



Office of Rural Development

Introduction



Rural Michigan faces unprecedented opportunities...and challenges

**Recent disruptions can reverse – or
exacerbate – long-standing population and
economic trends**

- **Workforce shortages & population migration patterns**
- **Broadband**
- **Housing**
- **Childcare**
- **Health**
- **New state and federal resources**



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

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

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



Interagency Coordination

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



Staff & resources to support communities

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



Increase statewide engagement & action on rural priorities

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





SHARED SERVICES *COUNTY MODEL*

County and local government hire shared grant writer to pursue funding for specific objectives

Attends local meetings, works with local stakeholders for contextual understanding and identification of opportunities



SHARED SERVICES

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MODEL

Staff capacity added to economic development agency to contractually manage key local priorities

Redevelopment Ready Communities, blight remediation strategy, communications



SHARED SERVICES

Nonprofit model

Regional nonprofit acts as employer of record for contractual activities related to housing readiness and development in Charlevoix, Emmet, Leelanau, and Manistee counties

Collaboratively funded by county, local governments, and community foundations/philanthropy

Zoning, development coordination, local advocacy, land bank support



Thank you!



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Discussion

What capacity/resources are needed in your region?

What partnerships already exist?

What other partners should be engaged?