



2020-2024 COMPREHENSIVE

PARKS

- AND -

Natural Resources

MASTER PLAN



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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Macomb County Comprehensive Parks and Natural Resources Master Plan represents a cooperative effort by the Macomb County Office of the County Executive, Macomb County Board of Commissioners, the Macomb County Water Resources Advisory Council, Macomb County Department of Planning & Economic Development and McKenna. The development and writing of this Plan was preceded with a Macomb County Planning & Economic Development Organizational Study for Land and Water Resources Division in 2017.

A special thanks to each of the County Departments that have assisted in the development of this Plan including the Finance Department, Roads Department, Facilities and Operations Department, Department of Health and Community Services, and the Macomb County Public Works Office.

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Southeast Michigan Council of Governments
Clinton River Watershed Council
Six Rivers Land Conservancy
Lake St. Clair Cluster - Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area
The State of Michigan - Office of the Great Lakes
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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Macomb County 2020 – 2024 Comprehensive Parks and Natural Resources Master Plan. This Plan reflects a vision for the future of Macomb County’s parks and natural resource facilities, their operations, maintenance, and enhancements for the next several years. It serves as a roadmap for future recreation facilities and programs by considering existing parks and programs in and around the County and anticipated demand for additional or improved recreation and natural area facilities.

The Plan also forms the basis for potential recreation grant funding from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) and other agencies and foundations. Macomb County’s Plan was prepared in accordance with MDNR’s Guidelines for the Development of Community Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenways Plans. Most importantly, this Plan will serve as Macomb County’s playbook for community building, as it relates to parks and natural resources over the next five or more years.

The planning process for 2019 – 2023 Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan was prepared with technical assistance from McKenna, a planning and design consulting firm, and with active involvement of the Macomb County Department of Planning and Economic Development. Citizen input through roundtable

discussions, Macomb Field Days, an online survey, and a public hearing played a critical role in the development of the Plan. As a result, recommendations described within the action plan reflect the needs and ideas of those who plan, use, and maintain Macomb County’s Parks and Natural Resources facilities. The planning process kicked off in June 2018 and concluded with the adoption of the Plan in June 20, 2019.

The Plan evaluated Macomb County by conducting a comparative Parkland Analysis that shows how the County can be better served by increasing attention to parks and natural resources as we have not invested much in the arena of parks and open space as did other comparative counties in the region. This is true even if State Parks and the Metroparks are considered. Macomb County currently provides limited parks and recreation

opportunities. It shows that that the County has significantly limited parks and recreation options compared to similar sized counties in Michigan, and the County offers the fewest parks and recreational opportunities in the region.

An Operational Analysis was conducted to evaluate how Macomb County is positioned amongst similar counties in Michigan. The analysis shows how Macomb County has the lowest per capita operating expense by a very considerable margin, spending nearly eight dollars less per resident than the next comparable county. Due to the lack of a dedicated parks and recreation department, Macomb County currently does not have any full time parks and recreation employees and lacks the ability to compete for recreational, conservation, and implementation funds. This Plan provides the basis for developing the administrative structure and initial funding opportunities to begin a process to advent the goals outlined herein.

An Action Program provides the recommendations of the Plan that are based on stakeholder discussions with Macomb County Department heads, public input, stakeholder roundtable discussions, the results of an online survey, and an analysis of best practices of comparable Michigan counties, parks and recreation administrative structures. The recommendation also considered the 2017 study regarding the Macomb County Planning and Economic Development Organizational Strategy for Land and Water Resource Program Area.

The recommended organization of parks and natural resources streamlines duties of various County departments under one centralized program. The responsibility of managing parks and natural resources would fall under the Macomb County Planning and Economic Development Department, with coordination from other County departments and other partnering agencies.

SECTION 1	COMMUNITY PROFILE
SECTION 2	PARKS & NATURAL RESOURCES ASSETS
SECTION 3	PUBLIC PARTICIPATION
SECTION 4	ANALYSIS
SECTION 5	GOALS & OBJECTIVES
SECTION 6	ACTION PROGRAM



MACOMB COUNTY HAS BEEN WITHOUT A DEDICATED PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT SINCE 2010 WHEN BUDGETARY CONSTRAINTS CREATED THE NEED.



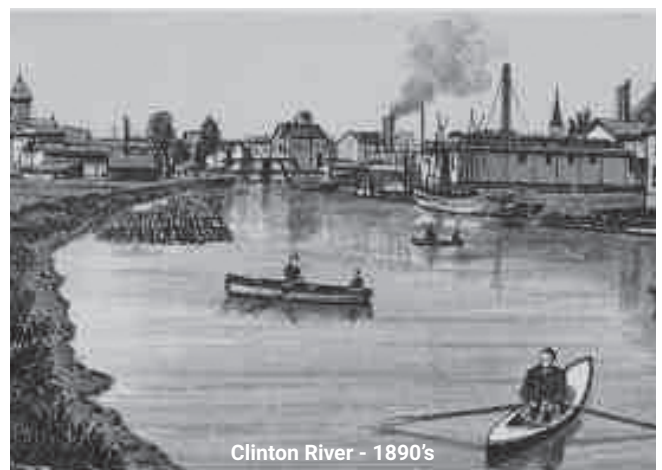
COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION

Macomb County encompasses 479 square miles of land area on the eastern shores of southeast Michigan along Lake St. Clair. It is comprised of 27 uniquely charming communities, 215 public parks, 32 miles of lakefront shoreline, 155 miles of built bike trails, 32 miles of paddling trails along the Clinton River and hundreds of additional miles of streams and tributaries. All are welcome to take advantage of the opportunity to enjoy a truly high quality of life within the County, as it offers a diverse array of recreational assets and events, some of the most advanced and connective multi-modal infrastructure in the state, and unequalled access to high value locations that ultimately define Macomb County as the preeminent place to make one's home or business.

Macomb County's setting and demographic trends will play an integral role in this parks and recreation planning process. As the Plan is developed and implemented, Macomb County must be aware of its own trends and its relation to the greater geographical region and Great Lakes community as a whole. The Plan is not a standalone document or service, it is a system. As practices evolve in the region and abroad, Macomb County must evolve as well as it strives to be the most dynamic of leaders in service to its population and environment.

History

Since the establishment of the County in 1818, local governments have been primarily responsible for providing parks and recreation services and opportunities for their communities. Most of these facilities and programs were relatively small operations consisting of playgrounds, picnic areas and various ball fields. These community green spaces served as gathering places for residents and created a safe and healthy environment for people of all ages to enjoy recreation.



Clinton River - 1890's

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, administrators sought to establish parks and recreation facilities that had more amenities and a greater ability to serve larger populations, as exemplified by Dodge State Park No.8. In the 1940s, southeast Michigan took a major step in 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, ultimately tasking HCMA to oversee the procurement and maintenance of large public park spaces. By 1950, Macomb County had its cornerstone facility in Lake St. Clair Metropark. This regional parks and recreation destination attracted Macomb County residents and visitors alike to a single place along the shores of Lake St. Clair. This lakefront park would not be the end of HCMA's footprint within the County, as they established two more Metroparks, each experiencing wild success in the region. Much like surrounding counties, the region began to see the successes of HCMA, so Macomb County decided to position itself more strategically in the scene by creating its own parks and recreation commission to serve the specific needs of Macomb County residents.

One of the first steps taken to gauge the residents' wishes and expectations associated with parks and recreation was the drafting of 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. Further expanding the scope of its work, Macomb County began to explore the benefits of comprehensive environmental stewardship programs and non-motorized trail networks in the early '80's. This effort materialized in Macomb County's 1991 Comprehensive Recreation and Open Space Master Plan which provided a means for addressing many of the water related concerns that existed in the Clinton River and Lake St. Clair, as well as a foundation in the effort to develop countywide trails. In the early 2000s, the County developed the Macomb County Trailways



Master Plan and the Macomb Orchard Trail Master Plan. These documents provided Macomb County with a strategic framework to acquire property and build a comprehensive non-motorized trail network. By 2007, there was great success to be celebrated as Macomb County had expanded Freedom Hill, constructed the Macomb Orchard Trail, and drafted a new parks master plan.

Momentum was building across the County for parks and recreation, but in 2008, this momentum was stopped by an economic downturn. As the economy began to slip into a recession, Macomb County's property equally shared in the disparaging trend. Resources that communities had set aside for parks and recreation were now being siphoned back into general funds to support basic community services, leading to many cuts and limitations in what was a budding parks and recreation era. Macomb County was not immune to these same budgetary challenges, as it too began to make difficult decisions to solve their fiscal 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. The County was financially unable to provide the services and amenities that it once had, which resulted in 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.



Freedom Hill County Park Sign - 2007

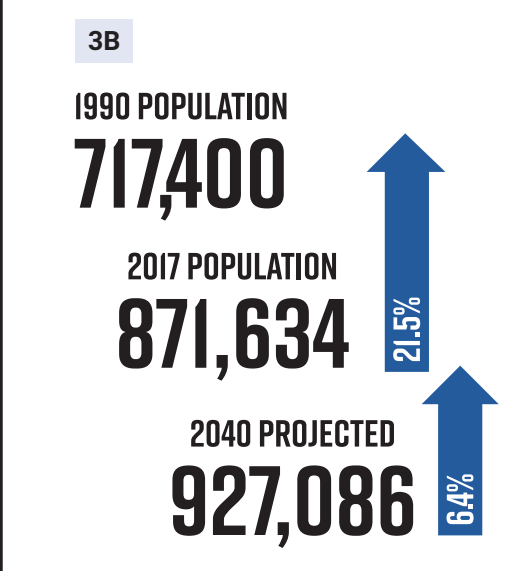
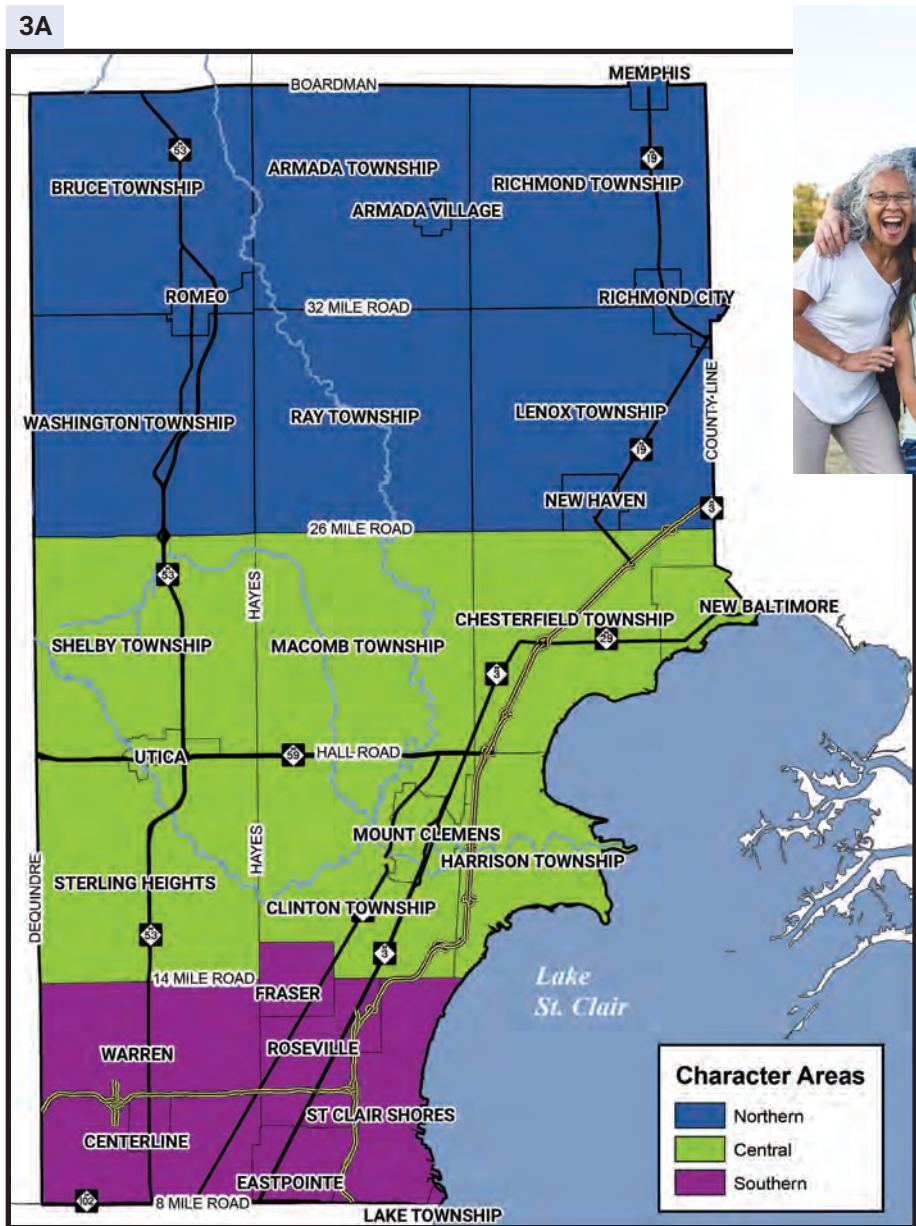
In 2011, in response to the new challenges facing local and county jurisdictions, Macomb County residents ushered in a new executive form of government. Mark A. Hackel was elected as Macomb County's first county executive. Taking the helm, Executive Hackel began to overhaul the County's finances and reinvest in major quality of life initiatives that could enhance the profile of the area. Macomb County quickly began investing in the promotion of its freshwater assets through its, "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. Since then, MCPED has been actively engaged with countless partners, developing a plethora of new and innovative plans and ordinances that promote parks and recreational assets, promote mobility through its "Mobilize Macomb Non-Motorized Master Plan," promote environmental stewardship, and highlight the County's key natural features. The County intends to build on its momentum through this next Master Plan by further developing and investing in its parks and recreation so that it can meet the expectations of its residents and compete with some of the regions finest offerings.

Demographic Characteristics

POPULATION TRENDS

Maintaining its almost 70 year population growth trend, Macomb County now nears the 1 million resident mark without sign of slowing down. The county is experiencing growth in the total number of households, total number of family households, and in the average household size – all while having an aging demographic, as evident by the increase in the County’s median age statistic and in the population trees as separated by the County’s Northern, Central, and Southern areas. However, even though birth rates are declining and the County’s median age continues to rise, we see positive trends in the family forming age demographic as well as increases in the attraction of migrants to the area - this will lead to great potential in the production of children and resetting the balance of the County’s population tree.



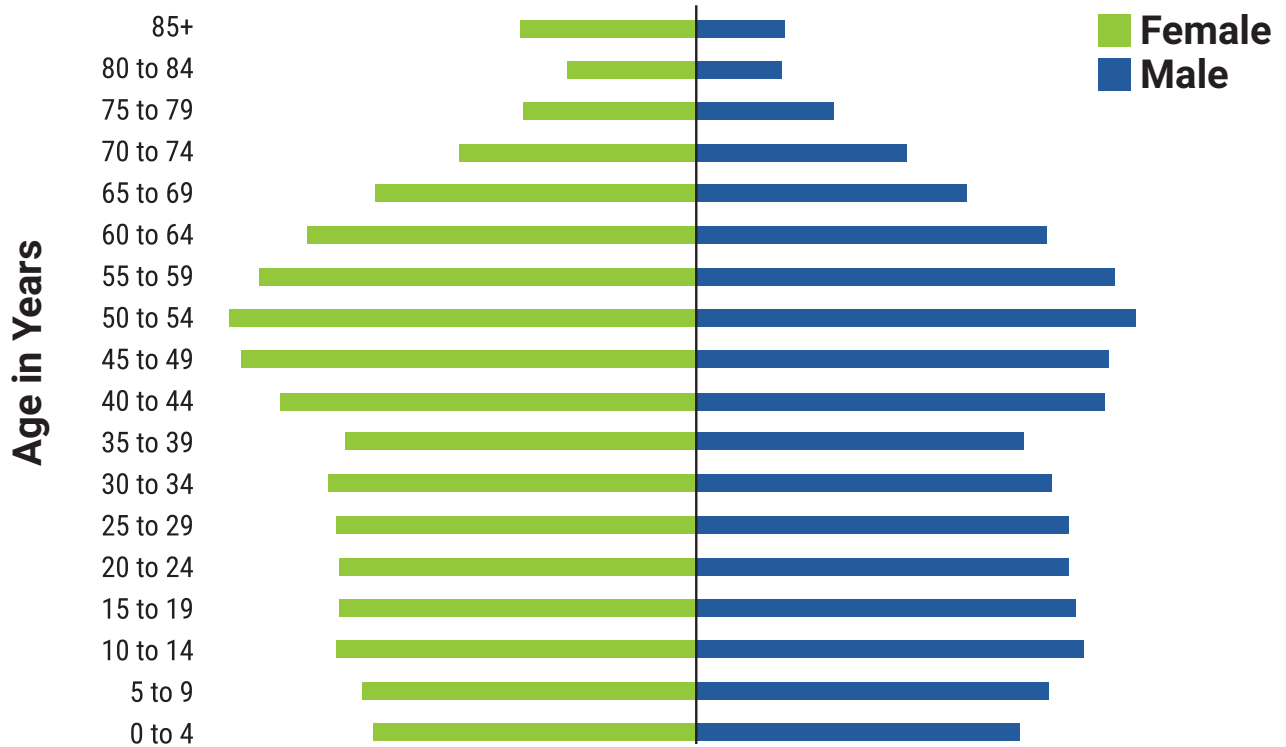
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NORTHERN MACOMB



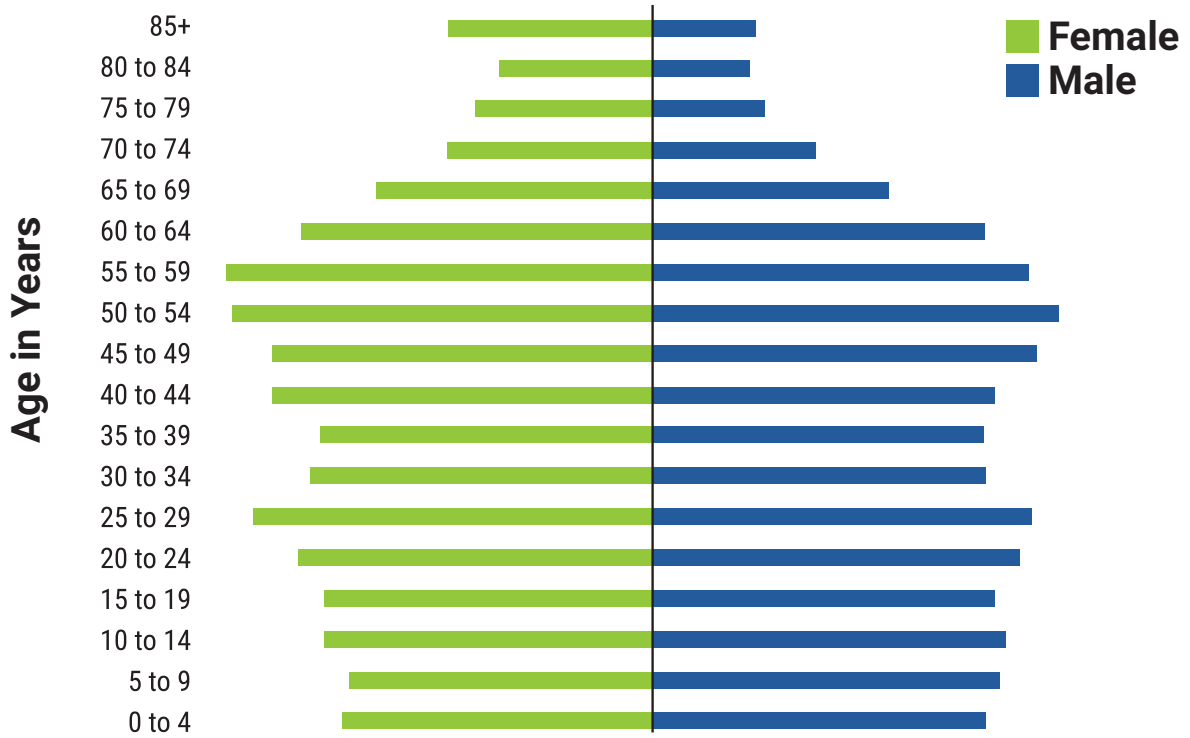
3D

CENTRAL MACOMB



3E

SOUTHERN MACOMB



3F

LIFE CYCLE ANALYSIS	2010	2016	% CHANGE
PRE-SCHOOL (UNDER 5)	48,815	48,221	-1.2
SCHOOL AGED (5 TO 19)	165,810	160,521	-3.2
FAMILY FORMING (20 TO 44)	269,343	275,158	2.2
MATURE FAMILIES (45 TO 64)	236,830	242,914	2.6
RETIREMENT AGED (OVER 65)	120,180	134,698	12.1



MACOMB COUNTY POPULATION

51.3% FEMALE
48.7% MALE

78.8% WHITE
11.9% BLACK
3.9% ASIAN
2.6% HISPANIC
2.5% MULTI-RACIAL
0.3% N. AMERICAN



HOUSEHOLD INCOME TRENDS

Median income levels in the County have risen since the last decennial census (U.S. Census Bureau) was surveyed. More households than ever before are tallied in the higher middle income and wealthiest of brackets. What is even more astounding is that this level of income mobility is representative of a greater statistical trend where households, in general, are moving up the income bracket in a net positive household income shift. However, while most trends have been positive for the population as a whole, poverty is still most prevalent in the southern portion of the County and must be factored in when it comes to the equity of parks and recreation.

MACOMB COUNTY POPULATION



**AVERAGE
 HOUSEHOLD SIZE:**
2.54

**TOTAL
 HOUSEHOLDS:**
338,893

**FAMILY
 HOUSEHOLDS:**
223,985

**2016 MEDIAN
 HOUSEHOLD
 INCOME:**
\$55,951
(+3.6% FROM 2010)

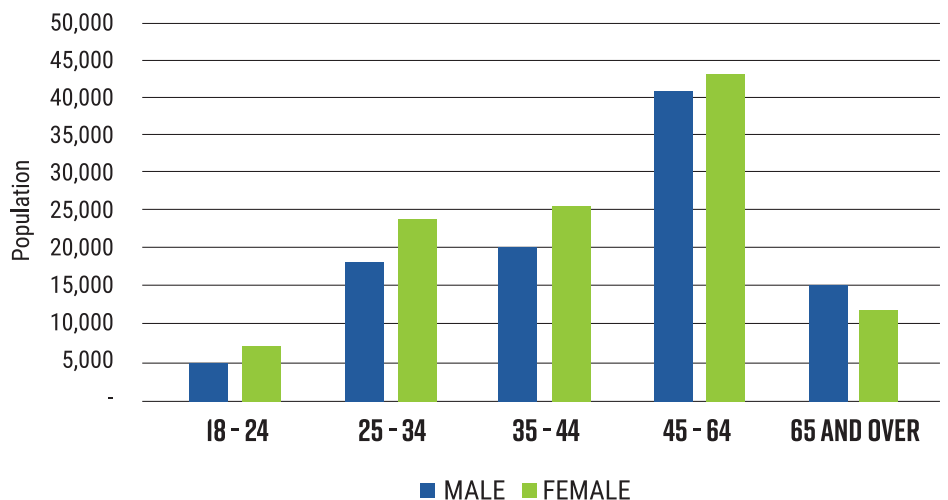
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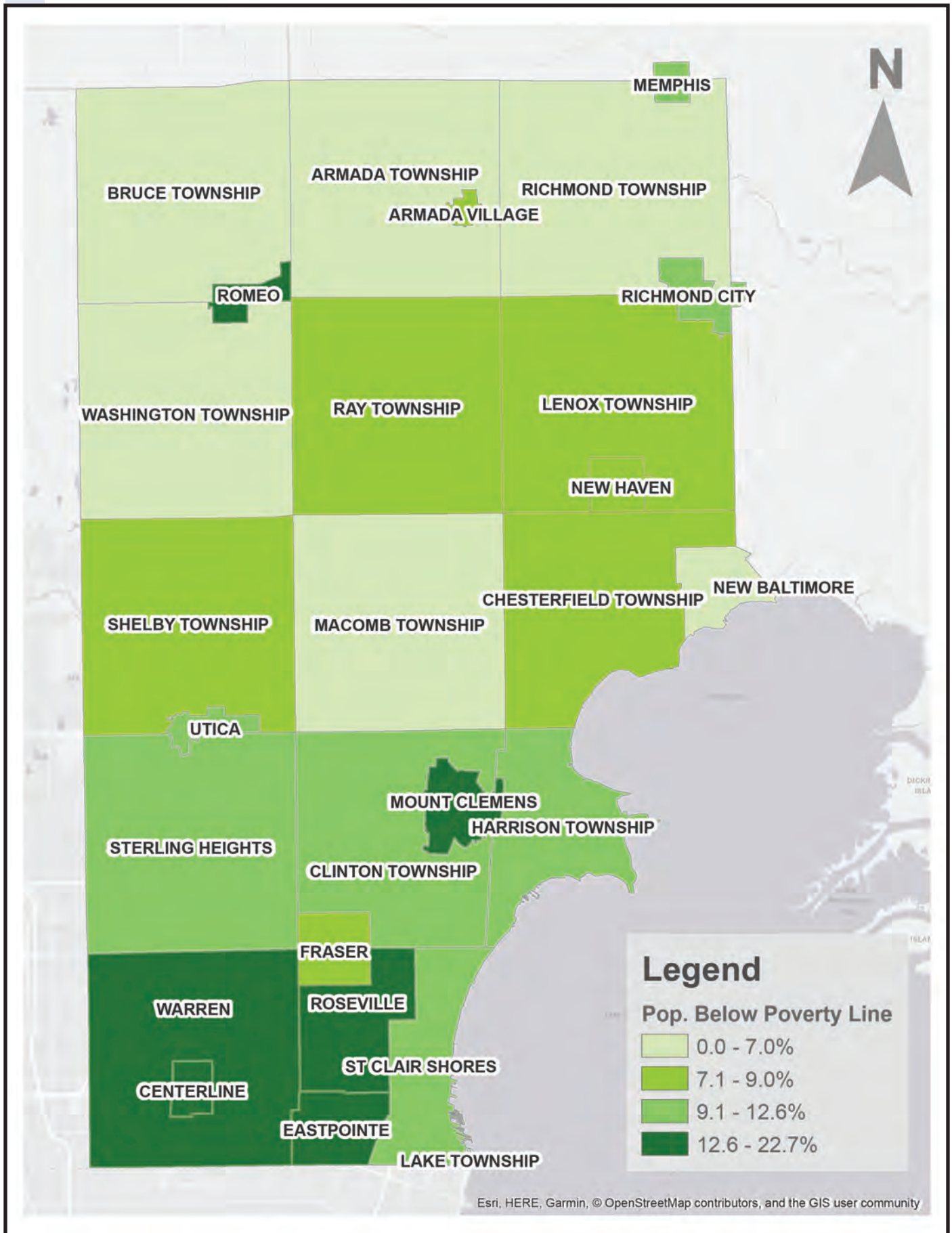
HOUSEHOLD INCOME	2010	2016	% CHANGE
LESS THAN \$10K	17,837	18,978	6.4
\$10K TO \$14,999	15,855	14,234	-10.2
\$15K TO \$24,999	34,353	35,584	3.6
\$25K TO \$34,999	35,344	34,906	-1.2
\$35K TO \$49,999	49,218	47,784	-2.9
\$50K TO \$74,999	63,752	65,406	2.6
\$75K TO \$99,999	48,888	45,073	-7.8
\$100K TO \$149,999	45,254	49,817	10.1
\$150K TO \$199,999	13,543	16,945	25.1
\$200K OR MORE	6,276	10,167	62.0

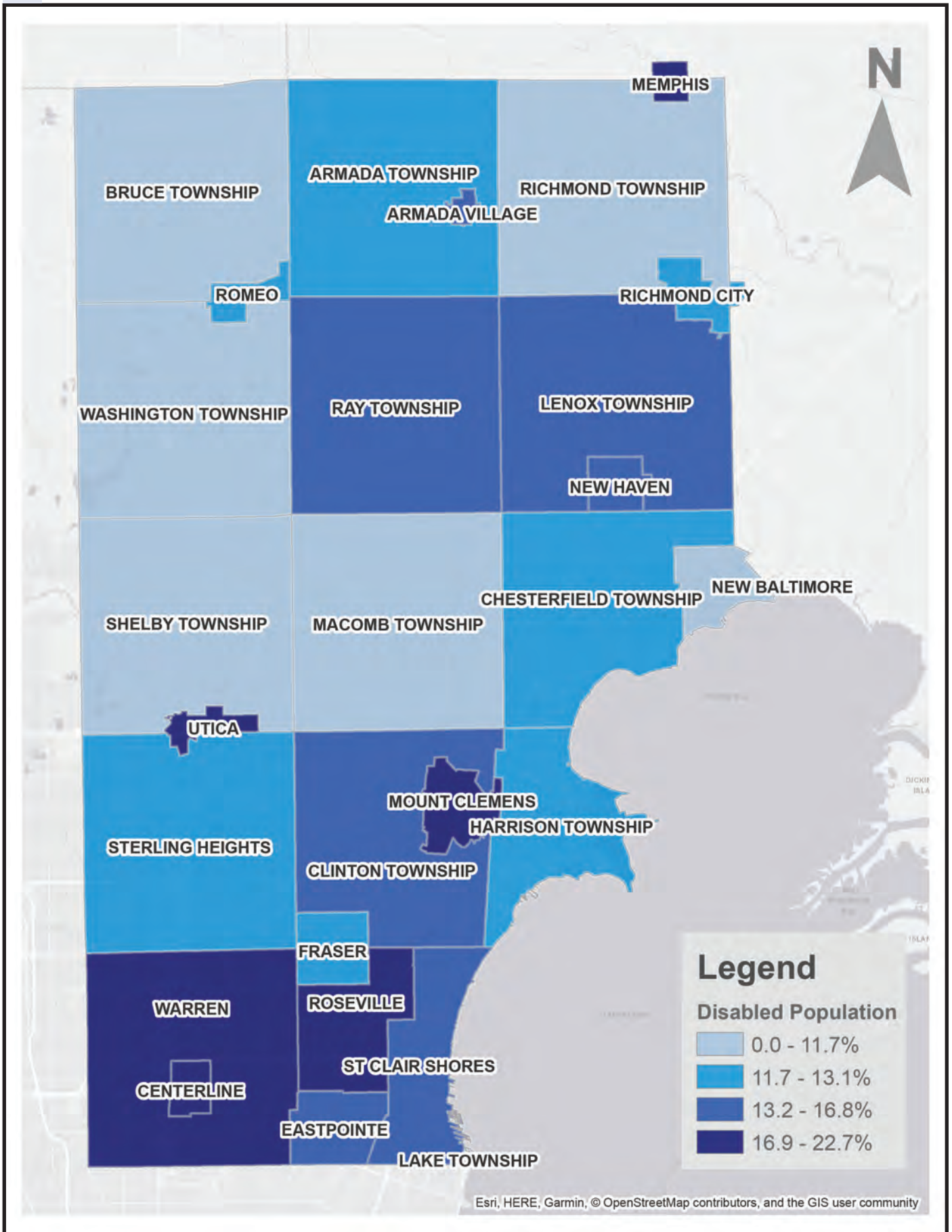
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EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Associates Degree or Higher



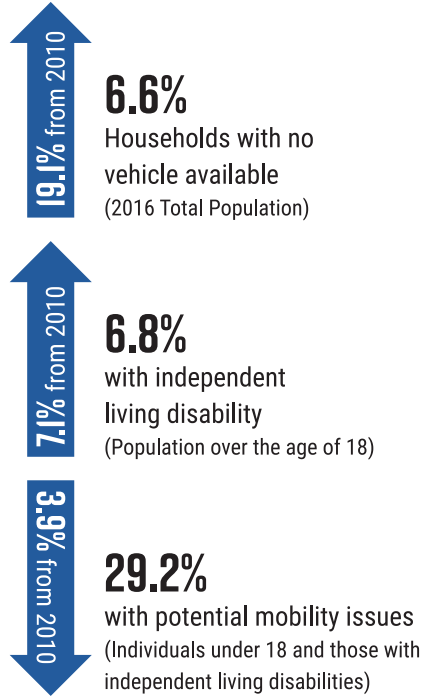






3.9% OF THE COUNTY'S POPULATION ARE LIVING WITH A DISABILITY, 8% OF WHICH ARE UNDER 18 YEARS OF AGE. (+1.1% FROM 2010)

3K



DISABILITY AND MOBILITY TRENDS

As the population ages, the proportion of individuals who have disabilities and mobility issues increases. However, through this narrow perspective, there are a number of individuals who go unaccounted for when planning for improving access and connection to parks and recreation. Beyond the issues that arise with an aging population, the County as a whole experiences a 13.9 percent disability rate. These individuals suffer from a wide array of ailments and will require accommodations specific to their needs. Going further, when combining the disability statistic with the number of individuals who may not have access to a car, or may be dependent upon someone else for their transportation, the accommodation statistic rises to 29.2 percent of the County population, with a majority of that population concentrated in the southern portion of the County.

SUMMARY

This Community Description depicts a county that is experiencing steady population growth with an increasing number of households, household size, and household income. These trends, while positive, lack important context on issues that will otherwise influence how parks and natural resource are planned for and ultimately used by the County population. Issues such as improving facility design and programming, lowering barriers to entry and better connecting the County's increasingly aged and mobility-challenged population to County parks are some of the considerations that must be weighed when implementing the recommendations of this Plan.

4

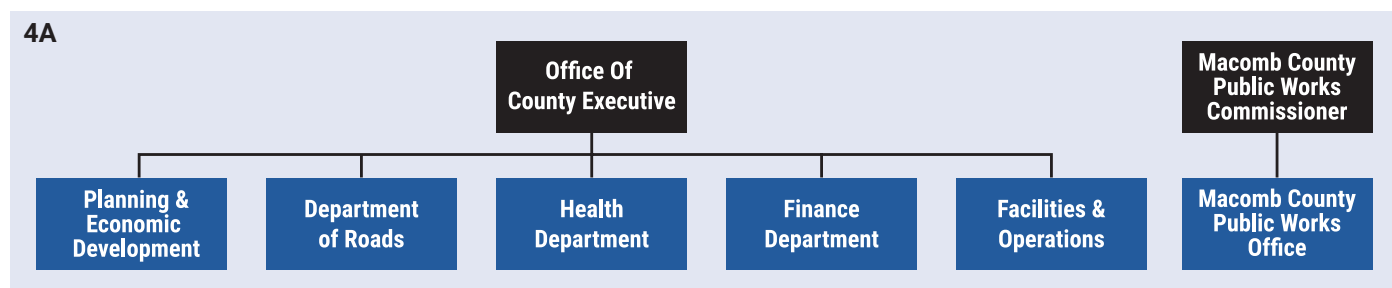
ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE AND FUNDING

Parks and Recreation Administrative Structure Comparison

CURRENT MACOMB COUNTY OPERATIONAL STRUCTURE

Under the direction of the Office of the County Executive, 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 (MCDOR). MCPED helps to develop facilities, natural features, trails and waterways strategies. The coordination, development and maintenance of Macomb County's non-motorized trail network is the responsibility of the MCDOR. Assistance for maintenance of existing park facilities is provided by the Facilities and Operation Department. The Public Works Office, under the direction of the Public Works Commissioner and the Finance Department also provides supporting services.

The current leadership structure is decentralized without a cohesive vision for long term parks and natural resources goals. A decentralized leadership structure leads to a reactive approach to opportunities as they arise. Without an organizational structure that puts key employees together on a regular basis, it will be difficult to create effective long-term strategies. It can lead to miscommunication because people might not be sure who needs information or where to send important messages. It can also create inefficiencies when departments are not working closely together. For instance, coordination of maintenance across facilities can reduce costs and time when resources are shared.



**COMPARATIVE COUNTIES
ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**

Each comparable Michigan county community has a dedicated parks and recreation department. Their general structure is that the county parks department manages the daily operations and development of their park and trail system. The department is overseen by the county administrator’s office which, in turn, reports to the elected county board of commissioners.

NUMBER OF DEDICATED PARKS AND RECREATION EMPLOYEES

Table 4B shows the number of combined full time and full time equivalent people each comparable county employs. The information was taken from each community’s Parks and Recreation Master Plan or annual budget document. Due to the lack of a dedicated parks and recreation department, Macomb County does not have any full time parks and recreation employees.



DUE TO THE LACK OF A DEDICATED PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT, MACOMB COUNTY DOES NOT HAVE ANY FULL TIME PARKS AND RECREATION EMPLOYEES.

4B

COUNTY	EMPLOYEES
OAKLAND COUNTY	213
KENT COUNTY	171
GENESEE COUNTY	59
WAYNE COUNTY	44
ST. CLAIR COUNTY	11
MACOMB COUNTY	0



Comparison of County Parks and Recreation Operations Budget to Other Michigan Counties

Table 4C depicts how Macomb County's current budget is positioned amongst similar counties in Michigan. Information used in this analysis was obtained from each participating agency's website. Due to differences in how each system collects, maintains and reports data, variances may exist.

4C

COUNTY	POPULATION	TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSE	OPERATING EXPENSE PER CAPITA	TOTAL NON-TAX REVENUE	OPERATIONAL COST RECOVERY
OAKLAND COUNTY	1,250,836	\$23,520,675	\$18.80	\$9,951,644	42%
WAYNE COUNTY	1,753,616	\$14,973,138	\$8.54	\$1,999,764	13%
GENESEE COUNTY	407,385	\$9,796,562	\$24.05	\$2,491,183	25%
KENT COUNTY	648,594	\$5,826,767	\$8.98	\$2,214,171	38%
ST. CLAIR COUNTY	159,350	\$3,382,000	\$21.22	\$334,300	10%
MACOMB COUNTY	871,375	\$534,000	\$0.61	\$278,000	52%

Macomb County has the lowest per capita operating expense by a wide margin, spending nearly eight dollars less per resident than the next comparable county and much less than the average in this region. Operational cost recovery is a performance indicator that measures how well each department's revenue generation covers the total cost of operations. Macomb County has the highest operational cost recovery, although it has the lowest non-tax revenue. Outside of non-tax revenues, other counties' operating expenses are supported by county-wide millages and transfers from the general operating budget.

MACOMB COUNTY HAS THE LOWEST PER CAPITA OPERATING EXPENSE BY A WIDE MARGIN, SPENDING NEARLY EIGHT DOLLARS LESS PER RESIDENT THAN THE NEXT COMPARABLE COUNTY.





4D

DIVISION DETAIL	2016 ACTUAL	2017 ACTUAL	2018 ADOPTED	2018 ADOPTED
EMPLOYEE EXPENSES	\$16,362	-	-	\$84,926
SUPPLIES & SERVICES	\$250,682	\$41,926	\$307,800	\$200,000
UTILITIES	\$111,366	\$21,624	\$130,000	\$130,000
REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE	\$49,628	\$8,394	\$45,000	\$45,000
INTERNAL SERVICES	\$1,267	\$1,010	\$1,200	\$2,423
CAPITAL OUTLAY	-	-	\$50,000	\$50,000
TOTAL	\$429,305	\$72,954	\$534,000	\$512,349

CURRENT MACOMB COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION BUDGET

Table 4D depicts Macomb County’s current 2019 parks and recreation budget. These expenses are solely for the operation and limited maintenance of Freedom Hill County Park. The expenditures under the supplies and services line item are related to the depreciation of equipment and facilities at Freedom Hill. Utilities such as water, sewer, and electricity are based on the usage at the park. The more events held, the higher the utility usage. *Source: 2019 Macomb County Budget*

Additional Funding Sources and Considerations

The following section identifies and describes potential sources for additional funding. These sources include state and federal matching grant programs, Federal Highway Administration/mDOT funds, new state tax revenues and dedicated millages.

4E

MICHIGAN NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND GRANT PROJECTS ACTIVE OR COMPLETED 1978 THROUGH 2011			
COUNTY	\$ FROM STATE TRUST FUND PER RESIDENT	TOTAL PROJECTS	TOTAL APPROPRIATIONS
OAKLAND	\$52	113	\$63,722,469
ST. CLAIR	\$88	32	\$14,029,449
WASHTENAW	\$65	50	\$22,900,314
WAYNE	\$39	81	\$69,320,118
REGION	\$41	297	\$177,476,280
MACOMB	\$9	21	\$7,503,930

MICHIGAN NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND - MDNR

The Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF) projects provide for natural resource protection and outdoor recreation. Applications are evaluated annually on established criteria such as resource protection, access to recreation opportunities, and project need. At least 25 percent of the cost of the project is required as match from local government applicants. Development project minimum/maximum grant amounts are \$15,000 to \$300,000. There are no minimum/maximum limits on land acquisition grants.

The amount of grants acquired through the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund is lacking considerably when compared to any other county within southeast Michigan. This is a deficiency that can be addressed when funding sources are identified on an annual basis and allows personnel to apply for parks and natural resources projects that enhance the lifestyle of those that are in Macomb County.

LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND - MDNR

The Land and Water Conservation Fund provides matching grants to states and local governments for the acquisition and development of public outdoor recreation areas and facilities. Applications are evaluated using established criteria and alignment with Michigan's Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). The criteria used to evaluate the projects is need for the project, site and project quality, applicant history, financial need of the applicant, quality of the overall park design, project facilities/scope items and universal access design. Any unit of government, including Native American tribes, school districts, or any combination of units in which authority is legally constituted to provide recreation are eligible applicants. The minimum grant request amount is \$30,000 and the maximum grant request amount is \$300,000.

RECREATION PASSPORT GRANTS - MDNR

The objective for the program is to provide funding to local units for the development of public recreation facilities. This includes the development of new facilities and the renovation of old facilities. Criteria emphasize renovations to existing facilities that have outlived their useful life expectancy. At least 25 percent of the cost of the project is required as match from applicants. The development project minimum/maximum grant amount is \$7,500 to \$150,000.

TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM - TAP PROGRAM (MDOT, FHWA)

The Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), a component of the Federal MAP-21 Surface Transportation Program, offers funding opportunities to help expand transportation choices and enhance the transportation experience through implementing a number of transportation improvements, including pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure and safety programs, historic preservation and rehabilitation of transportation facilities, environmental mitigation activities, and safe routes to school programs. The program is administered by the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG).

ACT 51 - MDOT

Act 51 creates the Michigan Transportation Fund (MTF). Revenues collected through highway user taxes—state motor fuels taxes, vehicle registration fees, and other miscellaneous automobile related taxes—are deposited in the MTF. Up to five percent of the MTF can be used for roadside parks. A minimum of one percent (based on a ten-year average) of MTF funds distributed to the state, counties and cities must be used for non-motorized transportation facilities.

However, with more emphasis on road fixes, MDOT auditors are denying the uses of MTF for non-motorized expenditures. This is a reversal of the late 1990's and early 2000's when MDOT placed an emphasis on local Act 51 Agencies to use road dollars on non-motorized projects.



IN ORDER TO BECOME COMPETITIVE AND PROVIDE THE ECONOMIC, HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL, AND SOCIAL BENEFITS THAT PARKS AND NATURAL RESOURCES CAN PROVIDE, THE COUNTY MUST BEGIN TO INCREASE FUNDING FOR PARKS AND NATURAL RESOURCES.



ITC REVEGETATION FUND

The ITC Revegetation Fund was established to revegetate the Macomb Orchard Trail in Shelby and Washington Township due to unapproved cutting performed by ITC. This fund has approximately \$415,000.

4F

COUNTY	MILLAGE
GENESEE COUNTY	0.75
WAYNE COUNTY	0.25
OAKLAND COUNTY	0.2368
ST. CLAIR COUNTY	0.4956
KENT COUNTY	0
MACOMB COUNTY	0

MILLAGES

Some counties have leveraged a millage to defray the operational costs for their parks and recreational facilities and to provide funds for necessary match to competitive grants. Of the five largest Michigan counties, only Macomb County and Kent County do not currently have a millage for parks and recreation; however, Kent County funds parks and recreation annually through the general fund.

SUMMARY

Compared to the five largest counties in Michigan by population, Macomb County has the lowest per capita operating expense by a wide margin, spending nearly eight dollars less per resident than the next comparable county. In order to become competitive and provide the economic, health and environmental, and social benefits that parks and natural resources can provide, the County must begin to increase funding for parks and natural resources.



5

PARKS, TRAILS AND NATURAL RESOURCES



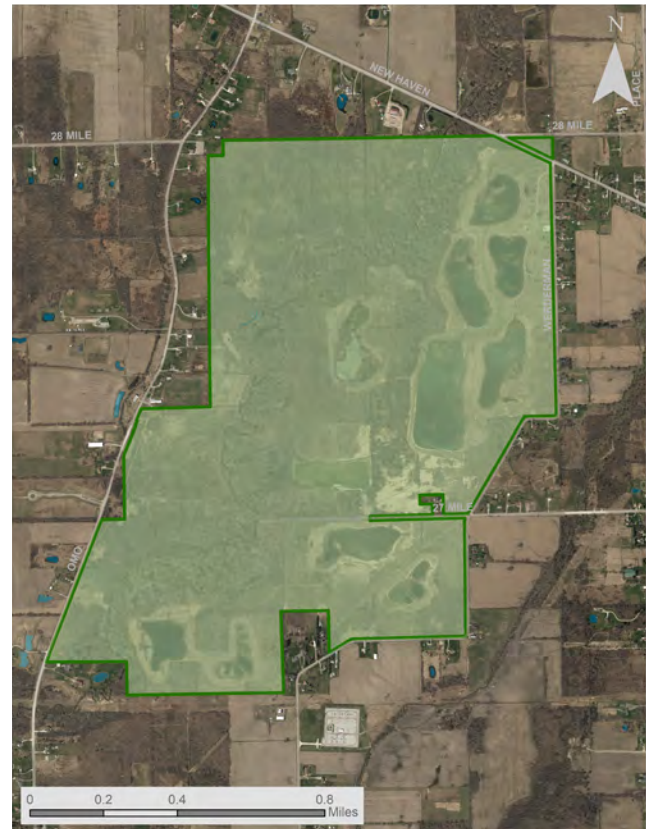
Overview

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. The following sections will provide an overview of parks and recreation facilities within Macomb County followed by an overview of the natural features that guide accessibility and opportunities to conserve, enhance and protect. Section 5A 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. Section 5B will provide and overview of the County's natural features.

5A | STATE AND REGIONAL FACILITIES INVENTORY

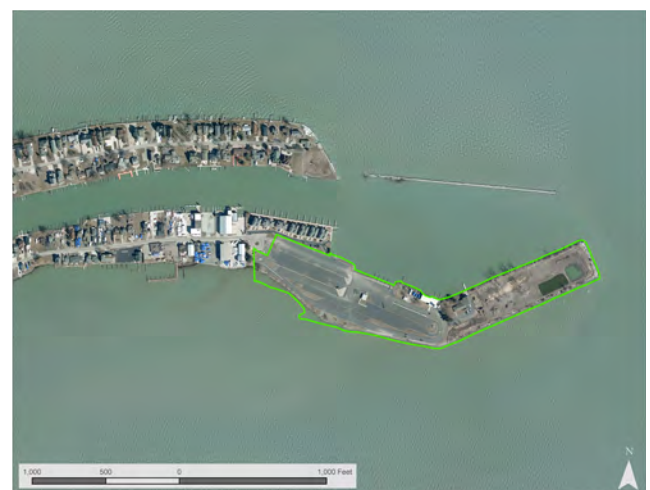
W.C. WETZEL STATE RECREATION AREA

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.



HARLEY ENSIGN MEMORIAL BOAT LAUNCH AND PUBLIC ACCESS

Located on Lake St. Clair at the mouth of the Clinton River, the Harley 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.



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 paved parking area that can accommodate 150 vehicles. Additionally, the site is fully handicap accessible and has a public toilet.



CLINTON RIVER CUT-OFF BOAT LAUNCH AND PUBLIC ACCESS

The Clinton River Cut-off Boat Launch and Public Access is located in Harrison Township on Jefferson Avenue and Crocker Boulevard. Operated by the MDNR, the Clinton River Cut-off Boat Launch and Public Access site provides direct access to Lake St. Clair. The facility has a hard surface launch area, is equipped with a public toilet and a paved parking area that can accommodate 130 vehicles.



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:

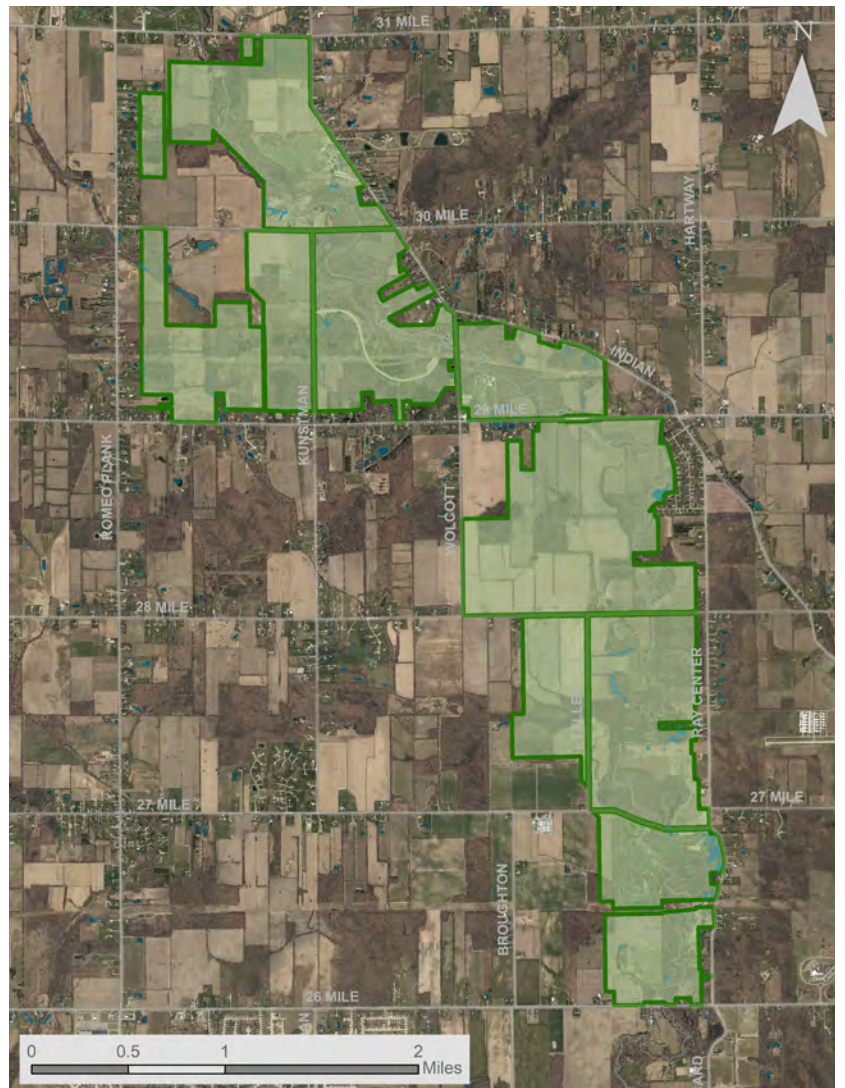
- 800 ft. long public beach with swimming area
- Olympic size pool
- Two waterslides
- 10,000 square foot Squirt Zone
- Eight slip boat launching ramp
- Two transient marinas which can accommodate 106 boats
- Nature center
- Three quarter mile nature trail
- Picnic areas
- Three miles of paved hike/bike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

More than 400,000 vehicles visit Lake St. Clair Metropark annually. From world renowned fishing tournaments to the County's Sprint and Splash Festival of Races, 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.



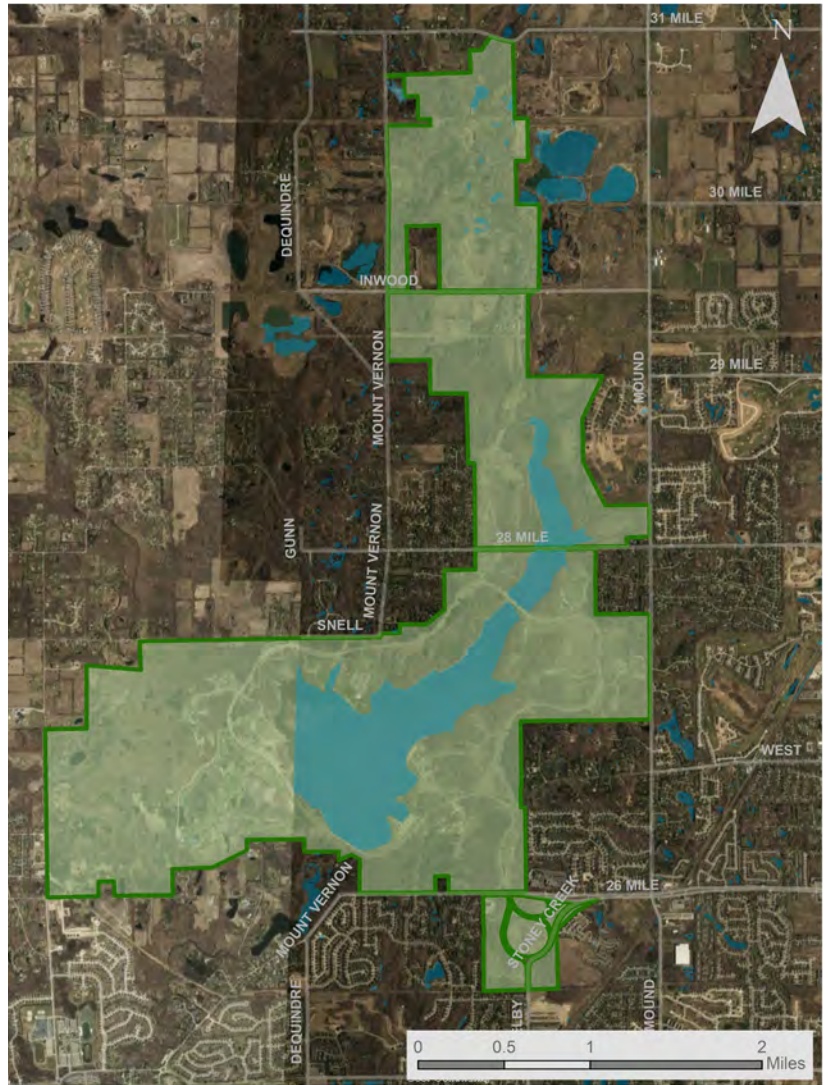
WOLCOTT MILL METROPARK

Wolcott Mill Metropark is a 2,845-acre park located in Ray Township. Covering five contiguous miles of green space 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. The park is also 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 center 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. More than 50,000 vehicles visit Wolcott Mill Metropark 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 and take advantage of the prime fishing, as pik, walleye, bass, perch, bluegills and crappies inhabit the water. 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, a seven mile paved hike/bike path and the Stony Creek Nature Center, which provides nature exhibits, programs and walking 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, and hosts many special events, including a fireworks display and many cycling and running competitions. More than 520,000 vehicles visit Stony Creek Metropark annually.





Macomb County Parks and Recreation Facilities

Macomb County has three park properties: Freedom Hill County Park and Amphitheater, the Macomb Orchard Trail and Nicholson Nature Center.

INVENTORY METHODOLOGY

A survey of each park was conducted during the month of September. Major amenities were documented and recorded on a series of maps which depicted each park via an aerial view. These maps were used extensively during planning sessions. Each of the maps focused on the parks amenities, natural features, context and connectivity elements. The maps also provided a Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) Accessibility Rating. The MDNR states in its “Guidelines for the Development of Community Park, Recreation, Open Space, and Greenway Plans” publication that an assessment of the accessibility of each park to people with disabilities must be conducted. This assessment must consider the accessibility of both the facilities themselves, as well as the access routes to them.

5A



MDNR provides the following rating system for assessing accessibility:

- 1** = None of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines
- 2** = Some of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines
- 3** = Most of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines
- 4** = The entire park meets accessibility guidelines
- 5** = The entire park was developed/renovated using the principles of universal design.

FREEDOM HILL COUNTY PARK AND AMPHITHEATER

MDNR ACCESSIBILITY RATING = 2

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 meets accessibility guidelines.



MACOMB ORCHARD TRAIL

MDNR ACCESSIBILITY RATING = 2

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.

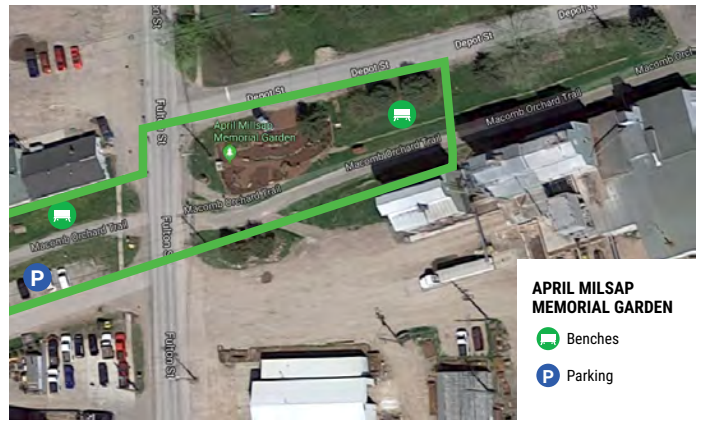
The MOT possesses a number of pocket parks and refuge areas. The trail is equipped with benches and comfort stations, and is anchored by a gateway structure at Dequindre Road in Shelby Township. In Washington Township, Ross Memorial Park is located on the MOT and provides users with a pavilion area, 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.

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.





24 MILE ROAD TRAILHEAD PARK
 ☆ Comfort Station



APRIL MILSAP MEMORIAL GARDEN
 🪑 Benches
 P Parking



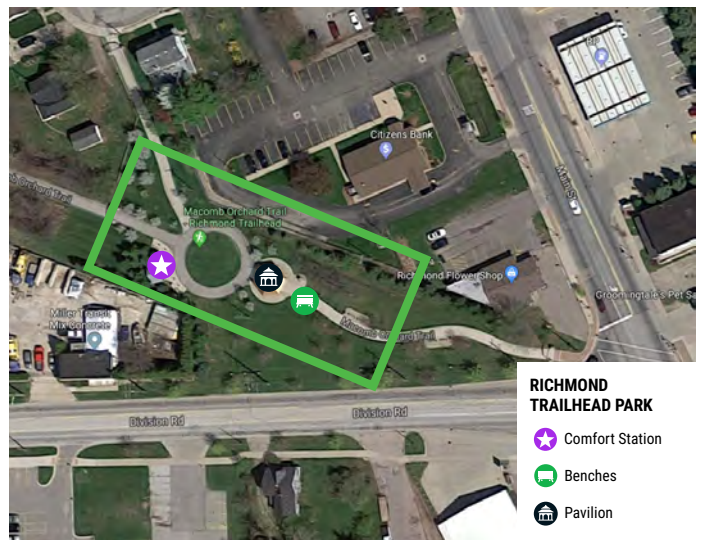
ROSS MEMORIAL TRAILHEAD PARK
 ☆ Comfort Station
 🪑 Benches
 🏠 Pavilion
 P Parking



ARMADA RIDGE TRAILHEAD PARK
 ☆ Comfort Station
 P Parking



ROMEO TRAILSIDE TRAILHEAD PARK
 P Parking



RICHMOND TRAILHEAD PARK
 ☆ Comfort Station
 🪑 Benches
 🏠 Pavilion

JAMES B. & ANN V. NICHOLSON NATURE CENTER AND FLOODPLAIN CONSERVATION EASEMENT

MDNR ACCESSIBILITY RATING = 2

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 of 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. The County entered into a maintenance share agreement in 2018 that will allow Clinton Township to boost the use of this facility.





Macomb County Parkland Analysis

The following section evaluates Macomb County’s park acreage in comparison to the guidelines set forth by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA, 1983, 1995). However, the standards are general in nature and do not reflect the quality of the facilities, the character of the community, or other local differences that impact community recreation facility needs. Thus in evaluating the results, the actual conditions and trends present in the County must be taken into account. To ensure a thorough review, the following additional considerations have been evaluated:

- Agencies providing regional parks
- Drive time
- Cost to enter parks
- Comparison to other Michigan county parks and recreation.

NATIONAL RECREATION AND PARK ASSOCIATION GUIDELINES

Based on SEMCOG’s 2017 population estimation of 871,634, the NRPA suggests 8,716.34 acres of regional parkland to serve the population. Macomb County operates the following facilities:

- Freedom Hill County Park and Amphitheater: 100-acre recreation facility and amphitheater
- James B. & Ann V. Nicholson Nature Center and Floodplain Conservation Easement: 33-acre nature center
- Macomb Orchard Trail: 24-mile linear park with five trailheads.

Macomb County offers approximately 160 acres of recreational opportunities to the County residents. Based on the NRPA guidelines, Macomb County is deficient in the number of acres provided for recreation by 8,556 acres. But Macomb County is not alone in providing regional parks and recreation to the residents in Macomb County.

ADDITIONAL AGENCIES PROVIDING REGIONAL PARKS

In addition to Macomb County, the State of Michigan and the Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority provide regional parkland and recreational facilities in the County.

State of Michigan

The State of Michigan operates the following recreation facilities in Macomb County:

- W.C. Wetzel State Recreation Area: 900 acre, predominantly-undeveloped recreation area.
- Harvey Ensign Memorial Boat Launch and Public Access: Public boat launch.
- Selfridge Boat Launch and Public Access: Public boat launch.
- Clinton River Cut Off Boat Launch and Public Access Site

Michigan provides approximately 900 acres of recreational opportunities in Macomb County.

Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority Parks and Recreation Facilities

The Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority is a regional special park district encompassing Livingston, Macomb, Oakland, Washtenaw, and Wayne counties. The Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority operates the following recreation facilities in Macomb County:

- Lake St. Clair Metropark: 770 acres
- Wolcott Mill Metropark: 2,845 acres
- Stony Creek Metropark: 4,461 acres

The Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority provides 8,076 acres of regional recreations in Macomb County. Combined, Macomb County, the State of Michigan, and the Huron-Clinton Metropolitan provide 9,136 acres of parkland and recreational facilities in Macomb County.

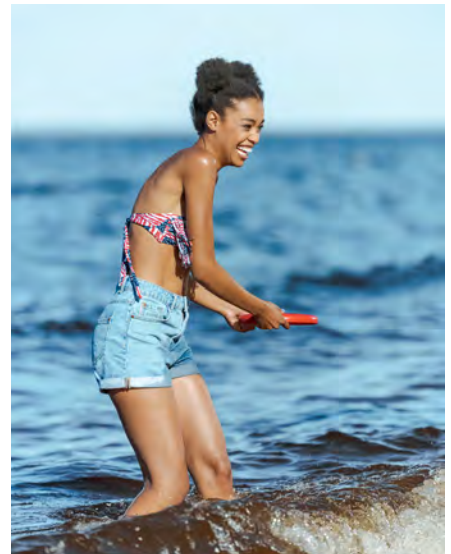
ACCESS TO PARKS

Just as important to the availability of parks and recreation opportunities is the accessibility to the opportunities. Regional park systems should ensure equitable access and opportunities for all citizens, regardless of socio-economic standing. Barriers to accessibility can take many forms, including distance to parks and entry fees.

DRIVE TIME

Macomb County owns or manages three parks and recreational facilities. For the majority of residents of the County, access to these facilities requires a greater than 15 minute drive time. The County does not provide any facilities in the southern part of the County.

When reviewing regional parks provided by all authorities, the majority of Macomb County residents can reach a regional park in 15 minutes or less. The southern area of the County, including parts of Warren, St. Clair Shores, and Eastpointe, have a greater drive time than 15 minutes to the nearest regional park in Macomb County. In the north area of the County, Richmond Township and parts of Bruce Township have a greater than 15 minute drive to the nearest regional park in Macomb County.





COMPARED TO SIMILAR SIZED COUNTIES IN MICHIGAN, MACOMB COUNTY OFFERS THE FEWEST PARKS AND RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES.

FEES TO ACCESS REGIONAL PARKS

The State Parks and Huron-Clinton Metroparks charge a fee for using the parks. These agencies provide 98 percent of the regional parkland in Macomb County. The State of Michigan offers a Recreational Passport for \$11 with the annual license plate renewal. Residents also have the option of paying \$16 for the Recreational Passport at the State Park. A day pass to a Huron-Clinton Metropark is \$11 per vehicle or \$35 for a yearly pass.

OTHER MICHIGAN COUNTIES

Macomb County has the third largest population in Michigan. Table 5B provides a summary of the parks and recreation offerings of the five most populated counties in Michigan. The number of acres listed is based on the parks that are owned or managed by each county and does not include any state or other regional authority parks.

5B

PARKS & RECREATION OFFERINGS OF THE FIVE MOST POPULATED COUNTIES IN MICHIGAN				
COUNTY	POPULATION	ACRES OF PARKS	ACRES PER 1,000 PEOPLE	TRAILS (MILES)
WAYNE	1,753,616	5,600	3.19	50
OAKLAND	1,250,836	6,743	5.39	62
KENT	648,594	6,722	10.36	60
GENESEE	407,385	11,000	27.00	27
MACOMB	871,375	160	0.18	24

SUMMARY OF REGIONAL PARKLAND AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Macomb County provides limited parks and recreation opportunities that are generally located in northern and central Macomb County, leaving the southern region with very few parks and recreation options. Compared to similar sized counties in Michigan, Macomb County offers the fewest parks and recreational opportunities.

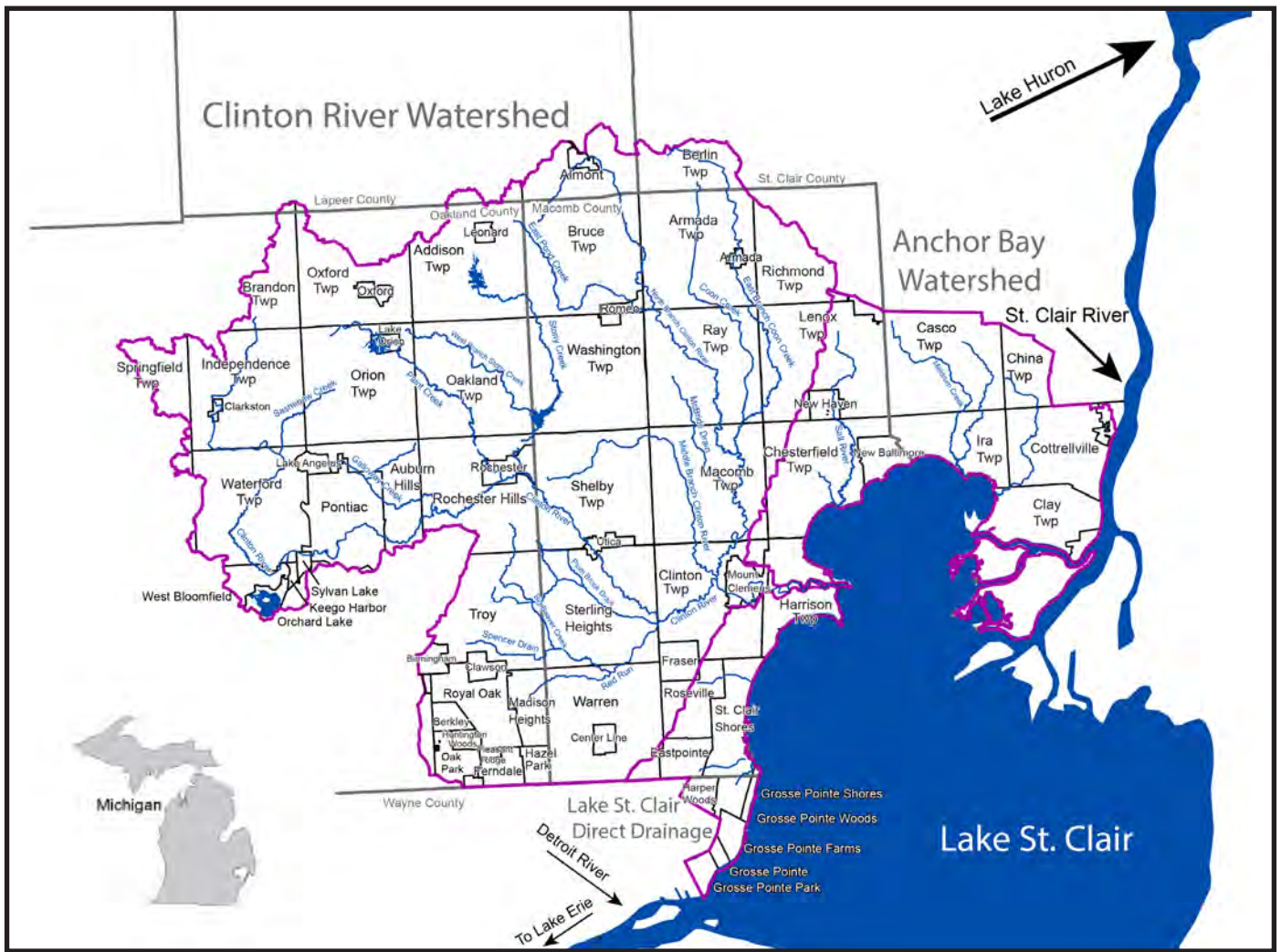
Combined, Macomb County, the State of Michigan, and the Huron-Clinton Metropolitan provide 9,136 acres of parkland and recreational facilities in Macomb County. However, even when considering these additional parks and recreational facilities, Macomb County doesn't fair as well as comparative counties in the region and lacks access to natural features. It has been revealed that the communities in the southern area of the County have especially limited access to any type of regional park.

5B | NATURAL FEATURES

With an increased focus on Macomb County's work related to the sustainability of place, greater attention for our natural features is widely supported by the residents and visitors to the County. It is well known that with the advent of the digital workplace, many people now choose a location to live and work that has ample access to nature and the outdoor experiences that the County is pursuing. This is well represented with much of the work associated within Macomb County Department of Planning & Economic Development. A significant amount of bipartisan support to restore the Great Lakes falls squarely in-line with many of the projects and programming associated with the current and future programming of this department, which is shared with many other County departments and partnering agencies.

This section provides an inventory of natural features and environmentally significant areas in Macomb County. The County's natural environment undoubtedly has an impact on the character of the existing and future development trends. Specific environmental features considered in this inventory include geology, topography, flood hazards, water, woodlands, wetlands and the Michigan Natural Features Inventory. The location of natural features influences the future development of specific areas positively or negatively depending on the feature and how the land is considered when developing or redeveloping.



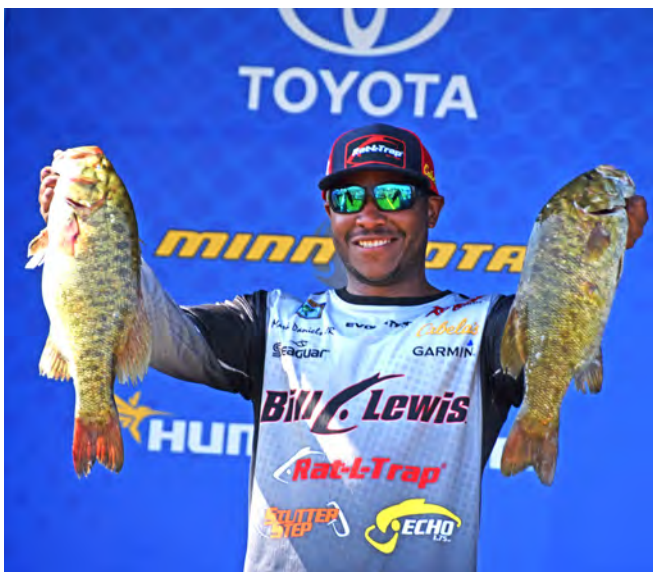
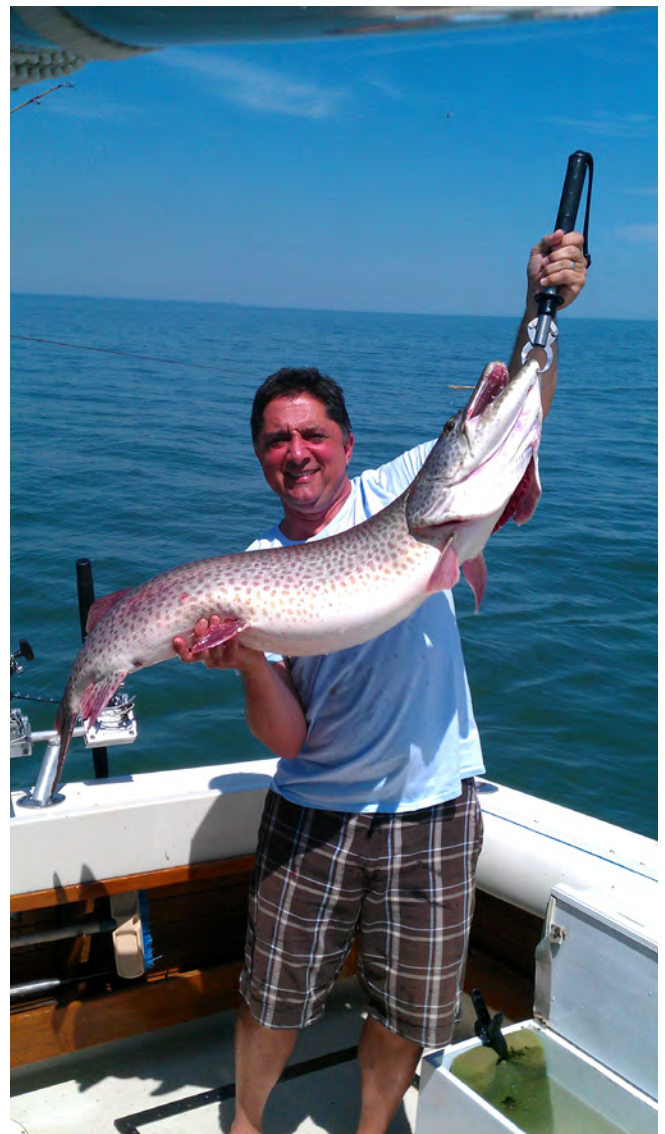


TOPOGRAPHY AND WATER FEATURES

Topography can have a significant influence on land development patterns. In Macomb County, the change in elevation varies from the hilly higher elevations created by glacial moraines from the last ice age in the northwest portion of the county into a large lake plain woodlands, wetland, and river complex throughout most of the County. The coastal areas were predominantly marshlands and wetlands along the the lower elevations near Lake St. Clair, however, very few remain. The highest point in Macomb County can be found in Bruce Township at Mt Trombley within the Ford Proving Grounds at 1,150 feet (351 meters) above sea level, while the lowest elevation can be found at Lake St. Clair at 574 feet (175 meters) above sea level.

Macomb County has a complex of riverine areas mostly within the Clinton River watershed, where both the Main Branch and the North Branch and their tributaries can often create moderate elevations within the river valleys, floodplains, and sometimes steeper grades along the banks. Otherwise, Macomb County is generally known for it's rather flat terrain, which has made it ideal for agriculture, industry, and residential development. There are many small man-made ponds and lakes within the County, but otherwise, only a few natural lakes exist due to the wetland and river heritage.

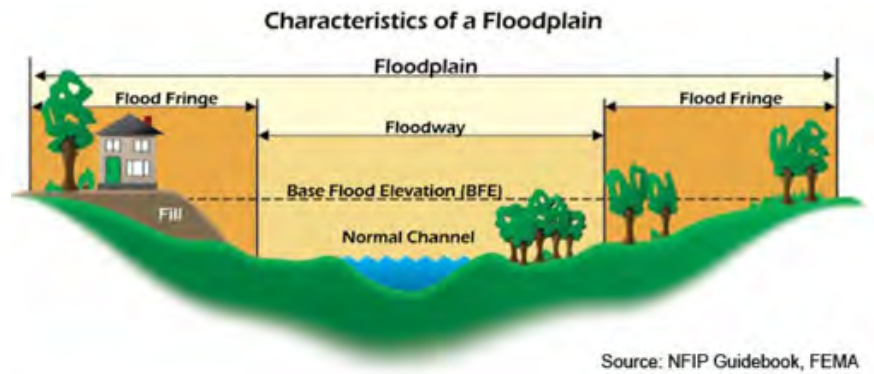
Lake St. Clair is the receiving body of water from the Upper Great Lakes (Lakes Superior, Huron and Michigan) via the St. Clair River and has an area of 430 square miles. The Lake then flows naturally into the Detroit River and the Lower Great Lakes (Lakes Erie and Ontario). This area functions as a unique ecosystem referred to as the "Huron to Erie Corridor" that has some flora and fauna found rarely in other parts of the world. Lake St. Clair is a shallow lake averaging only 11 feet deep with the exception of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence shipping channel. Macomb County has about 31.5 linear miles of shoreline along Lake St. Clair and there are many canals, inlets, and boating channels in each of the four coastal communities. This provides for ample boating access to Lake St. Clair and all of the Great Lakes. Due to the abundant natural freshwater recharge of Lake St. Clair, it hosts a large array of fish species and is considered an internationally renowned sport fishing lake. It hosts many major angling events, annually attracting the best anglers in the world amongst the many professional and amateur circuits.



FLOOD HAZARDS

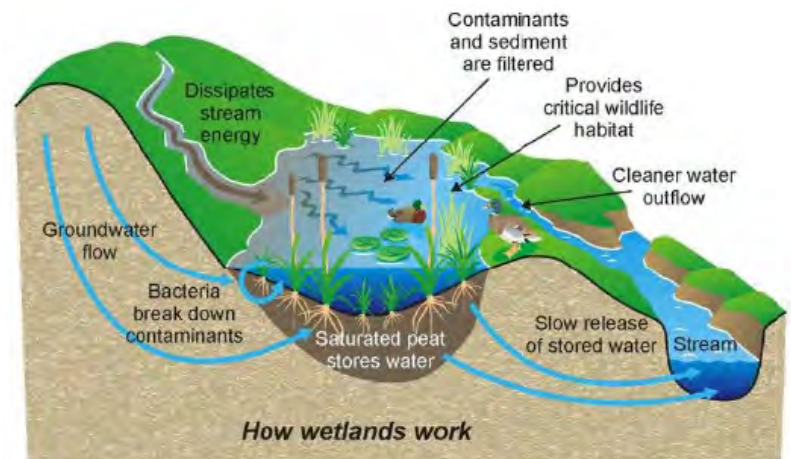
Due to Macomb's riverine and coastal makeup, floodplains are quite extensive within many parts of the County. Floodplain areas and flood-risk zones are designated and regulated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). After a review of information available from the U.S.

Department of Agriculture and FEMA, it is noted that Macomb County has significant areas within the natural floodplains, especially along each branch of the Clinton River and along coastal Lake St. Clair. The areas adjacent to county drains are also subject to flooding. These areas have been identified in our programming and resources for the local governments because development in a floodplain could cause additional flooding in the community and potential environmental contamination. However, these floodplains are typically left as heavily wooded areas, developed as parks or recreation fields, or as golf courses.



WETLANDS

Due to heavy clay soils, Macomb County has had a heritage of wetland complexes that naturally served as a means to hold storm water. Wetlands serve a number of necessary environmental functions that include: protecting water supplies, functioning as natural areas for floodwater, and providing a habitat for many types of plants and animals. Development in or around wetlands is regulated by several State statutes, the most prominent of which is Part 303, Wetlands Protection, of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act (P.A. 451 of 1994 as amended).



Macomb County's natural heritage included significant amounts of wooded wetlands and coastal marshlands. A vast majority of these areas have been drained for agriculture and development purposes. The remaining wetlands are typically the forested type and are located along the banks and floodplains of each of the branches of the Clinton River, as well as small areas remaining near Lake St. Clair and other tributaries. It is a goal of this plan to continue to conserve, preserve, or restore wetlands wherever possible as they act as natural stormwater storage areas during heavy rains. Significant rain events have become more common in Macomb County in the last decade with shifts in cycles of wetter and drier periods.

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE NETWORK - CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Historically, Macomb County was heavily forested with significant wetland areas throughout the county. Many of these forests were cleared for timber and the swamps drained to allow agricultural development of the fertile soil. Agricultural production continues in the northern portions of the county, while urban and suburban development has largely replaced agriculture throughout much of southern and central Macomb County.

The loss of wetlands in Southeast Michigan is of staggering proportions, with over 86 percent of pre-settlement wetlands lost in Macomb County alone. As these natural areas and wetlands diminish, the ecosystem services they provide – clean water, clean air, flood control, species habitat, and resiliency to varying climatic changes through local attenuation of extreme temperature and precipitation events – are lost as well.

The land uses and drainage patterns that replace natural areas also contribute nonpoint source pollution and increase flooding. In agricultural areas, runoff can result in nutrients, sediment, and pesticides entering waterways. In urban areas, impervious surfaces prevent stormwater from soaking into the ground, leading to very high volumes of water quickly entering streams, rivers, and drains. This urban development increases stream bank erosion; runoff also collects oil, chemicals, nutrients, trash, and other contaminants from buildings, streets, and parking lots. This is then carried directly to waterways through the drainage infrastructure, resulting in degradation of water quality, the ecosystem, and influencing beach closures.

Nationwide, there is a growing movement and mandatory federal programs that embrace green infrastructure practices that address issues of nonpoint source pollution and flooding while providing additional community benefits like access to recreation, public health, quality of life, increased property values, improved air quality, and reduced infrastructure costs. Macomb County's natural resource and green infrastructure programming represents a local adaptation and implementation of SEMCOG's Green Infrastructure Vision for Southeast Michigan.

The Green Macomb program, including the Green Macomb-Urban Forest Partnership, supports local green infrastructure projects in order to systematically implement environmental best practices that strengthen the economic, social, and ecological resources of Macomb County. Green infrastructure includes both the interconnected network of open spaces, parks, and natural areas as well as features intentionally designed to mimic natural systems, such as rain gardens, bioswales, urban parks, and street trees.

The Green Macomb program also provides resources that build local capacity to manage and grow urban forests and green infrastructure projects, expand public awareness of the benefits of these environmental assets, and create partnerships between local governments, private businesses, academic institutions, and nonprofit organizations.

MICHIGAN NATURAL FEATURES INVENTORY

The Michigan Natural Features Inventory (MNFI) program conducts field surveys to locate and identify threatened and endangered species



and communities throughout the state. It also maintains a database of all relevant species and community locations, provides data summaries and analysis in support of environmental reviews, and provides biological expertise to the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The program is housed in the Wildlife Division, but provides relevant information to all DNR divisions, the Department of Environmental Quality, and other agencies and organizations. This program is an essential part of meeting the Department's legislated responsibilities for threatened and endangered species protection.

Teams of scientists with expertise in botany, zoology, aquatic ecology, and ecology collect information about Michigan's native plants, animals, aquatic animals and natural ecosystems. MNFI has conducted surveys within interior forests and grasslands and on Great Lakes shores and remote islands in search of information about Michigan's special plants, animals and plant communities. Information is also gathered by studying museum

and herbaria records, communicating with other scientists in the Great Lakes area, and reading published works.

Sources: Michigan Department of Natural Resources Website: <http://www.michigan.gov/dnr>. Michigan State University MNFI Website: <http://mnfi.anr.msu.edu/>

NATURAL FEATURES ARE ESSENTIAL AS BASIS FOR PROGRAMMING

Macomb County must ensure that environmentally significant areas are protected and integrated into larger community plans, and that restoration efforts are equally employed. Experience has proven that cooperation with nature, using imagination and creativity, is preferable to removing natural features, even when developing a parcel of land. The County should carefully promote integrated land development in a manner that enhances the community's livability. Planning can best assist in accomplishing this by encouraging designs that respect and work with nature. Like many communities across the nation, Macomb County has some unique natural features that can build on its natural heritage legacy. As the County seeks to invest in parks and natural resources amenities, it would greatly benefit the community and environment to embrace these natural assets accordingly. By incorporating these natural features with accessible recreation infrastructure, the County can greatly enhance the quality of life of its residents and engage in a program of environmental stewardship that will preserve, restore, and protect these unique assets for future generations.

6

PLANNING AND PUBLIC INPUT

A systematic approach was taken for the planning and development of this Plan. The County's demographic and physical characteristics have been identified, and the existing supply of land, facilities and programs confirmed, the next step in the recreation planning process is to quantify and evaluate the needs of the community. This is accomplished using several methods, including comparison to national recreation guidelines and information gathered during the public input process.

Working together with the Macomb County Department of Planning and Economic Development, McKenna coordinated and conducted various outreach events throughout the planning process for robust and open community input. Participants at such events included residents, Macomb County staff, specific parks and recreation stakeholders, and community organizations. In total, there were five methods used as part of this program that have resulted in meaningful public engagement:

1. MACOMB COUNTY DEPARTMENT HEAD ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

A Macomb County Department Head roundtable discussion was held on August 9, 2018. The goal of the meeting was to identify current funding and activities relating to the administration of parks and natural resources in Macomb County. Another goal was to identify additional funds that can be reallocated to parks and natural resources and new ways departments can aid in the development and maintenance of parks and natural resources.



A) Executive Office

Macomb County Executive Mark A. Hackel acknowledged that Macomb County was behind in its offerings for parks and natural resources. The County needs to develop a vision for parks and natural resources, identify costs, and develop an action plan. Additional revenues for Freedom Hill could come from developing a 5K running course where the County could charge an event fee.



B) Department of Health and Community Services

The Department of Health and Community Services does not have a budget directly dedicated to parks and natural resources, but does administer a number of programs with similar goals relating to healthier lifestyles. This department could coordinate with other departments for providing educational kiosks, promoting the County's trails and natural resource assets through their web based portal, and helping design parks and natural resource facilities that meet the needs of an aging or special needs population.



C) Department of Facilities and Operations

The Facilities and Operations Department manages the maintenance of Freedom Hill and identifies projects for the County's capital improvement project fund. The budget for this maintenance comes from the parks and recreation budget.

D) Public Works Office

The Public Works Office has a budget of over \$2 million for drain management, habitat restoration, storm water management, soil erosion control, and community outreach. The drains under the management of the PWO provide an opportunity for creating better management practices and linkages to other recreational and natural resource assets in the County.



E) Department of Roads

Under Act 51, The Department of Roads has a budget of approximately \$1.2 million for the planning, designing, and management of non-motorized trails in Macomb County. The MCDOR also supports the stewardship of natural resources through invasive species and phragmites remediation and the planting of trees along medians, roadsides, and trails.



2. VILLAGE OF ROMEO PEACH FESTIVAL “FIELD DAY”

On Saturday, September 1, 2018, the Village of Romeo held their annual Peach Festival. From 11:00 AM to 5:00 PM, the McKenna team conducted public engagement at the Romeo Community Center. As visitors entered the Community Center, they were asked what their “Big Idea” was for parks and natural resources in Macomb County and they were directed to the online survey.

The McKenna team had the opportunity to interact with about 150 people. The visitors’ “Big Ideas” included more public access to Lake St. Clair, regional connections to existing community parks (and a reduction in fees to the Metro parks). The visitors were also passionate about preserving the County’s natural resources (rivers, lakes, woodlands, and wetlands).

3. FARMERS MARKET “FIELD DAY”

On Thursday, September 13, 2018, the Macomb County team and McKenna conducted public engagement during the Sterling Heights Farmers Market. The team was on site from 3:30PM until 6:30PM to facilitate quick, fun engagement exercises with visitors to the market. In total, the

McKenna team estimated engaging over 35 individuals during the three-hour engagement period. Participants included young families and older individuals.

Input collected from the field day highlight bike-friendly ideas such as working to connect existing bike trails and parks, having one location for information relating to trails in the County such as maps and facilities, providing more amenities such as benches and water fountains along trails, and creating shorter off-shoot trails from the main trail. In addition, residents were excited about the possibility of expanded Macomb County parks and natural resource facilities.



4. ONLINE SURVEYS

McKenna launched an online survey related to the County’s overall parks and natural resources program. Links to the surveys were made available at the Macombgov.org website and on social media. The survey was made available for 53 days. At the end of the survey period, the County had received 156 responses.

Most of the completed surveys were from residents between the ages of 35-49 and 50-64, 48 percent and 31 percent of all responses respectively. Individuals aged 65 and older made up 7 percent and 14 percent of the responses were from individuals 18-34 years old. No responses received were from individuals 17 and younger.

Overall the survey sought to gauge what role Macomb County should play in parks and natural resources and what should be the department's future priorities. Generally, respondents were familiar with the facilities operated by Macomb County. 76 percent have visited Freedom Hill County Park, 25 percent have visited the James B. and Ann V. Nicholson Nature Center, and 64.5 percent have used the Macomb Orchard Trail.

Those that have not visited the County parks listed their reason as "I am not familiar with these parks" (24 percent), "too far from home" (22 percent), "I participate in programs provided by my local community or other organization(s)" (13.5 percent) or "these parks do not offer the amenities I'm looking for" (13.5 percent). When asked if they believe parks and natural resources programs are vital in their community, overwhelmingly the response was in agreement, with 78 percent strongly agreeing and 7.5 percent somewhat agreeing. Twenty-six percent responded that they frequently attended and 44 percent occasionally attended structured recreational activities in their community. Thirty percent stated that they were willing to drive 15 to 20 minutes to a park with desirable amenities.

When asked what new or enhanced opportunities respondents would like to see within the County, nearly 70 percent of all respondents choose walking or biking trails, followed by trails next to rivers (58 percent), a walkable pier on Lake St. Clair (49 percent), more access to the Clinton River and Lake St. Clair (48 percent), paddle trails along the Clinton River or coastal Lake St. Clair (45 percent), environmental/nature education programs (44 percent), and nature preserves (42 percent). These responses were very similar to the open-ended questions that asked what residents felt are the top three recreational priorities for Macomb County in the next 10 years.



Respondents were asked if they believed that Macomb County should allocate more general fund dollars to maintain and expand county parks and recreational programs. Seventy-five percent were in favor, 23 percent answered maybe, and 2 percent responded no. When asked if they would consider supporting a county-wide millage to maintain and expand county parks and recreational programs, 59 percent responded yes, 32 percent answered maybe, and 9 percent chose no.

5. ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS

On October 4, 2018, McKenna conducted roundtable discussions with a number of stakeholders. The roundtable discussions ensured that representatives from specific stakeholder groups were able to provide feedback about their organization's perceived parks and recreation needs.

Public Agencies and Organizations

Attendees were asked to provide feedback for the County from the perspective of public agencies and organizations. One key role that the County can play is helping communities connect their parks to regional trails. The County can help bridge gaps that cross community borders, design a consistent wayfinding message, and promote existing facilities. The County should continue their efforts for the protection of greenways and waterways, while seeking new opportunities in the southern part of the County. When considering new recreation opportunities, campgrounds and kayak access should be a top priority.

Private Businesses and Economic Development Organizations

When asked what role Macomb County Parks and Natural Resources can play in promoting private



business and economic development, they said the County can serve as a key resource in organizing community events. The County is in a unique position to be a centralized voice for realizing economic opportunities from parks and natural resources management. Participants felt that it was key to have greater access to parks and natural resources due to a changing worldwide business climate and providing these services and places make for a more attractive place to work/play/live that many other places already do well. This can be done through expanding locations, keeping an online calendar of community events, hosting events along the Macomb Orchard Trail, or providing locations for food trucks near recreation facilities. For this to succeed, the County must have a centralized structure with key contacts for community organizations to engage. Other ideas included creating pop up parks in dense residential and commercial areas to create temporary spaces that bring excitement to areas with limited recreational opportunities.

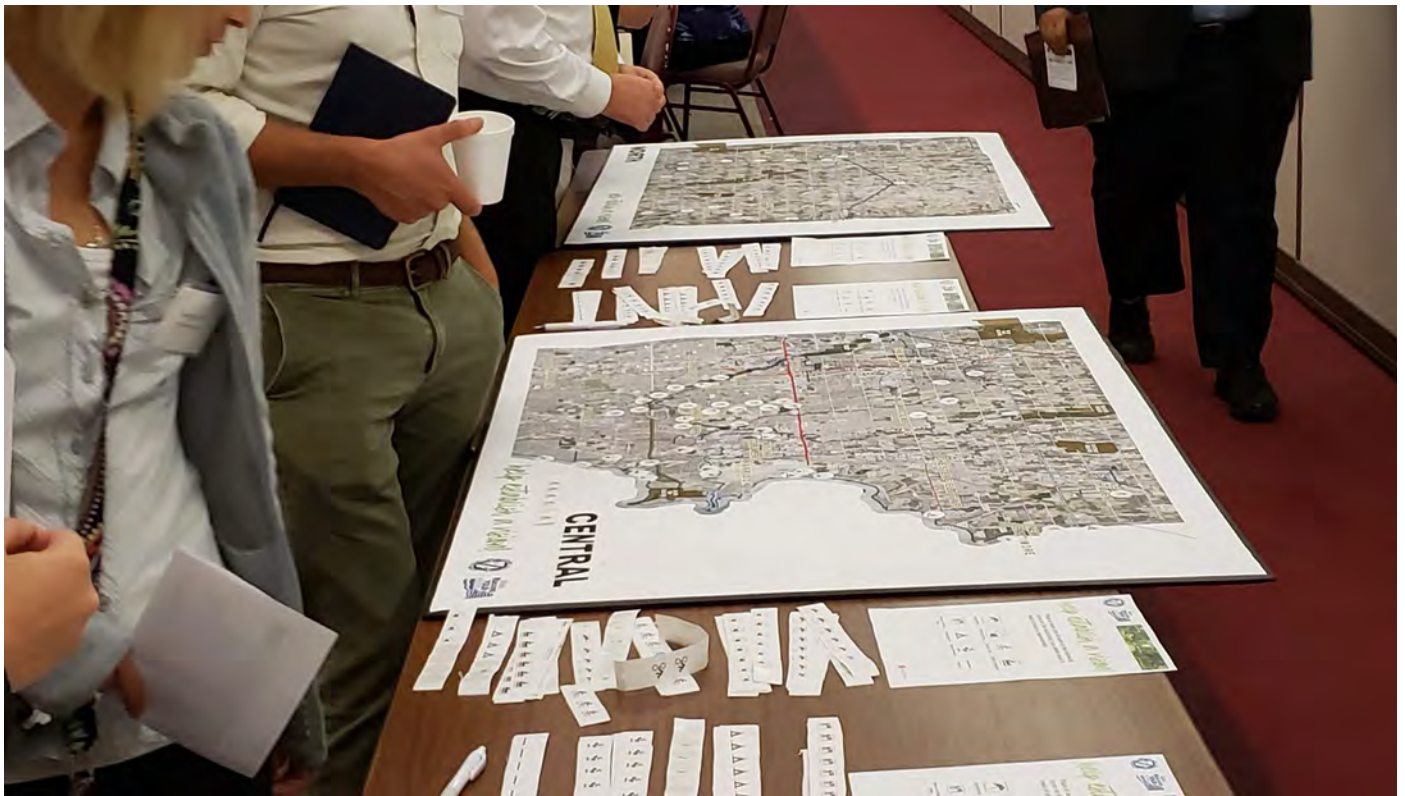
Funding Parks and Natural Resources

The stakeholders also provided their feedback on potential funding opportunities. One idea presented was to have Macomb County act as a one stop shop for community fundraising. The County could help match local communities with corporate partners to sponsor events, or for grants.

When asked if the County should seek a millage to expand the parks facilities, the stakeholders felt that there must be buy-in from the public. A parks and natural resources department is key to informing the public of Macomb County's offerings. The County must promote the Master Plan and work on implementing the Plan. A strong capital budget will need to be implemented first to justify other projects. Prior to seeking a millage, the County should start with a successful project or two to build momentum.

The stakeholders suggested that when considering property acquisition, lakefront or river front property, locations in denser areas, linear parks along lakes, streams and rivers, and areas that reduce travel time to parks should have top priority.





Resource Mapping Exercise

In order to engage the County stakeholders prior to the roundtable discussions, McKenna set up a resource plotting exercise in which the participants would place stickers on maps of the County reflecting where they would like to see a particular recreation amenity. The recreation amenities participants were asked to think about included: lake access, fishing, hiking trails, bicycling routes, canoe/kayak launch, and natural resource preservation. The County maps were divided into three regions, in order to highlight the size and diverse landscape of the County; North – Bordman Rd to 25 Mile Rd, Central – 28 Mile Rd to 14 Mile Rd, and South – Metropolitan Parkway to 8 Mile Rd.

The three designated areas of the County received disproportionate feedback. Whereas the southern area of the County is largely built out, participants were most interested in utilizing and enjoying the

existing waterfront of Lake St. Clair, with expanded lake access and fishing spots. Participants noted the importance and beauty of the lake frontage on Lake St. Clair; however, it is largely occupied by single-family homes without many areas designated for public use. Additional points of lake access and fishing spots would permit all county residents to enjoy the natural feature.

The northern area of the County is largely rural and received the least amount of amenity stickers. Based on the feedback, participants were interested in maintaining and preserving the rural and open space with a focus on enjoying recreation amenities. Participants were most interested in campgrounds and connecting the bike trail system.

The central region of Macomb County received the most feedback. A balance of the urban south and rural north, participants were interested in

expanding the bicycle trail to connect the northern and southern areas, hiking trails, canoe/kayak launches along the Clinton River and along the North Branch of the Clinton River.

The exercise reflected an overwhelming desire for bicycle trails throughout the County, specifically along M-53 (Van Dyke Ave.), the Lake St. Clair shoreline, and Garfield Rd, between 15 Mile Rd and 20 Mile Rd. Participants also noted a desire for bicycle trails along the Clinton River, which is proposed to connect to the Iron Belle Trail. The connection to the Iron Belle Trail was expressed by several stakeholders, as well as additional bicycle trail hubs that would connect to the trail system.

The exercise reflected a desire for amenities that encouraged connectivity throughout the County. The desire for bicycle trails was noted in each region, and was designed as a means to connect the communities within Macomb County. Participants also desired hiking trails along the North Branch of the Clinton River and campgrounds in the more natural parts of the County or along the water. Overall, participants were interested in recreation activities that connected them to surrounding communities and with the natural landscape throughout the County.





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6. OPEN HOUSE AND PRESENTATION

Throughout the public engagement process, people were generally positive about the parks and natural resources in Macomb County. However, several community values emerged throughout the process that can be used to prioritize improvements to the system. These include:

Connectivity

Many residents' largest concern about the parks and trail system was the lack of connectivity that gets residents from their homes or from local business to local and regional parks and trails. Nearly 70 percent of survey respondents and many more at the Field Days and roundtable discussion mentioned a need for improved walking, and bicycle path connections.

Natural Area Stewardship

Throughout the engagement efforts, many comments were made about the desires to preserve and maintain natural areas and open spaces within the County. When asked what the County's priorities for the next ten years should be, over 42 percent of respondents mentioned the need to preserve and manage open space.

Inclusive Community

Macomb County has desirable resources including the Clinton River, Lake St. Clair, and the Metro parks. Residents perceive that the majority of these assets and programs are located in northern and central Macomb County and it was suggested that programs and efforts that include the southern portions of the County be better addressed (such as Green Macomb, Iron Belle Trail, and others). Furthermore, some of these assets have barriers to access including limited access to Lake St. Clair or cost of entry into the Metro parks.

Keeper of Knowledge

A common theme of the Field Days and stakeholder meetings is that there is a disconnect between the Macomb County communities when it comes to sharing and promoting trails. The County could help promote the recreational assets of the local communities through the County's website. The County could also help develop a standard map format for communities to share that will help residents plan biking or hiking trips in the County.



Brand Macomb County Assets

Macomb County has developed a comprehensive message under the "Make Macomb Your Home" brand. A similar initiative should be undertaken to develop a recognizable brand with trails, parks, conservation and other efforts so that the County's efforts are easy to distinguish.



GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Introduction

The following is a list of recommended goals and objectives designed to guide the future of parks and natural resources within Macomb County. By design, these goals are painted with a very broad brush with the intent of being as open and inclusive of all future opportunities that may present themselves to the County over the life of the Plan. Specific recommendations have been aligned with the broad goals and are presented as objectives. Goals are the destination. The objectives serve as the compass. Each objective represents an action or set of actions that, once achieved, will help the County attain its goals.

GOAL 1: PROVIDE PARKS AND RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES

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

Objectives

- Establish administration structure for a parks and natural resources division within the Macomb County Department of Planning & Economic Development.
- Create a parks and recreation capital improvement framework that will establish a practical means of strategically investing in improvements to parks and recreation facilities by adopting a short term and five-year budget to develop a parks and natural resources program.
- 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.
- Identify areas where Macomb County can establish new, or expand existing trails, waterways, parks and recreation facilities, programs, partnerships and services.
- Work to provide greater access to water via rivers, streams, and lakes.
- Assist in providing large open spaces, conservation, waterways, greenways, camping facilities, and

access to hunting and fishing.

- 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.
- Expand connectivity throughout the County to encourage all residents to enjoy parks, facilities, and recreational amenities.
- Develop and implement consistent wayfinding and mileage signage along trails and at parks and other facilities to raise awareness.

GOAL 2: ENHANCE NATURAL RESOURCES AND PROMOTE ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

Macomb County will enhance natural resources and promote environmental stewardship.

Objectives

- Catalogue the location and character of environmentally significant areas throughout Macomb County.
- Help facilitate the acquisition and conservation of large-scale open spaces, agriculture, and floodplain management areas.
- Develop and employ urban forestry programs to increase tree canopy cover.
- 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.
- Develop and support invasives species management.
- Support brownfield redevelopment and remediation.

GOAL 3: FOSTER COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, IDENTITY AND ENGAGEMENT

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.
- Become the keeper of knowledge for county and local agencies that include users groups, mapping, and a resource center.
- Leverage “Make Macomb Your Home” and other media sources to brand, market and promote parks and recreation programs within Macomb County.
- Organize community forums and workshops with parks and recreation stakeholders to measure the impact of facilities, programs and services.
- Brand Macomb County parks and assets and develop universal wayfinding efforts.
- Incentivize year-round participation in parks and recreation through the use of recognition, awards or memorabilia.
- Create a sense of place throughout the community that will attract business and future development.
- Work with the Department of Defense in improving uses of waterfront, natural resources and other environmental issues.
- Work with other federal/state/regional/local governments and other regional agencies to promote a healthier environment.
- Collaborate with other Macomb County departments to promote a healthier environment.
- Encourage open communication between the County and residents for continued feedback on parks, facilities, and programs.





GOAL 4: ENCOURAGE HEALTHY LIFESTYLES

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.
- Develop tutorials and how-to guides highlighting the County's parks and recreation facilities, programs and services.
- Create new partnerships with healthcare and wellness organizations and corporate sponsors to improve physical and environmental health for the community.
- Collaborate with other Macomb County departments to promote a healthier environment.
- Help design parks and natural resources facilities that meet the needs of special populations.

GOAL 5: SUPPORT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Macomb County will use natural resources, 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. Sprint & Splash, fishing tournaments, Armada Fair, Romeo Peach Festival, Bay-Rama, etc.).
- 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 organizations to attract tournaments and conventions to Macomb County.
- Formulate a business attraction strategy tied to our natural resources.



ACTION PLAN

Introduction

By using the comprehensive planning process of roundtable discussions, surveys, and public field days, Macomb County has effectively established a framework for the action plan. The action plan describes recommendations for administrative organization, a proposed operating budget, a five-year capital improvements plan, and an action plan of short and long term initiatives designed to meet the Parks and Natural Resources Master Plan's goals and objectives.

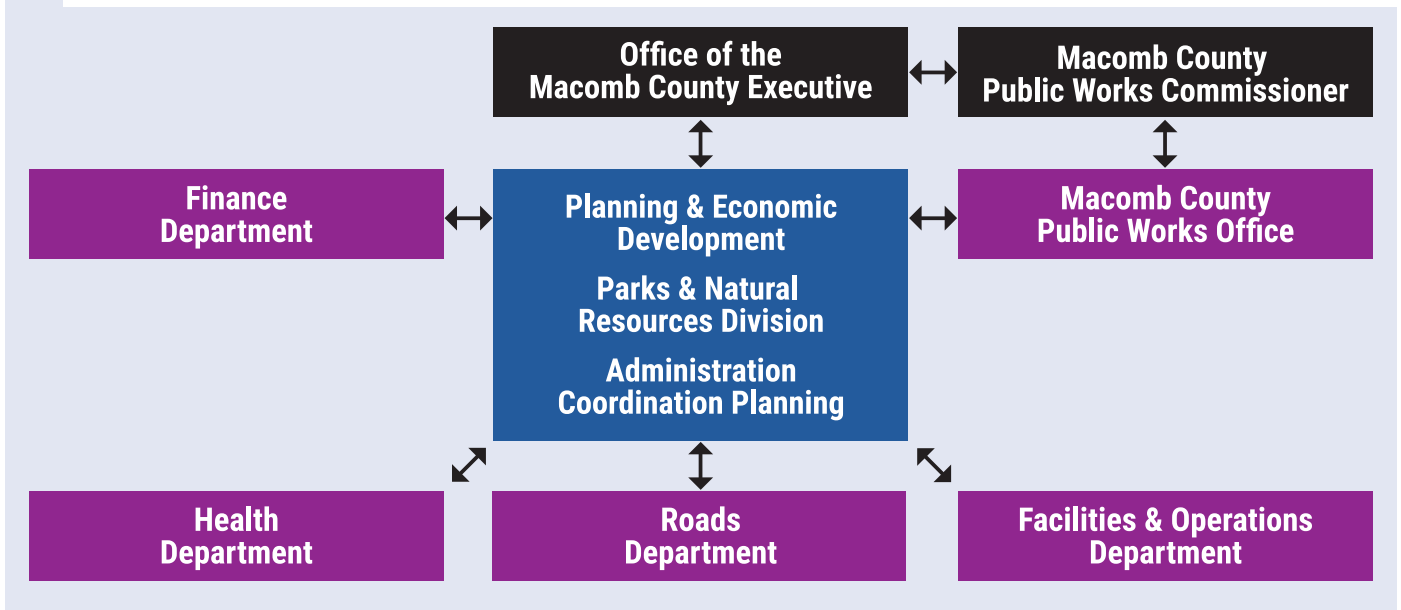
Key Recommendations

The following recommendations are based on stakeholder discussions with Macomb County department heads, an analysis of best practices of comparable Michigan counties' parks and recreation administrative structures, and the Macomb County Planning and Economic Development Organizational Strategy for Land and Water Resource Program Area.

STEP 1
ADOPT ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

STEP 2
DEVELOP BUDGET AND 5 YEAR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

STEP 3
ADDRESS SYSTEM-WIDE RECOMMENDATIONS



ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The recommended organization of parks and natural resources does not necessarily create a new department; instead, the responsibility of managing the parks and natural resources would fall under the Macomb County Planning and Economic Development Department, with coordination from other county departments. Under the leadership of the MCPED director, each group would formalize or expand their existing roles in managing the County's parks and natural resources.

Planning and Mapping services would continue to provide design and mapping support to meet the strategic goals for parks and natural resources. The Business, Outreach and Communication group would be responsible for developing a cohesive brand, message, and promotion of the parks and natural resources operations.

The main responsibilities of the management of parks and natural resources would fall under the Land and Water Resources (LWR) work group. The LWR will act as the coordinator between the

Department of Roads, Facilities and Operations Management, and Department of Public Works in the ongoing proactive maintenance and development of the parks facilities. The LWR will also coordinate with the Health Department, Department of Public Works and local county communities to promote the ongoing education and programming offered by each group.

The 'Land and Water Resources' work group is identified in the *2017 MCPED Organizational Strategy* to be renamed the 'Parks and Natural Resources' work group to better align with the scope of future work. The organizational structure also identifies a role for volunteers. The same type of coordination from federal, state, regional, or other agency programming would also be inherent to the LWR work group. Volunteers can share their time and talents to enhance and support parks operations, natural resources stewardship and environmental programs.

The success of the realignment of duties across the County departments is contingent upon proper



coordination and communication. The current Land and Water Resources work group has a program director and senior planner. These positions will remain intact with the work group name change. To properly facilitate this coordination, two additional senior planner level positions will be necessary in the first two years of this Plan: An environmental services program coordinator and a parks and natural resources coordinator. The environmental services program coordinator would be responsible for coordinating the grant administration and education and programming between Macomb County departments, State of Michigan departments, local communities and other community organizations. The parks and natural resources coordinator would facilitate communication between Macomb County departments for the management of Macomb County Parks and Natural Resources assets. Additional staffing at the associate planner level would be required by year three or four as the Parks and Natural Resources Plan is realized.

The proposed realignment offers a number of advantages. The biggest advantage of the realignment is the improved coordination and communication amongst internal and external agencies and organizations. The realignment also takes advantage of the work already being performed by the various agencies, but introduces a formalized coordination into the work flow, increasing operational efficiencies. This will also allow Macomb County to be more successful at attracting available state and other agency funding sources.

PROPOSED BUDGET

The following page depicts a 2019-2020 conceptual budget that combines all identified annual operations expenses and revenues. Expenses include both

Freedom Hill County Park, the Macomb Orchard Trail, Nicholson Nature Center, Green Macomb Program and required increased staffing. Revenues from Freedom Hill parking, lease agreements and facility rentals are noted. Additional funding sources identified in chapter four would represent annual transfers in and should be utilized in addition to any dedicated general fund dollars.

PROPOSED 5-YEAR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PLAN

A key component of the action plan is the capital improvement plan. Action strategies that may require significant capital investment from the County have been organized into a five-year plan. The specific projects have been prioritized in the five-year capital improvement plan in order to better manage the budget and equally distribute the projects over a five-year cycle. The projects, identified through the roundtable stakeholder process, have been prioritized and initially limited to existing facilities. The timing of these projects may be influenced, moved, or eliminated depending upon economic conditions, available funding, and/or grant awards.

The five-year capital improvement plan (Figure 8B on page 63) incorporates the top priority items for capital improvement in the next five years. Priorities should be reviewed on an annual basis and adjusted to respond to updated findings and identification of funding opportunities. In particular, costs should be closely monitored, as the proposed plan estimates are strictly preliminary.

Actual costs for each project will be more specifically determined as site surveys, programming elements and engineering plans are developed. If funding levels are lower than required to implement the Plan based on the schedule provided, the implementation could be stretched over additional years.

CONCEPTUAL PARKS AND NATURAL RESOURCES BUDGET		
REVENUES	2019	2020
FREEDOM HILL PARK		
Charges for services ¹	\$ 263,000	\$ 263,000
Reimbursements	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000
TOTAL REVENUES	\$ 278,000	\$ 278,000
EXPENDITURES		
MACOMB ORCHARD TRAIL		
Maintenance services	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000
Capital outlay	\$ 215,000	\$ 215,000
NICHOLSON NATURE CENTER*		
Maintenance/Capital outlay* ²	\$ -	\$ -
FREEDOM HILL PARK		
Supplies & services (depreciation)	\$ 230,000	\$ 230,000
Utilities	\$ 130,000	\$ 130,000
Repairs & maintenance	\$ 45,000	\$ 45,000
Internal services	\$ 1,200	\$ 1,200
Capital outlay	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000
GREEN MACOMB		
Urban tree program	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000
Urban forestry services	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000
Farm act	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000
STAFF		
Full time wages ³	\$ 54,275	\$ 101,122
Overtime wages	\$ -	\$ -
FICA/Medicare	\$ 4,152	\$ 7,736
Pension/retiree health care	\$ 3,257	\$ 6,067
Employee health/dental/life insurance	\$ 13,636	\$ 27,272
Workers comp/unemployment/other	\$ 771	\$ 1,436
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$ 797,290	\$ 864,833
REVENUES OVER/UNDER EXPENDITURES	\$ (519,290)	\$ (586,833)
OTHER FINANCING SOURCES		
Transfers In		
Roads	\$ -	\$ -
Other	\$ -	\$ -
GF Blue Water Cons. District	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000
TOTAL OTHER FINANCING SOURCES	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000

*Clinton Twp. will be responsible for Nicholson Nature Center's annual maintenance. Capital improvements will be assessed on an annual basis.

1: Lease, Sign & Parking

2: Maintenance of entry - Facilities & Operations performs mowing of PW0 grounds as needed and identified in May 1st annual CIP per MOU

3: 2019 Senior Planner entry range (\$54,275) / 2020 Associate Planner entry range (\$46,847)

CONCEPTUAL FIVE-YEAR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN					
MACOMB ORCHARD TRAIL	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Crack sealing entire trail grind/fill	\$ -	\$ 21,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Wayfinding signage & int. markings (\$20k/yr)	\$ 20,000	\$ 20,000	\$ 20,000	\$ 20,000	\$ 20,000
Bridge restoration (1 per 5 yrs)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 20,000	\$ -	\$ -
Trail replacement M-53 to Powell Rd.	\$ -	\$ 690,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Mill and resurface (2 miles per 5 yrs)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 100,000	\$ 100,000	\$ -
Culvert repair (2 per 5 yrs)	\$ 20,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 20,000
M.O.T. ANNUAL TOTAL	\$ 40,000	\$ 731,000	\$ 140,000	\$ 120,000	\$ 40,000
M.O.T. FIVE-YEAR TOTAL	\$ 1,071,000				
NICHOLSON NATURE CENTER*	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
N.N.C. ANNUAL TOTAL	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
N.N.C. FIVE-YEAR TOTAL	\$ -				
FREEDOM HILL PARK	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Independence building restroom updates	\$ 50,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Independence building hvac updates	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 425,000	\$ -
F.H. ANNUAL TOTAL	\$ 50,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 425,000	\$ -
F.H. FIVE-YEAR TOTAL	\$ 475,000				
GRAND TOTAL ANNUAL	\$ 90,000	\$ 731,000	\$ 140,000	\$ 545,000	\$ 40,000
GRAND TOTAL FIVE-YEAR PLAN	\$ 1,546,000				

*Clinton Twp. will be responsible for Nicholson Nature Center's annual maintenance. Capital improvements will be assessed on an annual basis.



System-Wide Recommendations

In addition to capital investments into the parks and natural resource system, the Planning and Economic Development Department must also focus on other aspects of the system.

The following items describe system-wide suggestions that should be coordinated each year.

BARRIER FREE ACCESSIBILITY

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) has established guidelines to provide barrier free accessibility at public facilities. It is important to provide access to Macomb County facilities according to these guidelines so that all residents can enjoy the facilities. As parks and facilities are improved or developed, a high priority must be placed on upgrades that improve barrier free accessibility with improvements to proper surfaces for wheelchairs, accessible picnic tables, and play equipment that provides universal access.

PARK DESIGN IMPROVEMENTS

As the park system evolves and each park undergoes its own degree of improvements, it is important to clearly mark park entrances and visually unify the parks so residents are aware that facilities they use are part of Macomb County's park system. This can be accomplished by a uniform set of design themes that symbolize Macomb County facilities and are used in the design of lighting, benches, signs, waste receptacles, bike racks, and other amenities. Tree transplanting and improvements are a community focus for all public areas.

NON-MOTORIZED CONNECTIVITY

Macomb County is committed to the development of regional non-motorized systems. The MCPED, in cooperation with the MCDOR and surrounding communities, and other supporting agencies, should continue to seek opportunities for planning, land acquisition, access easements, and non-motorized trail development to assist this effort within the County.

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

Macomb County is committed to being a leader in environmental stewardship. The MCPED needs to continue to support efforts that strengthen the economic vitality, quality of life, and environmental well-being of the region through their Green Macomb and Blue Economy initiatives.

STAFFING

The MCPED needs to annually monitor staffing levels and office facility needs as necessary for efficient administration, operation, programming and maintenance of the parks and natural resources system.

PARK PROMOTION

The MCPED should use creative promotional approaches to increase awareness of the features available at the various facilities. Promotional ideas could include park maps and park events. Increased awareness of the parks will increase appreciation and support for the park system and could also generate a spirit of volunteerism with maintenance, development and fundraising projects.

FUNDRAISING

Develop new and creative ways to raise funds for park improvements, such as events, service projects and local fundraising. Additionally a recognition program for donations of benches, trees and other amenities could be instituted.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The MCPED, along with the Department of Health and Community Services, should continue to solicit residents' suggestions on planning, use, and improvement of parks and programming. This can be accomplished with public meetings, surveys, or through resident feedback solicited at special events.



Action Plan Matrix

The following set of action items has been developed to align the needs identified through the public input sessions with the goals and objectives outlined in chapter seven. These action items are to be considered for implementation during the life of the Plan (next five years). The action items have been categorized by park facility or as a community-wide action. They have also been prioritized as items to be addressed in the next one to two years (short term), three to five years (long term) or as ongoing (monitor and feedback).



PARKS AND NATURAL RESOURCES - ACTION PLAN MATRIX

ACTION ITEM	GOAL #	MCPED	PWO	ROADS	PUBLIC HEALTH	F&O	EXT. PARTNERSHIP	DURATION
Implement realignment strategy by increasing staff levels	1, 3, 5	X						Short Term
Develop parks and resources operational budget	1	X						Short Term
Develop 5-year capital improvement plan	1	X						Short Term
Identify funding sources (i.e. Medical/rec marijuana revenues, foundations & special interest groups, etc).	1	X					X	Short Term
Cultivate rural nature and interpretive trails.	1, 2	X		X				Short Term
Enhance and improve environmental quality of existing and potential assets (i.e. Water quality, invasive species management, habitat, area of concern, Great Lakes restoration, etc).	1, 2	X	X			X	X	Short Term
Acquisition of property along waterways to construct lake and river access	1, 2, 4	X					X	Short Term
Develop and construct trail heads along trailways	1, 2, 3	X	X	X			X	Short Term
Construct a 10k trail/track to hold community and charity events	1, 3, 4, 5	X		X			X	Short Term
Partner to develop non-traditional recreation and natural resource facilities in vacant or underutilized buildings such as climbing walls or stem education centers.	1, 5	X			X		X	Short Term
Implement trail wayfinding, mile markers and pavement/bridge markings for walkers/bicyclists/paddlers.	1, 3, 4	X		X			X	Short Term
Develop a resource center and maintain county website with mapping tools to show locations and amenities at all county parks, trails, natural preservation areas, waterways, etc.	1, 2, 3	X					X	Short Term
Explore the development of county wayfinding signs along roadways to inform motorists of nearby parks and recreation facilities.	1, 3, 5	X		X				Short Term
Increase Macomb County marketing initiatives in order to draw attention to existing and proposed trail system, rivers, lakefront, natural preserve areas, etc.	1, 3, 5	X			X			Short Term
Establish county events along trails, i.e., Pop-up farmers market, food trucks, to allow people to visit trail and frequent planned activities.	1, 3, 5	X		X			X	Short Term
Leverage county parks and natural resources as component of community placemaking initiatives	1, 3, 4, 5	X					X	Short Term
Encourage the use of new technologies and services to enhance access to parks, trails and natural resources	5	X					X	Short Term
Implement Green Macomb (urban forest partnership, flood plain management, agriculture preservation,etc).	2, 3, 5	X	X	X	X		X	Ongoing
Implement Macomb County Blue Economy strategic development plan.	2, 3, 5	X	X		X		X	Ongoing
Implement Mobilize Macomb (non-motorized plan) & create linkages to local trails.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	X	X	X	X		X	Ongoing
Implement Clinton River and Lake St. Clair watertrails and amenities	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	X			X		X	Ongoing
Maintain and enhance existing facilities and assets (Freedom Hill, MOT, Nicholson Nature Center)	1	X						Ongoing
Evaluate existing contracts with vendors and contractors	1	X						Ongoing
Implement and expand toolbox for local govt environmental stewardship and green space development	2	X					X	Ongoing
County partnership with Detroit Zoo to construct a nature center within Macomb County.	1	X			X		X	Ongoing
Establish volunteer programs for stewardship and education.	2, 3	X			X		X	Ongoing
Encourage conservation areas for greenways, open space and waterway access.	2	X					X	Ongoing
Encourage open communication between county and residents for continued feedback on parks, facilities, programs.	3	X	X	X	X	X	X	Ongoing
Partnership with publications, county newsletter to inform residents of volunteer opportunities, special events, etc.	3	X						Ongoing
Coordinate planning efforts with federal, state, regional, local and other agencies.	3	X						Ongoing
County partnership with health and wellness programs to sponsor park or trail equipment and programs that promote exercise and healthy activities.	1, 3, 5	X			X		X	Ongoing
Explore corporate sponsorships for special events.	1, 3, 5	X					X	Ongoing
Establish partnerships to develop major assets and attractions (i.e. Walkable pier district, campground, north branch greenway, hunting areas and large open spaces.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	X	X				X	Long Term
Review and update the parks and recreation plan, particularly the five-year capital improvement plan, annually.	1, 3	X						Long Term

MCPED: Macomb County Planning and Economic Development Department
PWO: Macomb County Public Works Office
Roads: Macomb County Roads Department
Public Health: Macomb County Department of Health and Community Services
F&O: Macomb County Facilities and Operations Department

Goal 1: Macomb County will provide and administer a dynamic, impactful range of parks & recreation facilities, programs and services that will benefit residents and visitors.
Goal 2: Macomb County will enhance natural resources and promote environmental stewardship.
Goal 3: Macomb County pledges to utilize parks and recreation services as a catalyst for strengthening community pride and uniting residents.
Goal 4: Macomb County will utilize parks and recreation facilities, programs and services to improve the health and wellness of the County's residents.
Goal 5: Macomb County will use natural resources, parks and recreation facilities, programs and services to generate economic growth and prosperity.