

## News Release

### **Local county legislators discuss progress, future at Tri-County Summit**

*Macomb, Oakland and Wayne County Commission chairs pledge to continue collaboration to strengthen southeast Michigan*

**November 23, 2022, OAKLAND COUNTY, MI.** – During the 14<sup>th</sup> Tri-County Summit, which took place on Friday, November 18, county legislators from Macomb, Oakland and Wayne counties met to focus on water and broadband infrastructure challenges and opportunities facing the region. Through several different sessions, officials from the state's three most populous counties explored ways to collaborate as a region.

"I am proud of the efforts made by our tri-county team since we renewed the summit in 2021 and look forward to continuing the work identified at this year's event," said Macomb County Board of Commissioners Chair Don Brown. "These issues affect our entire region and we can tackle them better together."

"This year's summit provided a unique opportunity for commissioners across southeast Michigan to hear from experts on the issues facing our region and begin exploring how we can move forward together in the most effective and powerful way possible," said Oakland County Board of Commissioners Chairman David T. Woodward. "I can't wait to continue this work with my counterparts to ensure improved broadband equity and water infrastructure for everyone in the tri-county area."

"Issues like water quality and broadband access aren't just local issues, but regional issues," Wayne County Commission Chair Alisha Bell said. "Tri-county summits, like the one we just held, offer a tremendous starting point for all of us to work together on them. I look forward to being the host for next year's summit as we continue to work together for the residents of all three counties."

Following the 2021 summit, commissioners from Macomb, Oakland and Wayne counties formed study groups on water and broadband infrastructure. At this year's event, the Broadband Equity Study Group shared their findings on regional broadband coverage and ways to leverage federal funding opportunities. The Water Infrastructure Study Group presented on regulatory storm water standards, lobbying regulation and educational resources for residents. Officials from the National Association of

Counties also offered their expertise during these discussions and expressed support for the three counties' collaborative efforts around water and broadband.

Participants also heard from Martin Lavelle, an economist from the Chicago Federal Reserve, and Amy O'Leary, executive director of the Southeastern Michigan Council of Governments, who presented the organization's water infrastructure survey results and spoke about regional broadband. The Michigan Association of Counties provided a legislative update for attendees.

To conclude the event, commission chairs signed a pledge to continue working together to address issues that are significant to the region. Moving forward, the counties' leadership committed to:

- 1) Implement a tri-county approach to federal and state infrastructure grant opportunities and actively seek joint grant applications to submit with the support of all three counties; and
- 2) Evaluate, and if necessary, jointly challenge the accuracy of newly released FCC broadband maps, which will determine federal funding for improving broadband access and speeds across the region; and
- 3) Create a water legislative agenda by the first quarter of 2023 to jointly advocate and advance in the next state legislature session.

The Tri-County Summit was first hosted in 1998 to create a forum to identify common issues for cooperative action. Previous topics have included mental health, criminal justice, transportation/transit, economic development and regional quality of life. A recording of the 2022 event will be available at [www.bocmacomb.org](http://www.bocmacomb.org) soon.

For more information about the Macomb County Board of Commissioners, please visit [www.bocmacomb.org](http://www.bocmacomb.org) or call 586-469-5125.

For more information about the Oakland County Board of Commissioners, please visit [www.oakgov.com/boc](http://www.oakgov.com/boc) or call 248-858-0100.

For more information about the Wayne County Commission, please visit [www.waynecounty.com/elected/commission](http://www.waynecounty.com/elected/commission) or call 313-224-8115.

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*Suggested photo cutline: Macomb County Chair Don Brown, Wayne County Chair Alisha Bell and Oakland County Chair David T. Woodward signed a pledge to continue working together to address issues that are significant to the region at this year's Tri-County Summit.*