



# LAKESHORE ADVANTAGE

## 2025 Industry Trends Report

### Allegan and Ottawa Counties, Michigan

At Lakeshore Advantage, we keep a close pulse on the economy by meeting with more than 130 executives each year. These conversations are the foundation of our business retention program. We learn about each company's opportunities and challenges, and how we can support their continued success.

The Industry Trends Report is a snapshot of those insights, highlighting the strength of our employers today and guiding the actions we take to support growth, innovation, and opportunity across Allegan and Ottawa Counties in the future.

The data in this report represents interviews gathered from July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025 by Lakeshore Advantage team members.

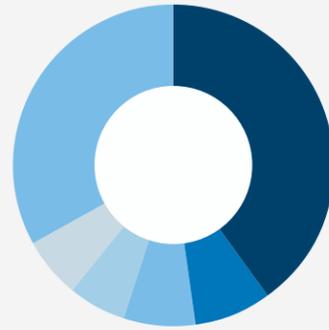


## KEY INDUSTRY BASE

**40%**  
MANUFACTURING\*

40% of the region's Gross Regional Product (GRP) comes from manufacturing

**8%** WHOLESALE TRADE | **7%** GOVERNMENT | **6%** RETAIL TRADE | **6%** CONSTRUCTION | **33%** OTHER



## POPULATION

**428,641** (2024)\*

The Lakeshore Region:  
Allegan and Ottawa Counties

**+4.7%**  
Since 2019

**Expected +3.2%**  
Between 2024-2029



## EMPLOYMENT

**193,895** (2024)\*

**+2.6%**  
Since 2019

From 2019 to 2024, jobs increased by 2.6% in the Lakeshore region from 189,040 to 193,895



## Growing Industry Clusters

The largest industries in the Lakeshore region by gross regional product



**Smart Manufacturing**  
Over 50 businesses in the region



**Advanced Energy Storage**  
Nearly 40 businesses in the region



**Food Processing & Agribusiness**  
Nearly 150 businesses in the region

## Business Growth Trends

89% in 2024

**85%**  
employers reporting stable or increasing sales



41% in 2024

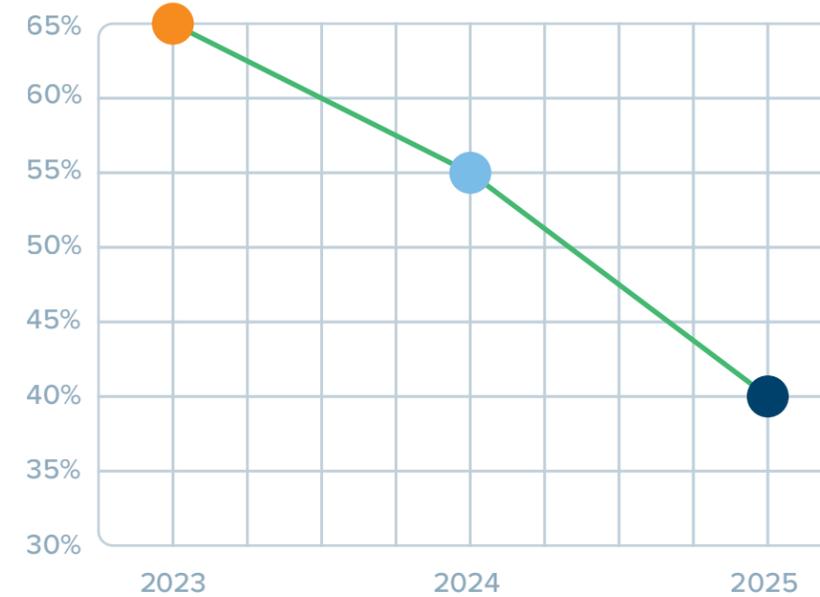
**1/3**  
of companies surveyed plan to expand in the next three years

**12 New Jobs**

projected on average per expansion project

**\$7.5 million private investment** projected on average per project

## Demand for Talent



65% in 2023

**40%** of respondents reported experiencing recruitment issues. While the demand for talent in some positions has eased, this research represents significant work ahead to attract and retain the talent we need.

## Types of Workers in Demand

**87%** skilled  
**13%** unskilled

- Skilled trades workers
- Mechanical technicians
- Software developers
- Hardware engineers



## Innovation Drives the Future Economy

**49%**  
of companies reported key product(s) growing

**42%**  
reported key product(s) as maturing

**76%**

introduced new products in the past 2 years

**1-2%** of sales spent on research and development

## Primary R&D Focus

- Production improvements
- Operational efficiency
- New product development

## Barriers to Business Success & Growth

Labor shortages

Housing scarcity

Industrial space limitations

Infrastructure limitations

Rising costs

**Overall, the 2025 Industry Trends Report** underscores the strength and adaptability of Allegan and Ottawa County employers while also shining a light on the challenges ahead. By listening to local business leaders, we gain the insights needed to target solutions that advance growth, innovation, and talent development. These findings will continue to guide Lakeshore Advantage's work to ensure our region remains competitive so this generation and the next want to live and work in our region.

**Looking for business support?**

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