Developing Regional Solutions

SEMCOG

Southeast Michigan Council of Governments

Broadband in the News

Gov. Whitmer Announces More than 200,000 Michiganders will Gain Access to High-Speed Internet Under Historic Funding from Biden Administration

June 26, 2023

Michigan received fourth-highest grant funding in the nation to expand high-speed internet to households and small businesses.

Michigan set to receive $1.5B from feds for high-speed internet

Riley Beggin
The Detroit News

Published 3:49 p.m. ET June 26, 2023 | **Updated 6:38 p.m. ET June 26, 2023**

Chelsea MI

7-06-2023 8:07am

Washtenaw County Pioneers Broadband Expansion in Michigan

NEWS

Progress being made to close digital divide in Manistee

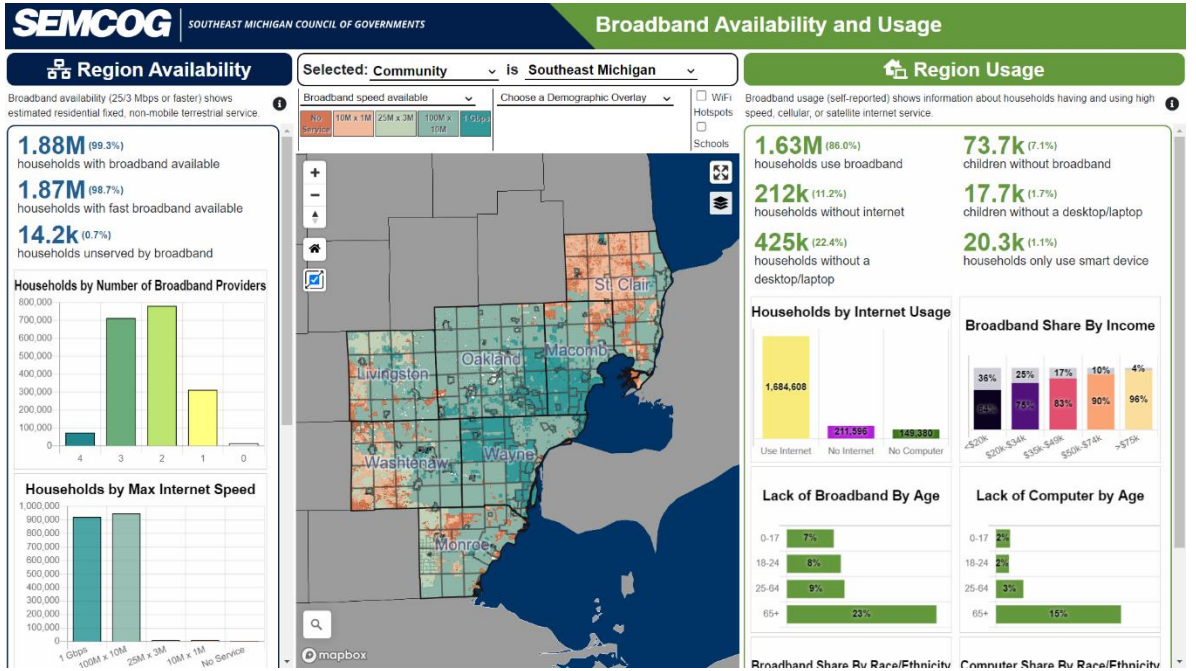
Scott Fraley, Staff writer
Nov. 23, 2022

Study finds growing rural internet access gaps for Michigan students

Michigan Radio | By Priya Vijayakumar
Published August 22, 2023 at 4:39 PM EDT

SEMCOG's Approach

- Many Southeast Michiganders lack access to the internet
  - Lack of suitable infrastructure
  - High cost of service
  - Lack of familiarity or comfort with internet-enabled technology
- In 2021, SEMCOG and the Metropolitan Affairs Coalition established a **Broadband Action Team**
  - Resulted in the **Southeast Michigan Broadband Framework**



https://maps.semcog.org/Broadband/

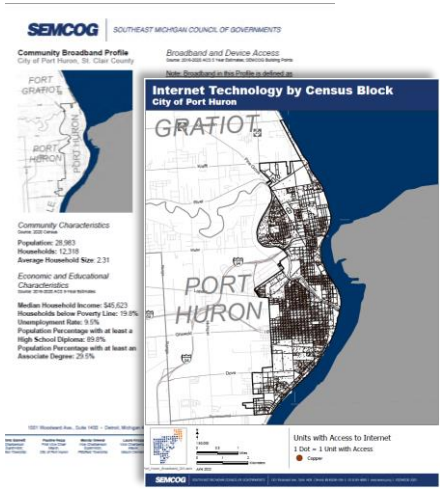
Broadband Framework

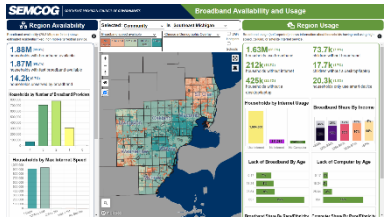
High-speed broadband should be accessible to homes and businesses across Michigan to:

- **enhance** community and economic development
- **improve** quality of life,
- **provide** access to education and lifelong learning opportunities,
- **support** remote work demands, and
- **promote** equitable access to healthcare.

Implementing the Broadband Framework

Broadband in Southeast Michigan: Expansion, Engagement, and Equity





- Southeast Michigan Broadband Navigator
- Community Broadband Profiles
- Policy and Technical Assistance
- Webinars and One-Pagers

SCAN ME

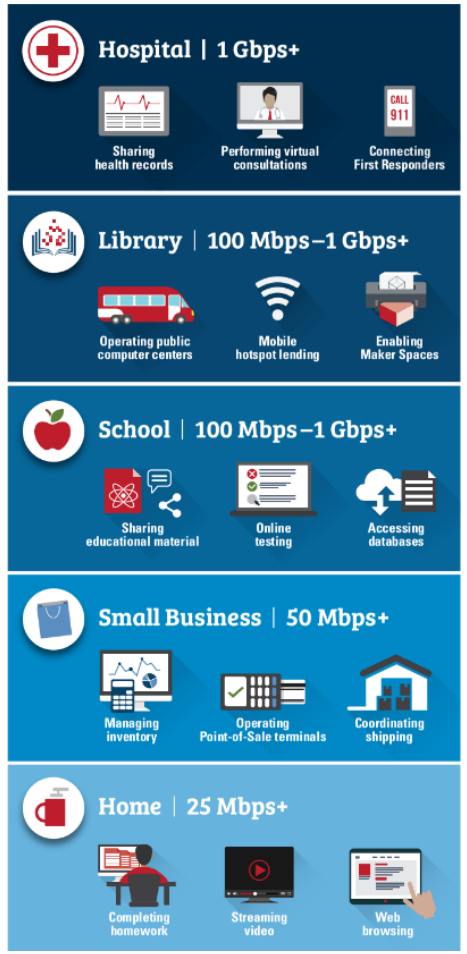
Broadband in the World of Transit

MDOT Office of Public Transportation – Tech Talk

November 29, 2023

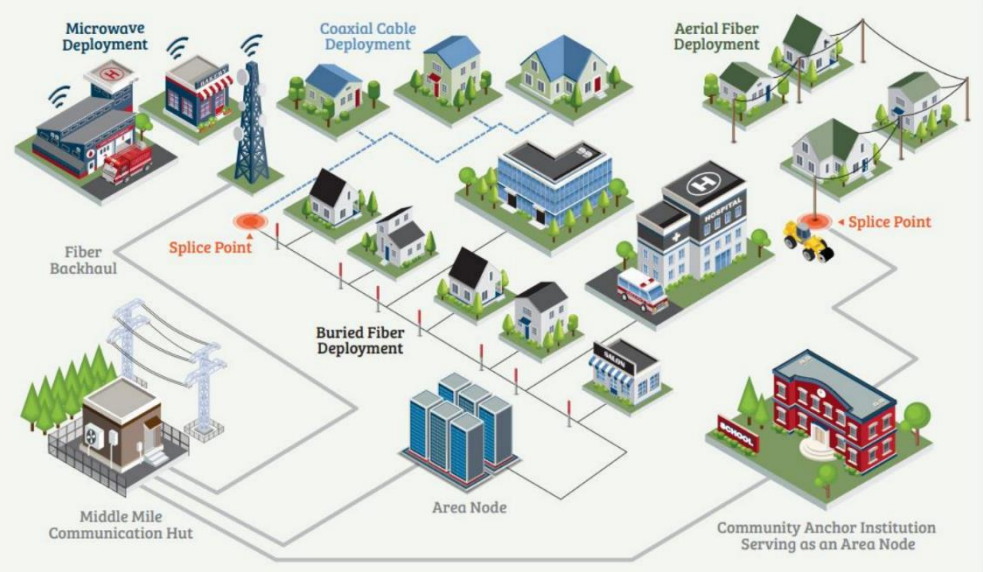
What is Broadband?

- Broadband is **fast internet**
  - The definition of “fast internet” has changed over the years
    - » 1996: 200 Kbps download / 200 Kbps upload
    - » 2010: 4 Mbps download / 1 Mbps upload
    - » 2015: 25 Mbps download / 3 Mbps upload
  - The definition officially remains at 25/3 Mbps, but in 2022 the FCC Chairperson recommended this be updated to 100/20 Mbps
- Fast internet makes many activities and tasks possible, more efficient, and more equitable



Broadband Infrastructure

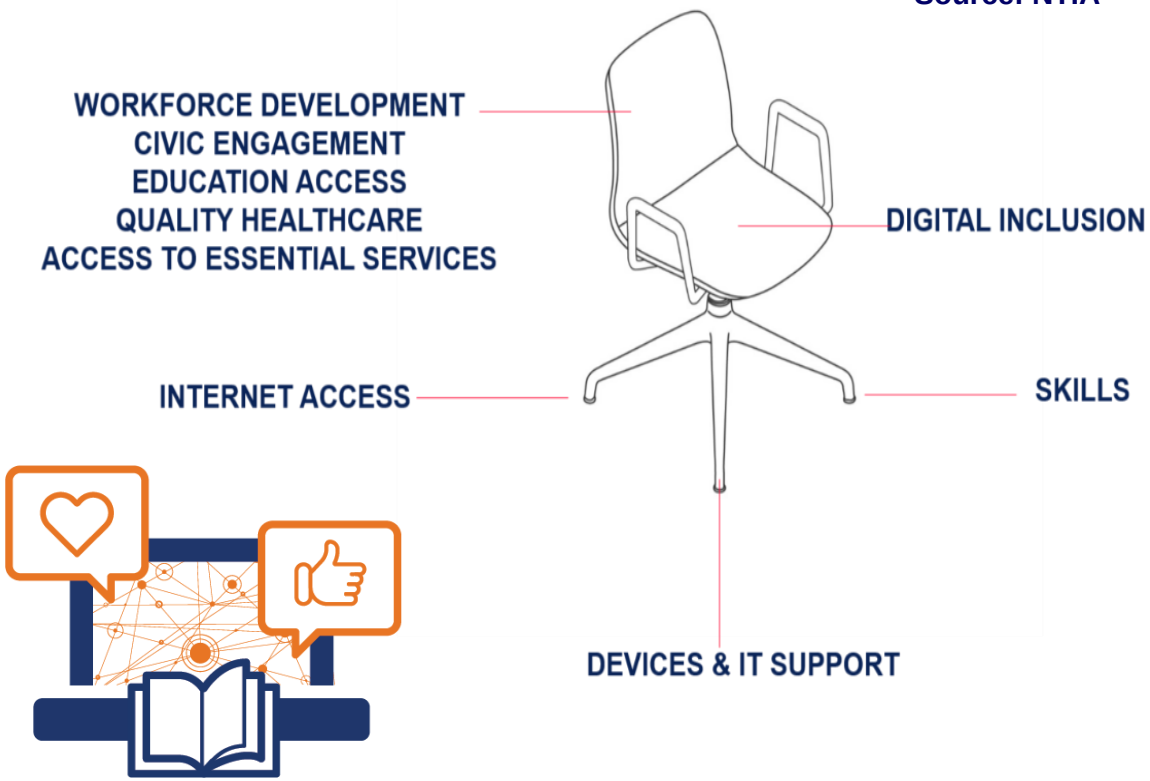
- Many ways to bring internet to homes, businesses, and institutions
  - Coaxial Cable
  - Cellular
  - DSL
  - Fiber Optic
  - Fixed Wireless
  - Satellite
- Three Network Types
  - Backbone
  - Middle-Mile
  - Last-Mile



Digital Literacy and Closing the Digital Divide

- Increasing access to broadband is crucial
- Closing the digital divide will require expanding digital literacy
- Digital literacy is needed for digital equity

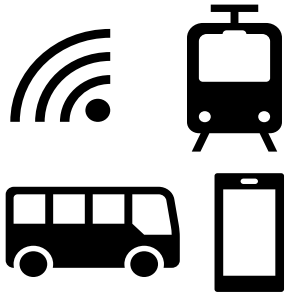
Source: NTIA



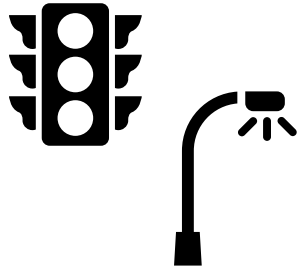
Broadband and Transportation

- Broadband Internet touches multiple aspects of transportation access and technology

Autonomous and Connected Vehicles

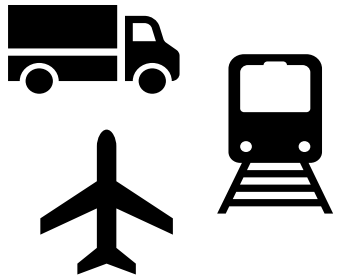


Smart Transit: Fleet Wi-Fi; Transit Apps; Mobile Wallets

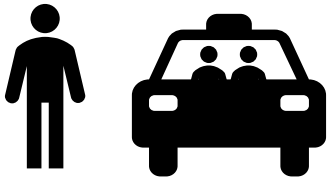


ITS and Other Smart Infrastructure

Telecommuting and Working from Home



Efficient Truck, Rail, and Air Freight



Taxis and Rideshare

Broadband and Transportation

- Broadband internet access and availability will be included in SEMCOG's 2050 Regional Transportation Plan

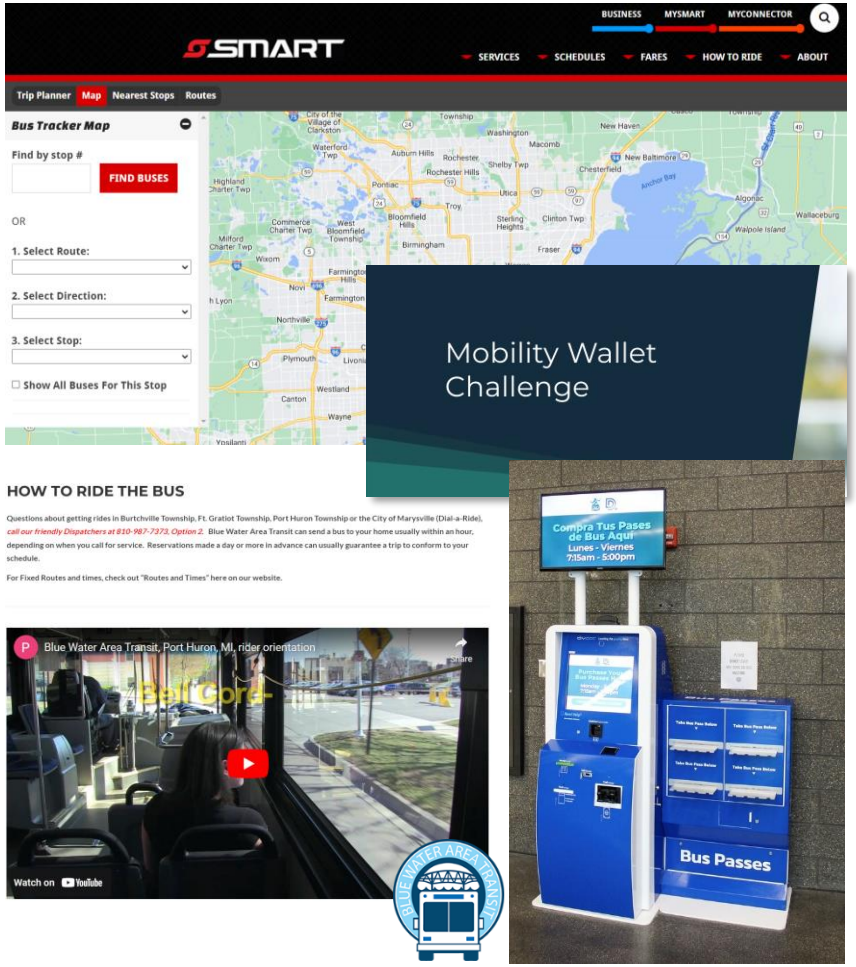
  Broadband paves digital roads that will make the future of transportation and transit more efficient, more equitable, and safer. *Telecommuting, telehealth, online shopping, and online school provide opportunities both as alternatives to driving to those locations, and overcome barriers to those unable to use transportation systems, or not without great difficulty.* ***More vehicles and transit systems are able to operate and navigate autonomously and in sync with other vehicles and local ITS to transport people and goods efficiently, safely, and with lowered environmental impact due to idling or additional fuel consumption.*** *Broadband enables these technologies by making sure the necessary data to assure a remote lifestyle or AV/CV usage are transmitted quickly and securely.*

Covered Populations for Broadband Funding

- MIHI-designated “Covered Populations” are factored into the RTP
  - Individuals in households earning at or below 150% of the federal poverty line
  - Individuals who are members of a racial or ethnic minority group
  - Rural residents
  - Individuals with a language barrier
  - Aging individuals
  - Individuals with disabilities
  - Individuals involved with the justice system

Implications for Transit

- Efficient route planning and ITS integration
- Wi-Fi on fleet vehicles helps commuters stay connected
- Digital kiosks at stops and stations
- Digital “wallets” for fare payment
- Phone apps for checking routes, navigating with multiple transit lines, calling paratransit, and navigating with multiple transit operators (e.g., SMART to DDOT)
  - In-house apps, as well as services like NextBus
- Enabling and enhancing Mobility as a Service (MaaS) programs



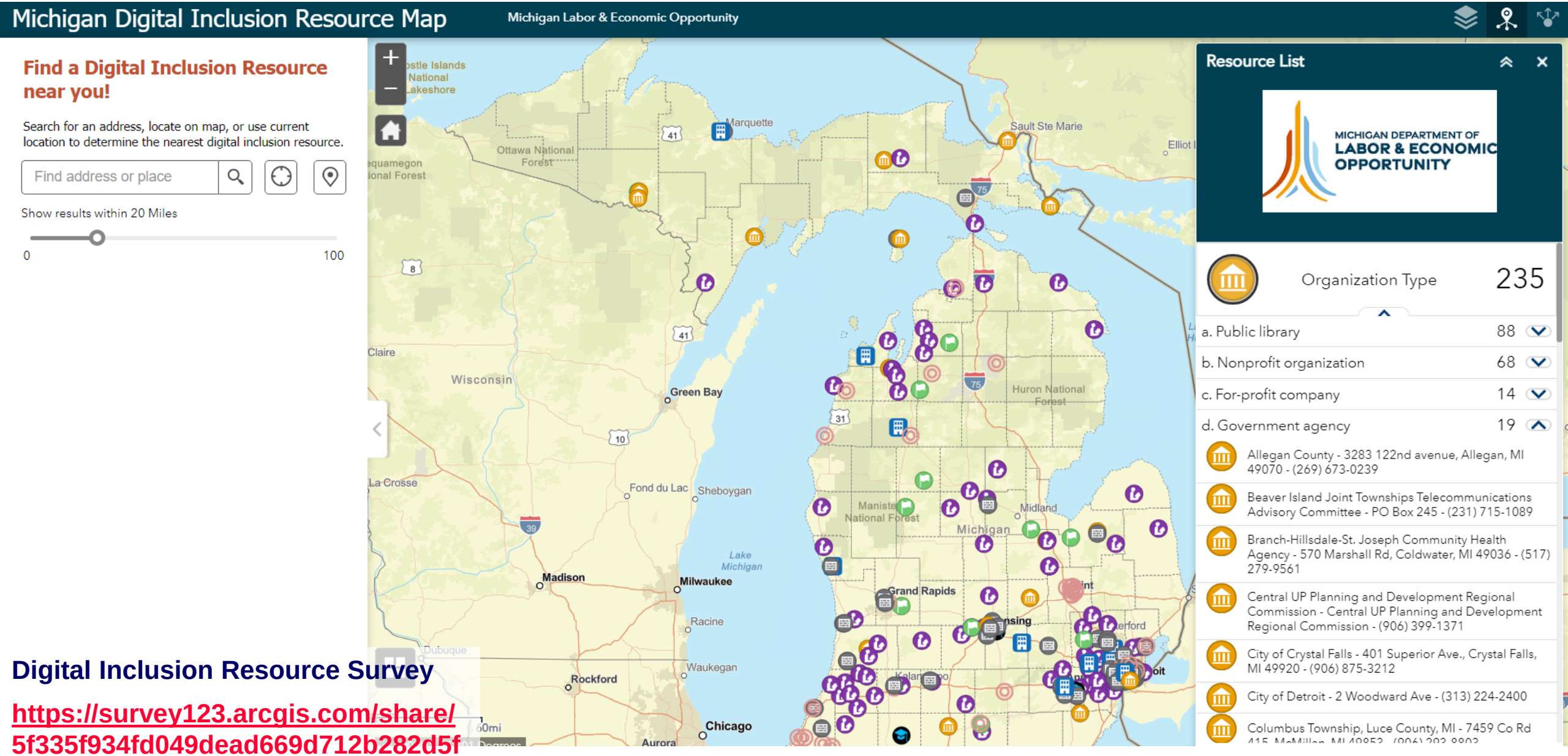
The Role of Transit Agencies in Digital Equity

- BEAD Initial Proposal Volume I
  - Chapter 4 – Community Anchor Institutions (CAIs)

Public transportation facilities	Public-facing transportation facilities including rail stations, bus stations, regional airports, local airports, and ferry terminals. Data acquired from multiple sources including the Michigan State Police - Michigan Critical Incident Management System, National Transit Database, and the National Census of Ferry Operators.

- What does CAI status mean for public transportation facilities?
  - Eligible for funding under BEAD for “nondeployment activities”
    - » Affordability | Digital Skills | Devices and Other
  - Role for providing access to internet and/or devices, both for daily life and accessing transit services

Michigan Digital Inclusion Resource Map



Digital Inclusion Resource Survey

https://survey123.arcgis.com/share/5f335f934fd049dead669d712b282d5f

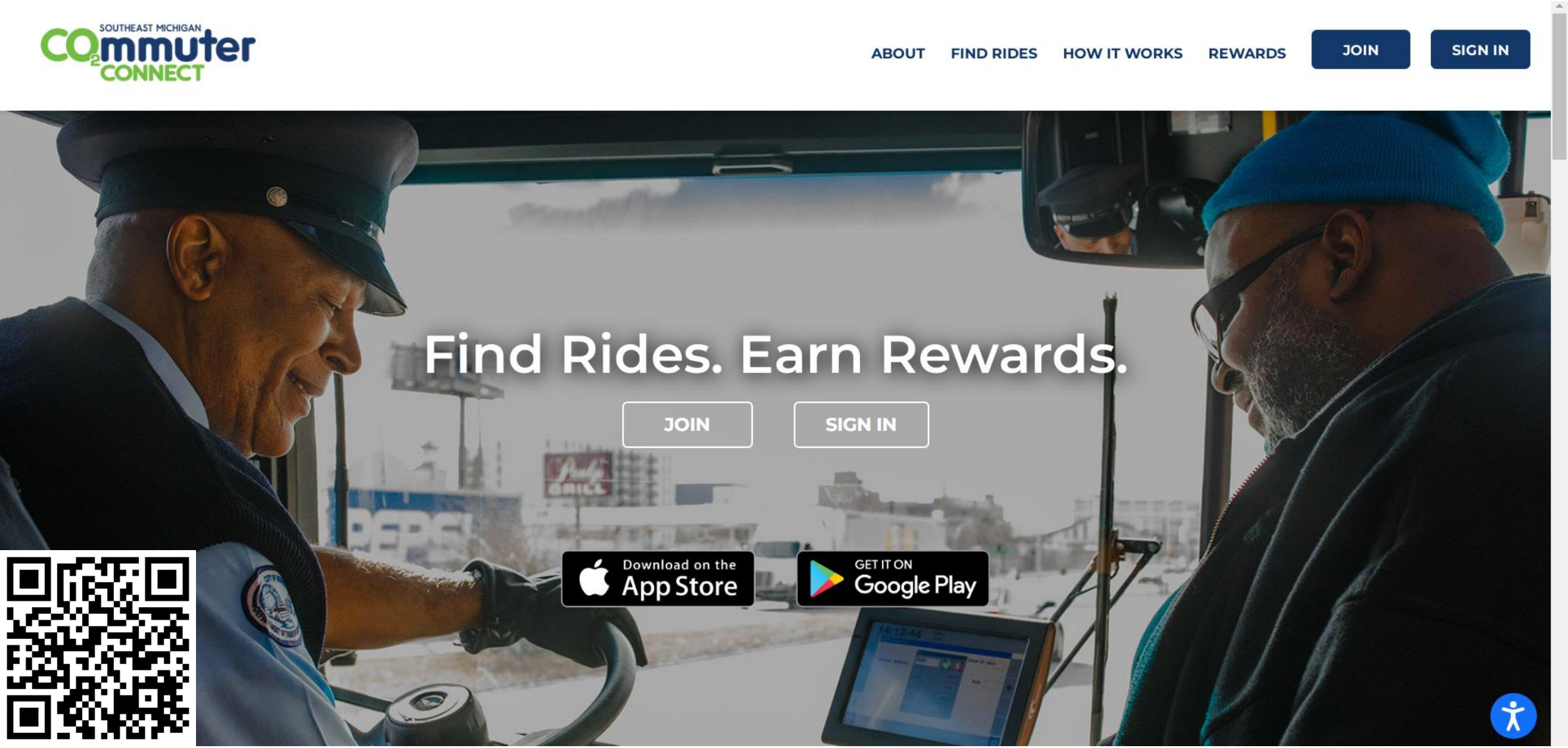
How Can Your Agency Help?

- Provide information to riders and visitors on resources and information like surveys
  - Is your agency's operational area included in a county or regional survey? (e.g., Tri-County Broadband Survey)
- Provide public access Wi-Fi or other forms of connectivity
  - Can be made available at stops, stations, or on fleet vehicles
- Assist riders with using technologies (phones, tablets, etc.) to navigate software and apps for route maps and fare payment

Ridesharing and Personal Mobility

- Does your transit agency operate a rideshare service or partner with one (Uber, Lyft, etc.)?
- Is your agency looking to start or participate in a MaaS program that can help a rider look at their full spectrum of mobility for a given day or week?
- Commute with Enterprise Vanpooling: https://www.commutewithenterprise.com/
- SEMCOG Commuter Connect: https://commuterconnectmi.org/
  - Questions about Commuter Connect? Reach out to Iris Steinberg, Planner II, SEMCOG: *steinberg@semcog.org*

Southeast Michigan Commuter Connect



Digital Equity Resources for Your Organization

- **General Resources:** https://www.michigan.gov/leo/bureaus-agencies/mihi/michigan-digital-inclusion-resources
- **Digital Equity Plan Draft:** https://www.michigan.gov/leo/-/media/Project/Websites/leo/Documents/MIHI/DE-Plan---DRAFT.pdf
- **BEAD Initial Proposal Open Comment Period (Closes Dec. 1):** https://forms.leo.state.mi.us/volume-2/
  - Initial Proposal Volume I
  - Initial Proposal Volume II

Questions?

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