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Clare County: Certified in Connected Community Engagement Program

Technology assessment results presented

[Download the plan](#)

Harrison, MI – Connect Michigan applauds the efforts of Clare County for achieving certification under Connected Nation’s Connected Community Engagement Program.

Results from a community technology assessment undertaken by the county, along with strategies for broadband expansion, were released today at the Clare County courthouse in Harrison, MI.



“It is truly exciting for residents, businesses, and tourists in Clare County to have this high level of broadband connectivity,” said Kathy Methner, director of Middle Michigan Development Corporation/Michigan Works Region 7B. “From an economic development standpoint, I see the availability of high-speed Internet, anywhere in the county, as a great attraction tool for new companies and for teleworkers who can now spend more time in their ‘up-north’ homes.”

Participating in the Connected program means Clare County has gone through an extensive assessment of its overall broadband and technology innovation. The Technology Action Plan sets general community-wide broadband connectivity goals that will support economic development and residential quality of life.

Recognized as the first community in Michigan to join the Connected program back in 2011, the Clare County Broadband Group has conducted ongoing local efforts to accelerate local broadband access, adoption, and use, resulting in Connected certification. With the release of this latest action plan, they are laying out a strategy for sustained community-led technology utilization.

Clare County's top goals from the new plan are to create local jobs via teleworking opportunities, develop a broadband awareness program focused on agricultural businesses, develop or identify broadband training and awareness programs for small and medium businesses, facilitate a technology summit, and pursue next generation 911 upgrades. The new plan gives the community step-by-step action items to make sure that the goals are met. The plan will also support future broadband expansion and programs that will ensure the community maintains widespread Internet access, adoption, and use.

To obtain Connected certification, Clare County had to meet certain benchmark scores based on the National Broadband Plan that demonstrate it is a technologically advanced community.

“Clare County is a gleaming example of the possibilities and opportunities that can be turned into reality through partnership and collaboration of local government, education, private enterprise, and community development organizations,” said Jeff N. Hall, co-president of ISP Management Inc. “The Connect Clare County Broadband Group initiative is inspired by vision, motivated by improving the overall quality of life, and fueled by synergy to propel Clare County to the technological forefront. Achieving certified Connected community status is the crown jewel of that initiative.”

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About Connect Michigan: As the designated entity for broadband mapping and planning in the state of Michigan, Connect Michigan is a public-private partnership between the Michigan Public Service Commission and Connected Nation to work with local governments, businesses, and citizens in the goal of increasing broadband service in the state's underserved areas. For more information about what Connect Michigan is doing to accelerate technology in Michigan's communities, visit www.connectmi.org.

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 **CONNECTED**SM Connected Nation developed the Connected Community Engagement Program to help guide a community through an assessment of its overall broadband and technology status. Connected certified communities have measurably demonstrated their proficiency for effective Access, Adoption, and Use of broadband-supported technologies. Connected Nation through its partners provides a national platform for recognizing those communities that excel across these important benchmarks. Funded by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA), this effort is part of the State Broadband Initiative. <http://www.connectednation.org/get-connected>