2024 MICHIGAN NON-GAMING

Tribal Economic Impact Study

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"Tribal Nations and Tribal businesses are economic anchors of the community that create and support thousands of good-paying jobs and drive billions of dollars in commerce. I am grateful to see the results of the thorough, multi-year Michigan Non-Gaming Tribal Economic Impact Study prove an economic reality that we see on the ground every day, that Tribal Nations in Michigan have a major financial impact on working families and provide essential infrastructure that supports our State. We are lucky to have Tribal partners that invest this success back into their communities, providing vital services region-wide for our shared citizens. As governor, I will continue competing to bring jobs and investments home to Michigan and figure out ways to help our sovereign Tribal Nations grow and diversify their economies too."

– Governor Gretchen Whitmer

Message from Deidra Mitchell

“My hope is that this report inspires more Tribes to get involved in economic development. Results like this serve as motivation for Tribes to believe that this type of success is possible — no matter where you sit on the economic development spectrum.”

It’s my great honor to once again collaborate with colleagues around the state in presenting the latest edition of the Michigan Non-Gaming Tribal Economic Impact Study.

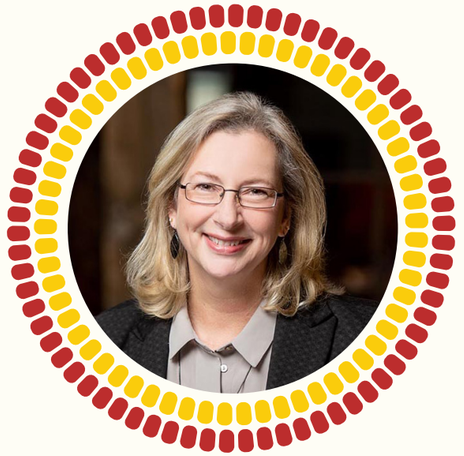
In 2020, nine Michigan Tribes provided data for the first Non-Gaming Tribal Economic Impact Study. The publishing of that report received widespread acclaim and laid the foundation for a quantitative assessment of the scope and impact of Tribal Business Entities (TBEs). Five years later, we’re elated to have the involvement in this study of all 12 federally recognized Tribes in Michigan. That level of participation means we are the first state to present such a comprehensive report on the impact of non-gaming Tribal economic development efforts.

As the previous report showed, Michigan Tribes have a growing commitment to economic sustainability through non-gaming investments. The 2019 data and subsequent report provided an initial look at Tribal economic development to that point – identifying 38 non-gaming business entities, owned and managed by nine federally recognized Tribes in Michigan. Those TBEs were credited with generating an economic impact of more than $288 million, and accounting for 1,847 jobs with an average wage of $45,664.

While those numbers are significant, this year’s report delivers an even more impressive assessment of the growing impact of Tribal non-gaming economic development in Michigan. Study researchers were able to identify 78 TBEs that tallied more than $1.24 billion in economic impact in 2024. These findings are truly remarkable and have already drawn the attention of business and elected leaders at the local, state, and federal level.

Producing a report such as this is a time-consuming and expensive task that would not be possible without the financial support of the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC). Beyond that, I would like to acknowledge several colleagues who were instrumental in the development of the study, starting with Waséyabek’s VP of Strategic Engagement, Jessi Goldner, and her team, Heather TePastte and Dyami Harris, for their efforts in securing the grant, managing the participation of the Tribes and various subcontractors, securing additional contributors, and procuring and formatting the content in the report. All three are Citizens of the Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the Potawatomi (NHBP) Tribe. Additionally, I’d like to recognize Eric S. Trevan, Ph.D., President & CEO of aLocal.ai, an AI market and economic analytics company. Eric’s company was subcontracted by Waséyabek to gather and analyze data in the study. He is a Citizen of the Match-E-Be-Nash-She-Wish Band of Pottawatomi Indians (Gun Lake Tribe). It’s a testament to Tribal business excellence that this impactful report was largely the result of the efforts of Tribal Citizens.

As you review the findings in this report, it’s important to remember that economic development is an infinite journey. While we have seen tremendous growth, it requires wisdom, perseverance, and patience. Tribal leaders understand this, and their Citizens are fortunate to have council members who are committed to seeking new resources that will provide economic sustainability and sovereignty for Indigenous peoples. This report highlights the growing Tribal business landscape and serves as a beacon for future economic prosperity for Tribes throughout Michigan.



Deidra Mitchell

PRESIDENT & CEO, WASÉYABEK

Economic Impact on Michigan in 2024

In 2024, Michigan's Tribal Business Entities (TBEs) demonstrated significant growth and economic impact on Michigan's economy. In summary, 78 non-gaming business entities, owned and managed by all 12 federally recognized Tribes in Michigan, participated in the study. The total economic impact reached $1.24 billion in 2024.

On average, these businesses have been in operation for **15.3 years**, with an average revenue of **$10.32 million per entity**. In terms of employment, Michigan Tribes collectively employed **2,819 workers (direct)**, with an average wage (direct) of **$59,971**.

The Tribes also reported total business assets of **$1.49 billion** and a combined net worth of approximately **$1.25 billion**. These figures reflect not only financial strength, but the disciplined governance and long-term planning that have enabled Michigan Tribes to build stable and diversified business portfolios.

As documented in the *State of Native Nations*, this pattern of growth and sustainability is no coincidence: "The story today of economic development in Indian Country is one of rapidly growing economies among both gaming and nongaming tribes. For the first time in a century, the United States seems to have found a policy that works, and Indian nations are taking hold of self-determination and making the most of it" (The Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development et al, 2008, p. 112).

The results of this study echo this statement. Michigan's Tribal Nations are not only building wealth, but they are also strengthening communities, expanding opportunities, and demonstrating the economic value of sovereignty in practice.

$1.24B

Total Economic Impact

$135.90M

Total Tax Revenue

$1.49B

Total Business Assets

$805.00M

Total Annual Gross Revenue

"As we look ahead, we see the Tribal business development landscape growing in importance in our state. By leveraging their cultural strengths and strategic assets, they can diversify their economies, create jobs, and establish new sustainable revenue streams beyond gaming. The MEDC welcomes the opportunity to work with the Tribal communities to increase their economic diversification and, in turn, broaden the overall economic prosperity in Michigan."

Tom Durkee

DIRECTOR OF TRIBAL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT, MICHIGAN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Purpose of the Study

The 2024 Michigan Non-Gaming Tribal Economic Impact Study aims to assess the economic impact of Tribal Business Entities in Michigan.

The 2024 Michigan Non-Gaming Tribal Economic Impact Study aims to assess the economic impact of TBEs in Michigan. An earlier version of this study, conducted in late 2019 before the COVID-19 pandemic, involved nine Tribes and was widely recognized as a powerful first step in establishing the impact of Native American non-gaming economic diversification efforts in Michigan.

This report builds upon the research from 2019, offering a more detailed and updated analysis of the economic impact of Michigan TBEs over the last five years. The 2024 study includes the full participation of all 12 federally recognized Michigan Tribes and highlights how these nations are exercising their sovereignty to create opportunities resulting in financial benefits, growth, and sustainability. Both studies were originated and authored by Waséyabek.

The 2024 study was funded by the MEDC through a grant from its Tribal Business Development Program. Data was collected and analyzed by aLocal.ai, a Native-owned business offering net economic impact analysis through its market and economic analytics software. To understand long-term trends, the 2019 dataset was adjusted to be comparable with the 2024 dataset. Since only nine Tribes participated in 2019, the data was normalized to represent all 12 federally recognized Tribes. Additionally, all 2019 financial figures were adjusted to 2024 USD using the Personal Consumption Expenditures (PCE) Index, accounting for a cumulative inflation rate of 17.6% from January 2020 to December 2024 (U.S. Department of Commerce, 2025). This adjustment allows for meaningful year-over-year comparisons with 2024 data.

"Participating in the Economic Impact Study allows us to quantify the value our family of companies brings not just to the Pokagon Band, but to the regional economy and broader Indian Country. It's an opportunity to share our story through measurable outcomes, strengthen our voice in policy conversations, and build a foundation for sustainable growth and strategic partnerships."

Julio Martinez
CEO, MNO-BMADSEN

Participants

Indicates Participating Tribe in 2024 *Indicates Participating Tribe in 2019 and 2024*

Bay Mills Indian Community

Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians

Hannahville Indian Community, Band of Potawatomi

Keweenaw Bay Indian Community

Lac Vieux Desert Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians

Little River Band of Ottawa Indians

Little Traverse Bay Band of Odawa Indians

Match-E-Be-Nash-She-Wish Band of Pottawatomi Indians (Gun Lake Tribe)

Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the Potawatomi

Pokagon Band of Potawatomi

Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe

Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians

Federally Recognized Tribes in Michigan

Historical Context and Background

Since the late 1970s, Tribal Nations across the United States have actively sought to diversify their economies to reduce reliance on gaming revenue. In Michigan, this effort has resulted in a wide range of successful business ventures across sectors such as manufacturing, hospitality, construction, federal contracting, natural resource management, logistics, and information technology.

The 2024 Michigan Non-Gaming Tribal Economic Impact Study measures and highlights the evolution and outcomes of these diversification strategies among Michigan's 12 sovereign Tribal Nations. These ventures not only generate essential revenue for Tribal governments but also create jobs, drive local and regional economic activity, and support broader community development for both Tribal and non-Tribal populations.

This study provides Tribal leaders with data-driven insights to inform governance, pursue equitable policy reforms, and strengthen intergovernmental and interorganizational collaborations. It also serves to showcase success stories, identify challenges, and offer recommendations for further economic perseverance and self-determination.

While each Tribe's approach to diversification reflects unique resources – whether capital, natural, or human – and is shaped by cultural priorities and governance structures, a shared pattern emerges: Tribal economic investments lead to tangible benefits well beyond reservation boundaries.

History of Tribes in Michigan and the Council of the Three Fires

Michigan is home to 12 federally recognized Tribal Nations, each a sovereign government engaged in a government-to-government relationship with the State of Michigan. These Tribes make up The Council of the Three Fires, an alliance among the **Ojibwe (Chippewa), Odawa (Ottawa), and Bodéwadmi (Potawatomi/Pottawatomi)** peoples, together referred to as Anishinabek (the original people).

Formed as early as 796 CE, through the Midewiwin scrolls, the Council of the Three Fires was established in response to external threats and to foster unity among the Ojibwe, Odawa, and Bodéwadmi Nations. Each member of the Council holds distinct and respected roles within their alliance that contributes to the self-sufficiency of the Anishinabek.

Ojibwe (Chippewa)

Keepers of the Faith

As the eldest brother of the Council, the Ojibwe were entrusted with the responsibility of preserving sacred and spiritual knowledge, traditional medicines, and healing practices. The Ojibwe are guardians of sacred scrolls, often inscribed on birchbark which contain teachings, laws, and ceremonial knowledge. Their role as spiritual and medicinal stewards is essential to the cultural and ceremonial balance within the Three Fires.

Odawa (Ottawa)

Keepers of the Trade

As the second eldest brother of the Council, the Odawa served as the traders and diplomats of the Three Fires, specializing in hunting, bartering, and commerce. They were responsible for supplying food, goods, and resources within their territory. The Odawa's role as the Keepers of the Trade was essential to economic strength and political cohesion of the Three Fires.

Bodéwadmi (Potawatomi/Pottawatomi)

Keepers of the Fire

As the youngest brother of the Council, the Bodéwadmi were given the sacred duty of tending to and protecting sacred ceremonial fires, a powerful symbol of life, unity, and spiritual continuity for the Anishinabek. As Keepers of the Fire, the Bodéwadmi continues to uphold a connection both to the Creator and their fellow Nations.

Together, these roles reflect a spiritually and socially interdependent relationship that maintains balance and unity among the Three Fires Nations. Though their languages and customs vary, these groups share foundational cultural and spiritual ties.

Today, the 12 federally recognized Tribes of Michigan continue to build on these legacies while exercising their sovereignty in new ways, especially through economic development and advocacy. A significant milestone came on October 31, 2019, when Governor Gretchen Whitmer signed Executive Directive 2019 - 17 (2019), requiring each state department and agency to formalize Tribal consultation policies, reinforcing the 2002 Government-to-Government Accord.

Why Economic Diversification

The drive for economic diversification among Michigan's Tribal Nations is rooted in both historical necessity and a vision for long-term sovereignty, sustainability, and prosperity. From the impacts of colonization to the vulnerabilities exposed during modern crises, Tribal governments have consistently demonstrated perseverance and strategic foresight in securing the future of their people.

"The Economic Impact Study highlights the significant contributions of non-gaming TBEs to Michigan's economy. The study provides a comprehensive assessment of how these businesses enhance economic resilience, reduce dependency, and contribute to long-term community well-being. The findings underscore the importance of TBEs in creating new jobs, increasing household income, and strengthening local supply chains. This report is a testament to the vital role that Tribal enterprises play in driving economic growth and sustainable economic development across the state."

Brigitte LaPointe-Dunham

TRIBAL CEO, KEWEENAW BAY INDIAN COMMUNITY

Perseverance and Economic Urgency

Michigan's Tribes, like Indigenous Nations across the continent, have endured generations of forced relocation, broken treaties, systemic underfunding, and economic marginalization. Despite these challenges, they have persisted – building institutions, asserting sovereignty, and adapting to changing economic landscapes.

While the passage of the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (IGRA) of 1988 created a transformative revenue stream, gaming alone cannot sustain the growing needs of Tribal communities. Tribal leaders have recognized that ensuring generational well-being and greater self-sufficiency means expanding beyond the limitations of gaming-based economies.

The COVID-19 pandemic and recent federal budget uncertainties have further highlighted the need to develop robust, diversified revenue sources not subject to external volatility.

"In these times of uncertainty, it's more important than ever to diversify outside of gaming. The economy fluctuates, the political environment fluctuates, but economic diversification serves as the best defense against inevitable change."

Dorie Rios

TRIBAL COUNCIL CHAIRPERSON, NOTTAWASEPPI HURON BAND OF THE POTAWATOMI

Methodology

Data Collection

The project management team at Waséyabek worked diligently on outreach to ensure all 12 federally recognized Tribes in Michigan were included in this report, highlighting the hard work and dedication of the Tribes in completing surveys and submitting their data. Participants included Tribal and economic development company (EDC) leaders representing each Tribe. The research team at aLocal.ai conducted a double-blind survey via an online platform that was designed to capture both quantitative and qualitative data related to the economic impact of non-gaming TBEs. The questions were structured to gather information on revenue generation, job creation, broader economic effects, and sociocultural impacts. The survey's introduction included an Informed Consent Statement and took approximately 15 minutes to complete. Each leader filled out a unique survey for each TBE.

Ethical Considerations

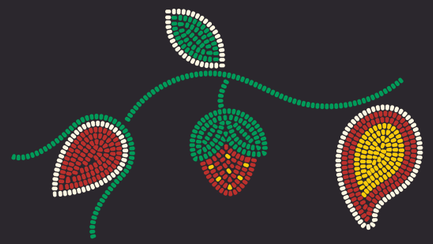
The survey design was written to adhere to ethical principles rooted in Native American culture, including the Seven Grandfather Teachings of Love, Respect, Bravery, Truth, Honesty, Humility, and Wisdom. These moral guidelines and cultural foundations are central to Anishinaabe culture and a way of life that teaches how to treat others, the Earth, and nature. The study emphasized the importance of beneficence (do no harm), respect for anonymity, confidentiality, and data sovereignty. These ethical considerations ensure that the research aligned with the community's values and interests while negating potential harm to Tribal communities. The outputs in this report are summarized to protect the confidentiality of each TBE.

Analysis Techniques

The Economic Impact Study leverages advanced analytics to ensure an accurate and comprehensive analysis. One of the primary tools used is Net Economic Impact (NetEI) and represents the true economic contribution of TBEs after accounting for offsetting factors such as operational expenses, subsidies, and depreciation of capital assets. While gross impact measures total revenue or economic activity generated, NetEI focuses on what remains a net benefit to the economy, including direct, indirect, and induced effects. This metric is especially important in Tribal economic studies, as it isolates the additional value created by TBEs that would not exist without their presence, such as new jobs, increased household income, and strengthened local supply chains. By focusing on net outcomes, NetEI provides a more accurate assessment of how Tribal enterprises enhance economic resilience, reduce dependency, and contribute to long-term community well-being.

"Our mission has always been bigger than business — we aim to create lasting opportunities for both Native and non-Native families. Through our non-gaming enterprises, we've generated meaningful careers with competitive wages and strong benefits-opportunities that simply wouldn't exist without the strength and leadership of the Grand Traverse Band."

Johnny Barrientoz
CEO, GRAND TRAVERSE RESORT & CASINOS



“Our Tribe’s investment in non-gaming enterprises is more than just smart business, it’s a commitment to future generations. These businesses create real jobs, support our youth, and allow us to reinvest in our people on our terms. The impact goes far beyond the balance sheet, it’s about sovereignty, sustainability, and self-determination.”

Ben Brenner, J.D.

TRIBAL COUNCIL SECRETARY, MATCH-E-BE-NASH-SHE-WISH BAND OF POTTAWATOMI (GUN LAKE TRIBE)

Input/Output (I/O) Model

The Input/Output (I/O) Model is a key analysis technique used to understand the interdependence between different economic sectors. By examining the flow of goods and services, it provides insights into how changes in one sector affect others. This model is crucial for identifying significant economic activities and understanding the broader implications of Tribal enterprises.

The analysis includes three types of impact: direct (immediate economic activity), indirect (secondary activity from local suppliers), and induced (household spending by employees). These impacts correspond to initial, secondary, and tertiary effects in the economy. The modified I/O model offers dynamic analytics based on these variables, providing a localized view of how non-gaming Tribal businesses contribute to Michigan’s economy and establishing a baseline for their statewide role.

To measure the economic growth of TBEs from 2019 to 2024, this study uses Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR). CAGR represents the smoothed annual rate of growth over a multi-year period, providing a more accurate and reliable measure of sustained performance than a simple overall growth percentage. While total growth tells us how much TBE total annual gross revenue increased from 2019 to 2024 (a 125% increase from $358.19 million to $805.00 million), it does not capture how that growth occurred year-to-year. CAGR, on the other hand, calculates the average annual rate of growth as if it happened steadily each year, offering a clearer, more accurate picture of sustained performance.

For example, a TBE could show the same total growth as another but with erratic year-to-year swings. CAGR smooths those fluctuations to provide a more reliable basis for trend analysis, comparison, and planning, making it the preferred metric for evaluating long-term economic impact and the trajectory of Tribal diversification efforts.

Inflation Adjustment

The financial figures originally published in 2019 were adjusted to reflect 2024 dollars for consistency. They were adjusted using the Personal Consumption Expenditures (PCE) Price Index published by the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA), which tracks changes in household spending in goods and services in urban and rural households. Compared to the more commonly used Consumer Price Index (CPI), which tracks a fixed basket of goods and services in urban areas, the PCE index is more representative of the survey respondents. Furthermore, the PCE index may more accurately represent actual spending behavior. For instance, as prices increase, consumers are likely to opt for more economical alternatives. The PCE incorporates this trend while the CPI does not. Between January 2020 and December 2024 (inclusive), the total inflation report by BEA’s PCE was 17.6%, which is applied to all 2019 financial figures and estimates. The numbers reflect actual economic changes and exclude the effects of price inflation. According to the U.S. Department of Commerce (2025), “The PCE price index is known for capturing inflation (or deflation) across a wide range of consumer expenses and for reflecting changes in consumer behavior. […] The PCE price index is used primarily for macroeconomic analysis and forecasting.”

“Tribal non-gaming economic investment is a powerful component in our state’s economic prosperity. As more organizations come to understand the strength and sophistication of Tribal economic ventures, there’s a real opportunity to build a more inclusive and resilient economy for all of Michigan.”

Rick Baker

PRESIDENT AND CEO, GRAND RAPIDS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Key Findings

For the 2024 study, all 12 federally recognized Michigan Tribes were represented. This coincided with a significant increase in TBEs – 78 in total, with an average of 15.3 years of operation. The average revenue of TBEs soared to $10.32 million, reflecting the dynamic growth and success of these businesses. This surge in economic impact is not only due to the increase in the number of TBEs, but also the diversification that has taken place across industries. The 2024 data highlights major successes, including higher wages and more stable, long-term economic growth. These businesses are reinvesting in their communities, creating lasting value for both Tribal Nations and the State of Michigan.

12

Participating Federally Recognized Tribes

78

Total TBEs

15.3 Years

of Operation on Average

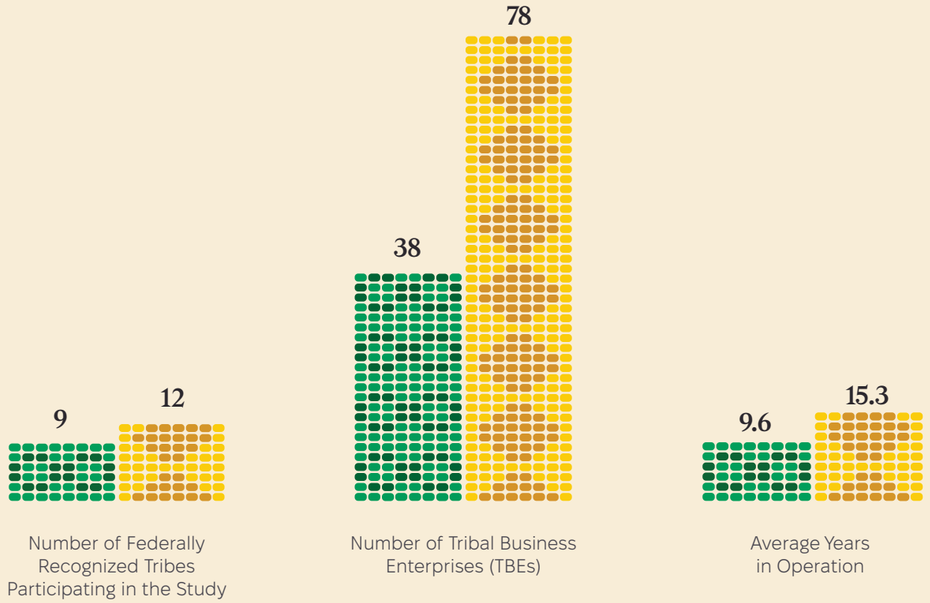
4,179 Jobs

Total Labor Impact (NetEI)

$66,977

Average Wage (NetEI, Per Full-Time Employee)

Growth in Participation and Business Stability



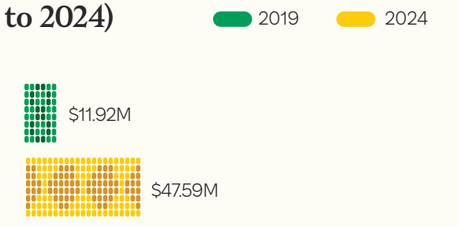
Economic Impact

Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) is the most accurate way to calculate the rate of return that an investment would need to have every year to grow from its beginning balance to its ending balance, over a given time interval (5 years for this study).

Net Economic Impact	2019 Actual	2019 Normalized (*USD Inflation Adjusted*)	2024 Actual	CAGR 2019/2024
Direct	$199.92M	$313.47M	$805.77M	**20.8%**
Indirect	$58.43M	$91.62M	$238.07M	**21.0%**
Induced	$30.41M	$47.68M	$198.99M	**33.1%**
Total Economic Impact	$288.76M	$452.77M	$1.24B	**22.4%**

*2019 data is normalized and USD amounts adjusted for inflation. 2019 USD shown in 2024 buying power.
Source: aLocal.ai, 2025

Tax Impacts (2019 to 2024)



*2019 data is normalized and USD amounts adjusted for inflation. 2019 USD shown in 2024 buying power. County information will not be included. Source: aLocal.ai, 2025

Key Business Metrics

Total Assets
2019: $538,679,242
2024: $1,491,375,202

22.6% CAGR

Net Worth
*as reported by Tribes
2019: $419,961,289
2024: $1,253,254,004

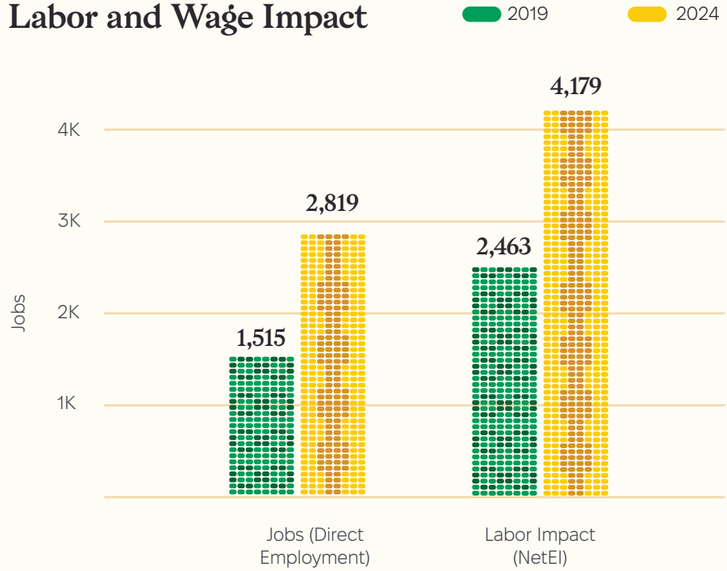
24.4% CAGR

Gross Revenue
2019: $358,189,776
2024: $805,000,972

17.6% CAGR

*2019 data is normalized and USD amounts adjusted for inflation. 2019 USD shown in 2024 buying power.
Source: aLocal..ai, 2025

Labor and Wage Impact



Total Labor Impact and Total Wage Impact are measured similarly to the net economic impact. This means the employment and income generated by TBEs extend beyond the jobs and wages within the businesses themselves. These figures capture both the direct jobs and wages provided by the TBEs as well as the additional jobs and wages supported throughout the broader economy – such as those created through supply chain purchases, employee spending, and other ripple effects associated with launching or maintaining a TBE.

Total Wages
2019: $77.46M
2024: $169.06M

Total Wage Impact (NetEI)
2019: $132.25M
2024: $279.90M

Avg. Wage Impact (NetEI)
2019: $53,701
2024: $66,977

*2019 data is normalized and USD amounts adjusted for inflation. 2019 USD shown in 2024 buying power. Source: aLocal..ai, 2025

Industry Diversification

Since 2019, the number of industries represented has increased from

11 → 16

This diversification reflects a broader distribution of business activity and reinforces the role TBEs play in driving Michigan's economic momentum.

2019 & 2024

- Retail Trade
- Management of Companies & Enterprises
- Professional, Scientific, & Technical Services
- Real Estate, and Rental & Leasing
- Accommodation & Food Service
- Utilities
- Construction
- Administrative & Support/Waste Management/Remediation
- Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation
- Manufacturing
- Finance & Insurance

2024 Only

- Other Services (Except Public Administration)
- Transportation & Warehousing
- Health Care & Social Assistance
- Information
- Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, & Hunting

> “The great thing that non-gaming enterprises do for Tribes is provide revenue streams that are truly discretionary and unrestricted. That’s really important because it allows Tribal leaders to practice good governance by setting their own priorities and then acting upon those priorities without restriction.”
>
> **Eric Henson**
> RESEARCH FELLOW AND ADJUNCT LECTURER, HARVARD UNIVERSITY
> *CITIZEN OF THE CHICKASAW NATION*

Regional and Local Impact

To better understand the locations and operations of TBEs across Michigan, data was categorized by the state’s 10 Prosperity Zones. Although not all zones currently have active TBE participation, this chart highlights the zones where relevant data was collected. Notably, Zones 4 and 1 have the highest concentrations of TBEs. This regional overview provides valuable insights into where Tribal economic activities are most concentrated, which can help guide future efforts to support growth, collaboration, and investment in Tribal economies throughout Michigan. The rise in economic impact seems to align with both an increase in the total number of businesses and greater industry diversification.

Economic diversification among Tribal Nations reflects a deliberate act of Seven Generations Thinking. As Jorgenson (2007) explains, **“For the Native nations that we are familiar with, the goal of economic development is not untold riches. For their leaders and citizens, the goal is self-determination: the freedom to choose for themselves where to live and what community to be a part of … Economic Development, then, is the process by which a community or nation improves its economic ability to sustain its citizens, achieve its sociocultural goals, and support its sovereignty and government processes”** (p. 36).

In the context of this Economic Impact Study, Seven Generation Thinking offers a powerful lens through which to evaluate the long-term value of Tribal economic development. It underscores how Tribal Nations are not only building financial strength for the present generation but are also investing in cultural preservation, environmental stewardship, and economic sovereignty of future generations. By applying this principle, Tribal leaders ensure that their strategies for business diversification and economic growth align with their sacred responsibility to both ancestors and descendants.

Prosperity Region Metrics, 2024

Region 1
NetEI · $470.31M
Total Wages · $38.83M
Jobs · 596

Region 2
NetEI · $75.91M
Total Wages · $3.23M
Jobs · 26

Region 3
NetEI · $57.47M
Total Wages · $6.03M
Jobs · 188

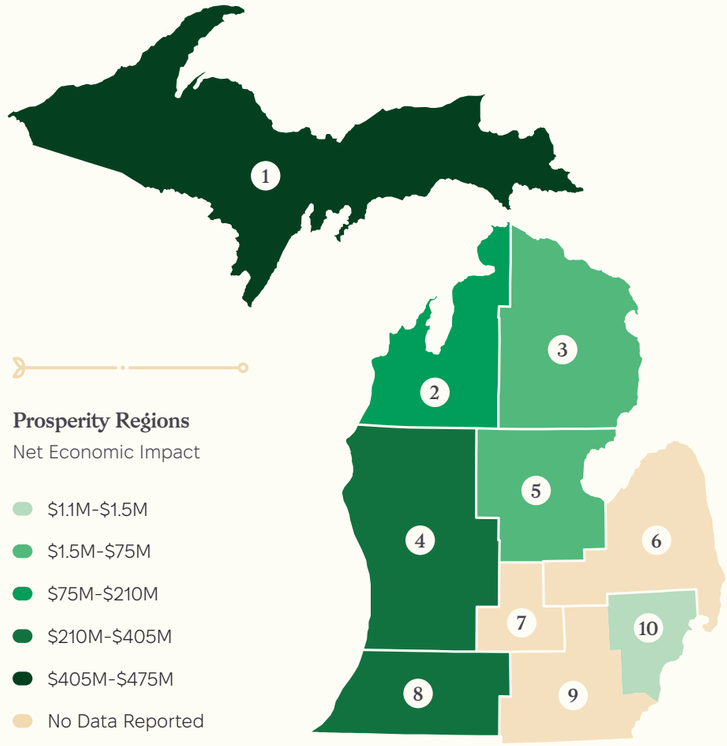
Region 4
NetEI · $373.25M
Total Wages · $72.6M
Jobs · 1,102

Region 5
NetEI · $58.46M
Total Wages · $6.89M
Jobs · 227

Region 8
NetEI · $206.26M
Total Wages · $41.45M
Jobs · 680

Region 10
NetEI · $1.16M
Total Wages · 0
Jobs · 0

Map of Michigan Prosperity Regions



Why It Matters

Overview

The 2024 Michigan Non-Gaming Tribal Economic Impact Study confirms that Michigan's 12 sovereign Tribal Nations play a vital and expanding role in the state's economy. In 2024, 78 non-gaming TBEs contributed a total economic impact of $1.24 billion. The findings in this report reflect a strategic shift toward diversified, self-determined economic development, underscoring the Tribes' commitment to long-term sustainability and prosperity beyond gaming.

Collectively, these TBEs supported well over 4,000 jobs and contributed more than $279 million in wages and benefits, demonstrating the significant role that Tribes play as employers, both for Tribal Citizens and across surrounding communities. Through reinvestments in infrastructure, workforce development, and entrepreneurship, Tribes are actively reducing dependency on federal and gaming revenues to build resilient, sovereign economies.

Equally important, the impact of TBEs extends beyond economic indicators and into the social and cultural fabric of Tribal and local communities. Additional data in this study emphasized the ways TBEs enrich community life.

Eight Tribes noted their TBEs are involved in local events and initiatives, while six cited service on community boards and committees. Sponsorships, internships, and leadership development programs were also commonly mentioned, reflecting a shared commitment to cultural preservation, youth empowerment, and future-facing leadership.

Ultimately, this study affirms that Tribal economic development is not merely about profit; it is a powerful expression of sovereignty, self-determination, and Nation-building. As Tribes continue to grow and diversify their business portfolios, they are not only reshaping local and state economies; they are reclaiming their futures.

"Economic development brings valuable resources and partnerships to both tribal and local communities. As the national economy shifts, tribes continue to adapt and move forward. We're proud to have contributed to the Non-Gaming Tribal Economic Impact Study along with all the other Michigan Tribes — strengthening Indian Country through collaboration."

Luke Sprague

TRIBAL COUNCIL SUB-CHIEF,
SAGINAW CHIPPEWA INDIAN TRIBE

Appendix

Project Management Team

Deidra Mitchell

President & Chief Executive Officer, Waséyabek

PROJECT ROLE
Project Owner

Jessi Goldner

Vice President of Strategic Engagement, Waséyabek

PROJECT ROLE
Project Lead

TRIBAL AFFILIATION
Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the Potawatomi

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Glossary of Key Terms

Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR)

A metric that represents the consistent annual growth rate of an investment or revenue over a specified period of time.

Consumer Price Index (CPI)

A weighted average of prices that is representative of aggregate U.S. consumer spending. It is used as a metric for inflation and deflation.

Direct, Indirect, and Induced Effects

Direct: Immediate economic effects from Tribal enterprise operations (e.g., employment, revenues).

Indirect: Secondary effects resulting from supplier and contractor activity.

Induced: Consumer spending by employees and households as a result of direct and indirect activity.

Gross Revenue

The total income generated by a business or enterprise before deducting expenses, taxes, or other costs.

Inflation Adjustment

The process of converting nominal financial figures into real dollars to account for changes in purchasing power over time, often using indices like the PCE or CPI.

Input-Output (I/O) Model

An economic model used to analyze the ripple effects of spending across sectors in a regional economy, capturing direct, indirect, and induced impacts.

Intergovernmental Agreements (IGAs)

Formal arrangements between Tribal Nations and federal, state, or local governments to coordinate services, jurisdiction, or infrastructure for mutual benefit.

Michigan's Prosperity Zones (Prosperity Regions)

Geographic areas designated by the State of Michigan to improve coordination and delivery of state services and economic development efforts. The state is divided into 10 Prosperity Regions, each encompassing multiple counties. Each Prosperity Zone serves as a framework for aligning planning, investment, and resources around regional needs and opportunities, including housing, transportation, workforce development, and business growth (Michigan State Housing Development Authority [MSHDA], n.d.).

Multiplier Effect

The compounded economic benefit that occurs when initial spending (e.g., from a Tribal enterprise) circulates through the economy, creating additional rounds of economic activity.

Net Income / Net Revenue

The amount remaining after all business expenses, taxes, and costs are deducted from gross revenue – often referred to as profit.

Personal Consumption Expenditures (PCE)

A key U.S. economic indicator measuring consumer spending on goods and services. It is commonly used to track inflation and adjust financial data over time.

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