Ann Arbor SPARK Sector Report

Automotive Technology & Mobility

Ann Arbor, Michigan

Ann Arbor's automotive technology and mobility sector has always been strong and in the past seven years, the automated and connected vehicle technology industry has experienced rapid growth. Today the sector includes 200+ firms and employs 20,000+ people.

Population

372,258	Washtenaw County
123,851	City of Ann Arbor
1,187,917	within a 30-min commute

Median Age

33.6	Washtenaw County
27.5	City of Ann Arbor
39.8	Michigan
38.5	U.S.

Median Household Income

$73,492	Washtenaw County

Education Level: Bachelor's Degree or Higher

55.8%	Washtenaw County
32.1%	U.S.

Rankings

#1	Most Educated Cities in America, 2021
#1	Best College Towns & Cities, 2021
#2	Top Places to Live, 2021
#2	Up & Coming Small Cities Close to Major Metros, 2020
#2	Cities with Best Public Schools, 2021
#2	Top Places to Work from Home, 2021

Source: U.S. Census and
annarborusa.org/insights/communities/facts-rankings/

The Detroit metropolitan statistical area is a world center for automotive headquarters, operations, research, design, and manufacturing. The headquarters of Ford Motor Company, General Motors, and Chrysler are within 60 miles of Ann Arbor.

Toyota, Hyundai, Honda, Subaru, Mercedes, and Mitsubishi all have an Ann Arbor presence. Ann Arbor is where business intersects with advanced research, out-of-the-box thinkers, abundant financial resources, a vibrant economic development initiative, and an immense talent pool.

ANN ARBOR
SPARK

Ann Arbor Business Community Profile

One way to reflect on a regional economy is to check out the top employers and their industries, including public and private organizations. Here's the latest list identifying the top employers in Washtenaw and Livingston counties compiled by Ann Arbor SPARK.

TOP REGIONAL EMPLOYERS

Company Name	Company Description	City	Employees
University of Michigan	Public university and health system	Ann Arbor	34,300
General Motors Milford Proving Grounds	OEM research	Milford	5,500
Ann Arbor Public Schools	Public school district	Ann Arbor	2,500
Toyota Technical Center (2 locations)	OEM research	Ann Arbor, Saline	2,200
Faurecia North America	Automotive component manufacturing	Saline	1,800
IHA Health Services Corp.	Healthcare system	Ann Arbor	1,600
Eastern Michigan University	Public university	Ypsilanti	1,300
Washtenaw County	Government	Ann Arbor	1,300
Thomson Reuters	Software/IT	Ann Arbor	1,000
Terumo Cardiovascular Group	Surgical & medical instruments, cardiovascular	Ann Arbor	700
Domino's Pizza	Headquarters	Ann Arbor	1,000
Thai Summit America Corporation	Automotive component manufacturing	Howell	800
Grupo Antolin Interiors	Automotive component manufacturing	Howell	700
City of Ann Arbor	Government	Ann Arbor	700
IBM Watson Health	Data and information	Ann Arbor	700
Zingerman's Family of Businesses	Food production	Ann Arbor	700
FCA US Proving Grounds	OEM research	Chelsea	600
Ford Motor Company - Rawsonville	Automotive component manufacturing	Ypsilanti	600
Corrigan Oil Company	Oil & gas	Brighton	675
Citizens Insurance	Insurance services	Howell	700
Ypsilanti Community Schools	Public school district	Ypsilanti	600
Howell Public School District	Public school district	Howell	600
Brighton Area Schools	Public school district	Brighton	600
Livingston Educational Service Agency	School services agency	Howell	500
ProQuest	Data and information	Ann Arbor	600

January 2022

Regional Mobility Companies

The Ann Arbor region has a strong automotive industry sector. The largest sectors are those related to component manufacturing and research. Southeast Michigan is the country's center of automotive research. The state employs 1,176,924 people in the automotive industry, twice as many as second place Ohio. Michigan is also the number one state for automotive R&D spending at $11.8 billion annually.

SAMPLE OF ANN ARBOR MOBILITY COMPANIES

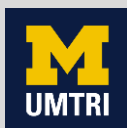| Company Name	Company Description	Employees
Accenture Industry X.0 (at the Forge)	Embedded systems software	3+
AGC Automotive Americas R & D, Inc	Automotive component R&D	40+
AVL Ann Arbor Technical Center	Automotive engineering and testing	60+
Condat Corporation	Automotive component manufacturer	50+
EAVX (Unit of JB Poindexter enterprise)	Chassis Solutions for EV and alternative fuel fleet	10+
Faurecia Interior Systems	Automotive component manufacturer	1,820+
Ford Motor Company (Rawsonville) + FordLabs	Automotive component manufacturer + Connected vehicle research	755+
FreightRoll LLC	Freight marketplace	5+
Honda Research Institute	Mobility Innovation, Collaboration and Prototyping	5+
Hyundai America Technical Center	Automotive Research and development	250+
KLA Corporation	Automotive component manufacturer	400+
Lear Corporation	Automotive component design	10+
Martinrea	Automotive component manufacturer	520+
May Mobility	Autonomous vehicle development and operations	175+
Mercedes-Benz Emissions Test Lab	Automotive emissions testing	40+
Mitsubishi Motors R&D	Automotive design and engineering	28+
Navitas Advanced Solutions Group	Manufacturer of energy storage solutions	200+
Navya Technology	Autonomous shuttle design and assembly	15+
New Eagle	Mechatronics controls software	60+
Nimbus	Electric autocycle design and assembly	12+
Nostrum High Performance Inc.	Combustion cycle and injection technology	30+
Phoenix Contact	PC-based controls software	50+
Quantum Signal AI	Intelligence sensing and data analysis	40+
SimuQuest	Embedded systems software	10+
SkySpecs	Autonomous aerial vehicle software	175+
Toyota Technical Center (Ann Arbor + York Township) + Toyota Research Institute	Automotive Research and Development	2,310+

University Mobility Programs

The University of Michigan has many centers, facilities, labs, programs, and courses dedicated to advancing new mobility research, deployment, and talent creation. A few of these have been highlighted below.

CENTERS & FACILITIES

Mcity is a 32-acre controlled environment designed to research and test real-world urban and suburban driving conditions for autonomous and connected vehicles.

UMTRI is one of the largest research institutes at U-M in terms of research expenditures, at $20 million annually. The institute has conducted over 1,000 research projects and collected hundreds of terabytes of data to advance safe, equitable, and efficient transportation and mobility.

UM Ford Center for Autonomous Vehicles (FCAV) is working to accelerate autonomous vehicle research and explore the future of driving through safer and more capable vehicles. They are researching perception, control, and planning for level-4 self-driving cars.

LABS, PROGRAMS, & COURSES

TechLab at Mcity is a Company-in-Residence program that pairs select early-stage advanced mobility companies in the connected and autonomous vehicle space with elite university students to work on company-sponsored technical projects.

The Urban Collaboratory brings together faculty and students in collaboration with city leaders and residents to identify and address emerging challenges in 21st-century urban centers

Michigan Traffic Crash Facts program (MTCF) website provides publications with crash data statistics dating back to 1952. The Data Query Tool, which allows users to perform advanced data searches over specific elements.

Michigan Robotics is a collaborative community of roboticists working together to accelerate socially beneficial advances in robotics.

The **AI Lab** at U-M is a vibrant research group that includes faculty, research scientists, graduate students, and postdoctoral fellows working in AI.

Foundation of Mobility Course: Expert faculty from six different colleges across the University of Michigan provide the knowledge, skills, and problem-solving techniques required to address today's complex transportation challenges.

Additional Educational Centers

CENTERS & FACILITIES

Washtenaw Community College's **Advanced Transportation Center** combines advanced manufacturing and information technology to develop the skills and competencies required to meet the needs of area employers. Specific programs on Intelligent Transport Systems, Advanced Manufacturing, Automotive Service and more.

Eastern Michigan University **(EMU)** has multiple programs focused on transportation like Aviation Flight Technology, Information Assurance & Cyber Defense, Supply Chain Management, Transportation Planning and Modeling, and more

City and State Programs and Resources

The Office of Future Mobility and Electrification (OFME) works across state government, academia, and private industry to enhance Michigan's mobility ecosystem, including developing dynamic mobility and electrification policies and supporting the startup and scale up of emerging technologies and businesses.

The Michigan Small Business Development Center offers expert assistance at no cost to entrepreneurs looking to start or grow a business. They have a Mobility lead on staff as well.

Michigan Translational Research and Commercialization (MTRAC) Innovation Hub for Advanced Transportation is a statewide program that funds projects which commercialize university research into products or services that shape the future of transportation technology or address poorly met needs.

Michigan Venture Capital Association (MVCA) puts out an annual report on venture capital and angel activity in Michigan and also provides assistance connecting companies to capital.

The City of Ann Arbor A2Zero Plan charters a path for how the entire Ann Arbor community could achieve carbon neutrality by the year 2030.

American Center for Mobility

The American Center for Mobility (ACM) is located at Willow Run in Ypsilanti and features the infrastructure needed to test advanced mobility solutions that could cut traffic fatalities by 80 – 90%. Each year, 35,000 people die in traffic accidents in the U.S. alone. ACM is a U.S. Department of Transportation designated site as a proving ground for connected and automated vehicle technology and enables:

- Development, testing, and validation of revolutionary mobility technologies
- Acceleration of technical standards
- Coordination of education and training resources
- Flexible usage options in eight environments: Highway Loop, Urban Area, Suburban Residential, Off Road, Rural Area, Suburban Commercial, Vehicle Dynamics Area and Campus Area

The future of the automotive industry is in Michigan.

With more than 500 acres of infrastructure, ACM is uniquely positioned to accommodate the broad needs of industry and government. ACM delivers an incredible range of capabilities:

- Testing of vehicles, roads, and communication systems
- Double overpasses
- A highway speed test loop
- Closed tunnel
- Simulation of virtually any driving condition - snow, sun, rain, sleet

Ann Arbor SPARK supports the businesses engaged with ACM with:

- Site selection
- Connections to innovation resources at the state and local level incentives
- Talent development and acquisition strategies
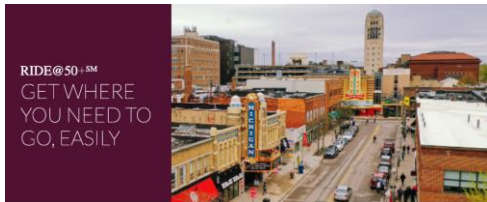
Ann Arbor Mobility Projects

Ann Arbor SPARK is currently involved in the following initiatives to further the mobility technology industry in the region:

Ford's City Insight platform: In 2019, Ann Arbor served as a living laboratory for Ford Motor Company's new City Insights platform. The concept was to see if a single platform could help city officials improve mobility outcomes using dynamic metrics such as parking, transit, traffic, safety, and census data. Ann Arbor SPARK aided in brokering partnerships between Ford and the public sector partners who held the data (city government and transit authorities) and acted as a grant administrator and project manager through the duration of the project.

Transatlantic Automated Driving Alliance is a program between AMZ Saxony and Ann Arbor SPARK to further R&D and technology projects between Michigan and German companies. In 2021, the autonomous sweeper project was launched under the TADA Program.

AARP's Rider 50+ Platform for Washtenaw County: Feonix – Mobility Rising operates the platform which helps source and book rides from local providers for seniors, people with disability and the wider community.

Mobility Pilots: Innovative startups
Ann Arbor SPARK has facilitated conversations and helped leverage grants to advance pilot developments between startups, industry, academia and public sector:

Ann Arbor Mobility Projects

The Ann Arbor Connected Vehicle Test Environment

Local, state, and national partners have transformed Ann Arbor into a real-world testing environment for advanced mobility infrastructure. The Ann Arbor Connected Vehicle Test Environment is the largest operational real-world deployment of connected vehicles and connected vehicle infrastructure in the world, spanning a full twenty-seven square miles across the city of Ann Arbor. Over 2,500 connected vehicles have been outfitted with state-of-the-art technology. The Federal Highway Administration recently awarded $9.95 million to the University of Michigan Transportation Research Institute to install twenty "smart intersections" to test how sensors can alert connected vehicles to obstacles hidden from the view of drivers.

World Economic Forum grant for connecting Ann Arbor, Detroit and Windsor

In 2018, The World Economic Forum in partnership with Deloitte collaborated with Detroit, and Ann Arbor in the US and Windsor in Canada to pilot the principles of a seamless integrated mobility system to improve the lives of the region's citizens. The Forum provided a global platform to the cities as they developed transport initiatives aimed at issues of affordability, economic growth, efficiency, and innovation and sustainability across the region.

The Michigan Connected Corridor

The Michigan Connected Corridor is a public-private initiative to develop a first-of-its-kind corridor of connected roadways between Ann Arbor and Detroit. Launched in 2020, the project will provide critical information on the infrastructure needed to support connected and autonomous vehicles. Partners include Cavnue, MDOT, OFME, MEDC, LEO, and industry and local project partners.
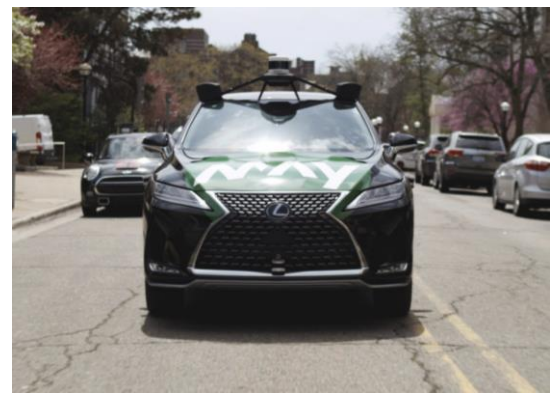
Company Snapshot

Homegrown Mobility Company Scales Nationally and Attracts Funding to the Ann Arbor Region

Founded in Ann Arbor, May Mobility develops the full-stack software solution for Level-5 autonomous driving. It operates fleets of autonomous shuttles running its own self-driving software for central business districts, campuses, and residential communities.

In 2021, May Mobility announced A2GO, a new on-demand autonomous vehicle shuttle service available free to the public in Ann Arbor. This one-year pilot is supported by a partnership between !important Safety Technologies, 4M, Michigan's Office of Future Mobility and Electrification, University of Michigan Mcity, and Ann Arbor SPARK. This will be May Mobility's eighth deployment around the globe.

The story of May Mobility provides great insight into the resources that Ann Arbor SPARK provides startups and how Ann Arbor is a great place to launch a mobility company. May Mobility CEO Edwin Olson and the CTO approached SPARK in early 2017 looking for help finding temporary office space. The startup, while young, had a decade of experience prior to its official formation, thanks to a team who had been working on autonomous tech since the third DARPA Grand Challenge in 2007.

Today, the company has raised $170M in funding with the latest round being in 2022. SPARK has worked with May Mobility to help the company grow and tap into the ecosystem in Ann Arbor. It has grown from 12 employees to now more than 160 in Michigan.

SPARK Programs Utilized by May Mobility

- A2 Tech Trek
- Ann Arbor Tech Homecoming
- SPARK Talent Portal
- $700,000 Michigan Business Development Program Grant
- Ann Arbor Tech Talent Compensation Survey
- Real Estate and Site Selection Support Services
- Key introductions in the community (education institutions, local government, etc.)
- SPARK Business Accelerator Grant to support its marketing efforts
- Brand Exposure through participating at SPARK-sponsored SXSW event in Austin, Texas
- Talent recruitment support via marketing initiatives and video production
- Industry and ecosystem connections
- Pilot Project grants

Ann Arbor Region Mobility Deployment Interactive Map

This interactive map displays over 50 mobility testing and deployments in the Ann Arbor area between 2017 - 2021. For community stakeholders, this map represents a phenomenal window into the multitude and variety of mobility projects unfolding in the Ann Arbor area in the last five years alone. For companies interested in testing or deploying their mobility tech, this map provides an outstanding sample of the types of projects the Ann Arbor region can enhance and facilitate.

a2spark.org/AAMM

Case Studies

Ann Arbor SPARK works to support the needs of small and large companies located in the Ann Arbor region.

The consistent, long-term growth of **Toyota** is proof positive that Ann Arbor has the talent, infrastructure, and commitment to grow a global powerhouse. Since 2006, the company has invested more than $300 million and created 600 new jobs in the region. In 2014, Toyota announced several expansions here, including the consolidation of its powertrain operations to its Ann Arbor facility. Additionally, 250 procurement jobs moved from Erlanger, Kentucky to Toyota's York Township campus.

Autaza provides solutions for industrial quality control through proprietary and patented technologies involving computer vision and artificial intelligence. Autaza started in 2016 in Brazil. In 2019 the company opened its U.S. headquarters at Ann Arbor SPARK. Since then, it has accessed grants and resources from SPARK for sales, marketing, and business development support. Autaza also enrolled in the Automation Alley Industry 4.0 Accelerator, from which it have received seed investment.

Bedestrian is a developer of autonomous delivery robots designed to serve the healthcare and retail sector. Bedestrian has leveraged several grants through Ann Arbor SPARK totaling $50,000 for legal, prototyping, and testing assistance. The company has also leveraged programs like the MI STEM Forward Internship Program, COVID BAF Grants, Entrepreneur-in-Residence and SPARK events to engage and hire talent. Bedestrian won the Invest360: Mobility category in 2021.

Pandemic Pivots: Startups Harness Opportunities to Emerge Stronger

In 2020, Ann Arbor SPARK hosted a webinar series called Pandemic Pivot which featured Ann Arbor mobility startups shifting their business strategies in response to changing markets and consumer demand as a result of COVID-19. During the events, business leaders shared key learnings about building more resilient companies during this crisis and beyond. We've outlined some of those insights below. Read the full summary and watch the webinars here.

ANTICIPATE RISKS

According to Michael Sare at Voxel51, the most resilient companies have the skills to anticipate risk and pivot. The startup, whose core capability is built around computer vision, identified and harnessed downstream opportunities to create the Physical Distancing Index — a community-focused resource. This index monitored streets in major cities using camera feeds and provided the community with transparency around how streets were being used during the pandemic. Bedestrian's Shadi Mere spoke about the halting of their pilot at Beaumont in Dearborn as the whole hospital shifted focus to COVID-19. The discontinuation resulted in Bedestrian pivoting to accommodate the immediate needs of clients as well as anticipate the lasting impact of this crisis on their market. They doubled down on innovations like adding contactless features, as well as expanding their teleoperation offerings to senior care facilities where there was a shortage of skilled nurses.

METRICS FOR SUCCESS

Markets and consumer needs have shifted dramatically during the pandemic. Tara Lanigan discussed how May Mobility is adjusting to produce new, relevant success metrics. Pre-pandemic, the key success metric at May Mobility was ridership. However, with fewer people moving around — and even fewer people feeling comfortable in shared vehicles — May Mobility realizes that other metrics may be more important to measure. One of the data points they are considering is engagement. Just because ridership is down does not mean that folks don't need to get around, and it's important to engage with these folks to understand their needs. Additionally, May Mobility is tracking and sharing its learnings with industry partners for broader, lasting impact.

RE-EVALUATE MARKET OPPORTUNITY

Sudhi Uppuluri of GreenRoute discusses how the mobility industry is experiencing a K-shaped recovery, wherein some businesses are excelling while others are struggling. An example of this is the decline in usage of shared transportation modes and the increase in fleet delivery. As GreenRoute sought pilot opportunities for its technology, they pivoted their strategy to focus on fleet delivery customers. Tony Lancione shared how this was apparent for IndustryStar. During the pandemic, IndustryStar customers used their software to collaborate in solving PPE distribution issues that were front and center during the pandemic. This pivot from the core markets that IndustryStar software typically served allowed them to engage with new partners.

WORK TOGETHER

At the start of the pandemic, many business leaders perceived that they were alone. For example, May Mobility initially feared that partners would be upset about service changes. Instead, the company worked collaboratively with these partners because they were also facing similar challenges. Rachel Kosla of Feonix-Mobility Rising discussed the role of community engagement and bringing stakeholders together through their mobility leadership circle. The goal was to spark greater conversation and joint action at tackling issues around access through its Rider50+ program.

LOOK TO THE FUTURE

A common theme shared by panelists was the urging of entrepreneurs to accelerate. Anticipate the risk, double down on innovation, and continue focusing your energy to solve the problems that you set out to do. Historically, major disruptions have fueled some of the greatest startups.

Community Engagement

The local mobility community hosts several coder groups, hackathons, and conferences for the further development of skills and connections. A few examples are below:

Made in A2
Downtown tech companies worked together to create one online space to collect information on companies, share community events and meetups, and post jobs. All information below is also included at madeina2.com

Meetups
The meetup culture in Ann Arbor is open and flourishing. A selection of meetups is below; please visit madeina2.com/community for a full list of coder groups, maker groups, un/conferences, hackathons, and more in our community. A selection of Meetups and active groups:

A2NewTech
A2 Mobility Tech
Ann Arbor FinTech Meetup
Duo Tech Talks
All Hands Active
PyData Ann Arbor
Ann Arbor Security Meetup
Coffee House Coders
tech [inclusive]
Michigan Devs

A2 Mobility Summit
The Ann Arbor Mobility Summit is a unique one-day thought leadership event that takes place annually during A2tech360. The summit highlights innovative solutions from the Ann Arbor region and brings visionaries from across the globe to share, learn, and inspire each other.

Michigan Connected and Automated Vehicle Working Group: cargroup.org/cav-working-group

Incubators, Accelerators, and Coworking spaces in the Ann Arbor Region
Ann Arbor has a flourishing network of incubators, accelerators, and coworking spaces. There's something for everyone. View a full list of incubators and coworking spaces here.

Mobility Newsletter: SPARK's Mobility newsletter is focused on opportunities, events, and insights in the Ann Arbor Region: annarborusa.org/sign-up

Community Engagement

a2TECH360

7 days, 24 inspiring events showcasing Ann Arbor's spirit of innovation to the world

A2AR TREK October 1	**FASTTRACK AWARDS** October 1	**A2ZERO GREEN FAIR** October 1	**HEROIC FUTURES** October 2
TechTwilight October 2	**ANN ARBOR FILM FESTIVAL PRESENTS A MACHINE TO LIVE IN** October 3	**MOBILITY MOVERS** October 4	**MICHIGAN ANGEL SUMMIT** October 4
INVEST360 October 4-8	**DIGITAL SUMMER CLINIC** October 4	**ANN ARBOR MOBILITY SUMMIT** October 5	**ENTREPRENEUR BOOT CAMP CELEBRATION** October 5
Applied AI Conference October 6	**SHINE+RISE #IamRemarkable Workshop** October 6	**2031 What the Future Holds** October 6	**Stephanie Dinkins: On Love & Data** October 6-8
a2TECH360 JOB SEEKER TREK October 6	**INFLUENCE OF MOBILITY AND TECHNOLOGY ON TODAY'S WORKFORCE** October 6	**DISTINGUISHED UNIVERSITY INNOVATOR AWARD** October 6	**TECH ON THE EDGE** October 7
WOMEN IN TECH October 7	**TECH TALK** October 8	**TECH TREK** October 8	**MOBILITY ROW** October 8

2021 Tech Trek & Mobility Row Impact

A² TECH TREK

MOBILITYROW

68 — Companies Represented

730+ — Virtual Tours Taken

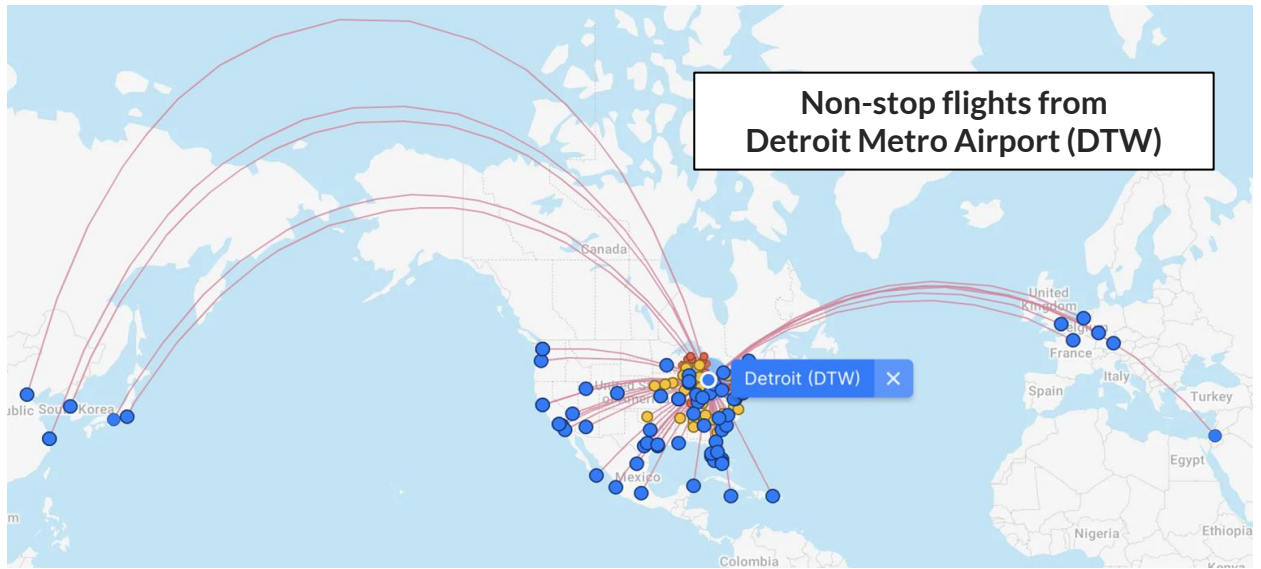**207k** — Video Views

a2Tech360 is a week of events celebrating Ann Arbor's spirit of innovation through experiences, conversations, and connections that strengthen and expand the region's vibrant ecosystem. The events are tailored to a variety of interests and audiences, including entrepreneurs, researchers, investors, businesses, academic institutions, non-profits, job seekers, and the general public.

ANN ARBOR SPARK

Learn more at a2Tech360.com

International Airport Connectivity

Detroit Metropolitan Airport (DTW) is less than 30 miles from downtown Ann Arbor (29 minutes by car). DTW) is the number one mega airport in North America, ranking highest in customer satisfaction according to the J.D. Power 2019 North America Airport Satisfaction Study. There are nearly 20 million annual business passengers and nearly three million annual international passengers flying out of DTW.

Non-stop flights from Detroit Metro Airport (DTW)

Sample of National and International Destinations	# of daily non-stop flights from DTW
Atlanta (ATL)	265
Chicago (MDW and ORD)	534
Dallas (DFW)	185
Los Angeles (LAX)	177
Mexico City (MEX)	28
New York (JFK, LGA, and EWR)	706
San Francisco (SFO)	94
Seattle (SEA)	130
Seoul (ICN)	23
Tampa (TPA)	195

An Educational Powerhouse

Ann Arbor's automotive and mobility community benefits from regional colleges and universities, foremost of which is the University of Michigan. In 2016, U-M awarded over 1,100 degrees in mechanical, electrical, and industrial engineering.

University of Michigan
The University of Michigan ranks among the world's top universities and its graduate and professional programs are consistently listed among the nation's top ten. University of Michigan's College of Engineering offers degree programs in:

Integrative Systems + Design
Automotive Engineering
Mechanical Engineering
Electrical Engineering
Industrial and Operations Engineering

Eastern Michigan University
The College of Technology at Eastern Michigan University, located in downtown Ypsilanti, offers four-year degrees in areas of computer-aided engineering, computer electronic and mechanical engineering technology, polymers and coatings, and quality management.

Regional Universities
In addition to University of Michigan and Eastern Michigan University, Ann Arbor area employers can recruit from universities within an hour's drive of Ann Arbor. Wayne State University, Lawrence Tech, Kettering, and Michigan State University all have elite degree programs in engineering and auto-related disciplines.

University of Michigan ranks #6 nationally for undergraduate engineering.

US News and World Report

University of Michigan Annual Research Spending

$1.6 billion

#2 in the U.S.

University Graduates

University of Michigan	Number of Graduates (2018)
Total graduates	13,844
Computer engineering	315
Computer science	166
Mechanical Engineering	433
Electrical Engineering	324
Industrial Engineering	324

Source

Eastern Michigan University	Number of Graduates
Total graduates	4,542
CAE/CAD	24
ME Technician	13

Washtenaw Community College Enrollment	12,327

University Graduate Retention Rates

40%

of U-M Alumni live in Michigan

Represents over 200,000 grads

33%

of U-M College of Engineering grads remain in Michigan

Up from 24% in 2010 and growing

64%

of MSU grads stay in MI

Represents over 325,000 grads

72%

of Eastern Michigan University Alumni remain in Michigan

Represents over 100,000 grads

TALENT

Talent acquisition and training is a top factor in a successful business. SPARK partners with the University of Michigan, Eastern Michigan University, Michigan Works!, and other resources to help identify and recruit staff. Some examples of how SPARK helps your talent needs:

The SPARK Talent Portal: A free online job posting system that spotlights executive and knowledge-based positions as well as internships and entry level positions. Employers can view resumes submitted by becoming a "job manager" here.

Training Grants: SPARK will work closely with you to maximize utilization of worker training programs and funds that are available for companies in our region. Learn more about the programs here.

Talent Grants: SPARK offers grants to engage interns and executive-level talent for startups headquartered in Ann Arbor

Academic Relationships: There are great business "front door" organizations like U-M's Business Engagement Center or EMU's BusinessLink programs. Be sure to check in with Washtenaw Community College, Michigan Tech, Kettering, and MSU. Make the most of your Handshake profile, as most colleges use it for recruiting and events. Read more about building these relationships here.

Ann Arbor Tech Homecoming: In the days leading up to Thanksgiving, SPARK hosts a casual evening with job seekers and companies as they mingle over delicious food and great conversation. This is an opportunity for local and out-of-town talent to learn about careers in the vibrant Ann Arbor tech ecosystem.

U-M Startup Career Fair: This annual event connects 750+ entrepreneurially-minded students in all majors to internships and full-time opportunities at 45+ high-growth startups from across the country.

tech[inclusive]: tech[inclusive] is dedicated to empowering underrepresented people in tech, and empowering allies to become advocates.

Eastern Michigan University Digital Divas: EMU's College of Technology hosts a yearly conference that connects young women in middle and high school to opportunities in STEM.

Pricing Talent: SPARK can do a review using PayScale to determine wage data in specific job categories. We recommend continuously benchmarking and adjusting pay structures and benefits (when necessary). Pricing can vary depending on skill set, experience and other factors.

ANN ARBOR SPARK
2021 JOB PORTAL STATS

143 new employers signed up

842 jobs posted

36,548 job views
each viewed ~**43 times**

1,161 apply links clicked

443 job applications submitted

128 jobs filled

388 additional Job Seeker newsletter subscribers
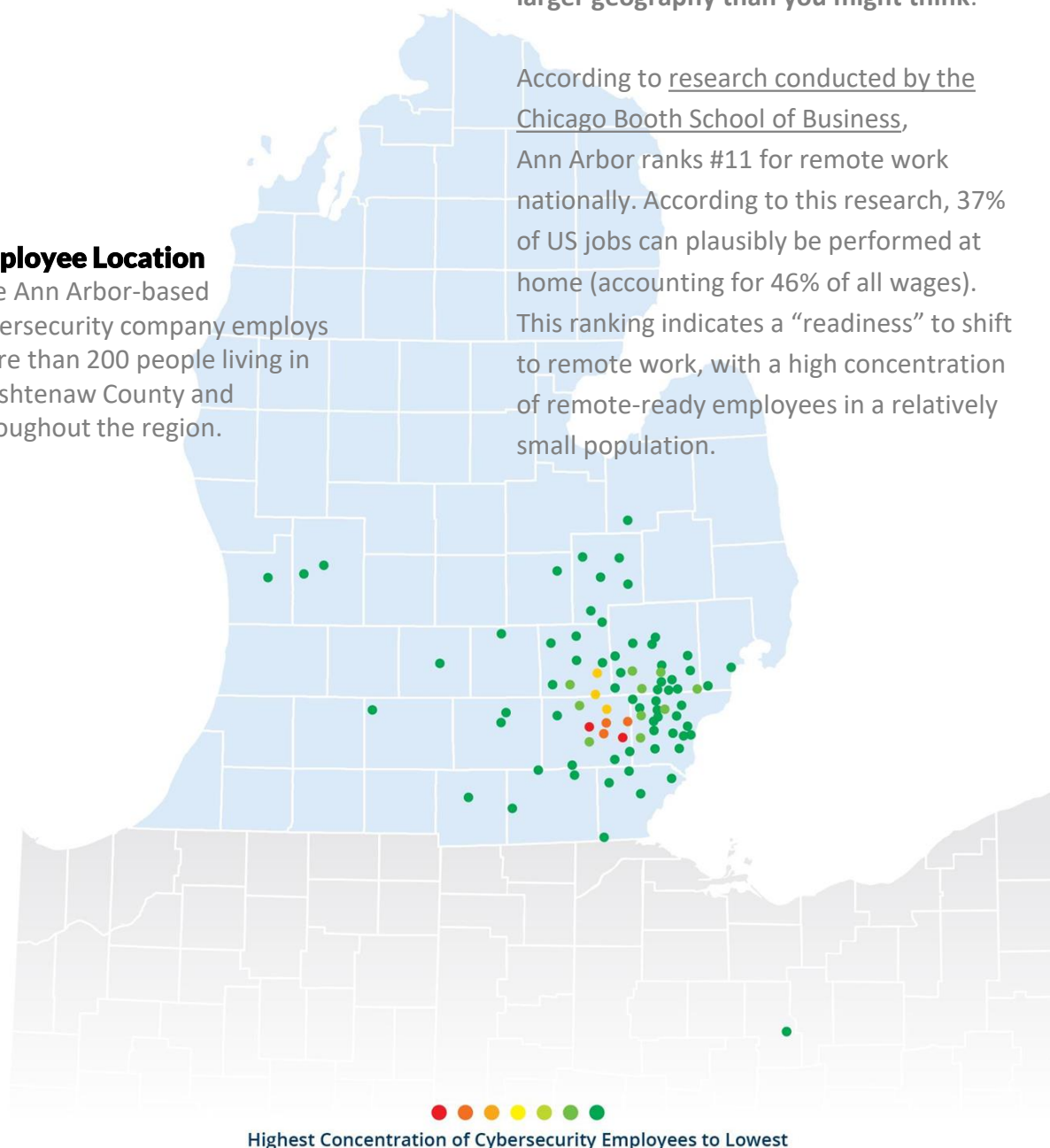
POWERED BY
TRUE JOB

OUR TALENT
REACH

Ann Arbor's talent pool spans a much larger geography than you might think.

According to research conducted by the Chicago Booth School of Business, Ann Arbor ranks #11 for remote work nationally. According to this research, 37% of US jobs can plausibly be performed at home (accounting for 46% of all wages). This ranking indicates a "readiness" to shift to remote work, with a high concentration of remote-ready employees in a relatively small population.

Employee Location
One Ann Arbor-based cybersecurity company employs more than 200 people living in Washtenaw County and throughout the region.

Highest Concentration of Cybersecurity Employees to Lowest

Destination Ann Arbor

Every community offers something unique to its residents, but the Ann Arbor area offers much more than the usual quality of life indicators. From recreation to culture, we offer large-city amenities with a small-town feel.

Recreation

In Michigan, you're never more than a few miles from water. In Washtenaw County, we can top that by saying you're never more than a few miles from a lake, river, park, golf course, cross-country trail, or other recreational option.

Washtenaw County boasts 4,000 acres of parkland, of which 2,200 acres are natural areas ideal for hiking, bird watching, or mountain biking. The Border-to-Border Trail, kayaking liveries, and golf courses add to the county's recreation inventory.

The city of Ann Arbor has 157 parks totaling 2,090 acres, 1,200 acres of which are natural areas. An additional 2,000 acres of farmland and open space surround the city of Ann Arbor, purchased with a Greenbelt millage.

Ann Arbor parks offer baseball and softball diamonds and leagues, soccer fields, disc golf, ice skating, and an excellent skateboard park.

Housing

County residents can find multiple housing options and locations: cities, towns, country, and suburban. Housing options include single family houses, downtown lofts, condos, and apartments. Housing costs in Washtenaw County are lower than east and west coast housing: The median sale price of single-family house in Washtenaw County is $316,558 (source: Zillow).

Schools

Public, charter, and private schools are found in Washtenaw County. A list of recent test scores by school and district is found here.

Culture

The University Musical Society brings national and international cultural performances to Ann Arbor (the New York Philharmonic has an annual residency). Our local cultural venues include the Ann Arbor Symphony Orchestra, the Ann Arbor Civic Theater, The Ark, and the Purple Rose Theatre, along with independent dance and music performance staged in the historic Michigan Theater.

Fun

The Ann Arbor area isn't all high-brow. Here is a smattering of the festivals and activities that take place throughout the county.
Ann Arbor FestiFools
Ann Arbor Summer Festival
Ann Arbor's Rolling Sculpture Car Show
Chelsea's Sounds & Sights Festival
Dexter Daze
Manchester Chicken Broil
Manchester's Riverfolk Music and Arts
Milan Bluegrass Festival
Milan Fliers model aircraft flights
Saline Celtic Festival
Ypsilanti's Summer Beer Festival
Ypsilanti Heritage Festival
Ypsilanti's Thunder Over Michigan Airshow

Shopping

You'll find independent retailers, wine shops, bakeries, and delis in the downtowns.

Local grocery stores: People's Food Co-op, Arbor Farms, By the Pound, Knight's Market, Monahan's Seafood Market, Zingerman's Bakery and Creamery. You'll also enjoy farmers' markets, cider mills, you-pick berry and apple farms, and CSAs.

Regular grocery stores: Whole Foods, Trader Joe's, Busch's, Meijer, Kroger.

Clothing, sporting goods, sundries: Local clothing stores and gift shops are found in downtowns. Arborland, Briarwood mall, and big box stores offer brand name shopping.

Rankings

2021

#1 "Most Educated Cities in America" – Ann Arbor, WalletHub

#2 "Best College Towns and Cities in the US" – Ann Arbor, WalletHub

2020

#2 "Top Places to Live" – Ann Arbor, Livability

#2 "Up-and-Coming Small Cities Close to Major Metros" – Ann Arbor, Livability

2019

#1 "Top cities for female founders raising first round" – Ann Arbor, VentureBeat

#1 "Top 5 car-free small metros" – Ann Arbor, CityLab

#3 "Top New U.S. Tech Hubs ("Brain" Index)" – Ann Arbor, Bloomberg

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Ann Arbor SPARK will advance the economy of the Ann Arbor region by establishing it as a desired place for innovation, business location and growth, and for talented people to live and work. The Ann Arbor region will be recognized for its academic, business, and community resources, and its collaborative culture.