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**Administrative ePacket**  
**May 09, 2024**

**Public Safety (Police/Fire)**

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**Economic Development (City Revenue/Job Growth)**

[Oakland County Economic Outlook 2024-2024](#)

**Citizen-Focused Government (Shared Services/Customer Services)**

[Oakland Transit 2023 Annual Report](#)

**Natural Areas & Features and Community Character (Community that Preserves)**

[Michigan Green Communities Challenge Gold Certification](#)

[Concerns with Tall Grass/Weeds - Cardenas](#)

**Fiscally Responsible Government (Maintain)**

**Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services (Enhance Services)**

[PRCS Resident Priority Registration - Ringle](#)

**Capital Improvement Program**

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39<sup>TH</sup>



# OAKLAND COUNTY ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

2024-2026

# *SUMMARY INTRODUCTION*

# DAVID COULTER

## OAKLAND COUNTY EXECUTIVE

As Oakland County's economy continues to thrive, I am pleased to present the 39th Annual Oakland County Economic Outlook Report. I'd like to highlight some of what makes up our thriving economy.

- \$387M business investment in 2023
- 737 foreign-owned firms, from 34 countries, who call Oakland their home away from home
- 42% of the region's R&D facilities
- \$56.4M private & public investment in our downtowns
- \$9.1M Going PRO Talent Fund training grants since 2021
- 68.4% Oakland County residents with a post-secondary degree or credential

These achievements and more are why Oakland County powers Michigan's economy with 20% of the State's GDP and why we continue to be a destination for OEMs, R&D, and small businesses, both nationally and globally.

To stay at the forefront and build an economy that works for everyone, we seek to be agile, innovative, and inclusive, with thoughtful programming and partnerships that serve our 39,000 businesses and 737,000 plus workers.

Project DIAMOnD is a best-in-class example of the promise of additive manufacturing or 3D printing. With our partners at Automation Alley, we've helped small and midsize manufacturers cut costs, increase productivity, and become more competitive.

Launched during the height of supply chain issues caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and leveraging federal funds, the program has helped provide additive manufacturing equipment and training to 250 companies across the county. Phase 2 is designed to bring 40% of our small and medium size manufacturers on board by 2026. We are embracing advanced manufacturing and investing for a prosperous tomorrow.

The business community, both here and abroad, recognizes that Oakland County, in addition to its great quality of life, is home to a talented workforce and invested in a mobility industry of the future that will rely on advanced manufacturing.

I'm proud that our recent trade delegation visits to Europe and Asia have resulted in increased investment by overseas firms in Oakland County and I'm encouraged by the continued success of the Oakland80 initiative which aims to help 80% of the adult population of the county attain a post-secondary or certified training by 2030.

Let's build on the strength of Oakland County's economy and ensure opportunities for long-term accessible, inclusive, and sustainable growth. Thank you for your shared commitment to realizing the full potential of Oakland County's economic future.



# OAKLAND COUNTY ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

## 2024-2026



Gabriel Ehrlich



Donald Grimes

### PRESENTED BY

Dr. Gabriel M. Ehrlich  
and Donald R. Grimes  
*University of Michigan*

MAY 2024

## OVERVIEW OF CONTENTS

- Advanced Manufacturing in Oakland County
- Comparisons with Oakland's Peer Counties
- Oakland County's Economy in the Latest Data
- The U.S. Economic Outlook
- The Economic Outlook for Oakland County through 2026, including:
  - *Inflation and Local Unemployment*
  - *Oakland Employment Growth Compared with Michigan's*
  - *Employment Growth by Major Industry Division*
  - *Average Real Wages by Industry Groups*

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## Research Seminar in Quantitative Economics (RSQE)

The Research Seminar in Quantitative Economics (RSQE) is a modeling and forecasting unit that has been in operation at the University of Michigan since 1952. Four times per year, RSQE provides forecasts of both the U.S. economy and the Michigan economy. RSQE hosts the University of Michigan's Annual Economic Outlook Conference, the longest running such event in the U.S., in Ann Arbor each November. RSQE has twice received the prestigious Blue Chip Annual Economic Forecasting Award (AEFA) recognizing "accuracy, timeliness, and professionalism" in economic forecasting.

### Dr. Gabriel M. Ehrlich

is the Director of the University's Research Seminar in Quantitative Economics (RSQE). He received his Ph.D. in economics from the University of Michigan. His research focuses on macroeconomics and regional economics. His work has been published widely in academic journals, and he comments frequently in the press on the economic outlook.

Prior to joining RSQE, Dr. Ehrlich worked in the Financial Analysis Division at the Congressional Budget Office (CBO). He earned his undergraduate degrees in finance and economics at the University of Maryland.

Dr. Ehrlich testifies twice per year to the state legislature on Michigan's fiscal and economic outlook. He recently coauthored *The United States Economic Outlook for 2024–2025* and *The Michigan Economic Outlook for 2024–2025*.

### Donald R. Grimes

received his master's degree in economics from the University of Michigan. He is a senior research area specialist at the University's Research Seminar in Quantitative Economics (RSQE). His primary research interests are in labor economics and economic forecasting.

For over 40 years, he has been engaged in economic forecasting for state and local governments and is frequently called upon for policy advice. He has worked for many years with the Michigan departments of Transportation and Treasury and the Michigan Economic Development Corporation on policy analysis and evaluating economic strategies.

His work has been published recently in the *Economic Development Quarterly*, the *New England Journal of Medicine*, and the *Journal of Health Politics, Policy and Law*.

### Dr. Michael R. McWilliams

is a senior economist at RSQE. Michael assists with forecasts of the Michigan economy and leads the development of state tax revenue projections. He also participates in RSQE's local economic forecasts for the City of Detroit, Oakland County, MI, and Washtenaw County, MI. In 2018, Michael coauthored an RSQE report on the economic impacts of the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative for the eight Great Lakes states.

Michael earned his Ph.D. in economics from the University of Michigan and received an M.Sc. in economics from the London School of Economics and Political Science. His personal research has focused on a range of topics in environmental and natural resource economics. He recently coauthored *The Michigan Economic Outlook for 2024–2025*.

### Jacob T. Burton

is an economist at the University of Michigan's Research Seminar in Quantitative Economics (RSQE), where he contributes to the Michigan and U.S. forecasts four times per year. He received his master's degree in applied economics from Eastern Michigan University. He coauthored *The United States Economic Outlook for 2024–2025* and *The Michigan Economic Outlook for 2024–2025*. His primary fields of interests are in economic forecasting and energy economics.



This Economic Outlook Summary is available online beginning May 8, 2024 at:  
**AdvantageOakland.com | [lsa.umich.edu/econ/rsqe](https://lsa.umich.edu/econ/rsqe)**

## **The Oakland County Economic Outlook for 2024–2026 Executive Summary**

*Jacob T. Burton, Gabriel M. Ehrlich, Donald R. Grimes, and Michael R. McWilliams*  
*University of Michigan*

Oakland County's economy has now recovered from the pandemic recession by most metrics. The number of employed residents in the county recovered to its pre-pandemic level in March of 2023, and exceeded pre-pandemic levels by 1.3 percent in February 2024. Meanwhile, Oakland's unemployment rate registered 2.9 percent in February, 0.5 percentage points below its average in 2019, and the county's labor force stood a bit higher than its 2019 level. Furthermore, Oakland County's real gross domestic product in 2022 came in 3.7 percent higher than in 2019. Despite these important successes, one key measure remains short of its pre-pandemic level: the count of payroll jobs located in Oakland County was still 1.8 percent shy of a full recovery in the third quarter of 2023, the most recent available data. Even so, we judge Oakland's recent economic performance to have been largely successful, and we are forecasting growth to continue.

We project the count of payroll jobs in the county to grow at an average pace of 1.1 percent, or about 8,000 jobs per year, from 2024 to 2026. The private health and social services sector is one of the major gainers, adding a total of 6,800 jobs over the next three years. Oakland's traditional blue-collar industries also add jobs at a healthy pace of about 1.4 percent per year despite limited growth in the auto and government sectors.

We expect Oakland County's unemployment rate to hold steady near 3.0 percent throughout our forecast. As such, we are counting on continued growth in the county's labor force to accommodate

ongoing job growth. By the end of our forecast, we project the county's labor force to stand 3.8 percent higher than it did before the pandemic. Although the county is not immune from the challenges associated with an aging population, we find that Oakland continues to stack up well against its peers on key metrics associated with local quality of life and economic wellbeing. We are therefore projecting that Oakland can resist the downward pull of demographic trends on its workforce over the next three years.

Our forecast is less bullish on the outlook for real wage growth. We are forecasting average real wages in Oakland County to grow by 0.5 percent per year over the next three years. Local inflation that runs significantly above its pre-pandemic norm is one reason we project relatively modest growth. Still, real wages are forecast to stand 4.0 percent above 2019 levels in 2026.

This year, we also took a look at Oakland County's advanced manufacturing industries. We identified three industry groups connected to advanced manufacturing: advanced manufacturing itself, "aspiring" advanced manufacturing, and services support for advanced manufacturing. Oakland County excels at providing services support to advanced manufacturing industries, with a concentration more than double the U.S. average. Workers in these support industries tend to be well-educated, and they are also relatively well-paid, with an average wage of \$112,639 in 2022. Still, that average wage in Oakland County trailed the national average for these industries, which was \$139,864. The county also faced a pay gap in the advanced manufacturing industries themselves, with an average wage of \$100,433 in 2022 versus a national average of \$126,735.

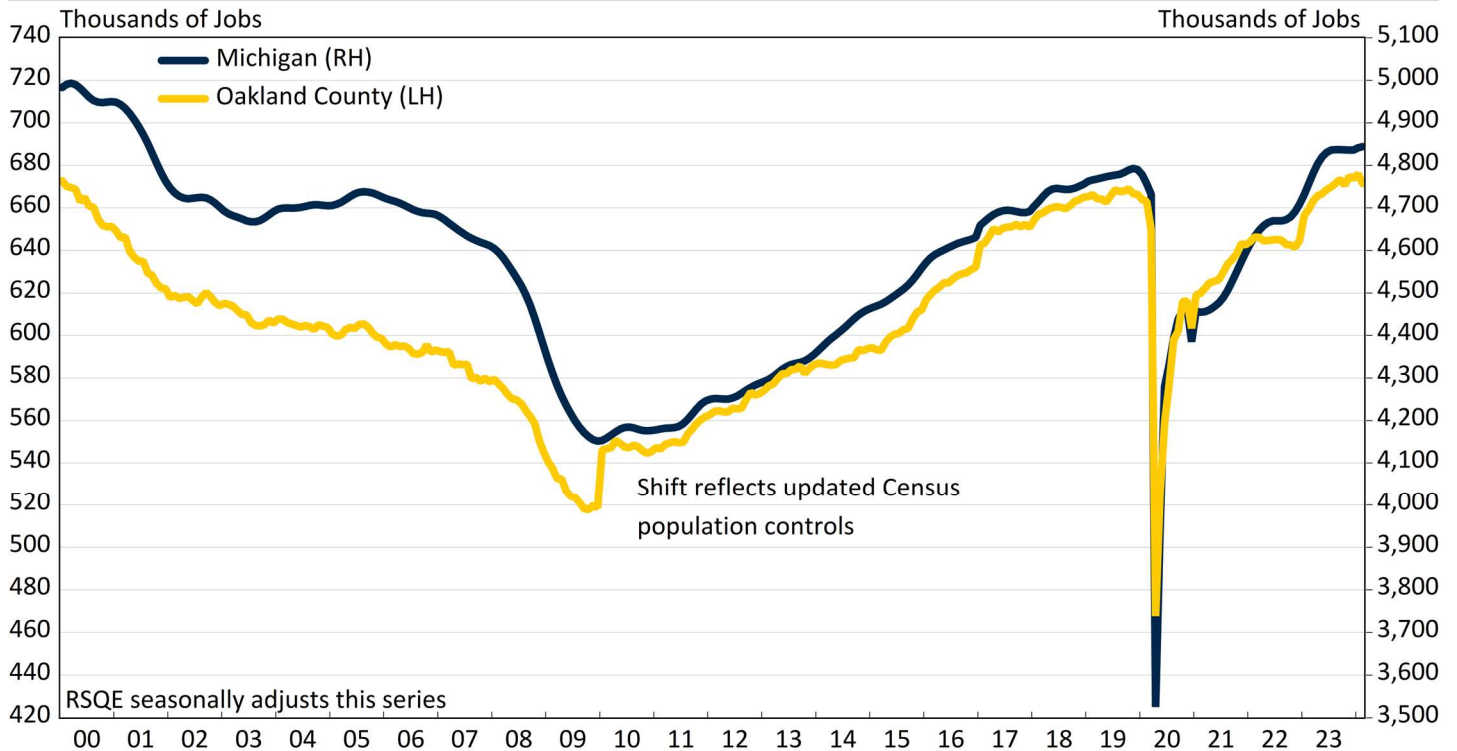
Ford Motor Company Chairman Bill Ford recently declared, "We're in a war for talent. Michigan is, our industry is, Ford is."<sup>1</sup> We agree enthusiastically, and we think the war for talent stretches beyond the auto industry. If we may offer some advice, long years of statistical analysis have convinced us of what workers everywhere knew already: the most reliable way to win a war for talent is to pay more!

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<sup>1</sup> Eric Lawrence, "[Bill Ford: Michigan Central Station must be more than just a restoration](#)," *Detroit Free Press*, April 17, 2024.

Figure 1

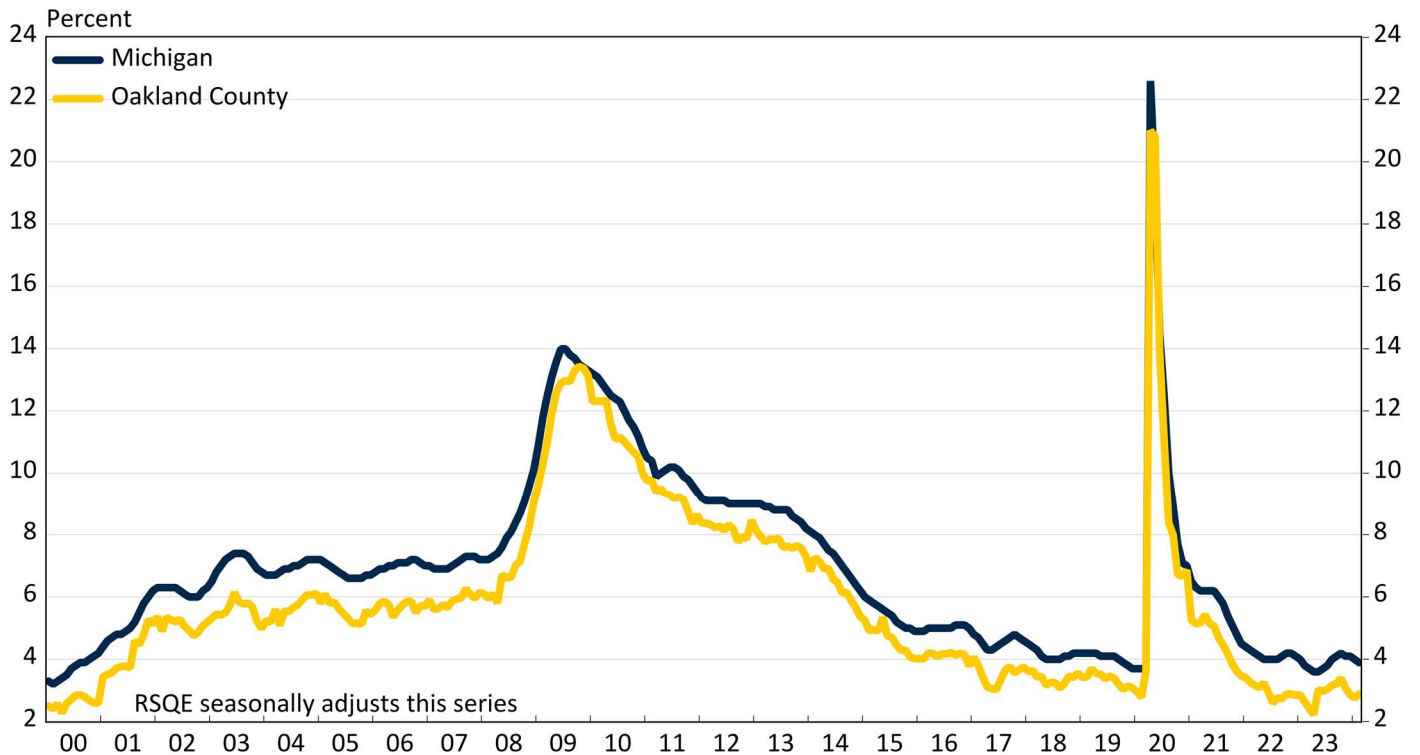
## Monthly Household Employment, Michigan and Oakland County



- Figure 1 shows monthly household employment in Oakland County and in Michigan. The household employment data presented in this figure depicts the count of employed residents, regardless of whether they work in Oakland County or elsewhere.
- The Oakland County household employment data presented in this figure come from the Department of Technology, Management & Budget's Michigan Center for Data and Analytics.
- Household employment in Michigan declined by 1.2 million, or 26 percent, during the initial months of the COVID-19 pandemic. Oakland County residents were hit more severely by the initial downturn, with nearly 200,000, or roughly 30 percent of employed residents, losing their jobs.
- Both Michigan and Oakland County had regained approximately 70 percent of their pandemic-related household employment losses by the end of 2020 and nearly 90 percent by the end of 2021.
- Resident employment growth came to a standstill in both the county and the state during the latter half of 2022. In fact, employment of Oakland County residents declined in six different months during 2022.
- Strong growth resumed in Oakland County and Michigan during the first half of 2023, leading both the county and the state to recover to their pre-pandemic employment levels by March 2023.
- The second half of 2023 posed greater challenges, though. Employment growth among state residents turned negative in the final four months of the year due to rising interest rates and strikes in multiple industries. Oakland County fared a bit better than the state as a whole at the end of last year.
- As of February 2024, the most recent data available at the time this report was written, resident employment in Oakland County had surpassed its pre-pandemic level by 1.3 percent, while statewide resident employment had surpassed its pre-pandemic level by 1.8 percent.
- The speed with which the county regained its large pandemic job losses stands in contrast with its prolonged recovery from the downturn that began at the start of the millennium. Michigan as a whole still has not returned to its all-time peak employment level reached in early 2000.

Figure 2

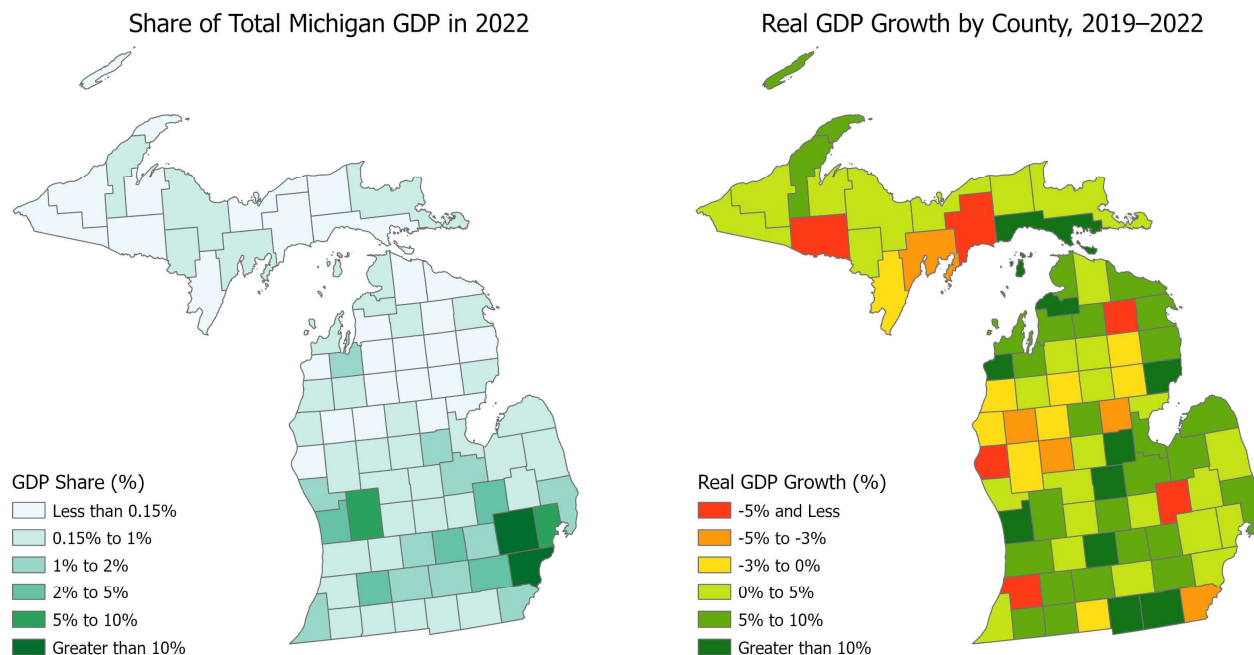
## Monthly Unemployment Rate, Michigan and Oakland County



- Figure 2 shows unemployment rates for Michigan and Oakland County. Both series are seasonally adjusted; we have seasonally adjusted the Oakland unemployment rate series ourselves. The unemployment rate data for Oakland County comes from the same source as the household employment data illustrated in Figure 1.
- Oakland County's labor market has run consistently tighter than the state's over the past twenty years. Since exiting the Great Recession, Oakland County's unemployment rate has averaged 0.9 percentage points below Michigan's.
- Although the local jobless rate spiked to a peak of 21 percent in April 2020, it remained 1.6 percentage points less than the state's. The local unemployment rate declined to an average of 3.0 percent in 2022, or 0.4 percentage points below its 2019 average.
- For comparison, Michigan's unemployment rate averaged 4.1 percent in 2022, or on par with its 2019 average.
- Oakland County's unemployment rate reached a recent low point of 2.2 percent in April 2023 before edging up to 3.4 percent in October. The county's jobless rate then resumed its decline.
- As of February 2024, the unemployment rate in Oakland County had fallen back to 2.9 percent, one percentage point below Michigan's jobless rate of 3.9 percent.
- Last year, we were concerned that Oakland County's full unemployment recovery masked an incomplete labor force recovery. Since then, however, both Michigan's and Oakland County's labor force levels have come roaring back, and they both now exceed their 2019 levels.
- As of February 2024, Oakland County's labor force had climbed to 2,100 residents, or 0.3 percent, above its 2019 average. Michigan's labor force stood 1.3 percent above its 2019 level.
- We believe that Oakland County currently maintains a healthy economic position. Local leaders and residents now must plan for the longer-run challenges of building the communities and economies that they desire.
- In this year's report, we examine advanced manufacturing in Oakland County, one engine which will help to build Oakland County's future.

Figure 3

## Gross Domestic Product by County



- The left-hand map above shows each county in Michigan's share of total statewide GDP in 2022, the most recent year for which data is available.
- At the county level, GDP is the value of all goods and services produced less the value of goods and services used in production. The Bureau of Economic Analysis currently provides data on GDP by county and metropolitan area from 2017–2022.
- Oakland County consistently has the highest GDP of all counties in Michigan, and it has maintained its top position in the state rankings every year from 2017–2022.
- Oakland County's total GDP came to \$127.3 billion in 2022. The next highest in the state was Wayne County, with total GDP of \$112.9 billion, followed by Kent County at \$53.6 billion.
- Oakland's GDP in 2022 was higher than 14 states', and it had the 30<sup>th</sup> highest nominal GDP among all counties nationally.
- As the county with the largest GDP in the state, Oakland accounted for 20.4 percent of Michigan's total GDP in 2022. Wayne County produced 18.1 percent, while Kent County produced 8.6 percent.
- The right-hand map shows the growth of real GDP by county between 2019 and 2022. This growth provides a depiction of the effects of the pandemic and initial recovery on GDP at the county level.
- Oakland's GDP grew by 3.7 percent between 2019 and 2022, which was the 44<sup>th</sup> strongest growth across the state. Nationally, Oakland's GDP growth ranked in the 57<sup>th</sup> percentile.
- There was a large variance in GDP growth across Michigan (and nationally) during this time. Counties with the largest shares of GDP tended to experience moderate growth, reflecting their relatively diverse economies.
- The strongest growth tended to occur in counties that fell in the middle of the state distribution for level GDP in 2019.
- The private sector accounted for over 95 percent of Oakland County's real GDP growth from 2019 to 2022.

Table 1

**Oakland County Compared with Its Peers\***

| County                     | State     | Population<br>2022 | Associate's<br>Degree or<br>More | Child<br>Poverty | Median<br>Family<br>Income** | High-Income<br>Persons Aged 65<br>or Older | Managerial,<br>Professional | Sum of<br>Rankings | Rank of<br>Sum |
|----------------------------|-----------|--------------------|----------------------------------|------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|----------------|
| Fairfax                    | VA        | 1,138,331          | 1                                | 2                | 1                            | 1                                          | 1                           | 6                  | 1              |
| Montgomery                 | MD        | 1,052,521          | 3                                | 10               | 2                            | 2                                          | 2                           | 19                 | 2              |
| Collin                     | TX        | 1,158,696          | 5                                | 1                | 4                            | 11                                         | 5                           | 26                 | 3              |
| Wake                       | NC        | 1,175,021          | 2                                | 6                | 6                            | 12                                         | 6                           | 32                 | 4              |
| Nassau                     | NY        | 1,383,726          | 12                               | 3                | 3                            | 3                                          | 14                          | 35                 | 5              |
| Bergen                     | NJ        | 952,997            | 8                                | 7                | 8                            | 6                                          | 10                          | 39                 | 6              |
| Travis                     | TX        | 1,326,436          | 7                                | 14               | 5                            | 10                                         | 4                           | 40                 | 7              |
| Westchester                | NY        | 990,427            | 9                                | 12               | 7                            | 4                                          | 9                           | 41                 | 8              |
| <b>Oakland</b>             | <b>MI</b> | <b>1,269,431</b>   | <b>10</b>                        | <b>9</b>         | <b>9</b>                     | <b>16</b>                                  | <b>8</b>                    | <b>52</b>          | <b>9</b>       |
| Hennepin                   | MN        | 1,260,121          | 6                                | 16               | 11                           | 13                                         | 7                           | 53                 | 10             |
| Denton                     | TX        | 977,281            | 14                               | 8                | 13                           | 8                                          | 12                          | 55                 | 11             |
| Contra Costa               | CA        | 1,156,966          | 17                               | 11               | 10                           | 7                                          | 16                          | 61                 | 12             |
| Fulton                     | GA        | 1,074,634          | 4                                | 27               | 12                           | 15                                         | 3                           | 61                 | 12             |
| Suffolk                    | NY        | 1,525,465          | 19                               | 4                | 14                           | 5                                          | 22                          | 64                 | 14             |
| Capitol Planning<br>Region | CT        | 981,447            | 20                               | 17               | 16                           | 14                                         | 15                          | 82                 | 15             |
| St. Louis                  | MO        | 990,414            | 15                               | 21               | 17                           | 19                                         | 13                          | 85                 | 16             |
| Allegheny                  | PA        | 1,233,253          | 11                               | 19               | 19                           | 26                                         | 11                          | 86                 | 17             |
| Mecklenburg                | NC        | 1,145,392          | 13                               | 18               | 18                           | 20                                         | 17                          | 86                 | 17             |
| Salt Lake                  | UT        | 1,186,257          | 27                               | 5                | 15                           | 17                                         | 24                          | 88                 | 19             |
| Honolulu                   | HI        | 995,638            | 21                               | 15               | 20                           | 9                                          | 27                          | 92                 | 20             |
| Erie                       | NY        | 950,312            | 18                               | 25               | 21                           | 24                                         | 21                          | 109                | 21             |
| Gwinnett                   | GA        | 975,353            | 24                               | 13               | 23                           | 22                                         | 29                          | 111                | 22             |
| Pinellas                   | FL        | 961,739            | 26                               | 20               | 24                           | 25                                         | 19                          | 114                | 23             |
| Franklin                   | OH        | 1,321,820          | 22                               | 30               | 22                           | 23                                         | 18                          | 115                | 24             |
| Palm Beach                 | FL        | 1,518,477          | 23                               | 22               | 28                           | 18                                         | 28                          | 119                | 25             |
| Orange                     | FL        | 1,452,726          | 16                               | 23               | 30                           | 30                                         | 25                          | 124                | 26             |
| Hillsborough               | FL        | 1,513,301          | 25                               | 24               | 27                           | 28                                         | 23                          | 127                | 27             |
| Pima                       | AZ        | 1,057,597          | 31                               | 26               | 25                           | 21                                         | 30                          | 133                | 28             |
| Cuyahoga                   | OH        | 1,236,041          | 28                               | 31               | 26                           | 31                                         | 20                          | 136                | 29             |
| Duval                      | FL        | 1,016,536          | 29                               | 28               | 31                           | 29                                         | 26                          | 143                | 30             |
| Marion                     | IN        | 969,466            | 30                               | 29               | 29                           | 32                                         | 31                          | 151                | 31             |
| Fresno                     | CA        | 1,015,190          | 32                               | 32               | 32                           | 27                                         | 32                          | 155                | 32             |
| Bronx                      | NY        | 1,379,946          | 33                               | 33               | 33                           | 33                                         | 33                          | 165                | 33             |

\*All counties in the United States with a population between 950,000 and 1,550,000 in 2022

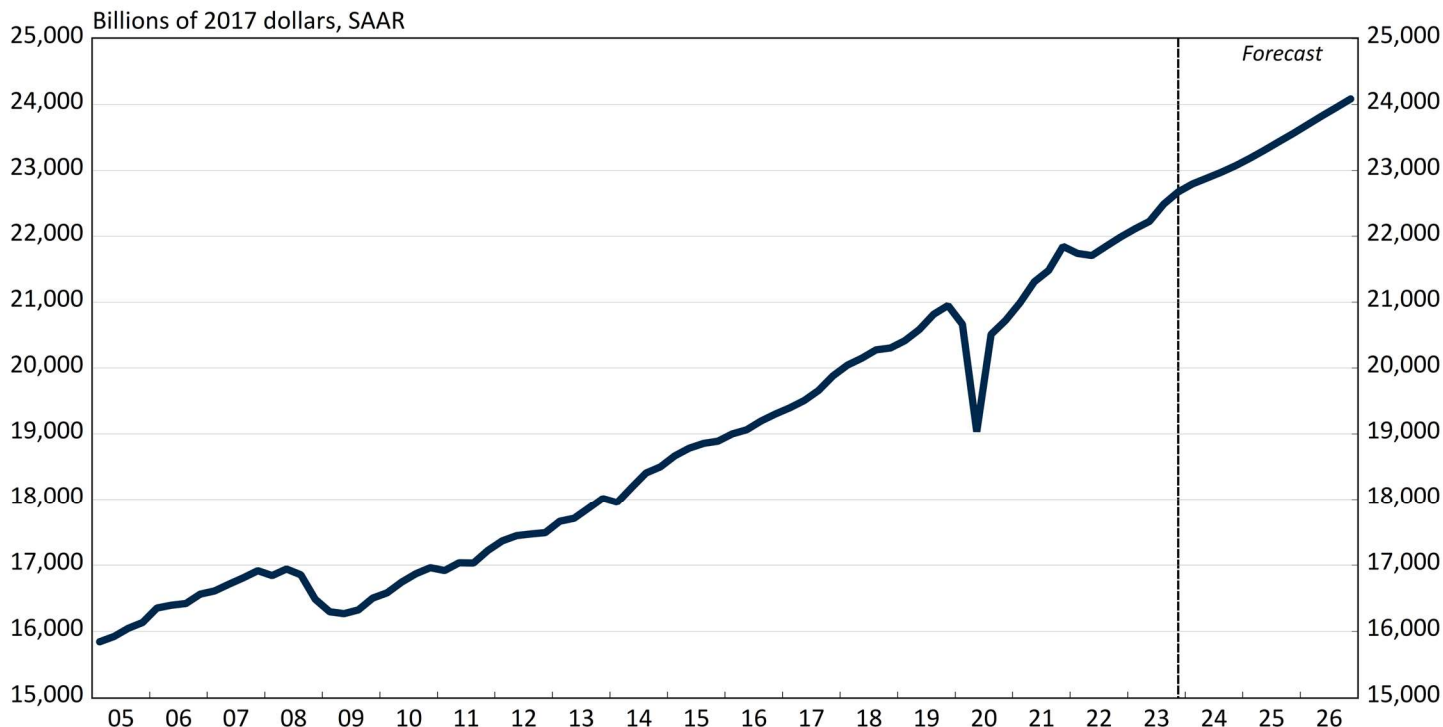
\*\*Adjusted for cost of living

Source: American Community Survey 2022. Census Bureau Population Estimates, March 2023.

## Oakland County Compared with Its Peers

- Each year, we rank Oakland County among its peers on five measures that we believe provide useful insights into the county's economic well-being. This year, Oakland's peer group includes all counties in the United States with populations between 950,000 and 1.55 million residents in 2022. A total of 32 other counties matched this description, with Oakland's population of 1.27 million in the middle of the pack.
- Many of the nation's most economically successful counties are included in this group. Like Oakland, many are also among the select group of U.S. counties that have a AAA bond rating with multiple rating agencies.
- In Table 1, we arrange the 33 counties by the sum of their rankings across the five measures to calculate an overall rank. Oakland places 9th overall. We believe that Oakland's top-ten ranking among this group of counties reflects its solid and enduring economic fundamentals.
- The five measures we consider are: (1) educational attainment—the share of the population aged 25 to 64 with at least an associate's degree in 2022; (2) child poverty—the share of the population aged 17 and under who lived in families whose income was below the poverty level in 2022; (3) median family income adjusted for the local cost of living in 2022; (4) high-income seniors—the share of persons aged 65 and older with income at least five times the poverty level in 2022; and (5) professional occupations—the share of employed county residents working in professional and managerial occupations in 2022.
- A lower number for a rank indicates a better position among the counties: a rank of 1 is the best and 33 is the worst. Oakland County ranks between 8th and 16th across the various measures (the underlying data for Table 1 is presented in Appendix C).
- Oakland ranks within the top ten counties nationally in professional occupations (8th), child poverty (9th), median family income (9th), and educational attainment (10th). Oakland's placement in these categories has helped it to maintain its overall top-ten position among its peer group for quite some time. This is an impressive achievement considering that a number of these counties contain some of the top-rated local economies around the nation.
- Oakland's weakest ranking came in the share of high-income seniors, but the county's ranking of 16th on this metric still placed the county within the top half of its peer group.
- We believe Oakland County's strong overall performance in these measures suggests that it is well positioned for the future despite the current challenges facing the local and national economies. The combination of an educated populace, a high share of managerial and professional jobs, and an attractive standard of living should provide a solid foundation for economic prosperity over our forecast period and in the years to come.

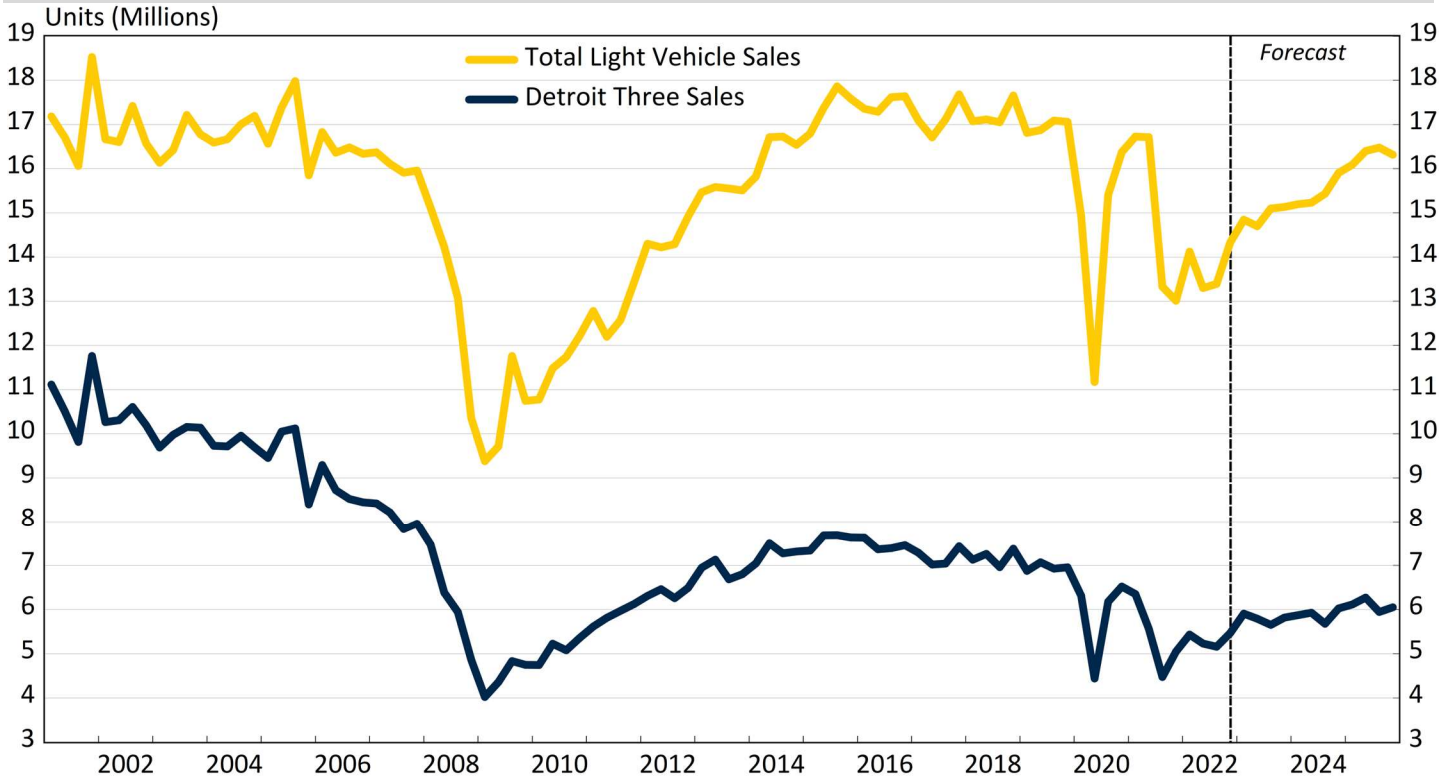
Figure 4

**U.S. Real GDP**

- Oakland County's economic future is closely tied to the overall health of the national economy. Figure 4 shows our February 2024 forecast for quarterly U.S. real GDP.
- Real GDP grew at an annualized pace of 3.4 percent in the fourth quarter of 2023. Although the pace of expansion cooled off from the 4.9 percent rate in the third quarter, it still surprised on the upside. Real compensation grew strongly in the second half of 2023, thanks to the robust labor market and welcome disinflation, helping to fuel the ongoing strength of consumption.
- We project the quarterly pace of economic growth to moderate in the near term, decelerating to about 1.5 percent annualized in the second quarter of 2024. Growth re-accelerates thereafter, ramping back up above 2.0 percent by the second quarter of 2025.
- We forecast that the pace of real GDP will then stabilize in the 2.2–2.3 percent range during the second half of 2025 and 2026 as interest rates continue to fall, inflation stabilizes around 2.1 percent, and real income growth exceeds 2 percent.
- Our forecast assumes that the Fed is done hiking during the current cycle. Inflation has come down sharply while the labor market remains tight. We project the Fed to start cutting rates slowly by mid-2024. By that time, we expect unemployment to be on a gradual ascent with inflation running near the Fed's target. We expect the Fed to proceed slowly, cutting 25 basis points at roughly every other meeting. By the end of our forecast, we expect the target range for the federal funds rate to stand at 3–3.25 percent.
- We believe that the November 2024 elections are likely to yield divided government in one form or another. We therefore expect the status quo to persist in fiscal policy.
- The federal deficit widened from 4.4 percent of GDP in fiscal 2022 to 5.8 percent in fiscal 2023. With elevated interest rates and no significant revenue-raising reforms in sight, the federal deficit hovers around 6.0 percent in fiscal 2024 and 2025 before notching down to 5.4 percent in fiscal 2026.
- The ultimate fiscal policy path is likely to feature a robust increase in defense spending, with some restraint for discretionary non-defense spending.

Figure 5

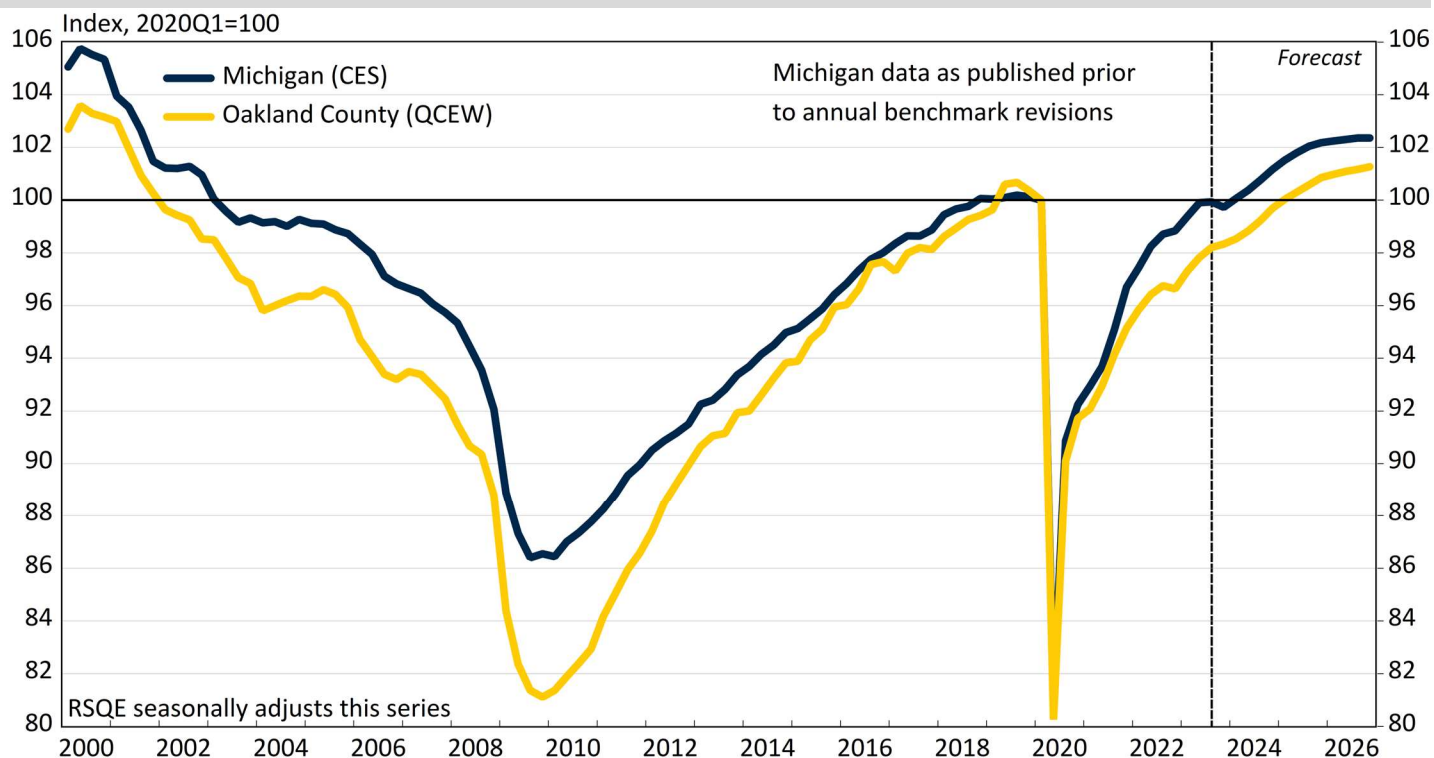
## U.S. and Detroit Three Light Vehicle Sales



- Figure 5 shows our quarterly forecast for total U.S. and Detroit Three light vehicle sales. The annualized pace of light vehicle sales fell from 16.1 million units in December 2023 to 14.9 million units in January 2024, but it bounced back to an average sales pace of 15.6 million units in February and March. We believe that the underlying demand for vehicles remains healthy, but stubbornly high financing rates and limited inventories are generating monthly gyrations in the sales figures.
- We expect light vehicle sales to continue to increase from March's solid pace, reaching an average of 16.2 million units in the second half of 2024, as financing rates retreat and income growth outpaces vehicle prices. As interest rates continue to decline, light vehicle sales are projected to reach 16.4 million units in 2025 before slipping to 16.2 million units in 2026.
- Car sales stall out during our forecast, however, as vehicle manufacturers continue to ditch low-profit-margin models in favor of light trucks, luxury sedans, sports cars, and electric vehicles.
- The Detroit Three's share of U.S. light vehicle sales recovered from October and November's anemic 33 percent to roughly 35 percent this winter, as the impact of the auto strike moved into the rearview mirror.
- As the market stabilizes, we expect the Detroit Three's share to reach 36.2 percent in the second quarter of 2024. That would put the Detroit Three's market share roughly in line with where it was last summer before the auto strike.
- Unfortunately, we anticipate that the Detroit Three's market share will then resume its decade-long trend, declining to 34.5 percent by the end of 2025 and 33.7 percent by the end of 2026.
- When combined with our projection of increasing total light vehicle sales, our forecast for the Detroit Three's share of the market implies that Detroit Three vehicle sales will total 5.6 million units in 2024, 5.7 million units in 2025, and 5.5 million units in 2026.
- Despite forecasting a sales pace that is roughly 20 percent lower than 2019 levels, we expect the Detroit Three manufacturers' profits to remain respectable, as income growth outpaces vehicle prices and the Detroit Three manufacturers broadly continue to prioritize pricing discipline and profitability over market share.

Figure 6

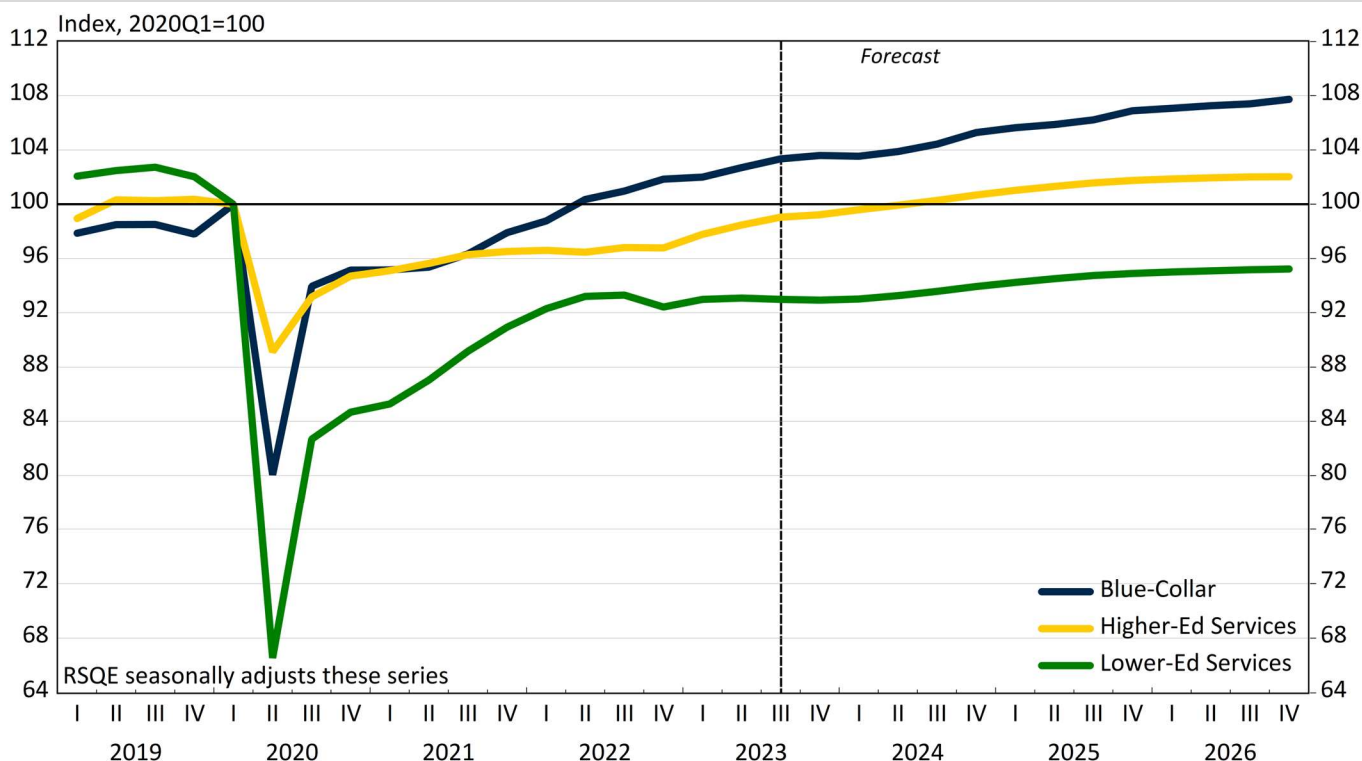
## Quarterly Payroll Employment Indices, Michigan and Oakland County



- Figure 6 displays our forecast for Michigan's and Oakland County's payroll employment levels, with values indexed to 100 in 2020q1.
- Oakland County's payroll employment and wage forecasts are based on the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) program, whereas our statewide forecast is based on the Current Employment Statistics (CES) program.
- From the end of the Great Recession (2009q3) to the beginning of the pandemic (2020q1), employment in Oakland County grew more quickly than in the state, averaging roughly 2.0 percent per year compared to the state's 1.4 percent per year.
- The COVID-19 recession led payroll employment in the state of Michigan to decline by 845,300 jobs, or 19 percent, in the second quarter of 2020. Oakland County lost 146,800 jobs, or roughly 20 percent, at the start of the pandemic.
- In the latest benchmark revision to the CES employment data, the state of Michigan had recovered all the jobs it lost at the start of the pandemic by the end of 2023, whereas we estimate that Oakland County had recovered 92 percent of its payroll job losses by that time.
- We are forecasting that growth differential to reverse course going forward, with the county's job growth (1.1 percent per year) outpacing the state's (0.9 percent per year) over the next three years.
- We expect employment in Oakland County to return to its pre-pandemic level in the first quarter of 2025 and to exceed its pre-pandemic level by 1.3 percent by the end of 2026.
- By the end of our forecast, we expect Oakland County's payroll job count to stand just 2.2 percent below its peak level reached in the second quarter of 2000, while Michigan's payroll job count remains 3.2 percent below its peak level reached that quarter.
- We are forecasting that Oakland's labor force will grow by 1.2 percent per year over the next three years. If that growth does not materialize, the county's unemployment rate will be lower than we are forecasting, its job gains will be smaller, or both.

Figure 7

## Job Indices in Oakland County by Selected Industries



- On the chart above, we categorize each of Oakland's industries into three groups. The graph displays our forecast for each group's total employment level, with values indexed to 100 in 2020q1, the quarter before the COVID-19 recession.
- The **blue-collar** industries comprise mining; construction; manufacturing; and wholesale trade, transportation and warehousing, and utilities. The job count for these industries declined by 20 percent in the second quarter of 2020 but recovered all of those losses by the second quarter of 2022.
- Blue-collar employment gains slowed down during the remainder of 2022 and the first three quarters of 2023. We expect job growth will continue over the next three years at an average pace of 1.4 percent per year, taking the blue-collar industries to 11,800 jobs (7.7 percent) above their pre-pandemic employment level at the end of our forecast.
- The **higher-education** services industries comprise information; finance; professional, scientific, and technical services; management of companies and enterprises; private education and health services; and government (which includes public education). These are industries that tend to employ highly educated workers.
- The pandemic led to relatively few job losses in Oakland's higher-education services industries. The initial recovery was relatively brisk, but job gains were modest in 2021 and flatlined in 2022. Job growth accelerated in 2023, however, so that the higher-education services industries had recovered over 90 percent of their pandemic-related job losses by the third quarter.
- We forecast continuing job gains in the higher-educational attainment services industries going forward. This industry group averages 1.3 percent growth per year over the next three years, taking its employment to 7,300 jobs, or 2.0 percent, above the pre-pandemic level by the end of 2026.
- The **lower-education** services industries comprise retail trade; leisure and hospitality; administrative support services and waste management; and other services. These industries tend to employ less well-educated workers, and they suffered the worst of the pandemic's impact, shrinking by one-third in 2020q2. Their recovery so far has been incomplete, with employment remaining 7.0 percent below pre-pandemic levels in 2023q3. We are forecasting modest growth for these industries through 2026 (0.8 percent per year), leaving employment 11,000 jobs, or 4.8 percent, below the pre-pandemic level by the end of 2026.

Table 2

## Forecast of Jobs in Oakland County by Major Industry Division

|                                                                 | 2022           | Forecast Employment |                |                |                | Average Annual Wage 2022 \$ |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|---------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------------------|
|                                                                 |                | 2023                | 2024           | 2025           | 2026           |                             |
| <b>Total Jobs (Number of jobs)</b>                              | <b>717,279</b> | <b>728,493</b>      | <b>737,064</b> | <b>747,275</b> | <b>752,369</b> | <b>73,008</b>               |
| (Annual percentage change)                                      | (3.0)          | (1.6)               | (1.2)          | (1.4)          | (0.7)          |                             |
| <b>Blue-Collar</b>                                              | <b>153,076</b> | <b>156,769</b>      | <b>158,863</b> | <b>161,709</b> | <b>163,556</b> | <b>90,329</b>               |
| Utilities                                                       | 1,581          | 1,566               | 1,584          | 1,599          | 1,613          | 157,564                     |
| Wholesale trade                                                 | 36,667         | 37,919              | 38,366         | 38,649         | 38,751         | 109,525                     |
| Transportation equipment (Motor Vehicles & Parts) manufacturing | 21,773         | 22,829              | 22,488         | 23,061         | 24,049         | 105,915                     |
| Construction                                                    | 29,393         | 30,895              | 32,064         | 32,923         | 33,305         | 85,961                      |
| Other manufacturing                                             | 47,199         | 47,176              | 47,735         | 48,405         | 48,454         | 79,979                      |
| Transportation and warehousing                                  | 15,348         | 15,284              | 15,501         | 15,912         | 16,190         | 58,934                      |
| Natural resources and mining                                    | 1,117          | 1,101               | 1,125          | 1,159          | 1,194          | 44,837                      |
| <b>Higher-Ed Services</b>                                       | <b>346,805</b> | <b>353,873</b>      | <b>359,211</b> | <b>363,859</b> | <b>365,829</b> | <b>84,363</b>               |
| Management of companies and enterprises                         | 17,743         | 17,245              | 17,304         | 17,475         | 17,392         | 128,891                     |
| Finance and insurance                                           | 41,288         | 40,723              | 41,379         | 41,850         | 42,013         | 106,082                     |
| Professional, scientific, and technical services                | 99,511         | 98,839              | 99,059         | 100,181        | 100,712        | 105,777                     |
| Information                                                     | 13,585         | 14,170              | 14,201         | 14,288         | 14,319         | 103,220                     |
| Real estate and rental and leasing                              | 17,146         | 19,021              | 19,081         | 19,254         | 19,337         | 72,366                      |
| Total Government                                                | 44,510         | 45,534              | 46,207         | 46,580         | 46,562         | 62,022                      |
| Private health and social services                              | 101,892        | 106,673             | 110,065        | 112,189        | 113,475        | 60,412                      |
| Private education                                               | 11,130         | 11,669              | 11,915         | 12,042         | 12,019         | 45,420                      |
| <b>Lower-Ed Services</b>                                        | <b>214,304</b> | <b>214,744</b>      | <b>215,782</b> | <b>218,435</b> | <b>219,647</b> | <b>42,420</b>               |
| Administrative and support and waste management                 | 55,016         | 52,214              | 51,751         | 51,967         | 51,593         | 56,025                      |
| Other services                                                  | 20,993         | 21,642              | 22,015         | 22,392         | 22,598         | 46,640                      |
| Retail trade                                                    | 73,041         | 72,572              | 72,469         | 72,569         | 72,377         | 44,954                      |
| Arts, entertainment and recreation                              | 10,086         | 10,702              | 10,998         | 11,324         | 11,539         | 31,313                      |
| Accommodation and food services                                 | 55,169         | 57,614              | 58,549         | 60,183         | 61,541         | 25,922                      |
| Unclassified                                                    | 3,093          | 3,106               | 3,208          | 3,272          | 3,338          | 61,549                      |
| <i>Addendum:</i>                                                |                |                     |                |                |                |                             |
| Total Private                                                   | 672,769        | 682,959             | 690,858        | 700,695        | 705,807        | 73,735                      |

Note: The annual data in this table are seasonally adjusted quarterly averages and may differ slightly from annual published estimates.

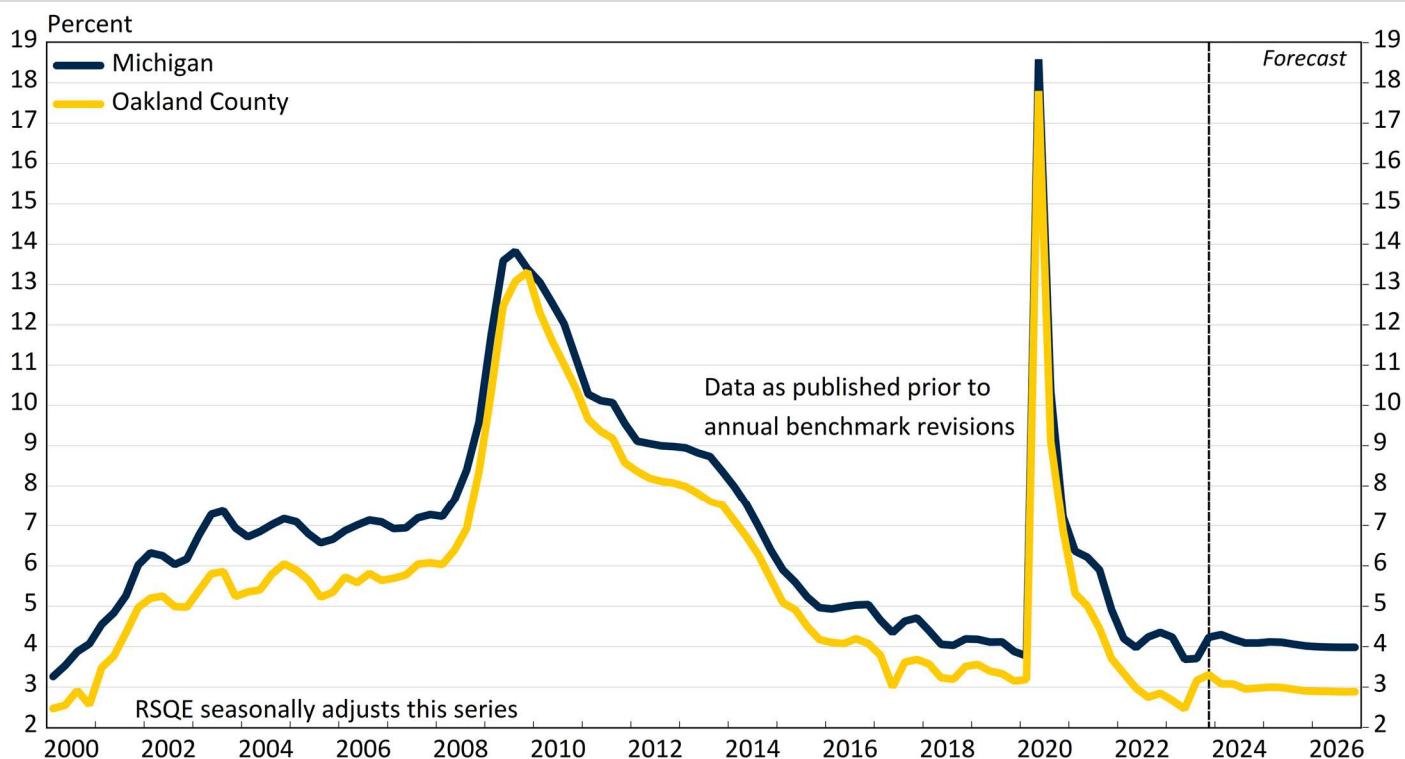
- On an annual average basis, employment in Oakland County declined by 9.8 percent in 2020. Employment then grew by 3.4 percent in 2021 and 3.0 percent in 2022.
- We estimate job growth in the county slowed to a pace of 1.6 percent in 2023. We forecast job growth of 1.2 percent in 2024 and 1.4 percent in 2025. As the county nears full employment, job gains slow to only 0.7 percent in 2026. Over the next three years, we are forecasting that Oakland County will add a total of 23,850 jobs.
- The vast majority (22,850) of the net job gains in the county between 2023 and 2026 are forecast to occur in the private sector. The government sector, which includes Oakland University, Oakland Community College, and the K-12 public schools, as well as general government administration, adds only 1,000 jobs over that period.
- The federal government introduced an updated NAICS industry classification system in 2022, which may have created a discontinuity between 2021 and 2022 for some industries.

## Forecast of Jobs in Oakland County by Major Industry Division

- In Table 2, we divide Oakland's major private sector industries into the three industry categories described previously. Within each category, the major industries are listed in descending order based on their average annual wage in 2022. Appendix B displays a full list of roughly 90 industries, organized by NAICS code.
- Within the blue-collar industry group, motor vehicle and parts manufacturing is forecast to lose 340 jobs in 2024 before adding a total of 1,560 jobs in 2025 and 2026 with the conversion of GM's Orion Assembly plant to electric vehicles. If our forecast is accurate, Oakland's 2026 job count in motor vehicle and parts manufacturing would be 2,340 higher than in 2019 and the highest since 2007, but it would still be only about one-half the number in 2001.
- We estimate non-automotive manufacturing lost 20 jobs in 2023, but we expect that growth will resume in 2024. By 2026, Oakland's employment in non-automotive manufacturing is forecast to be 1,040 jobs above 2019 levels.
- We estimate that the construction industry added 1,500 jobs in 2023, leaving employment at its highest level since 2005. We expect employment gains to slow over the next three years: 1,170 in 2024, 860 in 2025, and 380 in 2026. Construction employment is forecast to average 6,080 jobs higher in 2026 (22.3 percent) than in 2019.
- Within the higher-education services industry group, the management of companies industry lost 1,190 jobs in 2022. We suspect this drop may stem largely from the reclassification of jobs in motor vehicle manufacturing. We estimate that company management also lost 500 jobs in 2023. We are forecasting that company management will only recover 150 jobs over the next three years, leaving employment in 2026 roughly 1,500 jobs below 2019 levels.
- Employment in the finance and insurance industry declined by 2,310 jobs in 2022 and is estimated to have lost an additional 570 jobs in 2023. We forecast it to recover a total of 1,290 jobs over the next three years. In 2026, employment is expected to be 2,790 higher than it was in 2019.
- Employment in professional and technical services has recovered slowly since the COVID-19 recession, adding only 90 jobs since 2020. We are forecasting that growth will accelerate over the next three years, adding about 620 jobs per year. Despite this improvement, we expect that Oakland's professional and technical services industry will remain about 3,850 jobs short of 2019 levels by 2026.
- Employment in private health and social services initially recovered slowly from the pandemic, but it has recently become a bright spot, adding 4,780 jobs in 2023. We forecast private health and social services will add 6,800 jobs over the next three years (2.1 percent per year). Nearly three-quarters of the job gains that we are forecasting will come from hospitals, home health care, nursing and residential care facilities, and social services. Our forecast leaves employment in 2026 roughly 6,340 jobs (5.9 percent) higher than in 2019.
- Among Oakland's lower-education services industry group, employment in retail trade stood at 83,100 jobs in 2001, but it slipped to 78,900 by 2019. Employment fell another 9,350 jobs in 2020, then recovered 2,280 in 2021 and 1,200 in 2022. We forecast employment gains in retail trade to stall out, resulting in the loss of 190 jobs over the next three years. Our forecast would leave retail trade employment in 2026 about 8.3 percent below 2019 levels, and 12.9 percent below 2001 levels.
- Employment in accommodations and food services declined by 25.6 percent in 2020 (15,700 jobs). Initially the recovery was slow, but the pace picked up in 2022, with 6,620 job gains (13.6 percent). Job gains slowed to 2,440 in 2023 and are forecast to average 1,310 per year over the next three years. Employment in 2026 is 420 higher than in 2019.
- The arts and recreation industry lost 39.1 percent of its jobs in 2020. It recovered about 88 percent of those losses by 2023. Over the next three years, we expect the industry will add 840 jobs (2.5 percent per year) so that employment in 2026 is 290 higher than 2019 levels,
- Administrative support and waste management services are forecast to lose 620 jobs over the next three years, leaving employment in 2026 over 10,000 less than in 2019.

Figure 8

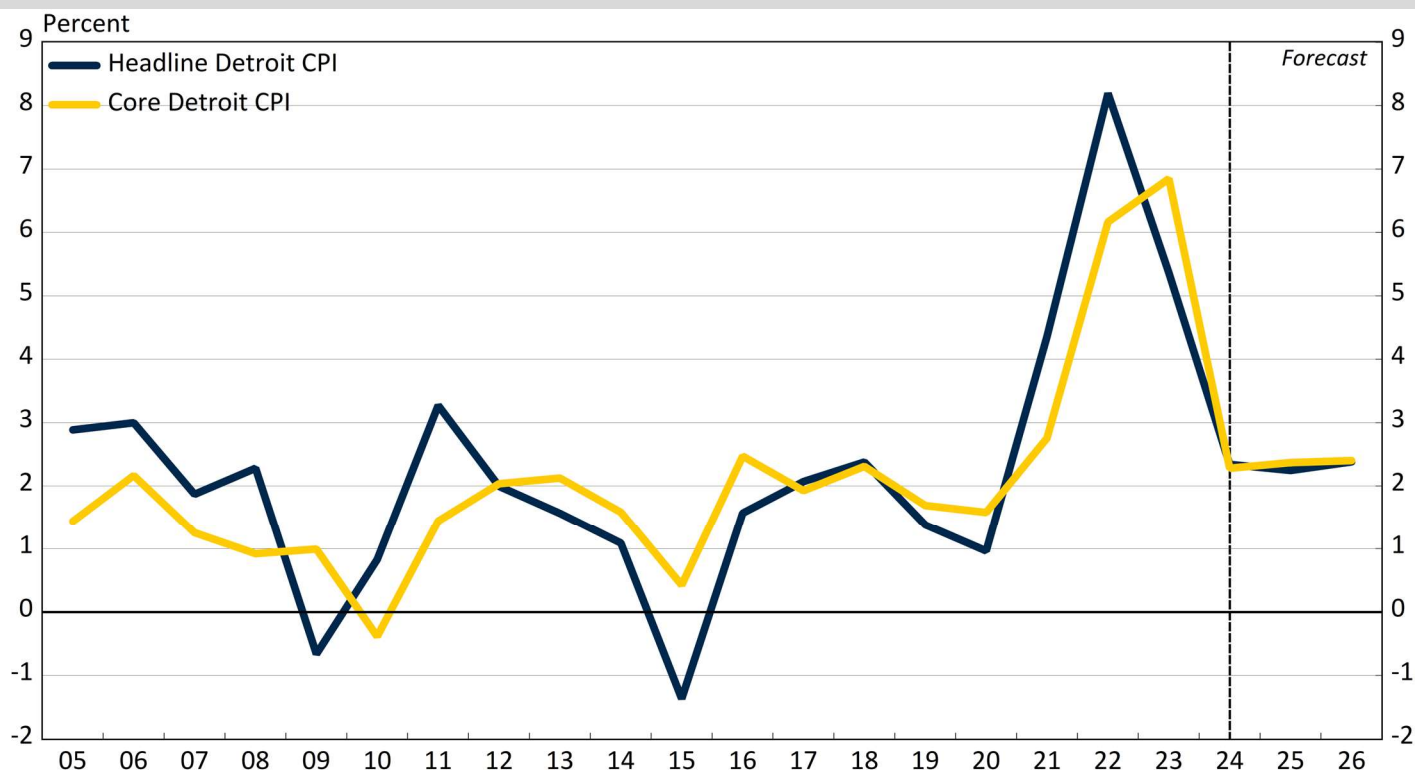
## Quarterly Unemployment Rate, Michigan and Oakland County



- Figure 8 shows history and our forecast for the quarterly unemployment rates in Michigan and Oakland County. Our forecast for both Michigan and Oakland County was completed before the annual benchmark revision, so the data in Figure 2 differs slightly from the data in Figure 8.
- We expect Oakland County's jobless rate to edge down from 3.3 percent in the final quarter of 2023 to 3.0 percent in the fourth quarter of 2024, putting Oakland's unemployment rate 1.1 percentage points below the statewide unemployment rate.
- We forecast Oakland's jobless rate to dip to 2.9 percent by the second half of 2025 before holding steady at that rate for the remainder of the forecast. Oakland County's unemployment rate remains 1.1 percentage points lower than the statewide rate throughout our forecast.
- That progress would put Oakland county's unemployment rate at the end of our forecast one-half of a percentage point below its 2019 average, which we judge to have been an economically healthy time for the county.
- In addition to the declining unemployment rate that we are forecasting, we expect the count of employed Oakland County residents to keep growing in every quarter of our forecast period. By the end of our forecast, that growth translates to 27,400, or 4.2 percent, more working residents than the county had before the pandemic.
- Despite our relatively rosy forecast, it is important not to lose sight of the long-run demographics at play. Michigan's demographic trends indicate a less promising outlook for future economic growth. We expect that Michigan's population 65 and older will account for more than 20 percent of its total population by the end of 2026. Michigan's aging populace will eventually act as a speed limit for both the state and the county, hindering growth as more residents near the age of retirement.
- Oakland County benefits from a well-educated population, a variety of higher education employment opportunities, and a desirable standard of living, but it is not immune from Michigan's expected aging trend.

Figure 9

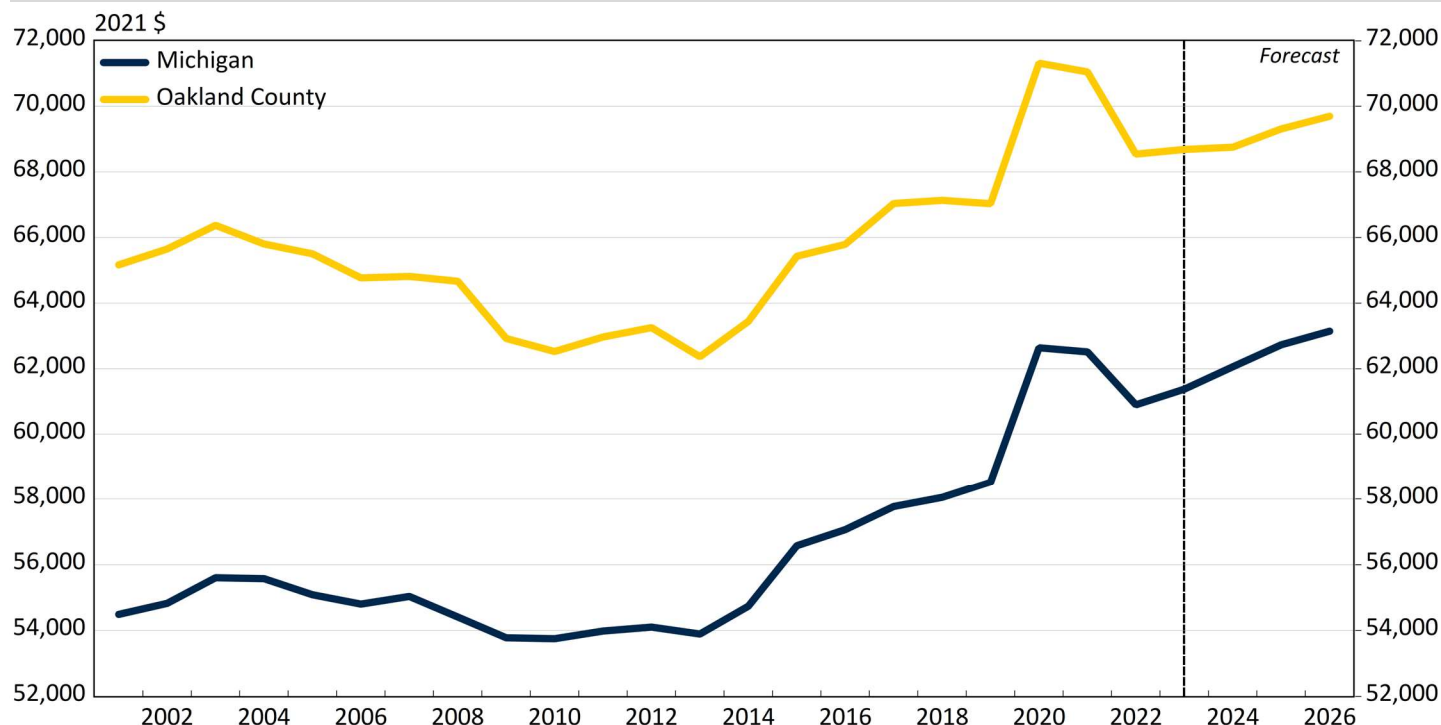
## Detroit CPI Inflation Rate



- Figure 9 shows the history since 2005 and our forecast of annual headline (all-items) and core (excluding food and energy) Detroit CPI inflation. We measure local inflation by the growth rate of the Detroit Consumer Price Index (CPI), as county-level consumer price data are not available.
- Local headline inflation slowed from 8.2 percent in 2022 to 5.4 percent last year, with prices actually declining in the fourth quarter. We expect headline inflation to return to the positive side of the ledger in the first quarter of 2024, at an annualized pace of 3.2 percent as shelter inflation reaccelerates.
- Looking further ahead, we anticipate local inflation to stabilize around 2.2–2.4 percent annually from 2024 through 2026.
- Inflation will remain significantly higher than the pace Michiganders became accustomed to prior to the pandemic, however. Local inflation averaged 1.2 percent per year from 2015 to 2019, but we do not expect to return to that pace during our forecast period.
- Local core inflation, on the other hand, accelerated from 6.2 percent in 2022 to 6.8 percent in 2023. Shelter cost inflation played an important role in the ramp up of local core inflation, but it has slowed considerably since mid-2023.
- We project local core inflation to register 2.3 percent in 2024, in keeping with the broad moderation of price pressures. Local core inflation ticks up to 2.4 percent per year in 2025–26.
- Additionally, the Fed's preferred measure of inflation, the Personal Consumption Expenditures price index, averages 2.0 percent per year during 2024–26.
- When combined with the ongoing economic growth we are forecasting over the next three years, we believe that our forecast for inflation would qualify as a “soft landing” if it comes to fruition.

Figure 10

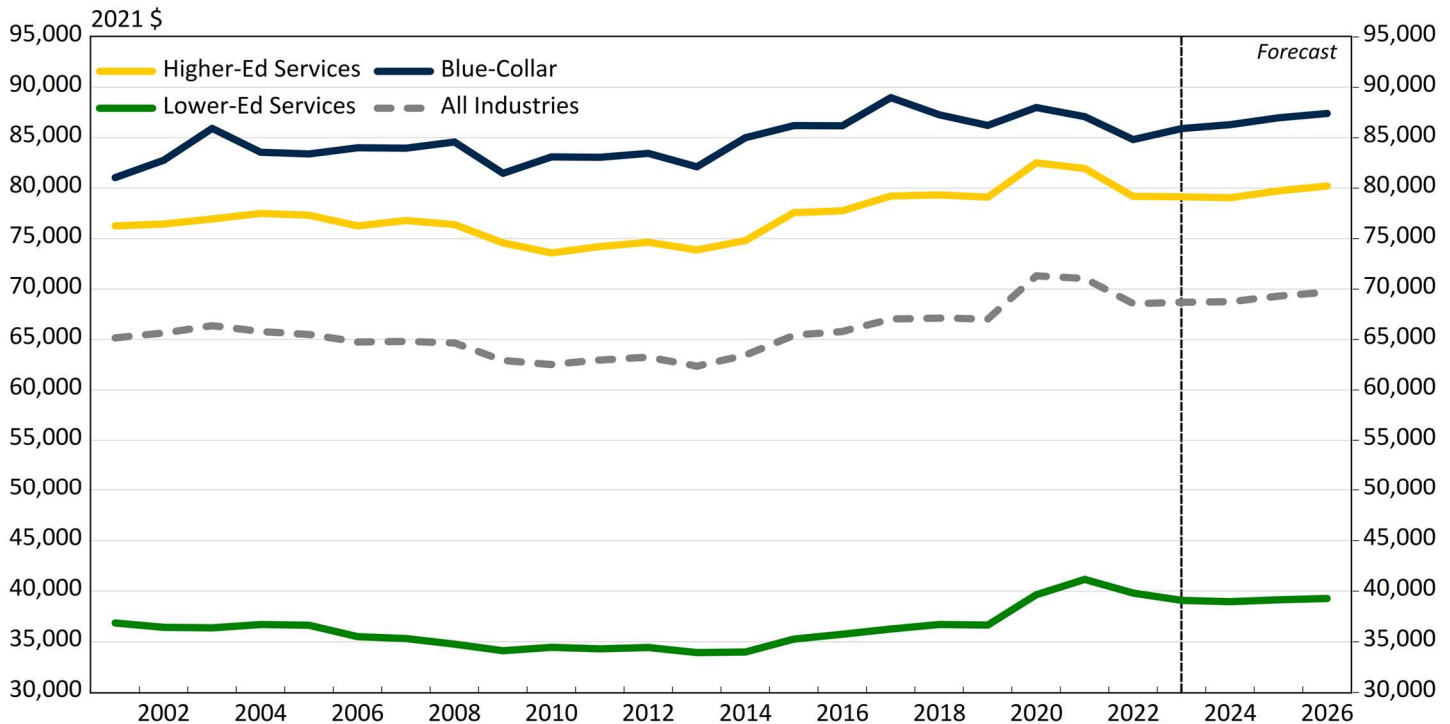
## Average Annual Real Wage, Michigan and Oakland County



- Figure 10 shows the average annual real wages for all workers in Oakland County and in Michigan from 2001 to 2026, adjusted for inflation to be expressed in 2021 dollars.
- The average real wage in Oakland County has run consistently higher than in Michigan, but Oakland's advantage narrowed from almost 20 percent in 2002 to slightly less than 15 percent in 2019.
- Both Oakland County and Michigan saw large jumps in average real wages during 2020. Real wages grew by 6.4 percent in Oakland County and by 7.0 percent statewide. Those were the largest single-year increases in real wages on record.
- The jump in average wages in 2020 was caused by the disproportionate loss of lower-paying jobs relative to higher-paying jobs during the COVID-19 pandemic. Few individual workers experienced wage increases of that magnitude.
- In 2021, real wages fell by 0.4 percent in Oakland County and by 0.2 percent in Michigan. In 2022, real wages fell by an additional 3.5 percent in Oakland and 2.6 percent statewide. We estimate that real wage growth turned positive in 2023, when the average real wage in Oakland County stood 11.9 percent higher than in the state.
- We are forecasting that over the next three years, the average real wage will increase by 0.5 percent per year in Oakland County and by 1.0 percent per year in Michigan.
- In 2026, real wages are forecast to average \$69,700 in Oakland and \$63,100 in Michigan. Thus, Oakland County's average real wage in 2026 will stand 4.0 percent above 2019 levels, while average real wages statewide will stand 7.9 percent higher.
- Real wage growth in the seven years between 2019 and 2026 is expected to be slightly slower than in the prior seven-year period (2012 to 2019). Oakland's real wage gains are forecast to total 4.0 percent from 2019 to 2026, compared to 6.0 percent in the earlier period.
- Although our forecast for real wage may appear to be pessimistic, it is comparable to the economy's long-term average.

Figure 11

## Average Annual Real Wage in Oakland County by Selected Industry Group



- Figure 11 shows the average annual real wage in Oakland County for the same three industry categories as in Figure 7: traditional blue-collar industries, higher-education service industries, and lower-education service industries.
- Average wages in the blue-collar and higher-education services industries are about twice as high as wages in the lower-education services industries.
- The 2020 pandemic recession caused a spike in average wages in all three industry groups: 2.0 percent in the blue-collar industries, 4.3 percent in the higher-education services industries, and 8.2 percent in the lower-education services industries.
- The relatively large increase in wages in the lower-education services industries reflects the fact that the lowest-paid industries within this group (arts and recreation and accommodations and food services) lost the greatest share of jobs in 2020.
- In 2021, the average annual real wage declined in the blue-collar industries and higher-education services industries, but it increased by 3.8 percent in the lower-education services industries.
- Inflation substantially exceeded wage growth in 2022, leading the average real wage to decline by 2.6 percent in the blue-collar industries, by 3.4 percent in the higher-education services industries, and by 3.3 percent in the lower-education services industries.
- Real wage growth turned positive for the blue-collar industries in 2023 (1.3 percent), but it continued to decline for the higher-education services industries and the lower-education services industries.
- Over the next three years, the average real wage is forecast to grow by 0.6 percent per year in the blue-collar industries, by 0.5 percent per year in the higher-education services industries, and by 0.2 percent per year in the lower-education services industries.
- By 2026, real wages are expected to stand around 1.4 percent higher than their 2019 levels in both the blue-collar industries the higher-education services industries. Over the same period the average real wage is forecast to grow by 7.2 percent in Oakland's lower-education services industries.
- The increase in wages in the lower-education services industries has helped to narrow wage inequality in Oakland County. In 2019, the county's lower-education services industry workers were paid only 43 percent of the blue-collar average, and 46 percent of the higher-education services average. In 2026, they will be earning 45 percent and 49 percent of those groups' average wages.

Table 3

**Advanced Manufacturing in Oakland County, 2022**

|                           | All Industries | Advanced, Aspiring, and<br>Private Services Support for<br>Advanced Mfg and Other | Advanced<br>Manufacturing | Aspiring<br>Advanced<br>Manufacturing | Private Services<br>Support for Advanced<br>Mfg and Other |
|---------------------------|----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| United States             |                |                                                                                   |                           |                                       |                                                           |
| Share of Jobs, BA+        | 28.9%          | 55.6%                                                                             | 40.1%                     | 23.4%                                 | 74.0%                                                     |
| Employment                | 150,025,655    | 10,083,683                                                                        | 2,479,995                 | 2,012,164                             | 5,591,524                                                 |
| Average Wage \$           | 69,986         | 125,182                                                                           | 126,735                   | 82,470                                | 139,864                                                   |
| Share of Total Employment | --             | 6.7%                                                                              | 1.7%                      | 1.3%                                  | 3.7%                                                      |
| Oakland County, MI        |                |                                                                                   |                           |                                       |                                                           |
| Employment                | 717,269        | 82,177                                                                            | 9,001                     | 13,235                                | 59,941                                                    |
| Average Wage \$           | 73,008         | 108,259                                                                           | 100,433                   | 93,744                                | 112,639                                                   |
| Share of Total Employment | --             | 11.5%                                                                             | 1.3%                      | 1.8%                                  | 8.4%                                                      |

- Oakland County enjoys a strong manufacturing base, but different parts of the manufacturing sector feature very different skill and technology profiles. The advanced manufacturing portion of the sector features more intensive use of technology than traditional manufacturing and is therefore arguably better positioned for future growth.
- While the term advanced manufacturing generally refers to the production process, employment data on manufacturing activity is officially organized by type of product, or industry.
- Table 3 shows our effort to organize “advanced manufacturing” on an aggregate industry basis including data on employment and wages in the United States and Oakland County in 2022.
- The industries we identify as “advanced manufacturing” include computer and electronics, aerospace, and chemical manufacturing. These industries are frequently cited as examples of advanced manufacturing, and they employ disproportionately large shares of workers with a bachelor's degree or higher. They also tend to pay very high salaries.
- The group we call “aspiring advanced manufacturing” includes machinery, medical equipment, electrical equipment, and motor vehicle assembly. These industries are generally still in the process of introducing advanced manufacturing technology into the production process and changing their employment mix to include more workers with at least a bachelor's degree.
- The third category we include in Table 3 comprises service-providing industries that support advanced manufacturing. It includes computer software publishing and systems design, engineering, and scientific research and development industries. Nearly three-quarters of the workers in these industries have a bachelor's or more education, and they are very well paid.
- Oakland County has a relatively high share of employment, 11.5 percent, in advanced manufacturing and related industries, versus the U.S. average of 6.7 percent. This advantage is due to the disproportionate share of activity in the service industries that support advanced manufacturing. Thus, Oakland appears to be well positioned to prosper as advanced manufacturing technology becomes more widely used.
- One concern, however, is that the average wage in the advanced manufacturing and service support industries is much lower in Oakland than nationally (\$100,433 compared to \$126,735 and \$112,639 compared to \$139,864). Unless wages in these industries rise, Oakland risks losing these jobs to other, higher-paying communities.

## Review of the Forecast

| Year of Forecast | % Forecast Error for Total Private Jobs | Year of Forecast | % Forecast Error for Total Private Jobs | Year of Forecast | % Forecast Error for Total Private Jobs |
|------------------|-----------------------------------------|------------------|-----------------------------------------|------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| 1986             | + 1.4                                   | 1999             | – 1.2                                   | 2012             | – 2.6                                   |
| 1987             | + 0.7                                   | 2000             | + 0.6                                   | 2013             | – 1.1                                   |
| 1988             | – 1.8                                   | 2001             | + 1.9                                   | 2014             | – 0.3                                   |
| 1989             | – 1.9                                   | 2002             | + 3.2                                   | 2015             | – 0.1                                   |
| 1990             | + 2.2                                   | 2003             | + 1.5                                   | 2016             | – 0.1                                   |
| 1991             | + 3.9                                   | 2004             | + 2.6                                   | 2017             | + 1.1                                   |
| 1992             | – 2.0                                   | 2005             | + 1.4                                   | 2018             | + 0.5                                   |
| 1993             | + 0.5                                   | 2006             | + 3.4                                   | 2019             | + 0.2                                   |
| 1994             | – 1.3                                   | 2007             | 0.0                                     | 2020             | + 0.9                                   |
| 1995             | + 0.2                                   | 2008             | + 2.3                                   | 2021             | + 0.8                                   |
| 1996             | – 0.5                                   | 2009             | + 5.5                                   | 2022             | + 1.1                                   |
| 1997             | + 0.6                                   | 2010             | – 1.7                                   | 2023             | – 0.2                                   |
| 1998             | + 1.3                                   | 2011             | – 2.5                                   |                  |                                         |

(Positive numbers indicate that the forecast was too high; negative numbers indicate that it was too low.)

Average absolute forecast error 1986–2023: 1.5%

|                         | Forecast 2023 | Actual 2023 |
|-------------------------|---------------|-------------|
| Unemployment rate       | 2.8%          | 2.9%        |
| Consumer inflation rate | 3.2%          | 5.4%        |

Forecast Date: May 2023

- In last year's report, we had forecast that Oakland County would gain 8,700 private jobs in 2023, for an increase of 1.3 percent. We now estimate that the county gained 10,200 private jobs last year, an increase of 1.5 percent. After revisions to the calendar 2022 job count, our forecast error for the 2023 private employment level comes to an under-prediction of 1,200 jobs, or 0.2 percentage points after rounding.
- That forecast error was well below our average absolute error of 1.5 percent since 1986.
- Our forecast for Oakland County's government sector was spot on. Last year, we had forecast that government employment in the county would gain 1,000 jobs in 2023, an increase of 2.3 percent. We now estimate that government employment did, in fact, gain 1,000 jobs in 2023.
- We had forecast that Oakland's unemployment rate would decrease from 3.0 percent in 2022 to 2.8 percent in 2023. Oakland's unemployment rate actually decreased to 2.9 percent in 2023.
- Last year, we forecast that local prices would increase by only 3.2 percent in 2023. Local prices ended up increasing by 5.4 percent last year, as inflation proved more stubborn than we had expected.
- Even though we slightly under-estimated the strength of Oakland County's economy in 2023, the county's overall performance suggests that it is well positioned for the future as one of the most prosperous counties in both Michigan and the United States.

**Forecast of Jobs in Oakland County by Detailed Industry**

|                                               | Estimate | Forecast |         |         | Average Annual<br>Wage 2022 \$ |
|-----------------------------------------------|----------|----------|---------|---------|--------------------------------|
|                                               | 2023     | 2024     | 2025    | 2026    |                                |
| Total Payroll Jobs (Number of jobs)           | 217,373  | 221,178  | 224,770 | 227,390 | 69,502                         |
| (Annual percentage change)                    | (2.2)    | (1.8)    | (1.6)   | (1.2)   |                                |
| Total Government                              | 83,290   | 85,355   | 86,970  | 88,335  | 72,970                         |
| Federal Government                            | 4,600    | 4,733    | 4,806   | 4,855   | 96,263                         |
| State Government                              | 67,037   | 68,823   | 70,255  | 71,567  | 74,074                         |
| Local Government                              | 11,652   | 11,799   | 11,909  | 11,914  | 57,847                         |
| Total Private                                 | 134,083  | 135,823  | 137,800 | 139,054 | 67,364                         |
| Private Goods-Producing                       | 17,328   | 17,555   | 17,761  | 17,788  | 73,169                         |
| Natural resources and mining                  | 409      | 431      | 448     | 465     | 38,827                         |
| Construction                                  | 4,832    | 4,929    | 5,032   | 5,080   | 72,287                         |
| Manufacturing                                 | 12,087   | 12,194   | 12,281  | 12,243  | 74,519                         |
| Printing and related support activities       | 1,130    | 1,123    | 1,129   | 1,130   | 52,041                         |
| Chemicals                                     | 609      | 618      | 635     | 649     | 91,564                         |
| Plastics and rubber products                  | 663      | 653      | 672     | 683     | 97,522                         |
| Fabricated metals                             | 1,029    | 1,024    | 1,020   | 996     | 64,610                         |
| Machinery                                     | 983      | 1,008    | 1,033   | 1,042   | 79,509                         |
| Computer and electronic products              | 1,375    | 1,410    | 1,422   | 1,413   | 91,380                         |
| Transportation equipment                      | 2,600    | 2,621    | 2,593   | 2,530   | 73,693                         |
| Miscellaneous manufacturing                   | 1,427    | 1,375    | 1,357   | 1,335   | 81,181                         |
| Manufacturing NEC                             | 2,270    | 2,361    | 2,420   | 2,464   | 60,658                         |
| Private Service-Providing                     | 116,755  | 118,268  | 120,039 | 121,267 | 66,501                         |
| Trade, transportation, and utilities          | 26,186   | 26,428   | 26,724  | 26,892  | 60,564                         |
| Wholesale trade                               | 6,347    | 6,513    | 6,662   | 6,792   | 87,744                         |
| Merchant wholesalers, durable goods           | 3,888    | 4,005    | 4,109   | 4,203   | 95,282                         |
| Merchant wholesalers, nondurable goods        | 1,724    | 1,759    | 1,790   | 1,813   | 75,729                         |
| Wholesale electronic markets, agents, brokers | 734      | 749      | 763     | 776     | 78,454                         |
| Retail trade                                  | 15,192   | 15,221   | 15,255  | 15,239  | 39,092                         |
| Motor vehicle and parts dealers               | 1,554    | 1,575    | 1,590   | 1,598   | 80,805                         |
| Building material and garden supply dealers   | 1,344    | 1,321    | 1,310   | 1,295   | 48,199                         |
| Food and beverage retailers                   | 3,081    | 3,157    | 3,230   | 3,294   | 29,931                         |
| General merchandise retailers                 | 3,070    | 3,079    | 3,047   | 3,005   | 31,902                         |
| Health and personal care retailers            | 1,127    | 1,152    | 1,180   | 1,205   | 36,913                         |
| Retail Trade NEC                              | 5,016    | 4,937    | 4,898   | 4,843   | 34,977                         |
| Transportation and warehousing                | 4,235    | 4,294    | 4,403   | 4,456   | 88,945                         |
| Utilities                                     | 396      | 399      | 404     | 404     | 171,129                        |
| Information                                   | 3,908    | 3,856    | 3,875   | 3,896   | 129,420                        |
| Publishing                                    | 1,162    | 1,136    | 1,121   | 1,104   | 125,887                        |
| Telecommunications                            | 478      | 456      | 442     | 429     | 72,717                         |
| Computing infrastructure providers            | 1,088    | 1,096    | 1,128   | 1,162   | 114,641                        |
| Information NEC                               | 1,180    | 1,167    | 1,184   | 1,202   | 170,260                        |
| Financial activities                          | 6,103    | 6,024    | 6,098   | 6,147   | 82,697                         |
| Finance and insurance                         | 3,599    | 3,562    | 3,634   | 3,691   | 97,355                         |
| Credit intermediation and related activities  | 1,708    | 1,644    | 1,674   | 1,697   | 88,854                         |
| Insurance carriers and related activities     | 844      | 854      | 859     | 863     | 81,069                         |
| Finance and insurance NEC                     | 1,048    | 1,064    | 1,101   | 1,130   | 126,807                        |
| Real estate and rental and leasing            | 2,504    | 2,461    | 2,465   | 2,457   | 59,464                         |

## Appendix B:

**Forecast of Jobs in Oakland County by Detailed Industry**

|                                                                              | Estimate | Forecast |        |        | Average Annual<br>Wage 2022 \$ |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|----------|--------|--------|--------------------------------|
|                                                                              | 2023     | 2024     | 2025   | 2026   |                                |
| Professional and business services                                           | 28,461   | 28,532   | 28,908 | 29,168 | 90,575                         |
| Professional and technical services                                          | 18,977   | 19,163   | 19,494 | 19,779 | 106,410                        |
| Legal services                                                               | 981      | 988      | 993    | 993    | 95,083                         |
| Accounting and bookkeeping services                                          | 618      | 632      | 635    | 638    | 77,961                         |
| Architectural and engineering services                                       | 4,811    | 4,874    | 4,932  | 4,983  | 131,286                        |
| Specialized design services                                                  | 193      | 191      | 192    | 193    | 84,047                         |
| Computer systems design and related services                                 | 3,251    | 3,196    | 3,271  | 3,342  | 119,651                        |
| Management and technical consulting services                                 | 2,053    | 2,010    | 2,012  | 2,013  | 101,310                        |
| Scientific research and development services                                 | 5,337    | 5,522    | 5,659  | 5,767  | 98,338                         |
| Advertising, PR, and related services                                        | 247      | 239      | 237    | 235    | 89,938                         |
| Other professional and technical services                                    | 1,485    | 1,513    | 1,563  | 1,614  | 61,426                         |
| Management of companies and enterprises                                      | 1,768    | 1,725    | 1,761  | 1,769  | 118,814                        |
| Administrative support and waste management                                  | 7,716    | 7,644    | 7,653  | 7,619  | 45,946                         |
| Private education and health services                                        | 29,992   | 30,663   | 31,058 | 31,371 | 60,891                         |
| Education services                                                           | 3,332    | 3,395    | 3,443  | 3,454  | 42,958                         |
| Health care and social assistance                                            | 26,661   | 27,268   | 27,616 | 27,917 | 63,018                         |
| Ambulatory health care                                                       | 12,593   | 12,817   | 12,991 | 13,181 | 80,958                         |
| Offices of physicians                                                        | 6,268    | 6,436    | 6,575  | 6,735  | 107,392                        |
| Other Ambulatory Health Care Services                                        | 6,325    | 6,381    | 6,416  | 6,446  | 55,418                         |
| Hospitals, nursing and residential care facilities,<br>and social assistance | 14,068   | 14,451   | 14,625 | 14,736 | 46,411                         |
| Leisure and hospitality                                                      | 16,749   | 17,246   | 17,779 | 18,137 | 26,067                         |
| Arts, entertainment, and recreation                                          | 2,448    | 2,510    | 2,589  | 2,662  | 27,994                         |
| Accommodation and food services                                              | 14,301   | 14,736   | 15,190 | 15,474 | 25,771                         |
| Accommodation                                                                | 1,178    | 1,192    | 1,203  | 1,211  | 32,652                         |
| Food services and drinking places                                            | 13,123   | 13,544   | 13,987 | 14,263 | 25,114                         |
| Restaurants and other eating places                                          | 11,403   | 11,778   | 12,136 | 12,344 | 24,443                         |
| Full-service restaurants                                                     | 5,950    | 6,154    | 6,382  | 6,482  | 28,179                         |
| Limited-service restaurants                                                  | 4,727    | 4,858    | 4,980  | 5,108  | 21,278                         |
| Other Restaurants and Other Drinking Places                                  | 726      | 766      | 774    | 753    | 16,552                         |
| Special food services                                                        | 761      | 773      | 815    | 850    | 31,276                         |
| Drinking places, alcoholic beverages                                         | 959      | 992      | 1,036  | 1,070  | 26,823                         |
| Other services                                                               | 4,798    | 4,926    | 4,991  | 5,038  | 40,902                         |
| Private unclassified service-providing                                       | 575      | 593      | 606    | 618    | 59,437                         |

Addendum

|                   |     |     |     |     |
|-------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Unemployment Rate | 3.3 | 3.2 | 3.0 | 2.8 |
|-------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|

**Oakland County Compared with Its Peers Indicator Values\***

| County                   | State     | Population<br>2022 | Associate's<br>Degree or<br>More | Child<br>Poverty | Median<br>Family<br>Income** | High-Income<br>Persons Aged 65<br>or Older | Managerial,<br>Professional |
|--------------------------|-----------|--------------------|----------------------------------|------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Fairfax                  | VA        | 1,138,331          | 72.4%                            | 5.6%             | 152,282                      | 62.2%                                      | 63.7%                       |
| Montgomery               | MD        | 1,052,521          | 66.6%                            | 10.1%            | 134,509                      | 58.0%                                      | 60.0%                       |
| Collin                   | TX        | 1,158,696          | 66.5%                            | 4.1%             | 128,691                      | 42.9%                                      | 57.1%                       |
| Wake                     | NC        | 1,175,021          | 67.5%                            | 8.1%             | 125,501                      | 40.5%                                      | 56.4%                       |
| Nassau                   | NY        | 1,383,726          | 60.5%                            | 6.2%             | 134,145                      | 50.6%                                      | 49.6%                       |
| Bergen                   | NJ        | 952,997            | 63.3%                            | 9.0%             | 122,217                      | 45.9%                                      | 53.4%                       |
| Travis                   | TX        | 1,326,436          | 64.3%                            | 11.6%            | 127,796                      | 43.0%                                      | 57.3%                       |
| Westchester              | NY        | 990,427            | 62.6%                            | 10.6%            | 123,848                      | 48.7%                                      | 54.3%                       |
| <b>Oakland</b>           | <b>MI</b> | <b>1,269,431</b>   | <b>62.3%</b>                     | <b>9.4%</b>      | <b>121,601</b>               | <b>38.2%</b>                               | <b>54.5%</b>                |
| Hennepin                 | MN        | 1,260,121          | 65.3%                            | 12.4%            | 120,370                      | 40.0%                                      | 55.1%                       |
| Denton                   | TX        | 977,281            | 59.5%                            | 9.3%             | 118,556                      | 45.1%                                      | 50.8%                       |
| Contra Costa             | CA        | 1,156,966          | 54.1%                            | 10.4%            | 120,644                      | 45.7%                                      | 48.4%                       |
| Fulton                   | GA        | 1,074,634          | 66.6%                            | 17.9%            | 119,951                      | 39.5%                                      | 59.1%                       |
| Suffolk                  | NY        | 1,525,465          | 52.0%                            | 6.2%             | 115,867                      | 46.8%                                      | 43.8%                       |
| Capitol Planning Region  | CT        | 981,447            | 51.9%                            | 13.7%            | 109,136                      | 39.9%                                      | 48.9%                       |
| St. Louis                | MO        | 990,414            | 59.3%                            | 15.0%            | 106,579                      | 36.0%                                      | 50.8%                       |
| Allegheny                | PA        | 1,233,253          | 60.5%                            | 14.6%            | 104,639                      | 29.2%                                      | 52.0%                       |
| Mecklenburg              | NC        | 1,145,392          | 59.8%                            | 14.2%            | 105,404                      | 34.9%                                      | 47.7%                       |
| Salt Lake                | UT        | 1,186,257          | 49.1%                            | 7.7%             | 113,591                      | 36.6%                                      | 43.0%                       |
| Honolulu                 | HI        | 995,638            | 51.2%                            | 12.0%            | 100,254                      | 44.2%                                      | 41.8%                       |
| Erie                     | NY        | 950,312            | 53.1%                            | 16.3%            | 97,491                       | 30.3%                                      | 45.1%                       |
| Gwinnett                 | GA        | 975,353            | 49.9%                            | 11.0%            | 95,079                       | 31.7%                                      | 41.3%                       |
| Pinellas                 | FL        | 961,739            | 49.6%                            | 14.8%            | 91,922                       | 29.9%                                      | 45.7%                       |
| Franklin                 | OH        | 1,321,820          | 50.9%                            | 21.3%            | 96,542                       | 30.9%                                      | 46.3%                       |
| Palm Beach               | FL        | 1,518,477          | 50.7%                            | 15.7%            | 87,487                       | 36.3%                                      | 41.6%                       |
| Orange                   | FL        | 1,452,726          | 54.4%                            | 16.1%            | 85,337                       | 27.8%                                      | 42.4%                       |
| Hillsborough             | FL        | 1,513,301          | 49.8%                            | 16.2%            | 88,133                       | 28.3%                                      | 43.0%                       |
| Pima                     | AZ        | 1,057,597          | 45.4%                            | 17.7%            | 90,586                       | 33.4%                                      | 40.9%                       |
| Cuyahoga                 | OH        | 1,236,041          | 48.6%                            | 24.0%            | 89,629                       | 27.6%                                      | 45.4%                       |
| Duval                    | FL        | 1,016,536          | 46.3%                            | 20.6%            | 83,176                       | 28.2%                                      | 42.1%                       |
| Marion                   | IN        | 969,466            | 46.0%                            | 21.1%            | 87,361                       | 24.5%                                      | 40.5%                       |
| Fresno                   | CA        | 1,015,190          | 33.6%                            | 25.7%            | 75,451                       | 28.5%                                      | 32.4%                       |
| Bronx                    | NY        | 1,379,946          | 31.0%                            | 35.6%            | 50,332                       | 17.7%                                      | 28.9%                       |
| <i>State of Michigan</i> |           | 10,033,281         | 44.1%                            | 18.2%            | 91,905                       | 26.6%                                      | 40.6%                       |
| <i>United States</i>     |           | 333,271,411        | 46.5%                            | 16.3%            | 92,148                       | 31.1%                                      | 42.5%                       |

\*All counties in the United States with a population between 950,000 and 1,550,000 in 2022.

\*\*Adjusted for cost of living.

Source: American Community Survey 2022. Census Bureau Population Estimates, March 2023. Median Family Income adjusted using BEA price parity indices for 2022 and extended to counties by relative gross rent.

**Q:** How does one county bring in *over 20% of the state's GDP?*



**A:** *All ways, moving forward.*

These contributions and more are the reasons why Oakland County powers Michigan's economy with 20% of the State's GDP. And why we continue to be a destination for OEMs, R&D, and small businesses.

[AdvantageOakland.com](http://AdvantageOakland.com)

# PROJECT DIAMOND



## Project DIAMOnD's Transformative Impact on Small Manufacturers

### Pioneering the Next Era of Manufacturing with 3D Printing

In collaboration with Oakland County, Automation Alley's Project DIAMOnD has created the nation's largest 3D printing network. This secure and scalable ecosystem is propelling small- and medium-sized manufacturers into the future, redefining supply chains and market dynamics.

Project DIAMOnD is the epitome of a digital-first mindset in manufacturing. It stands as a testament to our commitment to sustainability, transforming traditional supply chains and marketplace business models. By distributing state-of-the-art 3D printers to traditional manufacturers, Project DIAMOnD is fostering a culture of innovation.

Are you a small-  
or medium-sized  
manufacturer in  
Oakland County?  
Apply for a state-of-  
the-art 3D printer at:  
**ProjectDiamond.org**



**MORE INFO**



2023

# ANNUAL REPORT

Creating a Seamless  
Transportation Network  
for Oakland County



 **OAKLAND**  
COUNTY MICHIGAN  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
DAVID COULTER  
OAKLAND COUNTY EXECUTIVE

# 2023 Oakland Transit Annual Report

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## Introduction

### A Message from Executive Dave Coulter

Oakland County's first annual transit report is a testament to our commitment to establish a reliable, affordable and accessible public transportation system that responds to the diverse needs of our county's residents.

This report wouldn't have been possible without the support of the voters of Oakland County who recognized the need for a robust and seamless transportation network across the county that connects residents, communities, businesses and organizations.

On the heels of the transit millage approval, Oakland County quickly laid the groundwork for a transformational transit system, establishing a Transit Division within the Economic Development department, led by transportation professional Eli Cooper and two planners.

The Executive Office and Board of Commissioners also negotiated contracts with our five current transit providers—Suburban Mobility Authority for Regional Transportation (SMART), People's Express (PEX), North Oakland Transportation Authority (NOTA), Western Oakland Transportation Authority (WOTA), and OPC Transportation (OPC).

These agreements signify our commitment to not only sustain but enhance and expand county-wide transportation services. By fostering collaboration with these providers, we intend to create a comprehensive and inclusive transit network that addresses the evolving needs of our growing population.

With sincere appreciation,



**DAVE COULTER**  
Oakland County Executive



# Key Achievements & Milestones of the Past Year

## OAKLAND COUNTY PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION MILLAGE IS APPROVED BY VOTERS

On November 8, 2022, the residents of Oakland County showcases their commitment to enhancing their community by approving the Oakland County Public Transportation millage. This momentous decision not only reflects a shared vision for a more accessible and efficient public transit system, but also serves as a testament to the collective spirit of progress within Oakland County.

The approved 10-year, .95 millage is a crucial financial commitment that will play a pivotal role in transforming and sustaining public transit services throughout Oakland County. The millage effectively ends the “swiss cheese” approach to transit and allows for the development of a countywide transit network.

This financial backing empowers the community to make significant strides in maintaining and expanding public transit services. The 10-year duration ensures a sustained and consistent investment over a substantial period, allowing for long-term planning and development initiatives. Such foresight is instrumental in fostering a reliable and robust public transportation network that responds to the evolving needs of the residents.

## MULTI-YEAR AGREEMENTS ARE FORGED WITH FOUR TRANSIT PROVIDERS

Collaborative efforts facilitated by County staff result in approved contracts between the Board of Commissioners with four public transportation providers — Suburban Mobility Authority for Regional Transportation (SMART), North Oakland Transportation Authority (NOTA), Western Oakland Transportation Authority (WOTA), and the Older Persons’ Commission (OPC) — as a result of the countywide transportation millage made possible by voters. These contracts focus on continuing, enhancing, and expanding county-wide transportation services to better serve the diverse needs of the community.

Under the agreements, NOTA, WOTA, and OPC commit to increasing their hours of operation, adding more destinations, and standardizing fares at \$2 per ride in their service areas. SMART commits to implementing the first route expansions in decades, announcing planning in support of service expansions in Auburn Hills, Bloomfield Hills, Farmington Hills, Keego Harbor, Novi, Orchard Lake, Pontiac, Rochester, Rochester Hills, Sylvan Lake, Troy, Waterford, West Bloomfield, White Lake, and Wixom.

## LOCAL TRANSPORTATION REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAM IS ESTABLISHED FOR 2023

Oakland County’s Board of Commissioners also creates a Local Transportation Reimbursement Program to support communities who are not yet served by the four public transportation providers and who have an existing contract or have already budgeted for public transportation services between January 1 and December 31 of 2023.

## ESTABLISHMENT OF OAKLAND COUNTY TRANSIT DIVISION

Oakland County Executive Dave Coulter creates a dedicated Transit Division within the Economic Development Department, demonstrating a commitment to integrated and efficient transit management. The Transit Division works to guide the overall transit program and collaborate with transit operators in building a linked transit network that offers frequent, convenient and reliable public transportation options for residents and visitors of all ages and abilities. In addition, staff coordinate with local communities to identify transportation barriers, make recommendations to the County Board of Commissioners for millage fund appropriations, develop transit-based programs to improve community infrastructure, participate in regional transit discussions, and offer technical support and convenings.

The division is staffed with an experienced transit manager in **Eli Cooper**, a forward-thinking transportation leader guiding Oakland County through the progressive steps required to ensure widespread public transportation access across all four corners of the county. Cooper joins Oakland County with 35 years of experience in transportation oversight and planning, having recently served as the transportation program manager in Ann Arbor for 17 years.

He is joined by two transit planners, **Sarah Lagpacan** and **Dominic Pavone**, who bring expertise and enthusiasm to the improvement of Oakland County’s transit infrastructure. Lagpacan, a former Transportation Planner with AECOM, helped transit agencies and municipalities across the country plan and implement multimodal projects including Bus Rapid Transit, bus route network redesigns, and complete streets. Pavone, a former Transportation Planner at Bay County who oversaw the Bay City Metropolitan Planning Organization, brings data analysis, GIS, and short- and long-range planning expertise to the Oakland County Transit Division.

Together, they’re working to create a comprehensive, countywide public transportation system by expanding and diversifying service as well as eliminating the boundaries between communities and providers.



Eli Cooper



Sarah Lagpacan



Dominic Pavone



#### OAKLAND COUNTY TRANSIT AD HOC COMMITTEE CREATED

The Oakland County Board of Commissioners creates the Oakland County Transit Ad Hoc Committee to support countywide transit expansion, develop county public transportation policy, and provide oversight of all transit millage monies and contracts. The committee makes recommendations to the Board's Economic Development & Infrastructure Standing Committee for full Board consideration. The committee meetings are posted on the Board's website and the public is invited to attend.

Members of the 2023-24 Oakland County Transit Ad Hoc Committee include commissioners:

- Brendan Johnson, Chair
- David T. Woodward, Vice Chair
- Marcia Gershenson
- Michael J. Gingell
- Ajay Raman
- Philip J. Weipert

#### OPC EXPANDS

The Older Persons' Commission (OPC) expands hours of service and adds 19 medical facilities in Troy, Auburn Hills, and Sterling Heights to its service area.

#### WOTA EXPANDS SERVICE AREA

The Western Oakland Transportation Authority (WOTA) adds Orchard Lake, Keego Harbor, Sylvan Lake, and Lake Angelus to its service area, bringing transit services to this area for the first time following the passage of the Oakland County Public Transportation Millage.

#### AN ADDITIONAL TRANSIT PROVIDER JOINS OAKLAND TRANSIT

The Oakland County Board of Commissioners unanimously approves a new contract to expand public transportation service in the southwest area of the county with People's Express (PEX). The expanded service area, which would launch in September 2023, improves public transportation services in South Lyon, Wixom, Milford Township, Commerce Township, Lyon Township, the Village of Milford and the Village of Wolverine Lake.

The new driving boundaries connect more communities and allow for increased cross-community transportation. The agreement with Oakland County expands hours of operation and increases PEX's fleet.

#### WOTA EXPANDS SERVICE AREA AGAIN

WOTA adds the Village of Holly, Holly Township, Groveland Township and Rose Township further expanding its service area.

#### SMART EXPANDS SERVICE

On September 11 of 2023, SMART announces extended bus routes and 68 new bus stops in Novi, Wixom, and Bloomfield Hills. This marked the first time in 28 years that Novi and Bloomfield Hills have transit services and the first-ever fixed route in Wixom. The extensions include:

- Route 305 Grand River & 740 Twelve Mile – extending existing routes from Farmington Hills through Novi to Wixom
- Route 805 Farmington-Novi Park & Ride – extending an existing express route from Farmington Hills to Novi
- Routes 450 Woodward & 462 FAST Woodward – adding a new stop at Woodward Avenue and Long Lake Road on existing routes that previously only passed through Bloomfield Hills

Additionally, all fixed route expansion routes provide Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) paratransit service to residents with disabilities who live within three-quarters of a mile from fixed route service.

#### NOTA EXPANDS SERVICE AREA

NOTA adds Independence Township, City of the Village of Clarkston, Springfield Township, Brandon Township and the Village of Ortonville to its service area.

#### CONTINUED EXPANSIONS BUILT INTO 2024 AGREEMENTS WITH TRANSIT PROVIDERS

Collaborative efforts between the Oakland County Transit Division and the Board of Commissioners result in amended contracts with NOTA, WOTA, OPC, and PEX to roll out weekend service hours and general public service if not already in place and with SMART to continue implementing service expansions in Auburn Hills, Farmington Hills, Keego Harbor, Orchard Lake, Pontiac, Rochester, Rochester Hills, Sylvan Lake, Troy, Waterford, West Bloomfield, and White Lake.

APR 2023

MAY 2023

JUNE 2023

AUG 2023

SEPT 2023

OCT 2023

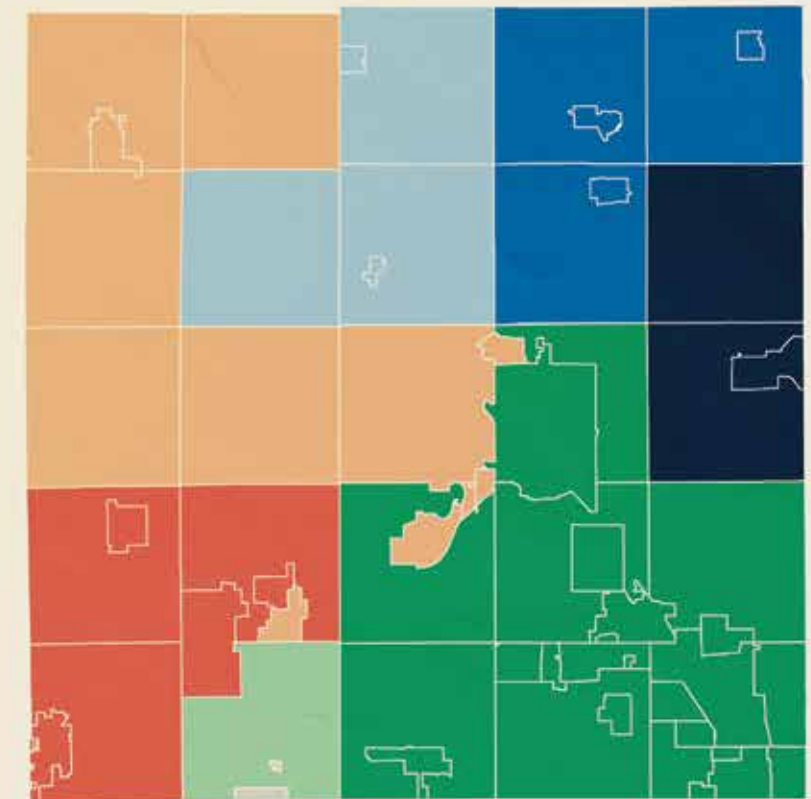
DEC 2023

# Transit Provider Profiles

Within Oakland County, there are two primary types of transit providers. The first is the Suburban Mobility Authority for Regional Transportation (SMART) and the second is the Community Transit providers including North Oakland Transportation Authority (NOTA), Rochester Hills-Oakland-Rochester Older Persons' Commission (OPC), People's Express (PEX) as well as some local transportation programs.



**Oakland County Transit Providers**  
(as of December 2023)



|       |                       |     |
|-------|-----------------------|-----|
| WOTA  | NOTA + Local Programs |     |
| NOTA  | OPC                   | PEX |
| SMART | SMART + Local Program |     |



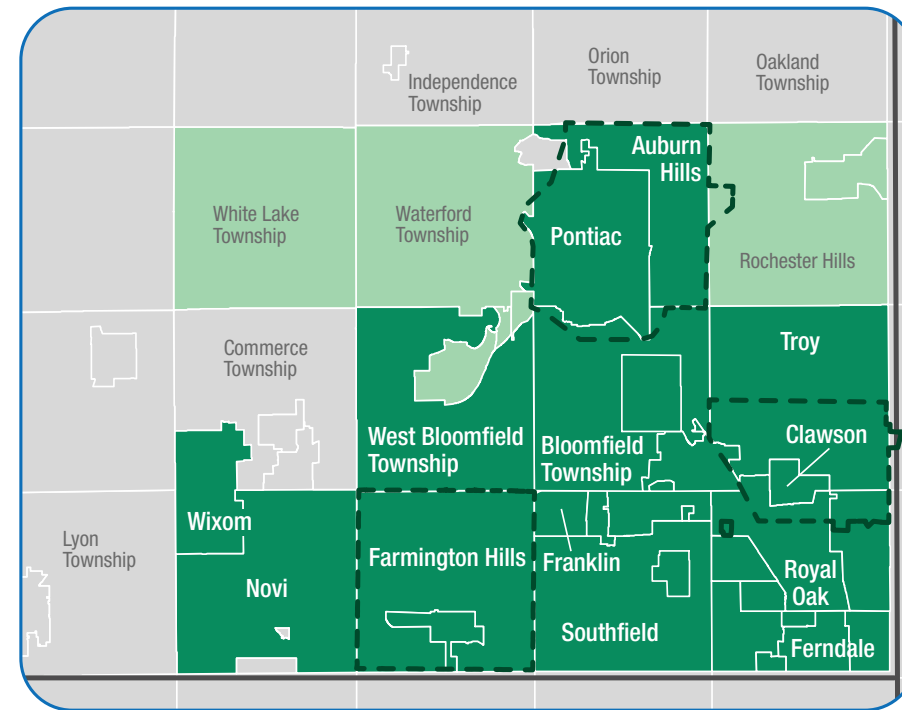
## About

Established in 1967, SMART is a regional public transportation authority delivering fixed route, demand response, and Flex (microtransit) service in the three-county Detroit metropolitan region, including the urban portions of southeastern Oakland County.

## 2023 Millage-Supported Accomplishments

- 2 new bus stops at Woodward Ave & Long Lake Rd in Bloomfield Hills
- Route extensions to Novi and Wixom with 66 new bus stops
- Hired 96 fixed route drivers and 66 demand response drivers
- Began implementing an upgraded dispatch software system that the other transit providers and local transportation programs throughout the region will also be able to use

## Service Area



**Fixed Route Service Area**  
These communities are served by SMART's fixed route service

**SMART Flex Zone**  
On demand driving zone

**Planned 2024 Fixed Route Service Area Expansions**  
Fixed route extensions or new fixed routes are planned for implementation in these communities in 2024

## Transportation Modes

SMART offers a variety of transportation modes to meet the diverse needs of its ridership, including:



### FIXED ROUTE

Big buses that run on specific routes and stop at specific locations marked as bus stops.

 **4,616,188**  
rides in 2023 (Oakland, Macomb, and Wayne County total)

 **8%**  
more rides than 2022



### DEMAND RESPONSE

Curb-to-curb small bus/van transportation that riders schedule days in advance. People with disabilities who need additional assistance can receive door-to-door service.

 **84,123**  
rides in Oakland County 2023

 **3%**  
more rides than 2022



### FLEX (MICROTRANSIT)

Designated point-to-point, wheelchair-accessible minivan transportation that riders can request on-demand within specific zones. People with disabilities who need additional assistance can receive door-to-door service.

 **241,176**  
rides in Oakland County in 2023

 **43%**  
more rides than 2022



“Expanding the route system and connecting our Farmington Hills campus to the western parts of Oakland County is an absolute game changer for our students, because one of the greatest hurdles for them to get to school is transportation.”

—PETER M. PROVENZANO JR.  
Oakland Community College Chancellor

“(With the Route 740 expansion), I don’t have to get off at the State Fairgrounds. I can just take (the bus) from the east side.”

—DEANTE BROCKMAN  
SMART rider



RideNOTA.org

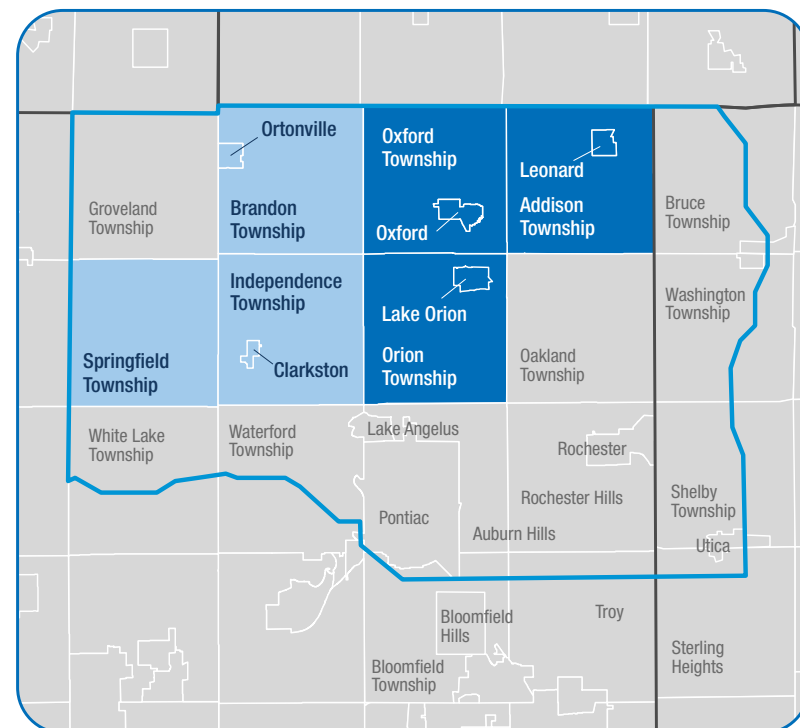


The North Oakland Transportation Authority (NOTA) has been providing transportation services since 2001 to qualifying residents of Addison Twp, Oxford Twp, Orion Twp, Lake Orion, Leonard, and Oxford Village. Eligible riders include seniors over 60, people with disabilities, and low-income residents along with a companion rider. NOTA accommodates trips to work, medical appointments, shopping, and community events within the driving boundary. In addition, NOTA operates a trolley with limited service between Downtown Oxford and Downtown Lake Orion.

## 2023 Millage-Supported Accomplishments

- Increased service capacity with 10 new vehicles, including a snowplow to keep service running in the winter months
- More than doubled staff with 37 new employees
- Expanded parking lot and added a fuel center to improve operations
- Doubled service area to include 5 new communities
- Expanded driving boundaries
- Expanded hours of service
- Delivered 91 Thanksgiving meals to NOTA riders

## Service Area



- Participating Community**  
Residents living in these communities may utilize NOTA
- Affiliate Community**  
Residents living in these communities may utilize NOTA or municipality services
- Driving Boundary**  
NOTA provides services to destinations within the boundary

## Transportation Modes



### DEMAND RESPONSE

Door-to-door small bus/van transportation that riders schedule days in advance. People with disabilities who need additional assistance can receive door-to-door service.

**49,314**  
rides in 2023

**21%**  
more rides than 2022



### TROLLEY

A charming and convenient mode of transportation weaving through the heart of downtown Lake Orion and Oxford

**5,348**  
trolley rides in 2023

**9%**  
more trolley rides than 2022



“In 2010 I experienced a sudden vision loss which left me legally blind... In 2012 (I moved) to the Lake Orion/Oxford area so that I would qualify (for NOTA's) transportation services. (They have) afforded me opportunities that changed my life for the better. Initially I rode NOTA a few days a week while completing my BSW at Oakland University. Upon graduation, I found employment in Auburn Hills and...ride as a passenger 4-5 days per week... If it were not for NOTA I would not be able to maintain employment and I am so thankful for their invaluable services!”

—JULIE EVANS, NOTA rider

“I'm 79 years old... I haven't owned a vehicle for nearly ten years... NOTA has provided trips to doctor appointments, grocery stores, and even personal outings. NOTA is not only a reliable service, but also the employees (are remarkably) caring... Because of (them) I don't feel isolated... The newly expanded routes and hours have been achieved with amazing speed... (They) are working in an even greater capacity to serve where there has long been a need! What an achievement!”

—LORRAINE MCWETHY, NOTA rider

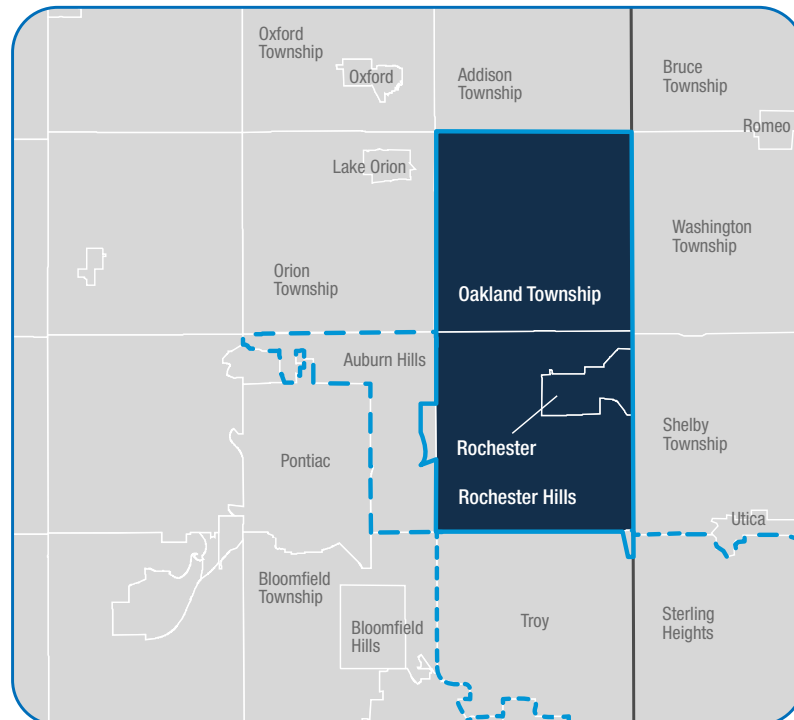


OPC Transportation has been providing transportation services for over 40 years to qualifying residents of Rochester Hills, Oakland Township and Rochester. Eligible riders include seniors 55 and older and adults with disabilities under 55 along with a companion rider. OPC accommodates trips anywhere in the three communities for medical and personal appointments, work, school, shopping and other pursuits.

### 2023 Millage-Supported Accomplishments

- Increased service capacity with 4 new and more fuel-efficient wheelchair-equipped vans, a new Director of Transportation, 8 new drivers and a new dispatcher
- Expanded medical facility destinations in Auburn Hills, Troy, and Sterling Heights
- Expanded hours of service
- Provided wheelchair securement training and national certification for all drivers and dispatchers
- Provided additional transportation throughout the day for disabled young adults to participate in Dutton Farms field trip programming
- Provided shuttle rides for 5,350 members of the general public to get to and from 6 different community events
- Identified a site for an expanded transportation facility

### Service Area



- Participating Community**  
Residents living in these communities may utilize OPC services
- Driving Boundary**  
OPC provides services to destinations within the boundary
- Additional Destinations**  
OPC also provides services to select medical facilities in these communities



### Transportation Mode

#### DEMAND RESPONSE

Door-to-door small bus/van transportation that riders schedule days in advance. People with disabilities who need additional assistance can receive door-to-door service.

 **43,335**  
rides in 2023

 **30%**  
of rides are wheelchair users

 **50%**  
more rides than 2022



“After the loss of my vision, I’m still able to get where I need to go with the OPC transportation program. The service allows me to remain independent and enjoy my retirement.”

—SALLY, OPC RIDER

“OPC has been a huge help and partner to Dutton Farm. Every Tuesday and Thursday they have helped Dutton Farm provide community transportation for our adults with disabilities. These trips include volunteering at the Rochester library, Innovation Hills Park, Avon Bowling lanes and Rochester Area Recreation. Thanks to OPC we are able to transport our students out to the community to do the things they love to do and volunteer in our community.”

—HARRISON KAKKURI  
Dutton Farm

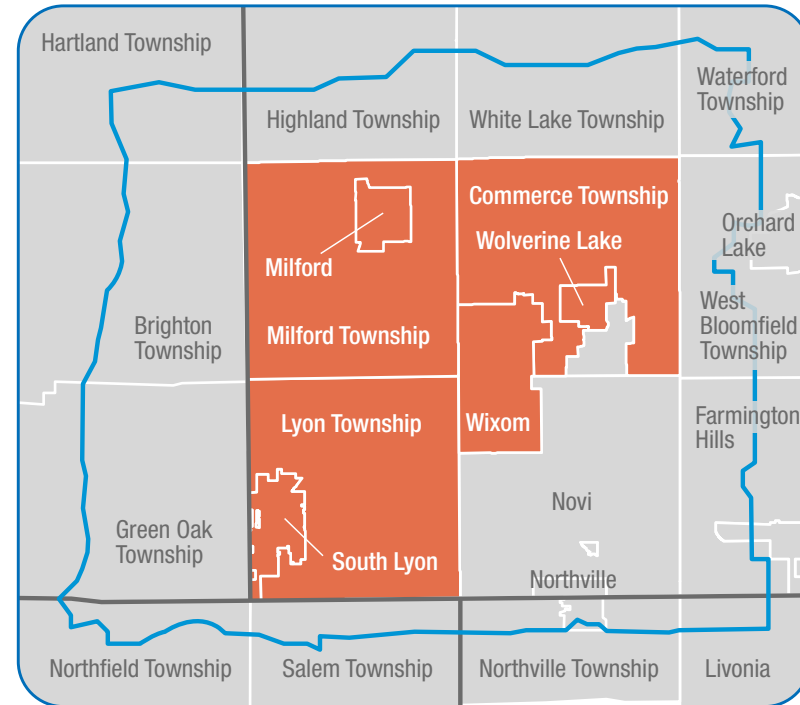


People's Express (PEX) has been providing transportation services in Oakland County for over 20 years and, before the Oakland County transit millage, contracted with individual municipalities to provide limited and short distance transportation to Milford, Milford Township, South Lyon, Lyon Township, Commerce Township, Wolverine Lake, and Wixom. Starting September 2023, any resident of these communities is eligible for rides throughout an expanded service area and to expanded destinations, with priority given to seniors, people with disabilities, low-income individuals, and veterans.

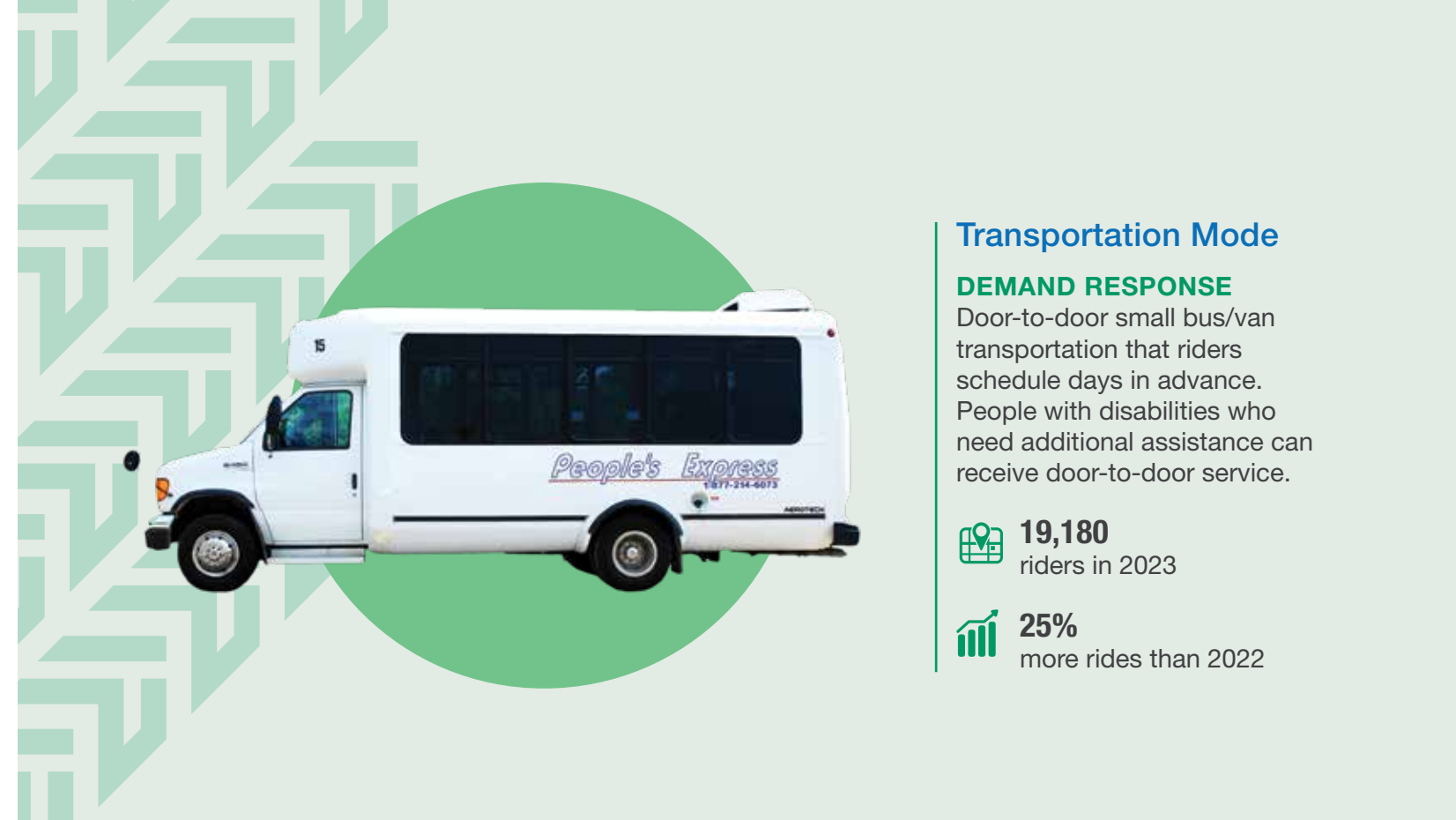
## 2023 Millage-Supported Accomplishments

- Increased service capacity with 9 new vehicles and 20 new staff
- Removed limitations on trips between communities
- Expanded driving boundary
- Expanded hours of service

## Service Area



- **Participating Community**  
Residents living in these communities may utilize PEX services
- **Driving Boundary**  
PEX provides services to destinations within the boundary



## Transportation Mode

### DEMAND RESPONSE

Door-to-door small bus/van transportation that riders schedule days in advance. People with disabilities who need additional assistance can receive door-to-door service.

 **19,180**  
riders in 2023

 **25%**  
more rides than 2022



“Thought I’d pass along this snap of Jared Denton’s first day taking PEX from our home in Milford to the Living and Learning Enrichment Center in Northville. This is so exciting for us – thank you all!”

—**MINDY DENTON,**  
Mother of PEX Rider

“She can count on us to get her to her appointments and places to go shopping. She is able to go to stores that were out of our boundaries previously. She can go to the dollar store or Walmart. She has told her friends who don’t have cars about us and how wonderful we are and how much we help her and are reliable... She tells as many people as she can about our services and how wonderful we are and how we make sure she is taken care of. She said her friends tell her all the time how wonderful we are and thanking her for telling them about us.”

—Dispatcher Recap of Conversation  
with Marlene Traud, PEX rider



RideWOTA.org >

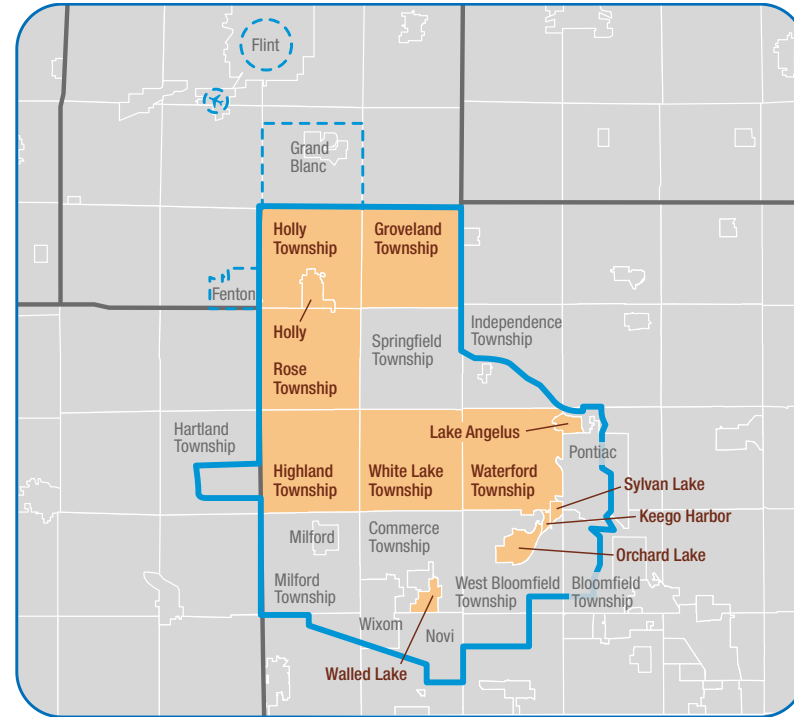


The Western Oakland Transportation Authority (WOTA) has been providing transportation services since 2020 to qualifying residents of Highland, Walled Lake, Waterford, and White Lake. Eligible riders include seniors 55 and older, adults with disabilities, low-income families, and veterans along with companion riders. WOTA accommodates trips to work, medical appointments, shopping, banking, civic events, entertainment venues, and social activities within the driving boundary.

### 2023 Millage-Supported Accomplishments

- Increased service capacity with 17 new vehicles and 30 new staff, including an in-house maintenance manager to keep vehicles in good working condition with less downtime
- More-than-doubled service area to include 8 new communities, 4 of which never had transit before the millage
- Expanded hours of service
- Improved on-time performance
- Provided shuttle rides for at least 3 different community events

### Service Area



- Participating Community**  
Residents living in these communities may utilize WOTA
- Driving Boundary**  
WOTA provides services to destinations within the boundary
- Additional Destinations**  
Residents of the Village of Holly, Groveland Twp, Holly Twp and Rose Twp may also travel to these additional destinations as needed



### Transportation Mode

#### DEMAND RESPONSE

Door-to-door small bus/van transportation that riders schedule days in advance. People with disabilities who need additional assistance can receive door-to-door service.

**49,825**  
rides in 2023

**55%**  
more rides than 2022



“You are bringing hope and life to many of us who were desperate and about to give up on life. Our isolation, powerlessness, and segregation from the rest of the world had become overwhelming for some of us. Several months ago, there was a 22 day wait for us to get transportation to a grocery store...There are several of us who are overwhelmed about the miracle of WOTA service to Holly. It just does not seem real! It is hard to believe we can independently go shopping, to the doctor, swimming, to parks, to the library, to a movie, out to eat...I rarely cry, but this miracle brings tears to my eyes. I have rarely used the word miracle, but WOTA is our miracle. Thank you!”

—**THERESA RODGERSON**  
*Holly Resident*

“By providing longer hours for riders using WOTA for employment and medical, we are paving the way for fully expanding the program. As WOTA builds the program, we are excited to see millage dollars at work in our communities.”

—**RICK HAMILL**  
*WOTA Board Chairman and Highland Township Supervisor*

# Local Transportation Programs

The Oakland County Interim Local Transportation Reimbursement Program supported local individual programs for many communities in the northwest and southwest. Throughout the course of 2023, this funding allowed them to continue to offer demand response service for their residents. Transit Division staff worked with communities in the southwest to consolidate individual contracts and expand services with People's Express. Communities in the northwest part of the county joined the WOTA service area. Staff continue to work with the remaining communities to identify needs and, if possible, transition to receiving services from the appropriate transit providers.



Before the millage, SMART's Community Partnership Program supported local communities within the SMART service area to deliver community-based door-to-door transportation services relying on opt-in tax revenue. With the adoption of the countywide millage, these important locally provided services are now funded through the County millage and are still administered by SMART.



“Our experience with WOTA has been very positive. Our residents seem to appreciate the extended hours. The ridership has continually increased. Because of the extended hours and the expanded service area, more residents are able to utilize the service.”

—**DEBORAH BIGGER**  
*Village of Holly Clerk/Treasurer*

“Recently we had a [resident] who needed two procedures for her vision...Between the initial doctor visit for a checkup, subsequent surgical consultations, the separate procedures, follow ups for each procedure and other trips necessary due to slight complications, this resulted in the need for 11 separate visits. Each visit would have been over \$100 per round trip to transport a wheelchair via private transportation service. Having the SMART buses available in West Bloomfield Township saved her and her family literally hundreds in transportation costs between November 2023 and February 2024.”

—**BEN BUR**  
*West Bloomfield Township Parks & Recreation Driver*

# Funding

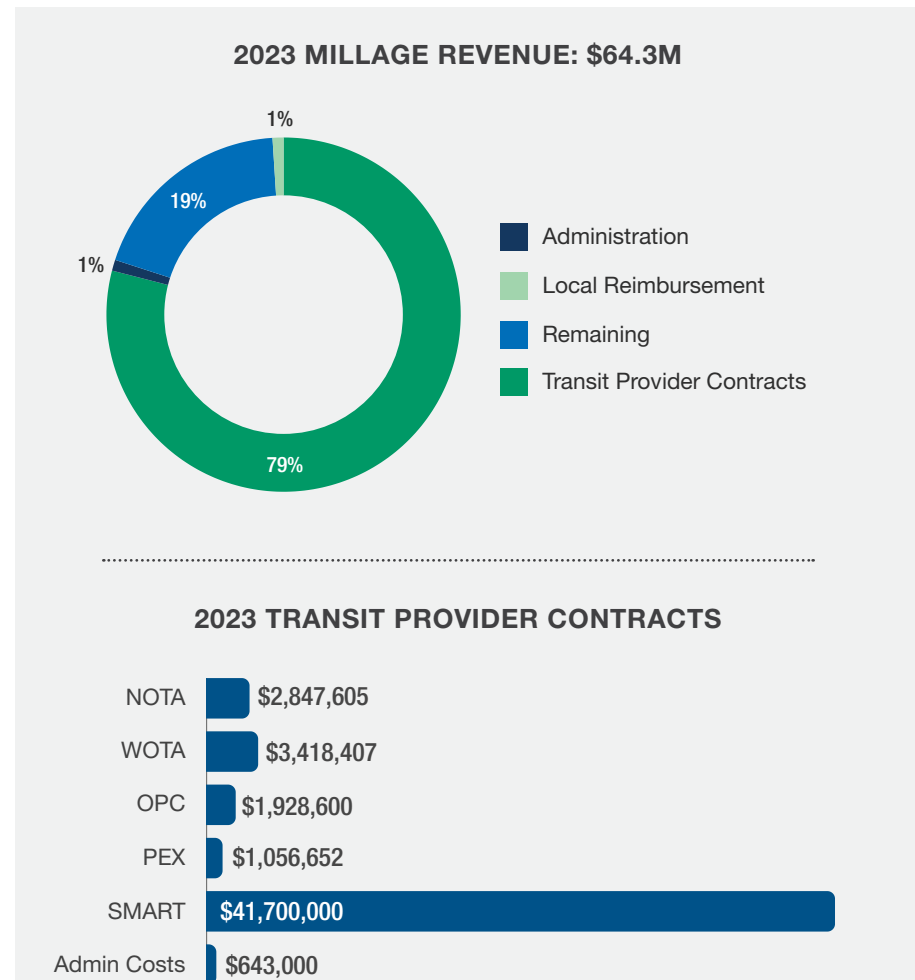
## 2023

Funding collected through the Oakland County Public Transportation Millage in 2023 amounted to \$64.3 million, with about \$51.0 million spent on transit provider contracts. This allocation of funds reflected Oakland County's commitment to enhancing and expanding transportation services for the benefit of all residents.

### TRANSIT PROVIDER CONTRACTS: \$50,951,000 (79%)

The largest share of the 2023 millage revenue funded the County's five contracted transit providers: SMART, NOTA, OPC, PEX, and WOTA. These contracts ensured the continued delivery of reliable and comprehensive county-wide transportation services while underpinning service expansions in Q3 and Q4 of 2023. Transit provider expenditures included:

- Staff (e.g., salaries, benefits, training and drug/alcohol testing)
- Facility Expenses (e.g., building rent, utilities and office supplies)
- New Vehicles
- Vehicle Fuel & Maintenance
- Insurance
- Technology (e.g., phones, tablets and dispatch software)
- Other Expenses (e.g., advertising/marketing and audit/legal services)



### ADMINISTRATION: \$643,000 (1%)

A crucial aspect of maintaining an effective transit system is the proper administration of operations. To facilitate this, a portion of the millage funding was allocated for administrative purposes. This included staff salaries, office infrastructure, and other necessary resources to manage the day-to-day operations of the Transit Division within the Economic Development Department.

### LOCAL REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAM: \$851,000 (1%)

Oakland County appropriated \$851,000 to reimburse communities that had a current contract or had already budgeted for public transportation services that would have otherwise been covered by millage funding. The program, which concluded in 2023, was called the Local Transit Reimbursement and allowed communities to submit semi-annual reimbursement requests with performance reports detailing ridership, services provided, and expenditures.

### REMAINING FUNDS: \$11,854,000 (18%)

The remaining 2023 millage revenue was deposited into a fund reserve consistent with County fiscal policy and is available only for transit as a resource base for continued service improvements and expansions, such as Bus Rapid Transit project development, and transit access/safety improvements in future years. This flexibility ensures that the transit system can adapt to evolving needs and challenges.

## 2024

The anticipated millage revenue will increase to \$69.4 million in 2024. This enables continued support of the five transit providers and further planned expansions, including the introduction of weekend service and general public service where it is not yet provided. The millage revenue will also support transit access and safety improvement projects throughout the County, including sidewalk and crossing infrastructure that makes it easier and safer to get to bus stops and transit pickup/drop-off locations.

Due to the service expansions and improved coordination enabled by the County millage, the contracted transit providers are beginning to leverage more funding from other sources, including the State's Local Bus Operating fund. Utilizing millage revenue to bring more resources into Oakland County is a key goal moving forward. In fact, our FY23 Operating results indicate that regional transit services (including services provided by SMART outside of Oakland County) saw a remarkable return of \$1.25 for each dollar spent. This figure encompasses all sources of revenue, including State, Federal, Fares, and various other sources. Additionally, our capital awards for the year further underscore the success of our efforts in maximizing funding opportunities.

# Community Engagement & Partnerships

## MONTHLY TRANSIT PROVIDER MEETINGS

In 2023, Oakland County prioritized collaboration through monthly transit provider meetings. These gatherings provided a platform for networking, idea sharing, and mutual feedback among providers. The aim was to foster a sense of community, encouraging the exchange of valuable information that contributed to the overall improvement of transportation services throughout the county.

## SMARTER MOBILITY PROGRAM

SMART kicked off its consultant-led planning process to gather community input and plan the future of the fixed route and Flex systems. More information and engagement opportunities can be found at [smarter-mobility.org](https://smarter-mobility.org)

## WOODWARD CORRIDOR PLANNING

The significance of the Woodward corridor to Oakland County cannot be overstated. Collaborating with the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), the county engaged in a planning contract for a long-term corridor plan. This collaboration is aimed at developing a sustainable transportation strategy for the future. Additionally, staff worked closely with state, regional, and local officials to compile a grant application to the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) in support of a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project along the Woodward corridor and other regional transit enhancements along Gratiot, Michigan, and Washtenaw Avenues. The outcome of the application is expected in early 2024, marking a pivotal moment for the county's transportation infrastructure.

## SMART "DRIVE A BUS WITH US" CAREER FAIR

In June 2023, SMART held a career fair for interested job seekers to get hands-on experience operating a SMART bus and other high-tech SMART vehicles on the M1 Concourse track in Pontiac. 35 new drivers were hired as a result of the event, a great win for SMART as it works to address the driver shortage that it, along with most other transit agencies across the county, currently face.

## COMMUNITY TRANSIT PLANNING

Looking ahead to 2025 and beyond, Oakland County is proactively planning for the future by conducting a consultant-led Community Transit Plan. This strategic initiative will build on the SMARTer Mobility Program to guide the entire county in developing a robust and responsive transit system that meets the evolving needs of residents and businesses beyond the fixed route and Flex systems.



SMART "Drive a Bus with Us" Career Fair



Countywide Transit Forum

## VETERANS TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM

In a commendable collaborative effort, Oakland County Veterans Services, the Oakland County Transit Division, and the transit providers are joining forces to explore expanding the current veterans' transportation program beyond its current services which are limited to the Veterans Administration offices and healthcare centers. Garnering inspiration from a knowledge exchange with the Flint MTA Vets to Wellness program, the goal is to develop a program that transports veterans for all trip purposes throughout the county. This partnership underscores the county's commitment to addressing the unique transportation needs of its veteran population which totals more than 50,766 individuals based on 2022 data.

## COUNTYWIDE TRANSIT FORUM

An instrumental initiative in fostering collaboration was the Countywide Transit Forum. This event brought together staff and elected officials from the County's cities, villages, and townships to learn about the transit program and share their insights. The forum served as an open space for dialogue, and the valuable feedback received will be used to shape future transit plans. Plans for follow-up sessions in 2024 are underway to delve into specific subjects raised during the initial forum.

## PARTNERSHIPS TO ADDRESS GAPS

WOTA, PEX, and SMART have teamed up to address transportation barriers for patients at DMC Huron Valley Hospital. In addition, WOTA and SMART are working with Huron Valley Schools and Waterford local school districts to assist with transportation for the adult transition and special needs student programs that they offer, creating opportunities for independence outside the school environment and assisting with transportation for work.

# Conclusion



2023 has been a transformative year for Oakland County's transit system. Through collaboration, outreach, and strategic partnerships, the county is laying the foundation for a reliable, affordable, and accessible public transportation network that caters to the diverse needs of its residents. The initiatives outlined in this report mark significant steps toward building a more connected and sustainable future for Oakland County.



## A Message from David T. Woodward *Chairman, Oakland County Board of Commissioners*

Oakland Transit is freedom for people to get to the places they need and want to go. Whether you use it or not, better transit is good for all of us. Thousands of workers, patients, students and seniors depend on public transportation options to get to their destinations. Many riders are people we count on a daily basis, others use it to be part of our community and not be trapped in their homes.

The first-year review of our countywide public transit strategy is nothing short of amazing. Service expanded, new routes began, and more hours of service were established to get more people to more places. This report proves that when you improve transit service, more people use it.

I want to give a special shout out to the Oakland Transit team and all our public transportation providers that accepted the challenge and pushed the limits on what is possible. When we work together to create better rider experiences, grow capacity to serve more people, and collaborate to have better transit options in Oakland County, we all benefit.

*...and this is just the beginning!*



Stay up to date on the latest transit news  
and ways to get involved by visiting:

[OakGov.com/OaklandTransit](http://OakGov.com/OaklandTransit)



 *All ways,*  
**MOVING FORWARD**

Mayor and Council –

The City was once again recognized for our efforts in Sustainability with receiving the GOLD designation from Michigan Green Communities.

- Victor

**From:** Danielle Beard <[dbeard@migreencommunities.com](mailto:dbeard@migreencommunities.com)>  
**Sent:** Friday, May 3, 2024 7:25 AM  
**Cc:** Michigan Green Communities Info <[info@migreencommunities.com](mailto:info@migreencommunities.com)>  
**Subject:** Congrats on your 2023 Gold MGC Challenge Certification!

Congratulations on reaching Gold certification in the MGC Challenge! And thank you for making this a record-breaking year for the MGC Challenge! This year, over 60 local governments were certified – 25% more than last year and more than ever before. It's clear that sustainability and climate resilience are a pressing issue for local governments in Michigan and we're thankful that we get to support your journeys. Thanks for being here! Please read below for details on our comms plan to announce your community's successes, a couple reminders, and other opportunities.

### **For you: Template Press Release & Challenge Logos**

Attached to this email you'll find a template press release for you to customize to your needs and a set of generic MGC Challenge logos that you're welcome to use in promotional pieces.

**Please note:** we are still waiting for a couple more MGC Challenge entries to be submitted (there were some technical difficulties outside of a few communities' control) so we should have exact numbers on the number of bronze/silver/gold/platinum certifications by early next week and I will email that to you for the template press release.

### **Coming Up Next:**

- The MGC program plans to send out a press release on or near May 20 announcing the results of this year's Challenge participation. You are welcome to send your own press release at any time, you may get a little more traction if it comes out around the same time as the MGC program's press release. We will send you a note the day before the program's press release goes out.
- Personalized graphics are in the process of being made for each community. We had record participation this year, so please be patient as we try to get those to everyone in the next couple of weeks!
- We will also send you an Excel document with all your responses from this year's Challenge and any other responses from 2021 and/or 2022 if you participated in those years as well.

### **We want you: MGC Steering Committee Vacancies**

We currently have four vacancies on the MGC steering committee for local governments to fill. Current steering committee local government representatives include: the City of Grand Rapids, the Village of Mackinaw City, Williamstown Township, and the City of Kalamazoo. We aim for representation from across Michigan and of local government type (city, village, township, county). We currently lack representation on the steering committee by counties and by local governments in the UP, southeast Michigan, and northwest Michigan. Even if your local government does not fill those representation needs, still reach out if you are interested! **Please reply to this email by May 31 if you are interested.** The steering committee meets again on June 10 and you're welcome to join to see if it's something that you'd like to commit to before making the commitment!

**MI Healthy Climate Conference, May 16 & 17 in Lansing – only a few days left to register, and spots are limited!**

In case you haven't already registered for the MI Healthy Climate Conference using your **two free registrations** as an MGC Challenge participant, the deadline is May 8 to register. So far, at least 700 people have registered for the second annual statewide climate conference hosted by EGLE. Use the code **"Green-Group"** for up to two free registrations when you check out. Be sure to select the government rate, only use the code for two registrations, and please don't share this code with anyone else! Conference website here: <https://egle.idloom.events/MI-Climate-Conference-2024>.

**Silver and Gold communities, you are now eligible to participate in the Catalyst Leadership Circle (CLC)!**

The CLC is a peer networking group that aims to connect Michigan local governments leading the state in sustainability. We meet every other month (usually virtually) to share resources, collectively troubleshoot challenges, and learn about new initiatives. Participation also enables you to join the [CLC Fellowship](#), a summer program that pairs you with a graduate student to complete a community-requested advanced sustainability project. To help kickoff this summer's CLC Fellowship, our next CLC convening is in-person, May 20th, 1-3pm at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. For more information on this convening and future events, look to your inboxes for the CLC resource email, sent every other week. Please contact Sarah Lee at [sarle@umich.edu](mailto:sarle@umich.edu) with any questions.

If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out using the contact information or the meeting sign up link in my email signature below.

Congrats again,

Danielle Beard

Michigan Green Communities Coordinator

She/Her/Hers

Ph: 517-908-0308 | Fax: 517-372-7476

1675 Green Road Ann Arbor, MI 48105

[www.migreencommunities.com](http://www.migreencommunities.com)

[www.mml.org](http://www.mml.org)



MICHIGAN  
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MICHIGAN**GREEN**COMMUNITIES  
**CHALLENGE**  
**GOLD**

# MEMORANDUM



**TO:** MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL  
**FROM:** VICTOR CARDENAS, CITY MANAGER  
**SUBJECT:** CONCERNS WITH TALL GRASS/WEEDS  
**DATE:** MAY 9, 2024

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The goal of this correspondence is to provide a brief summary of the City's Ordinances as it deals with tall grass on private property. Since we have had an unusually warm spring, the lawns have been growing sooner than normal. Concerns and complaints have been sent to City Administration and City Council members. Starting May 15<sup>th</sup>; any grass or vegetation that exceeds 8 inches in length will be in violation of the City Ordinance. A mid-May date is specified in Section 21-18 of the City's ordinance:

*It is hereby made the duty of the owner, occupant or any person having control or management of any lot, place, area or parcel of land within the city upon which noxious weeds, as described in [section 21-17](#), are found growing or standing, to cut and destroy or cause to be cut and destroyed all such weeds growing or standing on the premises, and upon the right-of-way of any highway, road or street adjacent to such lot, place, area of parcel, in such manner as shall effectually prevent such weeds from perpetuating themselves, **at least twice in each year, once during the last half of the month of May, and again during the last half of the month of July of each year,** or more often as may be necessary to prevent them from going to seed. If any owner, occupant or any person having control or management of property in the city shall knowingly suffer any noxious weeds, as described in [section 21-17](#), to grow upon such lands or shall suffer such weeds to ripen so as to cause or endanger the spread thereof or so as to constitute a detriment to public health, he shall, upon conviction in any court of competent jurisdiction, be liable to the penalty imposed in this division for violation thereof.*

The City is required to stipulate, by state statute (MCL 247.62), to have a date in our code of ordinances to guide this process. On or around May 15<sup>th</sup> in the event of a property being found in violation, a notice will be sent to the resident/violator for necessary corrections, which must be made within 10 days (May 25<sup>th</sup>) of the mailing date of that notice. If not corrected by the notice expiration date, vacant and unoccupied parcels will be turned over to a city contractor for cutting. Occupied parcels will be ticketed. Any abatement by the city for occupied parcels would be as directed by the district court following the court hearing process.

# MEMORANDUM



**TO:** JEFF MUCK, PRCS DIRECTOR  
**FROM:** TRACIE RINGLE, DEPUTY DIRECTOR  
**SUBJECT:** RESIDENT PRIORITY REGISTRATION  
**DATE:** MAY 9, 2024

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For several years, PRCS has been reporting increased demand and participation in our programs including youth basketball, adult pickleball, and summer camps. While experiencing growth is a testament to the programs and amenities we have in Novi, we unfortunately are turning people away due to space limitations in our facilities and those belonging to the Novi Community School District. For some programs the turn away rate is as high as twenty percent.

It is our current practice to accept registration for residents and non-residents concurrently. At the April 2024 Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Commission meeting staff presented, and the Commission unanimously supported, a plan for resident priority registration that provides the opportunity for residents to register for select programs one-week ahead of non-residents.

The select programs include youth basketball, youth volleyball, Camp Lakeshore, Camp PowerPlay, as well as pickleball lessons and leagues. Priority registration will take effect for programs beginning after July 1, 2024.

Additionally, our registration software now allows for street level data to determine residency. Prior to the upgrade we were limited to zip code data, which allowed for some Northville 48167 residents to be included as Novi residents. We plan to make the upgrade live on July 1, 2024.

The above-mentioned changes ensure PRCS is serving Novi residents first and foremost. Non-resident participants will be notified of the changes via email.