



Mapping Housing Assets in Southwest Michigan (Region J)

Fall 2025

MICHIGAN
OFFICE OF
**RURAL
PROSPERITY**



ORP works across sectors to foster investments in people and places, intentionally focusing on building capacity and resources to meet complex rural needs.

Strategize and advocate for rural needs in policy and program decisions

Connect rural communities with partners and resources to advance local priorities and projects

Build a strong rural network to keep rural communities connected to resources and each other

Founded in 2022 as the Office of Rural Development by Executive Directive in 2022-01, the office was renamed the Office of Rural Prosperity by Executive Order in 2023 (EO 2023-06).

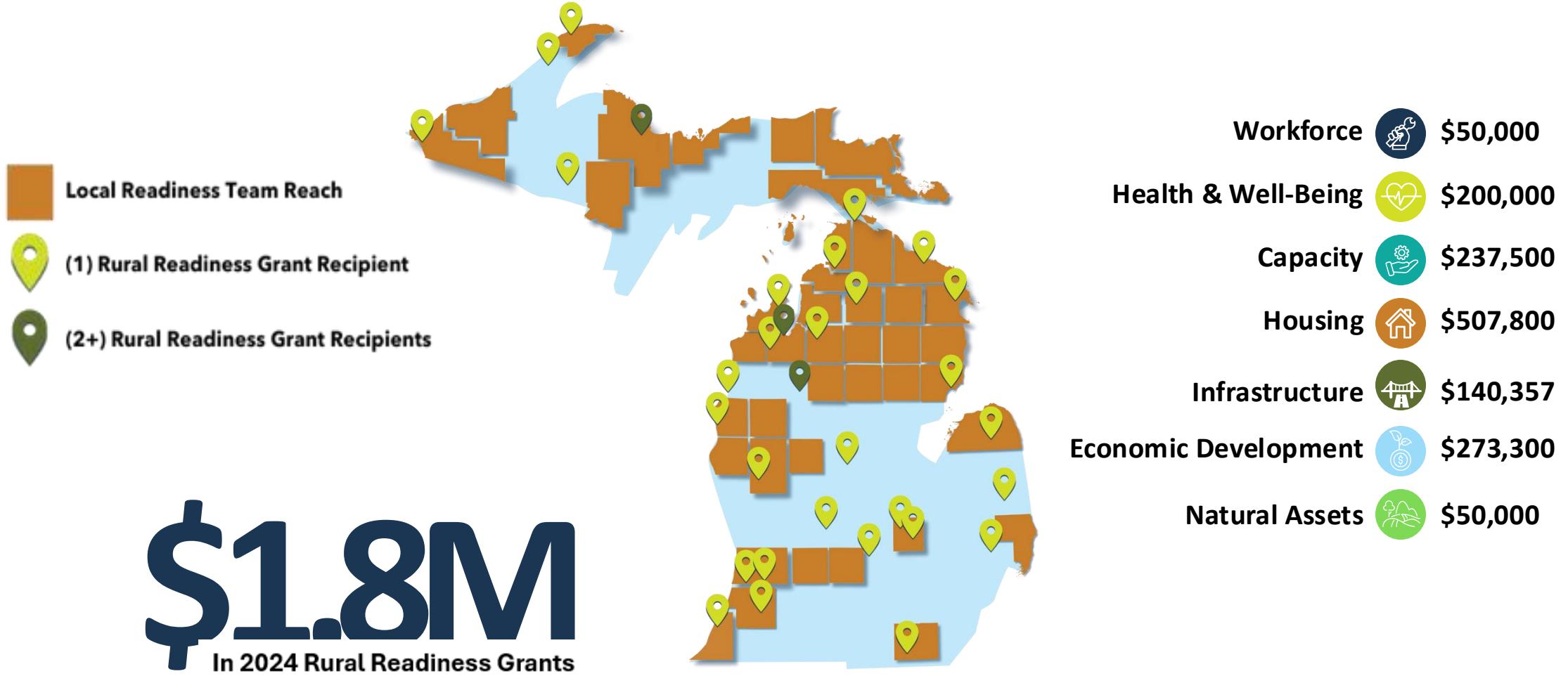
A ROADMAP TO RURAL PROSPERITY



Rural Communities are Advancing the Roadmap to Rural Prosperity

- Housing:** Local governments are using Rural Readiness Grants to fund housing needs assessments and zoning updates.
- Infrastructure :** Engineering studies are being completed to support broadband and water/sewer upgrades.
- Health & Well-Being:** Regional hubs are planning for mobile clinics and childcare access.
- Outdoor Recreation:** Trail planning is helping communities drive economic development and population retention.

The Rural Readiness Program: Rural Readiness Network & Rural Readiness Grants



Rural Readiness Grant Program

- Grants of up to \$50,000
- Tax-exempt organizations are eligible
- Competitive, cost-reimbursement grant
- Designed to build capacity and prepare rural communities for future investment.
- Flexible reporting requirements, virtual check-ins and only one final written report.

\$13:\$1

\$1.8M



In 2024 Rural Readiness Grants

\$22.2M

Rural Readiness Network

- Solution-focused network to advance local and regional projects
- Relationships with rural communities, state and federal agencies, universities, philanthropy, and non-profit organizations
- Various “levels” of support
 - 1:1 direct community assistance & capacity building support
 - Events, trainings, & peer connections
 - Access to Rural Resource Hub
 - Topic-focused Working Groups



Workforce



Health & Well-Being



Capacity



Housing



Infrastructure



Economic Development



Natural Assets



Mapping Housing Assets in SW Michigan

Why We're Here



- Workshop goals:
 - *Validate existing survey data*
 - *Identify gaps, priorities, opportunities*
 - *Strengthen regional housing ecosystem*
 - *Inform Regional Housing Partnership strategy and workplan*

What We've Done So Far

Online survey: ~85 responses

Assets categorized across six sectors

Preliminary analysis completed

Today: refine and interpret together



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Common Rural Themes

Context Matters:

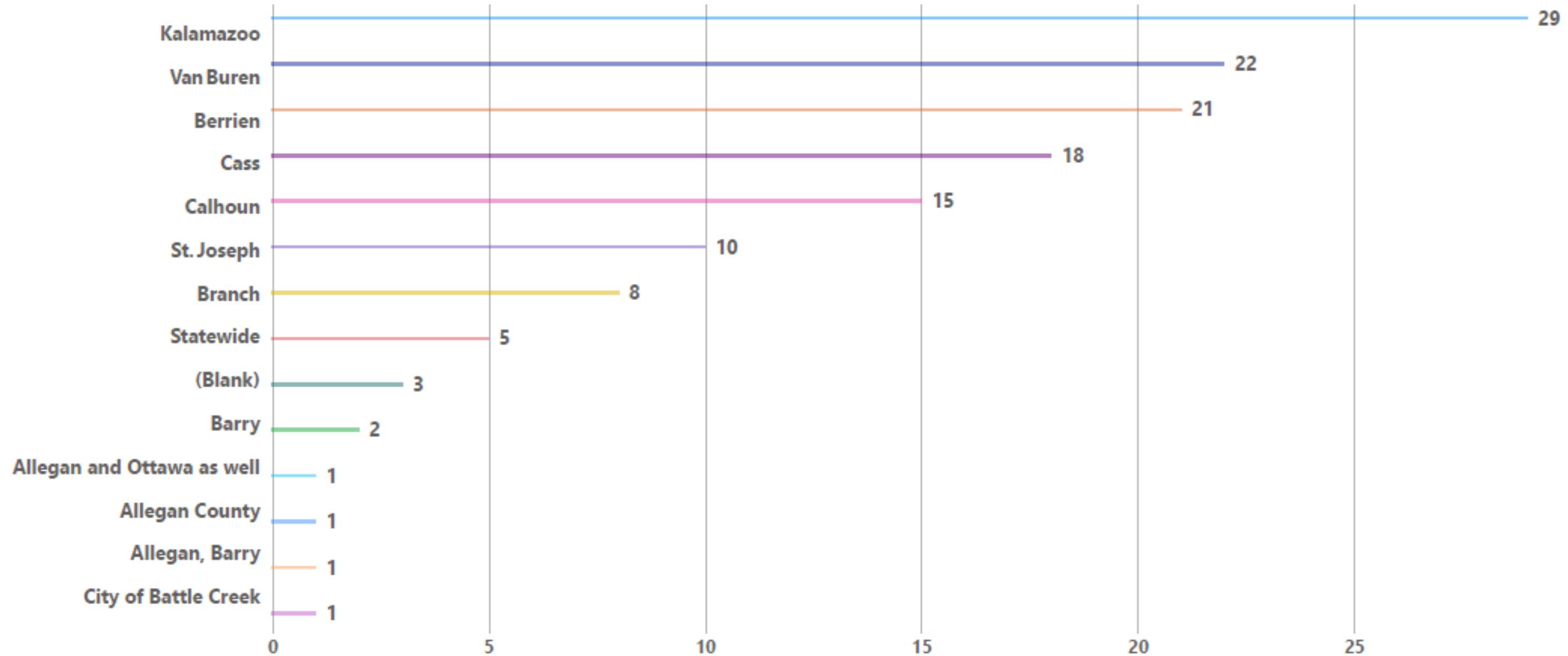
Rural Realities That Shape Housing

Rural Context Factor	Implication for Housing Assets
Smaller populations	Fewer economies of scale for developers or service providers
Limited staff/capacity in local gov	Housing is one of many priorities, with limited bandwidth to act on plans
High land availability, low density	Infrastructure costs become a barrier to developing scattered sites
Informal relationships	Asset collaboration may rely on personal networks more than formal structures
Seasonal housing & STR pressure	Housing stock is diverted from year-round occupancy

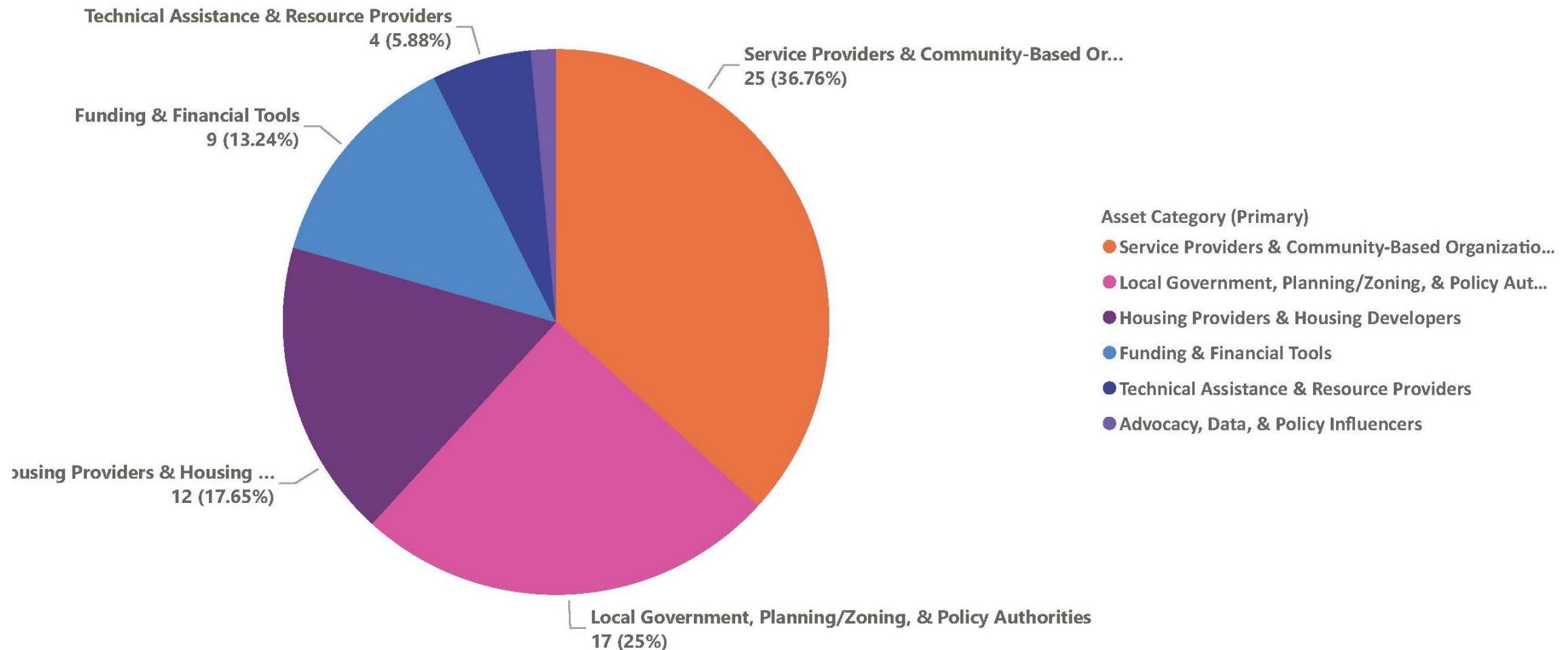


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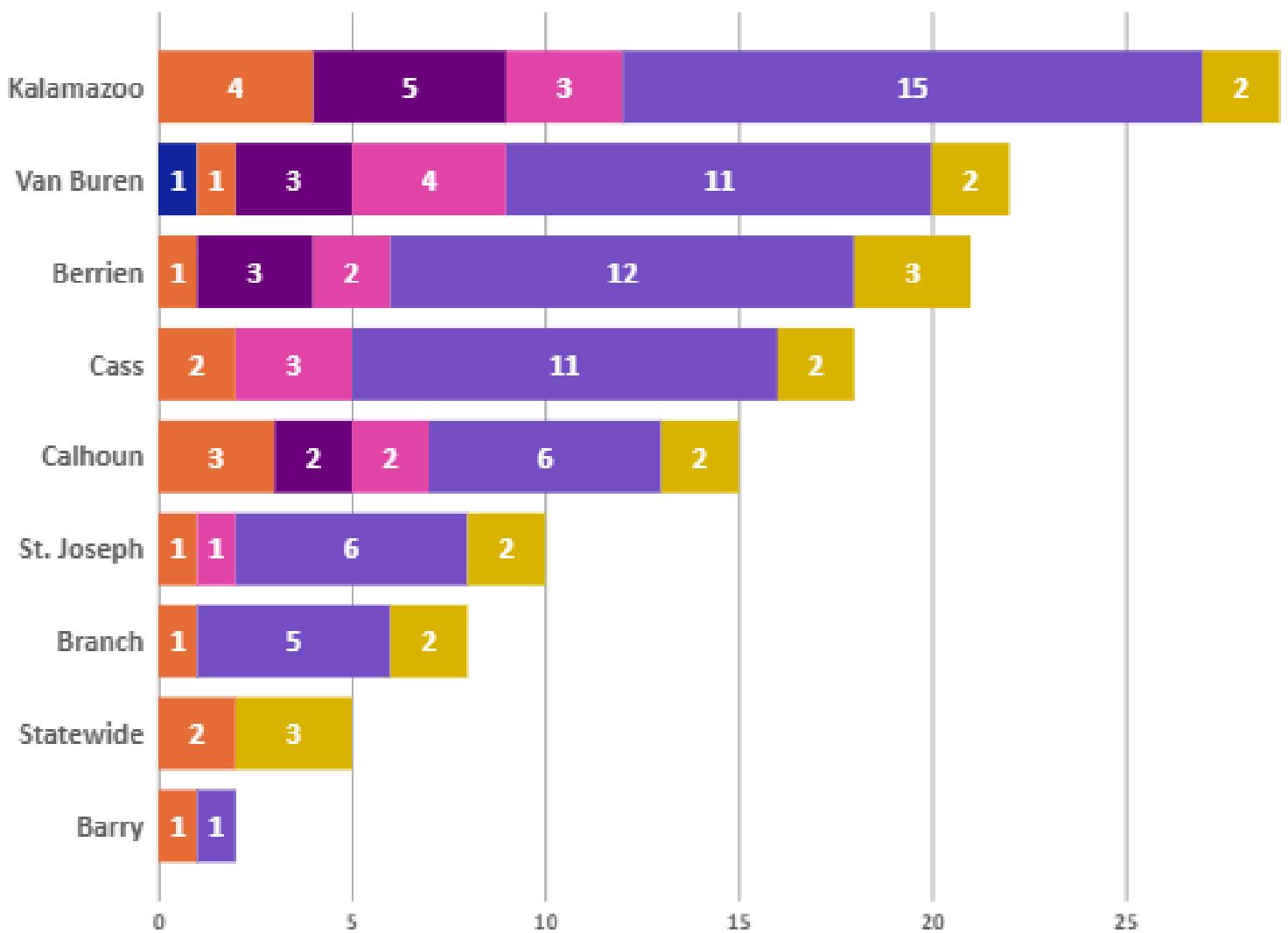
Initial Findings



of Assets by County



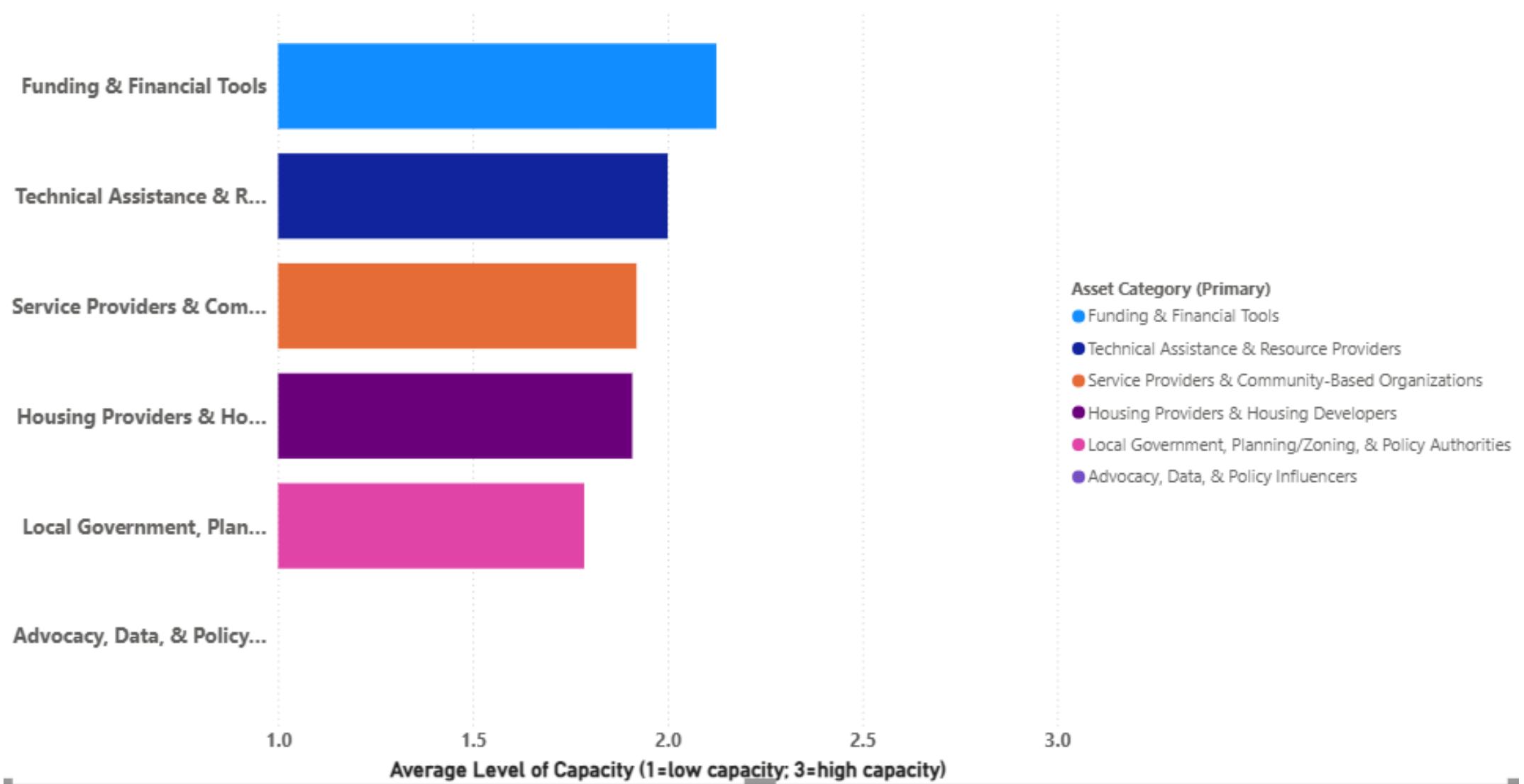
of Assets by category



Primary Asset Category

- Advocacy, Data, & Policy Influencers
- Funding & Financial Tools
- Housing Providers & Housing Devel...
- Local Government, Planning/Zonin...
- Service Providers & Community-Ba...
- Technical Assistance & Resource Pr...

of Assets by category & County



Average capacity level by category

Funding & Financial Tools



Service Providers & Com...

Local Government, Plan...

Technical Assistance & R...

Housing Providers & Ho...

Advocacy, Data, & Policy...

Asset Category (Primary)

- Funding & Financial Tools
- Service Providers & Community-Based Organizations
- Local Government, Planning/Zoning, & Policy Authorities
- Technical Assistance & Resource Providers
- Housing Providers & Housing Developers
- Advocacy, Data, & Policy Influencers

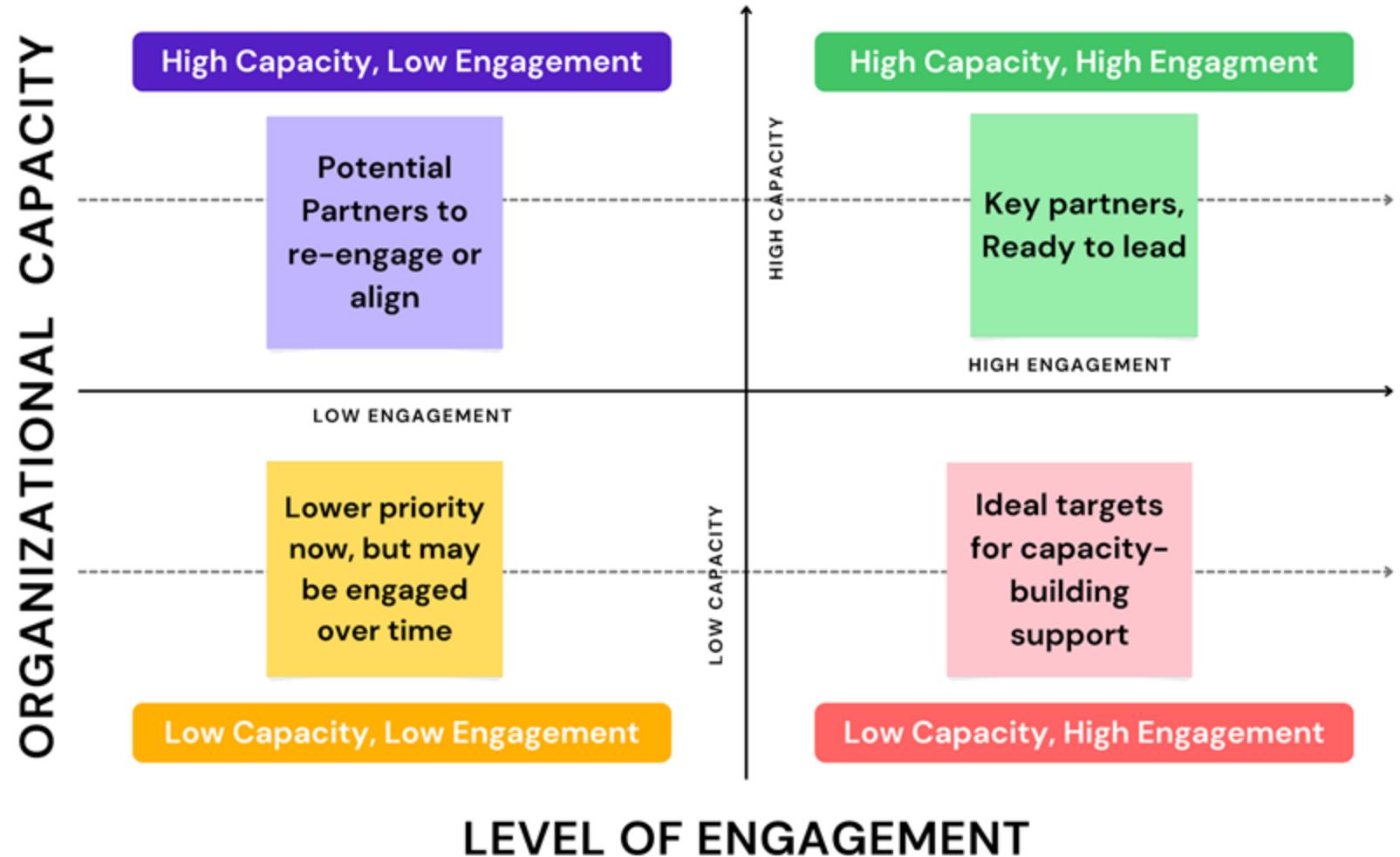
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Average Level of Engagement (1=low: 3=high)



Average engagement level by category

What this means



Early Patterns

- High interest across counties
- Moderate-low capacity in many orgs
- Few advocacy or TA assets
- Geographic gaps and duplicates



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What we need today

Validate, Analyze, and Prioritize

Your Role Today

- Validate data
 - Add missing assets
 - Identify mis-categorized assets
 - Discuss what this means for regional housing strategy

How Station Rotations Work

- Five asset-category stations (with seven categories)
- Groups rotate every 5-7 minutes
- Add corrections and missing assets to list

Questions to Answer at Each Station

- Review printed lists of organizations (name only)
- Add missing assets & flag updates/corrections
 - What's missing?
 - What's inaccurate?
 - Mis-categorized items?
 - Capacity/engagement signals?

What we're doing...

- At each station:
 - Review printed lists of organizations from the online survey
 - Use sticky notes or lists to:
 - Add missing organizations/resources
 - Flag updates or corrections (“wrong category,” “inactive,” “new service,” etc.)
 - Note perceived capacity or engagement (H/M/L)

GROUP INTERPRETATION & PRIORITIES

discussion

- What surprised you?
- Where is capacity strong?
- Where are we thin?
- Underutilized partnerships?
- Needs for strengthening ecosystem?

Be prepared to share:

- What 2-3 regional strategic priorities should we act on next?
- What gaps in housing assets do you notice? How important are they?
- What capacity-building is needed (TA, coordination, funding)?

What Happens Next

- Synthesize corrections and additions
- Update asset map
- Integrate findings into RHP planning
- Share results back with partners

Survey Still Open

- Open until Dec 5
- Encourage under-represented counties
- Share widely

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Thank You!

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