



# Tri-County Population Study

Lansing Economic Area Partnership





# Overview

- Identify how population changes are impacting the region
- Gather feedback from stakeholders on desirable development in their communities
- Provide examples of well-executed development
- Recommendations for future development



An aerial night view of a city, likely Madison, Wisconsin, featuring the Wisconsin State Capitol building with its prominent dome. The city is illuminated with streetlights and building lights, creating a vibrant urban scene. A semi-transparent green filter is applied over the entire image. The title 'Tri-County Population Assessment' is overlaid in large white text on the left side.

# Tri-County Population Assessment

# Projected Population Growth (2025–2050)



2.0%

MICHIGAN



9.1%

CLINTON  
COUNTY



1.6%

EATON  
COUNTY



4.7%

INGHAM  
COUNTY





# Projected Growth: Working-Age Population (2025–2050)

20–44  
years old

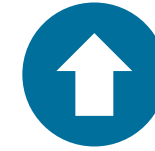


7%

CLINTON  
COUNTY

(-0.3% annualized)

46–64  
years old



19%

CLINTON  
COUNTY

(+0.7% annualized)



7%

EATON  
COUNTY

(-0.3% annualized)



4%

INGHAM  
COUNTY

(-0.2% annualized)



15%

EATON  
COUNTY

(+1% annualized)



22%

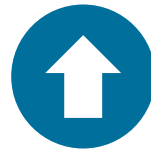
INGHAM  
COUNTY

(+0.8% annualized)

# Projected Growth: Senior Population (2025–2050)



**65+**  
years old



**38%**

CLINTON  
COUNTY

(+1% annualized)



**14%**

EATON  
COUNTY

(+0.5% annualized)



**37%**

INGHAM  
COUNTY

(+1% annualized)

# K-12 Enrollment



2024  
2025



3%

CLINTON  
COUNTY

(+0.1% annualized)

total enrollment 10,765



5%

EATON  
COUNTY

(-0.3% annualized)

total enrollment 12,853



7%

INGHAM  
COUNTY

(-0.5% annualized)

total enrollment 41,536



## Median Home Value 2010–2023

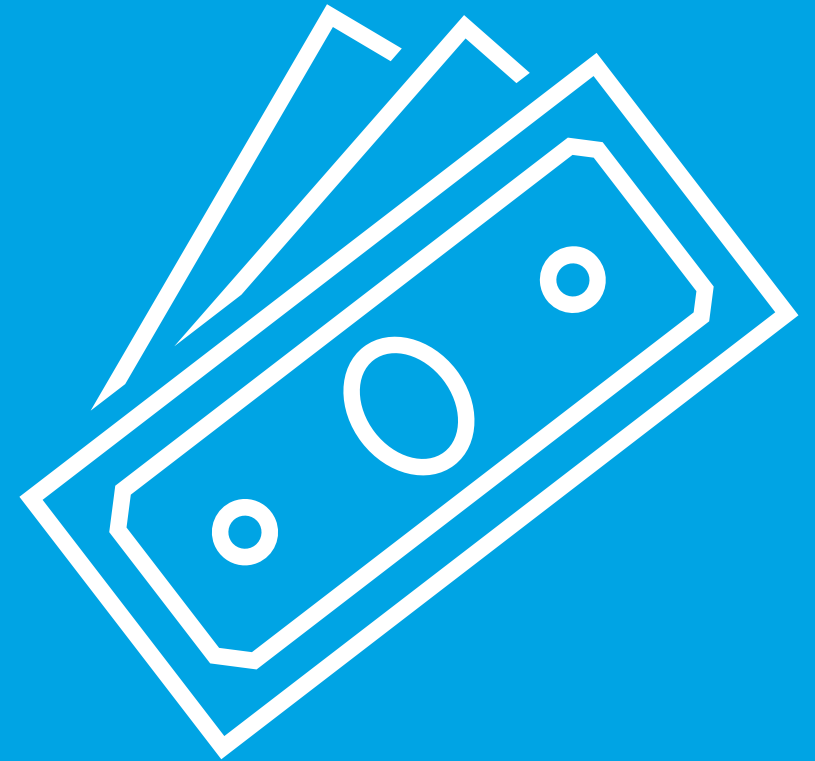
- ↑ 75% Clinton County (+4.4% annualized)
- ↑ 58% Eaton County (+3.6% annualized)
- ↑ 56% Ingham County (+3.5% annualized)



# Household Income

## 2010–2023

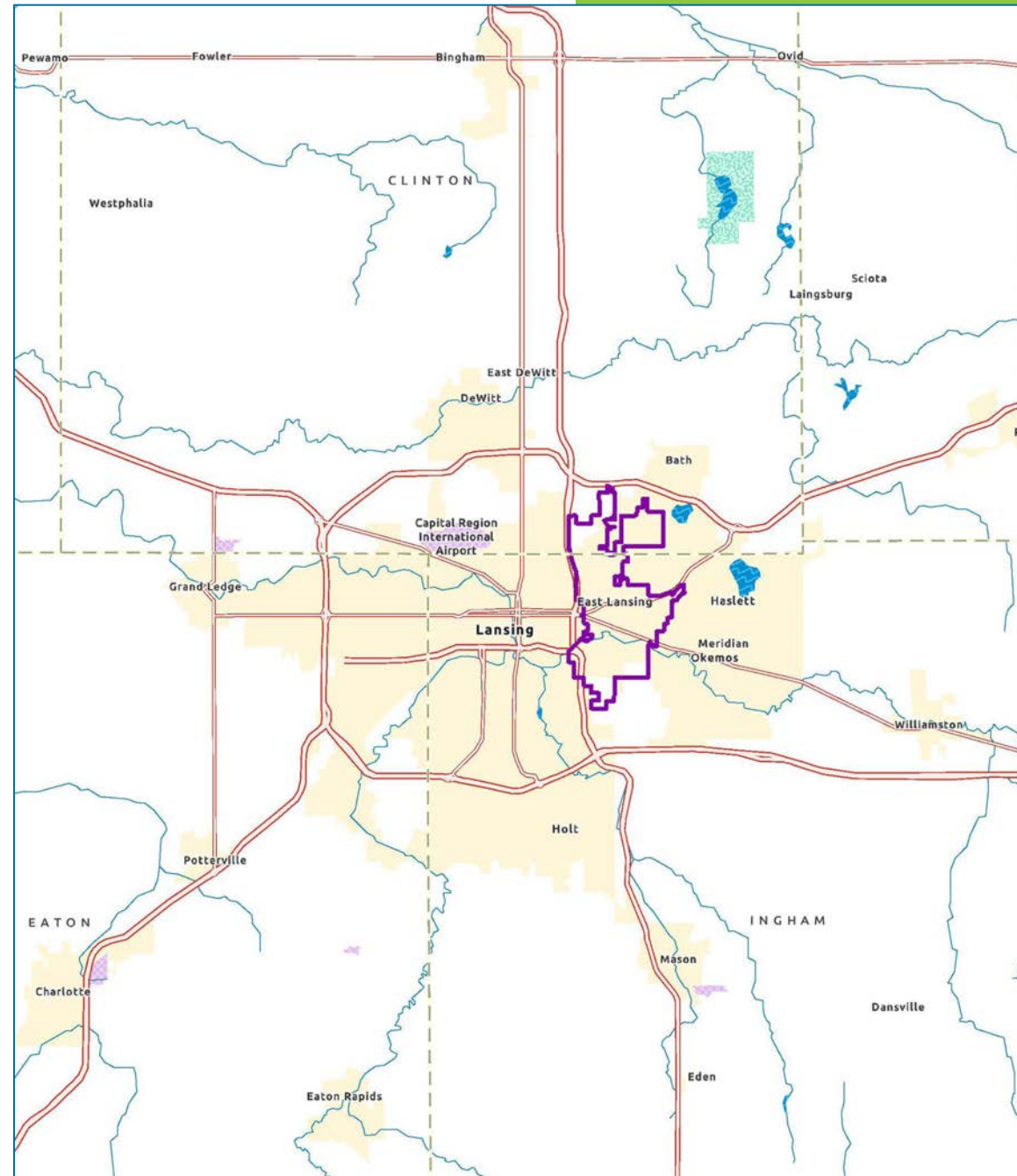
- ↑ 59% Clinton County
- ↑ 58% Eaton County
- ↑ 56% Ingham County



# Community Voices

## 4 listening sessions

- Ingham County
- Eaton County
- Clinton County
- Lansing/East Lansing



# What Makes a Place Feel Like a Community?

- Trusted relationships, local leadership, and safety
- Shared culture, values, and tradition
- Welcoming environments in public spaces
- Variety of “third-spaces”
- Small-town identity and protection of natural spaces
- Inclusion, openness, and diversity





# Development That Has Felt Right

- Alignment with local identity and community needs
- Driven by the community
- Revitalization of existing spaces
- Investments in new or existing local businesses
- Community-serving facilities and recreation investments, including parks and trails
- Provision of essential needs and investments in existing residents (e.g., Allen Neighborhood Center in Lansing)
- Alignment with local economy and culture (e.g., agricultural tech in rural areas, entrepreneur incubators in the city)
- Early engagement, enforceable community benefits, and transparent communication





# When Opportunity Is Met with Opposition

- Informed residents too late in the process
- Ignored community voice or local priorities
  - Strain on roads, water, sewer, and schools
  - Distrust of process and lack of transparency on development
- Prompted gentrification and uneven investments across a region or neighborhood
- Resulted in loss of farmland (large-scale projects)
- Misaligned with the community's identity or land-use priorities
- Disconnected from residents' values
- Imposed from large outside developers (e.g., Amazon-type warehouses, automotive manufacturing in rural areas)



# Cautions for Investment

- Generic or harmful to community character (e.g., big box stores, cannabis shops, drive-throughs)
- Development on farmland when there are other areas, like brownfields, available
- Duplication of services
- Projects that do not reinvest locally
- Data centers with high resource demands
- Utility-scale wind or solar
- Removal of schools
- Projects benefiting people external to community over residents



# Approaching Development Collaboratively

- Early, consistent, and transparent engagement
- Communications meet people where they are
  - Use trusted local networks and local leaders
  - Multiple formats (e.g., mailed flyers, social media, signs at sites, billboards)
- In-person options include support like child care, food, and translations
- Engagement throughout all stages of planning, not just at the final steps





# Building Trust in Development

- Operate with transparency, honesty, and accountability
- Demonstrate attempts to mitigate negative project impacts, like noise pollution or traffic increases
- Hire local labor, support community causes, and build relationships over time
- Engage in ongoing face-to-face communication when possible
- Show a proven track record of reliability and follow through on commitments
- Ensure that developers are familiar with needs of the community





# Shaping the Future Together

- Include residents alongside policymakers, business owners, and other local leaders
- Build coalitions with representatives from each township and city
- Strengthen civic education opportunities
- Share knowledge across neighborhoods
- Maintain local control and limit top-down planning

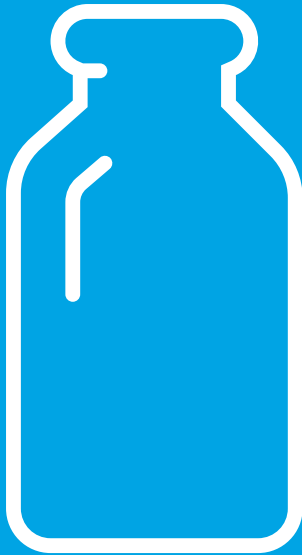


# Vision for the Future

- Modernized infrastructure and services that are accessible (e.g., housing, healthcare, and education)
- More connected, inclusive, and self-sustaining
- Local businesses and entrepreneurship are thriving
- Rural:
  - Maintaining the community identity
  - Preserving farmland and growing agriculture
  - Improving access to healthcare
- Urban:
  - Creating a community identity
  - Keeping zoning changes equity focused



# Case Study: St. John's Glanbia Development



# Background

## Glanbia Development

- Irish food and nutrition company
- \$555M dairy processing facility opened 2020
- Joint venture with Dairy Farmers of America and Select Milk Producers
- Largest dairy processor in the U.S and created approximately 260 jobs
- Supported 350+ Michigan dairy farmers with critical milk processing solution





## Background

- Predominantly agricultural county, with about 90% of agricultural land dedicated to farming
- Total population in 2023: 7,712
- Median household income: \$63,030
- Labor force participation rate: 60%



# Feedback from Stakeholders

## Concerns and barriers

- Increased truck traffic, unpaved roads, fire service strain
- Cultural disruption, fear of change, and foreign-led development
- Not-in-my-backyard sentiment in rural community resistant to industrial projects



# Feedback from Stakeholders

- Engagement strategies
- Early, transparent communication through town halls and direct outreach
- Public support from local officials and state leadership
- ▶ **Farmers largely supportive; mixed community opinions postlaunch on job quality and wage levels**



## Reasons for Success

- Strong alignment with local agricultural economy and community identity
- Timely investment during period of low milk prices and farm instability
- Phased, inclusive planning process with ongoing resident input
- Responsive to concerns (e.g., odor control, runoff management, visual buffers)
- Support and coordination from agencies like Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development; Michigan Economic Development Corporation; LEAP; Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy; and Michigan Works!
- Community ownership reflected through local initiatives like millage campaigns