

2012

Macomb County Blue Economy Strategic Development Plan



F O R E W O R D

A MESSAGE FROM MARK HACKEL MACOMB COUNTY EXECUTIVE



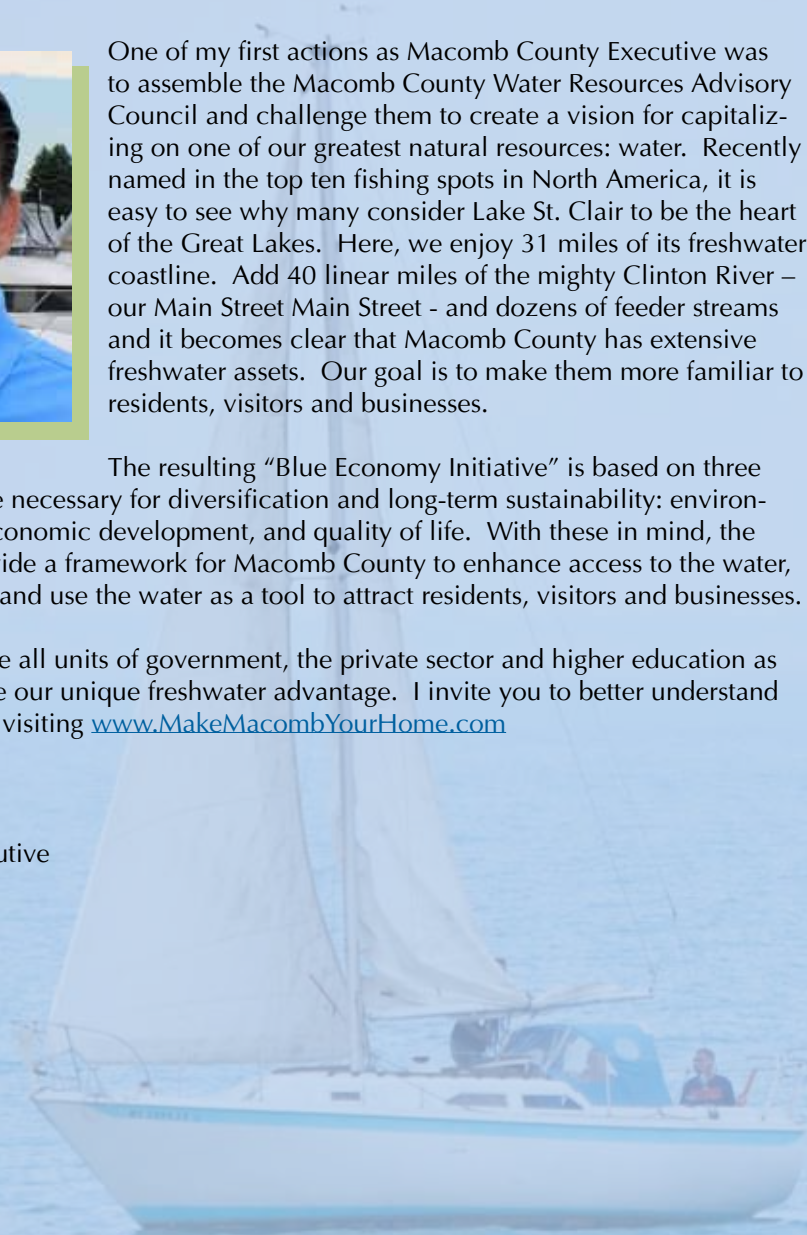
One of my first actions as Macomb County Executive was to assemble the Macomb County Water Resources Advisory Council and challenge them to create a vision for capitalizing on one of our greatest natural resources: water. Recently named in the top ten fishing spots in North America, it is easy to see why many consider Lake St. Clair to be the heart of the Great Lakes. Here, we enjoy 31 miles of its freshwater coastline. Add 40 linear miles of the mighty Clinton River – our Main Street Main Street - and dozens of feeder streams and it becomes clear that Macomb County has extensive freshwater assets. Our goal is to make them more familiar to residents, visitors and businesses.

The resulting “Blue Economy Initiative” is based on three core principles that are necessary for diversification and long-term sustainability: environmental stewardship, economic development, and quality of life. With these in mind, the proceeding pages provide a framework for Macomb County to enhance access to the water, improve water quality and use the water as a tool to attract residents, visitors and businesses.

My interest is to engage all units of government, the private sector and higher education as participants to advance our unique freshwater advantage. I invite you to better understand the Macomb brand by visiting www.MakeMacombYourHome.com

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark A. Hackel". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Macomb County Executive
Mark A. Hackel





EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



S U M M A R Y

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

We take pride in the Great Lakes for good reason. They are a national treasure, accounting for one fifth of the world's fresh surface water. In spite of the historic importance that the Clinton River and Lake St. Clair have played in the development of Macomb County, our water resources have not always been fully recognized for the key role they play as the heart of the Great Lakes and the multibillion dollar recreational boating and fishing industries they support.

Today too few Macomb County residents regularly have a chance to see and access Lake St. Clair or the Clinton River and may not see the potential for boosting our local economy and quality of life that our freshwaters hold. The creation of the Executive Office and the Executive's focus on the "Blue Economy" provide an historic opportunity to focus attention on and be an advocate for our water resources, helping to forge and encourage coalitions and collaborations at the local, regional, state and national levels.

The mission statement for the Macomb County Blue Economy Initiative is to "celebrate the world-class assets of the Clinton River and coastal Lake St. Clair as they relate to diversifying and transforming our local economy."

In coordination with the Macomb County Water Resources Advisory Council, (MCWRAC) created by County Executive Mark Hackel, this strategic development plan has been created to be advisory to the Executive Office. It is our hope that the Executive will find value in the proposals brought forward as Macomb County develops updates to its overall planning in three focus areas: environmental stewardship, economic development and quality of life.

Project directors from the County Planning and Economic Development staff identified a core team of individuals representing a cross section of local, state and federal government and their agencies. This group, along with coordinators of content from SEMCOG and the MEDC, met and worked throughout the first quarter of 2012 to develop this plan.

To inform and ground the work of the core team, two public meetings were held to gather input. Township and city representatives from Macomb County communities met on March 5, 2012 and stakeholders from business, environmental and

conservation organizations met on March 22, 2012. In both sessions, participants discussed existing and potential projects, and identified obstacles and opportunities. Small group brainstorming sessions and group discussions advanced numerous concepts and ideas.

Members of the MCWRAC, the Strategic Plan Core Team and participants in the public sessions were invited to bring forward potential projects or programs for consideration. Each of the projects or programs listed needed to meet identified Strategic Programming Criteria.

Based on the input received through the multiple opportunities cited, this plan identifies recommendations to the Executive Office in five categories:

- A. Increase accessibility to Lake St. Clair and the Clinton River
- B. Continue to enhance and improve environmental quality
- C. Increase entertainment and recreational development opportunities
- D. Seek additional funding opportunities
- E. Develop and implement marketing, education and advocacy programs

Specific recommendations within each category are included in the full report, and all proposals and concepts brought forward for consideration are also included.

We are fortunate that much important work has already been done or is currently underway in many of the categories. In those cases, those projects may not be included in the specific recommendations for focus by the Executive but are included in the full report. This is not to diminish in any way the importance of those activities.

Participants in the various sessions came away encouraged by the recognition that the passion and energy they bring to their work is shared by many others. We hope that process of collaboration and discussion will continue and we would recommend that those groups be reconvened on a regular basis to provide input and updates on the plan and its implementation.

Across the Great Lakes, alliances comprised of businesses, environmental groups, individual citizens and governmental agencies have recognized that a thriving economy and healthy environment go hand in hand. We believe that action on recommendations in this plan can help make Macomb County a leader in environmental stewardship and economic development. This can only further enhance the perception of Macomb County as an ideal place to live, work, play and build a business.

SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS:

A. Increase accessibility to Lake St. Clair and the Clinton River

- Increase number of boat launches/kayak launches, piers, public parks/beaches on Lake St. Clair
- Seek opportunities to open more parks for public use
- Seek opportunities for additional acquisition of land open to the public through the foreclosure process

B. Continue to enhance and improve environmental quality

- Increase and restore habitat to offset impacts of development
- Develop strategy for each beach to ensure beaches are open as much as possible
- Seek opportunities to manage stormwater runoff through the use of green infrastructure
- Look for funding opportunities to retrofit pollution issues
- Implement aquatic invasive control programs such as phragmites control

C. Increase the number of entertainment & recreational development opportunities

- Increase opportunities to “see and touch” Lake St. Clair and Clinton River
- Increase commercial development oriented to the \$1.7 billion boating industry, or the nearly \$1.4 billion angler/hunting industry.
- Seek opportunities to link recreation and

entertainment into hubs (e.g. Lake St. Clair Metropark, Nautical Mile, Salt River Marsh, Mount Clemens, North and South River Roads, and downtown New Baltimore)

D. Seek additional funding opportunities including

- Blue Water Fund for Macomb County
- Macomb County / HCMA joint funding: explore pooling funds from local governments, chambers of commerce and private entities to implement marketing programs
- Downtown Development Authorities (DDA) or Tax Increment Finance Authorities (TIFA) districts

E. Develop and implement marketing, education and advocacy programs

- Develop and implement a coordinated marketing strategy
- Increase collaboration to leverage resources
- Advocate for policies to assist in strategic implementation plan
- Provide educational opportunities in the Lake St. Clair area



TABLE OF CONTENTS



C O N T E N T S

SUMMARY	4
MISSION STATEMENT	10
PLAN PARTICIPANTS.....	12
PROJECT MILESTONES	16
PROGRAM CRITERIA	18
CONCEPTS	20
FINDINGS	24
RECOMMENDED PROGRAMS/PROJECTS....	32
GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS	30



MISSION STATEMENT



S T A T E M E N T

Macomb County's "Blue Economy Initiative" is designed to celebrate the world-class assets of the Clinton River and coastal Lake St. Clair as they relate to diversifying and transforming our local economy. The vision for a new Blue Economy Initiative is based on the three core principles that are necessary for diversification and long-term sustainability that include: environmental stewardship, economic development and quality of life, all of which must work in continued coordination for a healthy place. Under the Blue Economy Initiative, Macomb County will improve upon its water access, water quality and water attraction.

Programming such as the Clinton River Blue Way Water Trail, Lake St. Clair Coastal Paddling Trail, Circle

the Lake Tour, and a Parks and Open Space Master Plan enhances the quality of life for residents and visitors. Macomb County is developing and fostering economic development through its water-based businesses, advancements in smart water technology, and collaboration with the Detroit-Wayne County Port Authority and other agencies. Macomb County is continuing progress toward environmental stewardship through land acquisition, ecosystem restoration, coastal zone management, stormwater advisory groups and an international research center for freshwater studies.

Achieving sustainability of our water assets will allow Macomb County to more fully embrace its attractive locales to play, work, and live for generations to come.



PLAN PARTICIPANTS



PARTICIPANTS

PROJECT DIRECTORS

Melissa Roy, Macomb County Assistant County Executive

Stephen N. Cassin, AICP, Executive Director, Macomb County Department of Planning and Economic Development

Gerard Santoro, AICP, Program Manager, Macomb County Department of Planning and Economic Development

CHAIR OF COMMITTEE

Ken DeBeaussaert, Former – Director MI Office Great Lakes

PROJECT COORDINATOR OF CONTENT

Amy Mangus, SEMCOG (Regional perspective and part of LSC support)

CO-PROJECT COORDINATOR OF CONTENT

Gil Pezza, MEDC (plus access to Pure Michigan research and marketing arms)

ADDITIONAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

John Kerr - Port Cities Collaborative (DWCPA) – Economic development, regional perspective and funding agency

Jennifer Tewkesbury - MDEQ - Environmental stewardship and state regulation

Steve Stewart - Michigan Sea Grant Extension – Environmental stewardship and funding

Jack Liang - HCMA – Quality of life, marketing and regional perspective

Ben Hughes - Municipality representative

Rose Ellison - USEPA representative and funding agency

Amanda Priemer - Co-op Associate, Macomb County Planning and Economic Development, Land and Water Resources Division

**MACOMB COUNTY WATER
RESOURCES ADVISORY COUNCIL
(MCWRAC)**

In May, 2011 Macomb County Executive Mark Hackel called for the formation of a public/private sector council to support clean water, tourism, recreation and economic development along Lake St. Clair and the Clinton River. The resulting Macomb County Water Resources Advisory Council now meets quarterly to

discuss issues of water quality, water access and water attraction – the three foundations of the Blue Economy Initiative. The 24 member Council includes representatives from government, higher education, environmental agencies, economic development and private industry. This group was the first advisory council formed by the County Executive under the new form of government.

Macomb County Water Resources Advisory Council		
Agency/Office/Discipline	Name	Alternate
County Executive	Mark Hackel (plus one designee)	Al Lorenzo
Macomb County Board of Commissioners	Kathy Vosburg (plus one designee)	
Planning and Economic Development Department	Gerry Santoro	
Public Works Office-Phase II Environmental Engineer	Lynne Seymour	
Detroit Water & Sewer Department Board member	Fred Barnes	
Health Department-Health Officer	Gary White	Cole Shoemaker
Prosecutor's Office-Environmental Prosecutor	Luanne Lammerman	
Macomb Sherriff Department-Marine Division	Lt. Brian Barlog	Sgt. Matt Pecha
New Baltimore Downtown Development Authority	Judy Sproat	
Nautical Mile Merchants Association	Pete Beauregard Jr.	
Clinton River Watershed Council	Anne Vaara	
Water Quality Board member	Tom Morley	Chuck Bellmore
HCMA-Environmentalist	Paul Muelle	
SEMCOG	Amy Mangus	Chuck Hersey/Bill Parkus
Oakland County Water Resources Commission	John McCulloch	Jim Wineka
Research university	Dr. Scott Tiegs (OU.)	Dr. Donna Kashian (WSU)
Community college	Randall Young (MCC)	
State/regional policy	Ken DeBeaussaert	
Agriculture and Soil Conservation District	Ken DeCock	Charlie Bohm
Detroit/Wayne County Port Authority	Steve Olinek	John Kerr
Michigan DNR – AOC/PAC Officer	Jennifer Tewskbury	
Private civil engineering firm	Roy Rose, AEW	Jeff Bednar
Private marina industry/Boat Town USA Harrison Twp	Steve Remias	Eric Foster
Lake Saint Clair Tourism Initiative	Brad Simmons	Sproat/Flaherty/ABYA
Michigan Sea Grant Extension	Steve Stewart	
For more information contact Gerry Santoro (586) 469-5285 at Macomb County Planning & Economic Development		



PROJECT MILESTONES



M I L E S T O N E S

PROJECT MILESTONES

Present introduction to Mark Hackel and MCWRAC committee on Jan. 25, 2012

MEDIA RELEASE OF PROJECT

Coordinate with Sterling Heights, Velocity, and Sterling Heights Regional Chamber of Commerce and Industry for a May 2012 event.

BEGIN PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

(Jan-Feb 2012)

Meet every 2 weeks in Feb-Mar 2012 (Includes sub-groups and public meetings)

MEETING DATES

Feb 8, 2012 2-4 p.m. - Kickoff with committee members - Macomb County Administration Building, 9th Floor Conference Room

Feb 22, 2012 Rescheduled with the early March meeting.

March 5, 2012 2-4 p.m. (River & Coastal Cities Forum) – Macomb Intermediate School District (Room 206)

March 22, 2012 2-4 p.m. (Non-profit agencies, chambers of commerce and other interest groups) – Macomb County Intermediate School District (Room 103AB)

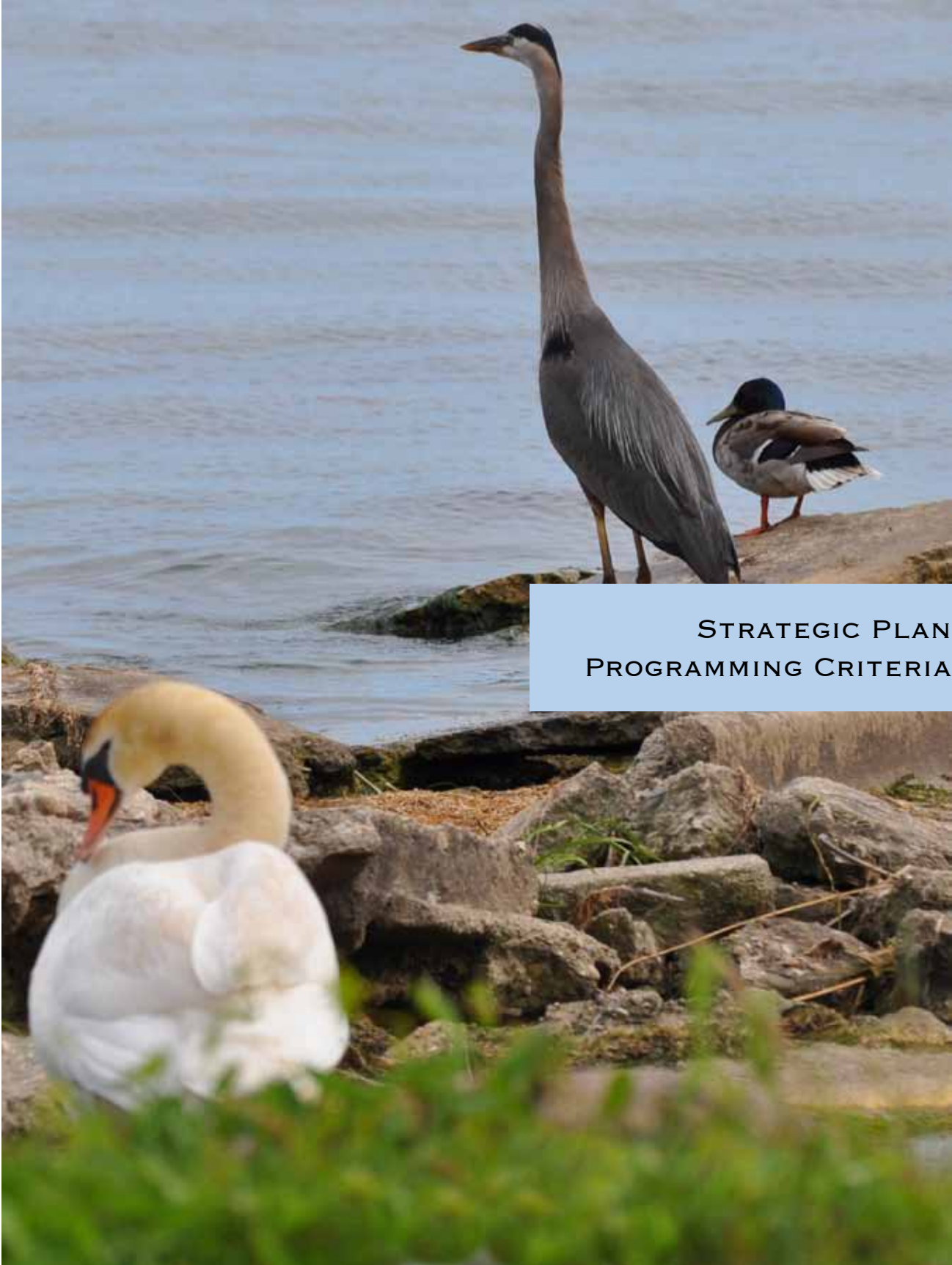
April 4, 2012 9 a.m. - noon Temp County Exec Offices

April 26, 2012 11 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. – Meet with MEDC, Travel Michigan.

May 24, 2012 8 - 10 a.m. - Lake St. Clair Metropark

1ST DRAFT

May 2, 2012 MCWRAC (Macomb County Water Resources Advisory Council Presentation 9-11 a.m.



**STRATEGIC PLAN
PROGRAMMING CRITERIA**



C R I T E R I A

CRITERIA FOR THE STRATEGIC PLAN

Each of the projects or programs listed needs to meet the following criteria:

- 1) Assets and deficiencies
- 2) Short and long term goals
- 3) Responsible agencies
- 4) Timeline
- 5) Potential funding sources

CRITERIA

In order to successfully identify all current and potential projects and programming relating to the Macomb County Blue Economy Initiative, members of local governments, private agencies and non-profit organizations were asked to submit a project worksheet to the core group. Any item submitted as a program or project needed to meet the five criteria for the strategic plan.



**CONCEPTS FOR PROJECTS
AND PROGRAM AREAS**



C O N C E P T S

OUTLINE OF MACOMB COUNTY BLUE ECONOMY STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Elements for strategic plan: Each of the items listed as a program or event will then need to meet the strategic programming criteria that will identify the

- 1) Assets and deficiencies
- 2) Short and long term goals
- 3) Responsible agencies
- 4) Timeline
- 5) Potential funding sources

1) Economic Development – Smart Water Technology

Would include development of strategy to support local businesses currently involved in smart water technology and expand their opportunity

Look at events planning (fishing tournaments, boat shows, etc.) and economic impact of such events

Land Acquisition Prioritization Plan – as it relates to water access at Clinton River and coastal Lake St. Clair

Freshwater systems development related to military and defense applications

Place making and economic gardening –

Lake St. Clair - Nautical Mile, Boat Town USA, Salt River Marsh, Downtown Mount Clemens and navigable river route, and Downtown New Baltimore

Clinton River - Shelby, Utica, Sterling Heights, Clinton Township

Blue Economy Development Fund - Work with Macomb Health & Fitness Foundation

2) Quality of Life – Blue Water Recreation and Tourism

Lake St. Clair Tourism Initiative – and further development of “Circle Lake St. Clair Tour”

Clinton River Blueway Trail (Coordinate with Oakland County and local governments)

Greenway Vision and Trail Network (Coordinated

by subwatershed systems for North Branch, East Pond Creek, Main Branch, and Coon Creek)

Lake St. Clair Coastal Paddling Trail

Nicholson Nature Center - Buildout

Walkable and access sites to the lake and rivers - Public piers & site development

3) Environmental Stewardship – Freshwater Studies for the Huron to Erie Corridor

Coastal Marshland Restoration

Lake St. Clair Plan (AOC/PAC) – WRDA/ SIP and GLRI Opportunities

HEART – WSU (URC), MCC, HCMA, and Macomb County partnership for International Center for Freshwater Studies in the Huron to Erie program

Eco-system Restoration - invasives and phragmites removal and control

Superfund and Legacy sites - e.g., former beet factory along the Clinton River

Drinking water monitoring system

Combined sewer overflows and IDEP coastal muck and algae problems

Macomb County Department of Planning and Economic Development employs the key principles of place sustainability in the development of this plan. Each of these key elements is necessary for the long-term attractiveness of a place. It also defends the key areas of the health, wealth and safety of Macomb County citizens and visitors.

PURPOSE: THREE KEY DIMENSIONS = “TRIPLE BOTTOM LINE”

FOCUS AREA 1: NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Continue progress for **Environmental Stewardship** by reviewing and implementing the goals of the LSC-Lake Area Management Plan & Sub-Watershed Management Plans.


FOCUS AREA 2: ECONOMIC VITALITY

Develop and foster **Economic Development** that will bring commerce through this targeted industry sector.

FOCUS AREA 3: HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

Enhance the **Quality of Life** for Macomb County residents and visitors. To allow Macomb County to fully embrace its attractive locales to play, work and live.



A group of people are stand-up paddleboarding on the ocean. The image shows several individuals from behind, wearing life jackets and using paddles. The water is blue with some whitecaps, and the sky is clear. In the distance, a large ship is visible on the horizon. A semi-transparent blue box with white text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

OUR FINDINGS BASED ON
FORUMS AND PROFESSIONAL
CORE TEAM INPUT



F I N D I N G S

FINDINGS

All of the findings presented in the Strategic Development Plan are based on forums and professional core team input. At the initial meeting, the core team identified overall issues facing Macomb County's water assets and discussed project strategy. They also identified general assets and deficiencies, goals and policies that could assist in large-scale funding. Two meetings followed, one with local municipalities and one with non-profit agencies. At these meetings, attendees participated in visioning sessions where they were posed questions such as, "How do you see

Lake St. Clair and the Clinton River being part of the Blue Economy? What does it look like to you?" They were also asked to identify impediments/barriers that exist to achieving this vision, as well as what strategies they would consider to deal with barriers such as funding, access, and marketing. All of the information gathered at these meetings was then compiled and presented to the core team, where they then identified the most important points to recommend to County Executive Mark Hackel.

RECOMMENDATIONS MACOMB COUNTY BLUE ECONOMY STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN COMMITTEE

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations were developed based on two visioning sessions with a variety of stakeholders throughout Macomb County.

A—Increase accessibility to Lake St. Clair and the Clinton River

1. Increase number of boat launches/kayak launches, piers, public parks/beaches on Lake St. Clair
 - County ROW opportunities
 - Pier near Boat Town USA in Harrison Township
 - Partner with MDNR on master planning for their launch areas
 - HCMA provides possible oversight of additional access sites
2. Seek opportunities for additional acquisition of land open to the public through the foreclosure process (e.g., land acquisition prioritization plan)
 - Create a Macomb County land bank
3. Seek opportunities to open private or residents-only parks to the public
4. Increase visual access by removing phragmites

Example: A - Salt River Marsh (Chesterfield)



Example B: Fisheries Habitat Restoration



B—Continue to enhance and improve environmental quality of Lake St. Clair and the Clinton River

1. Increase/restore habitat (e.g., Salt River Marsh, LSC Metropark, Clinton River Spillway)
2. Develop strategy for each beach to ensure beaches are open as much as possible
3. Seek opportunities to manage stormwater runoff through the use of green infrastructure
4. Look for funding and other opportunities to retrofit pollution issues (e.g., Blossom Heath Beach closings)
5. Implement aquatic invasive control programs such as phragmites control
6. Remove contaminated sediments
7. Utilize potential upcoming grant funding through the SRF program to implement water quality and infrastructure asset management
8. Utilize volunteers to adopt stretches of the waterfront to manage aesthetic pollution (Adopt a River)
9. Preserve natural features through acquisition (e.g., New Baltimore woodlands)
10. Local governments continue to implement activities to meet Phase II Stormwater and CSO requirements and infrastructure management
11. Implement woody debris management along the Clinton River
12. Remove dams and bridges impeding flow

Example C: Recreational and Entertainment



C—Increase the number of entertainment and recreational development opportunities

1. Increase opportunities to see and “touch” Lake St. Clair and the Clinton River

- Ensure interconnected water and land trails, including signage
- Canoe race
- HCMA and other sponsored events (e.g., Sprint and Splash)
- Whitewater park in Utica
- Circle the Lake Tour
- Michigan Sea Grant Extension
- Increase opportunities to rent houseboats, fishing boats, etc., in river/lake
- Provide opportunities for various ages
- Charter cruise opportunities stopping at coastal communities
- Provide year round recreational activities
- More to do on the river down to the lake
- Partner with activities outside of the area (e.g., Tigers’ games, Cobo Hall activities)

2. Increased commercial development

- Bars, restaurants and coffee shops that include lower-priced options
- Commercial development that links to hiking/biking and paddling
- Hotels, lodges, campgrounds on the water, including Lake St. Clair Metropark and integrating water parks
- A convention center

3. Smart Water Technology

- Seek opportunities to link recreation and entertainment into hubs (e.g., Lake St. Clair Metropark, Salt River Marsh area, New Baltimore, City of Utica, and Nautical Mile)

4. An entertainment venue that can be used year round - a national example would be Chicago’s Navy Pier

5. Increase economic impact through large-scale events

- Professional fishing tournaments
- Detroit Wayne County Port Authority

6. Multi-modal transportation linking entertainment, recreational and other Macomb activities

D—Seek additional funding opportunities

1. Blue Water Fund for Macomb County
2. County/HCMA joint millage
3. Local governments, chambers of commerce pool money to implement marketing program
4. DDA or TIFA districts
5. Grant opportunities
 - Collaboration on grant applications
 - GLRI, Passport, MNRTF
6. Foundations

E—Develop and implement marketing, education and advocacy programs

1. Develop and implement a coordinated marketing strategy
 - Increase public awareness of existing opportunities on Lake St. Clair and the Clinton River
 - Include marketing roles for various stakeholders (chambers, local governments, Watershed Council, businesses, boating industry)
 - Continue to position our County Executive as the champion of the Blue Economy Initiative
 - Provide information in various formats for

public (e.g., web sites, smartphone applications, social media, mass media)

- Utilize state and regional expertise (e.g., Pure Michigan, Detroit Convention and Visitors Bureau)
 - Deliver message within Macomb, regional, state and national levels
 - Promote our unique heritage to the public (e.g., historic boat making, landmarks)
2. Increase collaboration to leverage resources (messages, advocacy, promotion, environmental, education)
 - Organize a yearly summit
 - Utilize chambers of commerce as one of the front lines with the public
 - Engage citizen volunteers
 - Create directory of various stakeholders, including mission and strengths in moving forward the strategic plan
 3. Advocate for policies to assist in strategic plan implementation
 - State/federal environmental funding issues (e.g., continuation of Section 319 funding, utilizing 319 funding for pressing stormwater problems regardless of Phase II permit issue)
 - Aquatic and terrestrial invasive species
 4. Provide educational opportunities in the Lake

Example E: Discovery Tour



St. Clair area.

- Develop Lake St. Clair area as a Freshwater Research Institute
- Encourage individual actions to protect/restore Lake St. Clair and the Clinton River
- Promote environmental educational opportunities (Michigan Sea Grant Extension, Nicholson Nature Center)

Example E: Circle the Lake Tour



GLOSSARY

Acronyms	
ACE	Army Corps of Engineers
CRWC	Clinton River Watershed Council
DWCPA	Detroit Wayne County Port Authority
EPA	United States Environmental Protection Agency
HCMA	Huron Clinton Metropolitan Authority
ITC	ITC Holdings
LSCTI	Lake St. Clair Tourism Initiative
MCC	Macomb Community College
MCPED	Macomb County Planning & Economic Development
MCWRAC	Macomb County Water Resources Advisory Council
MDEQ	Michigan Department of Environmental Quality
MDNR	Michigan Department of Natural Resources
MEDC	Michigan Economic Development Corporation
MISD	Macomb Intermediate School District
SEMCOG	Southeast Michigan Council of Governments
SWAGS	Sub watershed Advisory Groups
TIFA	Tax Incremental Finance Authority
WSU	Wayne State University



Mark A. Hackel
County Executive

**MACOMB COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF
PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

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