

MONROE COUNTY LINK STATUS REPORT

December 2018

OVERVIEW

It all started with a study of Monroe County's I-75 corridor and the headlines for a new Windsor-Detroit bridge, and then a plan ... The Monroe County Link Plan, a strategy to guide future economic development for our community.

This plan identifies industry sectors that Monroe County should attract to the corridor, action steps that will entice companies to locate/relocate, and specific development areas that would appeal to the above-mentioned sectors identified in the study. Critical to this plan is a commitment to improving the quality of life and strengthening the image and brand of the County.

Michael Bosanac, Monroe County Administrator, said, "this is a focused effort to bring economic development into Monroe County," and "we want to make Monroe County the right place to do business."

At the November 2017 Board of Directors' meeting, the Monroe County Business Development Corporation (BDC) Board approved the implementation of the Monroe County Link Plan.

An organizational meeting led by Aaron Domini, Partner of OHM Advisors in Columbus, Ohio, brought together the original Management Team and the newly designated Team Captains.

The Monroe County Link Action Team Kickoff Meeting took place on January 12, 2018, which included Team Captains and their selected Team members. This meeting could not have been more successful!

Since that initial meeting, we have had 2 more Action Team meetings, 2 Team Captain group conference calls, and numerous pillar meetings which were conducted by the Pillar Team Captains. Over the course of the first year, the Monroe County Pillar Action Team volunteers have logged over 500 hours of time to this initiative.

The Monroe County Link's purpose is to create a strategy to guide the I-75 corridor studies action items that have been identified. This plan has become so much more and now is the County's economic strategy guide!



IN THE BEGINNING

When plans surfaced about the new Gordie Howe International Bridge being built at one of America's busiest border crossings and because it connects and provides direct access to I-75, an interstate known as "Michigan's Main Street" and an important roadway for Monroe County, our county started to talk. I-75 is one of the longest interstate highways in the United States traveling from southern Florida up to the Great Lakes region. This makes Monroe County a strategic location for economic development!

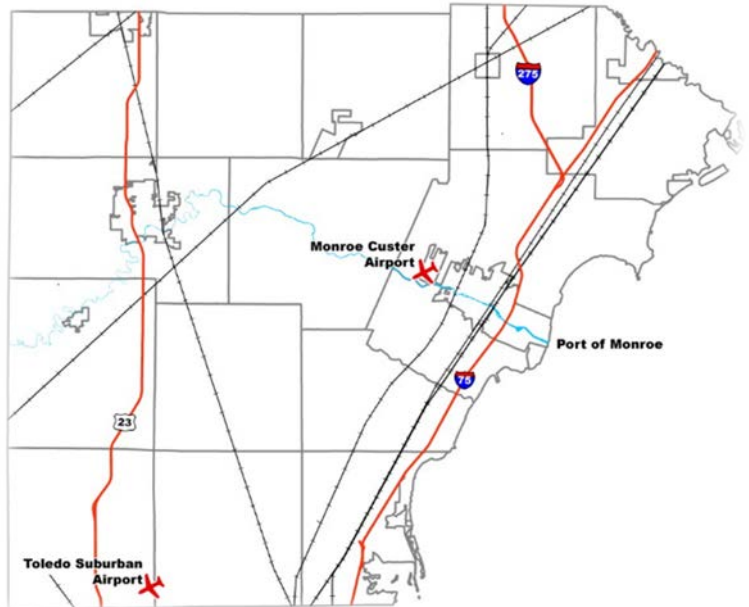
To add to that, three major freight rail lines, two short haul lines, connecting highways (I-275 and US23), the Port of Monroe, and the proximity to two International airports makes Monroe County a major corridor for carrying goods and services.

In 2016, a group was formed to discuss opportunities that exist for Monroe County. This group dedicated their time and effort to helping formulate the I-75 Corridor Study. The original Management Team consisted of:

- Al Barron – Monroe Township
- Michael Bosanac – Monroe County
- Mark Brant – Monroe County
- Doug Chaffin – Monroe Bank & Trust, Monroe County BDC Chairman
- Robert Clark – City of Monroe
- Dave Davison – City of Luna Pier
- Tim Lake – Monroe County Business Development Corporation
- Paul LaMarre – Port of Monroe
- Dennis Marvin – Consumers Energy
- Robert Peven – Monroe County Planning Department
- Gary Wilmoth – Monroe County

Without the generosity of the following organizations, the Monroe County Link Plan creation would not have been possible:

- Monroe County
- City of Monroe
- Consumers Energy
- DTE Energy Foundation
- Frenchtown Township
- Michigan Paving and Materials
- Monroe County Business Development Corporation
- River Raisin Battlefield Foundation
- Stoneco



OHM Advisors, with support from MDB Insight, and Ice Miller, were hired to participate as consultants for the creation of the plan.

A Planning Team was developed that included Michael Bosanac, Mark Brant, Doug Chaffin, Tim Lake, and a consultant from OHM Advisors, Aaron Domini. This Planning Team engaged two key groups throughout the planning process: (1) the Project Team Working Group, and (2) some local stakeholders which included 11 brokers and developers, 11 community and government leaders, and 15 local businesses.

Many meetings and hours of work with the Planning Team and Project Working Group resulted in the following insight:

WHAT WE HEARD FROM THE STAKEHOLDERS...

Issues

- “Monroe County loses economic activity because there are not enough places to spend money locally.
- “Companies with low wage jobs are struggling to retain employees.”
- “Warehousing and distribution infrastructure and availability is limited.”

Opportunities

- “Opportunity to redefine the area after an economic decline.”
- “The planned Gordie Howe Bridge will provide easier access into Canada.”
- “Close proximity to community colleges, and a skilled labor force.”

Big Ideas

- “Beautify the entire I-75 corridor consistent with a broader branding strategy.”
- “Connect the natural and cultural resources along the I-75 corridor to enhance the quality of life.”
- “Target specific government funding to make strategic land purchases.”

Market conditions were assessed and analyzed by MDB Insight detailing Monroe County's current economic conditions, the direction that Monroe County needs to go in order to remain economically competitive, and the steps that our County should take to ensure economic competitiveness. Conclusions showed that Monroe County has geographic advantages that favor the logistics sector but also has an opportunity to diversify its economy and investing in livable communities that are important for attracting and retaining quality employees in the County.



What we learned:

- Stakeholder Input
 - Strengthen the business environment, improve quality of life
- Market Analysis
 - Focus on logistics
 - Diversify economy
 - Identify Priority Development Areas and set expectations
- Best Practices
 - A sense of place and identity matters

Throughout the next 9 months, each of the steps taken, and the information gathered, informed future stages of the planning process. This led to the identification of 8 Priority Development Areas and the economic strategies necessary to fully revitalize those areas.

These observations led to the formation of 6 Plan Pillars. These Pillars are the goals of the plan and help organize the 30 Action Steps and 8 Priority Development Areas. The Pillars are derived from market and industry analysis and community feedback. They serve as the foundation of the plan.



|| The Plan Pillars



The priority actions identified those that are considered critical to the success of the plan. They were identified through several team meetings and stakeholder meetings held throughout the year long I-75 Corridor Study.



PRIORITY ACTIONS

1. Growing the Port of Monroe as the primary destination for port-related service on Lake Erie.
2. Invest in an online site-selection tool that can communicate the opportunity for investing in Monroe County to investors.
3. Create a county-wide regional branding campaign.
4. Using the Michigan Redevelopment Ready Communities program tool, implement a 'one-stop shop' model across local municipalities to strive for a universal local regulatory and permitting process.
5. Market and develop the Priority Development Areas.

Tim Lake was given the task of assigning Team Captains for each of the 6 Pillars. These captains hold leadership positions within our business, educational or government community and were chosen because of their executive role within their respective organizations. The strength of each of their organizations and the role within will continue the process should they retire or are no longer able to serve the Link Plan. They are as follows:



Prepare for Investment

Barry Buschmann, Mannik Smith Group President/MCEDC Chairperson
Streamlining Development



Enhance the Local Image & Brand

Michael Bosanac, Monroe County Administrator/CFO



Improve Workforce Development & Education

Co-chaired by Dr. Stephen McNew, Monroe County Intermediate School District Superintendent/Monroe County BDC Vice Chairman & Gregory Pitoniak, Southeast Michigan Community Alliance (SEMCA) President and CEO



Grow Monroe As A Logistics Gateway

Paul Pirrone, Bedford Township Supervisor



Improve the Local Quality of Life & Strengthen Tourism Opportunities

Doug Chaffin, Monroe Bank & Trust President/Monroe County BDC Chairperson



Grow Strategically

(combined with Grow Monroe As A Logistics Gateway Pillar during initial meeting)

Paul Pirrone, Bedford Township Supervisor



Team Captains were given the task of hand-picking the team they need in place to achieve the action steps of their assigned Pillar.

THE FIRST ACTION TEAM MEETING & CONSUMERS ENERGY FOUNDATION GRANT

On January 12, 2018, the kick-off meeting was held with the Pillar Team Captains and their Action Teams. This is the first time that the entire team was assembled in one room. A plan overview was presented:

Project Purpose:

Create a strategy to guide I-75 corridor economic development decision

1. Build on previous planning efforts
2. Create a clear vision for where and how to grow
 - Identify market potential
 - Identify the location and strategy
3. Run a collaborative process that is transparent and builds consensus
4. Guide and inform the image and brand messaging
5. Capitalize on planned capital improvements
6. Communicate Monroe County's opportunity to investors

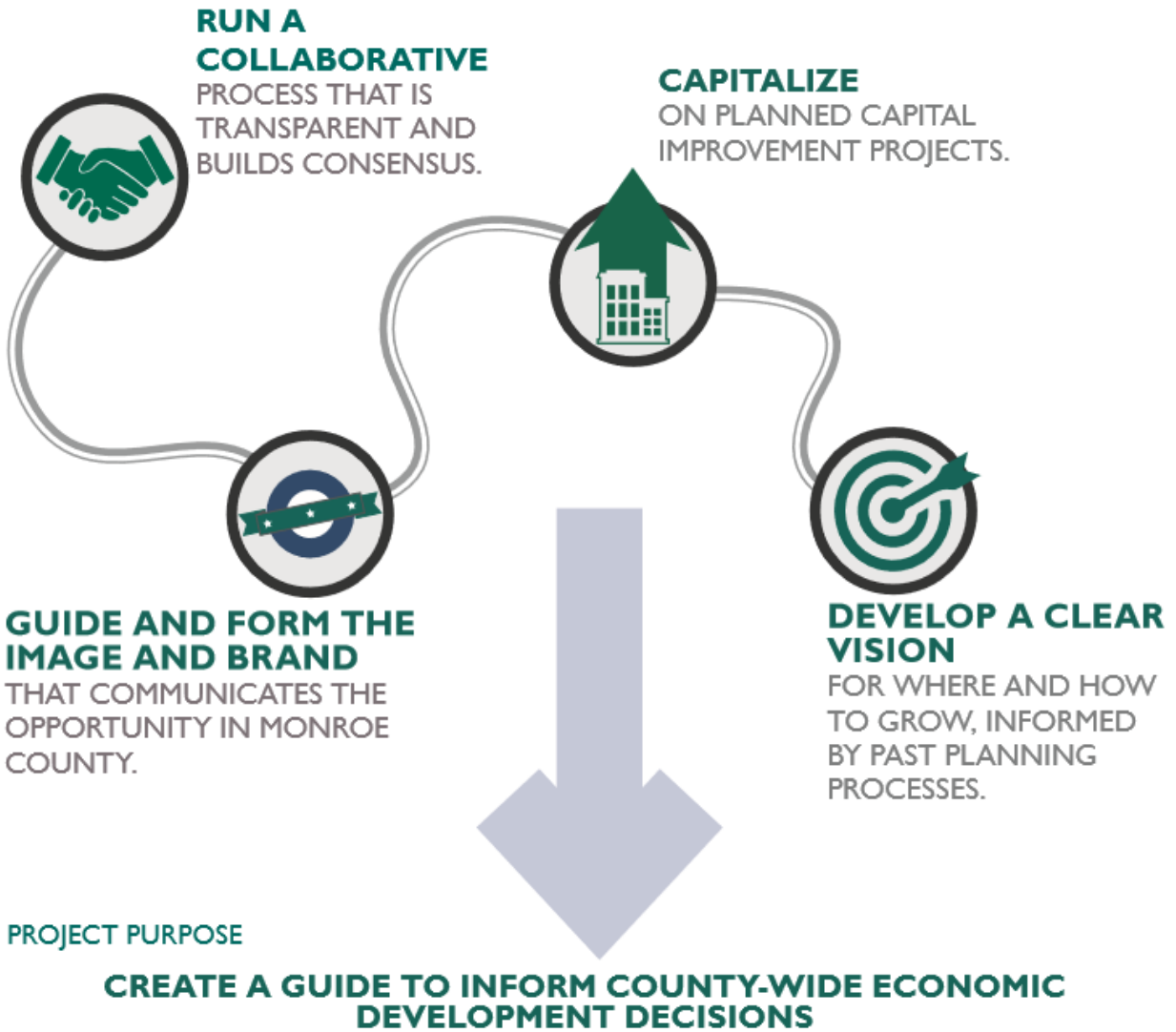
Plan Use:

- For the public sector
 - Identifies areas for new public sector investment
 - Illustrates the type and mix of future land uses to the private sector
 - A tool that communicates the market opportunity to investors
 - A guide to make future land use and code decisions
 - Identified opportunities where the public and private sector can work together to achieve a common vision
- For the private sector
 - Identifies areas where additional density or intensity may be allowed
 - Assist in refining site search efforts
 - Sets the expectation for the quality and character of development
 - Provides baseline market data to assist in site selection
 - Potential carrying capacity of the target development sites



PROJECT GOALS AND PURPOSE

PROJECT GOALS



Pillar Team Purpose:

Build a vehicle to implement the Monroe County Link Plan and drive to that destination, ... a vehicle fueled and operated by the WILL and PASSION of the Monroe Community

Our Vehicle:

The Monroe County Action Team



Each pillar team was then placed in break-out sessions where they met and accessed their action steps using worksheets and instructions to look at what might be potential issues and opportunities that may be related to each of their action items.

This first assembly of the entire Monroe County Action Team proved to be a success. During the individual break-out sessions of each pillar team, intense discussions took place. When the entire Action Team was brought back into one group, you could feel the excitement and energy in the room.

On this same day following our first Action Team Meeting, the Consumers Energy Foundation presented a \$200,000 grant to Monroe County BDC for the Monroe County Link Plan.

|| Grant Award – Consumers Energy Foundation



The Consumers Energy Foundation donated a \$200,000 grant to Monroe County BDC for the Monroe County Link Plan at a ceremony at Monroe Bank & Trust on January 12, 2018.

Tim Lake said, "This money will fund a portion of the 5-year plan which is expected to cost about \$550,000. Michael Bosanac, Monroe County Administrator, added, "the funding is essential to implementing the plan."



Carolyn Bloodworth, Secretary & Treasurer for the Consumers Energy Foundation, presented the check and talked about how the opportunity to help the community thrilled Consumers Energy as they work to make an impact on those areas they serve. Carolyn said, "we are keeping our commitment to the community we serve." *(Photo from left to right, Representative Jason Sheppard, Carolyn Bloodworth/Consumers Energy, Senator Dale Zorn, Tim Lake/Monroe County BDC (front), Greg Meyer/Consumers Energy retired, Representative Joe Bellino)*

"We are especially thankful for Consumers Energy and their Foundation for the support they have provided Monroe County," stated Tim Lake. He continued, "Without their leadership, guidance and financial support we would certainly not be able to embark on the Monroe County Link Plan."

THE SECOND ACTION TEAM MEETING

The second meeting of the Monroe County Link Action Team took place on June 15. There were 40 members in attendance. The meeting started with a project process overview presented by Aaron Domini from OHM Advisors. Each Pillar Team Captain then was given the



floor to present a general overview of their pillar team accomplishments to date, what lessons they have learned and what the project goal/expectations for end of 2018 were looking like.

Here are a few of the highlights from that meeting:

- The Developers Streamlining Guide was revamped and now includes section on Health and Tourism
- Two Memorandums of Understanding were being considered, one with local municipalities and one with each parcel owner of the identified sites
- Dual pillar team meetings were brought up for consideration to avoid duplication of efforts
- Sub-committees or working groups were being put in place for a number of the pillar teams to concentrate efforts on particular action steps
- A survey instrument was being finalized to gather information on perceptions from community for 3 distinct groups; business community, youth, and general population
- Developing concepts for promoting the county brand and message
- New partnership commitments were being formed to assist and promote the county

The Monroe County Link Action Team members left this meeting with determination and a dedicated commitment to their pillar team.

ENDING 2018 WITH SUCCESSES THIRD ACTION TEAM MEETING

The final meeting of the Monroe County Action Team for 2018 took place on November 9. There were 33 members in attendance. Each Pillar Team Captain presented an overview of their pillar team accomplishments for the year. Here is a detailed synopsis on year-end results for each Pillar Team.

|| Prepare for Investment Pillar

PRIORITY ACTION GOALS

- Evaluate the eight Priority Development Areas from a technical infrastructure perspective to determine feasibility of each site
- Continue to update, improve and add information to the Streamlining Guide to enhance the overall product and continue to provide a value-added document to the Monroe County BDC toolbox
- Develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with communities to expedite the overall approval process; buy-ins are needed from some of the property owners or communities for the priority sites listed, hence the need for two MOU's



- Develop guidelines (Develop Ready Communities) to assist communities to Prepare for Investment

LESSONS LEARNED

- Many of the priority sites originally selected have significant development deficiencies (roads, water, soil, sewer and utilities)
- Some of the original concepts for the priority sites may need to have the concept plans modified to better suit the site and Master Plan for the community

IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

- Continue to work on the Memorandums of Understanding
- Meeting with both the property owners and communities to secure their commitments
- Eliminate sites that are not practical
 - No commitment from property owners or communities
 - Not practical due to significant development constraints
- Redistribute the improved Streamlining Guide
 - Take the show on the road to the various cities, villages and townships

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Updated and improved many sections of the Monroe County EDC Streamlining Guide
- Coordinated efforts with the “Grow Strategically” Pillar
- Developed a draft of the Memorandum of Understanding for property owners
- Development a draft of the Memorandum of Understanding for communities
- Developed a draft for “Development Ready Communities” – a best practice evaluation

NEXT STEPS

- Finalize the Memorandum of Understanding with the property owners
- Finalize the Memorandum of Understanding with the townships, cities or villages
- Narrow the selection of the original sites to those more practical for development
- Evaluate other potential sites other than those previously identified\Evaluate the opportunity for a remuneration / convergence tax

|| Grow Strategically / Logistics Gateway Pillars

PRIORITY ACTION GOALS

- Defining supply chain analysis in corridor
- Working with Preparing for Investment Pillar
- Memorandum of Understanding for property owners and communities

LESSONS LEARNED

- Memorandum of Understanding draft letter
- Development of “site ready” properties



- Master planning and zoning issues
- Identifying lack of services at each site

IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

- Draft final Memorandum of Understanding between property owners and Monroe County Link
- Draft final Memorandum of Understanding between communities and Monroe County Link
- Market and engineering
- Funding development costs

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Draft of Memorandum of Understanding
- Recommendation of Master Broker to assist
- Service fee for development of costs

NEXT STEPS

- Contact property owners to determine advanced approval
- Contact Municipalities – Master Plan and Ordinance reviews
- Develop supply chain analysis

|| Enhance the Local Image & Brand Pillar

PRIORITY ACTION GOALS

- County-wide regional branding message
 - Feature and prominently displays the region’s competitive advantages, assets, quality of life
- Branding plan to develop methods to promote county and region
 - Signs that welcome visitors to community and residents back home
 - Signs that include the regional brand with local message

LESSONS LEARNED

- If we lead, there will be others who will become engaged and join efforts
- The effort will be a long process with setbacks; need to continue to push ahead
- From comments and observations, enhancing the curb appeal of the community will be well received from residents and visitors

IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

- Community Engagement Survey
 - 3 Targeted audiences identified for measuring
- Summarize survey results and validate or modify from original Link Plan findings
- Finalize a recommendation on county/community brand message



- Develop strategy to deploy/implement the message
 - Select initial location(s)
 - Identify the funding for initial location(s) and framework for balance

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Survey instrument created and currently disseminated
- Identified community assets and advantages for use in finalizing a brand and message
- Continued building collaborative model for economic development across public-private sectors and organization in county/community

NEXT STEPS

- Complete the Community Engagement Stakeholder Survey
 - Analyze results and insight
- Finalize brand and message
 - From brand identity begin implementation of strategy to deploy message at initial locations/sites
- Develop a more robust plan to fund and deploy across county/community

|| Improve the Quality of Life & Strengthen Tourism Opportunities Pillar

PRIORITY ACTION GOALS

- Need to engage local partners so that everyone is at the table

LESSONS LEARNED

- Need to focus back up and bring our group online
- We are discussing some of the same subjects as Local Image & Brand Pillar and need to combine efforts around those topics

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Brad Schreiber has been added to our Pillar Team

NEXT STEPS

- Group engagement needed

|| Improve Workforce Development & Education Pillar

PRIORITY ACTION GOALS

- Mission Statement
 - Create a dynamic, sustainable talent development ecosystem
- Vision Statement
 - A robust economy with a talent development system responsive to the needs of employers
- Marshall Plan for Talent
- Strategic Plan



IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

- Grant application
- Implementation of new county CTE Director
- Implement Strategic Plan

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Letters of Commitment from schools, manufacturers, municipalities, partners

|| Pillar Team Comments

An open “thoughts” session at the end of the final meeting of the year revealed these comments:

- “The value in the future will be in the ideas, taking risks and learning from it.”
- “Risks were taken, lessons were learned.”
- “People are excited about the growth of our county.”
- “We need to make sure that none of the Pillar Teams are duplicating processes.”
- “It is imperative to some communities that the Monroe County Link initiative continue.”
- “We are making the process easier for developers, but communities need to get onboard.”
- “We have so many exciting things happening with the Battlefield and Monroe County; the MC Link Team will continue to help and communicate our message.”
- “Ideas that come up in Monroe County Link meetings are taken back to individual communities where they are incorporated on a smaller scale.”
- “The value of the Monroe County Link plan is extremely beneficial ... it should never end.”
- “This is a great platform for everyone to get together ... it is nice to have major community players and elected officials at the same table.”

CONCLUSION

On December 11, we met with the Pillar Team Captains to get their perspective on 2019 and the Monroe County Link Plan. It is shared within the group that the Monroe County Link plan is making a difference to our County and that we should move forward. *(Photo below from left to right, Matthew Vanisacker, Barry Buschmann, Paul Pirrone, LuAnn Hogberg, Doug Chaffin, Tim Lake, Michael Bosanac, Stephen McNew)*

The Monroe County Link plan sends the message that everyone is together in this community and that everyone is working toward a common goal.

For questions or comments on the Monroe County Link Plan, please contact either Tim Lake (tlake@monroecountybdc.org), Matt Vanisacker (mvanisacker@monroecountybdc.org), or LuAnn Hogberg (lhogberg@monroecountybdc.org) at the Monroe County Business Development Corporation (734-241-8081).



MONROE COUNTY LINK ACTION TEAM MEMBERS

as of December 2018

Prepare for Investment

Barry Buschmann, Mannik Smith Group President/MCEDC Chairperson Streamlining Development

Monroe County Community College	Barry Kinsey
DTE Energy	Carolyn Bennett
ITC Holdings	Cynthia Stump
Monroe County Drain Commission	David Thompson
Village of Dundee	David Uhl
Michigan State Representative	Jason Sheppard
Monroe County Planning	Jeff McBee
James S. Jacobs Architects, PLLC	Jim Jacobs
Michigan Gas Utilities	Mike Baker
Bedford Township	Paul Pirrone
Monroe County Road Commission	Randy Pierce
Monroe County Planning	Ryan Simmons
Monroe County BDC	Tim Lake
MCEDC	Tracy Oberleiter



Grow Strategically and Grow Monroe As A Logistics Gateway

Paul Pirrone, Bedford Township Supervisor

Bedford Township	Alan Matlow
Bedford Township	Chrissy Eichler
University of Toledo	Crystal Glambin
Energy Executive Principal	Frank Wszelaki
Bedford Township	Kelly Elmer
Port of Monroe	Paul LaMarre
Rudolph Libbe Group	Phil Rudolph
CMS Energy	Stephanie Roehl
Monroe County BDC	Tim Lake
Coldwell Banker Commercial	Tom Fritz
Monroe Township Trustee	Wayne Blank

Enhance the Local Image & Brand

Michael Bosanac, Monroe County Administrator/CFO

Monroe Charter Township	Al Barron
City of Luna Pier	Dave Davison
Village of Dundee	David Uhl
Customer Experience 360	Florence Buchanan
Frenchtown Charter Township	James McDevitt
Durocher's TV & Appliance, Inc.	Jeanine Bragg
Monroe County Road Commission	Randy Pierce
City of Monroe	Robert Clark
La-Z-Boy, Inc.	Susan Vanisacker



Improve the Local Quality of Life & Strengthen Tourism Opportunities

Doug Chaffin, Monroe Bank & Trust President/Monroe County BDC Chairperson

Monroe County Museum	Andy Clark
Monroe County Tourism Bureau	Brad Schrieber
Crown Hospitality Suites, Inc./ Baymont Inn	Jasdeep Sohi
St. John the Baptist Catholic Church	Michael Stewart
Monroe County Chamber of Commerce	Michelle Dugan
U.S. Park Service	Scott Bentley
Monroe News	Vince Bodiford

Improve Workforce Development & Education

Dr. Stephen McNew, Monroe County Intermediate School District

Superintendent/Monroe County BDC Vice Chairman &

Gregory Pitoniak, Southeast Michigan Community Alliance (SEMCA) President and CEO

Monroe County Intermediate School District, CTE Director	(open)
FEDCO	Greg Thomas
Monroe Public Schools	Julie Everly
Monroe County Employment & Training	Julie Smith
Gerdau Specialty Steel Company	Julie Soderberg
MC Community College	Kojo Quartey
TWB Company	Patrick Lambrix
Monroe County Employment & Training	Stacey Goans

