



## News Release

For Immediate Release

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### **Advancing Macomb Awarded \$1 Million Grant From The Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation To Build Pedestrian Bridge Over Clinton River Spillway**

**Mount Clemens, Mich.** (Feb. 22, 2024) – [Advancing Macomb](#), a 501c3 that convenes resources to solve community challenges and enrich the lives of Macomb County residents, was awarded a \$1 million grant from the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation to build a bicycle and pedestrian bridge over the Clinton River Spillway in Harrison Township.

The grant was awarded in partnership with the Macomb County Department of Planning & Economic Development. It will be added to other funding sources to complete the project. The estimated cost for this project is \$3.5 million, and construction is expected to begin this year.

“We are extremely grateful to the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation for this generous grant,” said Phil Gilchrist, executive director of Advancing Macomb. “Trailway improvements such as this pedestrian bridge are important for increasing access to Macomb County’s many recreational assets, and we are happy to be able to support this project.”

The project also includes a multi-use path along Jefferson Avenue in Harrison Township. The path will begin at Saint Christopher Street and head north for approximately 0.4 miles on Jefferson Avenue until it reaches the Clinton River Spillway.

The bicycle and pedestrian bridge will be a single-span prefabricated steel truss structure approximately 202 feet long, with a 14-foot-wide clear opening. Once across the bridge, users can take the multi-use path to connect to an existing 10-foot path that takes them into Lake St. Clair Metropark and connects to the Macomb County Freedom Trail. The project also includes an additional 0.1 miles of 10-foot path along Jefferson Avenue to connect cyclists and pedestrians to Harrison Township’s Downtown District, the waterfront park, the senior center and the Michigan DNR boat launch.

“We are thrilled to receive this grant from the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation,” said Amanda Minaudo, program director of Macomb County Planning & Economic Development, Macomb County Planning and Economic Department. “This project will close a critical gap in Macomb County’s trail network. The non-motorized shared-use path and bridge will increase bicycle and pedestrian safety and give trail users access to many amenities.”



The project is part of the Great Lakes Way Trail, a regional trail spanning four counties. Currently, the trail runs approximately eight miles through St. Clair Shores into Harrison Township, where it continues for approximately 1.5 miles until it hits a stopping point at the Clinton River Spillway. The new bridge corrects this gap.

“The establishment of an important connector within the statewide Iron Belle Trail is a huge step forward in our shared efforts to enhance regional and statewide connectivity. By establishing the walking path on the Jefferson Bridge, Advancing Macomb is creating a safe connection, actively breaking down barriers and fostering accessibility for community members in Macomb County,” said JJ Tighe, senior director of parks and trails for the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation.

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### **About Advancing Macomb**

Advancing Macomb is a 501c3 that convenes resources to solve community challenges and enrich the lives of Macomb County residents. The organization provides the philanthropic model and leadership needed to cement partnerships between the nonprofit, public and private sectors, identify and attract resources to fund major projects and programs, and increase Macomb County visibility. For more information about Advancing Macomb, visit [advancingmacomb.com](http://advancingmacomb.com).

### **About Macomb County Planning and Economic Development**

The Macomb County Department of Planning & Economic Development supports an environment where businesses prosper and people thrive. Its activities and programs are focused on stimulating the local economy through business retention, expansion and attraction while improving the overall quality of life for residents. The department specializes in providing services to businesses at all stages of development with a concentration on the high-growth industries of aerospace, alternative energy, advanced manufacturing, defense and homeland security.

### **About The Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation**

The Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation is a grantmaking organization dedicated primarily to sustained investment in the quality of life of the people of Southeast Michigan and Western New York. The two areas reflect the devotion of Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. to his hometown of Detroit and greater Buffalo, home of his beloved Buffalo Bills NFL team. Prior to his passing in 2014, Mr. Wilson provided that a significant share of his estate be used to continue a life-long generosity of spirit by funding the Foundation that bears his name. Based in Detroit, the Foundation began with a grantmaking capacity of \$1.2 billion over a 20-year period, which expires January 8, 2035. This structure is consistent with Mr. Wilson's desire for the Foundation's impact to be immediate, substantial, measurable, and overseen by those who knew him best. For more information visit [www.rcwjrf.org](http://www.rcwjrf.org).