



OFFICE OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Opportunities & Investment for Rural Michigan



‘Rural’ encompasses 94% of Michigan’s geography and 20% of its population

Rural markets, natural assets, tourism, and workforce are vital to Michigan’s economic success

Figure 2.9: Population Change in Rural Districts, 2009 to 2019

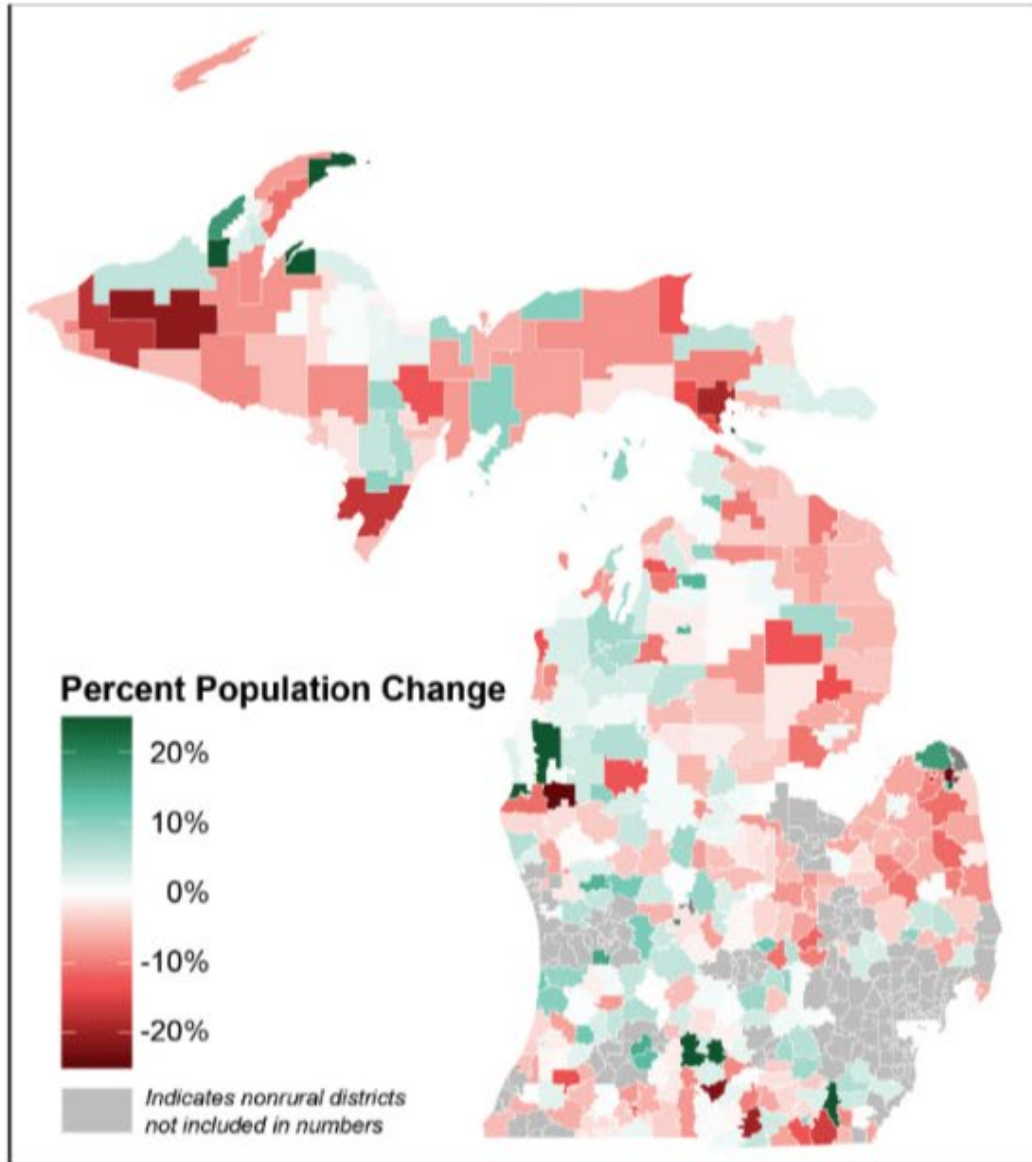
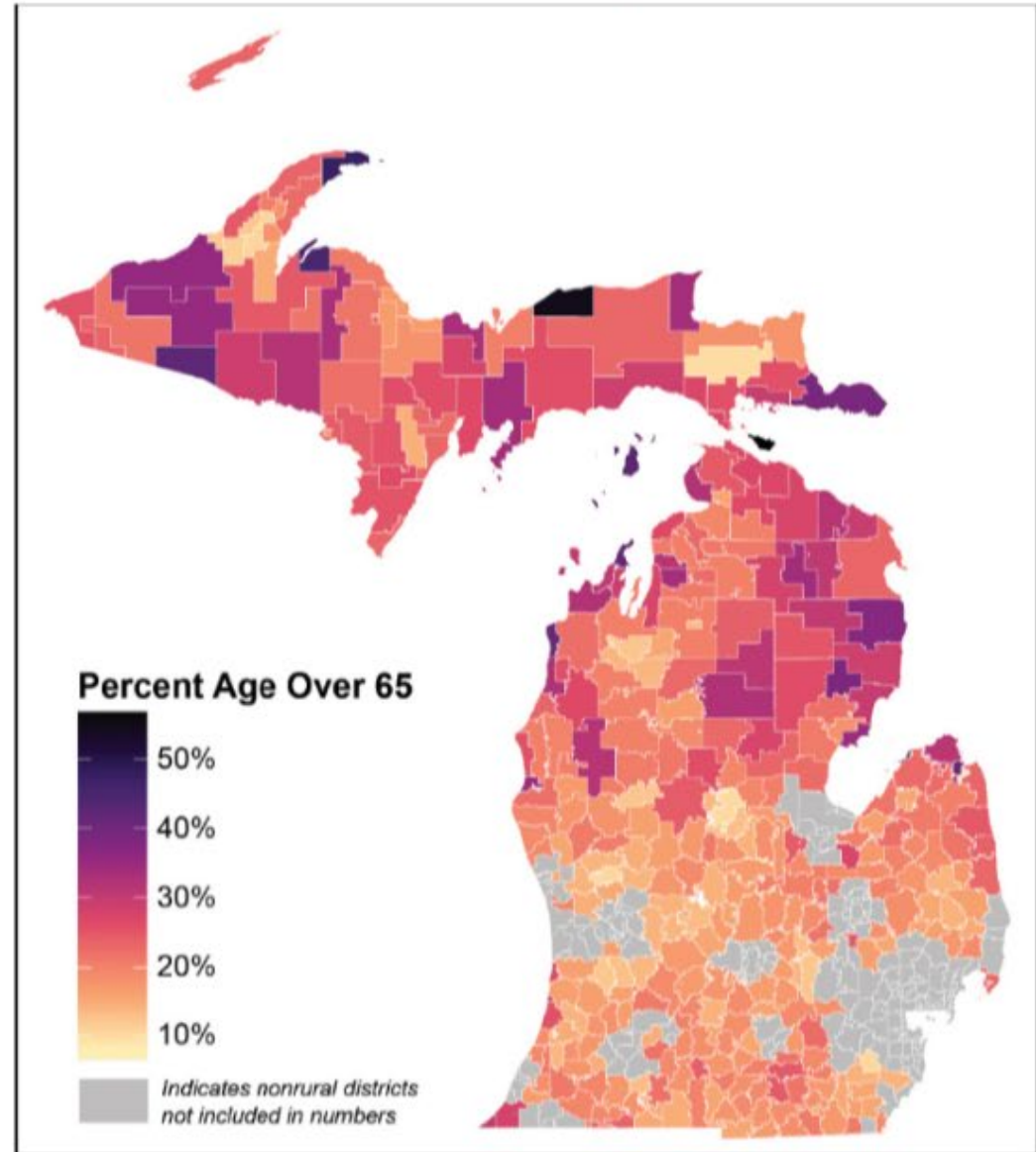


Figure 2.10: Percent of Population 65 or Older in Rural Districts, 2019



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community 5-year Survey



Opportunities for Rural Michigan

Recent disruptions can reverse – or exacerbate – long-standing population and economic trends that impact health outcomes, educational attainment, and future income of rural residents

Remote work allows for relocation

Climate migration forecasts opportunity for population growth

Outdoor recreation amenities/industry are key quality of life and economic assets

21 universities are located in Michigan's rural areas



MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF
**LABOR & ECONOMIC
OPPORTUNITY**



American Rescue
Plan Act of 2021



Capturing opportunity in rural Michigan requires strategic and coordinated investment in people and place

Resources are available, but rural areas face staff, procedural, and financial challenges in accessing programs and funding



MDARD's Office of Rural Development was established by Gov. Whitmer in January 2022 to elevate and address rural priorities

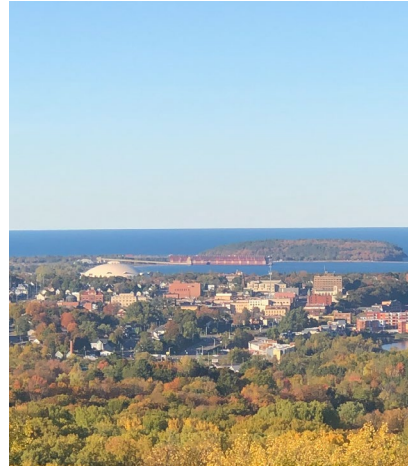
Gov. Whitmer's bipartisan budget includes \$3 million in one-time funding for grants to support needs related to housing, high-speed internet, infrastructure, workforce needs, and other rural priorities.

ORD is hiring 3 staffers to focus on policy/interagency coordination; community support/capacity building; and rural engagement and outreach.



Interagency coordination

- Identify opportunities for policy and program changes that will positively impact rural outcomes
- Ensure rural input on policy and programs



Increase statewide engagement & action on rural priorities

- Connect communities to share rural best practices and successes
- Improve coordination and collaboration
- Build regional and statewide preparedness and economic competitiveness



Staff & resources to support communities

- Build local capacity – act as information resource and partner for local programs and projects
- Fill in financial and other gaps needed to kickstart local initiatives





Local and regional engagement informs ORD priorities and activities

- Outreach and connections with economic development/community development collaboratives, key stakeholders, issue-specific workgroups
- Work together with state agencies on outreach, projects, and programming
- Bring partners together to explore collaborative solutions
- Planning for new events and platforms for engagement
- Adding staff and funding programs in 2022/early 2023



Housing

- Rising development costs and subsidy needs
- Infrastructure expansion and costs
- Regulatory barriers
- Limited local capacity
- Communications



Infrastructure & Broadband

- Reduced revenue has led to deferred infrastructure maintenance
- Costs are barrier to private and public providers
- Accurate maps needed to show biggest gaps for federal funding



Workforce & Economic Development Barriers

- Childcare costs, availability
- Transportation needs and access
- Skills mismatch and training needs



Growing commitment to & understanding of rural needs

New programs and resources

Missing Middle
Housing & Community Development Fund
MI Hope
Regional Child Care Innovation Funds
TriShare
USDA, BEAD, ROBN
Infrastructure & Jobs Investment Act (BIL)
Local and regional appropriations

New procedural considerations

Rural set-asides in new funding programs
Navigators and technical assistance
Outreach and communication
Planning and mapping



Connecting Local & Regional Resources

Increased financial commitment to housing, broadband, infrastructure, childcare

Housing funds and projects, infrastructure match programs, childcare set-asides

Emerging partnerships and growing capacity with employers, universities, and nonprofit partners

Housing and childcare projects, internships and apprenticeships, technical assistance

Local and regional plans for high-priority issues

Broadband surveys, housing action plans and needs assessments, childcare strategies, community awareness

Successful communities invest in planning and collaborate across sectors

Rural communities have unique and valuable assets that can be activated and leveraged

Regional perspectives, solutions, and collaboration can help to overcome geographic and capacity barriers

Investment requires organizational capacity and infrastructure



Thank you!



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