

FREE GUIDE

The Livingston County Relocation Guide

Everything families ask before making the move to Michigan's #1 wealthiest county — Brighton, Howell, and the surrounding area.

#1

Highest Income County

In Michigan

\$103K

Median Household Income

County-wide

100+

Lakes

Within County Boundaries

99th

Percentile

National Safety Ranking

Inside This Guide

- **The Income Story** — Why Livingston County leads Michigan
- **The Golden Triangle** — Detroit, Ann Arbor, and Lansing within 45 minutes
- **City by City** — Brighton, Howell, Pinckney, Hartland, and more
- **The Real Estate Picture** — What it costs and what you're buying
- **Schools & Safety** — Rankings, data, and what it means for your family

Eric Meldrum — Tru Living Group at Real Broker LLC

Made with **GAMMA**

FROM ERIC

A Note Before You Dive In

When Brianna and I moved back to Michigan, we weren't looking for the most impressive zip code. We were looking for a place where we actually wanted to raise our girls.

We wanted them outside. We wanted neighbors we'd actually get to know. We wanted Sunday mornings to feel like Sunday mornings.

We looked at a lot of options. We ended up in Brighton — in Livingston County — and we haven't looked back.

Most of the families I talk to who are moving to Michigan describe the lifestyle they want, and Livingston County almost always checks their boxes. The problem is they've never heard of it. They go straight to Oakland County, or Ann Arbor, or the names that come up first in the search results.

This guide is meant to fix that. It's everything I wish someone had put in front of me early in our research — the income data, the real estate, the schools, the commute reality, the specific cities. All of it, in one place.

I hope it helps. And if you have questions that this doesn't answer, reach out — that's what we're here for.

— **Eric Meldrum**, Brighton, Michigan

What's in This Guide

A complete picture of Livingston County — from the economic fundamentals to the neighborhoods where families are putting down roots.

1

The Income Story

Why Livingston County leads Michigan — and has for 30 years

2

The Golden Triangle

How the geography makes the lifestyle work

3

City by City

Brighton, Howell, South Lyon, Pinckney, and more

4

The Real Estate Picture

What you're actually buying and what it costs

5

Schools & Safety

The two things families ask about most

6

Next Steps

How to start a real conversation about your move

The Income Story

Most people researching Southeast Michigan land on Oakland County first. Bloomfield Hills, Birmingham — those are the names that come up. And they're solid areas. But there's a county right next door that has beaten Oakland County in median household income **every single year since 1995**.

That county is Livingston. And most families moving to Michigan have no idea.

\$103,039

Livingston County Median Household Income — **#1 out of all 83 Michigan counties**, 42% above the state average of \$72,875

23% Above

The national median of \$83,370 — reflecting a broad, stable base, not a small number of very high earners

86.9%

Homeownership Rate

vs. 65% national avg

30

Consecutive Years

As Michigan's Top County

2.0%

Unemployment Rate

Lowest in Michigan, 2024

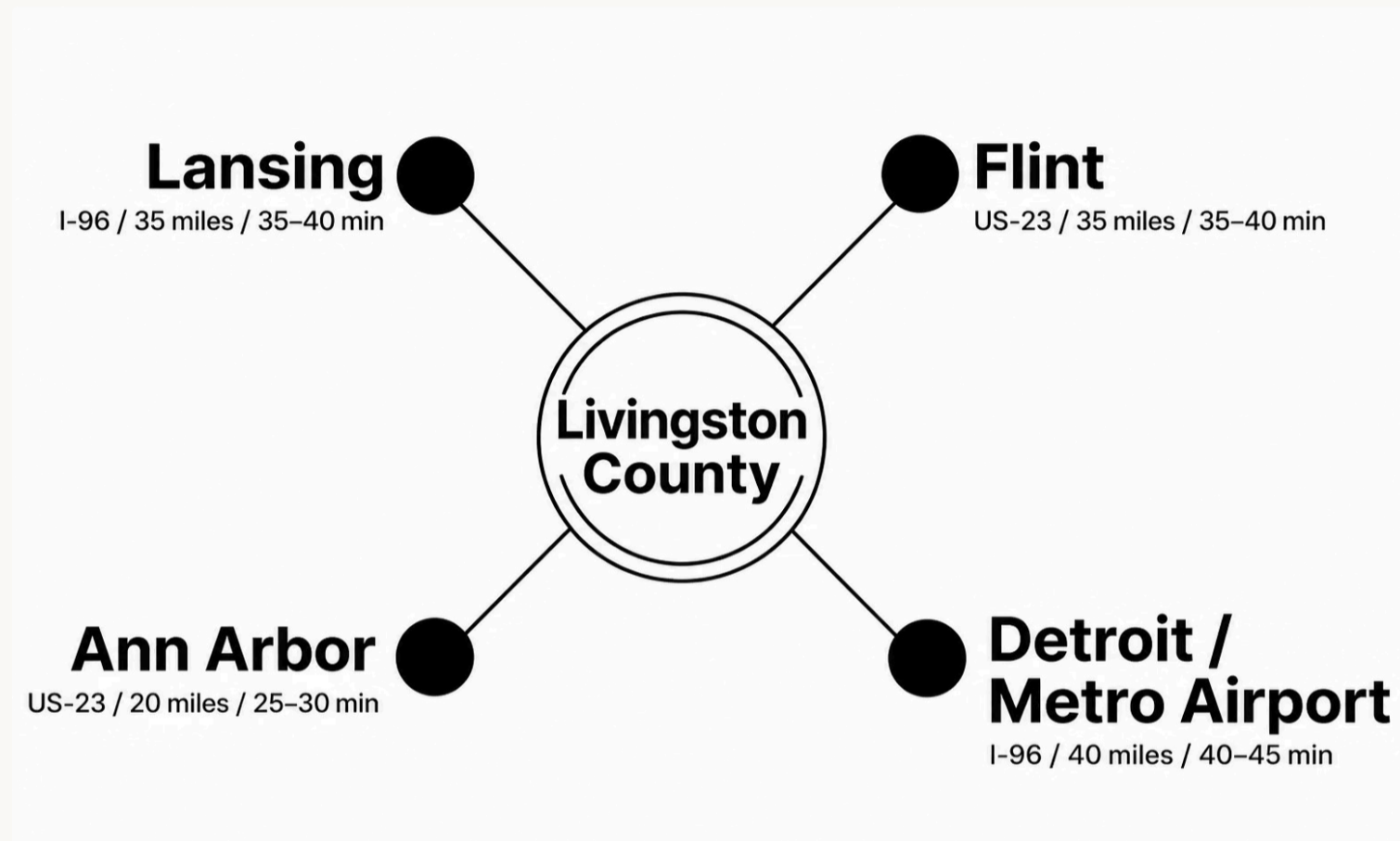
What's driving it? The county attracts dual-income households and people with stable professional careers who want to live somewhere they actually like. From 2000 to 2019, payroll jobs in Livingston County grew by 31 percent while the population grew 21 percent. The University of Michigan's economics team projects Livingston County job growth will outpace pre-pandemic levels by **5.6 percent by end of 2026** — compared to 2.9 percent for Michigan overall.

☑ This isn't a county coasting on a good reputation. The fundamentals are still moving in the right direction.

The Golden Triangle

One of the first things people ask when they look at Livingston County is: *where would I actually work?* And the answer is one of the best things about this county's geography.

Livingston County sits right between Detroit, Ann Arbor, and Lansing — three major employment centers, all within 45 minutes. We call it the Golden Triangle.



With hybrid work being what it is now, that geography changed things for a lot of people. You can have a serious career at one of the major employers in Ann Arbor or Detroit, come into the office two or three days a week, and spend the rest of your time in a place you actually chose for your family.

Destination	Distance	Commute (avg)
Ann Arbor	~20 miles	25–30 min
Detroit / Metro Airport	~40 miles	40–45 min
Lansing	~35 miles	35–40 min
Flint	~35 miles	35–40 min

Commute times are estimates. Actual times vary by specific origin and destination, time of day, and route.

- ① The three main highways — I-96, US-23, and M-59 — give residents real flexibility in how they get where they're going. It's not a commuter county in the old sense. It's a county with genuine access, which is a different thing.

City by City

Livingston County isn't one thing. Brighton feels different from Howell. Pinckney feels different from South Lyon. Here's a practical breakdown of the major areas and what they actually offer.



Brighton — ~\$407K

Eric's home market. Established, walkable, lake access.

- Walkable downtown with local shops and restaurants
- The Millpond — a natural gathering spot for families
- Lake access: Ore Lake, Chemung, Baseline Lake area
- Brighton Area Schools — #25 in Michigan, #6 for athletics
- Most competitive market in the county



Howell — ~\$356K

County seat. Slower feel, real community, serious revival underway.

- Historic downtown with local events year-round
- Active revitalization — new businesses, walkable improvements
- More room in the budget than Brighton for comparable square footage
- Howell Public Schools — growing enrollment, improving rankings
- Good access to M-59 and US-23



Pinckney — ~\$363K

Chain of Lakes corridor. Outdoor lifestyle, serious lake access.

- Pinckney Recreation Area — 11,000+ acres of state land
- Chain of Lakes: Halfmoon, Losee, and connected lakes
- All-sports lakes and no-wake options across the corridor
- More rural character — tradeoff is a longer Ann Arbor commute
- Strong year-round community on the water



South Lyon — ~\$447K

Oakland/Livingston border. Strong schools, newer builds.

- Sits on the Livingston/Oakland County line — benefits from both
- South Lyon Community Schools — consistently strong rankings
- Newer subdivision development with larger lots
- Higher price point reflects strong demand from both counties



Hartland — Township Feel

Township living with highway access. Schools trending up fast.

- Hartland Consolidated Schools: jumped from #153 to #69 in Michigan in one year
- More rural, lower density — good for buyers wanting privacy and land
- US-23 access makes Ann Arbor and Flint both accessible
- Lower price points relative to Brighton for similar lot sizes



Fowlerville — ~\$294K

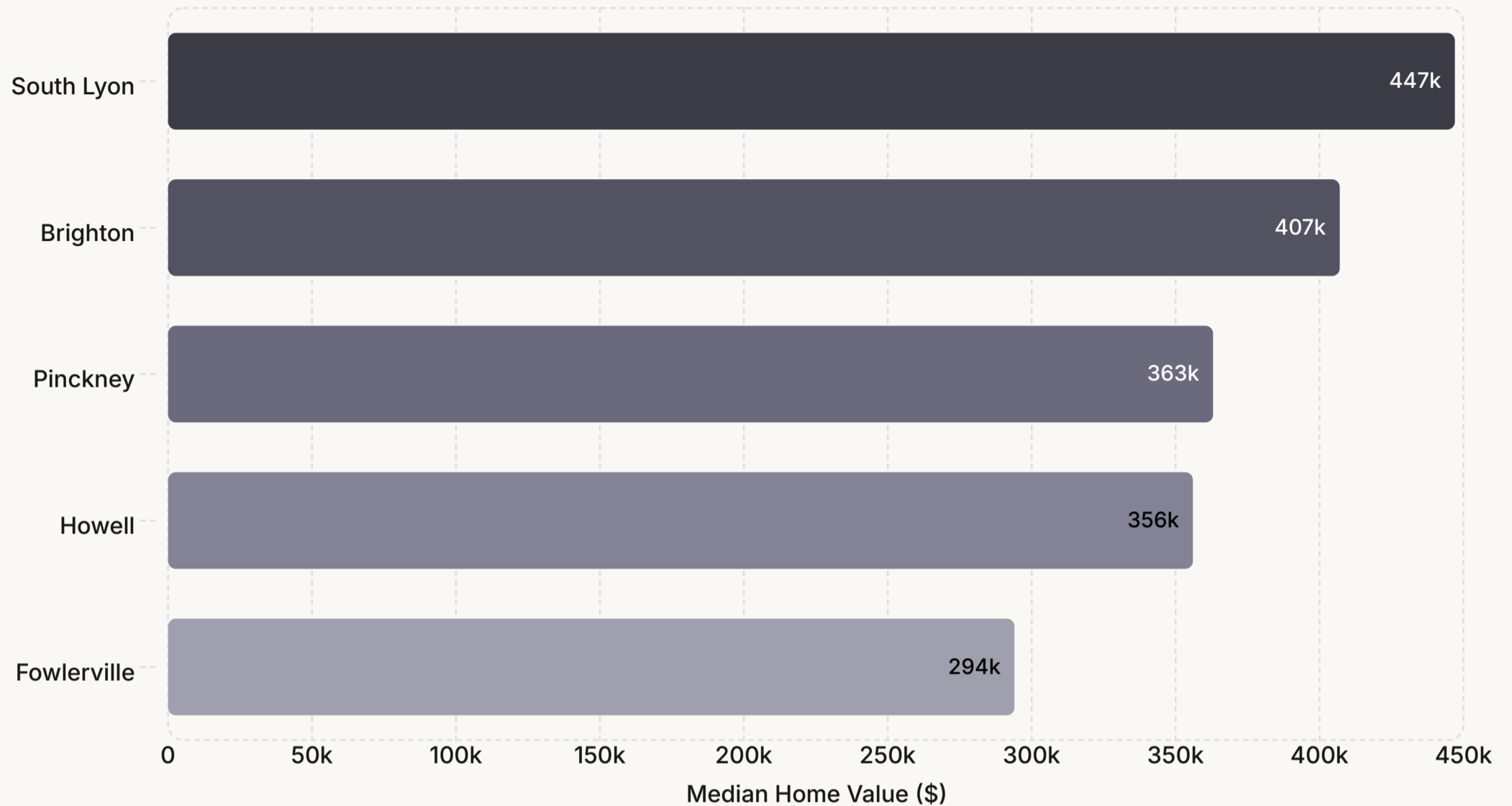
Most affordable in the county. Rural character, I-96 access.

- Lowest price point in the county — good for buyers prioritizing land and space
- I-96 provides direct access to Lansing and Detroit
- Small-town feel with a tight local community
- Strong choice for buyers coming from rural backgrounds

The Real Estate Picture

Livingston County is not undiscovered. People have been figuring this out, and the prices reflect that. The county median home value hit **\$356,800 in 2024**, up about 8 percent from the year before.

Area



Source: Zillow ZHVI. Prices change — verify current figures at [zillow.com](https://www.zillow.com) before making decisions.

A few things worth understanding about how this market works:

Homes priced right in Hartland and Genoa Township are still moving quickly — buyer demand is real and consistent.

The county's **86.9% homeownership rate** means you're buying into a community of owners, not renters cycling through. That matters for neighborhood stability.

If you're coming from California, the Pacific Northwest, or the East Coast, the comparison is going to look very different from what you've been dealing with — usually clearly in your favor.

If you're coming from Ohio or Indiana, the prices may feel higher than expected. That's a fair reaction — and it's worth having a specific conversation about your starting point.

- ✓ **The economic trajectory matters as much as the price.** UofM projects Livingston County job growth at 5.6% through end of 2026 vs. 2.9% for Michigan overall.

Schools & Safety

These are the two things that come up in almost every conversation I have with families looking at this area. And Livingston County delivers on both.

Schools

Brighton Area Schools is rated **#25 in Michigan** overall by Niche (2025), and **#6 in the state for athletics**. If your kids are serious about sports, that ranking matters.

Brighton High School ranked **#42 in Michigan** and in the top 1,600 nationally out of ~25,000 high schools (US News 2025).

Hartland High School jumped from **#153 to #69 in Michigan** in a single year. That kind of improvement doesn't happen by accident — that's a district actively investing in results.

School quality is one of the main reasons the income numbers are what they are. Families choosing this county are often specifically choosing it for the schools.

Safety

CrimeGrade.org rates Livingston County in the **99th percentile for overall safety nationally**. Their violent crime index is **10.8** — compared to a national average of 22.7.

Hamburg Township recorded the lowest total crime rate in the entire state of Michigan. **Green Oak Township**, right by Brighton, is in Michigan's top ten safest communities.

For us personally, safety wasn't negotiable when we made this decision. We wanted our girls growing up somewhere we didn't have to think about it. This county delivers on that.

School District Quick Reference

District	Key Ranking	Source
Brighton Area Schools	#25 in Michigan, #6 for Athletics	Niche 2025
Brighton High School	#42 in Michigan, Top 1,600 nationally	US News 2025
Hartland Consolidated Schools	#47 in Michigan (district)	Niche 2025
Hartland High School	#69 in Michigan (up from #153)	US News 2025
Howell Public Schools	Growing enrollment, improving trajectory	Niche 2025
South Lyon Community Schools	Consistently strong, Oakland border market	Niche 2025

Ready to Take the Next Step?

Most families I talk to have spent weeks or months researching on their own before we ever connect. That's totally fine — that's how this works.

When you're ready to have a real conversation about your specific situation — your timeline, your budget, which area actually fits your family — that's what the Zoom call is for. No pitch, no pressure. If we're a good fit to work together, great. And if we're not, I'll still point you in the right direction.



Schedule a Zoom

Book a free call to talk through your timeline, budget, and which area fits your family best.

[Schedule Here](#)



YouTube Channel

Watch Eric Meldrum's videos covering neighborhoods, market updates, & relocation tips for families moving to the area. [Watch Here](#)



Eric Meldrum — Tru Living Group at Real Broker LLC

Helping families relocate to Ann Arbor, Brighton, and the surrounding orbit.