

**2013**

**Comprehensive  
Economic  
Development  
Strategy**

*Economic Development District serving  
Berrien, Cass, and Van Buren Counties*



**Southwest Michigan Planning Commission**



*Produced in coordination with*

**The U.S. Department of Commerce  
Economic Development Administration (EDA)**

**Southwest Michigan Planning Commission**

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# Table of Contents

Executive Summary	#
Strategy Development Process	
CEDS Strategic Advisory Committee	
Southwest Michigan's Regional Context	
Population Characteristics	
Economic Vitality	
Personal Prosperity	
Community Wellbeing	
Lifelong Learning	
Role of Government in Southwest Michigan	
Workforce Profile	
Transportation Access	
Natural Resources	
Innovation Assets	
Analysis of Challenges and Opportunities	
Relevant Plans and Studies	
Michigan's Regional Prosperity Initiative	
Economic Development Investments	
Regional Economic Cluster Analysis	
Cooperative Regional Expectations	
Goal 1: Businesses and Entrepreneurs	
Goal 2: Education to Workforce	
Goal 3: Cluster-based Strategies	
Goal 4: Modernizing Infrastructure	
Goal 5: Talent Attraction and Retention	
Strategic Projects, Programs, and Initiatives	
Action Plan	
Southwest Michigan's Plan of Action	
Coordination with Michigan's Statewide Strategy	
Priority Projects	
Performance Measures	
Appendices	
Appendix A	
Appendix B	
Appendix C	

# Executive Summary

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2013 marks a new page in southwest Michigan's Economic Development District; the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission (SWMPC) is one year into its three-year Partnership Planning grant provided by the U.S. EDA and has opted for an overhaul of its 2012 CEDS in favor of a new coordinated strategy for regional economic development. This new approach brings coordinated regional action and greater focus on the pursuit of an innovative climate to the forefront of the regional strategy.



This change in focus

Fdsf

Sfd

# Strategy Development Process

## CEDS Strategic Advisory Committee Members

The 2013 CEDS Strategic Advisory Committee held a series of four monthly meetings between August and November 2013 for developing the framework of a regional strategy for economic development in southwest Michigan. This team was made up of representatives from local private-sector firms across a range of the region's industry sectors, as well as economic and workforce development professionals, higher education, and state and local government officials. The roster of the 2013 CEDS committee follows:

Name	Affiliation	Sector
Aaron Darling	Greenbush Brewing Company	Private
Arnie Redsicker	Rosta USA Corp	Private
Betty Guy	Lakeland HealthCare	Private
Bill Haase	IBEW Local 153	Public
Brett Bowen	Flagstar Bank	Private
Cynthia LaGrow	Cass County Economic Development Corporation	Public
Dan Peat	Kinexus (Michigan Works!)	Public
Dave Tomko	The Growth Coach	Private
Debbie Gillespie	Lake Michigan College	Public
Ed VanderVries	Van Buren County Economic Development Corporation	Public
George Saleeby	Swing-Lo Systems	Private
Jack McCloughan	South Haven Economic Development Department	Public
Jeff Noel	Whirlpool Corporation	Private
Jennifer Owens	Southwest Michigan First	Private
Jim Finan	Indiana Michigan Power	Private
Jodi Gruner	MDARD Economic Development Division	Public
Joseph Dick	Chemical Bank	Private
Joe Giannola	Giannola Investments	Private
Joe Sobieralski	Southwestern Michigan Economic Growth Alliance	Public
Kimberly Fedison	Berrien County Community Development Department	Public
Lisa Croteau	Niles Main Street, DDA	Public
Luann Harden	Western Michigan University - Southwest	Public
Michael Ferrill	USA Secure Data Systems	Private
Mike Schrom	TCB Food Processing	Private
Nicole Rodden-Bowen	Benton Harbor Department of Community Development	Public
Pat Iliff	Ibid County Electric	Private
Sarah Jollay	Jollay Orchards	Private
Steve Packer	Honee Bear Canning	Private
Victoria Pratt	Cornerstone Alliance	Public

# Southwest Michigan's Regional Context

The following subsections provide an overview of the background conditions relative to economic development in the counties of Berrien, Cass, and Van Buren.

## Population Characteristics

The 2010 Census data reveals the most accurate count the region's population within all incorporated places (cities, villages, and townships) to date. The most populous local unit within the region is Benton Township, followed closely by Lincoln and Niles Township.

### *Total Population (2010)*

County/Municipal	Pop.	County/Municipal	Pop.	County/Municipal	Pop.
<b>Berrien County</b>	<b>156,813</b>	<b>Cass County</b>	<b>52,292</b>	<b>Van Buren County</b>	<b>76,258</b>
Bainbridge Twp.	2,850	Cassopolis Village	1,774	Almena Twp.	4,992
Baroda Twp.	2,801	Calvin Twp.	996	Antwerp Twp.	12,182
Baroda Village	873	Dowagiac City	5,879	Arlington Twp.	2,073
Benton Harbor City	10,038	Edwardsburg Village	1,259	Bangor City	1,885
Benton Twp.	14,749	Howard Twp.	2,952	Bangor Twp.	2,147
Berrien Springs Village	1,800	Jefferson Twp.	987	Bloomington Twp.	3,103
Berrien Twp.	5,084	La Grange Twp.	2,488	Bloomington Village	454
Bertrand Twp.	2,657	Marcellus Twp.	1,621	Breedsville Village	199
Bridgman City	2,291	Marcellus Village	1,198	Columbia Twp.	2,588
Buchanan City	4,456	Mason Twp.	590	Covert Twp.	2,888
Buchanan Twp.	3,523	Milton Twp.	1,179	Decatur Twp.	3,726
Chikaming Twp.	3,100	Newberg Twp.	907	Decatur Village	1,819
Coloma City	1,483	Ontwa Twp.	2,020	Geneva Twp.	3,573
Coloma Twp.	5,020	Penn Twp.	1,164	Gobles City	829
Eau Claire Village	625	Pokagon Twp.	1,518	Hamilton Twp.	1,489
Galien Twp.	1,452	Porter Twp.	1,402	Hartford City	2,688
Galien Village	549	Silver Creek Twp.	1,173	Hartford Twp.	3,274
Grand Beach Village	272	Vandalia Village	301	Keeler Twp.	2,169
Hagar Twp.	3,671	Volinia Twp.	774	Lawrence Twp.	3,259
Lake Twp.	2,972	Wayne Twp.	1,272	Lawrence Village	996
Lincoln Twp.	14,691			Mattawan Village	1,997
Michiana Village	182			Paw Paw Twp.	7,014

New Buffalo City	1,883			Paw Paw Village	3,534
New Buffalo Twp.	2,386			Pine Grove Twp.	2,949
Niles City	11,599			Porter Twp.	2,466
Niles Twp.	14,164			South Haven City	4,400
Oronoko Twp.	9,193			South Haven Twp.	3,983
Pipestone Twp.	2,312			Waverly Twp.	2,554
Royalton Twp.	4,766				
St. Joseph City	8,365				
St. Joseph Twp.	10,028				
Shoreham Village	862				
Sodus Twp.	1,932				
Stevensville Village	1,142				
Three Oaks Twp.	2,574				
Three Oaks Village	1,622				
Watervliet City	1,735				
Watervliet Twp.	3,102				
Weesaw Twp.	1,936				

### *Population Change*

Between 2000 and 2010, Berrien County was the only county in the region to lose significant population, losing 3.5% of its population. Van Buren County saw only a 13 person drop for a flat rate of growth across the decade, while Cass County actually gained population over that time.

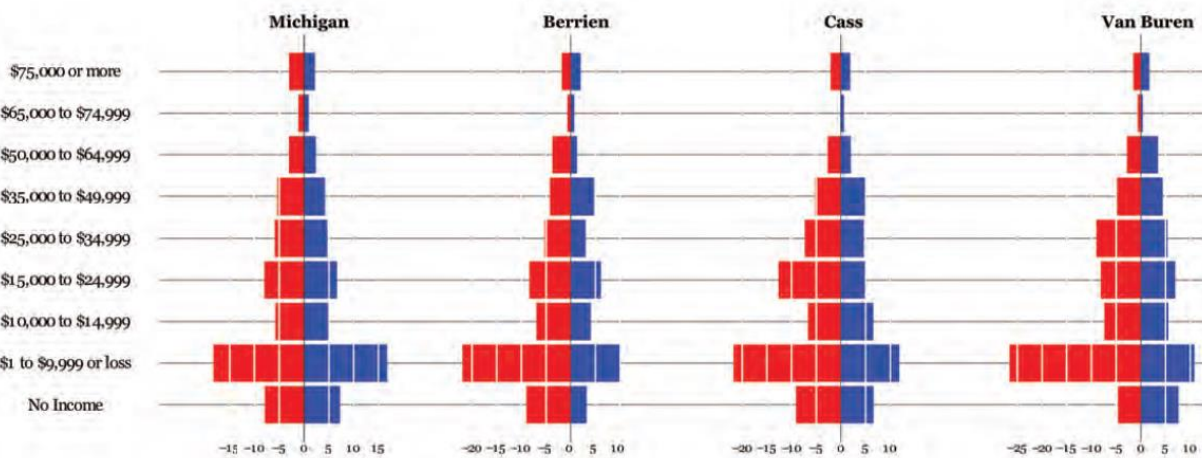
County	1990 Population	2000 Population	2010 Population
Berrien County	161,380	162,458 (+0.7%)	156,813 (-3.5%)
Cass County	49,475	51,099 (+3.3%)	52,292 (+2.3%)
Van Buren County	70,060	76,271 (+8.9%)	76,258 (-0%)
Southwest Michigan Region	280,915	289,828 (+3%)	285,363 (-1.6%)

### *Migration*

Between 2000 and 2010, Berrien and Cass Counties both experienced high net losses of their population ages 25-34, relative to their comparison counties. Berrien and Cass Counties also experienced net losses of their populations that had attained bachelor's or degrees or higher and populations making more than \$50,000 per year. In contrast, Van Buren County experienced net gains among all three of these populations.

This graphic shows migration into and out of counties in Southwest Michigan, based on income, education level, and age. The migration data are normalized per 1000 residents to take into account population differences between counties.

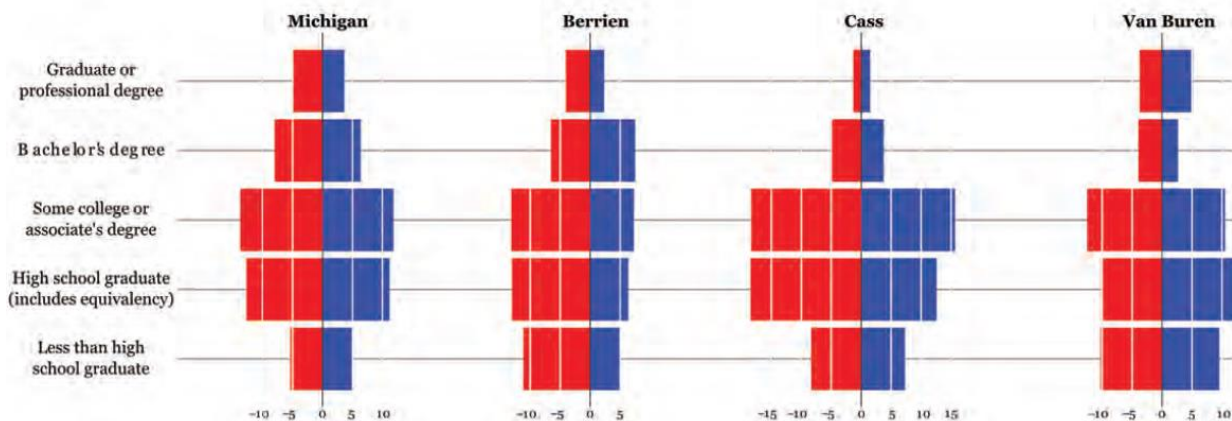
Figure 4.2.2: Domestic migrants into (blue) and out of (red) counties by individual income, per 1,000 residents age 16 and older, 2006-2010 Average



All three counties experienced a greater outflow rate of populations making less than \$25,000 than the state of Michigan as a whole.

Cass County experienced a higher outflow rate of high school graduates and individuals with some college education than the state of Michigan as a whole. At the same time, Cass County experienced a higher inflow rate of individuals with some college education than the other two counties in Southwest Michigan. Berrien County experienced a higher inflow rate of individuals with bachelor's degrees than the state of Michigan as a whole.

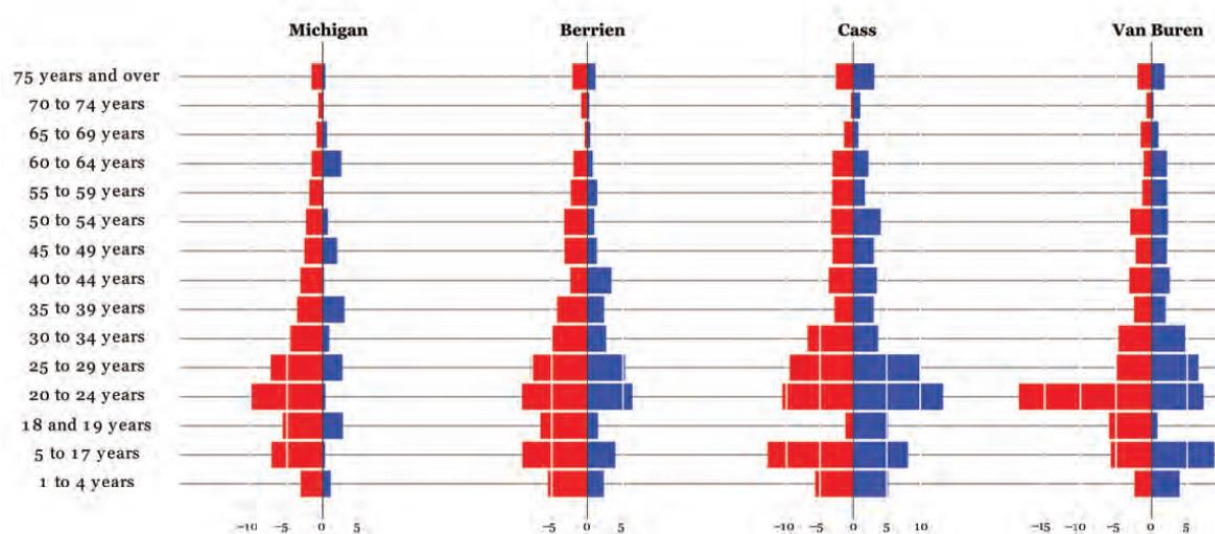
Figure 4.2.2: Domestic migrants into (blue) and out of (red) counties by educational attainment, per 1,000 residents age 25 and older, 2006-2010 Average





Both Cass and Van Buren Counties had higher rates of outflow of individuals aged 20-24 than the state of Michigan as a whole. In the case of Cass County, the loss of population in this age group seems to match the outflow of residents with high school diplomas or some college education.

Figure 4.2.2: Domestic migrants into (blue) and out of (red) counties by age per 1,000 residents, 2006-2010 Average



Cass County experienced a higher outflow rate of high school graduates and individuals with some college education than the state of Michigan as a whole. At the same time, Cass County experienced a higher inflow rate of individuals with some college education than the other two counties in Southwest Michigan. Berrien County experienced a higher inflow rate of individuals with bachelor's degrees than the state of Michigan as a whole.

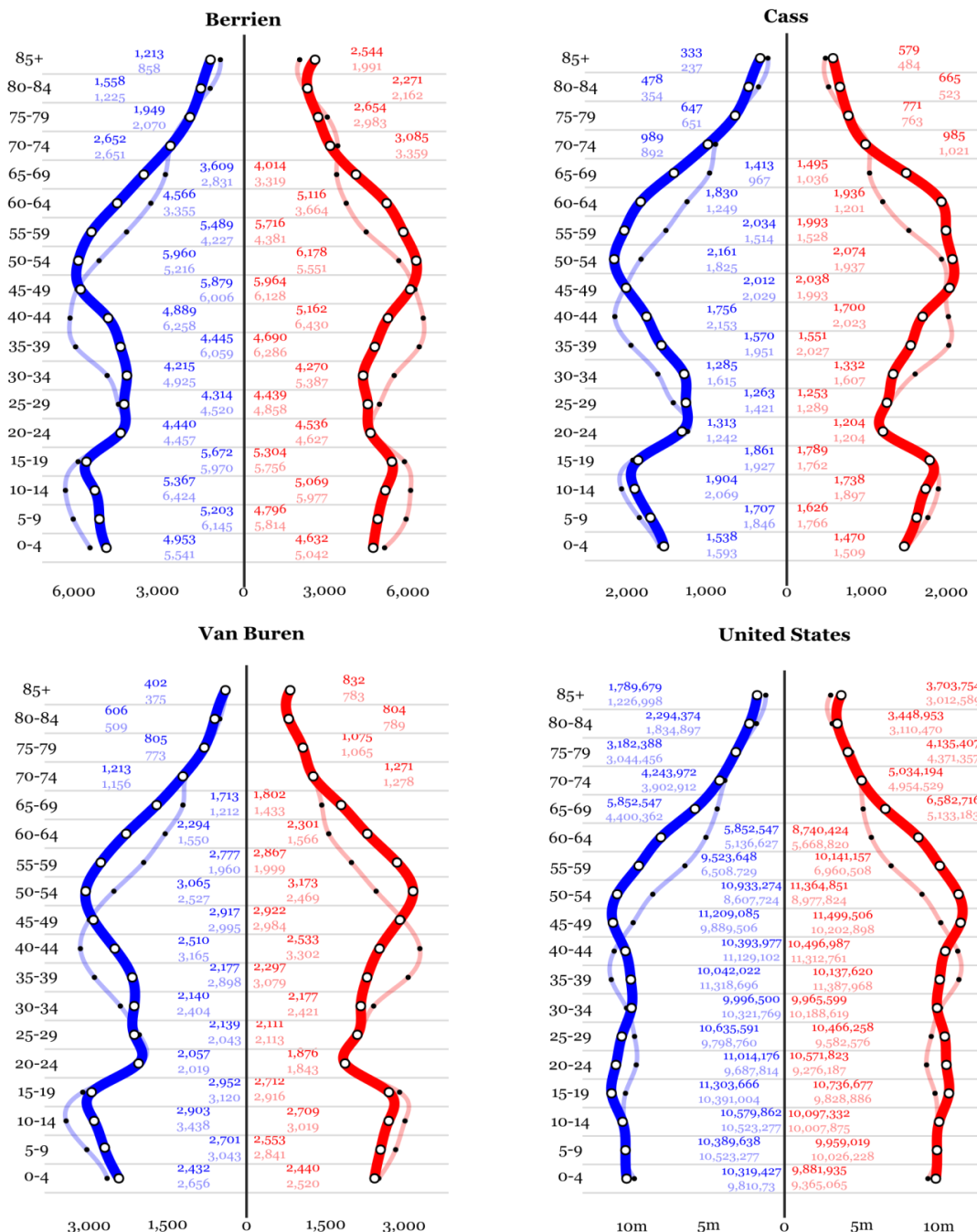
Both Cass and Van Buren Counties had higher rates of outflow of individuals aged 20-24 than the state of Michigan as a whole. In the case of Cass County, the loss of population in this age group seems to match the outflow of residents with high school diplomas or some college education.

## Age

Of the three counties, Van Buren County has the highest percentage of its population that is under the age of 18, and this percentage is higher than the figure for the entire United States. All three counties have lower percentages of their population that are between the ages of 25 and 44 than for the United States as whole. In contrast, all three counties have a percentage of their population aged 65

and older that is higher than that of the nation, with Berrien County having the highest percentage of elderly residents in the region.

## Population Age Group Comparisons, 2010



### Legend

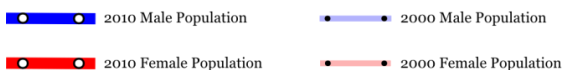
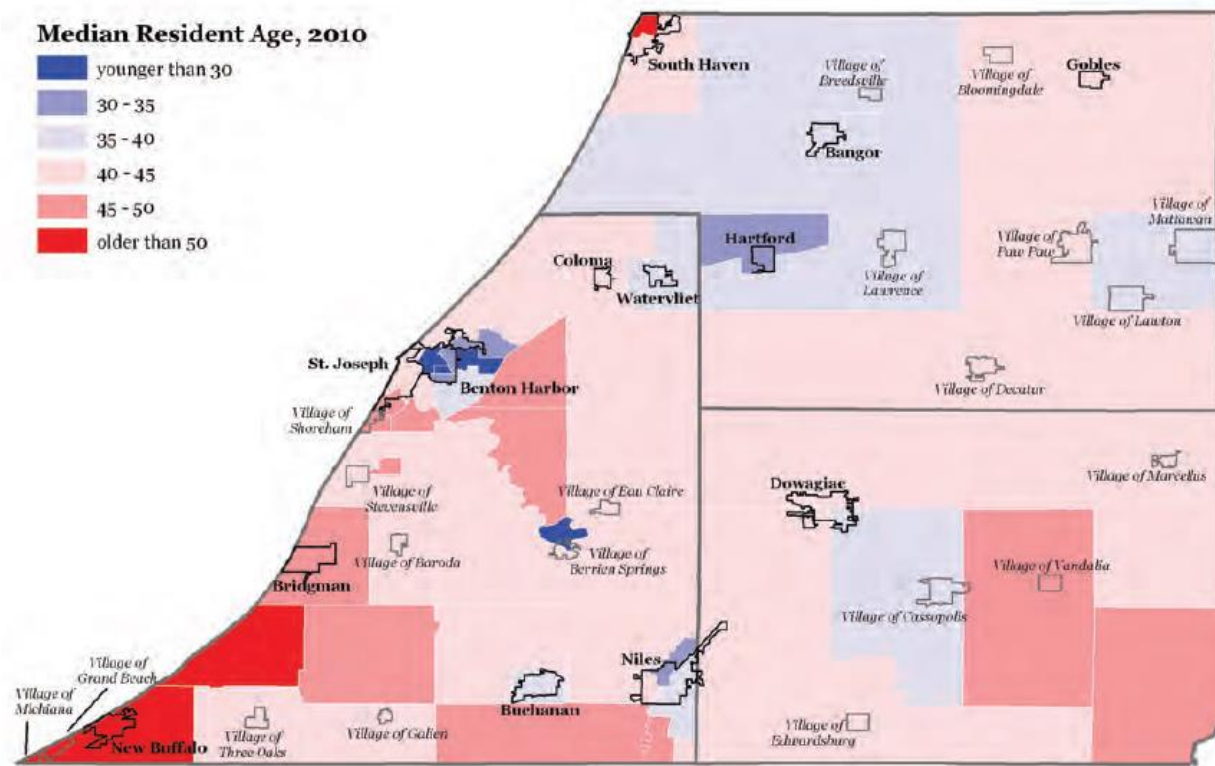


Figure 4.3.3: Median Resident Age, By Census Tract, 2010



## Race and Ethnicity

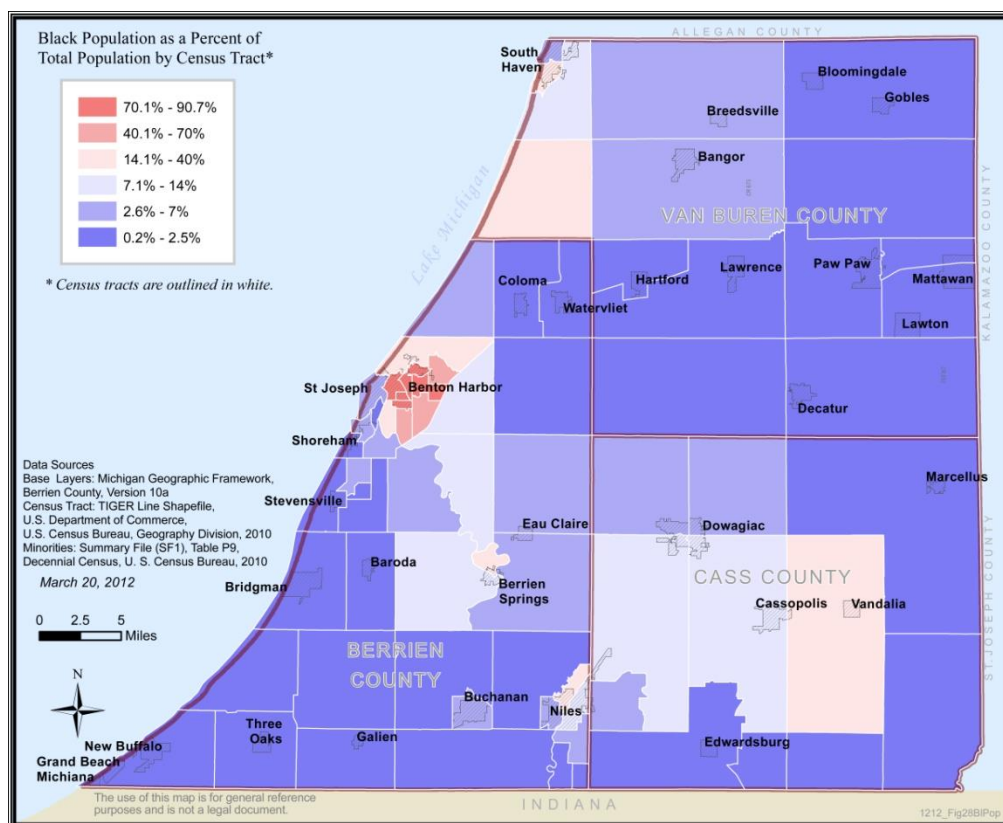
The following table represents the race and ethnicity percentages for the counties within southwest Michigan as well as the State and Nation as a whole.

Race	Berrien County	Cass County	Van Buren County	Michigan	United States
White	78.3%	88.9%	86.7%	78.9%	72.4%
Black	15.3%	5.4%	4.1%	14.2%	12.6%
American Indian or Alaska Native	0.5%	1.0%	0.9%	0.6%	0.9%
Asian	1.6%	0.6%	0.4%	2.4%	4.8%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0.1%	0%	0%	0%	0.2%
Some Other Race	1.8%	1.1%	5.2%	1.5%	6.2%
Two or More Races	2.4%	3.0%	2.7%	2.3%	2.9%
<b>Ethnicity</b>					

Hispanic or Latino (any race)	4.5%	3%	10.2%	4.4%	16.3%
Not Hispanic or Latino	95.5%	97%	89.8%	95.6%	83.7%

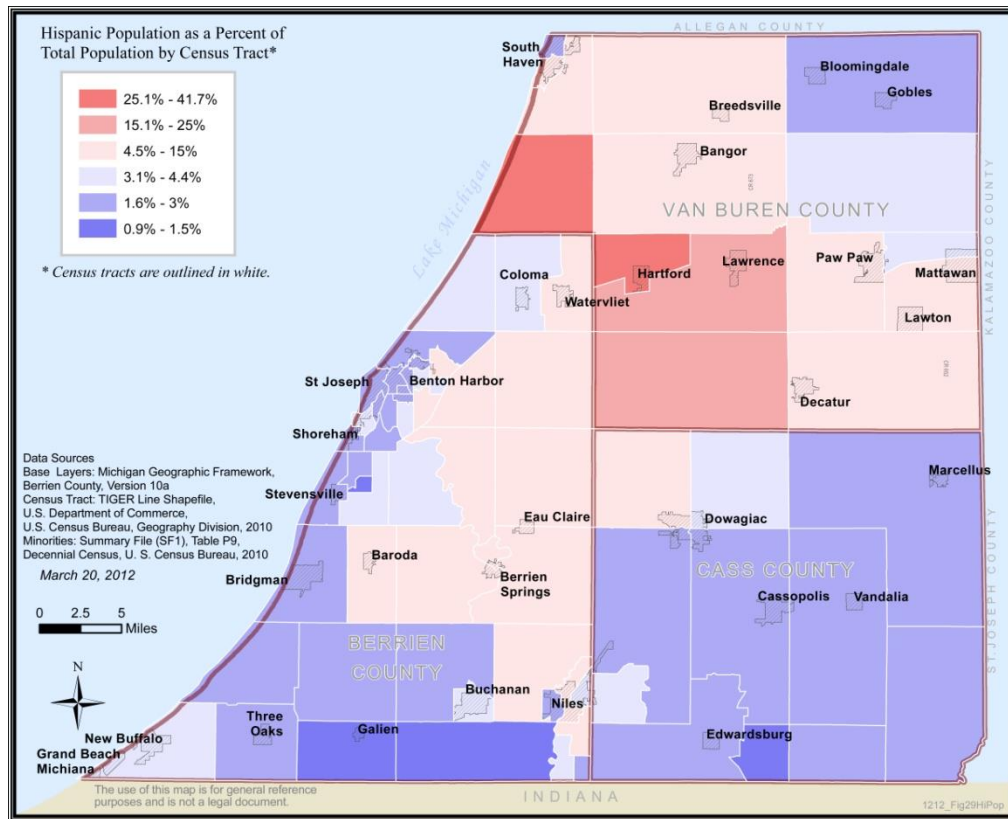
The historic population centers of the African-American community have remained consistent over the last three decades. Benton Harbor, Benton Charter Township, Covert Township, and the Village of Vandaila have rich histories of racial diversity or uniqueness, in Vandaila the history extends to before the Civil War.

### Black Population as a Percent of Total Population by Census Tract



The Hispanic or Latino population has also located in areas of higher concentrations in specific communities in Southwest Michigan. The City of Hartford, Hartford Township, and Covert Township have the highest concentrations while Oronoko Township in central Berrien County has the highest number Hispanic or Latino persons.

## Hispanic Population as a Percentage of Total Population by Census Tract



## Economic Vitality

This section covers background data relative to the strengths and weaknesses of economic conditions in southwest Michigan, including: unemployment, enterprise growth, gross regional product (GRP) and job growth.

### *Unemployment Rate*

The following table lists unemployment rates from local units within the region using data from the 2011 American Community Survey.

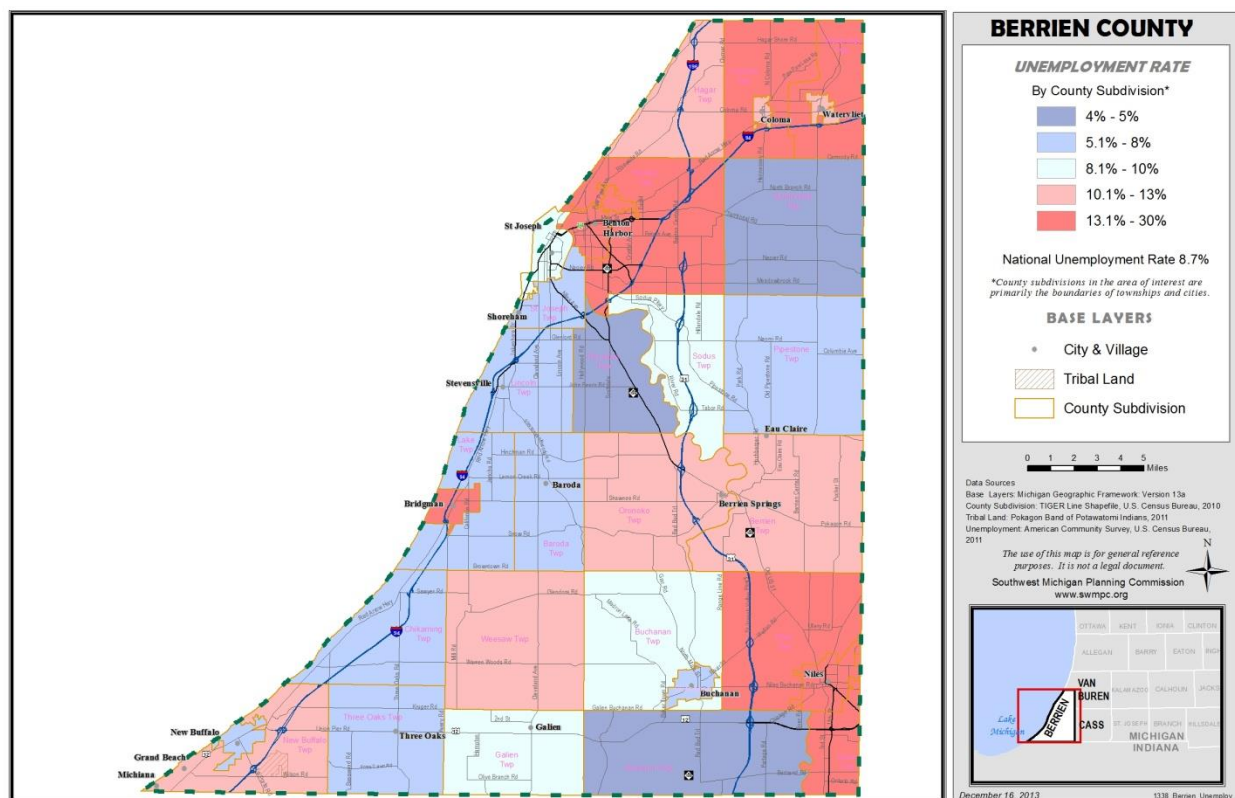
County/Municipal	Unemp %	County/Municipal	Unemp %	County/Municipal	Unemp %
<b>Berrien County</b>		<b>Cass County</b>		<b>Van Buren County</b>	
Bainbridge Twp.	4.9	Calvin Twp.	8.2	Almena Twp.	6.2
Baroda Twp.	6.9	Dowagiac City	12.0	Antwerp Twp.	11.1
Benton Township	14.7	Howard Twp.	10.4	Arlington Twp.	5.9
Benton Harbor City	29.8	Jefferson Twp.	7.4	Bangor City	11.7
Berrien Twp.	10.7	La Grange Twp.	11.5	Bangor Twp.	12.2
Bertrand Twp.	4.3	Marcellus Twp.	8.8	Bloomingtondale Twp.	8.5
Bridgman City	13.9	Mason Twp.	9.2	Columbia Twp.	14.8
Buchanan City	8.0	Milton Twp.	12.5	Covert Twp.	10.9
Buchanan Twp.	8.3	Newberg Twp.	11.6	Decatur Twp.	15.1
Chikaming Twp.	5.9	Ontwa Twp.	7.3	Geneva Twp.	9.9
Coloma City	10.4	Penn Twp.	6.0	Gobles City	10.8
Coloma Twp.	13.4	Pokagon Twp.	5.3	Hamilton Twp.	13.5
Galien Twp.	9.5	Porter Twp.	8.6	Hartford City	16.1
Hagar Twp.	11.8	Silver Creek Twp.	10.3	Hartford Twp.	11.2
Lake Twp.	6.1	Volinia Twp.	11.5	Keeler Twp.	9.5
Lincoln Twp.	6.4	Wayne Twp.	13.0	Lawrence Twp.	11.8
New Buffalo City	5.8			Paw Paw Twp.	13.9
New Buffalo Twp.	10.4			Pine Grove Twp.	15.5
Niles City	14.5			Porter Twp.	6.0
Niles Twp.	14.4			South Haven City	5.2
Oronoko Twp.	10.2			South Haven Twp.	9.7
Pipestone Twp.	6.6			Waverly Twp.	1.8
Royalton Twp.	4.0				
St. Joseph City	8.9				
St. Joseph Twp.	7.3				
Sodus Twp.	9.9				
Three Oaks Twp.	7.7				

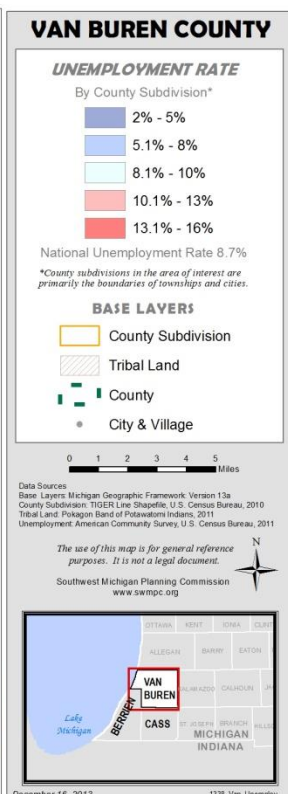
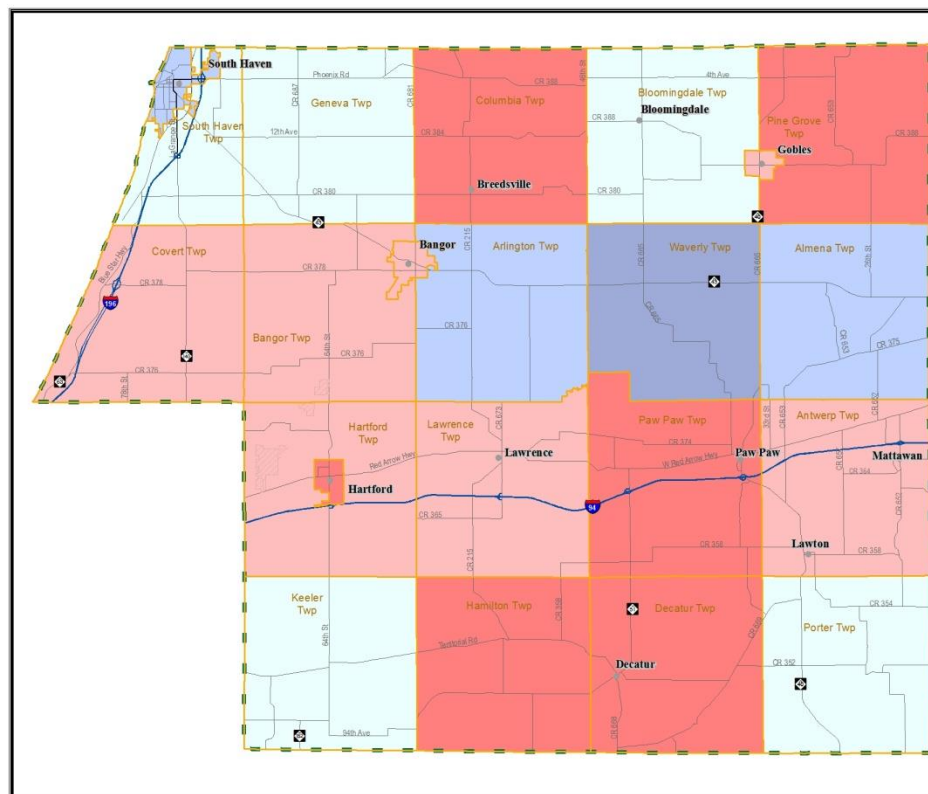
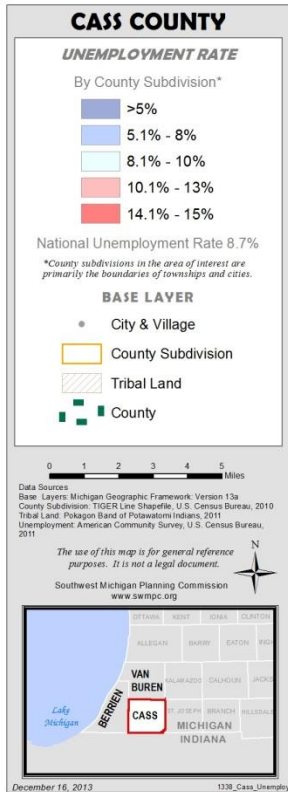
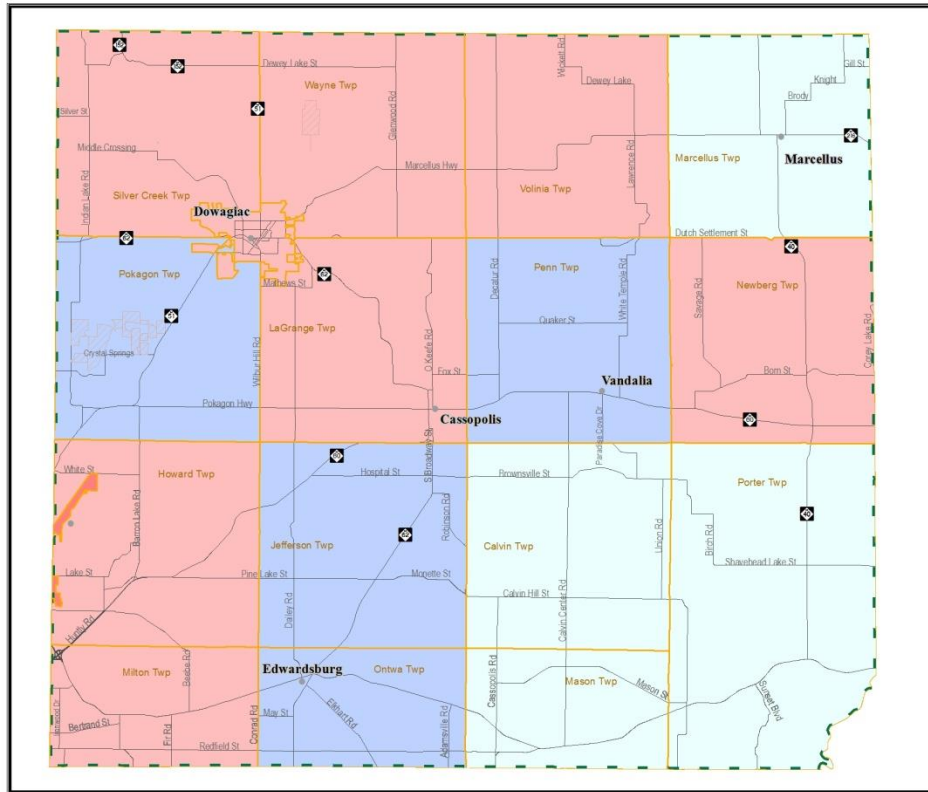


Watervliet City	11.5				
Watervliet Twp.	14.4				
Weesaw Twp.	11.1				

Using the EDA's measure for unemployment distress, which is one point greater than the national average (8.7%), 37 communities or roughly 54% of local units meet the criterion for unemployment distress. Especially impacted is the City of Benton Harbor at 29.8% unemployment which is 3.4 times the national average (or 21.1 points higher), showing an extreme level of distress for the community.

The heat map below illustrates where in each of the three counties significant levels of unemployment beyond the national average can be found.



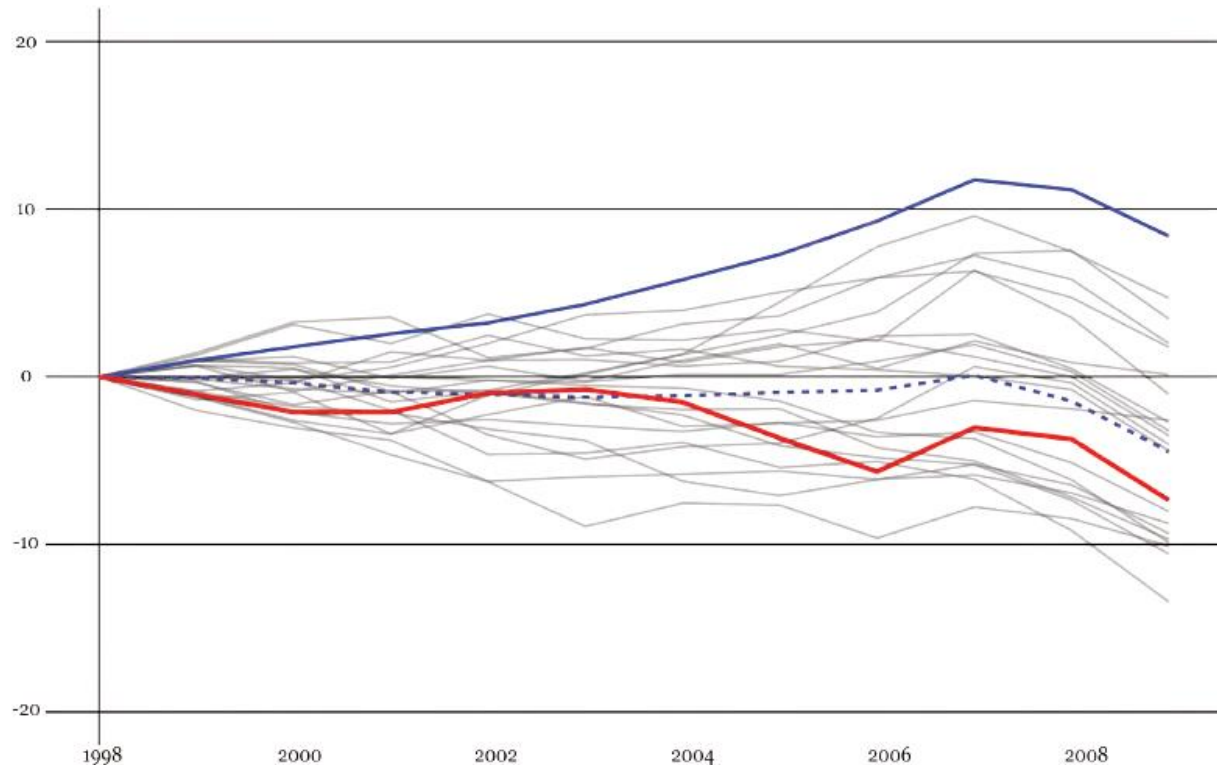




## *Growth in Total Enterprises*

Since 2002, all three Southwest Michigan counties have seen lower rates of growth in total enterprises than the United States as a whole. While the United States as a whole experienced net growth in total enterprises between 1998 and 2009, Berrien, Cass, and Van Buren all experienced a net loss.

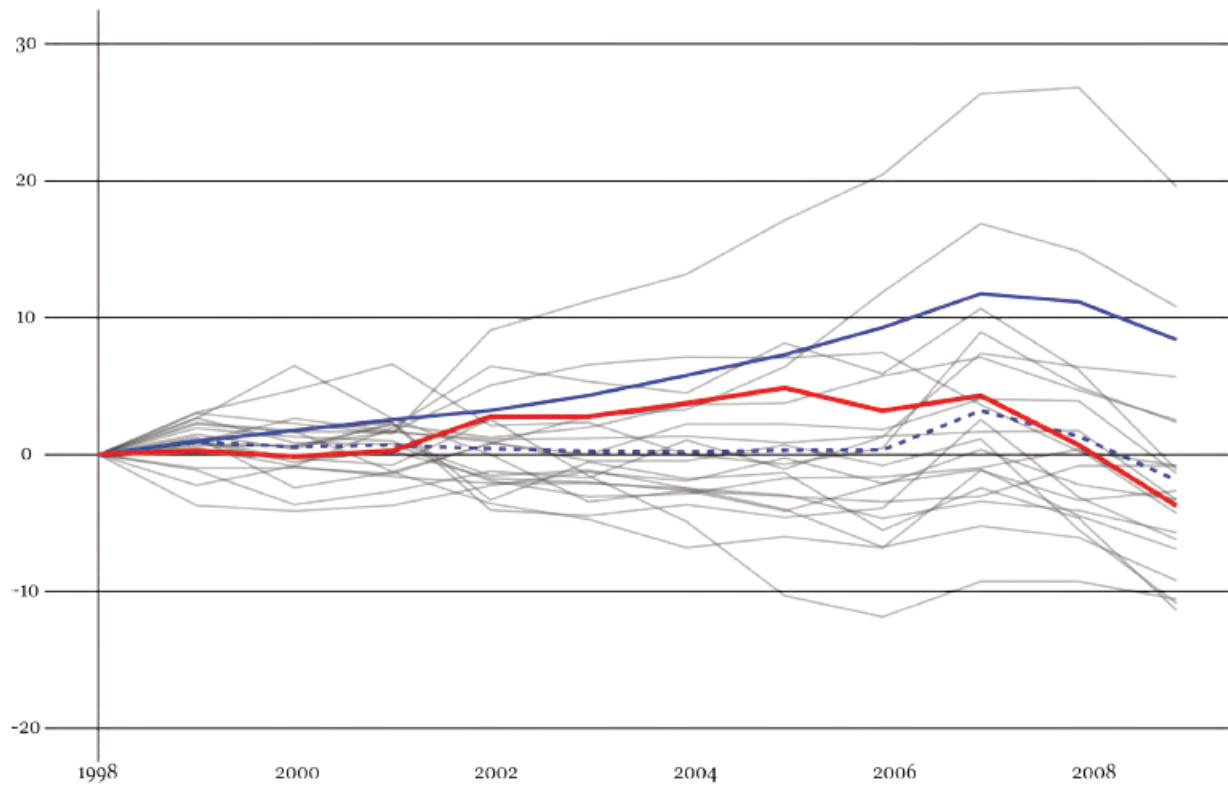
**Figure 5.2.1a: Percentage of Growth in Total Enterprises,  
with 1998 as Base Year, Berrien and Comparison Counties, 1998-2009**



### Legend

- Berrien County
- United States
- - - Average Comparison County
- Individual Comparison County

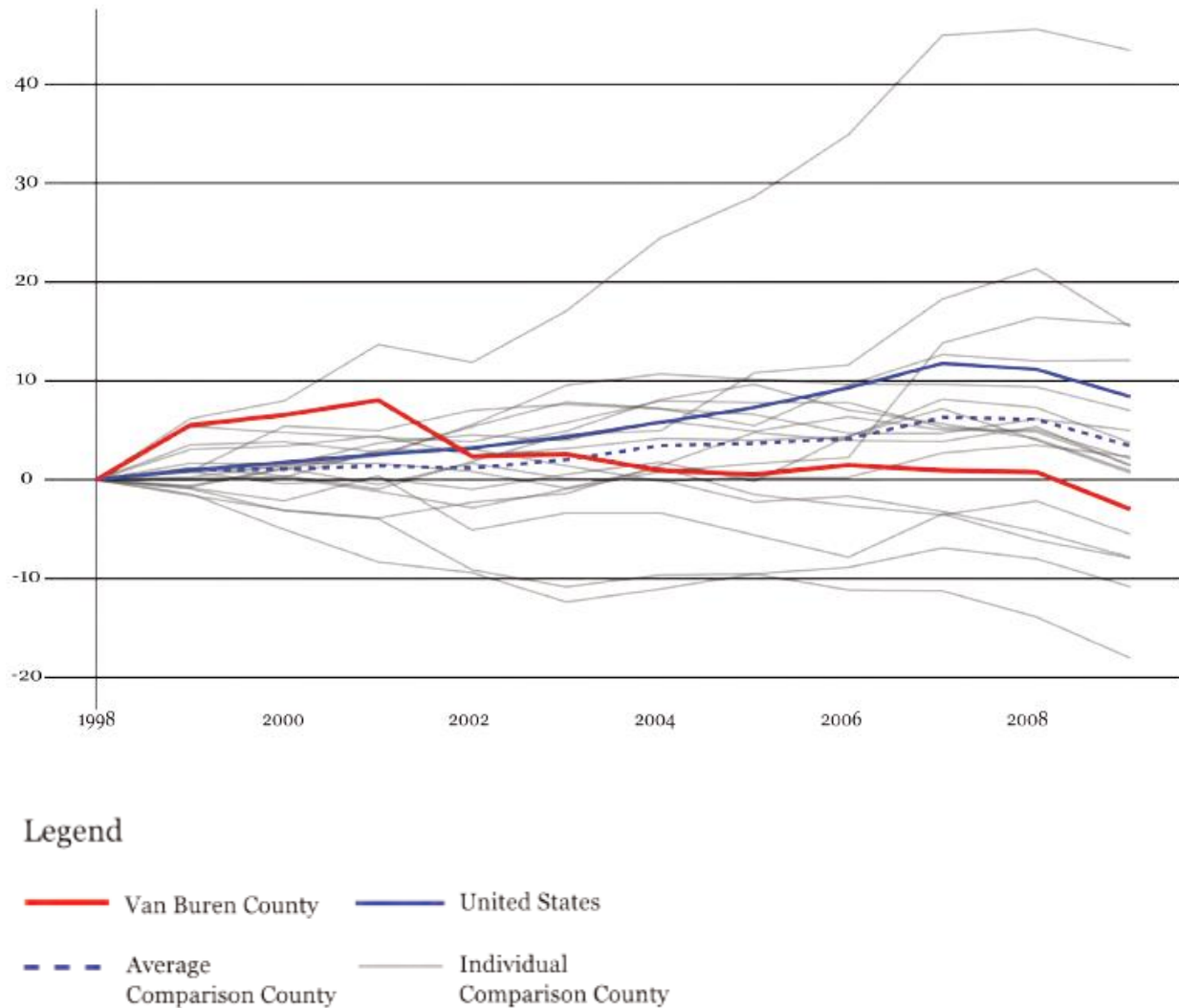
Figure 5.2.1b: Percentage of Growth in Total Enterprises,  
with 1998 as Base Year, Cass and Comparison Counties, 1998-2009



### Legend

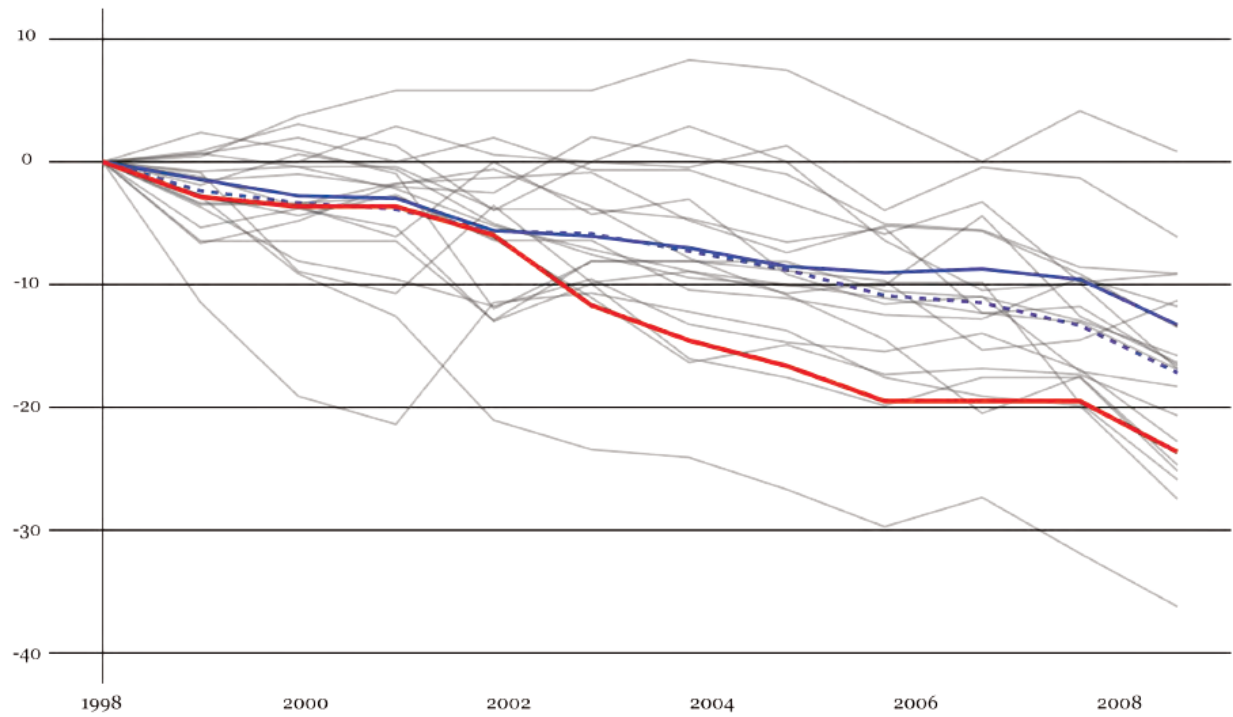


Figure 5.2.1c: Percentage of Growth in Total Enterprises,  
with 1998 as Base Year, Van Buren and Comparison Counties, 1998-2009



Following national trends, all three counties saw a net decline in the number of manufacturing enterprises. Berrien County's decline in manufacturing enterprises since 2002 has been particularly pronounced.

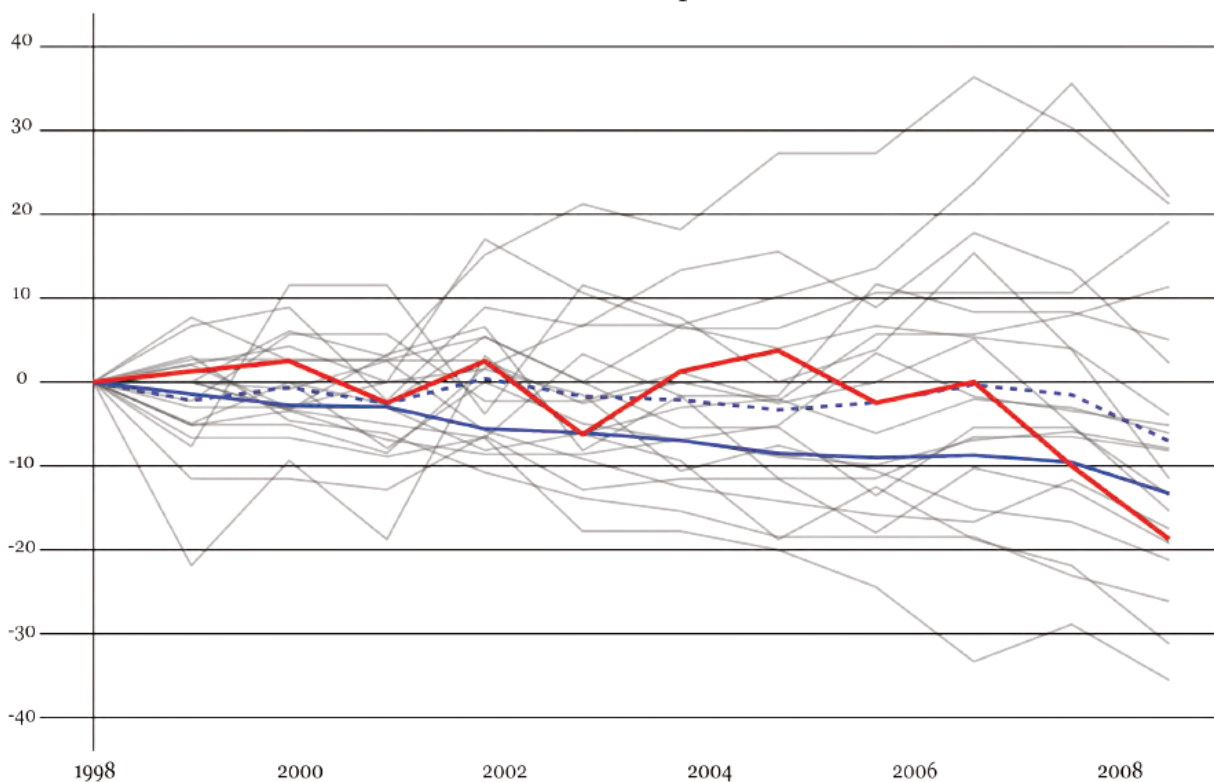
Figure 5.2.2a: Percentage Growth in Manufacturing Enterprises,  
with 1998 as Base Year, Berrien and Comparison Counties, 1998-2009



#### Legend



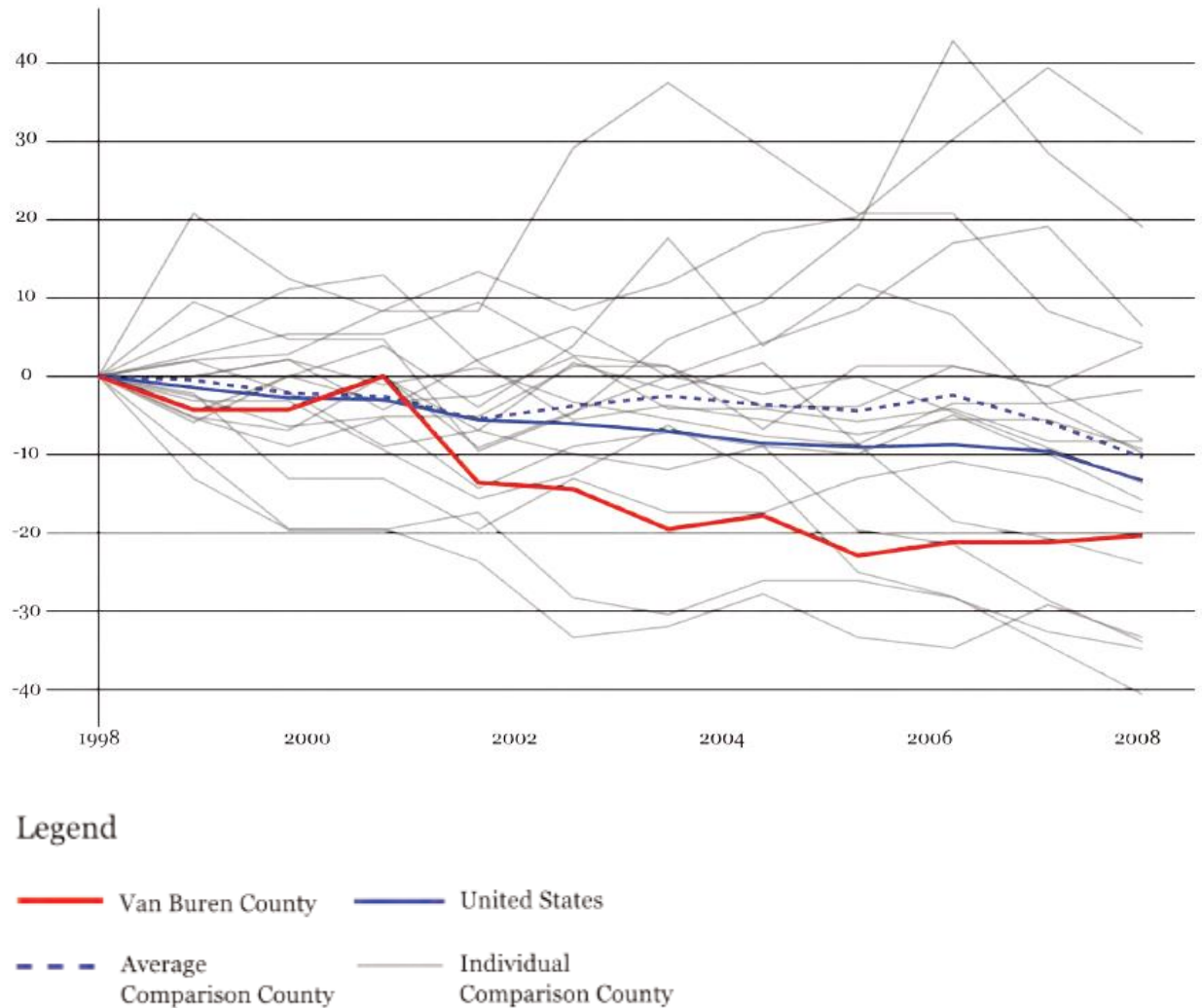
Figure 5.2.2b: Percentage Growth in Manufacturing Enterprises,  
with 1998 as Base Year, Cass and Comparison Counties, 1998-2009



### Legend



Figure 5.2.2c: Percentage Growth in Manufacturing Enterprises,  
with 1998 as Base Year, Van Buren and Comparison Counties, 1998-2009



### *Gross Regional Product*

Gross Regional Product (GRP) measures newly created value through production by regional production units in order to measure the size of the regional economy.

Community	2012 GRP
Berrien County	\$5.8 Billion
Cass County	\$828.3 Million
Van Buren County	\$2.0 Billion
Southwest Michigan EDD	\$8.6 Billion

## *Job Growth*

The following table, excerpted from Kinexus' *2013 State of the Workforce* report (Pg. 31), provides a breakdown of job growth and loss by industry sector between 2011 and 2013.

Although growth in employment has not seen dramatic increases over this period, there have been significant gains in a handful of industries that utilize highly-skilled or knowledge sector employees, such as manufacturing (up 2.3%) and Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (up 4%).

### **Tri-county Employment by Industry, 2011-2013**

Description	2011 Jobs	% 2011 Jobs	2013 Jobs	% 2013 Jobs	Growth	% Growth
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	6,834	5.5%	6,633	5.3%	-201	-2.9%
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	256	0.2%	256	0.2%	0	0.0%
Utilities	1,840	1.5%	1,912	1.5%	72	3.9%
Construction	5,578	4.5%	5,206	4.2%	-372	-6.7%
Manufacturing	16,483	13.3%	16,869	13.5%	386	2.3%
Wholesale Trade	2,812	2.3%	2,867	2.3%	55	2.0%
Retail Trade	12,420	10.0%	12,254	9.8%	-166	-1.3%
Transportation and Warehousing	2,690	2.2%	2,653	2.1%	-37	-1.4%
Information	970	0.8%	927	0.7%	-43	-4.4%
Finance and Insurance	4,645	3.8%	4,370	3.5%	-275	-5.9%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	5,132	4.1%	5,008	4.0%	-124	-2.4%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	5,725	4.6%	5,952	4.8%	227	4.0%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	651	0.5%	813	0.7%	162	24.9%
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	8,194	6.6%	8,873	7.1%	679	8.3%
Educational Services (Private)	3,098	2.5%	2,958	2.4%	-140	-4.5%
Health Care and Social Assistance	12,174	9.8%	12,215	9.8%	41	0.3%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	2,133	1.7%	1,887	1.5%	-246	-11.5%
Accommodation and Food Services	8,169	6.6%	9,430	7.6%	1,261	15.4%
Other Services (except Public Administration)	7,600	6.1%	7,620	6.1%	20	0.0%
Government	16,348	13.2%	15,937	12.8%	-411	-2.5%
Unclassified Industry	<10	N/A	76	0.1%	N/A	N/A
<b>TOTAL</b>	123,753	100%	124,716	100%	963	0.8%



Source: EMSI

## Personal Prosperity

The following section attempts to further illustrate the economic conditions of the region by examining the conditions of its residents specifically. The Personal Prosperity section examines factors such as income, poverty levels, and inequality.

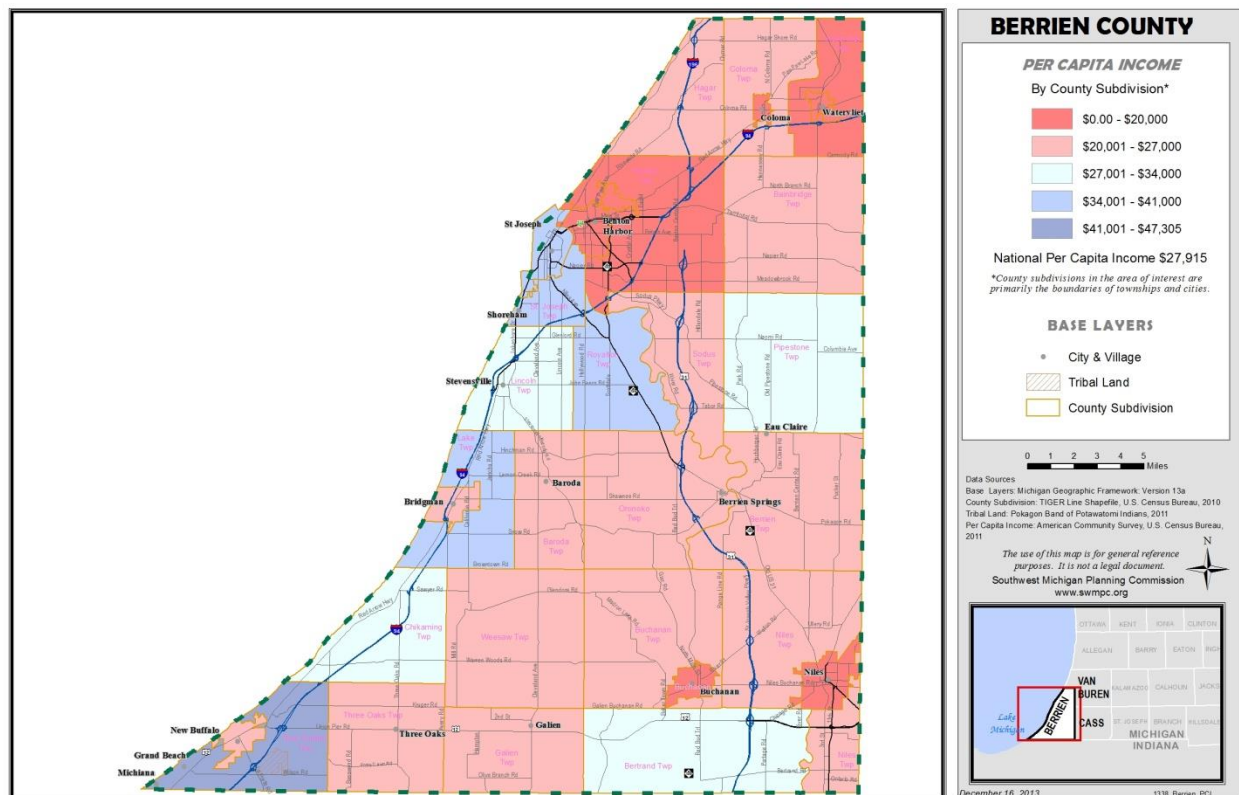
### *Per Capita Income*

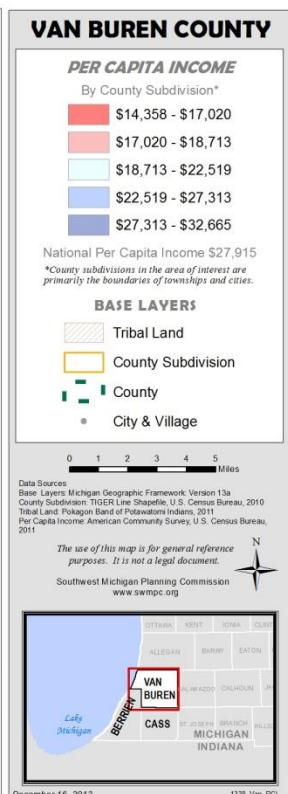
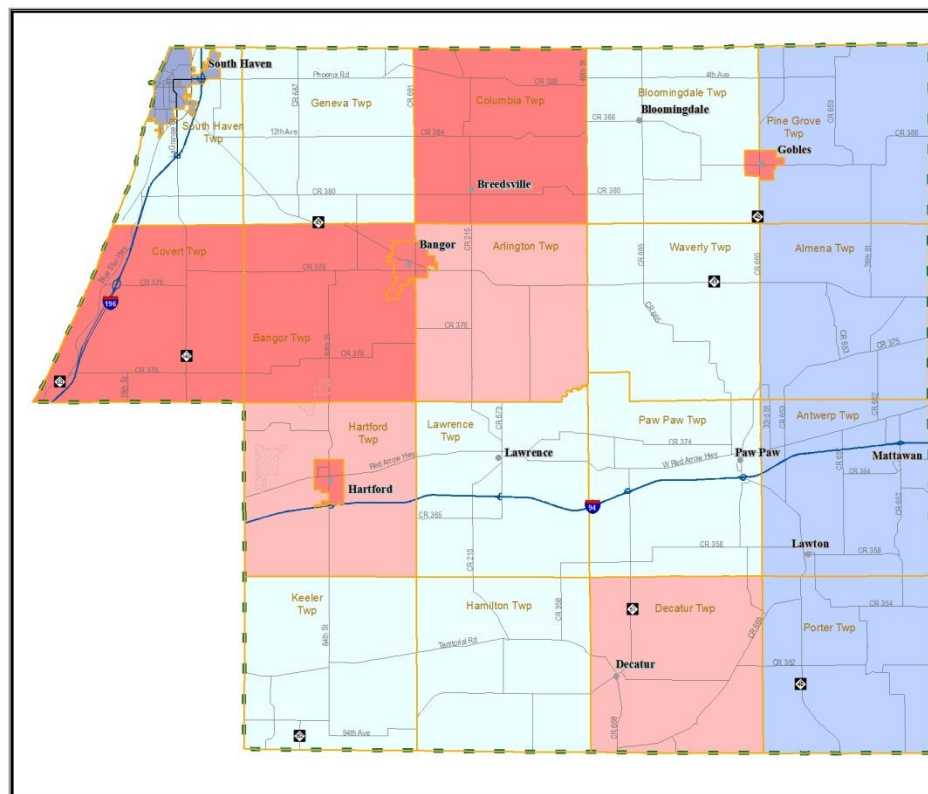
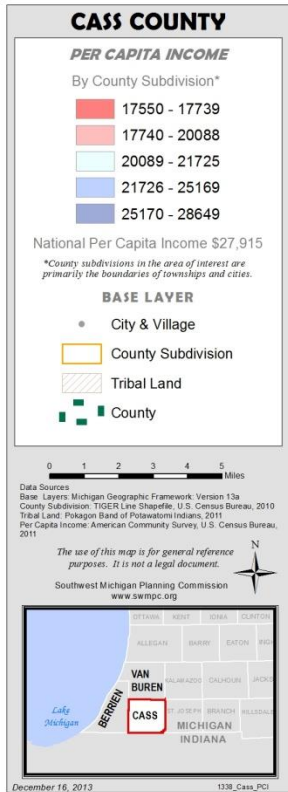
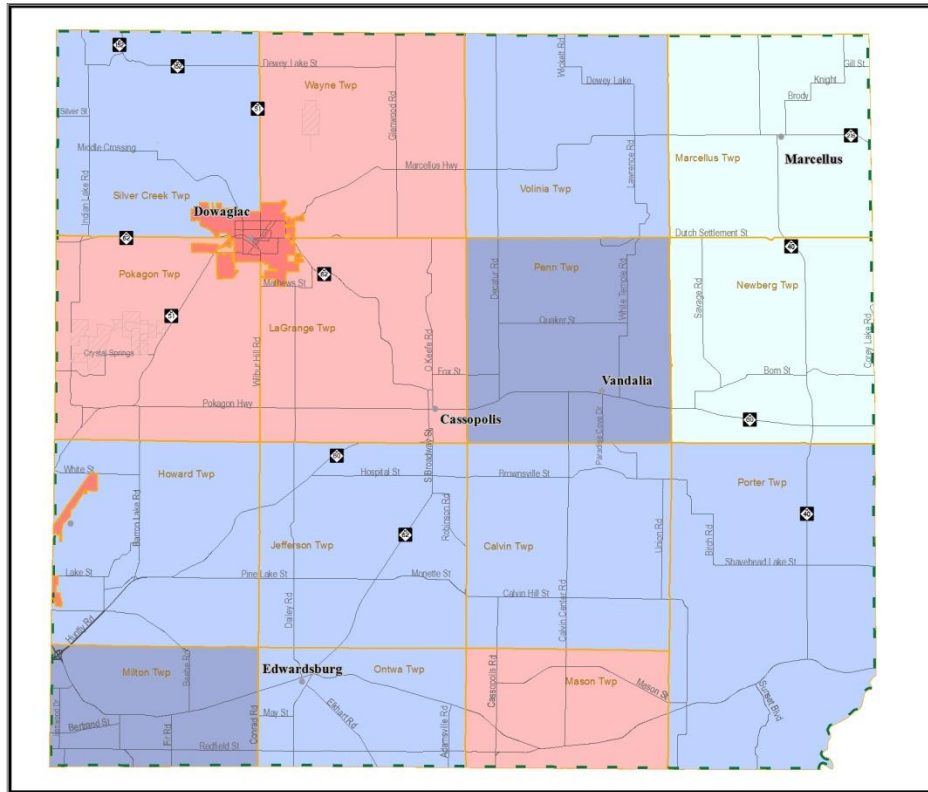
County/Municipal	Annual PCI	County/Municipal	Annual PCI	County/Municipal	Annual PCI
<b>Berrien County</b>		<b>Cass County</b>		<b>Van Buren County</b>	
Bainbridge Twp.	22,244	Calvin Twp.	23,293	Almena Twp.	27,313
Baroda Twp.	23,779	Dowagiac City	17,739	Antwerp Twp.	24,858
Benton Township	16,202	Howard Twp.	24,481	Arlington Twp.	18,601
Benton Harbor City	9,568	Jefferson Twp.	23,550	Bangor City	16,114
Berrien Twp.	21,809	La Grange Twp.	19,150	Bangor Twp.	17,020
Bertrand Twp.	31,815	Marcellus Twp.	21,568	Bloomington Twp.	20,719
Bridgman City	25,301	Mason Twp.	20,070	Columbia Twp.	16,573
Buchanan City	19,055	Milton Twp.	27,473	Covert Twp.	15,123
Buchanan Twp.	23,816	Newberg Twp.	21,725	Decatur Twp.	18,160
Chikaming Twp.	33,682	Ontwa Twp.	23,748	Geneva Twp.	22,181
Coloma City	18,649	Penn Twp.	28,649	Gobles City	16,246
Coloma Twp.	24,632	Pokagon Twp.	19,683	Hamilton Twp.	21,938
Galien Twp.	23,145	Porter Twp.	31,040	Hartford City	14,358
Hagar Twp.	22,821	Silver Creek Twp.	23,521	Hartford Twp.	18,713
Lake Twp.	39,125	Volinia Twp.	23,289	Keeler Twp.	21,226
Lincoln Twp.	33,238	Wayne Twp.	20,088	Lawrence Twp.	20,384
New Buffalo City	26,457			Paw Paw Twp.	21,384
New Buffalo Twp.	47,305			Pine Grove Twp.	23,820
Niles City	17,550			Porter Twp.	25,169
Niles Twp.	21,658			South Haven City	32,665
Oronoko Twp.	20,609			South Haven Twp.	22,519
Pipestone Twp.	28,621			Waverly Twp.	20,179
Royalton Twp.	38,049				
St. Joseph City	36,961				
St. Joseph Twp.	34,637				
Sodus Twp.	20,587				
Three Oaks Twp.	23,418				
Watervliet City	17,976				

Watervliet Twp.	15,557			
Weesaw Twp.	22,590			

Using the EDA's measure for income distress, which is 80 percent of the national average (\$27,915), 35 communities or roughly 51% of local units meet the criterion for distress. Especially impacted is the City of Benton Harbor at \$9,568 annual per capita income which is 34% of the national average (or \$18,347 less), showing an extreme level of distress for the community.

The heat maps below illustrate where in each of the three counties significant disparities beyond the national average in income can be found.





## *Median Household Income*

All three counties had lower median household incomes than the median for the United States as a whole. While the United States saw median household income decrease between 2000 and 2010, median income increased by a much larger amount during that decade in the three Southwest Michigan Counties. In the three counties, income inequality was at or below the level of the United States as a whole.

**Figure 6.2.5a Median Household Income, in 2010 dollars, Berrien and Comparison Counties, 1995-2010**

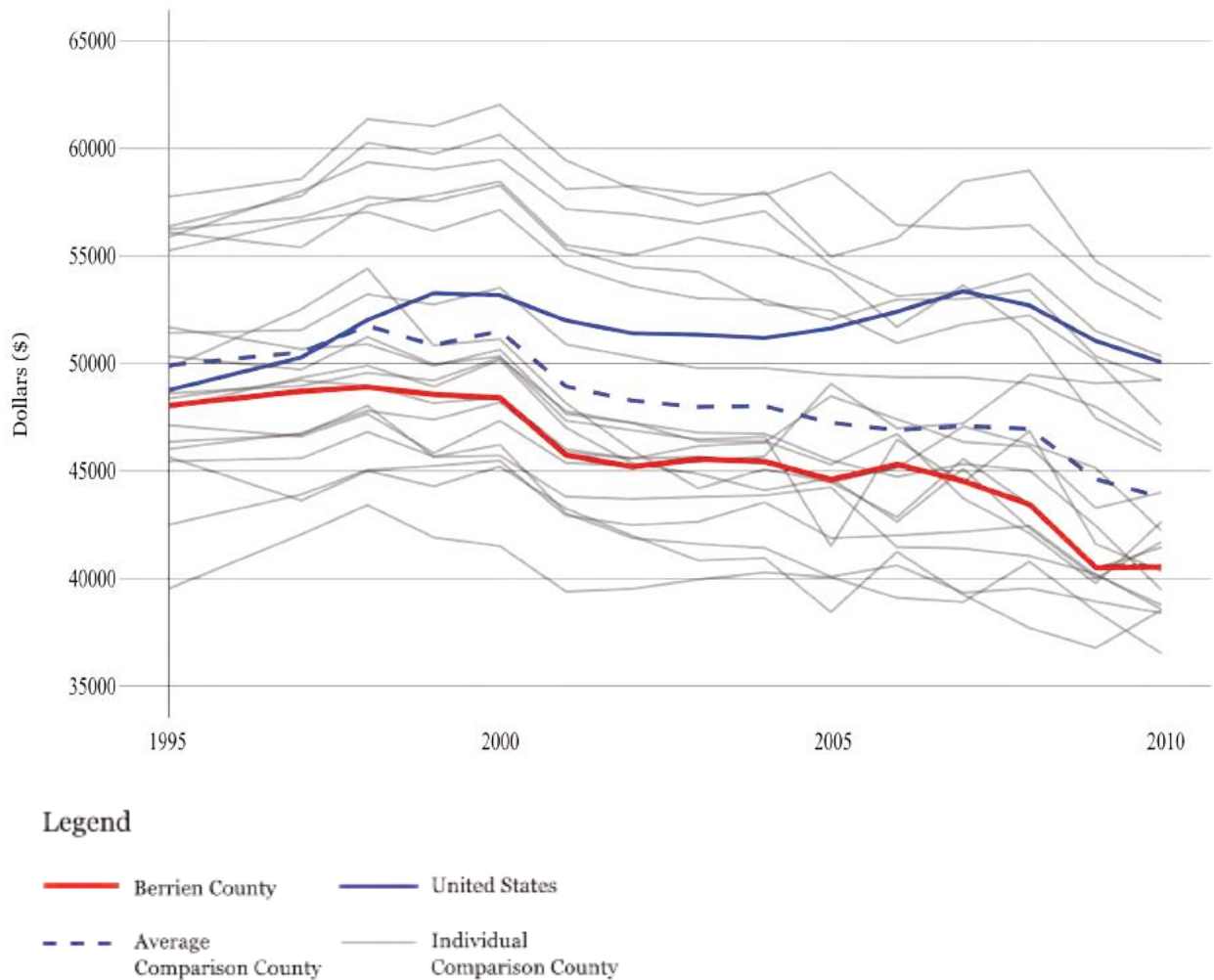
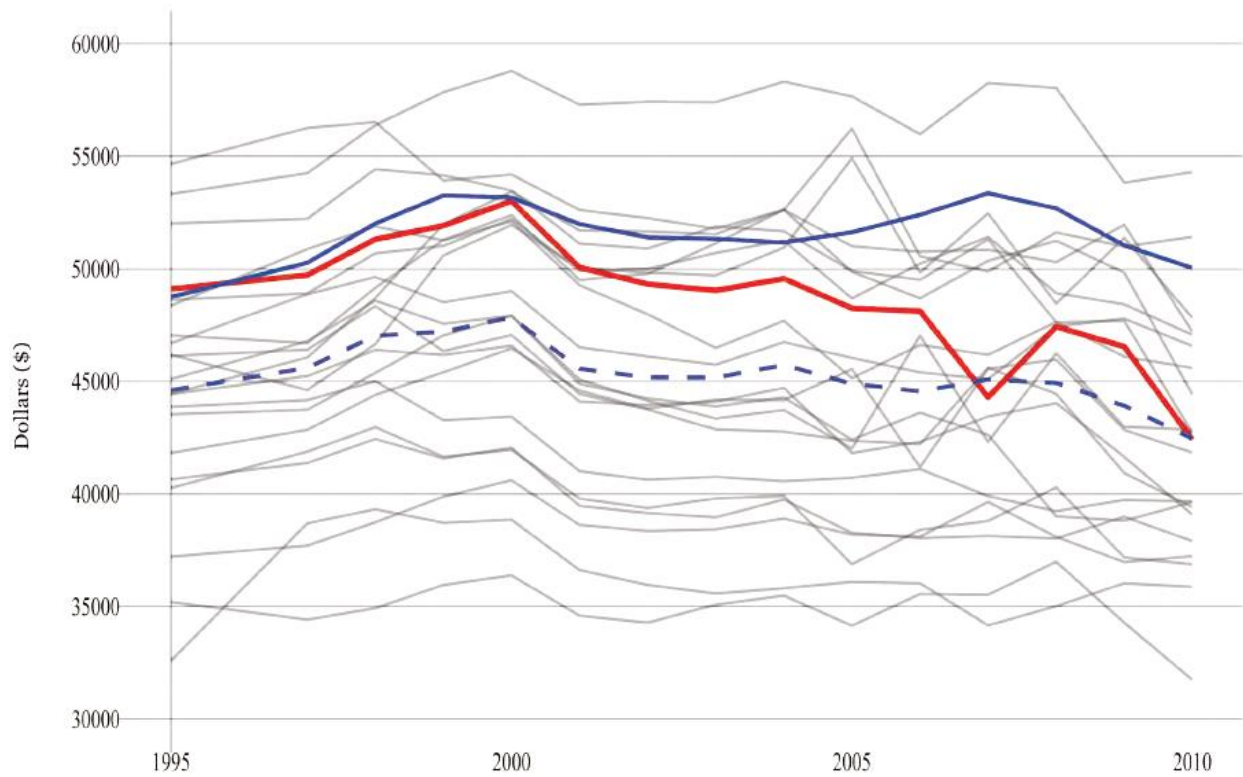


Figure 6.2.5b Median Household Income, in 2010 dollars, Cass and Comparison Counties, 1995-2010

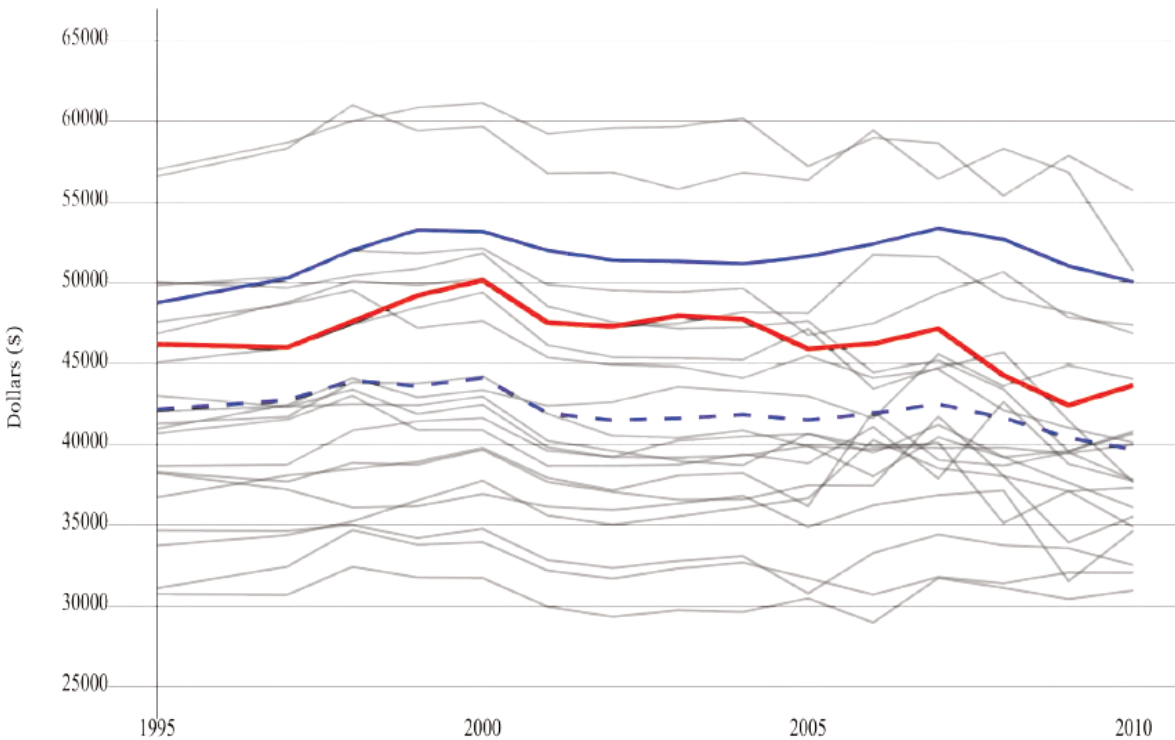


### Legend

- Cass County
- United States
- - - Average Comparison County
- Individual Comparison County



Figure 6.2.5c Median Household Income, in 2010 dollars, Van Buren and Comparison Counties, 1995-2010



#### Legend



### *Income Inequality*

This graphic shows the percentage of each county's population that falls in each income division---or "bracket." The graphic displays these data for the three Southwest Michigan counties, as well as Thomas, GA, which represents a comparison county with a relatively high Gini Coefficient (denoting a higher level of income inequality), and Richland, Ohio, which represents a comparison county with a relatively low Gini Coefficient (denoting a lower level of income inequality). As an example of the range of income distributions, all three Southwest Michigan Counties have a higher percentage of their population in the lowest income bracket than Richland, Ohio, but a lower percentage than Thomas, Georgia.

Figure 6.2.6 Income Brackets for Berrien, Cass, and Van Buren Counties, along with Gini Coefficient Comparison Counties (following pages), 2006-2010

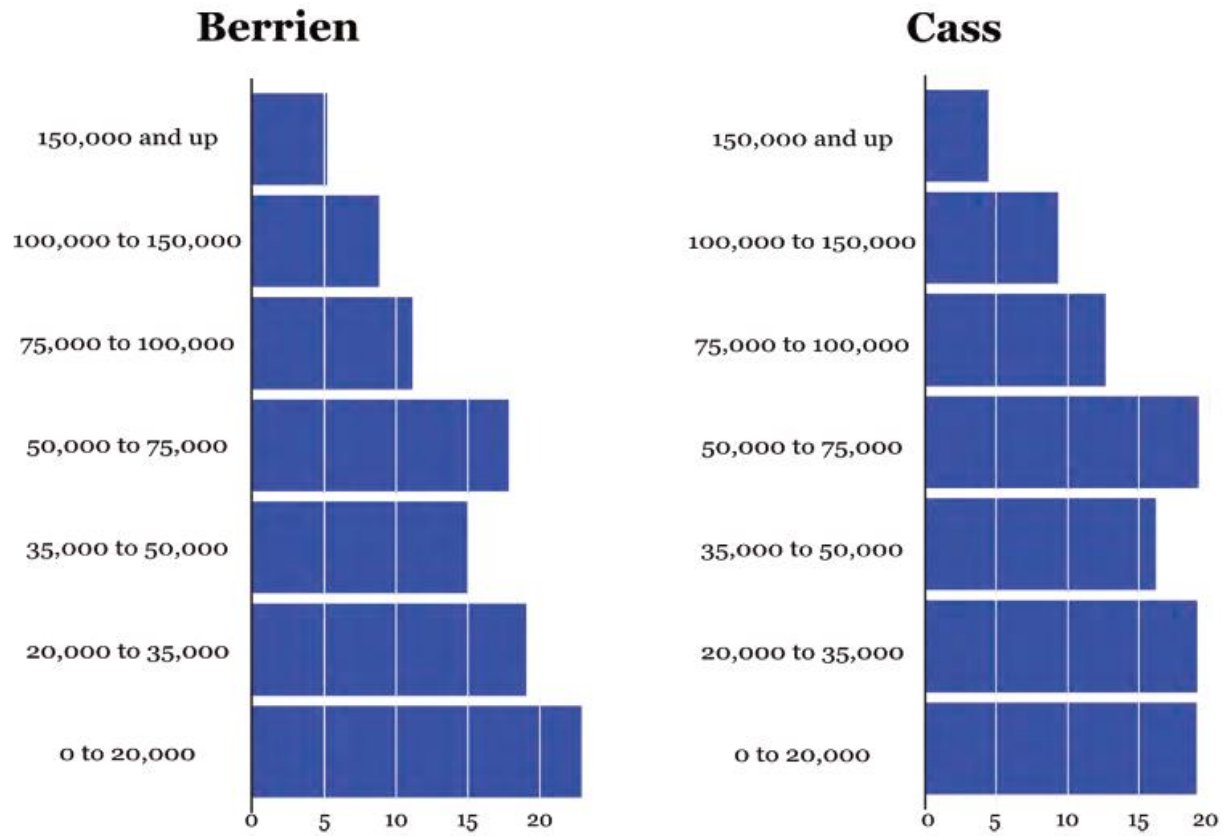


Figure 6.2.6 Income Brackets for Berrien, Cass, and Van Buren Counties, along with Gini Coefficient Comparison Counties, 2006-2010

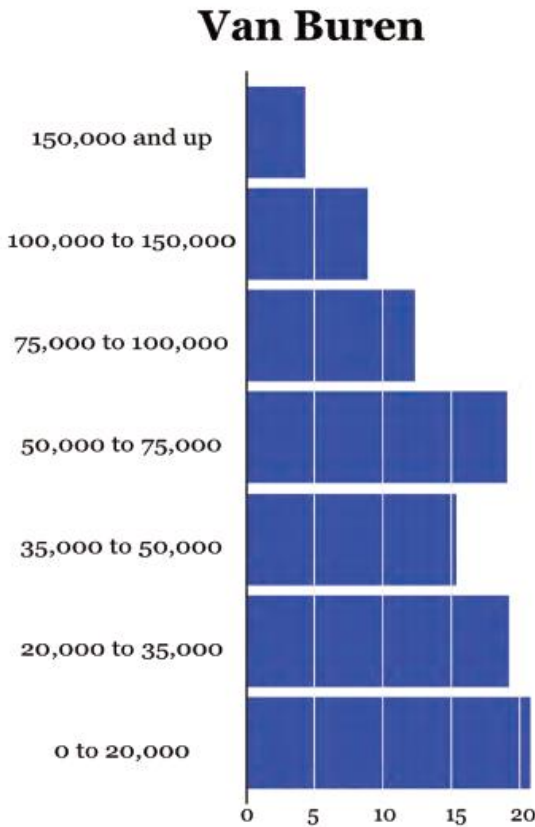
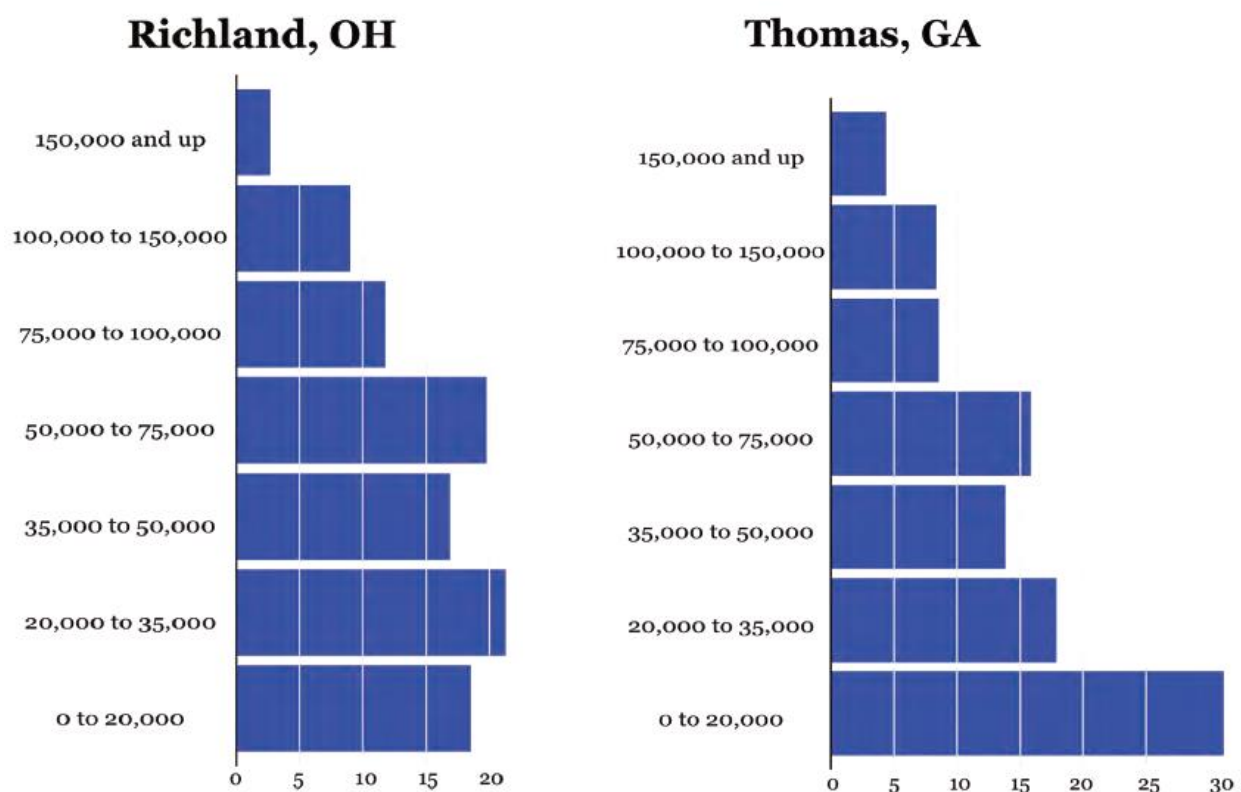




Figure 6.2.6 Income Brackets for Berrien, Cass, and Van Buren Counties, along with Gini Coefficient Comparison Counties, 2006-2010



### Poverty Rate

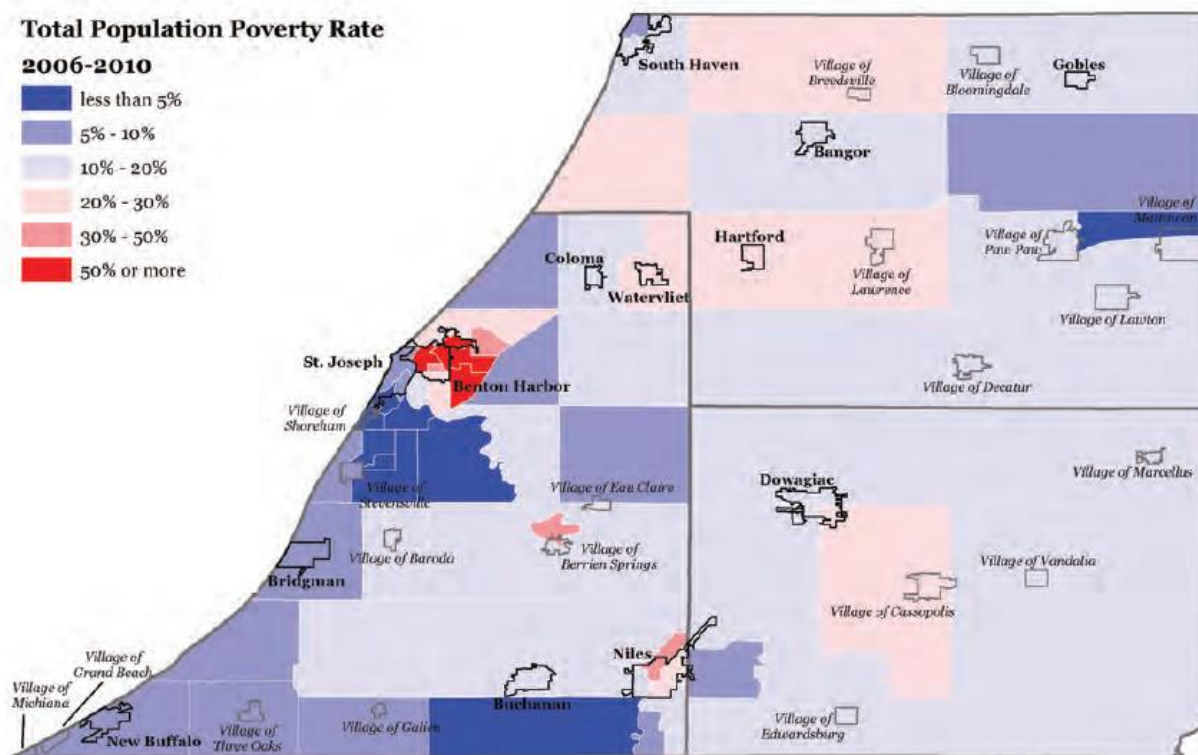
The Southwest Michigan Counties all have a poverty rate above the national average of 15.3%, with Berrien County's being particularly high at 17.5%. Van Buren County also has a higher poverty rate among seniors than the rate for the United States as a whole. Between 2000 and 2010, the total population poverty rate increased in all three counties, and every single county in each of their comparison groups.

The table below uses displays the overall poverty rate for local units within each of the three counties using 2011 ACS data.

County/Municipal	Poverty Rate %	County/Municipal	Poverty Rate %	County/Municipal	Poverty Rate %
<b>Berrien County</b>		<b>Cass County</b>		<b>Van Buren County</b>	
Bainbridge Twp.	21.2	Calvin Twp.	22.0	Almena Twp.	8.1
Baroda Twp.	10.7	Dowagiac City	19.7	Antwerp Twp.	9.7

Benton Township	33.5	Howard Twp.	4.3	Arlington Twp.	18.3
Benton Harbor City	47.6	Jefferson Twp.	11.5	Bangor City	19.4
Berrien Twp.	16.5	La Grange Twp.	22.0	Bangor Twp.	27.3
Bertrand Twp.	3.9	Marcellus Twp.	16.9	Bloomingtondale Twp.	17.6
Bridgman City	16.1	Mason Twp.	12.9	Columbia Twp.	28.4
Buchanan City	16.6	Milton Twp.	11.0	Covert Twp.	26.3
Buchanan Twp.	10.9	Newberg Twp.	11.9	Decatur Twp.	14.4
Chikaming Twp.	4.6	Ontwa Twp.	10.7	Geneva Twp.	31.6
Coloma City	8.8	Penn Twp.	8.5	Gobles City	16.6
Coloma Twp.	11.2	Pokagon Twp.	10.0	Hamilton Twp.	16.5
Galien Twp.	11.4	Porter Twp.	7.7	Hartford City	23.7
Hagar Twp.	13.0	Silver Creek Twp.	22.7	Hartford Twp.	34.1
Lake Twp.	5.3	Volinia Twp.	10.0	Keeler Twp.	25.3
Lincoln Twp.	4.5	Wayne Twp.	16.8	Lawrence Twp.	19.5
New Buffalo City	14.7			Paw Paw Twp.	26.8
New Buffalo Twp.	5.8			Pine Grove Twp.	12.3
Niles City	25.2			Porter Twp.	12.3
Niles Twp.	13.4			South Haven City	10.6
Oronoko Twp.	23.1			South Haven Twp.	18.9
Pipestone Twp.	11.8			Waverly Twp.	20.2
Royalton Twp.	1.8				
St. Joseph City	8.2				
St. Joseph Twp.	5.6				
Sodus Twp.	13.6				
Three Oaks Twp.	9.3				
Watervliet City	17.1				
Watervliet Twp.	23.9				
Weesaw Twp.	14.6				

Figure 6.3.2 Total Population Poverty Rate, by Census Tract, 2006-2010



## Lifelong Learning

### *Literacy*

These charts illustrate levels of illiteracy among adults for the three counties and their comparison groups. All three counties have percentages of their adult (Age 18+) population that lack basic English prose skills below the percentage for the nation as a whole, indicating a higher English literacy rate in Southwest Michigan.

As a means of measuring literacy, this graphic shows the percentage of the population in each of the three counties and their comparisons that lacks basic English prose skills. All three Southwest Michigan counties have lower percentages of their population that lack basic English prose skills than the nation as a whole.

Figure 8.2.1 Percentage of Adults Lacking Basic English Prose Skills, for Berrien, Cass, and Van Buren Counties, along with Comparison Counties 2003

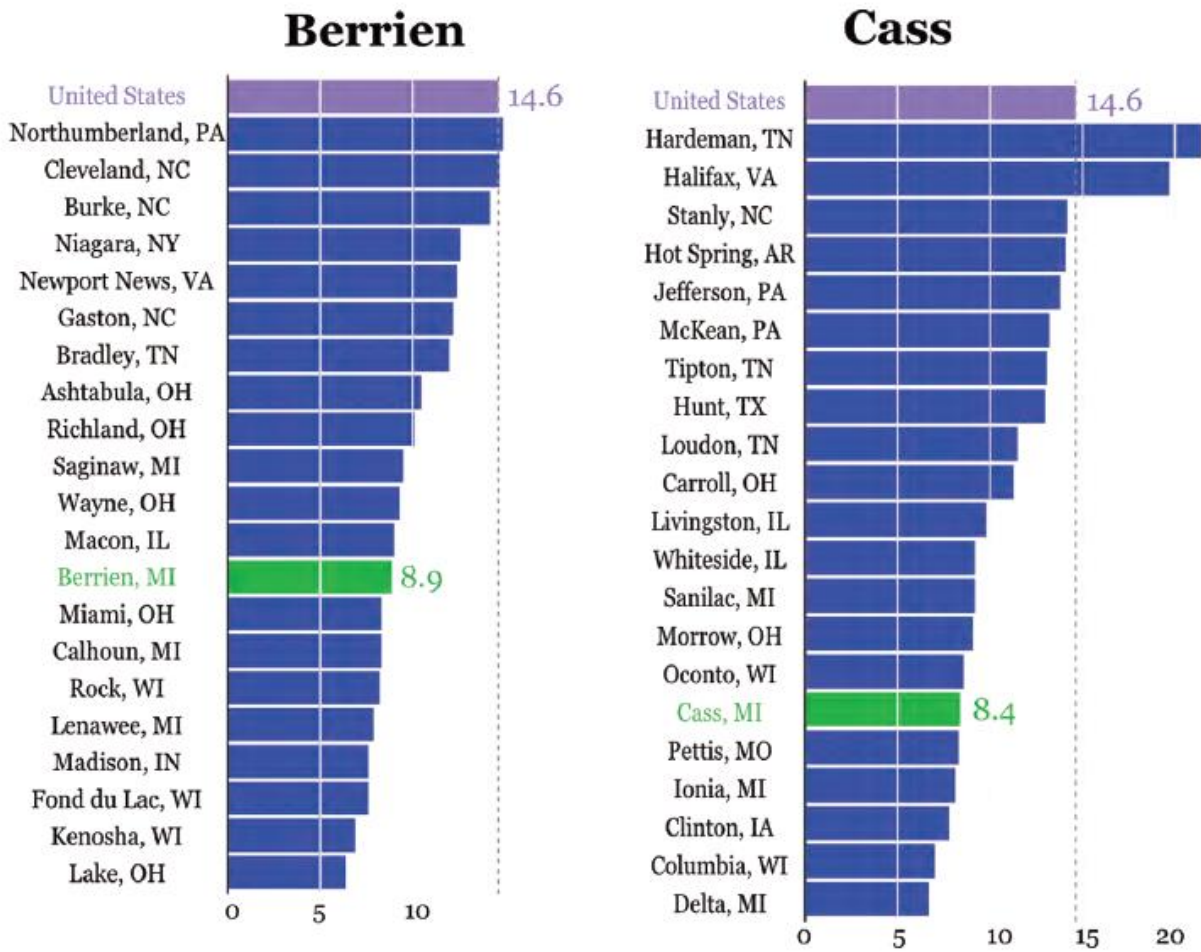
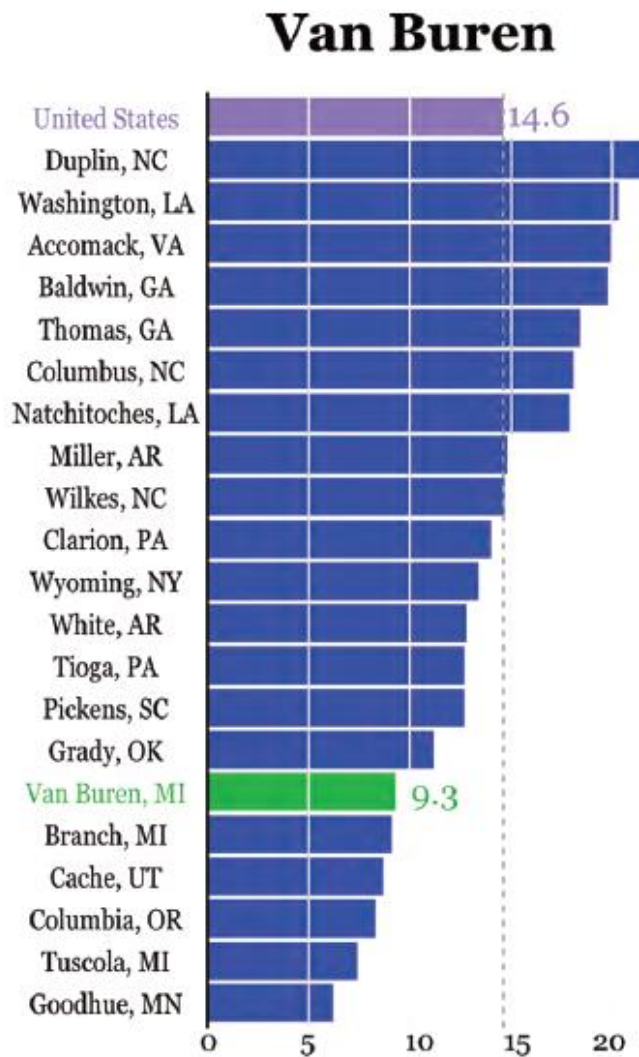


Figure 8.2.1 Percentage of Adults Lacking Basic English Prose Skills, for Berrien, Cass, and Van Buren Counties, along with Comparison Counties 2003



### *Technology in Schools*

Access to school computers with high-speed internet capability was very mixed throughout the region, with some districts having over 5 students per high-speed internet-capable computer.

Access to computers with high speed internet access can provide students and teachers with interactive learning tools, videos and multimedia presentations. For some high school students, schools may be the only place where they can use a computer, and therefore, internet access provides a vital gateway to college and job resources. Where there is a high level of competition between students for time on

computers, however, the learning advantages of the technology for each student could diminish. This graphic shows the number of enrolled students per computer with high speed internet access for each school district in the region. Districts with a lower number of students per computer may be better equipped to use computers as an individualized learning tool and promote technological literacy. The data suggest variability in availability of computers from one district to the next.

**Figure 8.4.4 Number of Students per Computer with High Speed Internet Access, for Public and Public Charter School Districts for Berrien, Cass, and Van Buren Counties, 2011**

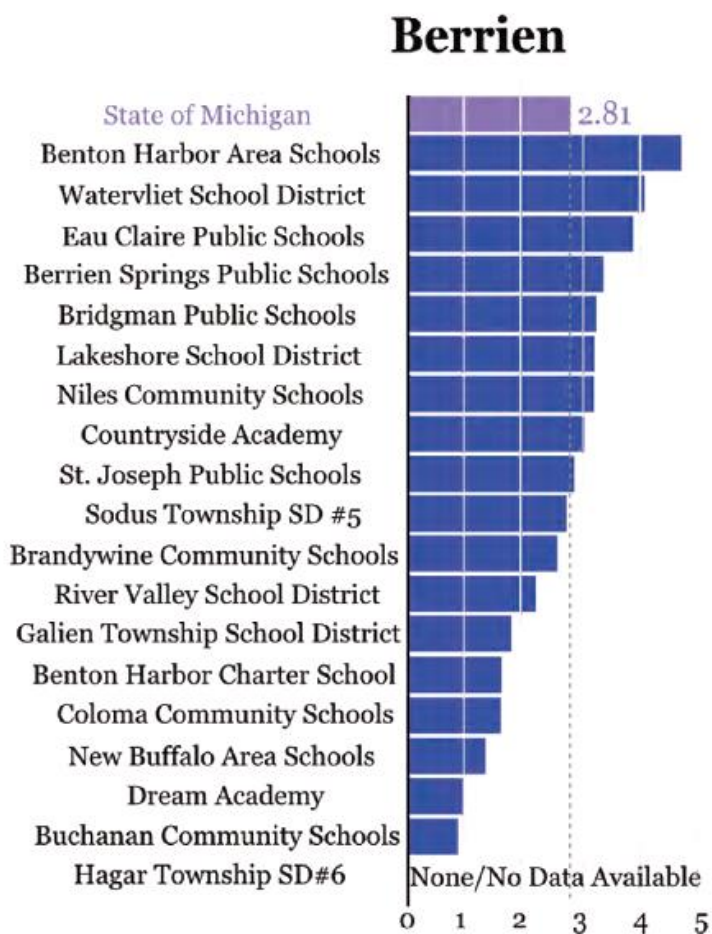
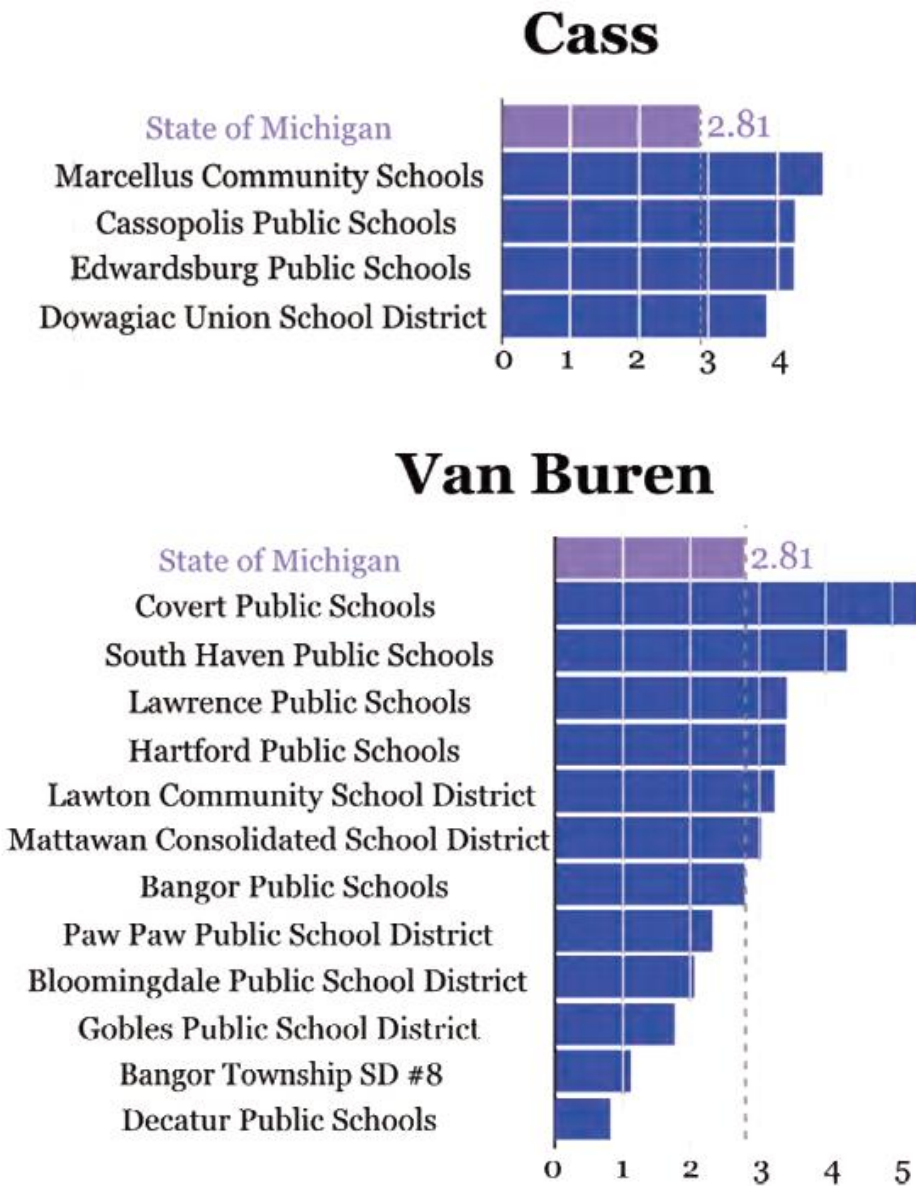




Figure 8.4.4 Number of Students per Computer with High Speed Internet Access, for Public and Public Charter School Districts for Berrien, Cass, and Van Buren Counties, 2011

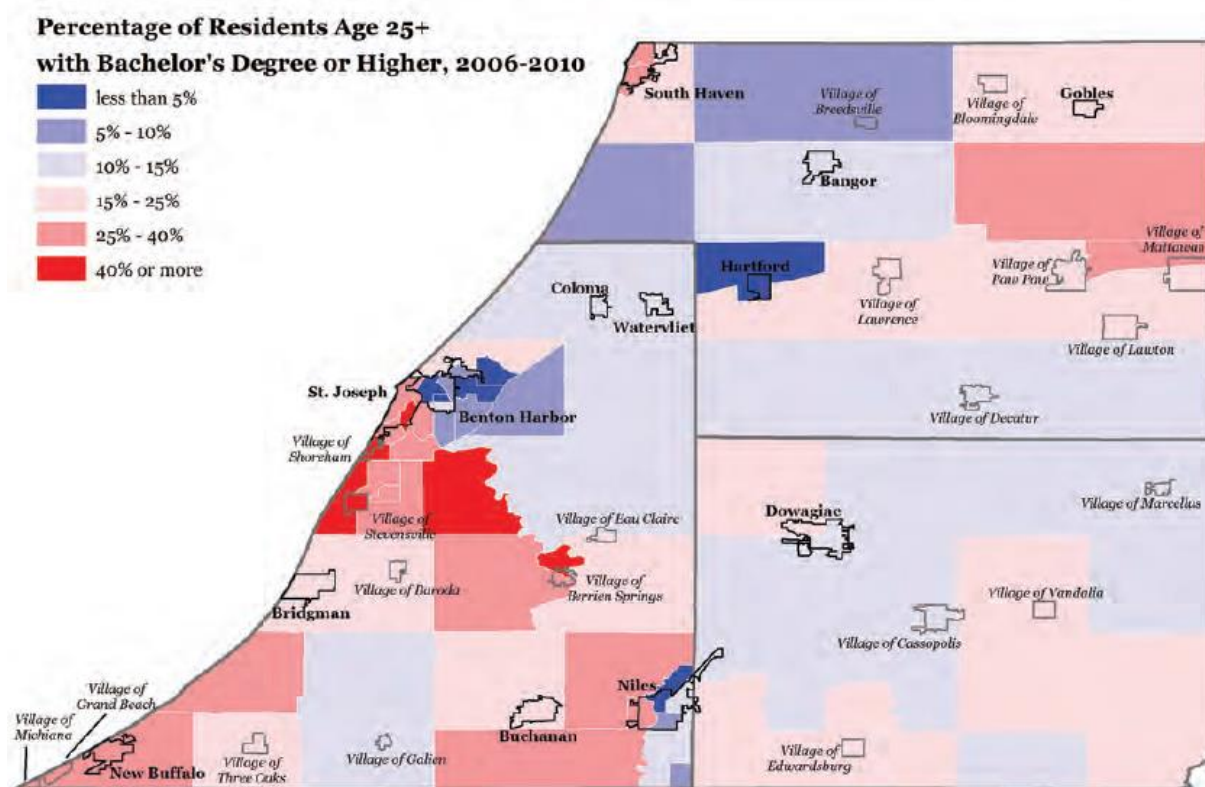


### *Educational Attainment*

Like the nation as a whole, the percentage of the population with bachelor's degrees has risen continuously in all of the three counties of Southwest Michigan. All three counties have percentages of their population with bachelor's degrees that are lower than the percentage of the nation as a whole. The areas with the highest percentage of bachelor's degree holders are in villages and townships rather than the cities.

This map shows the percentage of the population in each census tract that possess a bachelor's degree or higher, for the three-county region. In general, villages and townships have larger portions of their populations with bachelor's degrees than the cities, although areas around St. Joseph, Niles, and New Buffalo have high percentages as well. This trend suggests that individuals with high levels of education are part of the long-term shift away from cities and into townships in Southwest Michigan.

**Figure 8.1.3 Percentage of Residents Age 25+ with Bachelor's Degree or Higher, 2006-2010**



#### Educational Attainment for Ages 25 and Over, 2012 ACS

Educational Attainment	Berrien County	Cass County	Van Buren County	Southwest Michigan	Michigan
Population 25+	106,960	36,363	50,965	194,288	6,593,489
Less than high school graduate	12.3%	12.4%	14.2%	12.8%	11.1%
High school graduate	31.7%	38.1%	35.1%	33.8%	30.7%
Some college or associate's degree	31.4%	33.5%	33.1%	32.2%	32.6%



Bachelor's degree or higher	24.5%	16.1%	17.6%	21.1%	25.7%
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## Transportation in Southwest Michigan

### *Regional Public Transportation*

Southwest Michigan has numerous public transit agencies. There has been an increase in interest about public transit since the 2009 CEDS. A Coordinated Transit and Human Services Plan was written and adopted for Berrien County. Cass County has also explored the creation of a Coordinated Transit and Human Services Plan. Vehicle access in economically challenged households remains a significant problem in Southwest Michigan.

The transit providers of Berrien County have been working with a mobility manager; a position that was created in the summer of 2010. This manager has implemented important information exchange between clients and providers and conducted outreach to educate residents of their best transit options. Notable achievements are the use of prepaid fare cards, better tracking of reduced fare eligible riders, and an increase in fixed route ridership which has a lower cost rate per trip.

At the writing of this CEDS there is a Transit Consolidation Plan being drafted for Berrien County. Changes since 2010 have been clearly focused on promoting easier and more universal access to mobility throughout Southwest Michigan. Such work amounts to a positive development for the economic development of Southwest Michigan.

### **Intra-Regional Bus**

- Berrien County
  - Berrien Bus
    - Contract service with some demand response.
    - ADA and Senior Reduced Fare<sup>1</sup>
  - Buchanan Dial-a-Ride

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<sup>1</sup> The American with Disabilities Act requires transit providers to offer reduced fare ride on public transit if the transit agency is receiving federal funds.

- Demand Response
- ADA and Senior Reduced Fare
- Niles Dial-a-Ride
  - One Fixed Route
  - Demand Response
  - ADA and Senior Reduced Fare
- Twin Cities Dial-a-Ride
  - Two Fixed Routes with Flexing options
  - Demand Response
  - ADA and Senior Reduced Fare

### *Inter-Regional Transit*

#### **Rail**

Amtrak and The Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District (NICTD) provide passenger rail service in Southwest Michigan out of the region.

Amtrak operates three routes in the region, the Pere Marquette, the Blue Water, and the Wolverine. The Pere Marquette operates from Chicago, Illinois and terminates in Grand Rapids, Michigan with stops in St. Joseph in Berrien County and Bangor in Van Buren County. The Blue Water operates between Chicago, Illinois and Port Huron, Michigan with stops in southwest Michigan in New Buffalo and Niles in Berrien County, and Dowagiac in Cass County. The Wolverine operates between Chicago, Illinois and Pontiac, Michigan, with stops in southwest Michigan in New Buffalo and Niles in Berrien County, and Dowagiac in Cass County.

The 97 mile segment of track between Kalamazoo, Michigan and Portage, Indiana on which the Blue Water and Wolverine run is Amtrak owned and is approved for high speed - 110 mile per hour service. It is the largest segment of Amtrak-own track outside of the northeast. The rest of the Wolverine route is planned to become a high speed corridor.

The NICTD provides commuter rail service between South Bend Regional Airport and Chicago, Illinois. The stations nearest to southwest Michigan are the South Bend Regional Airport station, Hudson Lake Station, and the Carroll Avenue Station and 11<sup>th</sup> Street stops in Michigan City, Indiana.

## **Bus**

Greyhound Lines and Indian Trails bus companies have several scheduled terminal points in the three-county region. These include Benton Harbor, Stevensville, South Haven, and Paw Paw. Service to Detroit, Grand Rapids, Chicago and other large cities out of the region is frequent.

## **Roads**

Road infrastructure in Southwest Michigan has remained dominated by the Interstates of I-94 and I-196, and the limited access highway of US-31. I-94 and I-196 directly link Southwest Michigan to the Chicago region to the west, Holland and Grand Rapids to the north and Kalamazoo, Battle Creek, Jackson, Ann Arbor, Detroit Metro, and Canada to the east. US 31 is a limited access highway that originates at the Indiana and Michigan boarder in Niles Township and travels north connecting Southwest Michigan to the South Bend and Mishawaka area. US 31 was designed to connect directly to the I-94 and I-196 interchange in Benton Charter Township, but this portion of the highway has not been completed.

Transportation funding in Michigan over the last decade has been categorized by maintenance of current roadways and a moratorium against any capacity increasing projects. Governor Rick Snyder has proposed an overhaul of the funding sources for roads in the State of Michigan. With the improvement of the State of Michigan's economy Governor Snyder's 2013 fiscal year budget provides for a one year \$119 million dollar general fund appropriation to ensure a full match for all federal highway and transit aid.<sup>2</sup> The Governor's transportation budget totals \$3.3 billion for both fiscal years 2013 and 2014.<sup>3</sup>

Road development in Southwest Michigan is controlled by several agencies. The St. Joseph and Benton Harbor metropolitan areas are administered by the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Twin Cities Area Transportation Study (TwinCATS) and the Niles, Buchanan, and Milton Township area is administered by the MPO, Niles Area Transportation Study (NATS). Berrien, Cass, and Van

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<sup>2</sup> [http://www.michigan.gov/documents/budget/PR\\_376265\\_7.pdf](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/budget/PR_376265_7.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.michigan.gov/documents/budget/EB1\\_376247\\_7.pdf](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/budget/EB1_376247_7.pdf)

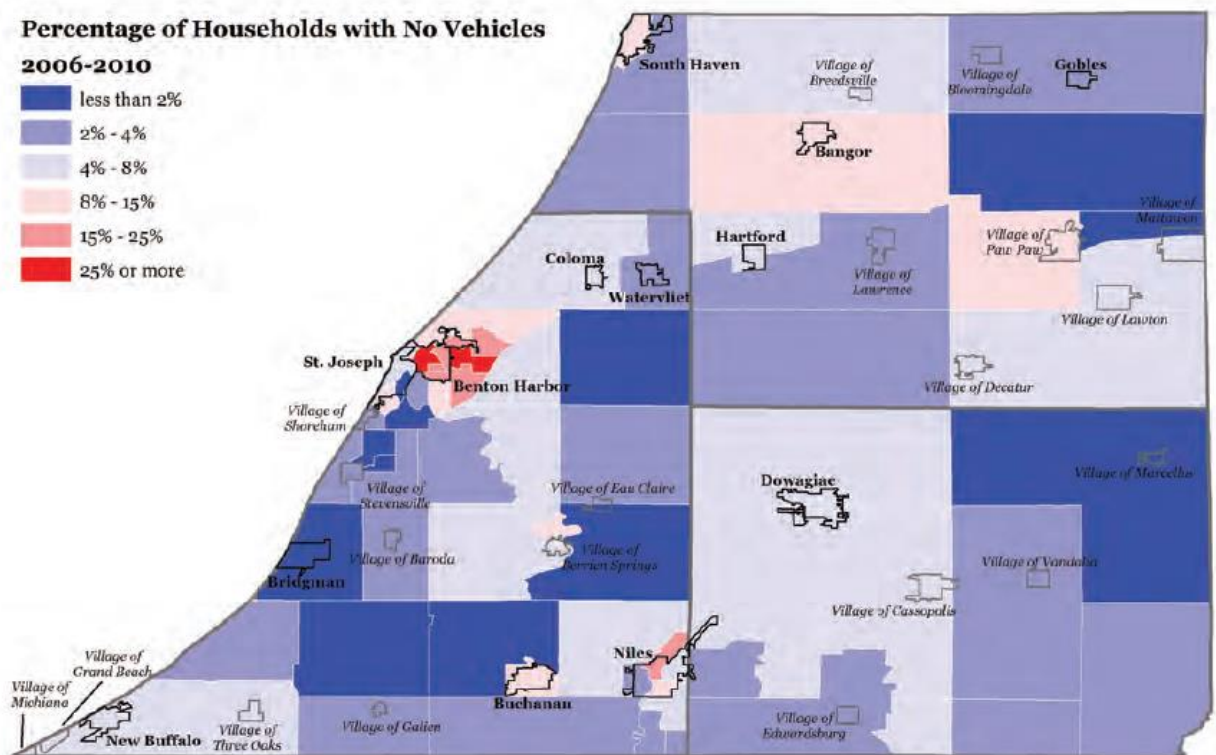
Buren Counties also have Road Commissions which are the designated bodies to receive state and federal transportation funds and then build area roads. Local municipalities can fund road projects directly from their general funds but utilize the road commissions to perform the construction of the roads.

## **Personal Transportation**

Driving alone to work continued to be the predominant mode of travel for the region. However, certain parts of Berrien County saw less than 70% of their population use vehicles to get to work, particularly around Benton Harbor and St. Joseph and north of the Village of Eau Claire. Benton Harbor, St. Joseph, and part of the City of Niles also see lower-rates of car ownership. All three counties on the whole, however, have smaller percentages of households with zero vehicles than the rate for the United States. All three counties see motor vehicle death rates that are the same or higher than the national average.

This map shows the percentage of households in each census tract in Southwest Michigan that have zero vehicles. Not surprisingly, the urban areas of Benton Harbor-St. Joseph and Niles have tracts with high percentages of households that do not have vehicles. Many residents may choose not to own vehicle due to the proximity of amenities via walking or bicycling. In addition, many households in these areas may choose not to purchase a vehicle due to economic limitations.

Figure 7.4.3 Percentage of Households with No Motor Vehicles, 2006-2010



This map shows the percentage of workers in each census tract in Southwest Michigan who commute to work by driving alone. Certain parts of the Benton Harbor-St. Joseph urbanized area have lower levels of commuting by driving alone. This finding correlates roughly with the higher percentage of zero-vehicle households in the area.

### Percentage of Workers who Drive Alone to Work, 2006-2010



Within Southwest Michigan, there are 89 local municipalities, five watersheds, varied soil types, land use types that range from nuclear power production to 20,000 acres of parkland, and just under 1,200 lakes larger than an acre in size. This section provides a general reference for the region's political and natural geography.

Berrien and Van Buren Counties are coastal; their western border is formed by Lake Michigan. Van Buren County's northern border with Allegan County also forms the northern border of the region. The eastern boarder of the region is formed

by Van Buren and Cass Counties. Kalamazoo County abuts the northern half, and St. Joseph County abuts the southern half. The Southern border of the region is formed by the southern borders of Berrien and Cass Counties. The southern border abuts the State of Indiana and the counties (from east to west), of Elkhart, St. Joseph, and La Porte.

The region is influenced by population and economic activity centers just outside its borders. The City of Kalamazoo to the northeast has driven development in Van Buren County's east side. Cass County's southern border with the communities of Granger and Elkhart has also driven new development. Southwestern Berrien County is closely tied to South Bend. The population economic actively center of Benton Harbor and St. Joseph is the dominate center within the region.

### *Natural Geography*

The regional topography is undulating, typical of land that had been under glaciers during the last ice age. The Lake Michigan coastal sand dunes are the most notable exception to the general topography of the region and soil composition in the region.

Much of the soil in Southwest Michigan is classified as well-drained, sandy loam, gravelly loam, or clay loam. The 2009 Michigan Soil Survey Geographic Data base records southwest Michigan soils as actually recorded and mapped. The region's climate, soil composition, and topography allows for one of the most productive and diverse agricultural regions outside of California. Southwest Michigan can grow nearly any kind of non-citrus fruit.

The numerous lakes, rivers, dunes, and Lake Michigan shoreline provides unique land and a high quality of life. The region includes numerous parcels of land that is desirable and easily developed into more intensive land uses like housing developments, commercial areas, and industrial uses.

### *Water Features*

Southwest Michigan has numerous and varied water features. The most prominent feature is the 55 miles of Lake Michigan shoreline that forms the western border of the region. There is also 765 inland lakes of an acre in size or more, 1,025 miles of rivers and streams, intact wetlands and freshwater sand dunes. The five major drainage basins are the St. Joseph, Paw Paw, Kalamazoo, Galien, and Black Rivers. Within these five drainage basins, there is an estimated 54,800 acres of wetlands in southwest Michigan. 85% of the Lake Michigan shoreline is designated as a high risk erosion area.



## Climate

Lake Michigan acts as a buffer for much of southwest Michigan resulting in mild but snowy winters and summers. The range of micro climates throughout the region allows for a diverse range of crops to be grown in the area, including grapes, peaches, cherries, and a wide variety of berries and vegetables. The effects of global climate change are present in Southwest Michigan, from the 2009 CEDS to 2012 CEDS the average annual temperature rose .8 degrees Fahrenheit. The table below contains 30 year averages from 1981-2010. The average low in January is 18.8 degrees and the average high is 32.2. In July the average low is 63.6 degrees and the average high is 83.9 degrees. The shortest growing season during the 30-year time frame was 148 days and the longest was 212. The greatest danger to Southwest Michigan's agricultural products is early warm-ups followed by a hard freeze late in spring, like that seen in 2012. Plants that rely on buds to produce fruit (grapes, cherries, etc.) can be damaged in early spring to the point where no fruit will be produced in that situation.

### Southwest Michigan Climate Averages

	Temperatures (Fahrenheit)			Count: Temperature Extreme Days, Growing-degree Days <sup>4</sup>					
	30-Year Average	Record High	Record Low	> 90°	< 32°	40° F	45° F	50° F	55° F
January	25.5	64	-22	3	28	11	3	1	*
February	28.6	71	-13	2	25	16	5	1	*
March	38	82	0	3	21	110	62	32	15
April	49.9	88	10	4	7	329	214	124	64
May	60.2	94	27	5	*	635	482	338	213
June	69.7	100	36	5	0	902	752	602	454

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July	73.7	103	42	4	0	1055	900	745	590
August	72.1	101	43	4	0	1005	850	695	540
September	64.9	96	33	5	0	757	607	459	318
October	53.2	90	21	4	2	423	283	169	88
November	41.6	76	10	4	14	139	71	31	10
December	29.5	69	-12	3	26	23	9	4	1

## Innovation Assets

### Text

#### *Educational Assets*

The following table provides enrollment statistics on State-approved Career and Technical Education (CTE) secondary education programs throughout Berrien, Cass, and Van Buren Counties for the 2012-2013 school year:

Grade level	Male	Female	Non-traditional students*	Total Enrollment
12	740	663	178	1,403
11	593	510	124	1,103
10	466	422	47	888
9	156	131	29	287
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1,956</b>	<b>1,726</b>	<b>378</b>	<b>3,682</b>

\*=Non-traditional students are those who attend part-time or have dependents of their own

The table below features enrollment data for specific program offered at CTE facilities across the region.

Field	Male	Female	Non Traditional	Total
Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources	31	21	21	<b>52</b>
Architecture & Construction	156	23	23	<b>179</b>
Arts, A/V Technology & Communication	113	202	15	<b>315</b>
Business, Management & Administration	186	192	*	<b>378</b>
Education & Training	*	*	*	<b>6</b>
Finance	34	54	*	<b>88</b>
Government & Public Administration	18	29	*	<b>47</b>
Health Science	54	154	*	<b>208</b>
Hospitality & Tourism	38	94	94	<b>132</b>
Human Services	*	25	*	<b>26</b>
Information Technology	80	42	8	<b>122</b>
Law, Public Safety & Security	19	10	10	<b>29</b>
Manufacturing	149	23	23	<b>172</b>
Marketing, Sales and Service	97	103	*	<b>200</b>
Science, Technology, Engineering, & Mathematics	*	*	*	<b>8</b>
Transportation, Distribution & Logistics	166	12	12	<b>178</b>

\* = Data provided is too low to assure confidentiality

The following table identifies the post-secondary educational institutions in the region and their 2012-2013 enrollment numbers.

Educational Institution	Type	2012-2013 Enrollment
Andrews University	Private university	3,487
Lake Michigan College	Community college	4,739
Siena Heights University at Lake Michigan College	Public university	Data not available at this time
Southwestern Michigan College	Private college	3,262
Western Michigan University-Southwest	Public research institution	#

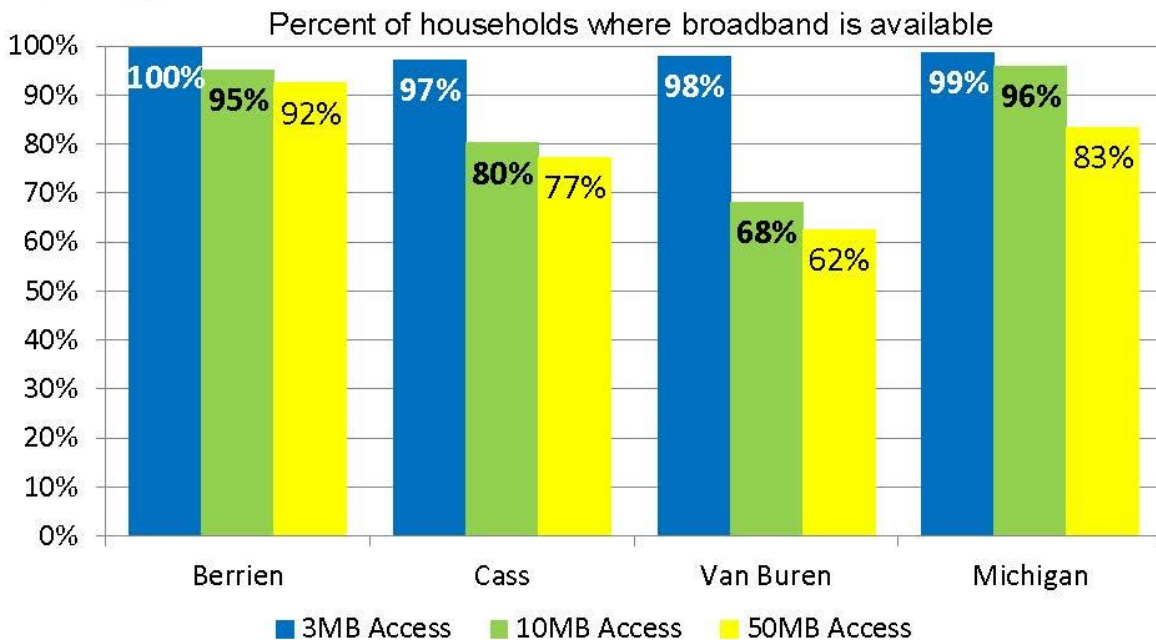
### *Broadband Infrastructure*

Broadband infrastructure is a vital component to the development of an innovative society. These high-speed internet connections enable students to research and attend courses online; it opens up new possibilities for public safety agencies to develop more effective systems for first responders; they provide businesses with the ability to engage in global commerce; and enables businesses and other institutions with the ability to transfer important information as it is needed. Only a decade ago, technology like this was seen as a luxury; however, today broadband connections are a requirement for any community to have any relevance in the new global economy.

Berrien, Cass, and Van Buren Counties have made significant steps toward building its broadband infrastructure over the last decade; however, more effort is needed to bring the entire region up to speed to make it competitive with regions across the globe. Berrien County, the most urbanized of the three counties, fares the best in terms of population coverage; having 100% coverage at 3MB access and 92% coverage at speeds of 50MB and above. The graphic below shows a comparison of internet speeds available in each of the three counties, as well as Michigan as a whole.



## Available Broadband Speeds Southwest Region – Oct 2013



The maps included in Appendix # (page #) show the availability of broadband internet service providers offering advertised speeds of at least 3MB. By contemporary standards, a 3MB connection is considered to be relatively slow, but still bearable and adequate for most average home users, but not sufficient for most businesses, government, and educational institutions. A 10MB connection is relatively average and suitable for most home users and small businesses, while it is still relatively slow for most ICT and knowledge-sector businesses and institutions, while speeds of 50MB and over are ideal for the latter's processes.

## Analysis of Challenges and Opportunities

### Challenges Facing Southwest Michigan's Economy

Throughout the engagement process with the 2013 Advisory Committee, a handful of challenges facing the overall regional economy were identified and considered while developing the plan of action. Three of the region's foremost challenges are acknowledged below, as well as references to actions which may overcome them.

Challenge	Description	Efforts to overcome
Skills gap	As technologies and job environments evolve over time, so do the competencies which are required for professionals in the field. The gap between the skills of the region's talent pool and the needs of the region's employers is an impediment in the region's ability to employ the workforce and to supply firms with the necessary talent to keep business running.	Providing on the job training opportunities for new professionals, such as internships and apprenticeships.
Brain drain	More and more young college graduates are taking their skills and talents to other states that offer unique places and more opportunities.	Talent attraction and retention efforts like placemaking.
Economic diversification	The presence of a range of industry sectors is important to a healthy and sustainable economy. Southwest Michigan has strong manufacturing, health care, and agricultural sectors, but focusing attention to knowledge sector industries (social services; finance and insurance; information; professional services; and management of companies) could make the region more resilient.	Identify newly emerging clusters where well-paying jobs reside and develop strategies to encourage the cultivation and growth of new enterprises in these sectors through economic gardening.

## Southwest Michigan's 2014 Prosperity Plan

Upon approval of southwest Michigan's application for the State's Regional Prosperity Initiative (see page ###) the collaborative project team must develop a five-year regional prosperity plan. This plan is expected to include the following:

- i. The collaborative must include regional representatives from adult education, workforce development, economic development, transportation, and higher education organizations.
- ii. The phase one: regional prosperity plan is required, at a minimum, to include a 5-year economic development blueprint for the region, a performance dashboard and measurable annual goals.
- iii. The 5-year economic development blueprint must include plans related to regional planning of adult education, workforce development, economic development, transportation, and higher education.
- iv. The regional prosperity collaborative shall adopt its phase one: regional prosperity plan by a 2/3 majority vote of its members.

## Relevant Plans and Studies

Institution	Document	Scope	Priorities (starred priorities are shared with this CEDS)
Michigan Economic Development Corporation	<a href="#">2012-2017 Strategic Plan</a>	Statewide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Entrepreneurship*</li> <li>• Business Growth*</li> <li>• Access to Capital*</li> <li>• Vibrant Communities*</li> <li>• Talent*</li> <li>• Image*</li> <li>• Seamless delivery of services</li> </ul>
Michigan Workforce Development Agency	<a href="#">Five-Year Strategic State Workforce Investment Plan</a>	Statewide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Michigan Industry Cluster Approach*</li> <li>• Pure Michigan Talent Connect*</li> <li>• Talent Based Job Creation and Entrepreneurship*</li> <li>• Workforce reforms</li> </ul>
Michigan Municipal League	<a href="#">Partnership for Place: An Agenda for a Competitive 21<sup>st</sup> Century Michigan</a>	Cities statewide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funding for the future*</li> <li>• Michigan in motion (multi-modal transportation)*</li> <li>• Place for talent*</li> <li>• Strength in Structure (infrastructure)*</li> </ul>
Southwest Michigan First	<a href="#">Transformation Agenda</a>	Berrien, Branch, Calhoun, Cass, Kalamazoo,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business growth*</li> <li>• Vital urban cores*</li> <li>• Effective education*</li> </ul>



		Saint Joseph, and Van Buren Counties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Efficient government</li> </ul>
Cornerstone Alliance	<a href="#">Strategic Plan 2014-2016</a>	Berrien County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business Development*</li> <li>• Community Capacity to support business development</li> <li>• Working on image and expanding on past successes</li> <li>• Sustainable funding and focus on infrastructure*</li> <li>• Expanding reach and developing new partnerships*</li> </ul>
Southwestern Michigan Economic Growth Alliance	2014-2018 Strategic Plan	Berrien, Cass, and Van Buren Counties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attract new business*</li> <li>• Support the Retention and Expansion of Existing Businesses*</li> <li>• Promote a skilled workforce*</li> <li>• Partner locally (enhance local community* development efforts)</li> <li>• Partner regionally*</li> </ul>
Southwest Michigan Planning Commission	2009-2035 Long Range Plans [ <a href="#">NATS</a> ] [ <a href="#">TwinCATS</a> ] (Transportation)	Berrien, Cass, and Van Buren Counties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhance the economic vitality of southwest Michigan*</li> <li>• Promote safety conscious planning and system security</li> <li>• Ensure the equitability and accessibility of the system</li> <li>• Preserve the regional transportation system</li> <li>• Promote livable communities and environmental responsibility in Michigan*</li> <li>• Efficiently and effectively move</li> </ul>

			people, goods, and services within southwest Michigan
	2013 Transportation Improvements Plan <a href="#">[NATS]</a> <a href="#">[TwinCATS]</a>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safety</li> <li>• Infrastructure condition*</li> <li>• Congestion reduction</li> <li>• System reliability</li> <li>• Freight movement and economic vitality*</li> </ul>
Kinexus (Michigan Works!)	2013 State of the Workforce	Berrien, Cass, and Van Buren Counties	<i>Not Available</i>

## Economic Development Investments

### EDA Public Works Funding in Southwest Michigan Since 1976

Coun ty	Applicant	Project Location	Project Description (abbreviations)	Ye ar	EDA Fundin g	Total Fundin g
Berrie n	Twin Cities Development Corp	Benton Harbor	Water/Sewer to Indust. Park	1971	\$302,400	\$378,000
Berrie n	Benton Harbor, City of	Benton Harbor	Addition to City Hall	1974	\$302,400	\$378,000
Berrie n	Benton Harbor, City of	Benton Harbor	Addition to Public Building	1975	\$168,000	\$588,000
Berrie n	Lake Michigan College District	Benton Harbor	Multipurpose Ctr Const	1976	\$5,000,000	\$5,000,000
Cass	Cass County Board of Commissioners	Cassopolis	Library Construction	1976	\$871,204	\$871,204
Berrie n	Benton Harbor, City of	Benton Harbor	Pavement and Sidewalk Improvement	1977	\$804,500	\$804,500
Berrie n	Benton Harbor Area Schools	Benton Harbor	Renovate Schools/hdcp	1977	\$804,500	\$804,500
Van	South Haven, City of	South	Road construction	19	\$263,9	\$263,94

Buren		Haven		77	46	6
Van Buren	South Haven, City of	South Haven	Replace glass in Sch/energy	19 77	\$12,000	\$12,000
Berrien	Berrien County	Niles	County Ofc Bldg	19 77	\$1,166,000	\$1,166,000
Van Buren	Hartford, Township of	Hartford	Town Hall & Utility Building	19 77	\$180,874	\$180,874
Van Buren	South Haven, City of	South Haven	School Addition	19 77	\$250,053	\$250,053
Van Buren	Paw Paw, Village of	Paw Paw	Sidewalk Improvements	19 77	\$83,000	\$83,000
Van Buren	Covert Township	Covert	Township Hall Renovation	19 77	\$270,000	\$270,000
Van Buren	Paw Paw, Township of	Paw Paw	Construction of 3 new bridges	19 77	\$98,000	\$98,000
Cass	Edwardsburg Township	Edwardsburg	Township Facility	19 77	\$299,835	\$299,835
Cass	Dowagiac, City of	Dowagiac	Park and Recr Building	19 77	\$135,565	\$135,565
Van Buren	Hartford, City of	Hartford	Sidewalk Improvement Project	19 77	\$274,133	\$274,133
Van Buren	Van Buren County	Paw Paw	Const Addition County Building	19 77	\$277,000	\$277,000
Cass	Vandalia, Village of	Vandalia	Community Center	19 77	\$159,947	\$159,947
Cass	Marcellus, Village of	Marcellus	Municipal Building Construction	19 77	\$276,500	\$276,500
Van Buren	Bangor, City of	Bangor	Industrial Park Improvement	19 82	\$83,420	\$143,000
Berrien	Buchanan Township	Buchanan	Redbud Center/River Shores	19 83	\$137,500	\$275,000
Berrien	Benton Harbor, City of	Benton Harbor	Improvement to Industrial Area	19 85	\$490,550	\$625,000
Berrien	Buchanan, City of	Buchanan	Const Pub Street	19 85	\$381,015	\$500,000
Berrien	Niles, City of &	Niles	Incubator Building	19 86	\$400,000	\$500,000
Berrien	Benton Harbor, City of	Benton Harbor	Industrial Park Improvement	19 87	\$500,500	\$650,000
Berrien	Benton Charter	Benton	Industrial Park	19	\$438,000	\$730,000

n	Township	Harbor		91	00	0
Van Buren	Lawrence, Village of	Lawrence	MI/Inc Commercial Area	1996	\$777,000	\$1,295,000
Berrien	Niles, City of	Niles	Sewer & Water Extension	1996	\$579,250	\$1,158,500
Berrien	Cornerstone Alliance	Benton Harbor	Infrastructure Improv	1999	\$1,247,000	\$1,798,000
Cass	Dowagiac, City of	Dowagiac	Ind Park Expansion	2000	\$775,558	\$1,292,597
Van Buren	South Haven, City of	South Haven	Park Infrastructure	2001	\$1,299,000	\$2,165,000
Van Buren	Decatur, Village of	Decatur	Road & WW Trt Expansion	2004	\$980,000	\$1,960,000

Source: EDA's Chicago Regional Office, November 2009

## Call for Projects

### Text

SWMPC #				
APPLICANT:				
PROJECT:				
LOCATION:				
SOURCE:				
PURPOSE:				
CONTACT:				
FUNDING:	Federal	State	Other	Total

## Regional Economic Cluster Analysis

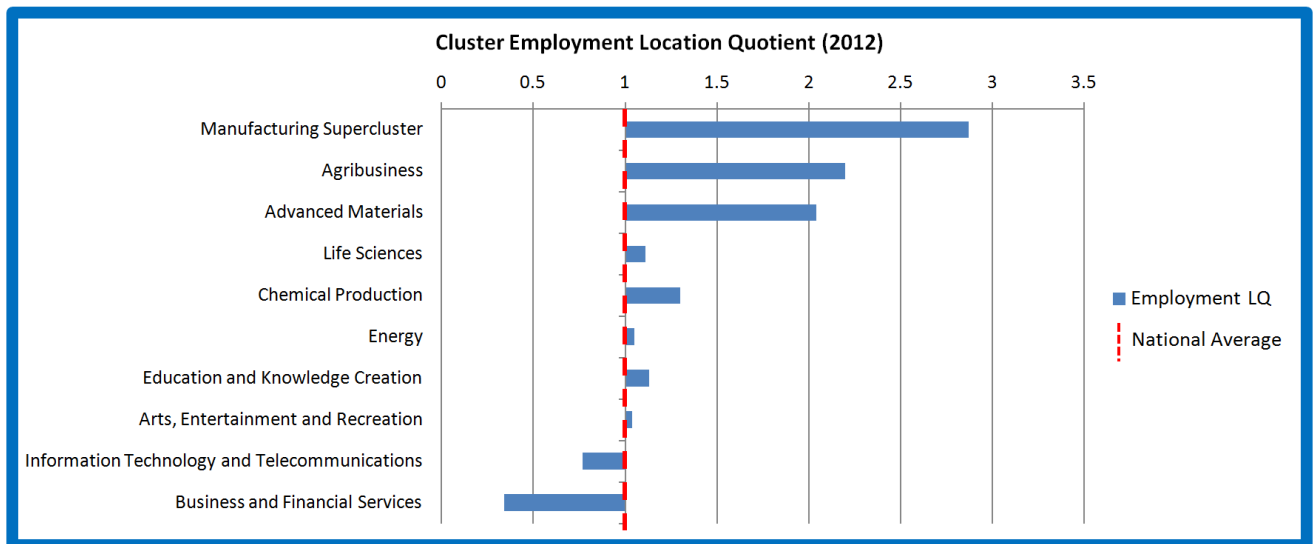
The following table provides statistics on southwest Michigan's ten most established industry clusters from 2010-2012. The table shows real data by cluster for number

of establishments, numbers of employees, and average annual wages. The data also provides location quotients for each of these fields.

Industry Cluster	# of Establishments		Establishment LQ		Cluster Employment		Employment LQ		Cluster Annual Wages		Annual Wages LQ	
	2010	2012	2010	2012	2010	2012	2010	2012	2010	2012	2010	2012
Manufacturing Supercluster	284	228	3.20	3.12	10,493	9,552	2.81	2.87	\$394,477,373	\$387,620,859	1.95	2.10
Agribusiness	255	261	2.81	2.91	4,725	4,460	2.26	2.20	\$123,605,627	\$131,735,848	1.90	2.09
Advanced Materials	263	204	2.79	2.42	7,245	5,858	2.23	2.04	\$402,446,436	\$352,925,986	2.14	2.06
Life Sciences	192	178	0.90	0.81	10,131	10,823	1.04	1.11	\$493,281,394	\$553,554,767	1.29	1.44
Chemical Production	73	65	1.63	1.57	2,180	1,660	1.59	1.30	\$109,928,812	\$91,028,411	1.54	1.36
Energy	224	207	0.84	0.79	4,125	4,188	1.05	1.05	\$299,835,704	\$322,102,509	1.28	1.29
Education and Knowledge Creation	63	70	0.77	0.82	3,661	3,804	1.08	1.13	\$158,985,021	\$171,859,512	1.18	1.25
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	231	220	1.32	1.28	3,331	3,644	0.95	1.04	\$81,750,406	\$96,688,240	0.81	0.95
Information Technology and Telecommunications	95	89	0.42	0.38	2,334	2,626	0.69	0.77	\$157,308,069	\$188,162,284	0.62	0.71
Business and Financial Services	622	600	0.66	0.63	2,623	2,633	0.34	0.34	\$131,077,561	\$137,199,397	0.25	0.25

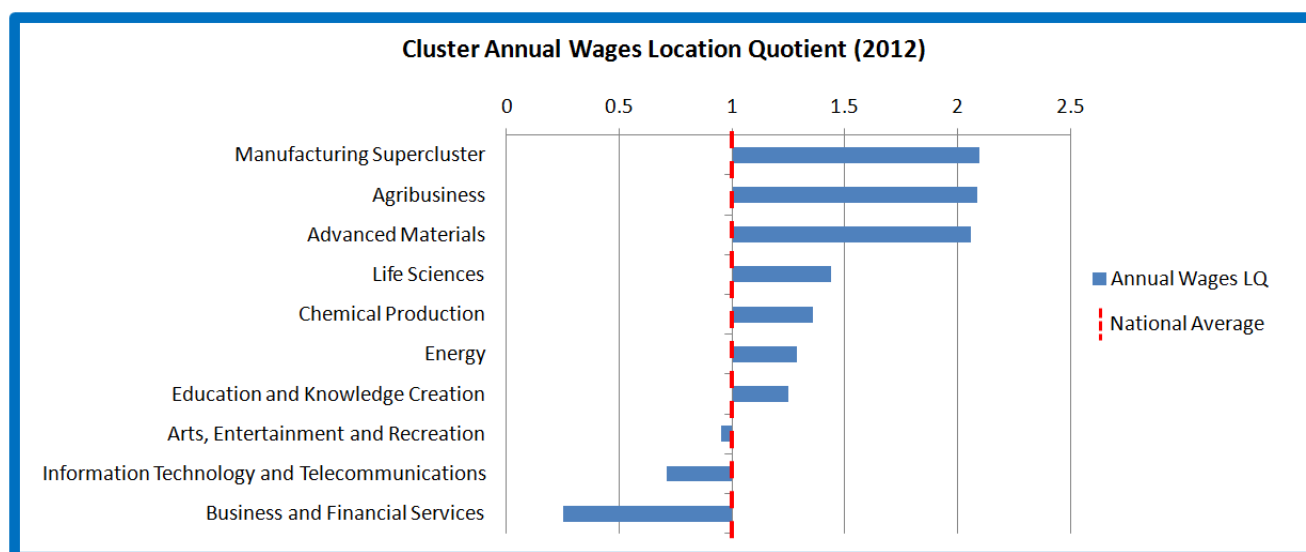
A location quotient (LQ) is an analytical statistic that measures a region's industrial specialization relative to the nation. An LQ is calculated as an industry's share of a regional total of one of these points of data, divided by the industry's share of the national total for the same statistic. For example, an LQ of 1.0 in Arts and Entertainment means that the region and the nation are equally specialized in mining; while an LQ of 1.8 means that the region has a higher concentration in Arts and Entertainment than the nation.

The graphic below shows the Employment LQ of the top ten largest clusters in southwest Michigan compared to the nation.



The region employs nearly three times the national average of manufacturing cluster employees and over two times the average in both agribusiness and the production of advanced materials. The knowledge-based fields of life sciences, chemical production, energy, education and knowledge creation also exceed the national average slightly; although ICT and business/financial services fall behind that average.

The table below provides location quotients for the average annual wages within these same clusters.



The data shows that the region’s manufacturing, agribusiness, and the production of advanced materials jobs pay more than twice the national average, while life sciences, chemical production, energy, and knowledge creation jobs also paid slightly above the average. The region’s wages in arts and entertainment, ICT, and business/financial services fell slightly behind the rest of the nation.

## Cooperative Regional Expectations

### Southwest Michigan’s Economic Development Vision

Given the diverse membership of our 30-member CEDS Strategic Advisory Committee, coordinating between the vast ranges of interests in the region was an inevitable challenge. In an attempt to begin the process from a point of mutual understanding, the Committee was engaged in a visioning exercise at their first meeting to identify shared values as they related to the region’s economic development future. By the end of this process, the following vision was proposed, voted upon, and accepted:

“To cultivate a **resilient**, **sustainable**, and **globally-competitive knowledge-based economy** across southwest Michigan that supports an **improved quality of life** and builds **pathways to prosperity** for residents.”

*-2013 CEDS Strategic Advisory Committee*



Central to this vision was the concept of building the foundation for a knowledge-based economy that was stronger, smarter, higher-skilled, and more resistant to the economic downturns which threatened the region's economic stability in years past. It is a vision that respects the quality of life of residents and strives to provide an environment that is conducive for upward mobility. From the first meeting on, this vision would be consistently referred to as we worked through the development of our economic development strategy.

Working from the concepts embodied in this vision, we began to develop the goals and objectives which would guide our plan of action and eventually shape the strategic projects, programs, and initiatives which would support the realization of these ideals.

## Goals and Objectives

Committee meetings that followed the group's initial visioning session focused on developing our region's strategic framework for meeting these ideals. The Committee was given the opportunity to develop a set of the five goals most important to the attainment of this vision. The Committee came to a consensus on their five highest-priority elements; these topics sought to address needs of existing businesses and entrepreneurs, the education to workforce pipeline, developing industry cluster-based strategies, modernization of the region's infrastructure, and talent attraction and retention. A summary of these five goals and their associated SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-bound) objectives follow:

### **Goal #1: Support and meet the needs of existing local businesses and entrepreneurs.**

Local economic development depends on local businesses and entrepreneurs. By providing support to local partners, our region can help facilitate more economic development on the grassroots level, causing development spurs from the ground up.

- Objective: By 2015, develop a web-based tool designed to help connect southwest Michigan's business owners and entrepreneurs to important business-related community resources in order to help them to quickly navigate the regional economic development ecosystem and find solutions.

- Objective: By 2015, develop a “Business to Business” networking and mentorship initiative in order to help novice business owners prosper, to encourage collaborative problem solving and best practice sharing, and to encourage mutually-beneficial arrangements between businesses.
- Objective: By 2017, reduce the number of downtown business vacancies in communities with functioning DDAs by engaging in strategies that encourage the revitalization of downtown business districts.
- Objective: By 2015, provide a comprehensive list of “capital resources” to assist business owners and entrepreneurs in finding traditional and non-traditional funding sources.

## **Goal #2: Support employer engagement in K-12, adult education, higher education, and vocational experiences in order to develop a high-quality workforce with a strong sense of work ethic.**

Starting career engagement as early as Kindergarten can have a direct impact on molding and shaping students for the future workforce. Employer engagement can help to give students workforce knowledge, preparation, and stresses the importance of personal achievement and work ethic.

- Objective: By 2015, establish a pilot program that creates partnerships (adopt-a-school) between businesses and schools (elementary, middle schools, and high schools) in order to incorporate fundamental workplace skills and attitudes at an early age.
- Objective: By May 2014, develop an internship coordination program for manufacturing and agribusiness jobs in order to help employers recruit talented young individuals who will receive a rich and rewarding professional experience and potentially stay with that employer.
- Objective: By 2015, develop a region-wide and multi-institutional “educational program catalog” to showcase vocational, secondary, and post-secondary academic programs and maps what is available by age, industry, economics, outcomes of programs, and who to contact for interns.

### **Goal #3: Develop a resilient regional economy built on established and emerging industry clusters by engaging in effective communication and collaboration throughout southwest Michigan's economic development ecosystem.**

Industry cluster communication and collaboration seeks to build a network of mutually beneficial partners. Through this network, partners can share responsibilities and resources, making each more economically viable and powerful.

- Objective: By 2016, Assemble work groups made up of public and private sector entities to streamline identification of shared needs, successes, challenges, and opportunities among industry clusters.
- Objective: By 2015, create a region-wide organizational asset inventory for use by institutions within the economic development ecosystem that is broad enough to be queried based on a range of jurisdictions, affiliations, and organizational assets in order to improve collaborative endeavors among entities.

### **Goal #4: Improve and maintain southwest Michigan's infrastructure to meet contemporary standards.**

Up-to-date infrastructure is crucial for the future cultivation of new firms and expansion of existing firms. In order for new and existing businesses to move or remain in the area, the region needs to supply amenities and contemporary infrastructure.

- Objective: By 2016, identify and begin maintaining a database, starting with at least 10 industrial and/or commercial sites within the region and inventory the following features: broadband; water/sewer; utilities (gas and electric); road class of adjacent roadways; proximity to rail, commercial ports, and highway interchanges; and significant environmental features.
- Objective: By 2015, assemble a broadband taskforce in order to develop strategies for identifying "last mile" deficiencies in broadband infrastructure coverage, improving broadband user adoption rates, and implementation of Connect Michigan's recommendations for building a stronger digital economy.

- Objective: By 2014, begin improving the coordination between transportation and economic development projects in the region through better understanding of their linkages and conducting economic impact analyses on significant transportation improvement projects.

## **Goal #5: Foster an environment that appeals to young, talented individuals.**

Young, talented individuals are highly mobile and willing to relocate. Having more young degree holders in this region will bring in economic diversity, fresh ideas, and intellectual assets helping to further innovation and economic advancement.

- Objective: By 2015, develop a regional placemaking strategy to identify southwest Michigan's assets that contribute to "sense of place" and potential growth areas for Strategic Placemaking initiatives.
- Objective: By 2017, analyze the region's existing housing stock and develop plans to provide and maintain a broad range of housing options suited to a variety of incomes, lifestyles, and family sizes while utilizing the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) "Livability Principles".
- Objective: By 2016, work with public and private partners in the region to develop internship opportunities for high school and college students which will provide young, talented individuals with entry-level opportunities.

## **Strategic Projects, Programs, and Initiatives**

### **Regional Prosperity Initiative**

Michigan's Regional Prosperity Initiative (RPI) is a voluntary competitive grant process that initiated in 2013, developed by the Governor's Office of Strategic Policy in coordination with regional leaders from around the State. The purpose of the RPI is to promote the alignment of a regional strategy for service delivery and to develop vibrant and competitive regional economies through collaborative involvement between public, private, and non-profit partners.

For southwest Michigan in particular, this approach was a welcomed incentive for practices and partnerships that were already beginning to emerge. Partners from southwest Michigan's new Region 8, which can be seen on the map to the right, submitted a proposal for developing a collaborative structure for future economic prosperity. Joining the existing counties under SWMPC's jurisdiction are the neighbor counties to the east under the jurisdiction of the



Southcentral Michigan Planning Council, which are: Branch, Calhoun, Kalamazoo, and St. Joseph Counties. This State-determined regional scope is intended to re-align service delivery boundaries among providers across five fields:

- Adult education
- Economic development
- Higher Education
- Transportation
- Workforce development

Funds provided through this program will be used for the facilitation of discussion among regional leaders in each of these fields, as well as the development of a strategic framework document for future collaborative efforts in light of diminished resources. Throughout the process, partners are expected to begin breaking down the silos in which we have operated during the “Old Economy” and being leveraging resources more effectively.

## Michigan's Great Southwest Strategic Leadership Council

A diverse group of community, education, business and government leaders are working to accelerate positive change in Southwest Michigan.

Participants in the Michigan's Great Southwest Strategic Leadership Council met in November of 2013 to discuss the positive changes that have taken place in the community during the past decade and honestly assess what the future holds for the interdependent set of communities in Berrien County.

The group first assembled in September at the invitation of Jeff Fettig, chairman and CEO of Whirlpool Corporation, and Dr. Loren Hamel, president and CEO of Lakeland HealthCare. At that meeting, the attendees acknowledged that, although our area is often referred to as Michigan's Great Southwest, many throughout our communities ask whether this description is aspirational at best.

During the September meeting, this diverse group of leaders discussed the need for a process to help accelerate positive change for the region and agreed to engage in an internationally regarded process known as "Future Search" to help the group engage in honest discussions around the strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities the communities face.

"Despite hundreds of millions of dollars in new investment along with significant employment gains by Whirlpool Corporation, Lakeland HealthCare and others, our area has seen a 9.4 percent loss of overall employment and a 4.1 percent loss of population over the past decade that is adversely impacting state funding for our schools and local communities," said Fettig.

One of the outcomes noted from the November working session was the group's agreement that the opportunity to stimulate the local economy has never been better. Evidence of this includes the national economy slowly emerging from a deep recession; structural changes in the State of Michigan beginning to take hold; and our region's proximity to Chicago and its \$400 billion GDP helping to fuel economic opportunity.

The leaders agreed realizing such opportunities would take a collective effort by the entire community. The Leadership Council will not create a roadmap or a prescriptive set of changes. Rather, the idea is to engage business, education, non-profit and government leaders to agree on a vision and help prioritize the areas whereby collaboration can help move our community to top tier in terms of services, education and economic growth.

Going forward, the work of the Michigan's Great Southwest Strategic Leadership Council will be to create an ever-growing body of community, business, education and organizational representatives to create a greater understanding of the critical issues, current competitive position and the gap between where the community is



today versus where we want to be in the future. The group will then identify strategic priorities for job creation, talent development and strengthened delivery of government services against reality-based planning.

## Southwest Michigan Broadband Initiative

While much of the southwest Michigan region currently has some form of high-speed internet available, there are still significant barriers preventing widespread adoption and the utilization of broadband to its fullest potential. Identifying these barriers and developing policies and initiatives to remove them will help make southwest Michigan a more connected and more prosperous place. It is for this reason that the Southwest Michigan Broadband Initiative (SWMBI) was developed.

This initiative emerged from the partnership between Connect Michigan and SWMPC following the region's participation in the Connected Communities program. This initiative seeks to identify the challenges facing broadband connectivity in the region on two levels, which are: the accessibility of broadband infrastructure and the adoption of high-speed internet by businesses and residents.



Upon completion of the Connect Michigan Community Assessment (excerpts from this assessment provided in appendix #, page #) in 2013, the SWMBI ad-hoc advisory committee will convene to discuss recommendations for adoption and implementation strategies provided by Connect Michigan and how to best apply these recommendations region-wide to become a Certified Connected Community. Additionally, this committee will be tasked with developing a strategy for ground-truthing the broadband infrastructure map data for Berrien, Cass, and Van Buren Counties that was developed during the Connected Communities program.

Apart from meeting the basic needs for overcoming the digital divide, the initiative's long range goal is to help communities stay ahead of the curve in regard to broadband infrastructure development. As technology evolves, the demand for higher internet speeds from businesses and households also increases. The ability to offer ultra-fast internet connectivity is quickly becoming a tool for attracting businesses and talent; communities that are able to market these assets hold a significant advantage in courting high-tech and knowledge-sector talent.

# Employer Internship Training Program

Internships have been identified by the CEDS Strategic Advisory Committee as a vital component of our regional economic development strategy. Internships provide real world professional experiences for entry-level students hoping to become professionals in their fields. Internships serve a dual purpose in this strategy; they could potentially open up long-term employment opportunities at local firms by providing a “foot in the door” and they also help in closing the skills gap in professions with ever-increasing technical skills demands.

The Employer Internship Training Program was initiated following the development of the 2013 CEDS’ goal for improving the region’s education to workforce talent pipeline. The program development team, consisting of representatives from Lake Michigan College, Western Michigan University-Southwest, Michigan State University’s Institute of Agricultural Technology, and Kinexus (our region’s workforce investment board), is building off of resources provided by Prima Civitas’ [Michigan Internship Initiative](#). The program aims to educate agribusiness and manufacturing employers on how to create high-quality internship programs that meet regulatory standards and teach interns valuable skills for being successful professionals in these fields.



Early in 2014, regional employers from the agribusiness and manufacturing sectors will join the EITP program team at introductory meeting to discuss “what’s in it?” for these employers, future opportunities to design internship programs, and even receive technical assistance from academic professionals to support these programs.

## Strategic Placemaking Initiative

Placemaking is the process of developing healthy, vibrant, and prosperous places within communities that attract pedestrians by encourage the use of public spaces and other local amenities. Placemaking seeks to create destinations that develop a feeling of an authentic and distinctive “sense of place”, often building from assets like main streets, parks, districts, plazas, cultural events, public art, and local

history. Placemaking is an important tool for attracting tourists and talent to a region, but also for providing established residents with engaging and inviting year-round activities.

It is apparent that in order to reverse the trend of out-migration of our region's residents, developing healthy, vibrant, and livable places with a range of opportunities is imperative. In 2013, SWMPC began developing a three-part initiative to help cultivate placemaking efforts throughout the region as a result of the CEDS Strategic Advisory Committee's goal for talent attraction and retention. SWMPC will begin working with the pilot communities of Benton Harbor and Saint Joseph beginning in 2014.

## **Regional Place-based Asset Mapping Project**

In preparation of local placemaking efforts, SWMPC is committed to mapping place-based assets like parks, museums, and non-motorized trails across the region. Mapping these assets will provide local units of government with a powerful resource to build from and add to as they develop local strategies for creating their own place identities.

## **MiPlace Partnership**

The MiPlace Partnership is a new program from the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) developed with assistance from Michigan State University's Land Policy Institute, created to empower local units of government to improve their communities through placemaking strategies. This program consists of six training modules for local government officials, economic developers, and non-profit community advocates designed to educate these leaders on placemaking's value as a tool for economic development and how to create local strategies to transform communities.

SWMPC's role in the Partnership is to host these training modules throughout the region and engaging local leaders to participate.



## Targeted Placemaking Projects

Communities that are ready to engage in local placemaking efforts are encouraged to coordinate with SWMPC on significant placemaking projects that will help build upon southwest Michigan's regional identity. Targeted projects that emphasize values of this identity, such as the cultivation of entrepreneurial and creative communities, active and healthy lifestyles, effective multi-modal transportation systems, and pride in our matchless natural resources are paramount to the regional interest. SWMPC is committed to supporting local units by providing these endeavors by providing high-quality informational resources and expert technical assistance.

## Action Plan

### A Collaborative Approach

Southwest Michigan's plan of action for the future of the economic development centers on leveraging collaborative partnerships among public and private sector entities to engage in focused initiatives relating to the CEDS' goals and objectives. A number of these initiatives are already beginning to form and are expected to align the priorities embodied in this document with those priorities shared by other public institutions and private enterprises. By recognizing shared priorities and adapting initiatives to accommodate the goals of partner institutions and success of private sector firms within the economic development ecosystem, we are creating a strong incentive to collaborate on a range of activities while bringing significantly more resources to the table.

The public-private partnership (P3) initiatives that develop over the following years are expected to undertake a range of activities relating directly to the goals and priorities of the CEDS while also promoting the EDA's interests in:

- Promoting economic development and opportunity;
- Fostering effective transportation access;
- Enhancing and protecting the environment;
- Maximizing effective development and use of the workforce;
- Promoting the use of technology in economic development;

- Balancing resources through sound management of physical development; and
- Obtaining and utilizing adequate funds and other resources

P3 initiatives that arise from the CEDS will address each of these interests (as they apply) by building each component into the framework of the initiative from the onset of that program. SWMPC has developed a first draft of the P3I Analysis Tool (Appendix #, page #) for use during the planning stages of these P3 initiatives to serve as a guide for identifying opportunities to improve in these areas. The P3I Analysis Tool will also serve as an efficient way of tracking and reporting performance measures as these initiatives progress and is expected to translate well to future CEDS updates.

Current P3 Initiatives related to the CEDS and their relationship to the EDA's Plan of Action interests are described below:

Public Private Partnership Initiative (P3I)	Purpose	Action Plan component addressed
Southwest Michigan Broadband Initiative	To increase the availability of broadband infrastructure across southwest Michigan and to increase adoption rates among residents, public institutions, and private sector enterprises.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promoting economic development and opportunity;</li> <li>• Promoting the use of technology in economic development;</li> <li>• Obtaining and utilizing adequate funds and other resources</li> </ul>
Regional Prosperity Initiative	To align public sector agencies and institutions around a common geography and facilitate better coordination among these entities in order to create a more prosperous and business-friendly region.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promoting economic development and opportunity;</li> <li>• Fostering effective transportation access;</li> <li>• Maximizing effective development and use of the workforce;</li> <li>• Balancing resources through sound management of physical development;</li> <li>• Obtaining and utilizing adequate funds and other resources</li> </ul>



Employer Internship Training Program	To equip private sector employers with the tools and knowledge to build high-quality internship programs for students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promoting economic development and opportunity;</li> <li>• Maximizing effective development and use of the workforce;</li> <li>• Obtaining and utilizing adequate funds and other resources</li> </ul>
Michigan's Great Southwest Strategic Leadership Council	To identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats as they relate to the future of investments in southwest Michigan and to develop strategies for improved activities in light of these factors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promoting economic development and opportunity;</li> <li>• Fostering effective transportation access;</li> <li>• Enhancing and protecting the environment;</li> <li>• Maximizing effective development and use of the workforce;</li> <li>• Promoting the use of technology in economic development;</li> <li>• Balancing resources through sound management of physical development;</li> <li>• Obtaining and utilizing adequate funds and other resources</li> </ul>
Strategic Placemaking Initiative	To cultivate healthy, vibrant, and prosperous communities across the region by coordinating with local governments, non-profit organizations, businesses, and the public.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promoting economic development and opportunity;</li> <li>• Fostering effective transportation access;</li> <li>• Enhancing and protecting the environment;</li> <li>• Balancing resources through sound management of physical development;</li> <li>• Obtaining and utilizing adequate funds and other resources</li> </ul>
Westrain	To continue the preservation and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promoting economic</li> </ul>

	expansion of Amtrak's Pere Marquette passenger rail line to the Blue Water and Wolverine high speed rail corridors in order to maintain interconnected passenger rail service throughout southern Michigan.	development and opportunity; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fostering effective transportation access;</li> <li>• Balancing resources through sound management of physical development;</li> <li>• Obtaining and utilizing adequate funds and other resources</li> </ul>
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## Coordination with Michigan's Statewide Strategy

This CEDS document has been developed to align with a number of focus areas in the State of Michigan's overall economic development strategy. The Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) created a six-year economic development strategy in which identified seven focus areas for strategic initiatives in Michigan. The following table outlines the major initiatives in the MEDC's 2012-2017 Strategic Plan and how those initiatives related to southwest Michigan's regional economic development strategy.

MEDC Initiatives	2013 CEDS Focus Areas
Entrepreneurship	Support and meet the needs of existing local businesses and entrepreneurs.
Business Growth	Support employer engagement in K-12, adult education, higher education, and vocational schools.
Access to Capital	Developing cluster-based approaches to economic development and improving communication among EDOs
Vibrant Communities	Modernizing infrastructure
Talent	Talent attraction and retention through the creation of livable communities
Image	
Seamless delivery of services	

MEDC's first three focus areas; entrepreneurship, business growth, and access to capital fall under the CEDS' broad goal of supporting an environment that meets the needs of existing businesses and entrepreneurs. This CEDS goal is followed up



by objectives that range from engaging in economic gardening practices to cultivating entrepreneurial communities. The State's focus on building vibrant communities relates to our infrastructure goal, because well-maintained public infrastructure (like roads, bridges, sewer, and broadband) is vital to any vibrant community. Building vibrant communities is also critical from a talent attraction perspective, as young talented individuals are attracted to communities that are active and have a variety of options for recreational and entertainment activities. Our region's talent goal is also directly related to the State's talent attraction initiative, as well as the development of the region's image as a welcoming environment for new, young professionals looking for professional opportunities.

## Regional Investment Priorities for Projects

In addition to the EDA's [investment priorities](#), SWMPC has developed a set of regional priorities for projects to be considered for submission to the EDA. This additional set of priorities is intended to guide federally-funded economic development projects in the region toward the vision developed by the CEDS Strategic Advisory Committee. While this is not intended to be an exhaustive list, the projects that address some of the categories below are considered the highest priority for the region's economic future.

These additional priorities include:

### **1. Development of Innovation Assets**

Projects that create or add value to assets that are important to innovative advancements in the region are of the highest importance to this economic development strategy. Innovation assets like broadband infrastructure, research institutions, makerspaces, and business accelerators are valuable components to an innovative environment which, when well-connected in the ecosystem can create a pipeline from education and research, to the development of innovative ideas, and then on to the physical implementation of those ideas.

*Example:* Projects that link research and development from educational institutions to the private sector in order to create market-ready enterprises.

### **2. Talent Pipeline Development**

The development of the region's talent pipeline, from elementary school through trade school or college is critical for building a globally-competitive

region. Talented individuals fuel the engines of innovation in the new economy, and so ensuring that students are provided with ample opportunities for internships and entry-level work before they migrate to places like Chicago is in the region's best interest. The pipeline development strategy also benefits employers, such as those in manufacturing and ICT firms who frequently cite the lack of skilled employees (or the talent gap). An effective talent pipeline is the most important tool in bridging this gap.

*Example:* Projects that coordinate with local schools to develop training and educational experiences for high-demand jobs within southwest Michigan's industry sectors.

### **3. Modernization of Infrastructure and Facilities**

In order to attract and retain firms in the region, local governments must provide an environment that is conducive to the work that modern firms expect to engage in. The provision of adequate roads, utilities, broadband connectivity, and modern facilities to operate within are not a luxury; they are essential components for competing in the global knowledge economy.

*Example:* Projects that provide high-speed fiber optic internet connections to incubator facilities which may someday house ICT sector enterprises.

### **4. Increasing Exports of Regional Products**

Southwest Michigan encompasses a wide range of producer firms; from automobile parts to apples, to craft beer. By assisting firms in overcoming their exporting challenges by increasing production capacities or identifying new foreign markets, the region becomes more globally-competitive.

*Example:* The development of an industrial spur along a rail line to provide better logistical options to local manufacturers.

### **5. Improving the Regional Food System**

The southwest Michigan region boasts one of the most vibrant agricultural economies in the Midwest, generating \$411,281,000 (Include citation for Kinexus' State of the Workforce pg. 54 – Source: EMSI) in the regions exports from agricultural products in 2012. Despite this significant production capacity, the region lacks a comprehensive regional food system with food hubs that could supply residents with locally-grown foods nearly year-round.

Improving the region's food system will benefit the residents and the growing agribusiness sector by providing fresh locally-sourced foods.

*Example:* The development of a regional food hub which could support local producers with an aggregation, processing, and distribution point for locally sourced foods.

## **6. Renewable Energy Generation**

Southwest Michigan has favorable conditions and plentiful opportunities for the development of both wind and solar energy generation. The importance of renewable energy and green jobs are growing along with the need of energy independence. As technology evolves and Americans inevitably begin the conversion to a more sustainable society based around renewable energy; it makes sense for the region to stay ahead of the curve in cultivating this type of infrastructure, rather than behind it.

*Example:* Development of cooperatively-owned community wind or community solar projects as a method of rehabilitating local Brownfield sites.

## **7. Attracting Manufacturing Firms From Around the Globe**

Southwest Michigan has a long history as a prosperous manufacturing community, supplying the world with a range of products since the dawn of the industrial revolution. The region's strength as a manufacturing center lies in its well-trained workforce with exceptional work ethic, as well as our ability to develop new talent through world-class training programs in a rich manufacturing environment. Attracting firms from around the globe, either through re-shoring or welcoming foreign manufactures to utilize the vast talent pool we possess is a strategy worth pursuing.

*Example:* Develop strategies and target investments towards attracting new and innovative manufacturing firms to make use of the region's skilled workforce.

# **Performance Measures**

The 2013 CEDS and future iterations of this document will utilize a dashboard which tracks performance measures annually over a range of topics that indicate

the economic health of the region. This dashboard will be incorporated into the SWMPC website's economic development page. The tool included below will be used to communicate progress and measure success following the adoption of this plan and the implementation of its initiatives.

## Regional Economic Development Dashboard

Human Capital	Baseline Conditions	2014 Benchmark
Degree Holders-Associates or Higher		
Population Growth Rate		
Employment in High-Tech or Knowledge Based Occupations		
Internships		

Economic Dynamics	Baseline Conditions	2014 Benchmark
Venture Capital		
Establishment Churn		
Small and Medium Enterprises		
Large Enterprises		

Productivity and Employment	Baseline Conditions	2014 Benchmark
Jobs Created		
Jobs Retained		
Exports		
Patents		
Gross Domestic Product per Worker		

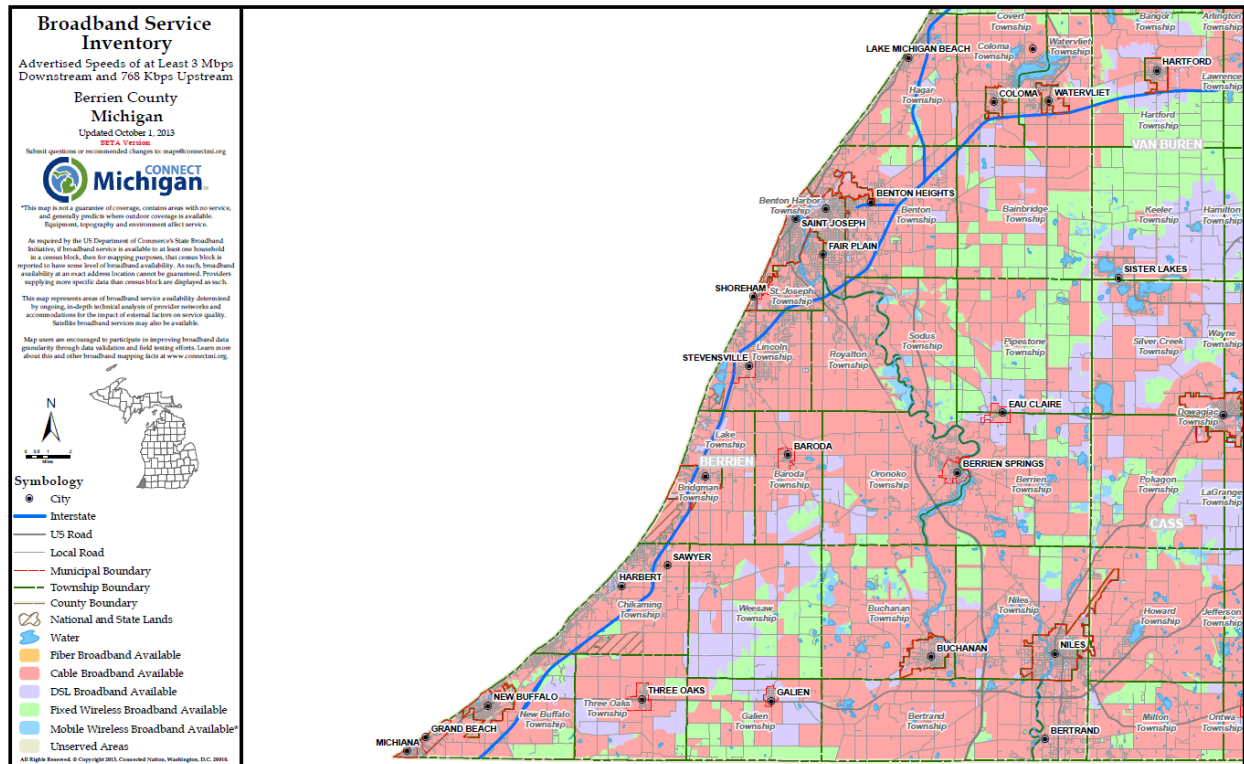
Economic Well-Being	Baseline Conditions	2014 Benchmark
Poverty Rate		
Unemployment		
Migration		
Growth per Capita Income		
Compensation (cluster employment)		

Investment Entity	Investment Purpose	Amount	Results
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			

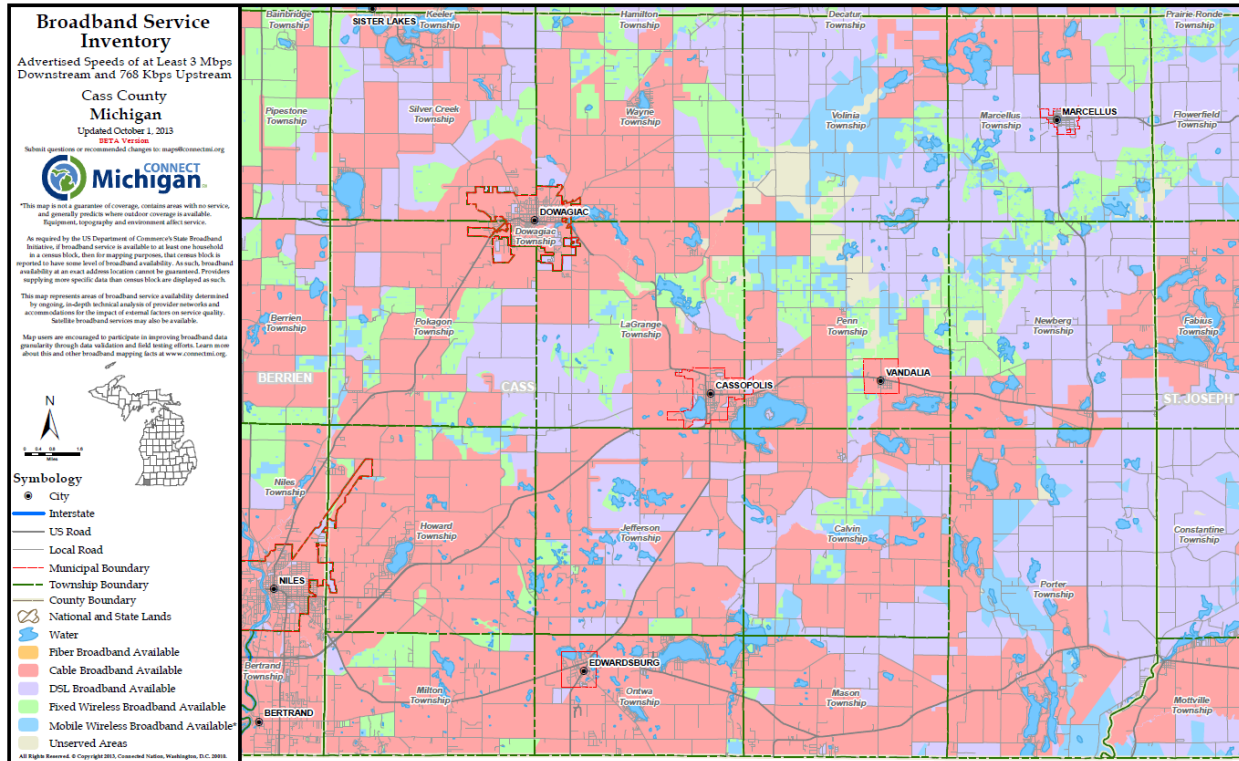
# Appendices

## Appendix A: Broadband Service Availability Maps

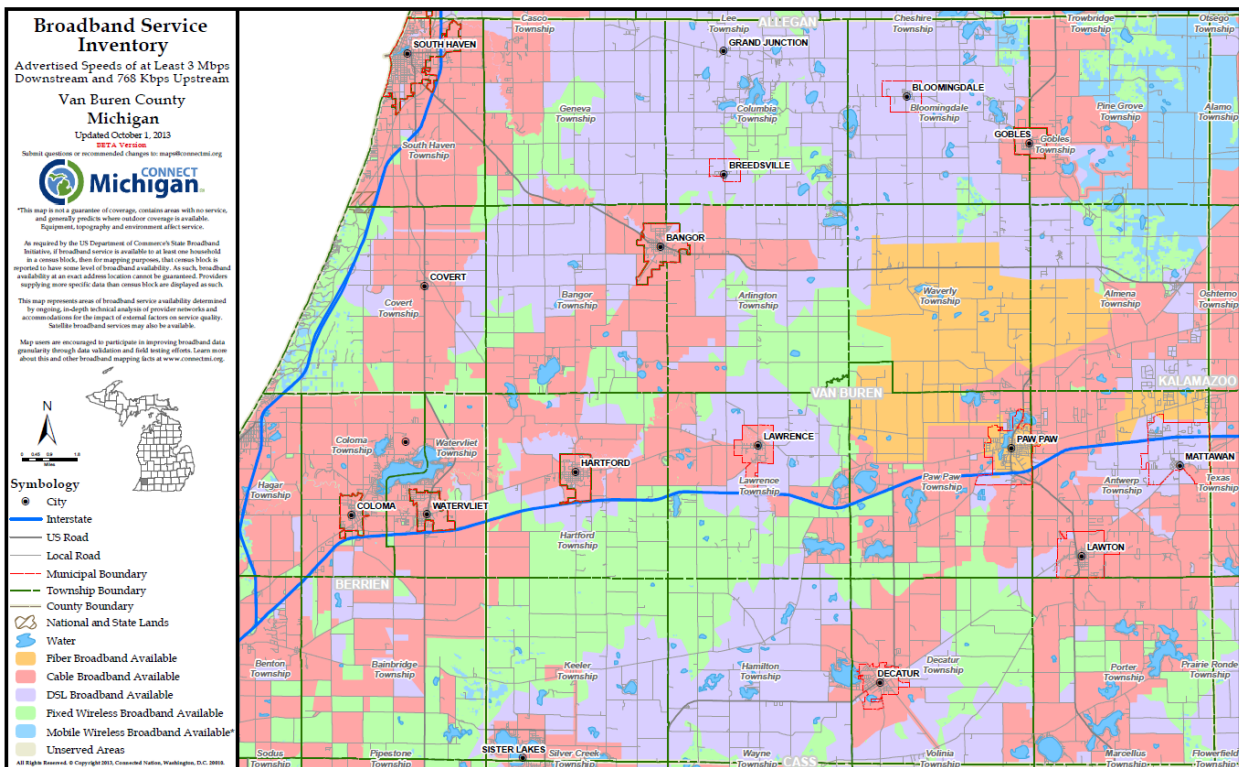
### Berrien County



### Cass County



## Van Buren County





# Appendix B: Connected Community Assessment Scorecards and Recommendations

## Berrien County

Berrien County Community Technology Scorecard				
Community Champion: Ryan Soucy Community Advisor: Dan Manning				
FOCUS AREA	ASSESSMENT CRITERIA	DESCRIPTION	COMMUNITY SCORE	MAXIMUM POSSIBLE SCORE
ACCESS	Broadband Availability	98% to 100% of households have access to 3 Mbps	10	10
	Broadband Speeds	75% of households with access to at least 50 Mbps	5	5
	Broadband Competition	95.0% to 100% of households with access to more than 1 broadband provider	5	5
	Middle Mile Access	Availability of middle mile fiber infrastructure from more than 1 provider	10	10
	Mobile Broadband Availability	99.0% to 100.0% of households with access to mobile wireless	10	10
	Total Access Score		40	40
ADOPTION	Digital Literacy	Program grads are greater than 4 per 1000 residents over the past year	6	10
	Public Computer Centers	250 computer hours per 1000 low income residents per week	4	10
	Broadband Awareness	Campaigns reach 60% of the community	6	10
	Vulnerable Population Focus	At least 5 groups	10	10
	Total Adoption Score		26	40
USE	Economic Opportunity	2 advanced, 4 basic uses	8	10
	Education	3 advanced, 2 basic uses	8	10
	Government	2 advanced, 3 basic uses	7	10
	Healthcare	1 advanced, 3 basic uses	5	10
	Total Use Score		28	40
Community Assessment Score			94	120

Summary of recommendations provided:

- 1) More focus on providing additional Digital Literacy programs (computer/internet education) by local libraries and other organizations
- 2) Increasing the number of Public Computing Centers and public access to more internet-connected computers



- 3) Expand overall public awareness of the VALUE of broadband and why it is important to personal and business productivity and success
- 4) Expand and improve local websites and broadband applications to offer more information and services online, especially in the areas of Government, Education, and Healthcare

## Cass County

Cass County Community Technology Scorecard				
Community Champion: Gautam Mani Community Advisor: Dan Manning				
FOCUS AREA	ASSESSMENT CRITERIA	DESCRIPTION	COMMUNITY SCORE	MAXIMUM POSSIBLE SCORE
ACCESS	Broadband Availability	95% to 97.9% of households have access to 3 Mbps	8	10
	Broadband Speeds	75% of households with access to at least 50 Mbps	5	5
	Broadband Competition	80.0% to 89.9% of households with access to more than 1 broadband provider	3	5
	Middle Mile Access	Availability of middle mile fiber infrastructure from only 1 provider	6	10
	Mobile Broadband Availability	99.0% to 100.0% of households with access to mobile wireless	10	10
	Total Access Score		32	40
ADOPTION	Digital Literacy	Program grads are greater than 4 per 1000 residents over the past year	6	10
	Public Computer Centers	450 computer hours per 1000 low income residents per week	8	10
	Broadband Awareness	Campaigns reach 60% of the community	6	10
	Vulnerable Population Focus	3 groups	6	10
	Total Adoption Score		26	40
USE	Economic Opportunity	2 advanced, 4 basic uses	8	10
	Education	1 advanced, 7 basic uses	9	10
	Government	0 advanced, 5 basic uses	5	10
	Healthcare	1 advanced, 3 basic uses	5	10
	Total Use Score		27	40
Community Assessment Score			85	120

Summary of recommendations provided:

- 1) Increase the number of broadband providers in the county (to improve the Broadband Competition score and offer more choice to residents)
- 2) More focus on providing additional Digital Literacy programs (computer/internet education) by local libraries and other organizations

- 3) Collect more data on or increase the number of programs focused on broadband support for Vulnerable Populations
- 4) Expand overall public awareness of the VALUE of broadband and why it is important to personal and business productivity and success
- 5) Expand and improve local websites and broadband applications to offer more information and services online, especially in the areas of Government and Healthcare

## Van Buren County

Van Buren County Community Technology Scorecard				
Community Champion: Kris Martin Community Advisor: Dan Manning				
FOCUS AREA	ASSESSMENT CRITERIA	DESCRIPTION	COMMUNITY SCORE	MAXIMUM POSSIBLE SCORE
ACCESS	Broadband Availability	98% to 100% of households have access to 3 Mbps	10	10
	Broadband Speeds	75% of households with access to at least 3 Mbps	1	5
	Broadband Competition	80.0% to 89.9% of households with access to more than 1 broadband provider	3	5
	Middle Mile Access	Availability of middle mile fiber infrastructure from only 1 provider	6	10
	Mobile Broadband Availability	99.0% to 100.0% of households with access to mobile wireless	10	10
	Total Access Score		30	40
ADOPTION	Digital Literacy	Program grads are greater than 2 per 1000 residents over the past year	4	10
	Public Computer Centers	450 computer hours per 1000 low income residents per week	8	10
	Broadband Awareness	Campaigns reach 60% of the community	6	10
	Vulnerable Population Focus	At least 5 groups	10	10
	Total Adoption Score		28	40
USE	Economic Opportunity	2 advanced, 2 basic uses	6	10
	Education	5 advanced, 2 basic uses	10	10
	Government	2 advanced, 2 basic uses	6	10
	Healthcare	3 advanced, 1 basic uses	7	10
	Total Use Score		29	40
Community Assessment Score			87	120

Summary of recommendations provided:

- 1) Work with current broadband providers to increase the speed and bandwidth of the existing infrastructure to support current and future needs of residents

- 2) Increase the number of broadband providers in the county (to improve the Broadband Competition score and offer more choice to residents)
- 3) More focus on providing additional Digital Literacy programs (computer/internet education) by local libraries and other organizations
- 4) Expand overall public awareness of the VALUE of broadband and why it is important to personal and business productivity and success
- 5) Expand and improve local websites and broadband applications to offer more information and services online, especially in the areas of Economic Opportunity and Government

## Appendix C: P3I Analysis Tool

### 2013 P3I Analysis Tool

This tool is intended to help analyze the framework of public private partnership (P3) initiatives that SWMPC engages in as a function of the CEDS in order to provide an opportunity to add more value through the recognition of goals and priorities of both the EDA and the Region. The tool may also be used for reporting purposes on future iterations of the CEDS.

#### Part I. General Information

General Project Information	
Date:	
Initiative name:	
Purpose of initiative:	
When will this initiative take place?	
Anticipated costs:	
Anticipated financial support:	
Other:	

Partner Information	Primary contact (Name/Phone/Email)	Role
<b>Public sector partners:</b>		
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
<b>Private sector partners:</b>		
1.		
2.		
3.		

4.		
5.		
6.		

## Part II. Relevance to 2013 CEDS Plan of Action

2013 CEDS Goals	Relevance
Support and meet the needs of existing local businesses and entrepreneurs.	
Support employer engagement in K-12, adult education, higher education, and vocational experiences in order to develop a high-quality workforce with a strong sense of work ethic.	
Develop a resilient regional economy built on established and emerging industry clusters by engaging in effective communication and collaboration throughout southwest Michigan's economic development ecosystem.	
Improve and maintain southwest Michigan's infrastructure to meet contemporary standards.	
Foster an environment that appeals to young, talented individuals.	

EDA Action Plan Elements	Relevance
Promoting economic development and opportunity	
Fostering effective transportation access	
Enhancing and protecting the environment	
Maximizing effective development and use of the workforce	
Promoting the use of technology in economic development	

Balancing resources through sound management of physical development	
Obtaining and utilizing adequate funds and other resources	

### Part III. Relation to 2013 Federal and Regional Priorities

EDA Priorities	Relation to priority	Expected Outcomes
Collaborative Regional Innovation: Initiatives that support the development and growth of innovation clusters based on existing regional competitive strengths.		
Public-Private Partnerships: Investments that use both public and private resources and leverage complementary investments by other government/public entities and/or non-profits.		
National Strategic Priorities: Initiative that encourage job growth and business expansion in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clean energy</li> <li>• Green technologies</li> <li>• Sustainable manufacturing</li> <li>• Information technology infrastructure</li> <li>• Communities severely impacted by automotive industry restructuring</li> <li>• Natural disaster mitigation and resiliency</li> <li>• Access to capital for SME and ethnically-diverse enterprises</li> <li>• Innovations in science, health care, and alternative fuel technologies</li> </ul>		
Global Competitiveness: Investments that support high-growth businesses and innovation-based entrepreneurs to expand and compete in		

global markets.		
Environmentally-Sustainable Development: Investments that encompass best practices in this category include projects that enhance environmental quality and develop and implement green products, processes, and buildings as part of the green economy.		
Economically Distressed and Underserved Communities: Investments that strengthen diverse communities that have suffered disproportionate economic and job losses and/or are rebuilding to become more competitive in the global economy.		

Regional Priorities	Relation to priority	Expected Outcomes
Development of Innovation Assets		
Talent Pipeline Development		
Modernization of Infrastructure and		
Increasing Exports of Regional Products		
Improving the Regional Food System		
Renewable Energy Generation		
Attracting Manufacturing Firms from around the Globe		

*Recommendations for framework revisions:*