

Macomb in the News

C&G: [Grant money to aid in battle against invasive species](#)

Metromode: [New robotics center highlights Macomb 'tech and talent' push at Auto Show](#)

Macomb Daily: [Chief Macomb County planner named as one of Hackel's four top advisers](#)

Macomb Daily: [OneMacomb to host first-ever Celebration of Black Excellence during Black History Month](#)

The Jewish News: [Defense industry trade missions a win-win for Michigan and Israel](#)

Macomb Business Blog

[The hottest cars from NAIAS and where to find them in Macomb County.](#)

[Q/A with Gail Alpert, president of FIRST in Michigan](#)

[American Society of Employers to offer HR and leadership-focused classes in Macomb County.](#)

Event Calendar

Now - April 4: Green Macomb and the Blue Water Conservation District are accepting pre-orders for their [annual tree and plant sale](#), an opportunity for the public to purchase young trees, fruit trees, flowering shrubs, wildflower seed and other fruits and vegetables at reasonable prices.



Message from Mark



Welcome to Focus Macomb, a quarterly newsletter with relevant information about Macomb County projects and programs. I hope that you enjoy (and share) the articles that follow.

In this issue, we focus on plans to develop a robotics and collaboration center, OneMacomb's first-ever Celebration of Black Excellence and a report from the Macomb County Department of Roads.

I am also pleased to announce that two of Macomb County government's most respected department leaders - Vicki Wolber, formerly from Emergency Management and [John Paul Rea](#) from Planning and Economic Development - have joined my team as deputy county executives. Both have exceptional knowledge, experience and proven abilities to affect transformative change. I know that they will be instrumental in helping me make Macomb County the best place to call home for business and life.

I would be remiss if I neglected to mention the concerning recent news about layoffs and possible plant closures in our automotive sector. If you or someone you know is facing a job loss, please know that there are resources available to help. Our Michigan Works! Office provides [employment readiness opportunities](#) for people at all career levels. They also maintain an up to date list of [featured job postings](#) by industry. Our friends at Macomb Community College offer many opportunities for seasoned professionals to align their skills with today's desired abilities through either [credited coursework](#) or [lifelong learning](#) classes. And, if you are a union member, be sure to check with your local to learn more about current services.

In closing, I'd like to recognize the leader of our animal control unit, Jeff Randazzo, for his swift response to the 52 dogs recently rescued from a Sterling Heights home. Jeff and his team provided immediate care and treatment for the animals before they were handed off to 12 local rescue organizations, where I can assure you, their paws are in good hands. For more information on the dogs and to find out about the tremendous community support we've received since the rescue, please read Jeff's recent [Make Macomb Your Home article](#).

Again, thanks for allowing us to check in. If my office can be of assistance to you, please call 586-469-7001 or write at executive@macombgov.org. My team is here to help.

February 23 - [Macomb's Celebration of Black Excellence](#)

March 2 - [29th Annual Walk for Warmth](#)

March 14 - [Macomb Food Program Elimination Raffle](#)

Click [here](#) for more events near you.

Business Calendar

February 27 - [Manufacturing Employers: Attract & Retain Employees through Registered Apprenticeships](#)

February 28 - [Generations at Work: Bridging the Generation Gap](#)

March 7 - [Business Resource Network Orientation](#)

To find more business events in Macomb County, visit Macomb County's Planning and Economic Development calendar [here](#).

Point of Pride

The Macomb County Department of Roads is proud to unveil its annual report [here](#). Thanks to new safety measures, there was a 33 percent reduction in traffic fatalities on county roads between 2016 and 2017.

Momentum Magazine

Have you read the newest issue of Momentum Magazine? This semi-annual publication illustrates the people and places of Macomb County and it's a great way to learn about our community. The last edition of Momentum was released in November 2018 – check it out [here](#). The next issue is planned for June 2019. To learn more about advertising opportunities within the publication, click [here](#).

Coming Soon

Organizers have announced the **8th annual Sprint and Splash Festival of Races** for Saturday, June 15. The event will feature a 5k run or walk, a duathlon and stand-up paddle events. Registration and other information is available [here](#).

Peregrine Falcons have nested on the roof of the Old Macomb County Building for more than 10 years. In that time, they've successfully hatched over 25 offspring—an incredible feat in helping to rebuild the once-

Macomb County discusses its “Future Tech, Future Talent” during Auto Show

In its most recent [Future of Jobs Report \(2018\)](#), the [World Economic Forum](#) forecasts a dramatic change to workplaces around the globe driven by automation and machines. But this five year economic outlook is more positive than one would assume. From new job creation to retraining opportunities, the report features several interesting predictions, including:

1. There is a net positive outlook for jobs – amid job disruption

While current job roles may be displaced by the shift in the division of labor between humans, machines and algorithms, 133 million new job roles may emerge at the same time. Those roles are either related to technology (data analysts, software and applications developers and e-commerce and social media specialists) or emphasize human traits (customer service workers, sales and marketing professionals, training and development, people and culture, and organizational development specialists).

2. New tasks at work are driving demand for new skills

By 2022, the skills required to perform most jobs will have shifted significantly. Skills growing in importance include analytical thinking and active learning as well as technology design. “Human” skills will also increase in value, including: creativity, critical thinking, persuasion and negotiation, attention to detail, resilience, flexibility, complex problem-solving, emotional intelligence, leadership and social influence and service orientation.

3. We will all need to become lifelong learners

As workplaces change, so must workers. On average, employees will need 101 days of retraining and upskilling in the period up to 2022. This will require businesses to build a comprehensive strategy for workforce planning, training and education.

These points are driving a future-focused mindset here in Macomb County, where business, government and education leaders are collaborating on several new talent and technology initiatives. And while attending the North American International Auto Show in mid-January, these leaders took the time to discuss a few of the efforts.

The first major initiative they highlighted was a Robotics Collaboration and Innovation Center, a new resource aimed at increasing awareness and opportunity within the robotics environment. The center was submitted by MCPED as a proposal to the Defense Industry Growth Area Grants program through the Michigan Economic Development Corporation in the summer of 2018. It was recently awarded funding and will launch at the Velocity Collaboration Center later this year. Once open, the center's mission will be partnering with businesses, educational organizations, nonprofits and startups to offer tools, programs, expert assistance and open access to an independent, digital- and electronic-based environment for creative people. It will be a facility and ecosystem which offers co-sharing and individual workspaces, computers,

endangered species' population. To give the public a behind-the-scenes look at this process, the county partnered with [EarthCam](#) to host a live video feed of the nesting area. Stay tuned for more details on when you can tune in!

software and related technologies. It will also feature a tooling and fabrication shop, engineering and computer science assistance, business development assistance and mentors from leading automotive, defense, manufacturing and technology firms, all in an open, collaborative environment.

“New technologies are having a massive effect on just about every aspect of our lives,” said County Executive Mark A. Hackel. “Whether it’s the economy, infrastructure or education, the world is changing and we need to be ready for that. This is why Macomb County is investing in new programs and initiatives aimed at tech and talent. We want to make sure that our communities and residents are prepared for the future in ways that will ensure our success.”

Other major investments discussed included Macomb County’s recently launched “[Fueling the Talent Pipeline](#)” effort – a service platform that will allow employers and educators to connect, share resources and help students become aware of future career opportunities – and its connected roadways strategy.

For more information on the above initiatives, visit www.macombbusiness.com.

OneMacomb to host first-ever Celebration of Black Excellence

This February, the country will recognize Black History Month, four weeks to honor and celebrate the long history and contributions of black Americans. OneMacomb, an organization dedicated to promoting multiculturalism and inclusion here in Macomb County, recently announced that it will recognize this period with a first-annual Celebration of Black Excellence, presented by Consumers Energy. The event will be held on Saturday, February 23 at the Macomb County Family Resource Center (196 N Rose St, Mt Clemens) and will feature a vendor and resource expo during the day and a ticketed awards gala in the evening.

“Hosting this first-ever event will not only pay tribute to the contributions of lifelong residents in Macomb County’s black communities, it will also connect newer residents and youth to the rich history many of us recall with pride,” said Rhonda Powell, director of Macomb County Health and Community Services and executive committee member of OneMacomb. “It is especially important to do this during the national celebration of Black History Month, a time when the country pays tribute to the generations of African Americans who have faced tremendous obstacles yet continue to overcome adversity and achieve great things.”

The Celebration of Black Excellence will begin on the morning of February 23 with the vendor and resource expo starting at 10 a.m. and running until 2 p.m. A variety of small businesses and organizations will have a presence during this portion of the event, which is free and open to the public. Those on site will sell items ranging from food to clothing. Others will provide services like health screenings and financial assistance. All told, more than 35 vendors are expected, including several young entrepreneurs (17-years-old and under) within the children’s business section. A panel discussion

will also be held from 12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. and will feature local expert discussing issues in education, religion and health care.

The celebration will continue in the evening with a ticketed awards gala at 6 p.m. During the gala, five individuals will receive honors for community involvement, athletics, business, education and the arts. Dinner and live entertainment will follow.

“Our OneMacomb sub-committee has done an awesome job planning this event and we are proud of the level of support and interest we’ve received from the business community, but there’s still time to get involved,” said Macomb County Deputy Executive and Chair of OneMacomb Pam Lavers.

More information on the Celebration of Black Excellence event can be found [here](#) or at WeAreOneMacomb.com.

New date, new award categories announced for 7th annual Macomb Business Awards

The annual Macomb Business Awards are undergoing a few changes this year – and that includes the date of the event. As part of a larger shift in plans, the awards will be held Tuesday, April 23, but at its core, the 7th annual program remains the same. The event will recognize organizations that are striving to build a capable workforce, tap new markets, cultivate a welcoming workplace or give back to the community. A Macomb County Economic Development Partner of the Year will also be honored.

Several new features, such as a new logo, a keynote speaker and new award categories have also been developed. Those categories include:

- **Trailblazer of Future Talent** – creating partnerships that provide opportunities for the next generation of our workforce to explore career possibilities and experience work-based learning.
- **Corporate Citizen** – providing meaningful support to our community through service and/or philanthropy.
- **Champion of Work/Life Integration** – offering innovative benefits that enable employees to balance work responsibilities with personal passions (Sponsored by MetroParent magazine).
- **Model of OneMacomb** - cultivating an environment where diversity is valued as evidenced by inclusive practices.
- **Hidden Gem** – uncovering a unique Made-in-Macomb product or place that more people should know about.
- **Manufacturer of the Year** – in recognition of a manufacturer of any size that is achieving success through its efforts to diversify its customer base, retain employees and/or implement new technologies or efficiencies.

Nominations for the Macomb Business Awards can be submitted through an [online form](#) today (Feb. 14) through Friday, March 15. A panel of judges will then review and select winners in each category.

Roads Department making strides towards next generation mobility in Macomb County

When you think of a county roads department, your first thoughts are likely snow plows and potholes. And while those two areas are certainly a major part of operations, here in Macomb County, our roads department is focusing on something a bit more complex: next generation mobility. So, what exactly is that?

Simply put, the goal of next generation mobility is to improve the overall transportation experience for drivers and pedestrians. Strategies to achieve this objective in Macomb County include building an intelligent transportation system (ITS) and facilitating better communications with the public. Both of these were highlighted in the Roads Department's recent [annual report](#), which features very impressive facts and figures. For instance:

The county Roads Department is disseminating information better than ever before.

- The use of email communications and social media that inform the public of incidents and impacts on traffic increased 164 percent from 2016. These additional notifications can be attributed to a partnership with Waze and the Connected Citizens Program and it resulted in the department being recognized with a National Association of Counties (NACo) Achievement Award in "Best in Transportation."
- In addition to disseminating alerts, the Roads Department, in conjunction with the Michigan Department of Transportation, maintains a website for a high-impact construction project along M-59. The MovingMacomb.org website is a source for the public to receive up-to-date information on current travel times within M-59 and the alternative routes.

Macomb County is leading the nation as one of the only counties developing ITS strategies and roadways.

- We are installing more than 300 Roadside Units (RSU) on business corridors throughout the county.
- There are over 630 traffic signals connected to COMTEC, the Macomb County Communications and Technology Center.
- 260 cameras help that facility monitor traffic on roads and 19 communication backhaul poles have enabled a robust ITS network.

Why does this all matter? The first answer is safety. Ultimately, Macomb County would like to increase driver welfare on area roads and decrease the number of car accidents. By combining current traffic safety programs with vehicle-to-infrastructure (V2I) systems and vehicle-to-vehicle (V2V) communications, this goal is within

reach. For instance, between 2016 and 2017, the county experienced a 33 percent reduction in traffic crash related fatalities. This is a direct result of actions taken by the Macomb Department of Roads (and other agencies) backed up by data and technology.

The second answer is connected vehicle testing, an essential tool for the Big Three as they look to prototype and build more connected cars. To do that, they need infrastructure where they can assess their new vehicles in real-world settings. The impending 300 RSUs on Macomb's business corridor give them this ability. These devices gather and broadcast information at intersections and link with the connected vehicles to alert them to changing lights or other hazards. Eventually, the RSUs will be able to give speed guidance or construction and weather alerts which can improve mobility and reduce traffic delays. And in the future, RSUs and connected vehicles could even communicate with other modes of transportation, like buses, pedestrians and bicycles, all using the same technology. But today, this system helps companies like GM, Ford and FCA experiment with their vehicles. And because Macomb prioritizes smart infrastructure, they can determine what will work and what won't for drivers around the world. That's certainly impressive; but of course it makes sense that our region would be a trailblazer in this effort. We make the cars; therefore we lead the way in next generation mobility.

Vicki Wolber shapes her new role as deputy county executive

On November 9, 2018, County Executive Mark A. Hackel announced Vicki Wolber as a new deputy county executive. Three days later, she marked her first day on the job. But of course, Wolber is not a new county employee. For more than 18 years she worked in Emergency Management and Communications; first as assistant director and then as director. She'll draw from this experience in her new position, where she will focus on issues relating to public safety while also assisting in the day-to-day operations of county departments and services. More specifically, Wolber will oversee Animal Control, Community Corrections, Emergency Management and Communications and the Juvenile Justice Center. She'll also have a lead role in the 9-1-1 surcharge initiative, the indigent defense program and COMTEC's ongoing growth. That's a lot to take on, but Wolber is up for the challenge.

"I'm motivated to show people that their government is hard at work and that it has the best interest of the public in mind," she said. "Ultimately, I want to improve quality of life and expand services for the people of Macomb County."

That progress is just one of Wolber's goals. She also hopes to continue making connections with the community – something that was an asset during her time in Emergency Management.

"It's so much easier to enter a project with a collaborative partner," she said. "And at the core of that is having a relationship where trust has been established."

This practice helped Wolber during several difficult periods on the job. For instance, when there were floods, fires or a sewer collapse,

she could call upon her network in Macomb County for solutions and they'd deliver.

"There's a wealth of knowledge, expertise and people who care here in Macomb, so when there was any type of emergency, I could pick up the phone and get to work right away," she said. "There is definitely a collaborative spirit, a team that you can rely on to get the job done."

Teamwork also played a role in what Wolber feels are her biggest achievements as director of Emergency Management. On that list is a radio enhancement project that added a backup dispatch center and five new towers to the county's radio tower network. Also on the list, and perhaps her most visible project, is the launch and ongoing success of COMTEC. Planning for that first started in 2009; ten years on, the facility is viewed as a model for governments of all levels around the world.

Wolber attributes some of that success to her long history in the public service sector.

"My father was a public servant his whole life, first starting with the Detroit Police Department, where he retired as an inspector. He then worked as director of public safety for the City of Fraser, which inspired me to explore public service," she said. "My first job was for the City of Fraser, where I worked in just about every department. Over those 12 years, I became a 'jack-of-all-trades' and then I transitioned to the county. But that initial time certainly helped me establish a foundation in public service. It set me up for success in my leadership roles."

Through work as an adjunct professor at Macomb Community College, Wolber shares that foundational knowledge and helps to prepare the next generation of public servants.

"I teach an introduction to emergency management course at Macomb," she said. "I tell my students that this sector requires you to face issues head on, but the work is engaging and worthwhile."

It is with this mindset that Wolber will shape her new role as deputy county executive. And as she has proven time and again, her passion for public service and commitment to the people of Macomb County will deliver results.

Shout out: Elcometer moves North American headquarters to Warren

To better accommodate future growth and to expand into new product ranges, Elcometer Inc., a United Kingdom-based supplier of coating inspection equipment, is relocating its North American headquarters to Warren. According to company officials, 22 employees will move to a 22,000-square-foot location that was purchased for \$1 million on 6900 Miller Drive and over the next 12 months, 10 additional workers will be hired.

"Our new North American Headquarters allows our dedicated team of in-house sales & service engineers, technical support and training personnel to provide our customers with highest levels of customer support that they have come to expect from Elcometer," said

Michael Sellars, managing director at Elcometer, in an interview with [Crain's Detroit Business](#).

Elcometer was previously headquartered in Rochester Hills. When the decision to move became final, Macomb County Planning and Economic Development staff worked closely with company leaders to assist with site selection and to facilitate connections with the city of Warren and Michigan Works! For more information on these business services, visit www.MacombBusiness.com.



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