



### MPPS Policy Brief

## Michigan local government officials' views on expanding energy infrastructure in their jurisdictions

By Natalie Fitzpatrick and Debra Horner

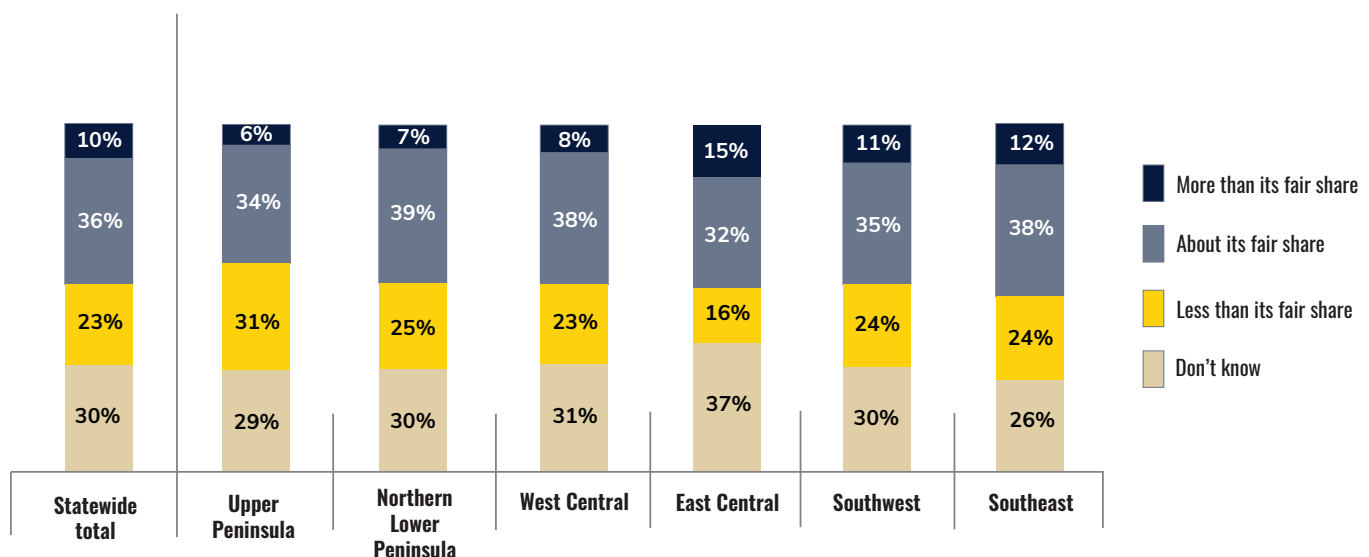
In fall 2023, the Michigan Public Policy Survey (MPPS) asked local officials statewide about a range of topics regarding local energy issues. The survey asked local leaders to assess the amount of energy infrastructure currently hosted in their jurisdiction, as well as their support for or opposition to building new energy infrastructure locally.

Leaders from 10% of Michigan local governments say their community already hosts more than its fair share of energy infrastructure, while 36% say it has about its fair share, and 23% believe their jurisdiction hosts less than its fair share (see *Figure 1a*). Meanwhile, almost one third (30%) statewide are unsure whether they are hosting their fair share or not.

There are significant regional differences in these findings. For example, in the East Central Lower Peninsula, where many wind farms have been built, 15% of jurisdictions say they have more than their fair share of energy infrastructure, while 16% say they have less. In contrast, almost one-third (31%) of jurisdictions in the Upper Peninsula feel they host less than their fair share, while only 6% of say they host more.

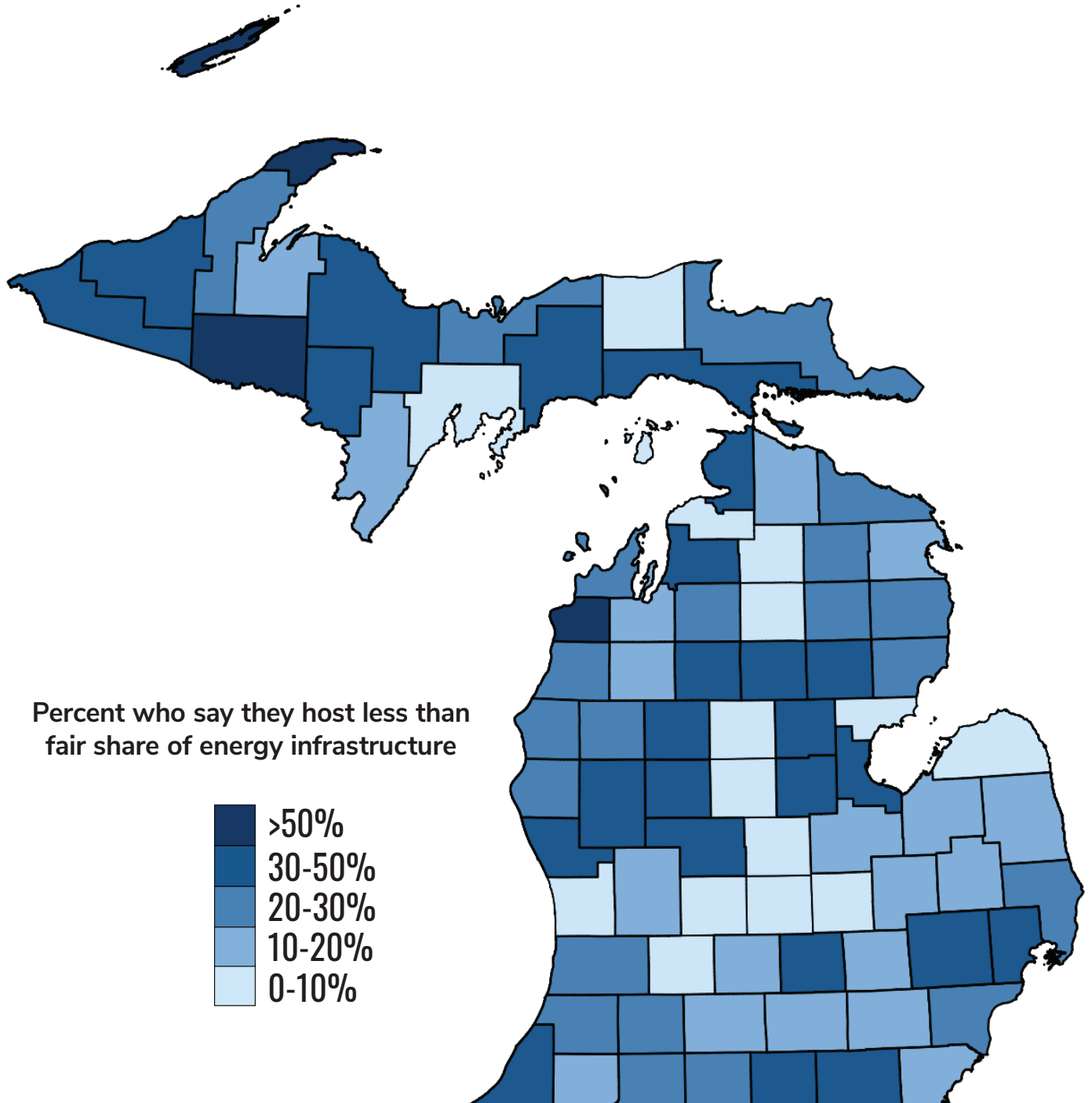
Figure 1a

Local officials' assessments of whether their jurisdiction currently hosts more or less than its fair share of statewide energy infrastructure, by region



The map in *Figure 1b* shows the percent of jurisdictions in each county who say they host less than their fair share of energy infrastructure. Darker blue shades indicate counties where a higher proportion of jurisdictions say they have less than their fair share, while light blue indicates counties with a lower percentage. Counties shaded in darker blue indicate areas where there may be more relative willingness among local officials to develop additional energy infrastructure.

**Figure 1b**  
Percentage of jurisdictions that say they host less than their fair share of statewide energy infrastructure, by county



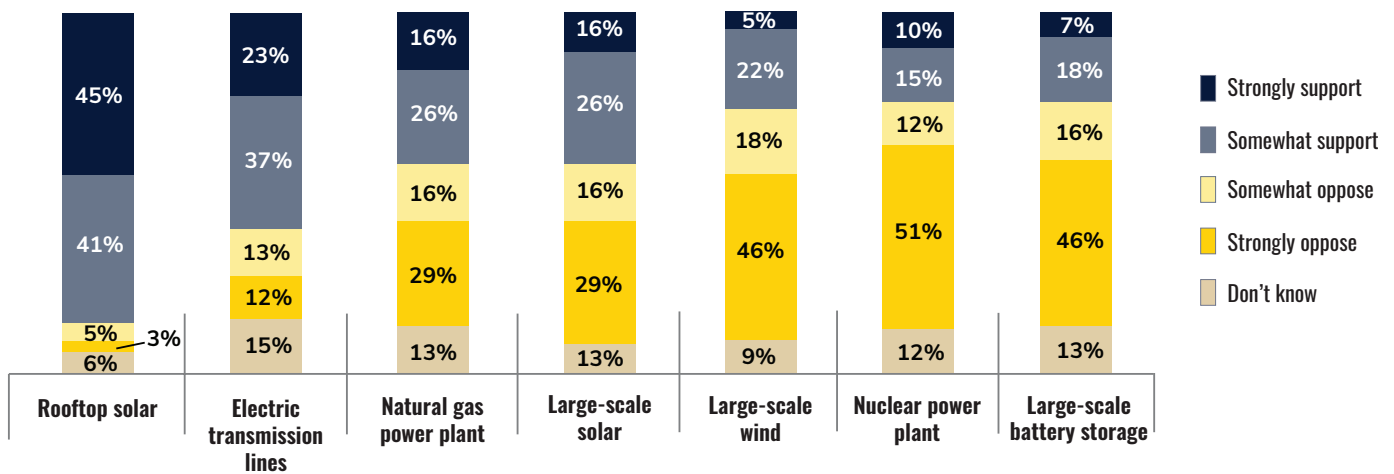
## Support for developing new energy infrastructure varies by energy type and by region

Regarding types of energy infrastructure, Michigan local leaders overwhelmingly support adding rooftop solar (45% strongly support, 41% somewhat), as seen in *Figure 2a*. A majority (60%) also supports new electric transmission lines.

Although there is more opposition than support for all other types, nonetheless more than 40% still support new natural gas power plants (42%) and large-scale solar installations (42%).

Support is significantly lower for new large-scale wind (27%), nuclear power (25%), and large-scale battery storage (25%) infrastructure. In particular, a majority of officials across the state (51%) *strongly* oppose the development of nuclear power in their communities.

**Figure 2a**  
Local officials' support for or opposition to new development of energy infrastructure in their jurisdiction



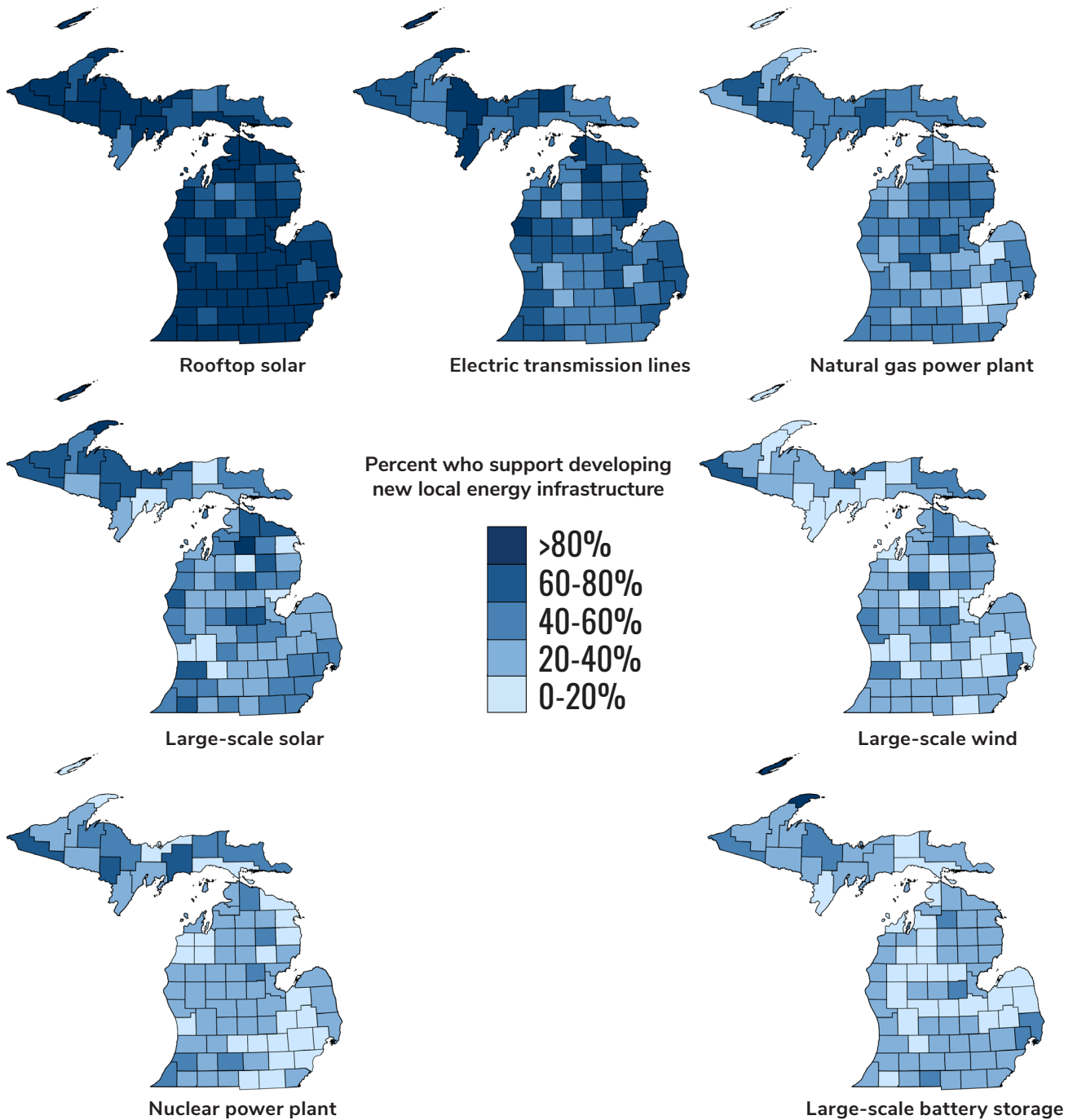
Again, there is significant regional variation. For example, support for the development of most infrastructure types is highest in the Upper Peninsula, where 68% support new electric transmission lines, 50% support new large-scale solar, 51% support new natural gas power plants, 38% support nuclear power, and 32% support large scale battery storage facilities. However, U.P. support is below the statewide average for rooftop solar (83%) and large-scale wind (25%). In contrast, in Southeast Michigan, support for rooftop solar (89%) and large-scale battery storage (30%) are above the statewide average, while support for other types of infrastructure fall below the statewide average.

Among jurisdictions that say they currently host *less* than their fair share of the statewide energy infrastructure, there is significantly higher support for adding new large-scale and rooftop solar, large-scale wind, battery storage, and transmission line infrastructure. However, in these same communities there is lower support for developing new nuclear power plants (23%) or natural gas plants (45%) locally compared with jurisdictions that say they host *more* than their fair share already (33% for developing nuclear power plants and 52% natural gas).

See *Appendix A* for breakdowns by jurisdiction type, size, region, rural-urban self-identification, and assessments of hosting fair share of infrastructure.

Figure 2b below shows the percent of jurisdictions in each county that support new development within their boundaries of the seven types of energy infrastructure. The top left map shows support for rooftop solar, which exceeds 80% in nearly every county. Support for transmission lines is similarly widespread. For the other types of infrastructure, there is wider variation by county, with some pockets of higher support but many places with much lower levels of support. Darker shades indicate greater levels of support.

**Figure 2b**  
Percent of jurisdictions that support the development of new energy infrastructure in their jurisdiction, by county



## Appendix A

Local officials' support (% "somewhat" + "strongly" support) for new development of energy infrastructure in their jurisdiction, by population size

	Large scale solar	Rooftop solar	Large-scale wind	Nuclear power plant	Natural gas power plant	Large-scale battery storage	Electric transmission lines
Statewide	42%	86%	27%	25%	42%	25%	60%
<1,500 residents	41%	84%	30%	20%	36%	17%	55%
1,500-5,000	40%	87%	25%	30%	47%	24%	61%
5,001-10,000	43%	85%	16%	27%	47%	32%	68%
10,001-30,000	40%	88%	26%	21%	44%	38%	65%
>30,000 residents	62%	94%	39%	27%	36%	53%	75%

Local officials' support (% "somewhat" + "strongly" support) for new development of energy infrastructure in their jurisdiction, by rural-urban self-identification

	Large scale solar	Rooftop solar	Large-scale wind	Nuclear power plant	Natural gas power plant	Large-scale battery storage	Electric transmission lines
Statewide	42%	86%	27%	25%	42%	25%	60%
Rural	39%	86%	27%	26%	41%	19%	58%
Mostly rural	46%	86%	28%	31%	50%	32%	65%
Mostly urban	47%	94%	24%	15%	30%	40%	66%
Urban	55%	89%	30%	14%	26%	38%	58%

Local officials' support (% "somewhat" + "strongly" support) for new development of energy infrastructure in their jurisdiction, by jurisdiction type

	Large scale solar	Rooftop solar	Large-scale wind	Nuclear power plant	Natural gas power plant	Large-scale battery storage	Electric transmission lines
Statewide	42%	86%	27%	25%	42%	25%	60%
County	53%	81%	35%	37%	54%	41%	73%
Township	39%	86%	27%	25%	44%	21%	60%
City	53%	89%	27%	23%	40%	45%	65%
Village	42%	83%	29%	23%	29%	20%	52%

Local officials' support (% "somewhat" + "strongly" support) for new development of energy infrastructure in their jurisdiction, by region

	Large scale solar	Rooftop solar	Large-scale wind	Nuclear power plant	Natural gas power plant	Large-scale battery storage	Electric transmission lines
Statewide	42%	86%	27%	25%	42%	25%	60%
Upper Peninsula	50%	83%	25%	38%	51%	32%	68%
Northern Lower Peninsula	46%	83%	33%	23%	42%	23%	62%
West Central	37%	88%	28%	25%	44%	22%	61%
East Central	39%	86%	28%	26%	42%	17%	58%
Southwest	41%	86%	27%	27%	43%	31%	59%
Southeast	41%	89%	22%	17%	31%	30%	58%

Local officials' support (% "somewhat" + "strongly" support) for new development of energy infrastructure in their jurisdiction, by assessments of hosting fair share of infrastructure

	Large scale solar	Rooftop solar	Large-scale wind	Nuclear power plant	Natural gas power plant	Large-scale battery storage	Electric transmission lines
Statewide	42%	86%	27%	25%	42%	25%	60%
Jurisdiction hosts more than its fair share of energy infrastructure	31%	81%	20%	33%	52%	26%	57%
About its fair share	42%	91%	29%	32%	48%	30%	71%
Less than its fair share	60%	93%	42%	23%	45%	36%	65%



## Survey Background and Methodology

The data presented in this policy brief come from the Fall 2023 Michigan Public Policy Survey (MPPS). The MPPS is an ongoing census survey of all 1,856 general purpose local governments in Michigan conducted since 2009 by the Center for Local, State, and Urban Policy (CLOSUP) at the University of Michigan's Gerald R Ford School of Public Policy. The program is a partnership with Michigan's local government associations. The Fall 2023 wave was conducted October 2 – December 7, 2023. Respondents include county administrators, board chairs, and clerks; city mayors, managers, and clerks; village presidents, managers, and clerks; and township supervisors, managers, and clerks from 1,315 jurisdictions across the state, resulting in a 70% response rate by unit. More information is available at <https://closup.umich.edu/michigan-public-policy-survey/mpps-2023-fall>.

See CLOSUP's website for the full question text on the survey questionnaire. Detailed tables of the data in this report, including breakdowns by various jurisdiction characteristics such as community population size, region, and jurisdiction type, will soon be available at <http://mpps.umich.edu>.

*The survey responses presented here are those of local Michigan officials, while further analysis represents the views of the authors. Neither necessarily reflects the views of the University of Michigan, or of other partners in the MPPS.*

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