the impact of broadband in areas that covered populations. Will report data directly to the Regional Digital Coordinator.
Priorities, KPI, Planned Activities, Roles and Responsibilities Related to Accessibility	
Priorities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Empower individuals to utilize online services available from their health care provider, financial institution, or other online services as needed (i.e. Secretary of state appointments) Target covered populations, particularly geographically isolated, and low-income households, to take advantage of the online services available to them to reduce unnecessary expenses relating to transportation or lost wages for services which can be conducted online
KPI:	<p>A digital government accessibility score</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Determine how likely each covered population is to access government services online as compared to how likely they are to use telehealth, online banking, or online consumer services

<p>Activities:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze webservices available throughout the state and create a resource bank of offerings available from the state for enrollment into assistance programs relating to workforce, education, healthcare access, and general civic engagement. Utilize Intake Form for each participant to provide insight on related points for the participants’ baseline Digital Government Accessibility Score <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Measure progress periodically and at program exit Analyze webservices available throughout the region and create a bank of resources available from the region’s healthcare systems, financial institutions, Tribal resources, municipal and county governments, and education institutions Provide tailored resource guides for industry improvement of websites for improving their government accessibility score
<p>Roles:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MIHI with the help of other state agencies will complete the analysis of statewide resources and their current digital government accessibility status. MIHI will develop the framework for analysis and provide a template to Regional Digital Coordinator to expand capacity for communities to utilize the template for local use. MIHI, with the help of relevant state agencies, and external partners, will facilitate the creation of resource guides to support education, workforce, banking, healthcare, and other civic agencies to improve their accessibility Regional Digital Coordinator will support Community Digital Navigator with training and resources to encourage community members to utilize the online services available to them. Community Digital Coordinator will promote and encourage online services among targeted covered populations to telehealth, online banking, and consumer services resources available
<p>Priorities, KPI, Planned Activities, Roles and Responsibilities Related to Digital Skills and Digital Literacy</p>	
<p>Priorities:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote Digital Equity and Digital Literacy Target covered populations that are economically distressed, geographically distressed areas, historically underrepresented and uninvested Support non-deployment subprograms that promote digital equity and literacy Develop awareness strategies that improve digital literacy engagement and enrollment through marketing and communication
<p>KPI:</p>	<p>Create a digital participation score that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Combines the proportion of each covered population in each region that struggles to use computers or internet enabled devices How likely each covered population is to do various online tasks versus the overall statewide average Utilize Intake Form for each participant to provide insight on related points for the individual Participation Score
<p>Activities:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner with the State of Michigan Library to identify and employ a digital skills training platform for adults Partner with the Michigan Department of Education to promote digital skills competencies among K-12 students

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze regional and covered population data to focus resources in areas with lower rates of digital literacy Evaluate digital literacy levels among participants in Digital Navigator led activities Convene a workgroup comprised of MIHI and MDE staff to provide quarterly status updates toward the status of digital literacy in Michigan among covered populations in K-12, postsecondary, and adult learning environments.
Roles:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MIHI will convene education workgroup and monitor growth toward closing the digital literacy skills gap. Resources and updates to relevant educational programs will be provided to the Regional Digital Coordinator by the Digital Inclusion Program Manager. Regional Digital Coordinator will provide information updates to the Community Digital Navigator on programs relevant to their region/community. Regional Digital Coordinator will collect data from Community Coordinator and report back to MIHI staff. Community Digital Navigator will facilitate digital literacy programs for adult learners at community organizations and provide data and progress to Regional Digital Coordinator. Any challenges or barrier trends preventing adults from completing course work will be shared with Regional Digital Coordinator and MIHI staff.

Priorities, KPI, Planned Activities, Roles and Responsibilities Related to Individual Cybersecurity

Priorities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target covered populations, specifically aging individuals, geographically isolated individuals, and formerly incarcerated individuals Utilize Intake Form for each participant to provide insight on related points for the participants' Digital Security Score Empower individuals to utilize online services available to them with confidence to keep their information safe and to minimize unnecessary expenses relating to transportation or lost wages for services which can be conducted online
KPI:	<p>Develop a Digital Security Score that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Determines the percentage of each covered population in each region which has refrained from one or more online activities due to cyber security concerns Determines the percentage of each covered population in each region which does not use the internet at all due to cybersecurity or privacy concerns
Activities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop communications strategy to promote safe online practices to targeted populations Utilize practical examples of good cyber-hygiene to model behavior among target populations Coordinate with Michigan Department of State and other relevant state agencies to communicate best practices when engaging online to protect personal information Convene/attend relevant workgroup with appropriate state agencies to report the status of, and progress toward KPI, specifically among targeted populations

<p>Roles:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MIHI will convene/attend the relevant workgroup among state agencies to monitor progress of digital security among targeted populations. MIHI will report changes quarterly to show progress to the KPI. Communications strategy will be led by MIHI staff with resources disseminating to the Regional Coordinator and Community Digital Navigators. • Regional Digital Coordinator will disseminate information to the Community Digital Navigator and provide support to Community Digital Navigator for any concerns regarding personal cybersecurity as they arise. • Community Digital Navigator will disseminate information to community members regarding best practices to stay safe online and share concerns from the public with the Regional Digital Coordinator as needed.
<p>Priorities, KPI, Planned Activities, Roles and Responsibilities Related to Device Access and Affordability</p>	
<p>Priorities:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target covered populations, specifically aging individuals, individuals with disabilities, formerly incarcerated individuals, and low-income households • Coordinate outreach (and in-reach in the case of incarcerated individuals) and communication about how to purchase low-cost, refurbished, or access free devices meeting the needs of the individual
<p>KPI:</p>	<p>Create a device distress score for each covered population per region which compares:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The percentage of homes with no computing device at all 2. Percentage of homes with only a smartphone 3. Percentage of homes where someone was unable to use a computer five or more days during the last six months because someone else was using it/it was elsewhere/it was otherwise inaccessible
<p>Activities:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partner with internal and external organizations currently refurbishing internet enabled devices to expeditiously distribute devices to targeted populations • Utilize Intake Form for each participant to provide insight on related points for the participants' baseline Device Distress Score • Encourage responsible device ownership including the promotion of digital skills and cyber-hygiene best practices with every device • Coordinate with MDE to promote responsible device usage among K-12 students, post-secondary, and adult learners • Monitor the progress of device distress score on annual basis in alignment with data sources
<p>Roles:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MIHI will develop and secure relationships with internal and external agencies to promote device distribution throughout more significantly distressed regions in accordance with the device distress score. MIHI will develop and coordinate the outreach and in-reach strategies and capitalize on existing programs to utilize funding efficiently. MIHI will elevate the importance of devices to education with its partners throughout MDE. MIHI will monitor the device distress score accordingly. • Regional Digital Coordinators will promote device outreach strategies to Community Digital Navigators and regional businesses. • Community Digital Navigators will disseminate information to community members regarding device access and resources.

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Partners, Host sites

MIHI will continue to work with partners to scale programs that are successful in smaller areas to statewide efforts. Digital Navigators will be placed in organizations as determined by a competitive RFP process. Potential host site partners include, but are not limited to:

- Michigan Works! Associations
- Library Systems
- Local Community Colleges, Colleges, Universities
- Intermediate School Districts
- Tribal Nations
- Councils of Government
- United Way organizations
- Philanthropic entities
- Healthcare Systems
- Non-profit entities
- Other partners, as needed

MIHI DE KPI Impact/Interaction with Outcomes

Key Performance Indicator	Outcomes				
	Economic and workforce development goals, plans and outcomes	Educational outcomes	Health outcomes	Civic and social engagement	Delivery of other essential services
Affordability Score	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Digital Government Accessibility Score	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Digital Participation Score	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Digital Security Score	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Device Distress Score	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

4.2 Timeline

Year/Stage	Activities
2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete Phase 1 of community meetings for initial data collection • Complete partnership roundtable discussions • Draft MICF Plan • Complete Phase 2 of community meetings for public comment and feedback on the draft BEAD Five-Year Action Plan and the Digital Equity Plan • Develop the DE plan, and finalize based off on public feedback
2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply for State Digital Equity Capacity Grant funding • Calculate Key Performance Indicator Scores <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affordability • Digital Government Accessibility • Digital Participation • Digital Security • Device Distress • Finalize asset inventory • Develop tracking mechanism for KPI progress • Convene workgroups among relevant state agencies and external partners
2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordination between State Digital Equity Capacity Grant and Digital Equity programs funded through BEAD • Begin designing outreach and in-reach campaigns for relevant KPIs • Issue RFP for Digital Navigator Host sites • Hire Regional Digital Coordinators and Community Digital Navigators • Finalize digital skills platform contract
2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate on progress of workforce development strategies and programs • Collaborate with MDE on progress of statewide digital skills competencies for K-12 learners • Coordinate with MDHHS on health outcomes from pre-and post-deployment of broadband projects in targeted areas • Publish annual progress report card
2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor KPI progress quarterly and annually • Publish annual progress report card • Monitor continuous quality improvement mechanisms for KPI analysis and among internal systems/coordination
2028	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor KPI progress quarterly and annually • Publish annual progress report card • Monitor continuous quality improvement mechanisms for KPI analysis and among internal systems/coordination
2029	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor KPI progress quarterly and annually • Publish annual progress report card • Monitor continuous quality improvement mechanisms for KPI analysis and among internal systems/coordination
2030	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Close the digital divide • Universal availability of reliable internet service

5 Conclusion

Michigan's journey to digital equity is a challenging but achievable goal that promises a brighter and more connected future. The state recognizes that broadband infrastructure and resources are crucial for economic and workforce development, healthcare, education, transportation, and more. Michigan's Digital Equity Plan aims at closing the digital divide by 2030 and ensuring universal access and adoption of high-speed internet services. With its integrated and comprehensive approach that involves state agencies, public and private stakeholders, and community members, Michigan is well-positioned to achieve its objectives and become an accessible and inclusive state.

Michigan's Digital Equity Plan sets out key goals, strategies, and measurable objectives to ensure that every resident in the state has access to affordable high-speed internet services. This includes developing and supporting new plans and programs to expand broadband coverage statewide, facilitating digital skills training for all Michiganders, and removing barriers to increased digital adoption, such as device access and computer training. Through collaboration and a success-focused approach, Michigan is paving the way for a more connected future and an inclusive state that offers boundless opportunities for every Michigander.

Appendix A-1

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Digital Inclusion Assets by Covered Population

Introduction

Michigan's digital inclusion asset inventory identifies existing resources available to promote digital availability and adoption and has been used to identify any asset gaps that may exist. Leveraging existing assets is a key strategy of both the Digital Equity and BEAD programs.

Leveraging existing assets is a key strategy for both the Digital Equity and BEAD programs, this is why MIHI developed a [Digital Inclusion Resource Map](#) in September 2022. The map serves as a tool for:

1. Collecting information regarding existing assets from the communities
2. Understanding the current digital inclusion programs, offerings, and resources available in communities across Michigan.
3. Promoting these new and existing programs to communities

The map was developed based on responses received to the Michigan Statewide Digital Inclusion survey developed by MIHI and distributed to key stakeholders and the public throughout the state. MIHI used several channels to engage stakeholders and encourage participation in the survey, including socializing it at community meetings as part of the MI Connected Future tour, Partnership Roundtables, and in the MIHI newsletter. Additionally, the survey is easily accessible and prominently displayed on the [MIHI website](#). By targeting stakeholders, such as non-profit organizations, for-profit organizations, government agencies, colleges, universities, trade schools, public libraries, and K-12 schools, the survey seeks to determine the current state of digital equity and inclusion programs and identify key organizations involved in these efforts. Based on these insights, the Digital Inclusion Resource Map is continuously updated, providing an ongoing and up-to-date inventory of digital inclusion assets in Michigan.










Methodology and Purpose










The purpose of this appendix is to provide NTIA with a high-level summary of digital inclusion efforts that were undertaken in the state of Michigan, including the diverse set of organizations and stakeholders involved in promoting digital inclusion throughout the state. By identifying key players and networks, NTIA can gain a deeper understanding of the scope and scale of digital inclusion initiatives across the state and the impact that these efforts are having on the covered populations they serve.

Table A-1 summarizes assets (including non-profit organizations, for-profit organizations, government agencies, colleges, universities, trade schools, public libraries, and K-12 schools or school districts) that support digital equity and were submitted as part of the Michigan Statewide Digital Inclusion survey in 2023. Each organization was aligned to the covered populations they best serve based on the organization's mission, values, and services provided. Some organizations included in Table A-1 may serve multiple covered populations, but in order to simplify our approach in the Organizations by Covered Population section below, they were classified under a single covered population. Following Table A-1, a description of each of these organizations is included, categorized by the category of covered population each organization serves the most.

Digital Inclusion Resource Map by Covered Populations

Table A-3: Select Digital Inclusion Assets by Covered Population

Select Digital Inclusion Assets	Covered Populations								
	Covered households	Aging individuals	Incarcerated individuals	Veterans	Individuals with disabilities	Individuals with a language barrier	Racial/Ethnic minorities	Rural community	Youth
									
Detroit Blight Busters Inc.	✓								✓
Edgewood Village Nonprofit Housing	✓	✓							✓
The Avalon Village Inc.	✓								✓
SAY Detroit Play Center	✓								✓
NPower Inc.	✓			✓	✓		✓		
Digitunity	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Center County Center for Seniors		✓							
St. Patrick Senior Center		✓							
Engage @ Eastern Michigan University - Digital Connecting Corps		✓							
Grand Traverse County Commission on Aging		✓							
Buchanan Area Senior Center		✓							
Greater Niles Senior Center Inc.		✓							
River Valley Senior Center		✓							
Senior Citizens Center		✓							
ABC Computers		✓							✓
Detroit Rescue Mission Ministries Education Complex	✓		✓						✓
Emmanuel House	✓			✓					
Michigan Department of Military and Veterans Affairs				✓					
Closing the Digital Gap	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Ann Arbor Center for Independent Living					✓				
Chance For Life Satellite Center Location			✓		✓				
Washtenaw Literacy						✓	✓		✓
American Indian Health and Family Services						✓	✓		✓

Select Digital Inclusion Assets	Covered Populations								
	Covered households	Aging individuals	Incarcerated individuals	Veterans	Individuals with disabilities	Individuals with a language barrier	Racial/Ethnic minorities	Rural community	Youth
									
Alkebu-Ian Village							✓		✓
Detroit Urban League	✓	✓					✓		✓
Dream of Detroit	✓		✓				✓		✓
Interfaith Center for Racial Justice							✓		
Latin Americans United for Progress						✓	✓		
Latin Americans for Social and Economic Development		✓					✓		
The Detroit Association of Black Organizations							✓		
Association of Chinese Americans Community Center		✓				✓	✓		✓
Pure Broadband								✓	
Lee Township								✓	
London Township								✓	
Boys and Girls Club							✓		✓
Center for Success									✓
Church of the Messiah / BLVD Harambee							✓		✓
Detroit Hispanic Development Corporation	✓					✓	✓		✓
Detroit PAL									✓
Downtown Boxing Gym Youth Program									✓
Life Remodeled	✓								✓
New City Kids: Grand Rapids	✓								✓
New Level Sports Ministries									✓
Baxter Community Center	✓								✓

Organizations by Covered Population

Individuals living in households with incomes at or below 150% of the poverty line

- 1. Detroit Blight Busters Inc.:** Detroit Blight Busters mission is to stabilize, revitalize, and rebuild the city of Detroit. by demolishing, renovating, and boarding up blighted homes for community use, and building community partnerships and events to help low to middle-income families.
- 2. Edgewood Village Nonprofit Housing Corporation:** Edgewood Village empowers low to very low-income households by providing them with access to affordable housing, educational opportunities, assistance, health and wellness, and community programming.
- 3. The Avalon Village Inc.:** Avalon Village's mission is to create a safe, nurturing, uplifting, and healing space within the City of Highland Park, MI by converting vacant and blighted land into a valuable urban resource and providing basic living components for a quality, comfortable, and prosperous life. In addition, the company provides basic services to the community to enhance traditional municipal or government services that have been reduced, eliminated, or have become unaffordable.
- 4. SAY Detroit Play Center:** SAY Play helps students from low-income families overcome literacy inequality while improving themselves and their communities. It has also become a motivational learning center for Detroit youth with academics as its core.
- 5. NPower Inc.:** NPower creates pathways to economic prosperity by launching digital careers for military veterans and young adults from underserved communities. Their mission is to move people from poverty to the middle class by creating access and pathways to careers in technology fields.
- 6. Digitunity:** Digitunity is a national organization working to eliminate technological gaps between individuals by providing computers and related equipment to those in need since 1984. Their mission is to ensure that everyone has access to technology through a network of stakeholders and solutions. They focus on the device component of digital equity from the supply chain to community distribution.

Individuals 60 years of age or older

- 1. Central County Center for Seniors:** The Central County Senior Center has a clear objective of meeting the documented needs of senior citizens aged 60 and above. It aims to provide solutions to their problems and offer enjoyable activities for those who reside in their homes.
- 2. St. Patrick Senior Center:** Detroit's largest health, wellness, and activities center for people over the age of 55. The center provides a variety of services including nutritious meals, dozens of health & wellness programs, an on-site clinic, transportation to medical appointments, and others.
- 3. Engage @ Eastern Michigan University - Digital Connecting Corps:** The Digital Connecting Corps, a collaboration between Eastern Michigan University (EMU) Engage @ EMU and University of Michigan (UM) Ginsberg Center, seeks to design and implement an intergenerational and sustainable digital support program for older adults living in Washtenaw County. The goal is to leverage the resources of both institutions' student capital to serve as tech coaches for the older adult community at older adult centers.
- 4. Grand Traverse County Commission on Aging:** Grand Traverse County Commission on Aging provides services to Grand Traverse County residents aged 60 and over to enable

them to remain living at home. This includes personal care, medication management, foot care, housecleaning, laundry, outdoor services, and personal emergency response systems.

- 5. Buchanan Area Senior Center:** Buchanan Area Senior Center is a community focal point on aging, where older adults gather for services, programs, and activities that reflect their experiences and skills, and responds to their diverse needs and interests.
- 6. Greater Niles Senior Center Inc.:** Greater Niles Senior Center is a senior citizen center located in Berrien County, Michigan. The center provides a broad range of services and programs for Seniors in the Niles area. Its mission is to offer a variety of activities to keep seniors engaged and active.
- 7. River Valley Senior Center:** River Valley Senior Center is a senior center located in Harbert, Michigan. Its mission is to offer residents of the area aged 60 years and older a range of educational, recreational, social, transportation, and referral services.
- 8. Senior Citizens Center:** Senior Citizens Center is a senior citizen center located in Benton Harbor, Michigan. The mission of the service Center is to provide safe, friendly, and positive social, educational, and recreational services to enhance the independence and well-being of the 60+ citizens of its community.
- 9. ABC Computers:** ABC Computers offers a range of computer-related services, including the sale of computer equipment, computer servicing (inclusive of laptops), onsite service, data recovery, and providing educational services for both high school students and senior citizens. They also offer consulting services.

Incarcerated Individuals

- 1. Detroit Rescue Mission Ministries Education Complex:** The Detroit Rescue Mission Ministries is a faith-based, non-profit organization that has devoted a wealth of resources to meet the basic needs of humanity while motivating individuals to rebuild their lives, one life at a time. DRMM has spent over 100 years of continued service providing food, shelter, and services to intervene where homelessness and substance addiction occur.

Veterans

- 1. Emmanuel House:** Emmanuel House is a nonprofit organization that provides daily programs and services to over 70 homeless veterans. It offers homeless Veterans an opportunity to take steps towards employment, create a self-help environment, establish a safe and drug-free residential setting, provide economic management training services, and facilitate structured interactions for the entire family.
- 2. Michigan Department of Military and Veterans Affairs:** The DMVA synchronizes strategic, legislative, and fiscal initiatives to build and sustain military readiness, care and advocate for veterans, and cultivate purposeful partnerships. Its vision is for Michigan to be the premier state for advancing military readiness and serving veterans and their families.
- 3. Closing the Digital Gap:** Closing the Digital Gap provides computer training, computer ownership and internet access to small non-profit organizations and individual in Michigan who may be unemployed, underemployed, low-income, single parents, disabled, veterans, immigrants, at-risk youth, and seniors.

Individuals living with one or more disabilities

- 1. Ann Arbor Center for Independent Living:** The center is a nonprofit disability advocacy and service agency that assists people with disabilities and their families in living full and productive lives. Its mission is to empower the lives of people with disabilities and advocate for a more inclusive community for all.

- 2. Chance For Life Satellite Center Location:** The center's vision is to transform minds, change hearts, and create safe communities by giving returning citizens and people with disabilities an opportunity to develop themselves in a positive manner in spite of adverse conditions. CFL focuses on fueling workforce development and strengthening family bonds.

Individuals with barriers to the English language (including English language learners and those with low literacy)

- 1. Washtenaw Literacy:** Washtenaw Literacy provides literacy support, free of charge, to adults through a network of trained tutors. It is the organization's vision to eliminate illiteracy in Washtenaw County. The organization also offers free English as a Second language (ESL) tutoring for adults. Tutoring is open to adults who live, work, or volunteer in Washtenaw County.

Members of racial and ethnic minority groups

- 1. American Indian Health and Family Services:** The American Indian Health and Family Services is a nonprofit health and community wellness center whose mission is to empower and enhance the physical, spiritual, emotional, and mental well-being of American Indian/Alaska Native individuals, families, and other underserved populations in Southeast Michigan through culturally grounded health and family services.
- 2. Alkebu-Ian Village:** The original purpose of the organization was to provide affordable martial arts training for the African American youth. Over the years the organization has expanded to include youth and adult sports and fitness, leadership training, visual and performing arts, homework assistance and tutoring, youth entrepreneurship training and community service.
- 3. Detroit Urban League:** The Urban League of Detroit & Southeastern Michigan is committed to being a provider of choice for its clients, an employer of choice for its co-workers, and the investment of choice for its stakeholders and philanthropic entities. Its mission is to enable African Americans and other persons of color to achieve their fullest potential.
- 4. Dream of Detroit:** Dream facilitates the growth of a thriving Muslim community, rooted in Detroit's Black Muslim history while attracting a young, multi-racial future. It also remains committed to the broader neighborhood, meeting the concerns and building the capacity and connectedness of all residents, no matter their background.
- 5. Interfaith Center for Racial Justice:** The Interfaith Center for Racial Justice has been working for over 50 years to build bridges of understanding among people of different cultures and faith traditions. The center addresses issues that impact inclusion and recognize that social and racial justice are key elements that impact inclusion in its communities.
- 6. Latin Americans United for Progress:** The organization focuses on empowering Latinos to participate in creating a better community for all through advocacy, education & celebration.
- 7. Latin Americans for Social and Economic Development:** The development's focus is to promote the social economic educational development of the residents of South Detroit by providing advocacy services and programs that create opportunities for the diverse community to better their educational level employment opportunities health and well-being.
- 8. The Detroit Association of Black Organizations (DABO):** The association has been a champion for greater unity and opportunities in Detroit's African American community.

Through an expansive network of over 130 organizations, DABO strives to create meaningful resources aimed at improving quality-of-life initiatives around the city. It has uplifted, unified, and empowered Detroit's African American community through various programs, initiatives, and events.

- 9. Association of Chinese Americans Community Center:** The center plays a leading role in enriching the lives of Asian Pacific Americans in the Metro-Detroit region. The organization is one of several entities that serve the Chinese and Asian Pacific American communities, providing year-round programs that include social services, educational classes, preventive health care, and cultural events. Programs focus currently on wellness for seniors and underserved Asians, education excellence and culture awareness for youths, and social and education services for adults.

Individuals residing in rural areas

- 1. Pure Broadband:** Pure Broadband is an internet service provider focusing on serving rural communities for over 10 years. Pure provides rural internet, home automation, IT support, and personalized installations.
- 2. Lee Township:** Lee Township is a government agency trying to get reliable, affordable internet in a rural community. The township partners with county and local service providers to ensure residents have access to affordable and reliable broadband services.
- 3. London Township:** London Township is a local township agency with a population of 3,000 with the goal of getting reliable internet in its rural community.

Youth

- 1. Boys and Girls Club:** The club is a nonprofit youth development organization that seeks to create hope, opportunity and foster civic engagement by inspiring and enabling all young people, especially those that need the most, to realize their full potential as productive, responsible, and caring citizens. The club focuses on three core areas to meet diverse needs and interests of members - academic success, good character and citizenship, and healthy lifestyles.
- 2. Center for Success:** The mission of the Center for Success is to unite literacy and community to empower students in the journey of education. The center offers mentoring, bringing together students and community partners during one-on-one, small group and whole class sessions to allow students to participate in various opportunities.
- 3. Church of the Messiah / BLVD Harambee:** BLVD Harambee is a non-profit organization helping foster life skills and connect resources for the holistic development of young people in the neighborhood. The church's primary focus is young people; the congregation is 60% African American males under thirty.
- 4. Detroit Hispanic Development Corporation:** DHDC is an organization that focuses on youth and families, particularly those at high risk within the Hispanic communities. DHDC provides a range of community services including adult continuing education, conversational Spanish classes, parenting classes, and after-school and summer programs for youth. DHDC's mission is to make a difference by creating life-changing opportunities for youth and their families. Their vision is to create a stable and safe community where youth and families have quality opportunities for self-empowerment, education, and personal wealth.
- 5. Detroit PAL:** Detroit PAL helps youth find their greatness through athletic, academic, and leadership development programs. The Detroit PAL department of Youth Enrichment provides supplemental services for youth and their families in order to help influence

student-athletes to be school and life ready. It focuses on literacy and academic enrichment, leadership development, college readiness, mentoring, workforce development, partnerships, and collaboration.

6. **Downtown Boxing Gym Youth Program:** DBG is a leading, free, out-of-school time program centered around student achievement and success. DBG has been providing free academic and athletic programs to students with continuing mentorship and support up to the age of 25.
7. **Life Remodeled:** Life remodeled repurposes properties into one stop hubs of opportunity for entire families to thrive. The organization fills buildings with the best and brightest nonprofit organizations who are providing youth programs, workforce development, and human services to tens of thousands of students and community members each year.
8. **New City Kids: Grand Rapids:** New City Kids offers after school programming for local low-income youth. Children and teens get a chance to explore music and academics in a creative and fun environment.
9. **New Level Sport Ministries:** New Level Sport Ministries is a non-profit youth support service committed to developing purpose-driven individuals that will be highly effective in all aspects of life. It is a Student Athlete Support Service, for ages 1 – 18 with a mission to maximize and balance the intellectual, spiritual, mental, and physical elements of all participating student-athletes.
10. **Baxter Community Center:** The Baxter Community Center's Child Development Center serves infants through preschoolers and provides a Wholistic Health Center that offers dental and mental health services through partnerships with local clinics and dedicated volunteers. It also has a marketplace which provides fresh produce to those in need of food assistance.

Digital Inclusion Plans

Existing County Plans

Connected Nation's "Connected Community" program has partnered with 10 counties across the state of Michigan to conduct an assessment regarding the current status of broadband and to establish a broadband planning process. Through surveys of local residents, businesses, and organizations, the program aims to understand the existing resources and capabilities in place to support the access, adoption, and use of broadband technology in homes and businesses. Data obtained from this assessment is used to develop an appropriate action plan to improve the broadband ecosystem effectively, addressing the current and future broadband needs of these counties. The program's aim is to enhance the accessibility, affordability, and availability of broadband technology in the counties, leading to social and economic development. Additional information by county is included below. It's important to note that as more households and communities participate in the Connected Community program, these figures are likely to change.

[Cheboygan County:](#) Data from Cheboygan County represent survey responses collected between September 28, 2020, and January 29, 2021. Altogether, 1,126 Cheboygan County households responded to the survey; some responded more than one time. Data from all Connected communities represent survey responses collected between January 1, 2017, and January 29, 2021.

[Eaton County](#): Data from Eaton County represent survey responses collected between September and November 2021. During this time, 1,322 Eaton County households responded to the survey, with some households responding more than once. Data from all Connected communities represent survey responses collected between January 1, 2017, and November 30, 2021. Eaton County also released the Executive Summary of their Technology Action Plan in January 2022. Eaton County's Executive Summary document can be accessed using the following link: [Eaton-County_Executive-Summary_01272022.pdf \(connectednation.org\)](#).

[Huron County](#): Data from Huron County represent survey responses collected between December 2020 and April 2021. During this time, 682 Huron County households responded to the survey, with some households responding more than one time. Data from all Connected communities represent survey responses collected between January 1, 2017, and April 30, 2021.

[Lake County](#): Data from Lake County represent survey responses collected between September 2020 and February 2021. During this time, 464 Lake County households responded to the survey, with some households responding more than one time. Data from all Connected communities represent survey responses collected between January 1, 2017, and February 28, 2021.

[Lapeer County](#): Data from Lapeer County represent survey responses collected between October 9, 2020, and January 1, 2021. Altogether, 1,845 Lapeer County households responded to the survey. Data from all Connected communities represent survey responses collected between January 1, 2017, and January 29, 2021.

[Midland County](#): Data from Midland County represent survey responses collected between October 26, 2020, and January 26, 2021. Altogether, 1,438 Midland County households responded to the survey. Data from all Connected communities represent survey responses collected between January 1, 2017, and January 29, 2021.

[Newaygo County](#): Data from Newaygo County represent survey responses collected between April 2017 and September 2018. During this time, 929 Newaygo County households responded to the survey, with some households responding more than one time. Data from all Connected communities represent survey responses collected between January 1, 2017, and February 28, 2021.

[Oceana County](#): Data from Oceana County represent 481 households that responded to the survey in 2017 and 537 households that responded in 2021, with some households responding more than one time. Data from all Connected communities represent survey responses collected between January 1, 2017, and May 31, 2021.

[Sanilac County](#): Data from Sanilac County represent survey responses collected between October 2020 and February 2021. During this time, 676 Sanilac County households responded to the survey, with some households responding more than one time. Data from all Connected communities represent survey responses collected between January 1, 2017, and February 28, 2021.

[Tuscola County](#): Data from Tuscola County represent survey responses collected between February 2021 and April 2021. During this time, 663 Tuscola County households responded to the survey, with some households responding more than one time. Data from all Connected communities represent survey responses collected between January 1, 2017, and April 30, 2021.