

Jackson County, MI
2026

DRIVE
JACKSON
STRATEGIC PLAN

Bentonville, AR



Case Study



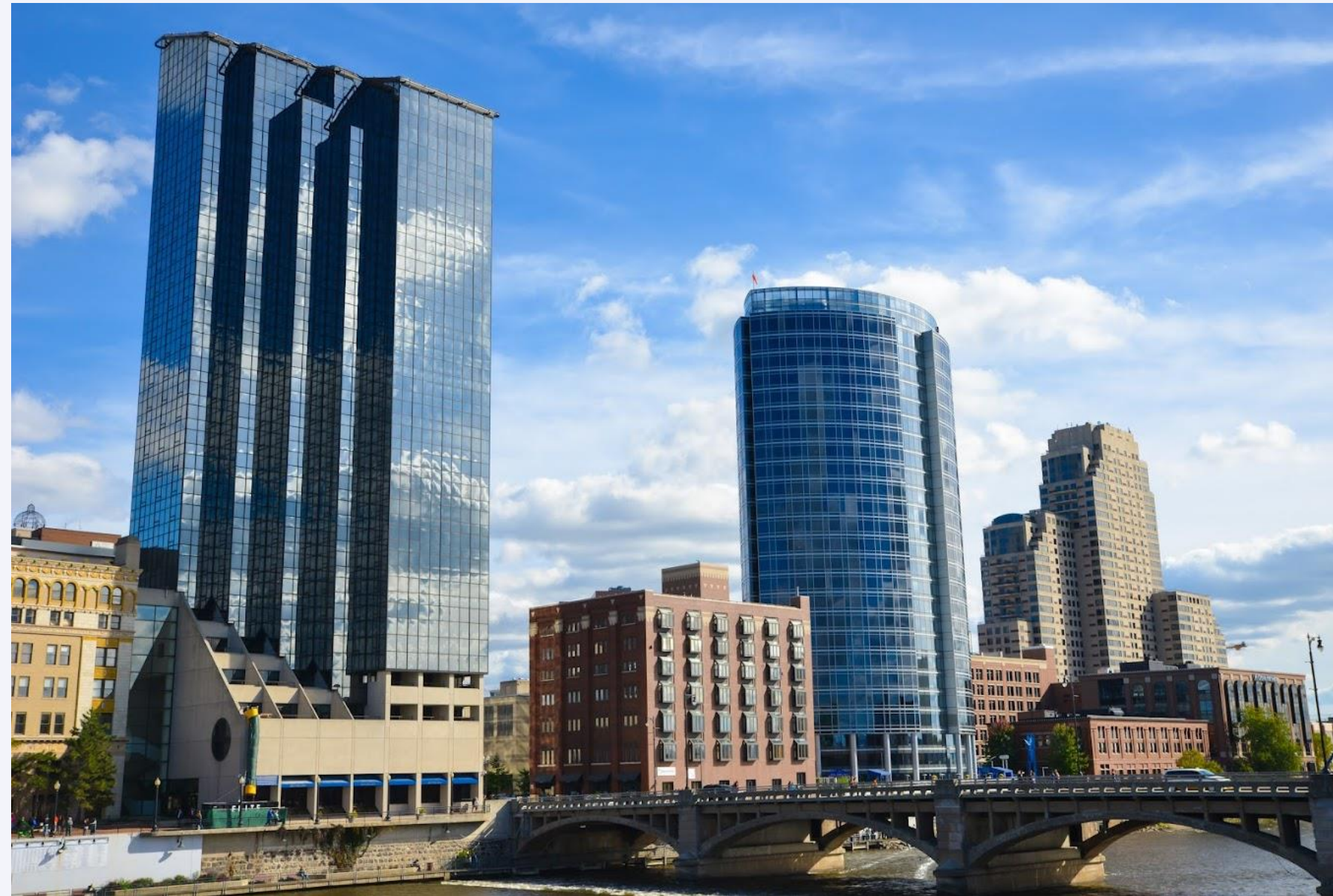
- Growth rate of 37 people/day
- Driven by development of cycling trails (quality of life)
 - Currently more than 500 miles of MTB trails with more in development



Grand Rapids, MI



Case Study



- Kent County 10-year population growth of 5.92%
- Driven by urban core renewal
 - Conference centers, Van Andel Arena, Medical Mile



Who lives in Jackson
County?

160,187

Total Population
(2023)

Jackson County's
population is
shrinking and aging.

Townships

19

Villages

7

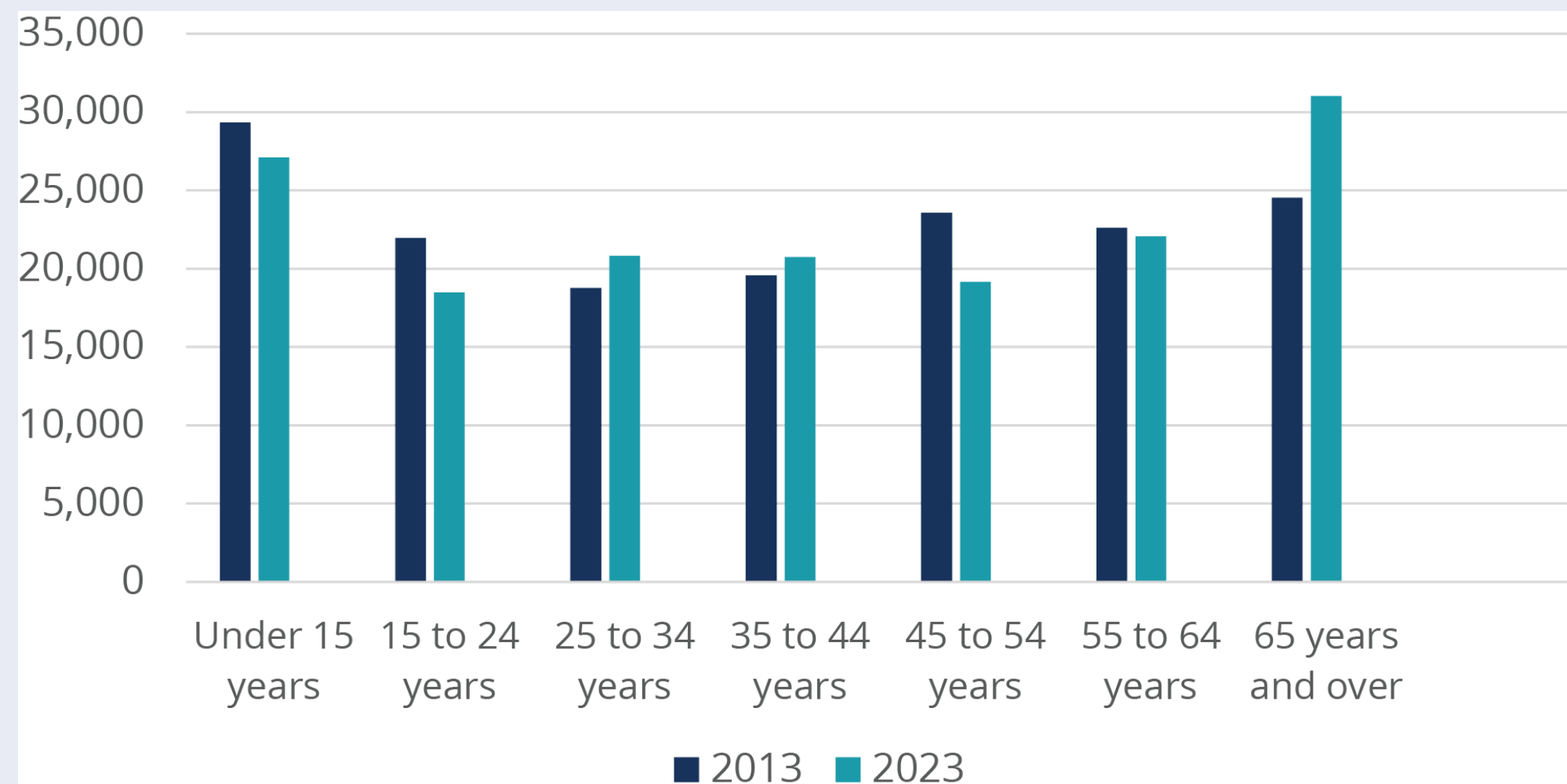
City

1

School
Districts

13

Age in Jackson County 2013-2023





Engagement Overview

Key Leadership Committee

24-person Key Leadership Committee representing a broad range of interests in Jackson County.

Community leaders, elected officials, young professionals, retirees, students and residents.

Outreach

To inform the public about the importance of Drive Jackson, the Key Leadership Committee implemented a multi-faceted outreach campaign using a variety of communication channels.

Flyers, press releases, appearances, radio, social media, and webpage.

Results

Drive Jackson’s reach was broad and successful.

≈1300
PEOPLE

5981
PIECES OF INPUT

54
STRATEGIES

Goals

The goals capture desired outcomes supported by strategies that are implementable.

A

**Improve Quality of
Place and Identity**

B

**Invest in Education
and Learning**

C

**Strengthen Housing
and Economic Vitality**

D

**Foster a Safe and
Healthy Community**



*Quotes from
Engagement*

**“I love the lakes, the
ballparks, riding my
bike
and hanging out.”**

**“Jackson County needs
more things for teens
and adults to do
together...”**

**“Focus on making places
feel safe by making
Jackson
beautiful again!”**

**“I would like no to
have to travel outside
of the County for fun
and
safe things to do.”**

**“I imagine Jackson County
as a regional destination
with thriving young
programs,
entertainment and
community pride.”**

**“Jackson County needs
a
new reputation other
than “Prison Town.”**



Existing Conditions

Green space and recreation facilities are accessible. Jackson County oversees 1,000 acres of wooded and natural areas, waterfronts and trails.



2.9 miles

Average distance from home to a trail in Jackson County

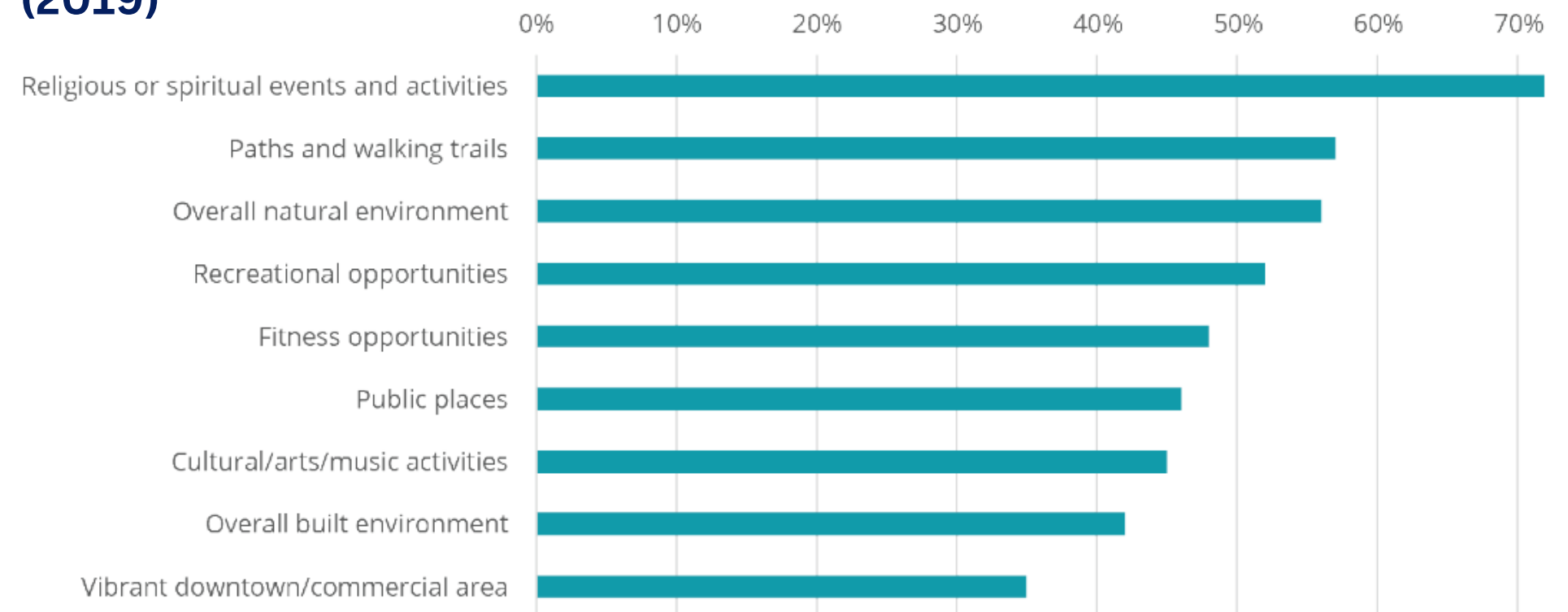


3.4 miles

Average distance from home to a lake in Jackson County

JACKSON COUNTY RESIDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF PLACE

Percent Rating a Factor Excellent / Good (2019)



Source: Jackson County National Citizen Survey (2019)



Existing Conditions

Among all survey categories, our highest rated assets are our recreational amenities

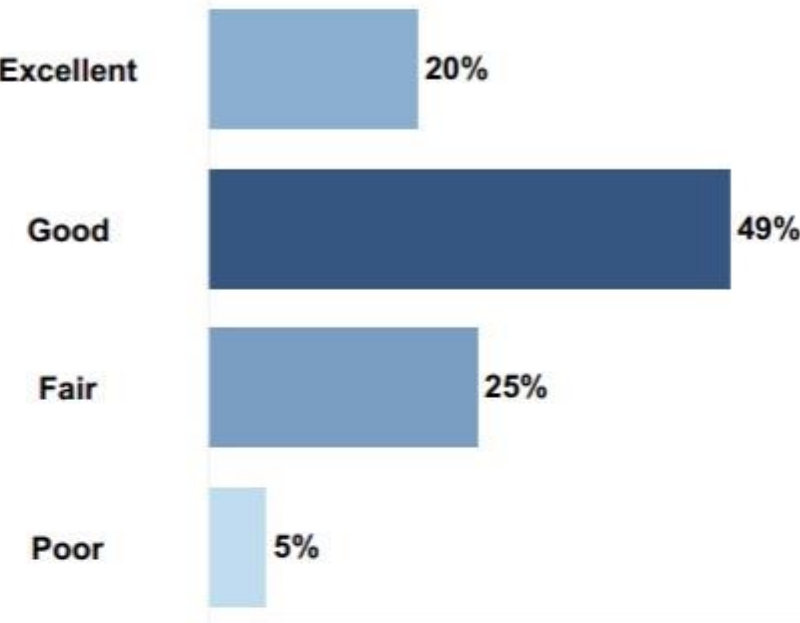


Parks and Recreation

"There are no communities that pride themselves on their quality of life, promote themselves as a desirable location for businesses to relocate, or maintain that they are environmental stewards of their natural resources, without such communities having a robust, active system of parks and recreation programs for public use and enjoyment."

- National Recreation and Park Association

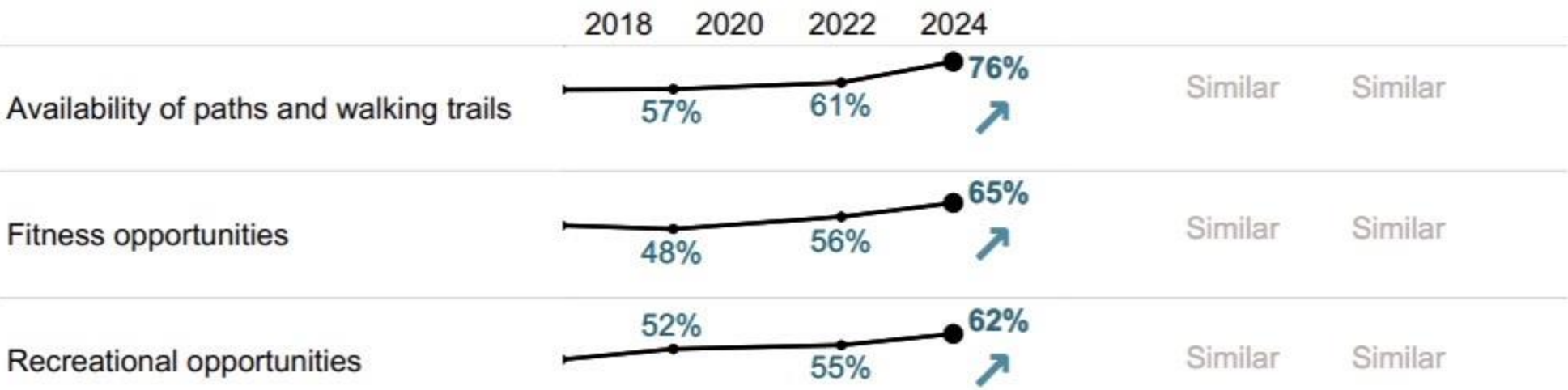
Overall quality of parks and recreation opportunities, 2024



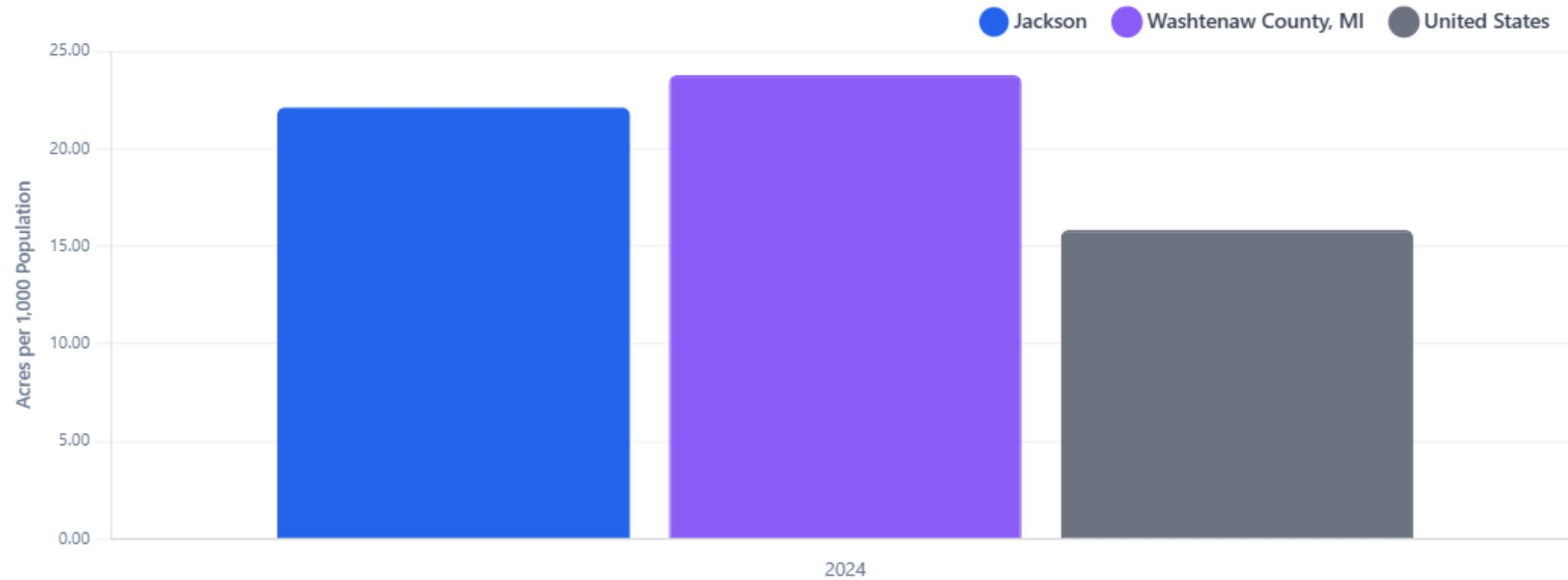
Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to Jackson County as a whole.
(% excellent or good)



Please also rate each of the following in the Jackson County community.
(% excellent or good)



Local Park Acres per 1,000 Population



22.11

LOCAL ACRES PER 1,000 POP

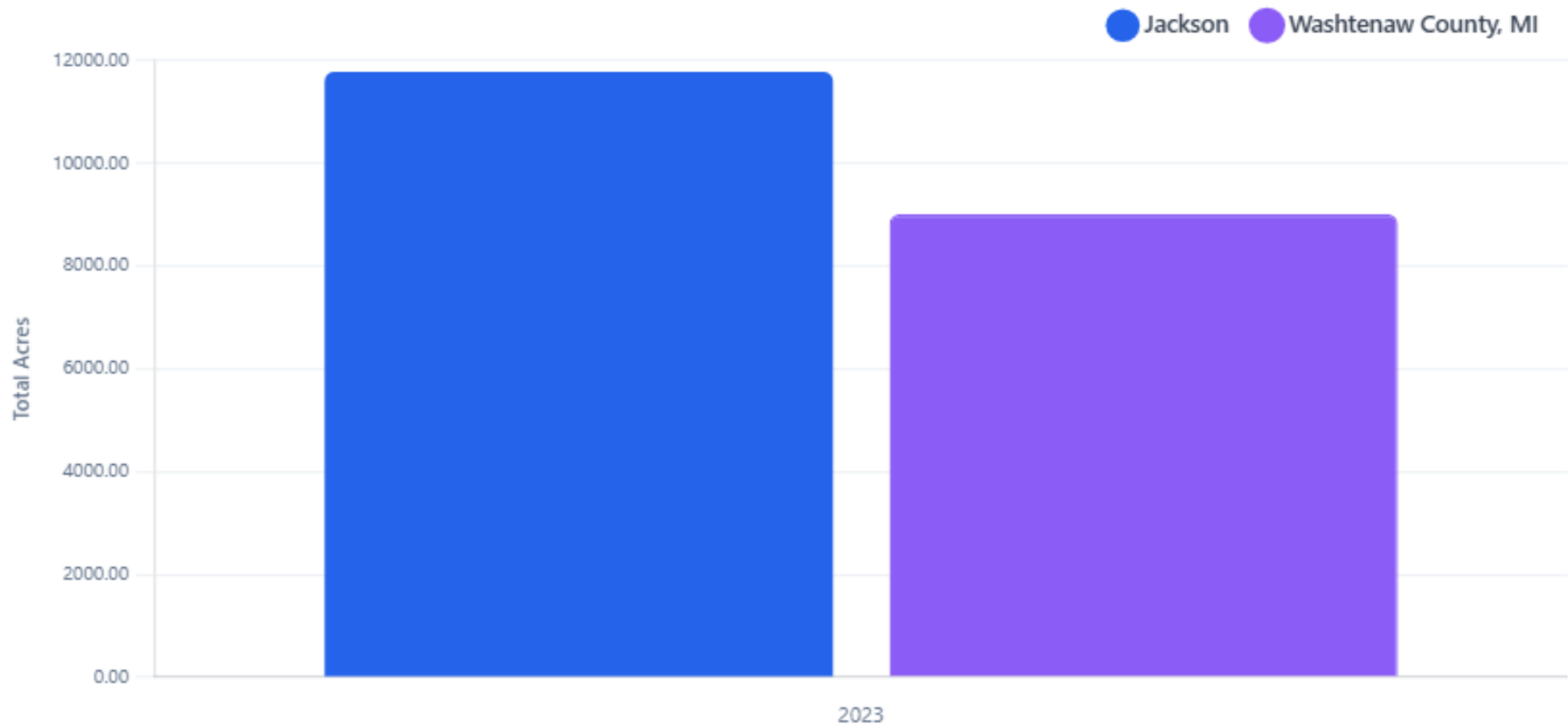
✓ vs 19.81 selection average

29360.20

TOTAL PARK ACRES

⚠ vs 40104.00 Washtenaw County, MI

Recreation-Water Acres

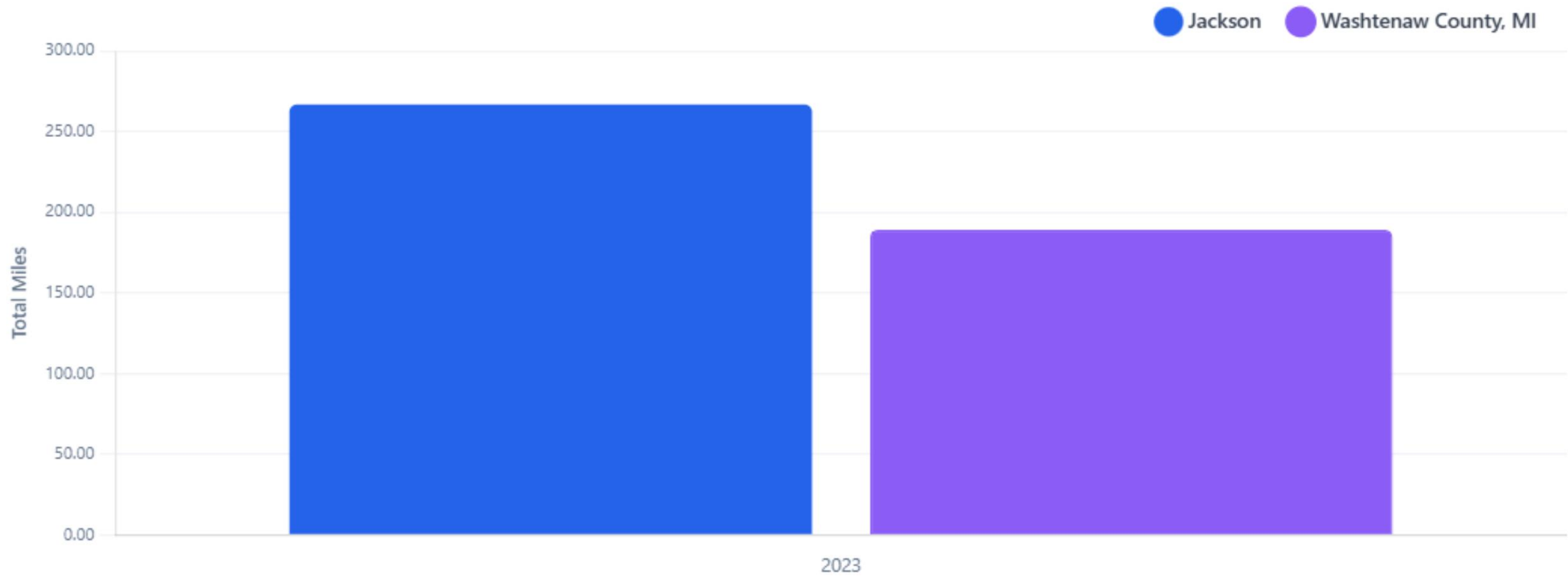


11777.90

REC-WATER ACRES

✓ vs 9010.10 Washtenaw County, MI

Recreation-Water Shoreline Miles



266.80

SHORELINE MILES

✓ vs 189.20 Washtenaw County, MI



Recreation-Water Shoreline Miles



266.80

SHORELINE MILES

✓ vs 107.70 selection average



Movement Project and Ella Sharp MTB Trails



**Annual
Economic
Impact: \$5.25M**



River & Rail Food Hub

3-Year Est.
Economic
Impact:
\$23.6M



Build in Jackson

3-Year Est. Economic Impact: \$7.63 M

BUILD IN JACKSON
Belong to a Community

\$40K TO \$60K
DOWNPAYMENT PROVIDED

The City of Jackson is partnering with community organizations to help young professionals build their future here, starting with homeownership. Through this limited opportunity, selected participants can receive **\$40,000-\$60,000 in downpayment assistance** toward a newly constructed home in Downtown Jackson.

THE JACKSON TALENT PACKAGE
During your first year in the program, you'll receive community perks:

- Choice of Bicycle OR Kayak (\$1,000 Credit)
- 2 NASCAR Race Tickets
- 1-Year YMCA Membership
- 1-Year Ella Sharp Park Golf Course Membership
- Dinner with a State Representative
- Lunch with the Mayor or City Manager
- Experience Jackson Entertainment Package
- And More

ELIGIBILITY

- Income not exceeding 120% Area Median Income (AMI)
- Obtain mortgage approval
- Commit to living in the home
- Be part of Jackson's growing workforce

THIS IS YOUR LAUNCHPAD. APPLY TODAY!

CITY OF JACKSON | ACCELERATE | JACKSON COUNTY Chamber of Commerce | JACKSON | experience jackson | WORKS! SOUTHEAST



Economic Transition Fund: Mapping and Brand Development

\$100K awarded

**\$1M investment helps 10
Michigan communities
navigate industry
transitions, prepare for
future**

September 25, 2026



Outdoor Accelerator Pilot:

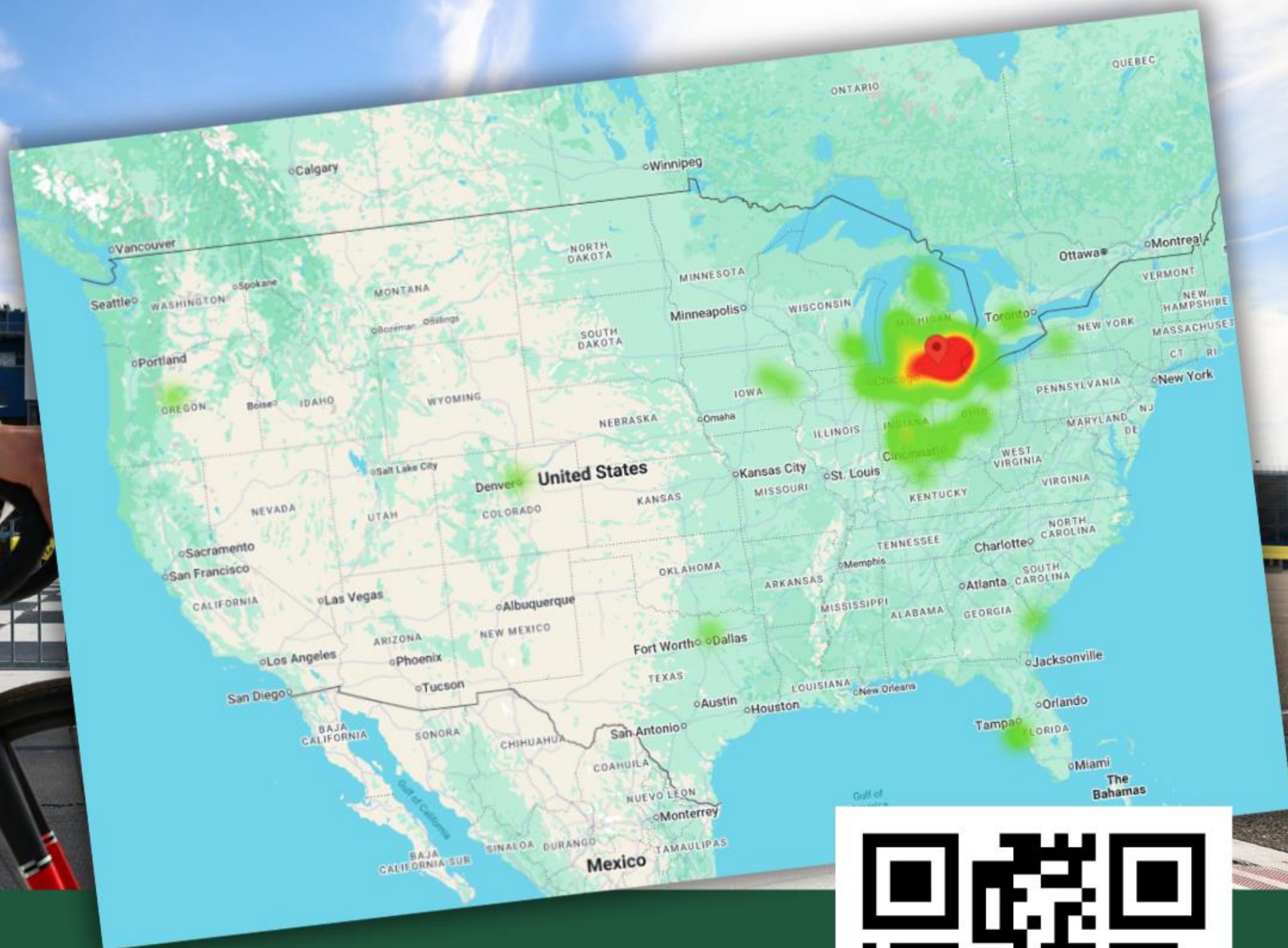
- \$5,000 in seed funding
- 6 weeks of business coaching
- LLC + EIN + bookkeeping setup
 - Licensing, permits + liability insurance
- Branding + marketing support
- Public launch + showcase





IRISH hills
GRAVEL





IRISH hills
GRAVEL





Ryan Tarrant

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