



MACOMB COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN



2014



Mark A. Hackel
County Executive

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Detroit News In Brief Macomb County Parks and Recreation January 9, 2014

C&G Newspapers County officials seek input on parks and rec plan January 14, 2014

Macomb County Board of Commissioners Meeting Agenda January 30, 2014 Public Hearing

Macomb County Board of Commissioners Meeting Minutes January 30, 2014 Public Hearing

**Macomb County Board of Commissioners Infrastructure Committee Meeting Agenda February 25,
2014**

**Macomb County Notice of Public Hearing Parks and Recreation Master Plan Published February 20,
2014 Macomb Daily**

Macomb County Board of Commissioners Meeting Agenda February 27, 2014

Macomb County Board of Commissioners Meeting Minutes February 27, 2014

**Macomb County Board of Commissioners Resolution Adopting Macomb County Parks and Recreation
Master Plan 2014 February 27, 2014**

Transmittal Letter Southeast Michigan Council of Governments

Transmittal Letter Macomb County Department of Planning and Economic Development

Macomb County FY 2011-2016 Parks and Recreation Budget Analysis

Macomb County DNR Past Grant Report

Macomb County Municipal Parks List

Board of Commissioners

2014

RESOLUTION NO.	R14-031
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Official Resolution of the Board of Commissioners
Macomb County, Michigan

A Resolution Adopting Macomb County's Five Year Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Commissioner Jim Carabelli, on Behalf of the Board of Commissioners,
Offers the Following Resolution:

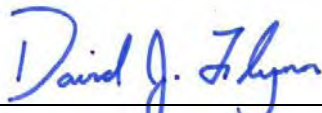
WHEREAS, the County of Macomb has undertaken a Five Year Parks and Recreation Plan which describes the physical features, existing recreation facilities and the desired actions to be taken to improve and maintain recreation facilities during the period between 2014 and 2019; and

WHEREAS, multiple public comment sessions were held throughout Macomb County to provide an opportunity for citizens to express opinions, ask questions, and discuss all aspects of the Recreation Plan including two public hearings on January 30, 2014 and February 27, 2014 Full Board meetings; and

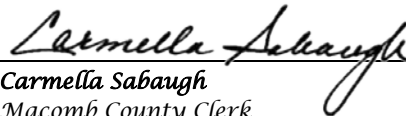
WHEREAS, the County of Macomb has developed the plan for the benefit of the entire community and to adopt the plan as a document to assist in meeting the recreation needs of the community; and

WHEREAS, after the public meeting, the Macomb County Board of Commissioners voted to adopt said Recreation Plan.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED the County of Macomb Board of Commissioners hereby adopts the Macomb County Parks and Recreation Master Plan 2014 as a guideline for improving recreation for the residents of the County of Macomb.



David J. Flynn, Chairman
Macomb County Board of Commissioners



Carmella Sabaugh
Macomb County Clerk


James L. Carabelli, County Commissioner

Passed at 2/27/14 Full Board Meeting

SECTION 1.0

COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION

MACOMB COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN



Community Description

Introduction

The purpose of this comprehensive master plan is to provide parks and recreation opportunities for all Macomb County residents and visitors. This fresh and innovative planning process will take a wide-ranging approach to parks and recreation, which will enable Macomb County to effectively support facilities, programs and services at all levels of government. From municipal parks to regional recreational destinations, Macomb County seeks to engage a wide array of parks and recreation service providers, and to develop inventive and impactful strategies that will lead to a more integrated parks and recreation system.

This comprehensive planning process will also allow Macomb County the opportunity to enhance its presence and role in the administration of parks and recreation services. Macomb County seeks to establish a dynamic organizational and funding structure that will support the County's many parks and recreation assets. Focusing on efficient, effective and ethical service provision, Macomb County seeks to formalize its functions associated with parks and recreation. Under the direction of Macomb County Executive Mark A. Hackel, Macomb County has begun an expansive transformation. Parks and recreation is one of the major program areas that must modernize its operations to better meet the needs of an ever evolving population. Whether it is investing in existing facilities, expanding programming, acquiring new parklands or solidifying stakeholder networks, Macomb County is committed to investing in parks and recreation.

Macomb County understands and appreciates the many communities, departments, organizations and volunteers that continue to provide exceptional parks and recreation experiences throughout the County. In no way does this undertaking seek to diminish or undermine any of the facilities, programs or services currently in operation. This process seeks to enhance and expand on each of our parks and recreation initiatives and develop a contemporary framework that is based on partnership and collaboration. The County seeks to reach across municipal boundaries and generate opportunities for shared services and collective efforts surrounding parks and recreation. The parks and recreation master plan will be a catalyst to uniting common interests and solving frequent concerns. While there is not one single pool of resources or set of policies that will completely satisfy all parks and recreation needs, Macomb County believes that it can leverage initiatives, such as this plan, to garner additional support and interest that will benefit all of Macomb County.

The 2014 Macomb County Parks and Recreation Master Plan follows the State of Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) "Guidelines for the Development of Community Park, Recreation, Open Space, and Greenway Plans". Utilizing this state recommended framework Macomb County will better position itself to implement an engaging range of parks and recreation services. By reaffirming its parks and recreation structure under the DNR Guidelines Macomb County will also reinstate its eligibility to apply for recreation grants from the Natural Resources Trust Fund Act (Part 19 of 1994 PA 451). It is Macomb County's intent to work closely with the State of Michigan to explore any and all funding opportunities that will expand parks and recreation within the County. The County will also work closely with local parks and recreation stakeholders to develop pioneering grant proposals, which will lead to the successful implementation of this master plan and champion intergovernmental cooperation. Ultimately this plan is a commitment by Macomb County to support and prioritize parks and recreation. It is an opportunity for all of Macomb County to showcase its pristine natural beauty and celebrated parks.

Community Description

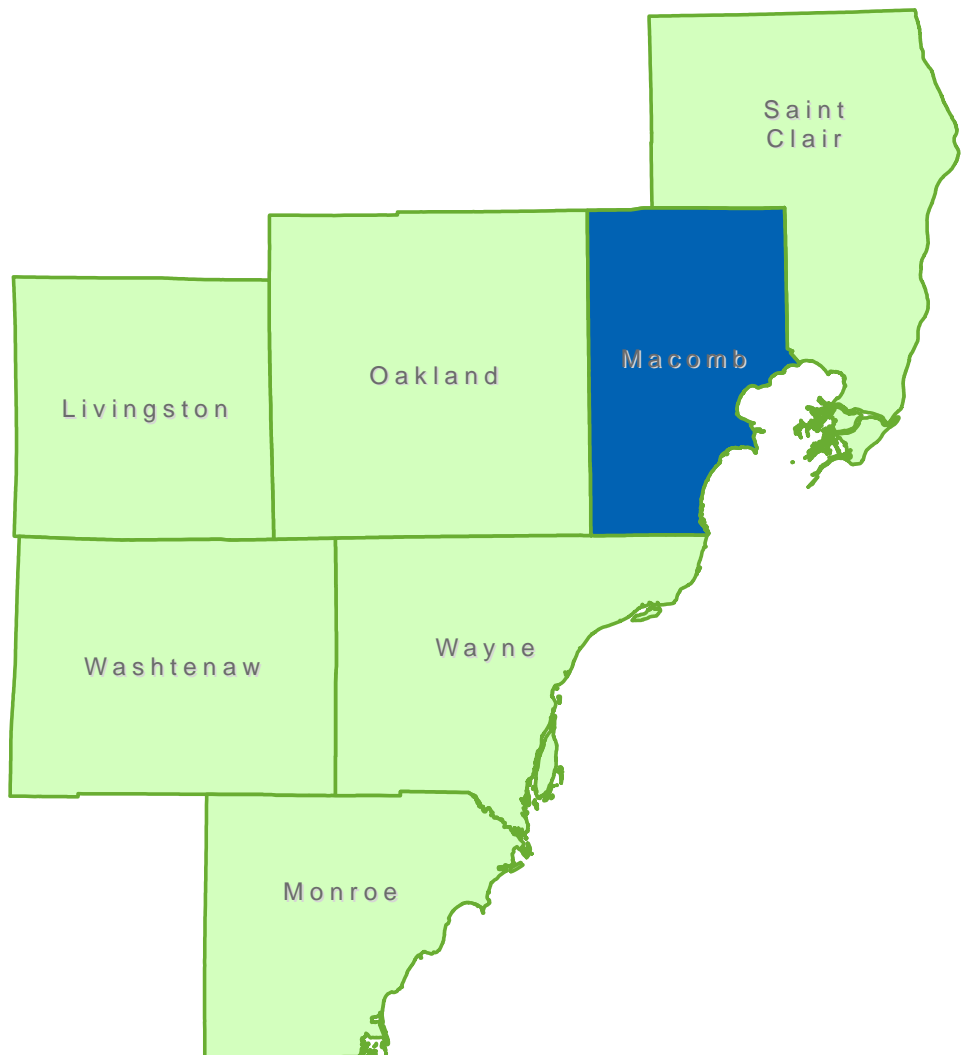
Regional Setting

Macomb County is located in Southeast Michigan. Positioned north of Wayne County and the City of Detroit, east of Oakland County, south of Lapeer County, southwest of St. Clair County and directly west of Lake St. Clair, Macomb County is home to a vast spectrum of people and places. Comprised of 27 local units of government, Macomb County is characterized by dynamic urban clusters, expansive networks of industry, pristine natural features and fruitful agricultural lands. From its densely populated southern cities to its charming rural villages, Macomb County possesses a wealth of assets that makes it a desirable place to live, work and play.

Macomb County is connected to Southeast Michigan through an expansive transportation network. The County is serviced by: two interstates, I-94 and I-696; a series of highways including M-3 Gratiot Avenue, M-97 Groesbeck Highway, M-53 Van Dyke and M-59 Hall Road; a grid-like network of local streets and mile roads; and an expansive non-motorized trail system. This interconnected hierarchy of transportation options provides Macomb County residents and visitors with safe and efficient access to any destination throughout the County.

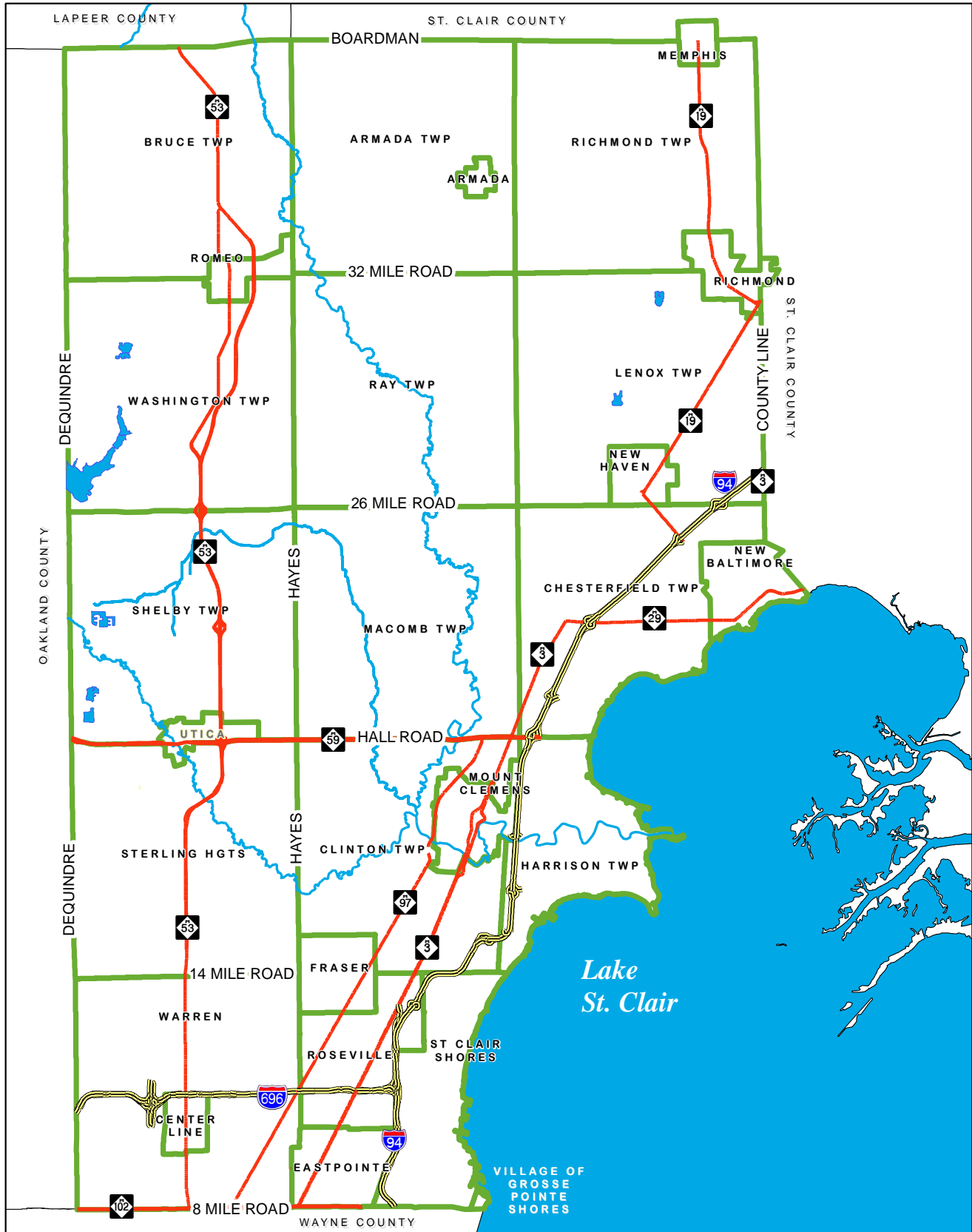
Macomb County's regional setting will play an integral role in this parks and recreation planning process. As the plan is developed, maintained and implemented, Macomb County must be aware of the role it will fulfill in the region. Parks and recreation is not a stand alone service, it is a system. As this system evolves here in Macomb County, it will do the same across the region.

Macomb County Parks Regional Setting



Community Description

Macomb County Communities



Community Description

History

Parks and recreation services have been facilitated by an active and diverse stakeholder network in Macomb County. In the early 1900s local governments were primarily responsible for providing parks and recreation for their communities. Most of these facilities and programs were relatively small local operations consisting of playgrounds, picnic areas and ball fields. These community green spaces served as gathering places for residents and created a safe environment for children to play.

In the mid 1900s, parks and recreation services began to evolve into more comprehensive operations here in Macomb County. With the creation of the Michigan State Park Commission in 1920 and the Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930s, communities began to establish regional parks and recreation destinations. In Macomb County, one of the first regional parks destinations was Dodge State Park No. 8. Administrators sought to establish parks and recreation facilities that had more amenities and space to serve a larger population.

In the 1940s, Southeast Michigan took a major step in committing to parks and recreation with the creation of the Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Parks Authority (HCMA). The citizens of Macomb, Wayne, Oakland, Washtenaw and Livingston Counties approved a regional special parks district under state legislation that created HCMA to oversee the procurement and maintenance of large public park spaces. Using the basins of the Huron and Clinton Rivers as the foundation for this preservation and parks cooperative, HCMA began to target areas and acquire land through funds derived from a property tax levy. By 1950, Macomb County had its cornerstone facility in Lake St. Clair Metropark. This regional parks and recreation destination was bringing Macomb County residents and visitors together on the shores of Lake St. Clair. The next couple of decades would usher in the creation of two more HCMA facilities in Macomb County: Stony Creek Metropark and Wolcott Mill Metropark. As the region began to see the successes of HCMA, Macomb County positioned itself to facilitate additional investments in parks and recreation.

In 1966, Macomb County created a parks and recreation commission to serve the recreational needs of Macomb County residents. One of the first comprehensive steps taken to gauge the residents' wishes and expectations associated with parks and recreation was drafting the 1971 Outdoor Recreation and Open Space Report for Macomb County. This document was created in cooperation with the Macomb County Planning Commission to guide the County's acquisition and development of parkland. Soon after, Macomb County invested in the creation of Freedom Hill County Park in Sterling Heights, which became one of the County's premier destinations. In the 1980s, Macomb County began to explore the benefits of comprehensive environmental stewardship programs and non-motorized trail networks. Macomb County's 1991 Comprehensive Recreation and Open Space Master Plan provided a means for addressing many of the water related concerns with the Clinton River and Lake St. Clair and established opportunities to invest in trails.

In the early 2000s, the County developed the Macomb County Trailways Master Plan and the Macomb Orchard Trail Master Plan. These two documents provided Macomb County with a strategic framework to acquire property and build a non-motorized trail network. By 2007, Macomb County had expanded Freedom Hill, constructed the Macomb Orchard Trail and drafted a new parks master plan. Macomb County now possessed vibrant local parks, regional parks destinations, interconnected non-motorized trails and a network of dedicated administrators and volunteers. Momentum was building across the County for parks and recreation, but in 2008 this momentum was stopped by an economic downturn.

Community Description

As the national, state and local economy began to slip into a recession Macomb County property values headed into a decline. Resources that communities had set aside for parks and recreation were now being siphoned back into general funds to support basic community services. Macomb County was not immune to these municipal ills, and began to make difficult decisions to solve its financial hardships. In early 2010, Macomb County was forced to close Freedom Hill and shutter its Parks and Recreation Department due to a lack of funding. Macomb County was financially unable to provide the services and amenities that it once had, and there was a major void in the regional parks and recreation landscape.

For the better part of three years, Macomb County was unable to commit any funds to facilitate active parks and recreation services for residents and visitors. In 2011, Macomb County residents ushered in a new executive form of government. Mark A. Hackel was elected as Macomb County's first County Executive. Taking the helm, Executive Hackel began to overhaul the County's finances and reinvest in major quality of life initiatives that could enhance the profile of Macomb County. Macomb County was quickly promoting its fresh water assets with the "Blue Economy Initiative" and marketing the County through "Make Macomb Your Home". After two years in office, Executive Hackel began to explore the feasibility of reviving the County's dormant parks and recreation services. In the fall of 2012, he advised the Macomb County Department of Planning and Economic Development (MCPED) to begin the process of updating the 2007 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan. The County's long history of investing in parks and recreation has provided residents and visitors with an immense foundation to build upon. This plan will act as a catalyst to revive the vibrancy and impact Macomb's parks and recreation destinations once had.

Demographic Characteristics

In order to develop a parks and recreation master plan that is both relevant and attainable, a comprehensive demographic and economic analysis is needed. The following sub-sections will highlight a number of demographic and economic benchmarks that are shaping the current and future needs of Macomb County. These trends will undoubtedly have an impact on the provision of parks and recreation services in Macomb County. The population of Macomb County or the household income level alone will not predict the community's future recreational needs. However, the following analysis will incorporate geographic, population, race, age, income, employment and a number of other major community metrics to develop a composite framework for how Macomb County should shape its parks and recreation initiatives.

Population Analysis

Macomb County's population has been steadily increasing since the 1940s. Over the past half decade, the population has risen from nearly 108,000 residents in 1940, to more than 840,000 residents as of the 2010 Census. Currently, the Southeast Michigan Council of Government estimates Macomb County's population at 851,915. This 688% increase in population came in waves from decade to decade, and transformed the County on many fronts.

In the 1940s and 1950s, the appeal of the suburbs began to attract residents and businesses to Macomb County. In two decades Macomb County's population went from just over 100,000 residents to more than 400,000. This first population boom for Macomb County was mainly concentrated in the inner-ring suburban communities surrounding the City of Detroit. Communities like Warren, St. Clair Shores and Eastpointe saw immense gains in population as the residential housing stock in Macomb County began to expand.

Community Description

Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, the massive influx of population into Macomb County continued. Macomb County had established itself as a viable alternative to living in the City of Detroit. Residential development spurred the County's capacity to cater to new residents. As the County's population grew, the need for residents to access services also developed. Commercial and municipal services began to expand throughout the community, as both governmental administrators and investors realized the stability and opportunity of Macomb County living. In one single decade, Macomb County added more than 200,000 residents.

By the 1980s, Macomb County was beginning to see the full impact of suburbanization. The County's northern Townships began to experience unprecedented growth. Communities that once were viewed as rural pastures were now becoming home to thousands of Macomb County residents. In 1990, with a population exceeding 700,000, Macomb County's physical landscape was changing at a staggering rate. Homes, shopping centers, schools, office buildings and municipal complexes were popping up all across Macomb County. By the turn of the millennium Macomb County's population was reaching 800,000 residents, and development on all fronts was booming.

The first decade of the 21st century saw Macomb County reach unimaginable highs and experience troubling lows. From urban cores to rural enclaves Macomb County communities were in the midst of incredible prosperity. Residential development was fortifying community growth with an influx of new residents and a growing tax base. Private business was investing in Macomb County with

new facilities and employment opportunities were growing. Municipal stakeholders were facilitating the expansion of governmental services from infrastructure to social programs. Macomb County now had the third largest population of any County in the State of Michigan, and all major economic indicators were pointing up. Unfortunately, by the second half of 2000s national economic crisis hit Macomb with local impacts. After

Macomb County Population			
Year	Population	Population Change	% Change
1940	107,638	-	-
1950	184,961	77,323	71.84%
1960	405,804	220,843	119.40%
1970	625,309	219,505	54.09%
1980	694,600	69,291	11.08%
1990	717,400	22,800	3.28%
2000	788,149	70,749	9.86%
2010	840,978	52,829	6.70%
2020	869,978	29,000	3.45%
2030	884,865	14,887	1.71%
2040	905,390	20,525	2.32%

Source: Southeast Michigan Council of Governments

Community Description

sustaining over five decades of incredible population increases, growth began to slow. By 2008 the nation was in the grips of a staggering recession, and Macomb County was not immune to the ill effects of this economic slow down. Residential development came to a screeching halt, and so too did the County’s grand population increases.

By the 2010 United States Decennial Census, Macomb County’s population had reached 840,978 individuals. This was an increase from previous population counts; however the incredible rate of population increases experienced throughout the 60s, 70s, 80s and 90s was no longer sustainable. The County’s population is projected to continue its upward trend over the next couple decades. By 2040, the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments projects Macomb County’s population to reach 905,000 residents. The last four decades of the 20th century ushered in a 94% increase in population for Macomb County from 405,000 to 788,000 individuals. Comparatively, population growth over the first four decades of the 21st century is expected to increase 14%. Macomb County’s population will continue to increase over the next three decades, but at a more subtle rate. The sheer number of residents that reside in a County alone does not provide an adequate analysis of population trends. Population distribution is a valuable analysis to perform. Analyzing the distribution of residents across communities over time illustrates migration patterns and trends in community formation. The distribution of population across Macomb County will provide valuable insight into facilitating parks and recreation.

Population by Community Clusters

Macomb County is comprised of 27 local units of government. By simply stating Macomb County’s population is 852,915 residents, the County does not adequately illustrate the dynamic nature of its residents and communities. In order to illustrate the true impact of the County’s population, it is beneficial to analyze the distribution of Macomb’s residents by community clusters based on location and similar built/natural environments. The following analysis will link each of Macomb County’s 27 communities into three core Community Clusters: Urban Core; Suburban Cluster; and Rural District.

Macomb County Population by Community Cluster

	1990	% of Total Pop.	2000	% of Total Pop.	2010	% of Total Pop.
Urban Core	322,696	44.98%	307,457	39.01%	296,328	35.24%
Suburban Cluster	354,919	49.47%	426,916	54.16%	481,002	57.20%
Rural District	39,785	5.55%	53,776	6.82%	63,648	7.57%
Total Population	717,400	100.00%	788,149	100.00%	840,978	100.00%

Urban Core

Macomb County’s Urban Core includes the following communities: Warren; St. Clair Shores; Roseville; Eastpointe; Fraser; Center Line; and the Village of Grosse Pointe Shores. These 7 communities are characterized

Community Description

as some of the first inner-ring communities surrounding the City of Detroit. This municipal cluster experienced immense population growth during the mid-1900s, due to the migration of individuals and industry out of the City of Detroit. Today, Macomb County's Urban Core is home to some of the County's most established residential neighborhoods, parks and schools. These communities offer a wide array of parks and recreation facilities. Population growth has tapered off in these communities over the past 3 decades. In 1990, these seven communities housed nearly 45% of Macomb County's population, and in 2010 that number dropped to 35%. As Macomb County's population increased, so too did the ability for individuals to access a wider array of housing options in communities located further north. Development and migration patterns soon strengthened the cluster of communities from 14 Mile Road to 26 Mile Road. These communities would become the foundation of Macomb County's Suburban Cluster.

Urban Core Population Analysis

Urban Core	1990	2000	2010
Warren	144,864	138,247	134,056
St Clair Shores	68,107	63,096	59,715
Roseville	51,412	48,129	47,299
Eastpointe	35,283	34,077	32,442
Fraser	13,899	15,297	14,480
Center Line	9,026	8,531	8,257
Grosse Pointe Shores	105	80	79
Urban Core	322,696	307,457	296,328

Suburban Cluster

The Suburban Cluster encapsulates the following municipalities: Sterling Heights; Clinton Township; Shelby Township; Chesterfield Township; Harrison Township; Macomb Township; Mt. Clemens; Washington Township; New Baltimore; and the City of Utica. This cluster of 9 communities is characterized by expansive residential developments, regional shopping centers, historical cities and industrial hubs. Beginning in the 1980s, population in a majority of the Suburban Cluster municipalities began to soar. Anchored by immense residential development and the services needed to support this new population base, these suburban communities began to rise in size and stature. Present day Macomb County's Suburban Cluster is home to some of Michigan's largest and fastest growing communities. In 1990 Macomb County's Suburban Cluster accounted for just over 49% of the County's population. By 2010 that number reached over 57% of the County's population. This growth has spurred an expansion of infrastructure and municipal services, which has supported an incredible wealth of parks and recreation amenities. With incredible natural features and expansive regional parks Macomb County's

Community Description

Suburban Cluster offers a vast spectrum of parks and recreation experiences. Together the County’s Suburban Cluster and Urban Core account for over 92% of the County’s population. The remaining nearly 8% live in Macomb County’s Rural District.

Suburban Cluster Population Analysis

Suburban Cluster	1990	2000	2010
Sterling Heights	117,810	124,471	129,699
Clinton Township	85,866	95,648	96,796
Shelby Township	48,655	65,159	73,804
Chesterfield Township	25,905	37,405	43,381
Harrison Township	24,685	24,461	24,587
Macomb Township	22,714	50,478	79,580
Mt Clemens	18,405	17,312	16,314
New Baltimore	5,798	7,405	12,084
Utica	5,081	4,577	4,757
Suburban Cluster	354,919	426,916	481,002

Rural District

Macomb County’s Rural District includes 11 communities: Washington Township; Bruce Township; City of Richmond; Village of Romeo; Ray Township; Lenox Township; Armada Township; Richmond Township; Village of New Haven; Village of Armada; and the City of Memphis. Characterized by agriculturally dominated townships and vibrant small towns, Macomb County’s Rural District boasts pristine natural features, expansive farm operations and charming villages and cities. Unlike its Urban and Suburban counterparts Macomb County’s Rural District has limited water and sewer infrastructure, which restricts the scope and density of development. This lack of infrastructure has provided the Rural District with the opportunity to focus on agricultural heritage and cultivating strategic “placemaking” initiatives. The six townships located in the Rural District are members of the Macomb Agricultural Purchase of Development Rights Committee. This intergovernmental agreement seeks to preserve active farmland and ensure land remains available for agricultural uses. The Rural District is also the epicenter for many of Macomb County’s historic rural hamlets. From the Victorian styling of the Village of Romeo to the innovative streetscape in the Village of Armada, these small villages and cities are cultivating small business and orchestrating communitywide social gatherings. The Rural District is home to some of Macomb County’s most expansive regional park destinations including Stony Creek Metropark, Wolcott Mill Metropark

Community Description

and W.C. Wetzel State Recreational Area. Macomb County also operates the Macomb Orchard Trail, a 24 mile linear park and trailway in this area. Population in Macomb’s Rural District has been steadily increasing since 1990, when the population of these 11 communities was almost 40,000. By 2010 that number reached over 63,000 residents accounting for nearly 8% of the County’s total population.

Rural District Population Analysis

Rural District	1990	2000	2010
Washington Township	11,386	17,122	23,296
Bruce Township	4,193	6,395	6,947
City of Richmond	4,141	4,896	5,733
Village of Romeo	3,520	3,721	3,596
Ray Township	3,230	3,740	3,739
Lenox Township	3,069	5,362	5,828
Armada Township	2,943	3,673	3,649
Richmond Township	2,528	3,416	3,665
Village of New Haven	2,331	3,071	4,642
Village of Armada	1,548	1,573	1,730
Memphis	896	807	823
Rural District	39,785	53,776	63,648

Age

Age is an essential demographic indicator when planning for parks and recreation. The age compositions of a community allow parks and recreation stakeholders to better gauge and implement activities that are tailored to current and future users. When we analyze the age breakdown of a community, we can better determine the appropriate mix of parks and recreation services needed to serve the public. For example, a community with a younger population may seek to invest in more active parks and recreation amenities including playgrounds and ball fields. A community with an increasingly elderly population may need additional passive recreational amenities including walking trails and activity centers. Ultimately, any community establishing a comprehensive parks and recreation system would benefit from a balanced system of amenities that provides access to all users regardless of age or ability.

Community Description

In 1990, Macomb County's median age was 33.9, by 2000 it increased to 36.9, and in 2010 it reached 39.9. Macomb County is not alone in this pronounced increase in median age with the State of Michigan and the nation also witnessing steady increases in median age. This steep increase in median age highlights an elderly demographic trend that is being spurred by larger portions of Macomb County residents transitioning into the later stages of life.

When analyzing Macomb County's population by United State Census Bureau 5-year age groups, the aging trend facing the County becomes more apparent. From 2000 to 2010 Macomb County saw every age group over the age of 45 increase.

Macomb County Population Change by Age Groups					
	2000		2010		Change 2000-2010
Age	Number	%	Number	%	
Under 5	51,062	6.48%	48,815	5.80%	-2,247
5 to 9 years	54,125	6.87%	52,758	6.27%	-1,367
10 to 14 years	53,865	6.83%	56,245	6.69%	2,380
15 to 19 years	48,685	6.18%	56,807	6.75%	8,122
20 to 24 years	44,772	5.68%	49,511	5.89%	4,739
25 to 34 years	115,714	14.68%	101,393	12.06%	-14,321
35 to 44 years	132,503	16.81%	118,439	14.08%	-14,064
45 to 54 years	108,261	13.74%	132,855	15.80%	24,594
55 to 59 years	40,135	5.09%	56,646	6.74%	16,511
60 to 64 years	31,376	3.98%	47,329	5.63%	15,953
65 to 74 years	55,980	7.10%	61,092	7.26%	5,112
75 to 84 years	39,782	5.05%	40,803	4.85%	1,021
85 years and over	11,889	1.51%	18,285	2.17%	6,396
Total	788,149	100.00%	840,978	100.00%	

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Community Description

The largest increases were seen in the 45 to 54 years (24,594 residents), 55 to 59 years (16,511 residents), and 60 to 64 years (15,953 residents). With these increases in elderly age groups, Macomb County's 45+ residents now account for more than 42% of the County's population. During this past decade the County experienced sizable decreases in middle aged and youth age groups. The 25 to 34 years and 35 to 44 years age groups both lost more than 14,000 since 2000. Macomb County also saw declines in residents less than 5 years of age, and residents' age 5 to 9 years, a net loss of more than 3,500 residents. These population trends by age group affirm the County's aging phenomenon. Macomb County is experiencing more of its residents entering the later stages of the lifecycle. In the past, these numbers were offset by births and in-migration of young families, but current demographic patterns suggest that Macomb County will continue to age at an increasing rate.

Age by Lifecycle Category

Combining residents into lifecycle categories by age groups provides a more relatable synopsis of Macomb County's population. By taking census age groups and combining them into larger lifecycle categories, the County can analyze its population using larger cohort groups that closely resemble identifiable stages of a normal human lifecycle. Selected categories and the age intervals that they represent include: pre-school (Under 5), school (5-19), young adult (20-24), family formation (25-44), middle-age (45-64), and seniors (65+). Each lifecycle category is a useful indicator of population trends and community needs. For example, a rise in pre-school and school age categories would strengthen a community's youth population, thus leading to facilities, programs and services that would cater to children and young families. An increase in middle-age and senior categories would position a community to explore opportunities for senior citizen service expansion and aging in place initiatives.

Age By Lifecycle Category Analysis						
Macomb County						
	1990		2000		2010	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Pre-School (Under 5)	48,914	6.82%	51,062	6.48%	48,815	5.80%
School (5-19)	142,682	19.89%	156,675	19.88%	165,810	19.72%
Young Adult (20-24)	53,688	7.48%	44,772	5.68%	49,511	5.89%
Family Formation (25-44)	236,119	32.91%	248,217	31.49%	219,832	26.14%
Middle-Age (45-64)	147,540	20.57%	179,772	22.81%	236,830	28.16%
Seniors (65+)	88,457	12.33%	107,651	13.66%	120,180	14.29%
Total	717,400		788,149		840,978	

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

The pre-school, school, young adult and family formation lifecycle categories are essential to the growth and stability of a community's population base. A community that can establish a strong foundation of families with children, a core group of young adults and attract new residents will position itself to have sustainable gains in population. More households can create an environment for more schools and business opportunities. Since 1990, Macomb County has seen uneven gains in these four lifecycle groups. Currently, these four lifecycle categories account for more than 57% of the County's total population. This is a considerable portion of the county's population, but this number has decreased since 1990. In 1990, these four lifecycle groups accounted

Community Description

for more than 67% of the County's population. This 10% drop can be attributed to the fact that the only one of these four groups that increased over the past two decades was the school aged children, which increased by more than 23,000 individuals. During this same time period, the pre-school, young adult and family formation categories dropped by a combined 20,563 residents. This illustrates a net gain in population for these four categories of more than 2,500 residents; however, this gain is not enough to offset the immense increase in the middle-age and senior categories.

The middle-age and senior lifecycle categories have considerable impact on a community's service provision network. From senior citizen services to a comprehensive network of wellness and healthcare providers, as these two lifecycle categories increase so too will the need for public service. In 2010, the middle-age and senior lifecycle categories account for nearly 43% of the County's total population. This number is up from just 32% in 1990. In two decades, Macomb County residents entering middle-age and senior status have increased by more than 121,000 residents. These numbers confirm the aging trend that was highlighted in the previous section. Macomb County is aging, and this demographic surge is going to drive not only the needs of parks and recreation services, but the whole spectrum of social and governmental services.

Gender, Race and Ethnicity

Gender, race and ethnicity are three important demographic factors to consider when planning for parks and recreation. Exploring the diversity of a community will highlight the ever changing nature of the places we call home, and the continuing need to ensure that all residents feel welcome and engaged. Parks and recreation can play an integral role in supporting unity and inclusion. From local little leagues to regional cultural festivals, parks and recreation services can build stronger communities that engage all residents.

Macomb County's gender breakdown is evenly distributed between males and females. In 2010, Macomb County's population was comprised of 432,266 females and 408,712 males, 51.4% and 48.6% of the total population respectively.

Macomb County 2010 Gender Analysis		
	Number	%
Females	432,266	51.40%
Males	408,712	48.60%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

The racial composition of Macomb County has transformed over the past decade. In 2000, 92% of Macomb County residents identified themselves as white. The largest minority group at that time was Black or African American residents at 2.7% of the population. The County's Asian population was just over 2%, and the Hispanic or Latino population peaked at 1.5%. In a little over a decade, these figures quickly changed. The 2010 Census highlighted Macomb County's emerging racial diversity. In 2010, 85% of Macomb County's residents were white. This is still a considerable majority; however the County saw significant gains in its minority population. The County's Black or African American population went from 21,326 residents in 2000, to 72,723 residents in 2010. Black or African American residents now account for more than 8% of Macomb County's population.

Community Description

The County's Hispanic and Asian populations also increased over the past decade, currently representing 2.27% and 2.98% of County residents respectively. As Macomb County has continued to grow, so too has its racial diversity. With safe neighborhoods, great schools, expansive parks and responsive public service, Macomb County continues to be a welcoming and prosperous place that people want to call their home. The diversification seen in Macomb County's racial composition can also be seen in the County's various ethnic groups.

Macomb County Race Analysis				
	2000		2010	
	Number	%	Number	%
White	730,270	92.66%	717,973	85.37%
Black or Africa American	21,326	2.71%	72,723	8.65%
American Indian and Alaska Native	2,478	0.31%	2,646	0.31%
Asian	16,843	2.14%	25,063	2.98%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	178	0.02%	179	0.02%
Some Other Race	3,106	0.39%	4,760	0.57%
Two or More Races	13,948	1.77%	17,634	2.10%
Total	788,149	100.00%	840,978	100.00%
Macomb County Hispanic/Latino Analysis				
	Number	%	Number	%
Hispanic or Latino	12,435	1.58%	19,095	2.27%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Macomb County has always welcomed ethnically diverse populations. This tradition of acceptance and understanding of diverse cultures can be seen in the County's continued commitment to supporting ethnic celebrations, cultural centers and community based ethnic service institutions. Macomb County's largest ancestry groups have been predominately of Western European decent. German, Polish, Italian and Irish people have continually integrated themselves into Macomb County. Recently, Macomb County has seen an increase in ancestry groups of Middle Eastern decent. The County's Assyrian/Chaldea/Syriac, Iraqi and Lebanese ancestry groups have increased considerably over the past decade. This diverse pool of ancestry groups continues to change on a daily basis as more people look to Macomb County as a place to live, work and play. Regardless of gender, race or cultural background, Macomb County continues to illustrate its capacity to welcome all people.

Community Description

Macomb County Top 20 Ethnic Groups					
2000			2010		
Ethnic Group	Number	%	Ethnic Group	Number	%
German	189,358	24.03%	Other Ancestries	124,908	14.91%
Polish	150,900	19.15%	German	121,900	14.56%
Italian	108,752	13.80%	Polish	116,964	13.97%
Irish	93,819	11.90%	Italian	88,393	10.55%
Other Ancestries	70,298	8.92%	Irish	53,210	6.35%
English	64,018	8.12%	English	39,272	4.69%
French (except Basque)	46,401	5.89%	American	34,352	4.10%
American	30,411	3.86%	French (except Basque)	24,925	2.98%
French Canadian	20,533	2.61%	French Canadian	12,126	1.45%
Scottish	18,412	2.34%	Assyrian/Chaldean/Syriac	11,874	1.42%
Belgian	17,581	2.23%	Scottish	11,463	1.37%
Scotch-Irish	10,775	1.37%	Belgian	10,573	1.26%
Dutch	10,463	1.33%	Albanian	10,003	1.19%
Assyrian/Chaldean/Syriac	9,356	1.19%	Scotch-Irish	8,119	0.97%
Lebanese	8,380	1.06%	Dutch	5,543	0.66%
Ukrainian	8,228	1.04%	Iraqi	5,509	0.66%
Hungarian	7,582	0.96%	Greek	5,483	0.65%
Greek	7,436	0.94%	Lebanese	5,399	0.64%
Albanian	7,183	0.91%	Yugoslavian	5,260	0.63%
Russian	6,635	0.84%	Ukrainian	4,839	0.58%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Community Description

Disability Analysis

Planned improvements to the County’s park and recreation system should consider the needs of all population groups. Individuals with disabilities are one of the key groups that community leaders and parks administrators need to account for when planning for parks and recreation. Information on disability status of the population was collected from the 2010 United States Census. In 2010 Macomb County had 110,401 residents that reported having some form of disability. Encompassing 13% of the County’s population, residents with disabilities were represented in each age demographic. The largest concentration of residents with disabilities was individuals aged 18 to 64 years, with 58,295 residents. As Macomb County continues to expand its parks and recreation network, administrators must ensure that all residents and visitors, regardless of ability, have full and free access to facilities, programs and services.

Macomb County 2010 Disability Analysis							
Under 5		5 to 17 years		18 to 64 years		65 years and over	
# With Disabilities	% of total Pop. Under 5	# With Disabilities	% of total Pop. 5 to 17	# With Disabilities	% of total Pop. 18 to 64	# With Disabilities	% of total Pop. 65+
386	0.80%	8,114	5.60%	58,295	11.10%	43,606	37.20%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Community and Economic Characteristics

The population counts and demographic analysis above provides a valuable foundation for parks and recreation planning. The number, composition and characteristics of Macomb County residents illustrate many impactful trends that will steer parks and recreation stakeholders to make more informed decisions. In order to refine this analysis many community based characteristics must be analyzed. Incorporating housing, land use, labor force and other economic indicators will illustrate a community’s capacity to support parks and recreation investments.

Household Profile

The above population analysis highlights Macomb County’s rising population. As the number of County residents has increased over the past decade, so too has the County’s housing stock. In 2000, Macomb County had just over 320,000 housing units. By 2011, the number of housing units in Macomb County had increased to more than 356,000. This substantial increase of more than 30,000 housing units has altered the composition of Macomb’s County’s households.

Macomb County 2011 Housing Units		
Occupied Housing Units	330,452	92.70%
Vacant Housing Units	25,911	7.30%
Total Housing Units	356,363	100.00%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Community Description

A household consists of people who occupy a housing unit. In 2000, Macomb County had more than 309,000; by 2011 this number reached over 330,000 households. Currently, 77% of the County's households are owner-occupied, while 22% are renter occupied.

As the number of households has increased, the County's average household size has been relatively unchanged. In 2000 the average household size in Macomb County was 2.52 individuals. In 2010, it dropped slightly to 2.51 residents per household, but by 2011 it rose again to 2.52. This stability in average household size can be attributed to the number of family households in Macomb County. In 2011, Macomb County has 221,640 family households, by far the largest household type in the County.

Macomb County 2011 Occupied Housing Analysis		
Owner-occupied	256,695	77.70%
Renter-occupied	73,757	22.30%
Occupied Housing Units	330,452	100.00%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Macomb County 2011 Household Type	
Household Type	Total
Family Households	221,640
Married Couple Family	168,309
Male householder, no wife present, family	13,869
Female Householder, no husband present, family	39,462
Nonfamily Households	108,812
Total Households	330,452

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

The economic characteristics of households also impact parks and recreation opportunities within a community. Household income levels illustrate varying degrees of economic stability within a community. The distribution of income levels within a community can assist parks and recreation stakeholders with better administering an appropriate slate of services. For example, if a community has a greater concentration of households with higher income levels, there is a higher likelihood of a more robust tax-base to be leveraged for parks and recreation services. Higher income levels also illustrate a greater ability to participate in a wider range of recreation activities, especially those with associated fees. A concentration of households earning lower income levels limits a municipal tax base and the ability to leverage fee based parks and recreation services.

Community Description

Macomb County's 2011 median household income was \$54,078, which is higher than the State and national rates at \$45,981 and \$50,502 respectively. In Macomb County, the largest household income category is households with an income of \$50,000 to \$74,999, encompassing 19.3% of all households. When analyzing the extremes of the household income spectrum, 20.8% of County households earn less than \$25,000 annually, while 34.2% of households earn more than \$75,000 annually. The median household income rates for Macomb County highlights the County's viable residential base.

Labor Force

A community's labor force is an essential community characteristic to analyze when gauging economic vitality. The more robust labor force a community possesses, the more opportunity there is for local economic prosperity. As a local economy grows, the community has the ability to invest in many community and cultural amenities including parks and recreation services. For Macomb County, the past decade has been plagued by labor force volatility. In 2000, Macomb County had more than 407,000 individuals in the civilian labor force. Of those 407,000, 95.8% of the labor force was employed. This left the County with an unemployment rate of less than 5%. By 2010, Macomb County's unemployment rate had risen to more than 14%.

Macomb County 2011 Household Analysis		
Total Households	330,452	
Less than \$10,000	18,220	5.50%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	16,159	4.90%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	34,266	10.40%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	36,566	11.10%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	47,564	14.40%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	63,876	19.30%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	46,925	14.20%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	45,837	13.90%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	14,018	4.20%
\$200,000 or more	7,021	2.10%
Median household income (dollars)	\$54,078	

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Macomb County Labor Force Characteristics		
	2000	2010
Civilian Labor Force	407,716	434,580
Employed	390,791	371,675
Unemployed	16,925	62,905

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Community Description

This was an alarming increase; however in that same time period, Macomb County's civilian labor force increased by nearly 27,000 individuals to 434,580. Present day Macomb County's unemployment rate is hovering around 9%, with the labor force just shy of 400,000 individuals.

Community Land Use and Natural Features

The composition and distribution of land uses has a profound impact on planning for parks and recreation. As a community begins to strategize where to best invest in parks and recreation, it is imperative to analyze and understand the complexities of development patterns, environmentally significant areas and community activity nodes. This synopsis will better aide stakeholders in creating parks and recreation opportunities that are appropriately sited, developed and managed. As development and conservation patterns evolve in Macomb County, so too will the size, scale and service area of our parks and recreation assets.

Land Use

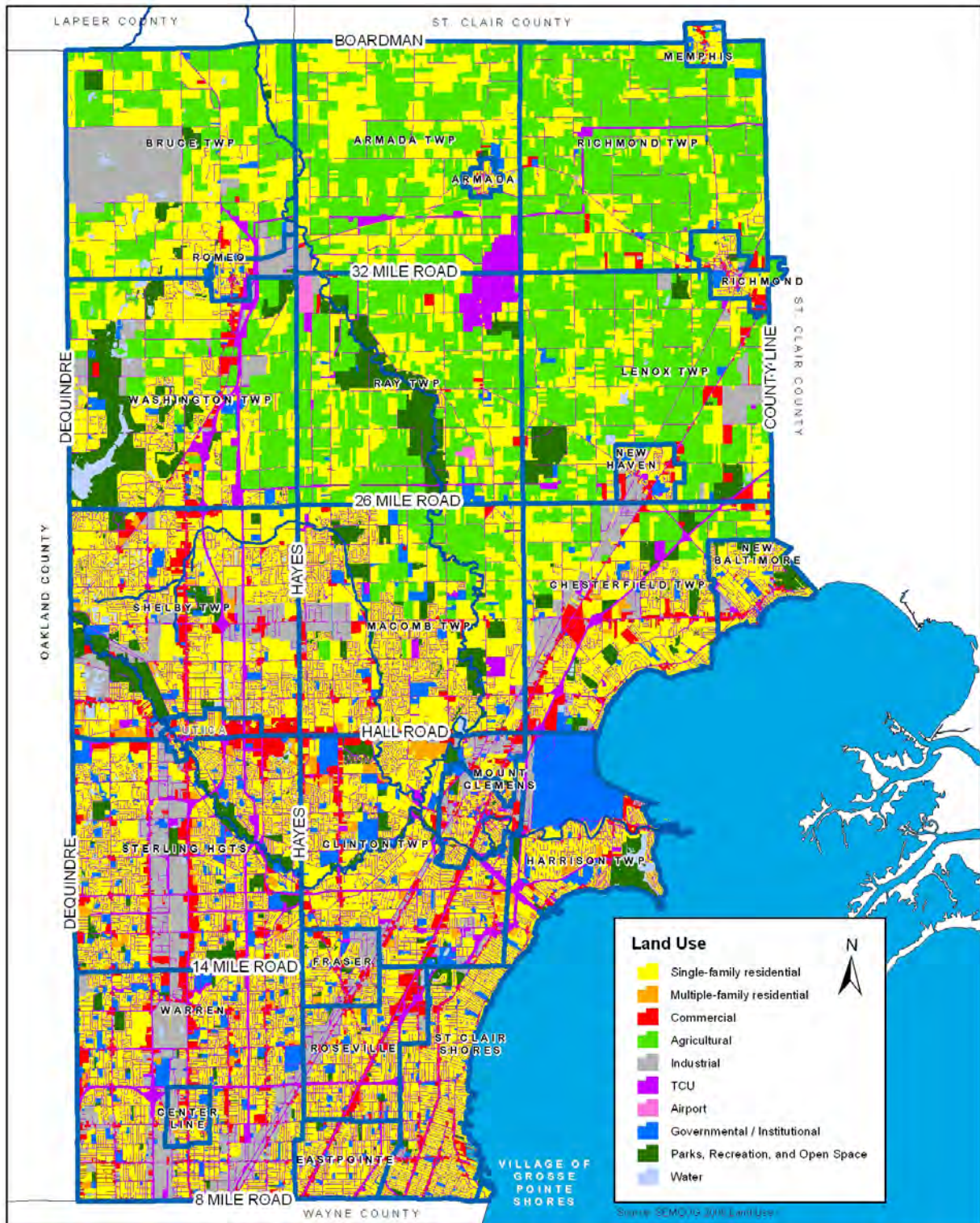
Macomb County possesses a vibrant mix of land uses. With 27 unique and dynamic communities, Macomb County's landscape is filled with a wide spectrum of uses ranging from dense urban settings to expansive rural areas. In total, Macomb County is comprised of 310,372 acres of land. The largest land use classification in Macomb County is Single-Family Residential, which accounts for 126,925 acres, 40.89% of the total land area. The County also possesses a mix of Multiple-Family Residential opportunities, accounting for 3,958 acres, 1.28% of the total land area. Altogether residential uses cover more than 42% of Macomb County's landscape. From upscale estate communities to contemporary apartment style development, Macomb County is flush with residential opportunities that meet all lifestyle needs and price points. The predominance of residential uses illustrates the County's ability to sustain and attract residents. With such a vibrant mix of housing options, Macomb County has a stable residential base that will support community-based investments in parks and recreation services. This foundation of residential land has made the County rich with areas to integrate parks and recreation facilities. Macomb County can continue to leverage its residential base to advance parks and recreation by integrating parks, conservation areas and trails into residential developments.

The second largest land use category in Macomb County is land zoned for agricultural purposes. Farms, orchards and other agricultural production operations account for 71,690 acres of land. Totaling 23% of the County's total land, the agricultural uses are mostly located in the County's rural district. Macomb County's agricultural assets are producing fresh foods and preserving fruitful soils. From rolling fields of wheat and corn to bicentennial fruit orchards, Macomb County has a critical mass of agricultural uses that promote environmental sustainability and local economic vitality.

The County also exhibits an abundance of land zoned for parks, recreation and open space encompassing 17,642 acres. Macomb County is flush with parks and recreation destinations. From quaint neighborhood parks, to regional recreation destinations, the County has a robust network of facilities that are engaging residents and visitors. Tracts of open space are predominately located in the County's Rural District providing pristine areas highlighting the County's natural beauty. The County's open space clusters intermingle with prime agricultural areas. The following parks and recreation inventory section will provide a more in-depth analysis of the County's parks, recreation and open space assets. This collection of property not only provides Macomb County with a great number of existing parks and recreation assets, but also as important an ability to explore and invest in additional services, facilities and programs that will expand the current parks and recreation uses.

Community Description

Macomb County Land Use



Community Description

Commercial and industrial nodes are also situated throughout Macomb County. Land zoned for commercial uses makes up 14,569 acres, 4.69% of total land area. Encompassing regional shopping centers along major thoroughfares, local neighborhood convenience centers and unique boutiques nestled in historic downtowns, the County's land dedicated to commercial development is diverse in scope and size. Industrial uses are also integrated into Macomb County's landscape. With 20,770 acres (6.69% of the total land area) zoned for industrial uses, Macomb County boasts major manufacturing facilities and technologically advanced research and development labs. Together, commercial and industrial uses provide residents with daily retail needs, professional services and employment for thousands of individuals. These hubs of commerce and community act as major economic generators and provide opportunities for the County to grow.

Macomb County also has a wealth of government and institutional uses. With award winning schools, sprawling hospital campuses and government facilities, Macomb County possesses 13,992 acres of these uses, 4.49% of the total land area. These community-based operations are integral to the future prosperity of Macomb County. Schools act as community meeting places and provide parks and recreation opportunities ranging from gymnasiums to playgrounds. Hospitals provide health and wellness initiatives that can lead to a more active and healthy population. Government at all levels is responsible for facilitating parks and recreation. As our communities grow, it is imperative that government and institutional uses remain viable community resources.

Natural Features

Macomb County possesses a wealth of natural features and environmentally significant areas. From freshwater assets to pristine woodlands, the County offers outdoor enthusiasts a diverse and lush landscape to explore and appreciate. The centerpiece of Macomb County's natural features is Lake St. Clair. The lake covers 440 square miles of area and provides the County with 32 miles of freshwater coastline. As the gathering place of the Great Lakes, Lake St. Clair is a haven for recreational boating and fishing and is populated with a number of regional and local parks.

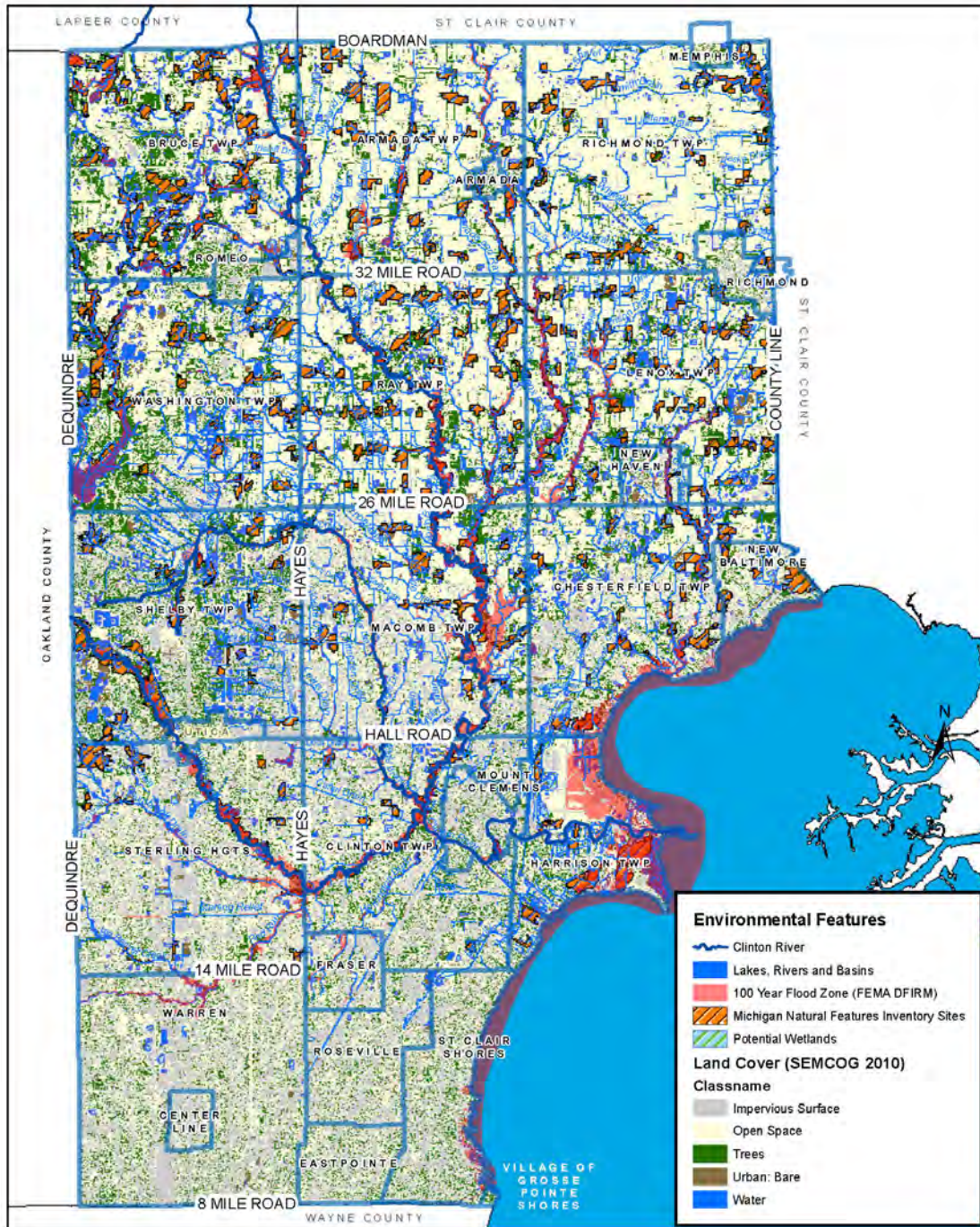
Meandering through Macomb County and feeding into Lake St. Clair is the Clinton River. This prime natural watercourse is anchored by the Main Branch which is 81.5 miles long. The river is home to a variety of wildlife species, such as the great blue heron, beaver, muskrat, mink, fox and at least 59 species of native fish. The Clinton River also boasts an elevation drop of approximately 450 feet from its headwaters to the mouth, making it an excellent river for paddle sports. The River is part of a larger watershed that is flush with additional ecological features. The Clinton River Watershed encompasses 760 square miles, and has more than 1,000 miles of streams and hundreds of lakes and ponds. More than 1.5 million people in 63 communities live in the Clinton River Watershed, making it the most populous river basin in the State of Michigan. This robust network of lakes, rivers, streams, ponds and drains provides Macomb County with ecological and quality of life advantages. From its breathtaking vistas to its inviting water activities, Lake St. Clair and the Clinton River Watershed possess an abundance of features that can enhance parks and recreation facilities, services and programs.

Beyond its freshwater resources, Macomb County's landscape is also populated with a number of other engaging natural features. The County has a number of unique conservation areas inland. These areas catalogued by the Michigan Natural Features Inventory (MNFI) identify "potential conservation areas" that are dominated by native vegetation, water features and unique natural environments. In Macomb County, these environmentally significant areas are located predominately in the Suburban Cluster and Rural District. These natural hubs are nestled along the banks of the Clinton River, the coast of Lake St. Clair, hidden in rolling agricultural areas

Community Description

and anchored by undisturbed woodlands. These environmentally significant locations lend themselves to conservation and parks initiatives because of the complexities associated with developing these areas. When integrated into comprehensive environmental and recreational planning strategies, these areas can highlight Macomb County's natural beauty and provide pristine areas for residents and visitors.

Macomb County Environmental Features



Community Description

Demographic and Land Use Considerations

The information gathered in the preceding demographic and land use analysis will act as the foundation for parks and recreation planning. The analysis provides a broad overview of Macomb County and the many opportunities to invest in parks and recreation facilities and programs. The single most impactful conclusion is the steady increase in population Macomb County continues to experience. With a stable influx on new residents, Macomb County has the ability to leverage gains in population into additional households and business investment. These increases will provide the County and local municipalities with an expanding tax base, which can then be utilized to strategically invest in parks and recreation amenities. From a community perspective, as new residents begin to integrate themselves into Macomb County, parks and recreation programs and facilities can be a vibrant link to their new home. A continued commitment to parks and recreation can enhance the desirability of the County and strengthen civic pride. As population grows, so too should the County's commitment to parks and recreation.

The population analysis also highlighted a substantial increase in the County's senior population. This is a significant demographic trend that will have a profound impact on parks and recreation services. As the county, region and state begin to experience increased numbers in their senior population, it is imperative that government, at all levels, continue to engage this growing segment of the population. Macomb County's senior citizens have invested in this County for decades. From raising families to owning homes and frequenting local businesses, these individuals have remained committed to making Macomb their home. Parks and recreation services can be a viable community service to ensure our seniors remain dynamic members of society. Scenic parks, walking paths, wellness programs and other passive recreational services will provide seniors and our communities with impactful amenities for all generations. Macomb County can target its increasing senior population with programs and services that will allow residents to age in place and create multi-generational communities that cater to the needs of all residents.

From a land use development perspective, the community description illustrated a number of interesting trends. The abundant residential land use supplies Macomb County with a critical mass of potential parks and recreation users. From traditional neighborhood development nestled along historic main streets to expansive subdivision developments drawing in new residents, Macomb County has the ability to target residential clusters for parks and recreation investments. Making parks and recreation facilities more accessible to residential clusters will provide residents with a higher likelihood to connect to them. The County also possesses a wealth of existing parks and recreation facilities at the local, county, regional and state level. Targeting these existing uses provides a beneficial starting point to prioritize parks and recreation investments. The subsequent sections of this document will extensively catalogue these assets, and demonstrate the advantage of targeting these facilities for continued programming and events. One final characteristic that will be useful to the future success of Macomb County's park and recreation strategy is the amount of open space in the County. With large tracts of undisturbed natural areas and agricultural land, Macomb County can target properties for conservation and environmental activities.

As each day passes, the data and characteristics from this community description will transform. Regardless of the demographic trends or community development strategies, Macomb County must ensure that parks and recreation is a priority. Parks and recreation programs and facilities are a prime ingredient in the future prosperity of Macomb County. Every community has housing, business and infrastructure. However, not every community has regional parks, freshwater resources, regional concert amphitheatre or hunting and fishing

Community Description

venues. A pledge to parks and recreation provides Macomb County with the ability to set itself apart from its neighboring counties. This plan is the first step in a commitment to focus on parks and recreation. The following sections will provide Macomb County, and its parks and recreation stakeholders, with a viable framework to fortify parks and recreation.

SECTION 2.0

ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

MACOMB COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN



Administrative Structure

The planning and implementation of a comprehensive parks, recreation and open space strategy cannot be accomplished without a cohesive administrative structure. A network of elected officials, advisory boards, citizens groups, administrators, philanthropists and volunteers is needed to ensure that services are delivered efficiently and investments are made soundly. From developing budgets to cultivating staff, the administrative structure surrounding parks and recreation is vital to current operations and future accomplishments. The following section will detail Macomb County's past, present and ideal parks and recreation administrative structure.

Parks and Recreation Administration of the Past

Macomb County has been directly involved in the administration of parks and recreation since 1966. That year, the County established a Parks and Recreation Commission pursuant to State of Michigan Public Act 261 of 1965. The Parks and Recreation Commission was created by the Macomb County Board of Commissioners. For nearly 50 years, it has operated as the planning and policy-making body for parks and recreation undertakings. These two bodies have worked in chorus furthering Macomb County's parks and recreation agenda through a number of avenues. From the establishment of Freedom Hill County Park to the cultivation of the Macomb Orchard Trail, these two entities were able to provide the County with a number of valuable parks and recreation assets.

This conventional parks and recreation structure also established a parks and recreation department during its tenure. The Macomb County Parks and Recreation Department was created to carry out the day-to-day parks and recreation functions for Macomb County. At its height, the Macomb County Parks and Recreation Department had seven full-time personnel. The department was led by the Parks and Recreation Administrator who served as the technical advisor to the boards and supervised all park activities, programs and staff. The department also facilitated the lion's share of capital improvements and marketing functions associated with parks and recreation at the County level. Seasonal staff and volunteers were also brought in on an as needed basis to assist with events and special parks functions.



This parks and recreation administrative structure served the County admirably for nearly a half century. However, economic trends and governmental restructuring forced the County to make some difficult decisions. In the late 2000's, Macomb County, like many other communities across the state and nation, began to experience a period of economic volatility. The ability to sustain the County's parks and recreation services through general fund allocations was not possible due to plunging tax revenues. With limited funding and a need to restructure

Administrative Structure

public services, the County had to make the difficult decision to disband the Parks and Recreation Department and shutter many of the County's parks and recreation operations. These necessary actions hampered Macomb County's ability to actively program and invest in parks and recreation. This restructuring of parks and recreation left Macomb County with no dedicated parks and recreation staff and a limited budget that was set aside for basic maintenance. For nearly 3 years Macomb County's parks and recreation services remained inactive, but in 2011 the County began to experience an economic turnaround, which provided an opportunity for a renewed commitment to parks and recreation.

The Executive Transition

The residents of Macomb County created a new charter form of government. This new structure developed an executive form of government. In 2010, Mark A. Hackel was elected as Macomb County's first County Executive. Under the authority of the Macomb County Home Rule Charter, Executive Hackel was given the responsibility to enact a local government which is efficient, economical and ethical. This new form of government changed the administration of county services. In the past, the Macomb County Board of Commissioners was the administrative body of County government, but the Charter granted new powers to the Executive's Office. The Macomb County Home Rule Charter states that the Executive has the authority, duty and responsibility to, "supervise, coordinate, direct and control all County departments/services except for departments headed by Countywide Elected Officials". With Executive Hackel at the helm, Macomb County began to restructure the County's administrative functions. This restructuring of responsibilities placed the County's parks and recreation service network under the authority of the Macomb County Executive's Office.

The Macomb County Executive's Office placed a priority on investing in quality of life initiatives. Soon after taking office, Executive Hackel created the "Make Macomb Your Home" initiative. This branding and marketing campaign was established to highlight Macomb County's quality of life assets. "Make Macomb Your Home" leveraged www.makemacombyourhome.com to create an online catalogue of what Macomb County has to offer to residents, businesses and visitors. This new energy and interest in Macomb County's assets provided the Executive's Office with a unique opportunity to reimagine Macomb County's freshwater water resources.

Understanding the value of Lake St. Clair, the Clinton River and the County's watershed system, Executive Hackel created the Blue Economy Initiative. Designed to celebrate the world-class assets of the Clinton River and coastal Lake St. Clair, the Blue Economy Initiative is based on three core principles: environmental stewardship, economic development and quality of life. This initiative has enhanced the accessibility and quality of Macomb County's fresh water assets. Furthermore, the County drafted the "Macomb County Blue Economy Strategic Development Plan" which prioritized capital improvements and programming associated with Macomb County's Blue Economy. The success of the Blue Economy Initiative led the Executive's Office to prioritize other elements



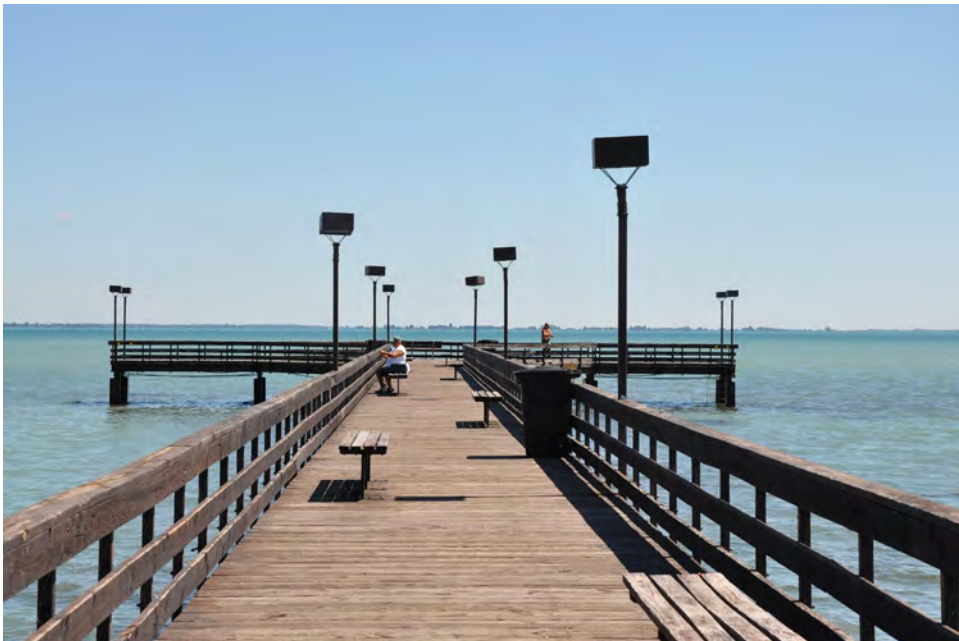
Administrative Structure

of the County's parks and recreation infrastructure.

With interest and activity increasing surrounding the County's freshwater resources, Executive Hackel focused on reopening Freedom Hill. In 2009, Freedom Hill County Park and Amphitheatre was shuttered due to a lack of funding and instability with the parks management structure. Understanding the value of this regional park and amphitheatre, the Executive's Office began to explore the financial and human resources needed to reestablish this facility as a destination. After nearly 2 years of planning, Freedom Hill County Park and Amphitheater was reopened in the spring of 2013. The County established a relationship with Luna Hillside LLC. to take over the operations of the amphitheater. This new management agreement provided the park with \$2 million dollars of capital improvements and a long-term agreement to manage events and programming at the amphitheater. The County also expanded maintenance and reestablished some staffing at the park. The summer of 2013 was the first full concert series at Freedom Hill in 3 years. From nationally renowned concerts to local community

festivals, Freedom Hill is open for business and Macomb County remains committed to this parks and recreation facility.

The success of Freedom Hill also provided Macomb County with an opportunity to reposition additional parks and recreation operations. Macomb County had sustained a comprehensive non-motorized trail system through a network of departments. At any one time the Planning and Economic Development Department, Public Works and the Department of Roads were involved in the development and



maintenance of the County's trail system. This fragmented system was hampered by a lack of coordination and understanding of lead organizations. The Executive's Office recognized these pitfalls and restructured the County's non-motorized trail responsibilities. The Department of Roads was given the authority and responsibility to lead the County's non-motorized trail efforts. Executive Hackel created the staff and structure within the Department of Roads to administer the day-to-day functions of the County's comprehensive non-motorized trail system. From the Macomb Orchard Trail to the County's many local connectors, the Department of Roads is now the primary development and maintenance agency for trails.

In just two short years in office, Macomb County Executive Mark Hackel was able to establish a number of widespread reforms that reaffirmed Macomb County's commitment to parks and recreation. This targeted restructuring illustrates the new administration's ability to deliver impactful services. This governmental reorganization provided Macomb County with a prime opportunity to reinvigorate its parks and recreation strategy. During this transitional period, Macomb County took a number of positive steps to develop major initiatives and solidify departmental responsibilities associated with parks and recreation. As the Executive ushered in "Make Macomb Your Home", the Blue Economy Initiative and the re-opening of Freedom Hill, the positive value and force of parks and recreation became more and more evident. It is this activity and interest

Administrative Structure

that has led Macomb County to revisit and revise its parks and recreation administrative structure.

Parks and Recreation Administration Moving Forward

Executive Leadership

This is Macomb County's first parks and recreation master plan created under a County Executive form of government. With new leadership and departments in place, it is time for the County to make definitive changes to its parks and recreation administrative structure. The future duties and responsibilities of administering a comprehensive parks and recreation system within Macomb County must be facilitated by the County Executive's Office. Unifying the parks and recreation administrative structure under the authority of the Macomb County Executive will provide the County with a clear and contemporary organizational configuration.

The groundwork of this new administrative philosophy lies in Macomb County's Home Rule Charter. The Executive is charged with management and organizational responsibilities that can support parks and recreation in Macomb County. The roles and responsibilities of the Executive's Office encompass the coordination of county departments, organizational planning, committee appointments, intergovernmental relations and ensuring the continuity of government. With a



new executive form of government in place, the County has an opportunity to create a more vibrant and dynamic parks and recreation structure. The foundational principles in this executive form of government provide the leadership and support network that will take parks and recreation in Macomb County to new heights.

Macomb County Departments

The initial phase of this new parks and recreation structure will be to leverage and synchronize the efforts of existing Macomb County departments. As currently situated, Macomb County has two departments actively involved in the planning and implementation of Macomb County's parks and recreation system: The Macomb County Department of Planning and Economic Development (MCPED) and the Macomb County Department of Roads (MCDR).

MCPED is the primary planning and economic development agency for Macomb County. Within the department there are two workgroups who have been tasked with facilitating the comprehensive planning of parks, recreation and open space: Planning and Mapping Services and Land and Water Resources. From parks and recreation master plans to facilities and trail strategies, Planning and Mapping Services staff is focused on providing the County with impactful and strategic planning documents. The Land and Water Resources workgroup is exclusively involved in the cultivation and implementation of Macomb County's Blue Economy Initiative. Targeting the

Administrative Structure

County's freshwater resources and environmentally significant areas, the Land and Water Resources Group facilitates project scoping, stakeholder coordination and fund development for the "Blue Economy Initiative". The Land and Water Resources workgroup has also facilitated a number of events and meetings ranging from the annual Sprint and Splash Duathlon to ongoing meetings with the Water Resource Advisory Council. Under the direction of the Macomb County Executive's Office, MCPED will continue to act as the lead planning and coordinating arm for the County's parks and recreation initiatives.



The MCDR has also been integrated into parks and recreation at a number of different levels. The Macomb County Executive has placed the coordination, development and maintenance of Macomb County's non-motorized trail network in the hands of the MCDR. The system is anchored by the 24 mile Macomb Orchard Trail, the Metropolitan Parkway Freedom Trail and a network of local non-motorized connectors. The MCDR utilizes planning, engineering and maintenance staff to support the County's non-motorized routes and engages a growing number of stakeholder groups through public outreach. MCDR is also

the County's lead fiduciary for State of Michigan Public Act 51 of 1951. This act governs state appropriations for most Michigan transportation programs and helps fund local transportation projects in Macomb County. Beyond the County's non-motorized trail network, the MCDR has also been tapped to assist with the reopening of Freedom Hill County Park. MCDR staff has been involved in facilitating capital improvements and maintenance at the facility since its reopening. Targeting existing resources, equipment and staff, the County has leveraged the MCDR to reinvest in many of the County's parks and recreation facilities.

The continued involvement of MCPED and MCDR in the administration of parks and recreation is essential to the future success of Macomb County's initiatives. These two Departments possess the staff, resources and partnership networks that can sustain existing parks and recreation services within Macomb County. Working with the Macomb County Executive's Office, these two Departments must continue to invest in parks and recreation and provide the County with opportunities to expand services and facilities.

Macomb County should also explore the involvement of other departments in administering parks and recreation services. The County has three departments that could expand their scope in parks and recreation: Macomb County Facilities and Operations; the Macomb County Office of Public Works Commissioner; and the Macomb County Department of Health and Human Services. Each of these departments has the resources and staff which could be leveraged for facility maintenance, programming and event coordination. Working with the Macomb County Executive's Office, these departments could be better integrated into parks and recreation initiatives as opportunities arise. As the County invests in programs and facilities additional staff will be needed to facilitate these activities. Utilizing existing staff is a way to incrementally build capacity and coordinate intra-departmental activities.

Administrative Structure

As Macomb County refines its parks and recreation services, the administration should explore reestablishing the parks and recreation department. A standalone parks and recreation department would help consolidate all activities into one department. Following the lead of neighboring counties, a dedicated parks and recreation staff could facilitate daily operations, promote and market county park functions, oversee funding and serve as a liaison to parks and recreation agencies and commissions. This commitment will illustrate that Macomb County is dedicated to providing an expanded parks and recreation system.

Commissions and Advisory Groups

Macomb County possesses a number of boards, commissions and advisory groups that are furthering the parks and recreation agenda within the County. From legislative bodies representing Macomb County's growing population to specialty commissions focused on programming and facilities, the County has utilized a wide range of advisory groups that link citizens to the decision making process. Over the years, each of the following entities has played a supportive role in expanding the scope and impact of parks and recreation. As the County seeks to refine its parks and recreation administrative structure under the new executive form of government, the duties, responsibilities and representatives of each of these entities will change. Macomb County is also committed to creating new parks and recreation advisory groups. Working alongside each of the following entities the County seeks to leverage this plan as the foundation for future collaboration. Developing the framework for additional countywide parks and recreation advisory councils will strengthen the County's administrative structure. Targeting newer state enabling legislation and emerging park advocates, Macomb County can cultivate modern advisory committees. This representative based advisory system will incorporate elected officials, administrators, park operators, the general public, volunteer organizations and advocacy groups. The focal point of this reorganization is to position existing and future stakeholder groups in the best way possible to advance parks and recreation in Macomb County.

Macomb County Board of Commissioners

The Macomb County Board of Commissioners (BOC) consists of 13 members, each representing a specific geographic district. The BOC is granted legislative powers through the Macomb County Home Rule Charter, and is responsible for adopting resolutions and ordinances.

As the legislative body for Macomb County, the policies and procedures enacted by the BOC will support the implementation of parks and recreation objectives. The BOC and Macomb County Executive Office will work cohesively on advisory committees. Specific to the parks and recreation master plan, the BOC is instrumental in facilitating public outreach and hearings and in dedicating resources through the budget approval process



Administrative Structure

Macomb Orchard Trail Commission

In 2001, the Macomb Orchard Trail Commission (MOTC) was formed. This intergovernmental commission was established to facilitate the development, maintenance and programming for the 24 mile Macomb Orchard Trail. Membership of the Commission includes representatives from communities bordering the trail, the Macomb County BOC and a member of the Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority. The Commission is staffed by the Macomb County Department of Roads and Macomb County Corporation Council. Focused on facilitating planning, programming and special events for the trail, the MOTC is an integral administrative entity for Macomb County's non-motorized trail system.

Macomb County Water Resources Advisory Council

In May 2011, Macomb County Executive Mark Hackel called for the formation of a public/private sector council to support clean water, tourism, recreation and economic development along Lake St. Clair and the Clinton River. The resulting Macomb County Water Resources Advisory Council meets quarterly to discuss issues of water quality, access and attraction. The 24 member Council includes representatives from government, higher education, environmental agencies, economic development and private industry. This group was the first advisory council formed by the County Executive under the new form of government and will be an advocate for Macomb County's continued commitment to the Blue Economy Initiative.



Macomb Agricultural Purchase of Development Rights Committee

The Macomb Agricultural Purchase of Development Rights Committee (PDR) was formed to preserve farmland and open space in Macomb County's rural district. Created as an inter-local agreement under the Urban Cooperation Act, the committee is comprised of two members from Macomb County and two members from each of the County's rural townships. These include: Washington

Township; Ray Township; Lenox Township; Richmond Township; Armada Township; and Bruce Township. The PDR Committee assists property owners in utilizing the voluntary purchase of development rights program (Public Act 116 of 1974) to preserve agricultural land in perpetuity. Under the program, farmers enter into a contract with the State of Michigan to keep their land in farming and agree not to develop the land. In exchange for that restriction, the landowner may receive state income tax credits. In Macomb County the PDR Committee has preserved three farms, and continues to educate the general public regarding the economic and societal impacts of having a robust agricultural community.

Local Partnerships and Intergovernmental Relations

It is important that the administration of parks and recreation in Macomb County include external stakeholder

Administrative Structure

groups and municipal partners. Macomb County can expand its parks and recreation footprint by engaging existing parks and recreation providers, community service organizations and local governments. The inclusion of public, private and non-profit organizations will allow Macomb County to develop strategic partnerships that will lead to a more collaborative parks and recreation system. By engaging outside agencies, Macomb County can explore and expand upon existing parks and recreation programs and create opportunities for resource sharing. Targeted partners include: National Recreation and Parks Association; Michigan Recreation and Parks Association; Michigan Department of Natural Resources; Southeast Michigan Council of Governments; Clinton River Watershed Council; Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority; municipal parks and recreation departments; school districts; senior citizen groups; and local service/community organizations. Each of these entities provides a service that can help bolster Macomb County's comprehensive parks and recreation strategy.

Parks and Recreation Budget

On an annual basis, the Macomb County Executive's Office prepares a budget to execute County services. This process sets aside annual expenditures and revenues for parks and recreation. In 2013, parks and recreation expenditures totaled \$322,507 in Macomb County. The majority of the County's expenditures associated with parks and recreation were spent on supplies and services (\$157,500) and utilities (\$155,007). In 2013, the County obtained \$125,000 in parks and recreation revenues gleaned from charges for services. This left the



County with an operating deficit of \$197,507. In order to offset some of the costs associated with reestablishing its parks and recreation services, the County leveraged a \$137,507 transfer from its general fund to support these investments. The remaining \$60,000 shortfall was absorbed by the County's \$1,252,683 parks fund balance. Heading into fiscal year 2014, Macomb County has forecasted parks and recreation revenues to reach \$185,000 and total expenditures to top \$408,500. After transfers and asset investments Macomb County is projecting a 2014 parks fund balance of \$1,132,683.

SECTION 3.0

PARKS & RECREATION INVENTORY

MACOMB COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN



Parks and Recreation Inventory

Creating an inventory of existing parks and recreation assets is imperative when developing a comprehensive master plan. The location, size and amenities at each facility has a profound impact on the current and future planning for parks and recreation. An extensive inventory of parks and recreation facilities will allow a community to highlight its assets, develop linkages, build off of innovative trends and point out any gaps in services. Focusing on the existing recreational framework will allow all stakeholders to develop strategies and scenarios that will strengthen parks and recreation.

In the summer of 2013, the Macomb County Department of Planning and Economic Development performed a wide-ranging inventory of the County's parks and recreation facilities. The following section will provide an overview inventory of parks and recreation facilities within Macomb County. The section will begin with an overview of the regional parks and recreation environment, highlighting state and regional parks and recreation destinations. The inventory will then focus on the parks and recreation facilities owned and operated by Macomb County.

State Parks and Recreation Facilities

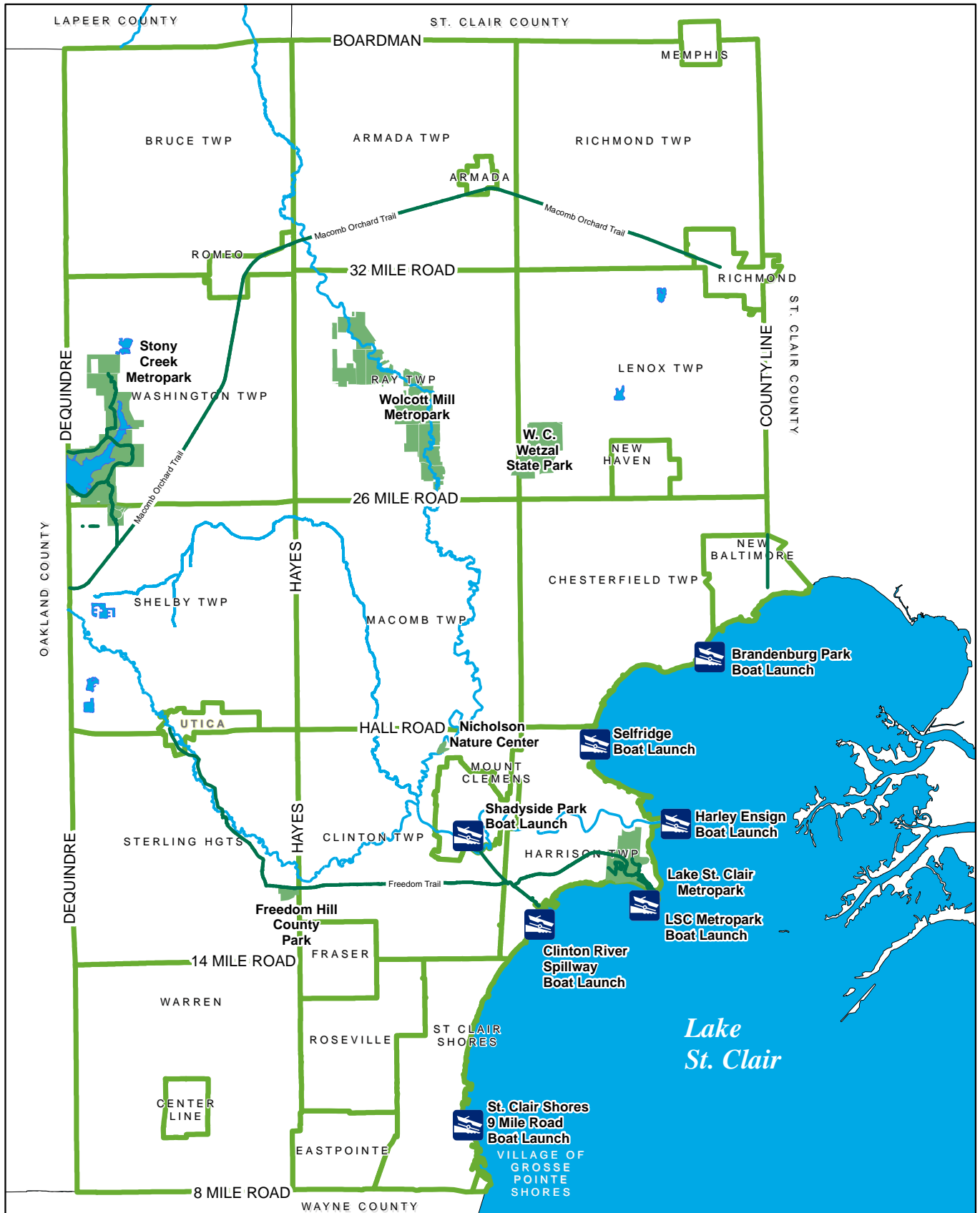


W.C. Wetzel State Recreational Area

The W.C. Wetzel State Recreational Area is a 900 acre park operated by the State of Michigan. Located in Lenox Township, this state recreational area is predominately undeveloped. The park provides areas for hiking, hunting, snowmobiling and cross-country skiing. Wetzel is also home to an avid radio control airplane community that hosts events at the mock airfield on site. This recreational area houses a number of pristine wetland and habitat areas for Macomb County's wildlife. Wetzel is maintained by the State of Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) and has a dedicated network of volunteers who assist with park events and upkeep. As the only state recreational area in Macomb County, improvements to this site are significant to Macomb County.

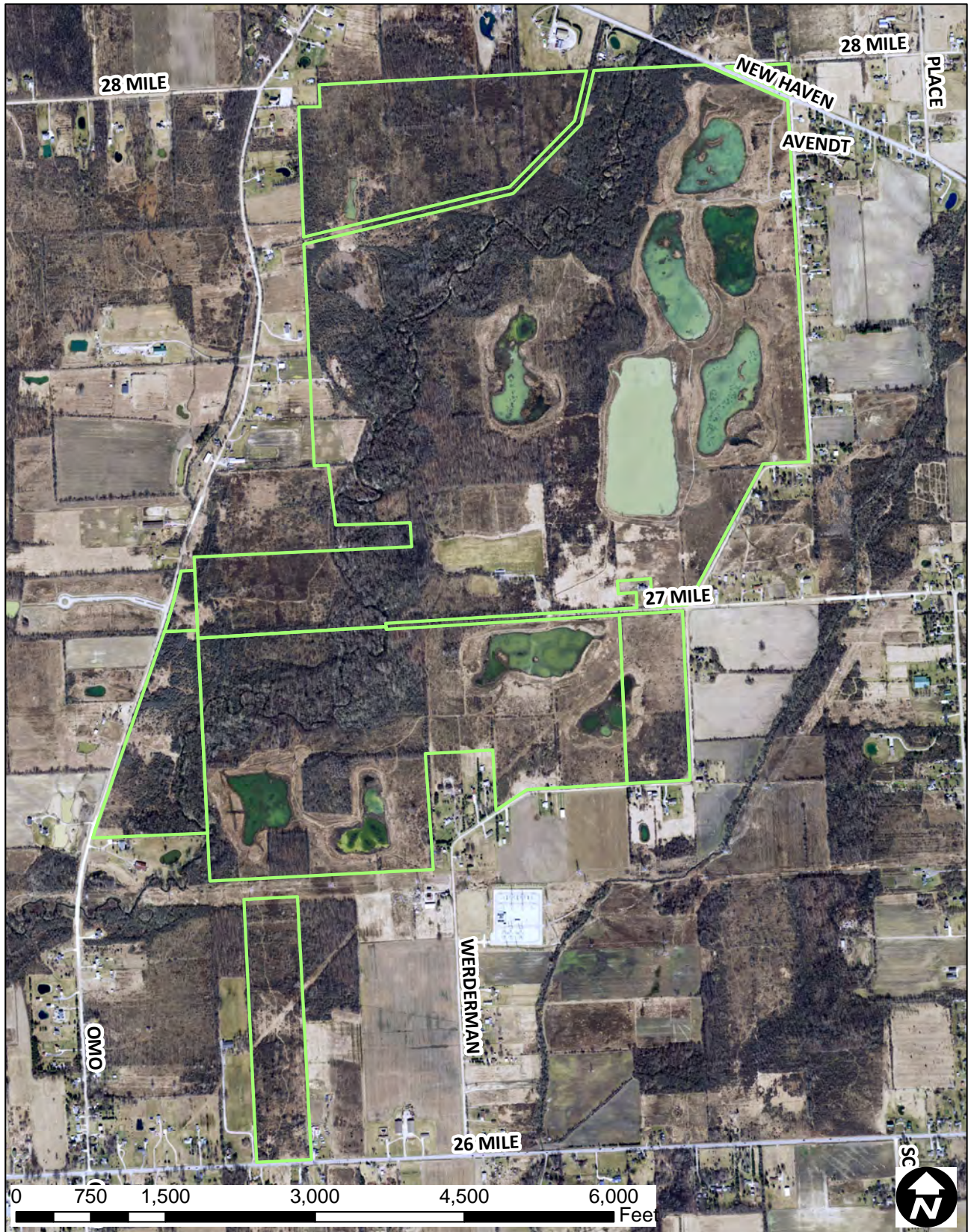
Parks & Recreation Inventory

Macomb County Major Recreation Facilities and Regional Trail Network



Parks & Recreation Inventory

W.C. Wetzel State Recreational Area



Harvey Ensign Memorial Boat Launch and Public Access

Located on Lake St. Clair at the mouth of the Clinton River, the Harvey Ensign Memorial Boat Launch and Public Access site is a state operated facility providing access to Macomb County's fresh water resources. This public boat launch is run by the MDNR and provides a hard surface launching site with a courtesy pier for loading and unloading passengers. The facility is equipped with a paved parking area that can accommodate more than 300 vehicles per day.

Harvey Ensign Memorial Boat Launch and Public Access



Selfridge Boat Launch and Public Access

The Selfridge Boat Launch and Public Access site is located in Harrison Township near the entrance to Selfridge Air National Guard Base. Operated by the MDNR, the Selfridge Boat Launch and Public Access site provides direct access to Lake St. Clair. The facility has a hard surface launch area, a courtesy pier and can accommodate more than 150 vehicles per day.

Parks & Recreation Inventory

Selfridge Boat Launch and Public Access



Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority Parks and Recreation Facilities

Lake St. Clair Metropark

Operated by the Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority Lake St. Clair Metropark is one of the most popular parks and recreation attractions in southeast Michigan. This 770 acre regional recreation destination is located in Harrison Township on the coast of Lake St. Clair. A wide variety of recreational facilities and activities are provided at the park including:

- 800 foot long public beach with swimming area
- Olympic size pool
- Two waterslides
- 10,000 square foot Squirt Zone
- Eight slip boat launching ramp
- Two transient marinas which can accommodate 106 boats
- Nature center
- Three quarter mile nature trail
- Picnic areas
- Three miles of paved hike/bike paths

Parks & Recreation Inventory

- 18-hole par 3 golf course
- Shipwreck Lagoon Adventure Golf Course
- Concession areas
- Welsh Activity Center
- Ice fishing
- Ice skating
- 2.5 mile cross-country ski trail

Lake St. Clair Metropark serves more than 1.5 million park visitors annually. From world renowned fishing tournaments to the County's Sprint and Splash Duathlon, Lake St. Clair Metropark possesses the size and amenities to be the staging ground for many of Macomb County's prominent parks and recreation events.

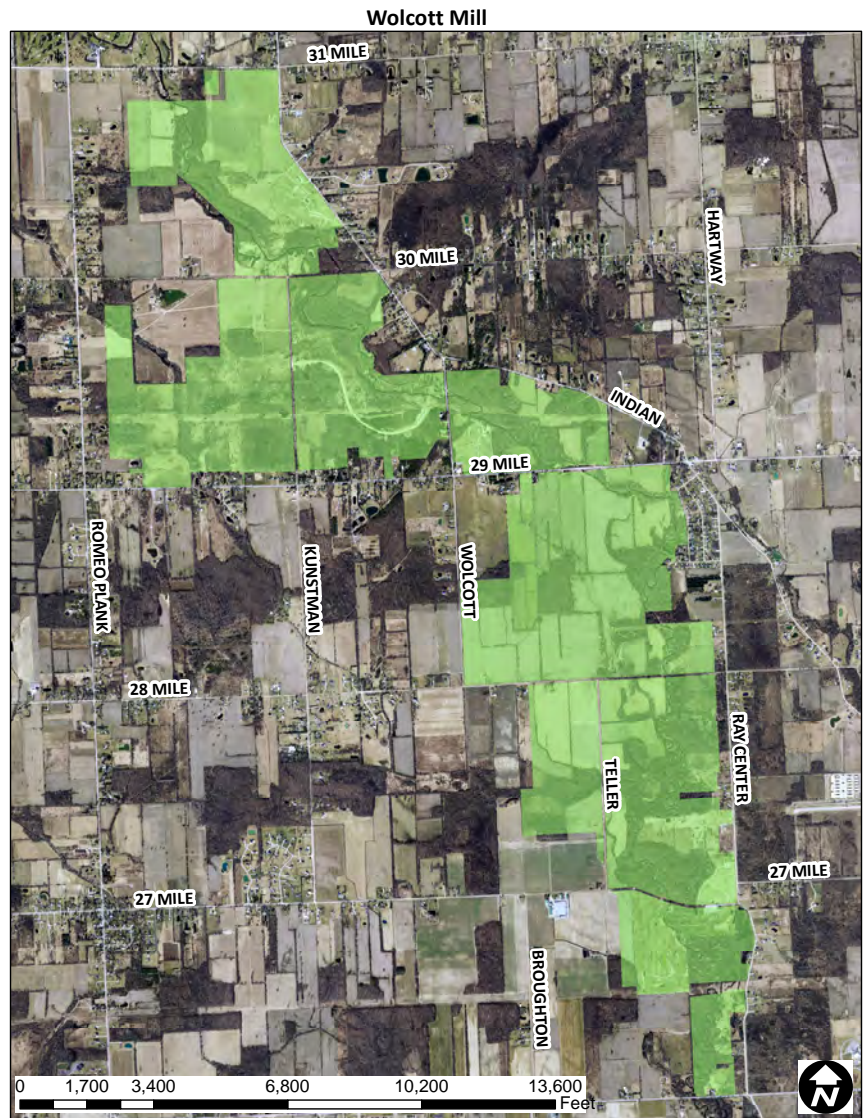
Lake St. Clair Metropark



Parks & Recreation Inventory

Wolcott Mill Metropark

Wolcott Mill Metropark is a 2,845 acre park located in Ray Township. Covering 5 contiguous miles of greenspace from 26 Mile Road to 31 Mile Road, this massive park and preservation area is operated by the Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority. Wolcott Mill is home to a number of unique recreational amenities. One of park's activity nodes is Camp Rotary, a service organization camping area. Equipped with activity and lodge facilities, this camping area is open to boy scouts, girl scouts and other youth groups throughout the year. Also, the park also is home to the historic Wolcott Gristmill. This historical mill dates back to 1874 and is open for tours and educational programming. The park's most intriguing asset is the Wolcott Mill Interpretive Farm Learning Center. This working farm provides visitors with a look into some of the daily functions of farming. From milking cows to horse exercises, this agricultural learning centers hosts programs, tours and educational exercises for patrons. Wolcott also possesses an 18-hole golf course, 10 miles of equestrian trails and many comfort and picnic areas. The park is traversed by the Clinton River and provides the county with some pristine environmental areas and unique habitat areas. The park hosts more than 2,000 visitors annually.



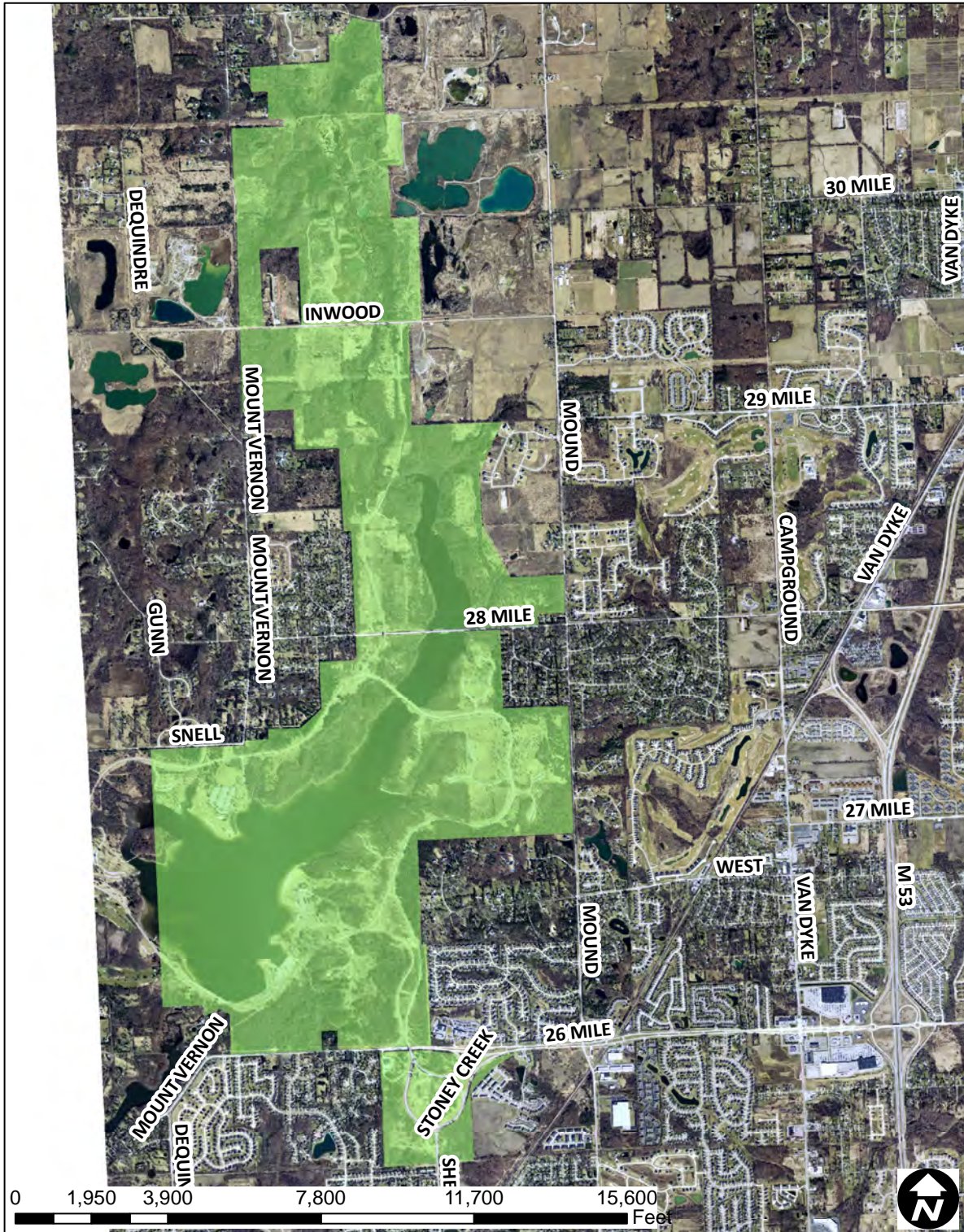
Stony Creek Metropark

Stony Creek Metropark is one of Macomb County's most dynamic parks and recreation facilities. Operated by the Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority, this 4,461 acre park spans two counties and three communities. The park is anchored by Stony Creek Lake which possesses two public beaches, Baypoint and Eastwood. Both beach areas provide concession, picnic and comfort areas for users. The park also rents out rowboats, paddle boats, canoes and kayaks for use on the lake. Private boat owners can utilize the eight boat launching ramps on Stony Creek Lake. The lake is also a prime fishing location with pike, walleye, bass, perch, bluegills and crappies inhabiting the lake. Stony Creek is also home to a comprehensive non-motorized trail network. The park boasts: 13 miles of mountain bike/hiking trails; 10 miles of additional hiking trails; and a seven mile paved hike/bike path. The park is also home to the Stony Creek Nature Center which provides nature exhibits, programs and walking

Parks & Recreation Inventory

trails complete with educational signage. The park also houses an 18-hole championship public golf course with driving range and a 27-hole disc golf course. The park hosts many special events including a fireworks display and many cycling and running competitions. Annually Stony Creek Metropark serves more than 1.8 million park visitors.

Stony Creek



Parks & Recreation Inventory

Macomb County Parks and Recreation Facilities

Freedom Hill County Park and Amphitheater

Freedom Hill County Park and Amphitheater is Macomb County's preeminent parks and recreation facility. This spacious 100 acre county operated site is located in Sterling Heights and possesses a number of dynamic amenities. The park contains two outdoor pavilions, picnic areas, a playground, internal walking/nature path, direct connection to the regional Freedom Trail and a monument garden celebrating the United States Armed Forces. Ralph Liberato Independence Hall is also located at Freedom Hill. This community gathering space includes a full kitchen and banquet hall, meeting rooms, indoor and outdoor restrooms and administrative offices. The grounds and hall are maintained and operated by Macomb County and contain parking for the park and amphitheater. Freedom Hill is also the staging ground for a regional concert and entertainment venue. The 7,200 seat Freedom Hill Amphitheater is operated by Luna Entertainment, under a joint agreement with Macomb County. This outdoor amphitheater is home to a summer concert series and many cultural and community festivals. Freedom Hill County Park and Amphitheater provides thousands of residents and visitors with a unique parks and recreation experience. As Macomb County seeks to expand its parks and recreation footprint, Freedom Hill County Park and Amphitheater is a prime location for capital improvements and program expansion. This County facility also meets accessibility guidelines.



Freedom Hill Amphitheater



Parks & Recreation Inventory

Freedom Hill Events



Freedom Hill Inventory

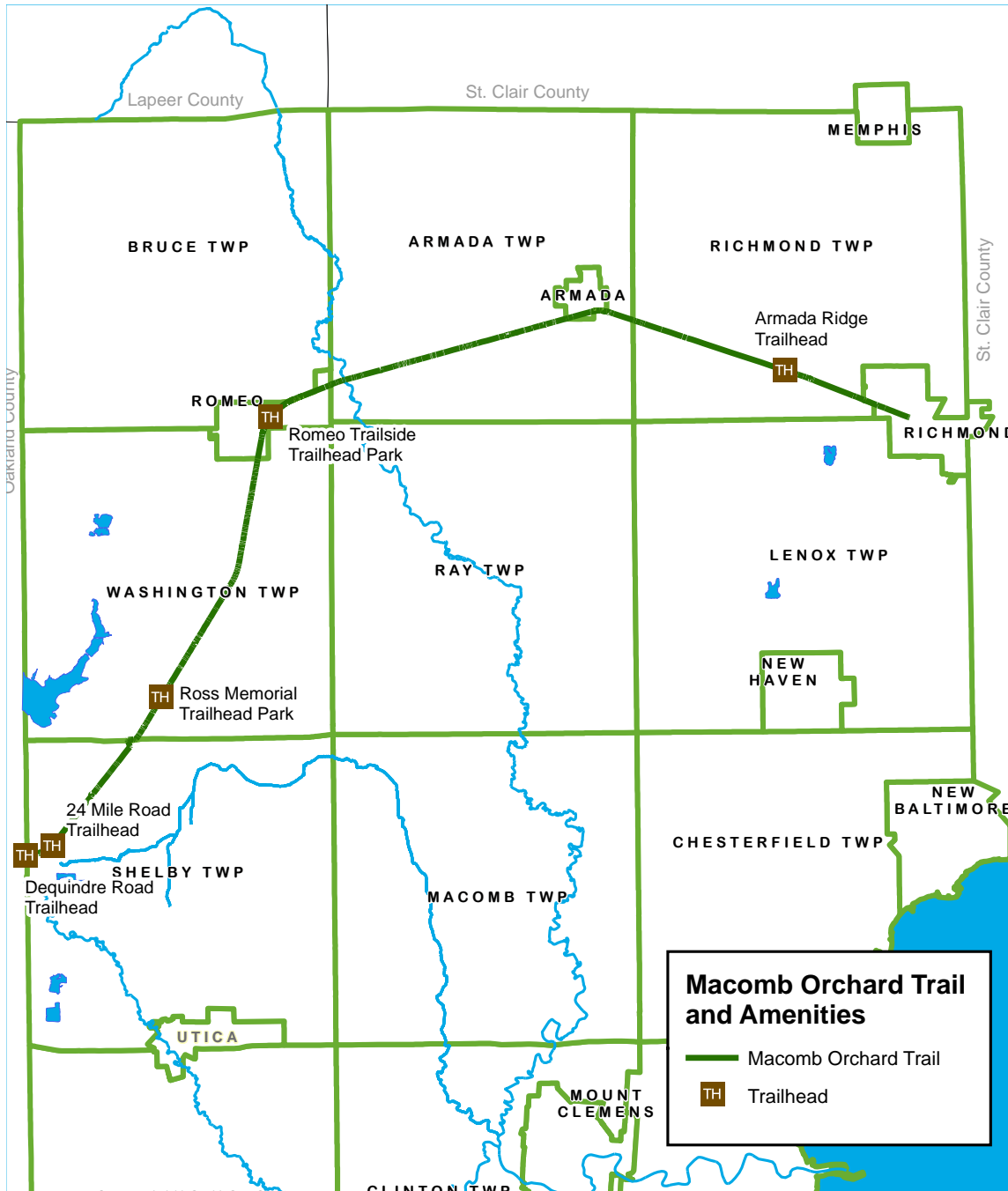


Parks & Recreation Inventory

Macomb Orchard Trail

Macomb County operates the Macomb Orchard Trail (MOT), a 24 mile linear park and trailway. This non-motorized trail is located in northern Macomb County and traverses 7 communities: Shelby Township; Washington Township; Village of Romeo; Armada Township; Village of Armada; Richmond Township; and the City of Richmond. The MOT is also a regional trail connector linking Macomb County to the Clinton River and Paint Creek Trails in Oakland County.

Macomb Orchard Trail Inventory



Parks & Recreation Inventory

Macomb Orchard Trail Amenities

The MOT also possesses a number of pocket parks and refuge areas. The trail is equipped with benches and comfort stations, and is anchored by a gateway structure at Dequindre Road in Shelby Township. In Washington Township, Ross Memorial Park is located on the MOT and provides users with a pavilion area, picnic tables, benches, parking and a comfort station. In the Village of Romeo, just off Clinton Street, there is a parking and rest area for trail users. In Richmond Township, at the intersection of the MOT and Armada Ridge Road, there is a comfort station and parking area. These strategically placed community comfort areas provide users with an opportunity to access the MOT and rest during their rides.



Ross Memorial Trailhead Park Inventory



Parks & Recreation Inventory

The MOT provides pedestrians, cyclists, runners, cross-country skiers, skaters and disabled populations with the ability to exercise and experience many of Macomb County's unique communities and pristine natural areas. This county amenity also meets accessibility guidelines.

Romeo Trailhead Park Inventory



24 Mile Road Trailhead Park Inventory



Parks & Recreation Inventory

Armada Ridge Road Trailhead Park Inventory



Macomb Orchard Trail Amenities



Parks & Recreation Inventory

James B. & Ann V. Nicholson Nature Center and Floodplain Conservation Easement

The James B. & Ann V. Nicholson Nature Center and Floodplain Conservation Easement is a 33 acre preservation area located along the east banks of the North Branch of the Clinton River, adjacent to the Macomb County Public Works Office. The funds to protect this pristine site were donated by the Nicholson family, and the Six Rivers Regional Land Conservancy was instrumental in placing the property into a conservation easement. This environmentally sensitive area is home to a number native plant and animal species and provides direct access to the North Branch of the Clinton River. The site is also equipped with outdoor classrooms, walking/nature trails, observation platforms, and comfort stations. Some of the facilities in this conservation area meet accessibility guidelines. This is due to the parks natural features and rustic areas.



Nicholson Nature Center Amenities



Parks & Recreation Inventory

Nicholson Nature Center Inventory



SECTION 4.0

PLANNING & PUBLIC INPUT

MACOMB COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN



Planning & Public Input

Macomb County employed a number of planning and public input techniques in developing this parks and recreation master plan. In hopes of engaging a varied and dynamic group of parks and recreation stakeholders, the County leveraged many public and private partners. From metropolitan planning organizations to local volunteer groups, Macomb County was able to target parks and recreation stakeholders at all service levels who are actively engaged in providing programs and services. The strategies and initiatives established by this document were developed through the many interactions with these groups. This process allowed the county to analyze existing conditions and resources, strategize for future investments and cultivate a contemporary approach to parks and recreation.

Planning Methods



The formation of this master plan is based on a systems approach to parks and recreation. This approach to parks and recreation planning was developed by James D. Mertes and James R. Hall for the National Recreation and Park Association in 1995. This systems based planning strategy is a process that begins by assessing the parks, recreation and open space needs of a community. This information is then translated into a framework that considers the physical, spatial and facility requirements of the community. The County and its parks and recreation stakeholders decided to apply

this planning method because it considered all parks and recreation facilities, programs and services as a part of a larger system. Developing a new playground at a local park or expanding senior citizen programs at a recreation center are tangible steps a community can take to enhance its parks and recreation offerings. These actions would clearly have an impact on the facility where they are offered. However, they also have the ability to influence additional elements of the parks and recreation system. A single strategy or investment has the ability to alter user patterns, and potentially alter future parks and recreation needs. It is this inter-linkage between parks and recreation facilities, programs and services that creates a vibrant atmosphere where the County must continually evaluate and create appropriate policies and procedures for parks and recreation.

In order to effectively utilize a systems based approach, a wide-ranging inventory of the parks and recreation facilities across Macomb County was created. Presented in Section 3.0, the inventory illustrates the full compliment of facilities and amenities the County possesses. The inventory, coupled with the community description (Section 2.0) will act as the foundation for the goals and objectives proposed in this document. The goals and objectives will then be linked to a strategic plan of action that will recommend parks and recreation projects and initiatives to be undertaken over the lifespan of this document.



Planning & Public Input

Each goal, objective and subsequent action plan was crafted with the intent to create a more comprehensive system of parks and recreation services within Macomb County.

Public Input

Macomb County took great strides to engage the public in the development of this parks and recreation master plan. The County leveraged many different departments, community forums, public meetings and focus groups to compile information and resources for this document. Led by the Macomb County Department of Planning and Economic Development under the leadership of the Macomb County Executive's Office, the County orchestrated the following public input sessions:



- Macomb County Parks, Recreation and Open Space Stakeholder Focus Group – Thursday July 19th, 2012 Mt. Clemens, MI
- Macomb County Parks and Recreation Public Forum – Monday December 17th, 2012 Clinton Township, MI
- Macomb County Agricultural Stakeholder Focus Group – Monday March 4th, 2013 Mt. Clemens, MI
- Southeast Michigan Council of Governments and Macomb County Green Infrastructure/Parks and Recreation Visioning Session – Thursday July 17th, 2013 Clinton Township, MI
- Macomb County Agricultural Purchase of Development Rights Meeting - Monday July 22nd, 2013 Ray Township, MI
- Macomb County Freedom Hill Focus Group – Friday August 2nd, 2013 Sterling Heights, MI
- Macomb County Legislative Caucus – Monday October 28th, 2013 Clinton Township, MI
- Wetzel State Park Focus Group – Friday November 1st, 2013 Mt. Clemens, MI
- Macomb County Board of Commissioners Parks and Recreation Presentation – Tuesday November 12th, 2013 Mt. Clemens, MI
- Macomb County Health and Human Services Focus Group – Friday November 15th, 2013 Mt. Clemens, MI
- Macomb County Board of Commissioners Economic Development Sub-Committee – Wednesday January 15th, 2014 Mt. Clemens, MI
- Macomb County Board of Commissioners – Thursday January 30th, 2014 Mt. Clemens, MI – Public Hearing
- Macomb County Board of Commissioners Infrastructure Sub-Committee – Tuesday February 25th, 2014 Mt. Clemens, MI – Preliminary Plan Adoption
- Macomb County Board of Commissioners – Thursday February 27th, 2014 Mt. Clemens, MI – Final Public Hearing, Adoption and Resolution

Over the past year and a half, the County discussed and drafted different elements of the plan at each of its public input sessions. As information was gleaned from these many public discussions, County staff would incorporate these strategies into the document. The draft plan was completed in December 2013 and was sent

Planning & Public Input

out for the 30 day review period on January 7th, 2014. During the 30 day review period the general public had an opportunity to review the plan online and at the Macomb County Department of Planning and Economic Development website. The plan was also publicized through a number of traditional news and social media sources. The County received coverage in local and regional newspapers, with feature stories and news briefs. Public outreach and input was also facilitated through Facebook and Twitter. Macomb County leveraged @MakeMacomb, @MarkHackel, and @MacombNewsNow for Twitter updates and informational blasts about the parks and recreation planning process. The Macomb County Department of Planning and Economic Development also posted information about the plan and its approval process on its Facebook page.

As the draft plan was being reviewed by the public Macomb County vetted the document through its commission and committee structure. On January 15th, 2014 the Macomb County Board of Commissioners Economic Development Committee held a public review of the document at its public meeting. After the Economic Development Committee meeting the Macomb County Board of Commissioners held a preliminary public hearing on the plan at its January 30th, 2014 meeting. The plan had been receiving print and social media attention, and the County sought to provide residents with an informal session to discuss and provide input for the plan. On February 20th, 2014 Macomb County published a notice of public hearing for the parks and recreation draft plan to be held on February 27th, 2014. The Board of Commissioners then sent the draft plan to its Infrastructure Committee on February 25th, 2014 to review and recommend adoption. The draft plan was recommended for adoption by the Committee, and was sent to the Macomb County Board of Commissioners for final resolution. On February 27th, 2014 the Macomb County Board of Commissioners held a second public hearing on the draft master plan. After the public hearing, the Macomb County Board of Commissioners passed a resolution adopting the Macomb County Parks and Recreation Master Plan 2014 dated February 27th, 2014.

For more than a year, Macomb County has facilitated a series of dynamic public input forums. These public settings have provided both residents and stakeholders with an opportunity to shape the vision of this document. In the end, Macomb County strongly believes that it has created a parks and recreation master plan that represents the will of the people.

SECTION 5.0

GOALS & OBJECTIVES

MACOMB COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN



Goals & Objectives

Goals and Objectives

The progress of Macomb County's parks and recreation system will be charted by the County's ability to institute the following goals and objectives. Throughout the process of developing this parks and recreation master plan, Macomb County crafted a series of goals and objectives that will act as benchmarks for the County over the next five years. These policy guidelines will enable parks and recreation stakeholders to effectively implement programs and activities that will expand the County's service network. Macomb County recognizes that these goals and objectives are not static. As opportunities and challenges arise, the County must be able to make informed and impactful decisions grounded in these goals and objectives that will allow parks and recreation to flourish.

In order to develop these goals and objectives, Macomb County considered a number of community factors. Each series of goals and objectives takes into consideration: demographic and economic factors; physical characteristics; financial feasibility; intergovernmental impacts; and administration practicality. As the collaborative process for creating these goals and objectives was underway, County administrators continually weighed the merit and potential impact of each outcome. The following list of goals and objectives is a comprehensive representation of the future of parks and recreation within Macomb County. As the County continues to progress, these goals and objectives will allow the community to effectively administer a system of parks and recreation services that is in the best interest of the general public.

Provide Parks and Recreation Opportunities



Goal

Macomb County will provide a dynamic and impactful range of parks and recreation facilities, programs and services that will benefit residents and visitors.

Objectives

- Maintain and enhance current parks and recreation facilities, programs and services, to ensure that there are sufficient parks and recreation opportunities for all current and potential users.

Goals & Objectives

- Identify areas where Macomb County can establish new, or expand existing, parks and recreation facilities, programs, partnerships and services.
- Create a parks and recreation capital improvement framework that will establish a practical means of strategically investing in improvements to parks and recreation facilities.
- Pledge that all parks and recreation facilities, programs and services are administered in a safe and secure environment.
- Study the feasibility of developing new parks and recreation destinations.
- Cultivate new and expand existing funding sources to sustain parks and recreation services.
- Establish dedicated parks and recreation staff within the County's administrative structure.

Foster Community Development and Engagement



Goal

Macomb County pledges to utilize parks and recreation services as a catalyst for strengthening community pride and uniting residents.

Objectives

- Ensure that all residents and visitors, regardless of age or ability, can adequately access parks and recreation facilities, services and programs.
- Develop a more comprehensive assortment of parks and recreation programs engaging a wider spectrum of residents and visitors. Include additional services and programs for special populations, ethnic and cultural organizations, and vulnerable populations.
- Create partnerships with other parks and recreation service providers at the local, regional and state levels.
- Leverage “Make Macomb Your Home” and other media sources to brand, market and promote parks and recreation programs within Macomb County.

Goals & Objectives

- Organize continuing community forums and workshops with parks and recreation stakeholders to measure the impact of facilities, programs and services.
- Incentivize year-round participation in parks and recreation through the use of recognition, awards or memorabilia.

Promote Environmental Stewardship

Goal

Macomb County will leverage parks and recreation facilities, programs and services to protect and enhance environmentally significant areas throughout the community.

Objectives

- Catalogue the location and character of environmentally significant areas throughout Macomb County.
- Expand environmental cleanup and awareness initiatives surrounding Macomb County's natural resources.
- Target environmentally significant areas for conservation and parks and recreation uses.
- Leverage the Macomb County Agricultural Purchase of Development Rights Committee to expand agricultural opportunities and open space conservation initiatives.
- Cultivate additional partnerships and programs with environmental and conservation groups at all levels of government.
- Leverage the "Blue Economy Initiative" to protect and educate individuals about Macomb County's freshwater assets.



Encourage Healthy Lifestyles

Goal

Macomb County will utilize parks and recreation facilities, programs and services to improve the health and wellness of the County's residents.

Objectives

- Expand healthy lifestyle, physical fitness and wellness programs, educating residents about the benefits of preventative care.

Goals & Objectives

- Develop tutorials and how-to guides highlighting the County's parks and recreation facilities, programs and services.
- Create new partnerships with health care and wellness organizations.

Support Economic Development



Goal

Macomb County will use parks and recreation facilities, programs and services to generate economic growth and prosperity.

Objectives

- Promote and partner with festivals and special events to increase activity and interest in Macomb County (i.e. Armada Fair, Romeo Peach Festival, Bay-Rama).
- Link investments in parks and recreation to larger community projects including private developments and infrastructure improvements.
- Provide opportunities for local businesses, non-profits, foundations and volunteer organizations to partner with parks and recreation through marketing, educational opportunities, sponsorships and promotions.
- Partner with local sport and service organizations to attract tournaments and conventions to Macomb County.

SECTION 6.0

ACTION PROGRAM

MACOMB COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN



Action Program

Macomb County hopes that this parks and recreation master plan will revitalize the County's parks and recreation system. With numerous parks and a wide variety of recreation opportunities, Macomb County has been able to sustain a viable parks and recreation system. This plan is the impetus for a new era of investment and empowerment in the County's parks and recreation system. The County is committed to expanding its parks and recreation footprint.

The following action plan is a series of projects and programs that will assist Macomb County in implementing their goals and objectives. Throughout the development of this document, the County and its wide array of engaged participants explored a number of ideas and potential outcomes. The following section is a compilation of those ideas and discussions. This action program is a wish list for Macomb County's parks and recreation system. Each of the proposed action items will assist Macomb County in realizing its parks and recreation goals.

Macomb County Parks and Recreation Administrative Structure



As was discussed in the administrative section, Macomb County is in the midst of a transitional period. With a new executive form of government taking place, County government is exploring fresh and innovative ways to administer services to residents. Parks and recreation is one of the major service areas Macomb County seeks to refine over the tenure of this document. From administration to funding sources, Macomb County is primed to revive its parks and recreation service network. Macomb County's administrative action program for parks and recreation includes:

- **Creating a Dedicated Parks and Recreation Staff and Department** – An imperative part of the future success of Macomb County's parks and recreation system is the creation of dedicated staff. With dedicated parks and recreation staff, Macomb County can begin to standardize administrative functions and facilitate the implementation of the master plan recommendations. A parks and recreation coordinator can work with existing departments and service providers and better coordinate capital improvements and programming. As the roles of the parks and recreation coordinator are refined, the County can begin to establish

the framework for a full fledge parks and recreation department. With a standalone parks and recreation department, Macomb County can expand its parks and recreation services.

- **Solidify Parks and Recreation Funding Sources** – The general fund obligations to parks and recreation are not impervious. As the economy fluctuates, so too can municipal finances. General fund resources are a part of the necessary commitment needed to sustain parks and recreation services in Macomb County. However, more dedicated and vibrant funding sources can help parks and recreation expand.

Action Program

This plan provides Macomb County with an opportunity to explore the feasibility of a millage, special assessments, fees for services, endowments and grants. Moving forward, Macomb County must work closely with its finance department and parks administrators to create a sensible and impactful menu of funding options.

• **Develop New and Expand Existing Partnerships with External Parks and Recreation Providers** – Macomb County understands that parks and recreation is a comprehensive system of programs and facilities. This dynamic system is administered at all levels of government, and Macomb County is focused on partnering with stakeholders at all levels. From local units of government to state agencies, Macomb County will leverage financial, human and capital resources to further parks and recreation.

Macomb County Parks and Recreation Facilities

The parks and recreation inventory highlighted Macomb County's direct role in administering three major parks and recreation operations: Freedom Hill; Nicholson Nature Center; and the County's non-motorized trail network. Each of these assets provides Macomb County park users with a number of quality of life experiences. From local community festivals to major running events, these facilities allow Macomb County to stage events and programs that lead to activity and interest in Macomb County. Beyond routine maintenance, Macomb County is committed to expanding the scope and impact of each of these facilities. Macomb County's action program for County owned facilities includes:



• **Freedom Hill County Park** – As the County's premier park and entertainment venue Macomb County is focused on investing in Freedom Hill. This facility is the County's most recognizable parks and recreation destination, and advancements to this facility will provide for additional events and programs for the county. The County's efforts surrounding Freedom Hill include:

- **Enhanced Park Maintenance and Amenities** – In order to preserve the function and beauty of this public space Macomb County is devoted to investing in Freedom Hill. Macomb will target the following maintenance and amenity enhancements at Freedom Hill: landscaping and grounds; picnic and pavilion areas; comfort stations; pedestrian and cyclists amenities; playground equipment; canine and pet facilities; storage and administration areas; and stormwater management upgrades.
- **Parking and Circulation Improvements** – Freedom Hill is the staging ground for many events throughout the year. In order to adequately host these events, the County is targeting parking and internal circulation improvements. Macomb County seeks to explore options for enhanced parking and ingress/egress options for the site.
- **Safety and Security Upgrades** – The safety and security of park users is vital. As programming continues to expand at Freedom Hill, Macomb County is committed to upgrading much of the parks security infrastructure. From lighting to public safety patrols, the County will ensure that Freedom Hill is a welcoming place for all.

Action Program

- **James B. & Ann V. Nicholson Nature Center and Floodplain Conservation Easement** – As Macomb County’s newest parks and recreation destination, Nicholson Nature Center and Conservation area is in the development stages. With a new outdoor classroom and pavilion, the park is well equipped for educational and community events. To continue the activity and investment at the Nicholson Nature Center and Conservation area, Macomb County’s action plan includes:

- **Enhanced Park Maintenance and Amenities** – In order to solidify this park as a recreational destination, the County seeks to continually invest in landscaping, park maintenance, public seating, scenic lookout areas, picnic areas, signage and comfort stations.



- **Non-Motorized Trail System** – Anchored by the Macomb Orchard Trail, the Freedom Trail and numerous local connectors, Macomb County’s non-motorized trail network is expansive. Working with park stakeholders and transportation service providers, Macomb County can ensure that these pedestrian anchors remain essential to the County’s transportation and recreational infrastructure. Macomb County’s action program for its non-motorized trail system include:

- **Macomb Orchard Trail** – The Macomb Orchard Trail is a major non-motorized trail anchor. The long-range viability of this asset hinges on the County’s ability to sustain pavement conditions and maintenance. During the tenure of this master plan Macomb County must forge strong financial commitments and governmental partnerships to ensure the superior condition of this trail.

- **Expand Local Non-Motorized Connectors** – Macomb County seeks to work with local communities to plan and invest in local non-motorized trail connectors. These local pedestrian routes will lead users to and from major trail routes to community park areas and business districts. Integrating more community connectors will provide trail users with the ability explore the County on foot or by bike. With the help of transportation service providers, Macomb County can engage local communities to explore where these local connectors best fit the transportation and parks system.

- **Expand Urban Non-Motorized Trail Network** – Macomb County is committed to developing additional non-motorized trail options in its urban core communities. Working with its southern communities Macomb County is focused on cultivating plans and capital investment strategies to facilitate the development of non-motorized trails south of 16 Mile Road.

- **Cultivate Rural Nature and Interpretive Trails** – The County is interested in creating additional nature and interpretive trails in its rural district. Engaging the communities north of 26 Mile Road, Macomb County can begin to invest in low-impact walking and hiking trails that integrate agricultural and environmentally significant areas.

- **Enhanced Maintenance and Amenities** – As the County continues to expand its non-motorized trail network, enhanced maintenance and amenities are an added benefit to users. Macomb County seeks to anchor its trail network by investing in additional: trailhead and pocket parks; comfort stations and rest areas; signage; landscaping; public art; and maintenance equipment.

Action Program

Macomb County Blue Economy

Macomb County's freshwater assets are an integral component of the County's future parks and recreation strategy. Providing opportunities for residents and visitors to engage Lake St. Clair and the Clinton River will enhance the County's overall quality of life. In order to sustain Macomb County's energy and activity surrounding the Blue Economy, the County is committed to the following action program:

- **Increase Accessibility to Lake St. Clair and the Clinton River** – Access to these freshwater assets is the lifeblood of Blue Economy Initiative. Macomb County seeks to enhance accessibility by: increasing the number of boat and kayak launches; cultivating pier and freshwater development districts; and expanding public parks and beaches.
- **Enhance and Improve Environmental Quality** – Macomb County is committed to upholding the environmental integrity of its freshwater assets. By working with environmental and wildlife organizations, the County can invest in ecosystem and habitat restoration initiatives. The County will also focus resources on exploring and creating contemporary storm water management techniques.
- **Cultivate Macomb County's Blueways and Greenways Strategy** – In creating this parks and recreation master plan, Macomb County recognized that it possessed a great number of interconnected water resources and green space areas. From major community parks to Lake St. Clair, these assets have sustained a natural connection. The County is focused on ensuring that these natural connections remain intact and vibrant. By expanding parkland and refining conservation areas, Macomb County can enlarge its parks and recreation presence. These areas can become prime nodes for recreational programming and enhance the County's environmental stewardship.



APPENDIX

MACOMB COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN

