



Forward **TOGETHER**

STRATEGIC PLAN

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From the Desk of Mayor Reichert

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Strategy Key

Accomplishments



Goals



Macon-Bibb County Board of Commission



Gary Bechtel
Commissioner – District 1



Larry Schlesinger
Commissioner – District 2



Elaine Lucas
Commissioner – District 3



Mallory Jones, III
Commissioner – District 4



Bert Bivins, III
Mayor Pro-Tem
Commissioner – District 5



Ed Defore
Commissioner – District 6



Scotty Shepherd
Commissioner – District 7



Virgil Watkins, Jr.
Commissioner – District 8



Al Tillman
Commissioner – District 9



Robert Reichert
Macon-Bibb County Mayor

STRENGTHEN OUR CORE, GROW OUR COMMUNITY

To the people, businesses, and organizations of Macon-Bibb County,

In 2012, you overwhelmingly approved creating a new, consolidated government that would operate more efficiently, provide better services, and provide an equitable tax rate for all people. You also created the fourth largest city in the entire state of Georgia.

Since January 1, 2014 – and even during the 18-month transition prior to that – we have worked to create a solid foundation for the new government, realign and combine departments, reduce the size of government, complete SPLOST projects, and actively seek your input throughout it all.

However, our work as a new consolidated government is about much more than moving offices and reducing costs... it's about growing our community by strengthening our core. This Strategic Plan gives your consolidated government a way to set priorities, allocate funds to complete projects, and select initiatives that will have a long-term benefit.

We want to thank the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation for the grant that made this process possible. We also want to thank the University of Georgia Carl Vinson Institute of Government for facilitating the discussions and helping us focus our ideas on what needs to be accomplished in order to make the most positive impact on our entire community.

We, as a Commission and consolidated Macon-Bibb County, are working to strengthen our core and grow our community. By doing so – and with your assistance and support – we can move the entire community 'Forward Together' and make Macon-Bibb the Hub City of Middle Georgia.

Economic & Community DEVELOPMENT

The highest priority of Macon-Bibb County is to create a robust economy and strong communities. We will focus on retaining our current business and industry, creating opportunities for new economic development while addressing poverty, supporting and encouraging quality education, and workforce development.

BLIGHT TASK FORCE

For the past several years, there has been a goal of tearing down 100 dilapidated houses in our neighborhoods in an effort to attack blight. Macon-Bibb has formed a Task Force – made up of government, nonprofit organizations, neighborhood associations, community leaders, and citizens – to administer \$14 million in bond funding to take action beyond demolition. Strategies include abandoned house demolition, creating green space and recreation areas, adding lighting, building sidewalks, and more.

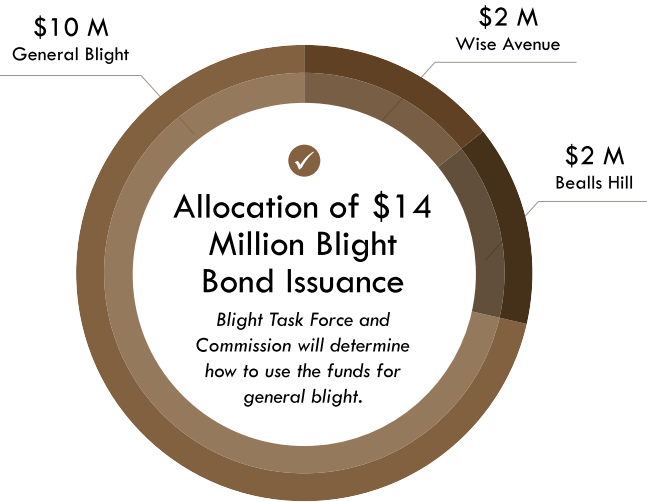
Houses Demolished Under Blight Initiative



100
July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2014



100
July 1, 2014 – April 23, 2015



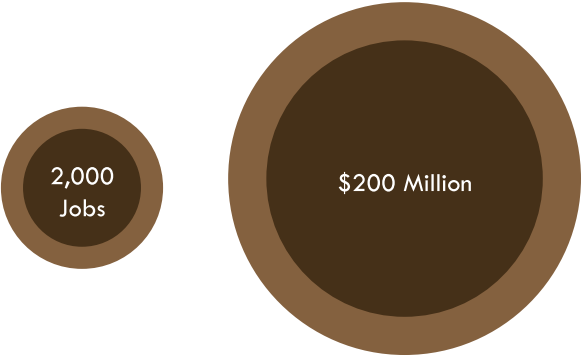
EXPANDED USE OF AIRPORTS

Middle Georgia Regional Airport

Macon-Bibb County believes our community can become a transportation and logistics hub for the entire state by extending the runway and attracting viable passenger airline service. With the deepening of the Port of Savannah, there will be an increase of shipping traffic traveling up I-16, and the extension of the runway would

allow fully loaded cargo planes to utilize the airport. There is an identified market for passenger air service that could use our airport, and attracting a DOD-certified passenger airline would allow us to serve the needs of Robins Air Force Base.

Current Annual Economic Impact of Regional Airport



Safe Neighborhoods & Safe Communities

Safe neighborhoods are the foundation of great communities. Macon-Bibb County will focus our efforts on providing for public safety, citizen education and engagement, and crime prevention, all in an effort to create safe and enduring communities.

✓ 5X5 NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

The 5x5 Neighborhood Improvement Program focuses services in a five block area for five weeks in each of the nine Commission Districts. Administration meets with each of the nine elected Commissioners to determine which five block area in their district will receive the focused services, as well as meet with residents, churches, and community leaders about the needs they would like addressed.

The following partners have joined Macon-Bibb County to help make more significant and visible improvements to specific areas:

- Bibb County Sheriff's Office
- Community Partnerships
- Macon Area Habitat for Humanity
- Macon Water Authority
- Rebuilding Macon

Second Round Schedule

District 1 April 20 – May 22, 2015

District 2 June 1 – July 3, 2015

District 3 July 13 – August 14, 2015

District 4 August 24 – September 25, 2015

District 5 October 5 – November 6, 2015

District 6 November 16 – December 18, 2015

District 7 December 28, 2015 – January 29, 2016

District 8 February 8 – March 11, 2016

District 9 March 21 – April 22, 2016

🚲 SUSTAINABLE, WALKABLE, BIKEABLE COMMUNITIES

With the Second Street Vision Block as the prime example, Macon-Bibb County's goal is to create a walkable, bikeable community by focusing on adding sidewalks, bike lanes, and recreational spaces and improving the downtown urban core. One exciting initiative is the pedestrian-friendly Second Street Corridor which will connect East Macon to the business and residential areas of Downtown to Mercer University, and eventually all the way to Middle Georgia State College.

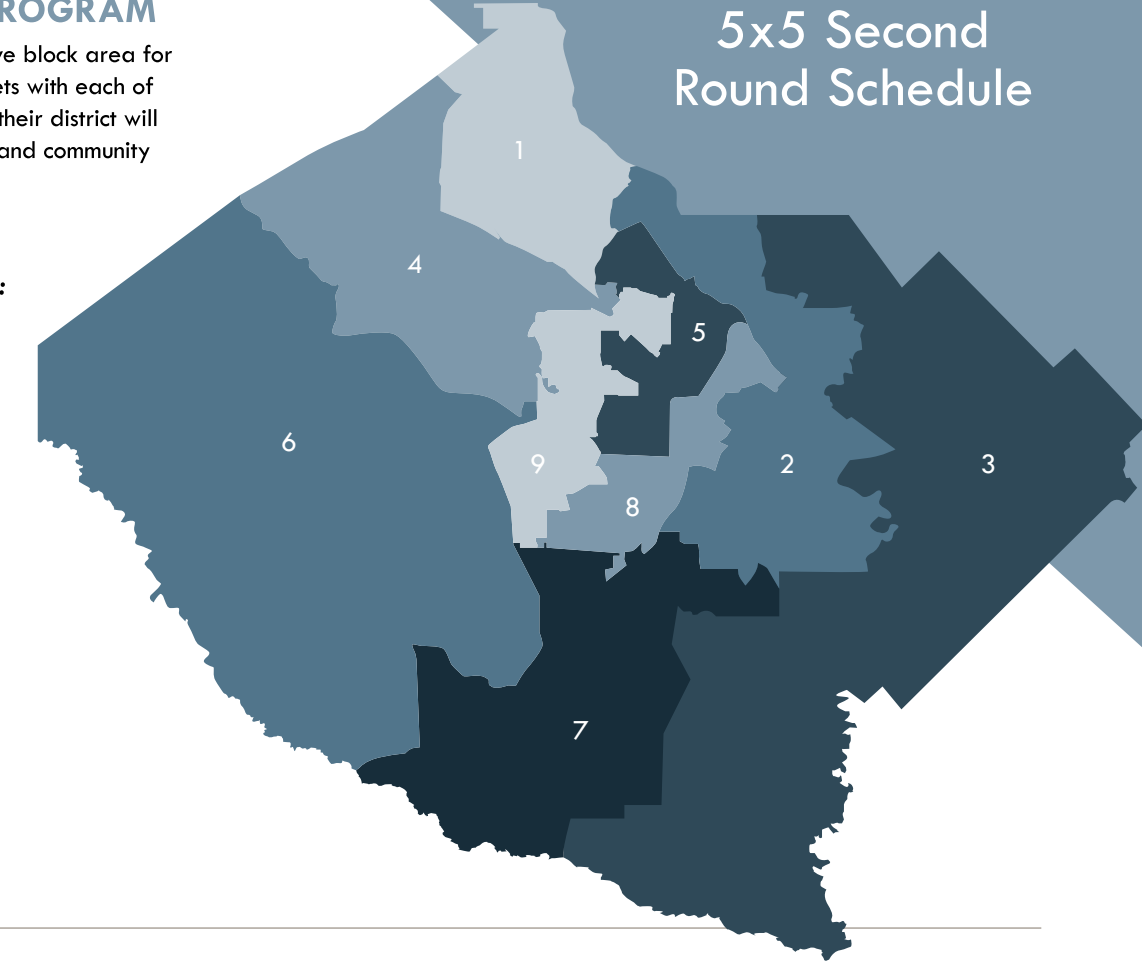
👥 INVOLVING THE COMMUNITY

The Macon Action Plan (MAP) is a comprehensive planning process to envision the future for downtown and InTown neighborhoods and guide change in coming years. All members of the public have been invited to help shape this plan for Macon's urban core. Facilitated by the Macon-Bibb Urban Development Authority, Macon-Bibb County, and their partners, in collaboration with the MAP planning team led by Interface Studio, the plan is incorporating thorough research, community feedback, and expert planning.

🚒 IMPROVED FIRE PROTECTION SERVICES

Due to the need for additional fire stations, Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) funds were appropriated for the completion of two fire stations, #109 and #110, located on New Forsyth Road and Heath Road respectively. Using bond funds, Macon-Bibb County will build another station on Donnan Road.

5x5 Second Round Schedule



Effective Government & GOVERNANCE

The Macon-Bibb County Commission and staff will work to improve public perception of the governance and government processes and apply fair and equitable principles regarding taxation and employee compensation. We will utilize best management practices to execute Commission policy towards completing SPLOST and all other projects successfully and in a timely manner.

STATE OF FINANCIAL AFFAIRS

✓ Macon-Bibb Wins Budget Award

Macon-Bibb County was awarded the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award for its Fiscal Year 2015 budget by the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA). In order to receive the award, Macon-Bibb's budget document had to serve as a policy document, a financial plan, an operations guide, and a communications device, and then it had to be rated as proficient in each of those areas.

According to GFOA, the award "reflects the commitment of the governing body and staff to meeting the highest principles of governmental budgeting. In order to receive the budget award, the entity had to satisfy nationally recognized guidelines for effective budget presentation."

✓ Successful Budget Reduction

The consolidated government is reducing its budget by 20% over five years, and we were able to reduce the budget by 6% in the first year of consolidation. This came through a reduction of the former city millage rates, and we are proposing a budget that continues that trend. A smaller, more efficient government was one of the promises of consolidation.

✓ First Macon-Bibb Audit "Impressive"

An audit was performed by Mauldin & Jenkins, an outside firm, for the first six months of the newly consolidated government from January 1, 2014 to June 30, 2014, and was found to be clean with no findings and no adjustments. Mauldin & Jenkins praised the commission, administration, and department heads for rising to the challenge of consolidation and being good stewards of the public money.

"THIS IS VERY IMPRESSIVE FOR A NEW GOVERNMENT THAT WENT THROUGH ALL THE CHANGES THAT CAME WITH CONSOLIDATION."

Miller Edwards, Mauldin & Jenkins

✓ 2015 STRATEGIC PLAN

Macon-Bibb County spent a year developing its first Strategic Plan through multiple retreats and meetings with Commissioners and Department Heads. This Plan will guide the work of the new government in setting priorities, delivering more efficient services, and identifying and completing projects which will improve the entire community.

The process was funded by the John S. and James L. Knight Foundations and facilitated by the University of Georgia Carl Vinson Institute of Government.

🔧 URBAN REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

The Urban Redevelopment Plan previously existed only for the City of Macon, but with the expansion of our city's borders to the county line, Macon-Bibb County is in the process of updating the plan to encapsulate the entire county. Contingent upon extensive demographic and data work, the Urban Redevelopment Plan will allow the Commission to identify areas to improve, apply for tax credits, and put into place certain tax incentive districts such as opportunity zones and enterprise zones to offer incentives for businesses.

✓ CONSOLIDATION EFFORTS

Through the consolidation thus far, the Macon-Bibb Government has

- Merged and created new departments
- Selected new department heads
- Worked to find more effective ways to provide services
- Reduced our budget below the combined budgets of the former City and County

Macon-Bibb County is currently renovating several buildings in order to combine offices and move departments to better serve the public. These renovations include creating a Sheriff's Downtown Annex in the former Sears building and using SPLOST funds to renovate the Bibb County Courthouse to locate all courts in one building and provide better services to the public.



🔧 IMPROVED CUSTOMER SERVICE

Macon-Bibb County is expanding its use of SeeClickFix, an online and web-based application where citizens can request services from the departments directly and track the progress of those requests. On average, more than 1,300 requests per month are managed, and of the tickets closed, we average 80-90% closure rate in 10 days. Over the past year, we have expanded SeeClickFix to three more departments and plan to continue adding more.

✓ BY THE NUMBERS

1,335
Work orders
opened in
March

825
Work orders
opened &
closed in
March

747
Work orders
resolved in
10 days

90%
March orders
resolved in 10
days

1,698
Total work
orders closed

Infrastructure IMPROVEMENT

To achieve the community we desire, Macon-Bibb County will focus on and develop storm water, water, and wastewater infrastructures and an integrated transportation system of rails, trails, roads, and runways to become the logistics hub of Georgia.

MERCER UNIVERSITY DRIVE PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE

Using Tax Allocation District bond funding, Macon-Bibb will build a signature pedestrian bridge over Mercer University Drive that will serve as a gateway into the city. Its construction is bringing almost \$50 million in investment in Tindall Heights.

SECOND STREET CORRIDOR REDEVELOPMENT & REVITALIZATION

The Second Street Corridor redevelopment and revitalization project was started with funding from the voter-approved SPLOST. Eight million dollars was designated to improve the area that stretches from East Macon through Downtown and will feature bike lanes, reverse angle parking, landscaping, shade trees, benches, improved sidewalks, an irrigation system, and more. We have completed the Vision Block between Cherry and Poplar Streets, and are working on the Connector, Mid-City Square, Pinnacle Park, and a transit alternative.

SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT PLAN

In the next five to seven years, Macon-Bibb County must close the landfill, which necessitates a Solid Waste Management Plan to identify how we will divert waste out of the landfill and what it will do with the waste once it is closed. The goal is to build a recycling center.

Three components of the Plan are:

- 1 Expanding our recycling program
- 2 Building a transfer station to other landfills
- 3 Educating the public on the importance of recycling and keeping streets free of trash and debris

COMPLETE STREETS

We are using SPLOST funds for road maintenance and improvement with the goal to create a more walkable, bikeable community. SPLOST funds are being used as our 30% match for state funding, allowing us to complete more projects.

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS

- Using \$1.5 million in SPLOST funds to make Log Cabin Road more pedestrian-friendly by realigning intersections, adding sidewalks, and more
- Allocating \$750,000 for Jeffersonville Road property and right-of-way acquisition to allow the GaDOT to make significant, pedestrian-friendly street improvements
- Maintaining several roundabouts being built by the state
- Working with the GaDOT to divert major truck traffic off Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard to increase pedestrian-friendly nature of downtown

SARDIS CHURCH ROAD – SGODA ROAD CONNECTION

Macon-Bibb County is currently working with the GaDOT on the Sardis Church Road – Sgoda Road connection, a direct link between I-75 and I-16 that will provide access to the Middle Georgia Regional Airport and Robins Air Force Base.

I-75/I-16 INTERCHANGE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

We are working with the GaDOT and offering support so the interchange improvement project can move forward quickly and efficiently.

The Interchange Improvement Project

- Allows for easier movement of traffic
- Offers a mitigation program in Pleasant Hill that includes moving and rehabilitating a number of structures, enclosing storm water drainage, constructing a multi-use path and a heritage tour, and more
- Connects the Ocmulgee Heritage Trail to Amerson River Park improvement with the goal to create a more walkable, bikeable community





Quality OF LIFE

Macon-Bibb County will support, encourage, and promote good-living in Macon-Bibb with the arts and cultural events, tourism improvements, social and night life opportunities, and a community-wide system of passive and active recreation.

✓ AMERSON RIVER PARK

A \$5.5 million improvement project at Amerson River Park is close to completion, in addition to more than \$3 million dollars of private fundraising efforts during the past decade. Amerson River Park will consist of 160 acres, 3.5 paved miles of trails, ¾ mile of mulch trail, a state-of-the-art playground, picnic shelters, improvements to Porter Pavilion, and more. It will be a destination park for the county, region, and entire state.

🔧 OCMULGEE HERITAGE TRAIL

The Ocmulgee Heritage Trail is a perfect way for Macon-Bibb's citizens to enjoy several miles of Macon's beauty, history, and community while walking, biking, jogging, bird watching, picnicking, or fishing along the Trail. In order to improve the quality of life for our citizens, we plan to continue extending the Ocmulgee Heritage Trail across the Ocmulgee River into Amerson River Park and on to the Ocmulgee National Monument.

🔧 OCMULGEE NATIONAL MONUMENT

The Ocmulgee National Monument, the ancestral home land of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation, is a great place for people of all ages to come to experience 17,000 years of continuous human history. We are supporting the initiative to expand the Ocmulgee National Monument, currently situated on 700 acres of beautiful greenspace along the Ocmulgee River, to become the Ocmulgee National Historic Park. This would increase the boundaries of the Monument from 700 acres to 2,000 and authorize the National Park Service to conduct a border study to examine the possibility of expanding the Park further.

RECREATION CENTERS

With SPLOST funding, Macon-Bibb County is upgrading and improving the county's recreation centers after decades of deferred maintenance.

Upgrades include:

- Replacing roofs
- Upgrading gymnasiums
- Creating a new boxing gym
- Creating a new Filmore Thomas Park on Log Cabin Road with trails, fields, a pavilion, and more
- Building a recreation center in southern portion of county
- Improving tennis courts at John Drew Smith Tennis Center and Tattnall Square Park

TATTNALL SQUARE PARK

Tattnall Square Park has undergone a significant revitalization through the efforts of multiple people, organizations, and agencies.

Improvements include:

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|--|-------------------------------|
| • New sidewalks along the Park | • Roundabout at College and Oglethorpe Streets | • New lighting |
| • New tennis courts | • Utility relocation | • Tree planting |
| • Upgrades to the tennis center | • Crosswalks | • Rain garden |
| • New festival plaza | • New pedestrian crossing system near Alexander II Magnet School | • New entrances into the Park |
| • Road improvements | | |

TATTNALL SQUARE PARK – A COLLABORATIVE EFFORT





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 Knight Foundation