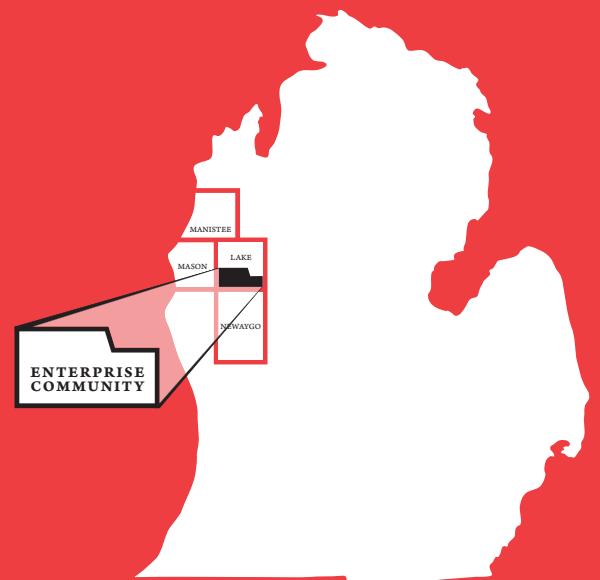




# LAKE COUNTY

# ENTERPRISE COMMUNITY

**A FINAL REPORT  
DECEMBER 2009  
LAKE COUNTY, MICHIGAN**



## A PRIVILEGE TO SERVE



**B**ecause the Enterprise Community designation has come to an end does not mean that the effect of the many investments, collaborations and community programs related to the designation disappear. Instead we have watched investments continue to enhance the lives of our residents, witnessed collaborative relationships deepen, and been heartened to know that many programs established to meet critical needs continue to fulfill a caring mission.

As your Board of Directors, we are so proud of all that was accomplished because of the Enterprise Community and honored to have been a part of the process. We believe that this one-time federal opportunity has created a lasting effect for Lake County and all those who call it home. While not every task included in our initial plans over a decade and a half ago was fully realized, those tasks, within critical benchmark goals, still represented our best intentions as a community for a brighter future.

We owe a debt of gratitude to FiveCAP, Inc., its Board of Directors, and Mary Trucks, the Executive Director, for having the courage, willingness and tenacity to take on the administrative responsibilities associated with the Enterprise Community. And, to the concerned citizens of Lake County, you have all played an important role in expressing your opinions about the needs of our community and have come together when needed to make the “voice” of Lake County heard.

It has been a privilege to serve Lake County and together we look forward to a bright future.

Sincerely,

## LAKE COUNTY ENTERPRISE COMMUNITY BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### CHAIR

**Deborah Smith-Olsen**, *Chair/CEO*  
*Lake Osceola State Bank*

**Doug Bolles**, *President*  
*Village of Baldwin*

**Mabel Williams**, *President Emeritus*  
*Lake County Merry Makers*

### VICE CHAIR

**Connie Theunick-Perley**, *Director*  
*MSU Extension Service-Lake County*

**Bernice Culpepper**, *Resident*

**Jeffrey McKnight**  
*Lake County Chamber of Commerce*

**George Walker**, *Yates Township Supervisor*

**Linda Shively**, *Executive Director*  
*Baldwin Family Health Care*

**Vedra Grant**, *Executive Director*  
*Yates Dial-A-Ride*

**Mark Bergstrom**, *Director of Development*  
*West Shore Community College*

**Nicolette McClure**  
*Lake County Board of Commissioners -*  
*representing Yates Township*

**Mary L. Trucks**, *Executive Director*  
*FiveCAP, Inc.*  
*Lead/Administrative Agency*

**Randy Howes**, *Superintendent*  
*Baldwin Community Schools*

**David Randall**  
*Lake County Board of Commissioners -*  
*representing Chase Township*



# DEAR FRIENDS AND COLLABORATORS:



With this final report on the federal designation for the Lake County Enterprise Community, we celebrate the conclusion of over fifteen years of focused community effort, hard work, dedication and inspiration. It is not an ending so much as a chance to express gratitude and create a marker for a new beginning.

To help you fully understand the scope and consequences of this designation I have called on a handful of active community members to lend their voices and their individual points of view to tell the stories that follow in this report. It is my sincere hope that this will be an effective way to begin to describe the breadth of opportunity and benefits that have flowed to Lake County as a result of the EC designation. Space limits our ability to formally acknowledge everyone that was involved, so my apologies in advance for any omissions.

From my personal point of view, the successes of the Enterprise Community would not have been so significant without the tremendous support of the FiveCAP, Inc. organization and its Board of Directors. This opportunity came our way and fell on fertile ground that had been tilled by a community action agency that fully understood the needs of our community, understood how to mobilize the community and was led by a board that was fearless in its pursuit of opportunities to enhance the lives of Lake County residents.

It has been my honor and pleasure to have served the Lake County Enterprise Community Board through my role as Executive Director of the Lead Agency, FiveCAP, Inc.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mary L. Trucks  
Executive Director  
FiveCAP, Inc.



## FiveCAP, Inc. BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### CHAIR

**Bernice Culpepper**

**Connie Theunick-Perley**

### VICE CHAIR

**Jan Bailey**

**Mabel Williams**

### TREASURER

**Harold Madden**

**Anita Brown**

**Ernie Richardson**

**Cyndi Jacobi**

**Judge Terrence Thomas**

**Ruth Krueger**

**Carl Rutske**

**William Shea III**

**James Clark**

**Casey Martin-Cook**

## IN MEMORIAM LAKE COUNTY EC BOARD MEMBERS

**Robert F. Williams**  
*Member FiveCAP, Inc.  
Board of Directors*

**Howard Roberts**  
*Lake County Planning  
Commissioner*

**Robert O. Bair**  
*Lake County Commissioner*

**Linda L. Bair**  
*Lake County Commissioner*

**Lucinda K. Dechow**  
*Lake County Clerk*

## THE HISTORY OF AN OPPORTUNITY

A review of the fifteen years between 1995 and 2009 for Lake County reveals the tremendous accomplishments and improvements set into motion by an unprecedented federal opportunity, the Enterprise Community designation. This one time federal funding opportunity came from the Department of Health and Human Services Office of Community Service. The US Department of Agriculture is the federal agency providing oversight and support to the rural Enterprise Community projects.

For far too long Lake County struggled with lack of quality housing, lack of jobs, aging or nonexistent infrastructure, a large human services gap, and a forgotten yet glorious cultural past. Lake County was labeled as one of the poorest counties in the state and the country.

*“For far too long Lake County struggled with lack of quality housing, lack of jobs, aging or nonexistent infrastructure, a large human services gap, and a forgotten yet glorious cultural past.”*

To earn the federal designation as an Enterprise Community (EC) would require an enormous community

and planning effort in a very short time frame. The early work was critical to the new planning process. Upon learning of the opportunity, a strategic planning committee was formed by FiveCAP, Inc. The Community Action Agency provided some much needed traction for creating and coordinating the community response to this competitive opportunity.

FiveCAP took the lead with the understanding that it would bear all the costs associated with pursuing the EC designation. Between March and June of 1994 there were 27 meetings held for planning, public hearings and community input. Special care was taken to include the members of the community with the lowest income and greatest needs. For once, the pervasive poverty label became a competitive advantage for Lake County, as it was a prerequisite for the designation.

The EC strategic plan drew together an inclusive plan based on the Lake County community vision and the strategies for obtaining that vision. Benchmarks were organized in three principle areas – Economic Development, Affordable Housing, and Human Services. This report highlights accomplishments over the designation period.

In December of 1994 Lake County learned that it was a successful applicant for the designation, earning nearly a \$3 million dollar grant. Lake County was the only rural community in Michigan earning an Enterprise Community designation.

## THE REAL VALUE OF THE DESIGNATION

It wasn't long after the Enterprise Community (EC) grant came to the area that the planning committee understood the real value of the designation. Immediately the favored funding status of the EC began to make a difference in a multitude of funding opportunities from local, state and federal funding sources. By demonstrating the great community need and having a plan with priorities the EC was able to leverage over ten (10) times the initial \$2,947,368 from various funding sources, and a conservative calculation of indirect benefits to the area places the tangible value of the grant at over \$60 million or twenty (20) times the initial investment.

From the start in Lake County, the plan for the EC funds was to leverage every possible existing funding opportunity relevant to the strategic plan, to provide project seed money for new programs, to provide matching funds on some housing and building projects, and to fund necessary studies to move other projects forward.

After years of articulating great need and describing the problems in Lake County, the big lesson learned from the Enterprise process – they were funding plans, not problems.

A lesson that will continue to pay dividends in the way the community continues to find and leverage sources for fulfilling the community vision.

# SOMETHING TO BUILD ON



Economic Development was the first of three broad categories that would guide the efforts of the Lake County Enterprise Community (EC). A solid plan, seed money and focused funding opportunities meant the EC designation could deliver critical investment to key projects. This investment would lead to business investment, jobs and improved community vitality across Lake County.

In 1995 some of the first visible signs of investment for the area were torn up streets, lots of mud, big yellow backhoes, and concrete sewer conduits stacked up like cord wood. One of the first infrastructure projects was underway, the sanitary sewer collection system for the Village of Baldwin. While this and many other infrastructure and transportation improvement projects across the county are nearly invisible today, the millions of dollars in infrastructure investments that extended utilities, expanded and improved wastewater treatment, and improved road conditions created a lasting effect for the county.

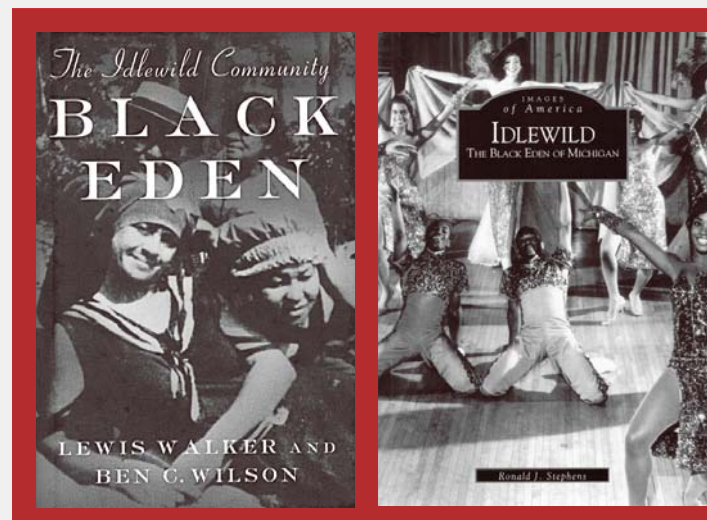
Projects included expansion of the Baldwin Water Treatment Plant, sewer and natural gas systems for Yates Township, and bridge and road repairs throughout the county.

## THE THREADS OF THE PAST

In addition to the Enterprise Community (EC) infrastructure and transportation projects, lasting connections to the history of the area created tourism opportunities and a greater understanding of the significance of the area. In 2001 and 2002, two books were published by two authors titled, *Idlewild; The Black Eden of Michigan* and *The Idlewild Community, Black Eden*. These books did the important work of capturing the history and culture of the Idlewild Resort and its growth into the Midwest's most popular Black Resort between the 1920s and 1960s.

As part of the cultural renewal in Lake County, an annual summer music festival was established in Idlewild. The festival took a cue from a vibrant time when Lake County was the vacation and entertainment destination for performers like Louis Armstrong, B.B. King and Sammy Davis Jr.

Through the work of the EC, in addition to the annual music festival, a permanent Historic and Cultural Center was established to create a lasting tribute to the area and a tourist attraction.





## IT TAKES LEADERSHIP

Lake Osceola State Bank Chair/ CEO Deborah Smith-Olson is a third generation leader for the bank and a proud graduate of Baldwin High School. Her enthusiastic participation and leadership as Chair of the Lake County Enterprise Community Board of Directors from the beginning is a reflection of a true and enduring family value of customer care and community support.



“  
*The designation gave us a place to start and a powerful way to join the private and public sector together towards a common goal.*

”  
 Deborah Smith-Olson  
 Chair/CEO, Lake Osceola State Bank;  
 Chair, Lake County Enterprise Community Board of Directors

“We understand and consider the nature of the community we work within. Much of the business we do focuses on small businesses and individuals with low to moderate income,” said Smith-Olson. “We believe that you need to help the customers in the market to grow in order for the bank to grow. Participating in the Enterprise Community is a reflection of that belief.”

While the quantifiable benefits of the EC that leveraged a nearly \$3 million grant into over \$60 million of direct and indirect community investment would be among the easiest things to talk about, Smith-Olson describes a community attitude change because of the EC designation as priceless. “We had the wish list of things we wanted to do, but it was the *yes we can* belief that really propelled us forward. The designation gave us a place to start and a powerful way to join the private and public sector together towards a common goal,” said Smith-Olson.

## FAVORED FUNDING STATUS CONTRIBUTES TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Just as work stemming from the Lake County Enterprise Community (EC) began to escalate for the county, Jim Truxton began his 13 years of service as President of the Village of Baldwin and EC board member.

Truxton points to the favored funding status of the EC designation as critical to many infrastructure projects that would not have come to Lake County. It was these funding streams accessed for Lake County that served to stabilize a community that was in a severe decline.

The existing businesses that populated downtown Baldwin were barely hanging on and had been begging for sanitary sewer hookups. In the absence of sewer service, businesses like restaurants, bars, the ice cream shop and even the bank had to bear the burden of paying for costly sewage pump and haul services. Without a sanitary sewer system, the downtown area could not attract new businesses.



“  
*You have to have entrepreneurial enthusiasm... Find the leaders and set them free to lead and grow!*

”  
 Jim Truxton  
 Business Owner and  
 former Village of Baldwin President

“The first phase of the sanitary sewer project was a real community leadership opportunity. The EC board got it right when they prioritized so many critical infrastructure improvements across the county. Our early efforts even attracted the area’s first new major employer with the establishment of the Michigan Youth Correctional Facility. This simply would not have happened without the infrastructure investments,” said Truxton.

Sadly, the Michigan Youth Correctional Facility was closed by the Governor in 2005, but the asset of the building and the infrastructure remained, and better yet – a community lesson on empowerment was learned. All these things would become essential in the bid for a new federal contract that would restore and expand the building and bring the possibility of hundreds of new jobs – and economic vitality back to the area.

Looking at his years of service and noting the over \$60 million dollars of direct and indirect private and public development investments that sprang out of the \$3 million dollar EC grant, Truxton’s opinion is that the infrastructure and improvements are in place and now it is time to refocus energies around attracting more development to the area.

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## EDUCATION PLUS ENTREPRENEURIALISM EQUALS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Community colleges, particularly in rural areas, have a real interest in seeing their students successfully prepared for jobs or careers that may feed back into the local economy. Based in Scottville, West Shore Community College (WSCC) has a primary service area that covers four rural counties, including Lake County, and has two popular core programs, nursing and law enforcement. West Shore Community College has been an important partner for the Lake County Enterprise Community (EC).

It was an easy choice to invite WSCC’s Mark Bergstrom into the strategic planning process for the Lake County

Enterprise Community competition and an even easier decision to invite him to join the Board of Directors once the designation had been earned. At the time, Bergstrom had already been working for nearly a decade on curricula and collaborations at WSCC that focused on economic development and entrepreneurialism. Now, with more than 26 years at WSCC, Bergstrom is the Director of Development at the college, and still a board member for the Enterprise Community.

“As I look back at the Lake County economic environment prior to the Enterprise Community designation, it is safe to say not much of major significance was happening,” said Bergstrom. “Once the EC designation was in place I believe it was a real catalyst for action. In addition to the resources, people and business that it attracted – there was also a wholesale shift in belief. The community believed change could happen, and it did.”

Looking to the future, Bergstrom is pleased that WSCC participated with the EC to close a technology gap by creating distance learning solutions. He also points to the future and investments in the area’s youth with the possibility of WSCC helping to keep the Baldwin Promise for advanced education scholarships. “Better educated young people turn into good economic drivers for the community,” said Bergstrom. “Even without the EC designation, the work of economic development, skill development and job creation must continue, and I believe the community is up to the task.”

“  
*A program like this will benefit the students in their preparedness for college, and better educated young people turn into good economic drivers for the community*  
”

Mark Bergstrom  
Director of Development  
West Shore Community College



## TAKING UP A CAUSE IN LAKE COUNTY

Mabel Williams and her late husband, Robert F. Williams, describe themselves as freedom fighters. Before coming to Michigan, the couple lived in North Carolina during the civil rights movement and then traveled and worked in Canada, Cuba, China, and Africa. They had a friend who lived and worked in Northern Michigan. After just one visit, they were convinced to put down roots in Lake County.



“  
*The designation gave us a place  
to start and a powerful way to  
join the private and public sector  
together towards a common goal.*  
”

Mabel Williams  
President Emeritus  
Lake County Merry Makers

“We wanted to take up a cause that would foster great economic expansion for this area and that would build on our history and culture,” said Ms. Williams about the Merry Makers. “Our Merry Makers group was able to bring forth some deeper knowledge about the history of the area to people on the Lake County Enterprise Community Board and in the community. One of the projects of the Enterprise Community was training sessions so we could conduct oral history interviews. We were also able to bring some people to the area that had historical information to share.”

For Ms. Williams, one of the stand-out activities of the Enterprise Community was the battle to bring natural gas to the area, especially the Idlewild area. She remembers a particular trip to Lansing with a delegation from the Enterprise Community. “In my opinion, the people at MichCon were giving us all sorts of reasons for not bringing natural gas to Baldwin. We were able to change people’s opinions at MichCon. This was a great victory for the Enterprise Community,” said Ms. Williams. She also acknowledged the importance of the extension of a sewage system to Yates Township by the Enterprise Community. “This brought real change to the area.”

## BENCHMARK HIGHLIGHTS

Over \$10 million leveraged through efforts to attract new industries and create new job opportunities

8 new or revised plans  
Master planning and zoning codes for the county  
Developed plans for Baldwin Airport

Over \$13 million spent on new or improved infrastructure systems, nine separate projects

Encourage **ENTREPRENEURIAL SPIRIT** in Lake County  
training programs in conjunction with West Shore Community College

Develop and distribute tourist **MARKETING MATERIALS**

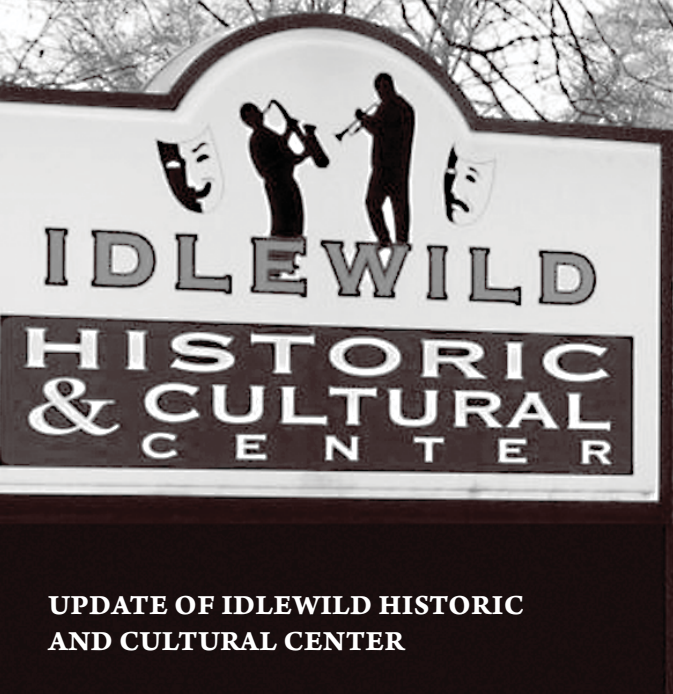
5 public facilities improved  
\$750,000 spent by US Forest Service and Michigan Department of Natural Resources



SEWER CONDUIT AWAITING  
INSTALLATION IN BALDWIN



STUDENT COMPUTER LEARNING CENTER  
AT BALDWIN COMMUNITY SCHOOLS



UPDATE OF IDLEWILD HISTORIC  
AND CULTURAL CENTER



## INVESTING IN HOUSING STOCK

In 1995, the housing conditions in the Lake County area were especially challenging. The state of the housing stock revealed many substandard structures that would need to be demolished; rental housing that failed to meet basic safety requirements and no ordinances to enforce quality standards; and limited resources for grants or loans to improve existing houses. Because of infrastructure gaps, new housing development opportunities were limited and interest from outside developers was nonexistent.

The Enterprise Community (EC) began to tackle the Lake County housing challenges with target activities that would create ordinances and enforcement to address existing substandard rental housing; promote programs that would create accessibility and affordability for families and the elderly; access programs that would promote the development of moderate income single family housing and multi-family developments; and provide programs that would offer low interest loans and grants for low income homeowners to make necessary repairs and maintenance, including well and septic repairs and upgrades.

It was in 1996, just as the infrastructure sewer improvements were being completed in the Village of Baldwin that construction began on the second phase of the Kahlil Village Apartments. The expansion included 24 additional one bedroom apartments, bringing the total apartments to 40 in this development. Major funding for the development project came from USDA Rural Development. Prior to the EC designation, this expansion project had been tabled because of market concerns. After the designation, the project was given the go ahead. Every new rental unit created an environment of choice for renters.

Throughout the fifteen years of the EC designation, funds were used to create market studies that would ultimately support new developments targeting seniors and families. The EC provided matching funds to help qualify for several on-going programs from the Michigan State Housing Development Authority. In addition, the Enterprise Community worked with Habitat for Humanity and USDA Rural Development to increase the availability of affordable housing in Lake County.

By July of 2004, Idlewild in Lake County was celebrating the completion and 100% rent-up of the Duvernay Park Apartments. Named for the dynamic former leader of the Michigan State Housing Development Authority, Terrence R. Duvernay. This development represented a \$2.5 million investment that filled a void in housing availability, retained residents and created economic impact as those residents continue to live, work and spend locally.

Quality single family homes were also built and made available for sale in anticipation of the influx of residents coming to the area to fill new jobs at the Youth Correctional Facility.



“  
*...there is one thing that  
 I will never forget – and  
 that is how our community  
 leaders worked together.*

”  
**Connie Theunick-Perley**  
*Director, MSU Extension Service –  
 Lake County;  
 Vice Chair, Lake County  
 Enterprise Community Board of  
 Directors*

## BUILDING BRIDGES AND BUILDING HOMES

Recently capping off over three decades with the Michigan State University Extension service in Lake County, Connie Theunick-Perley describes her participation in the Enterprise Community (EC) process as a career hallmark. Much of her work at the Extension service centered on community needs, community and economic development. This



experience was ideal for the EC. Like many others on the Board of Directors, it seemed that Theunick-Perley had the right sets of experiences, contacts, resources and the willingness to provide important service to the EC process.

“There have been so many great projects and accomplishments over the fifteen year span of the EC designation – some I had even forgotten,” said Theunick-Perley. “But there is one thing that I will never forget – and that is how our community leaders worked together. It took a diverse board to keep the many projects moving and results happening to reach our benchmark goals. Even if there was disagreement on a particular project, there was always sound, thoughtful discussion with everyone willing to build a bridge of understanding.”

“It was the networking that was a wonder to watch,” commented Theunick-Perley. “The restoration of the Bowman Street bridge was a great example of the networking and collaboration required to make progress. The EC designation brought the bridge project to the top of a state priority funding list, but it was the interaction of the local road commission, the township and the Michigan Department of Transportation that really moved the project to completion.”

“Through a variety of programs and funding sources like the Michigan State Housing Development Authority, USDA Rural Development and Habitat for Humanity, the EC helped Lake County lay the foundation for quality affordable housing. “Our affordable housing goals require the kind of solutions where the progress is measured in decades. In spite of a tough economic environment and changing housing market, the EC has made great progress.”

## MATCHING UP RESOURCES WITH NEEDS

Jackie Morgan and her predecessors at USDA Rural Development have been active participants in the federally designated Enterprise Community (EC) process from the beginning. Morgan sees her role as a matchmaker. Morgan says she enjoys attending the EC board meetings because she often finds opportunities to match up program and funding opportunities available through USDA Rural Development with new or ongoing needs in Lake County.

“  
*...the changes in Lake County because of the designation have had a great impact.*

”  
Jackie Morgan  
*Business and Cooperative Specialist,  
USDA Rural Development*



Among the many focus areas of need in rural communities, housing needs continue as a high priority. By combining the favored funding status of the Enterprise Community with lending capacity and programs at the Michigan State Housing Development Authority and USDA Rural Development, several housing initiatives have been established in Lake County.

Nationally, it is USDA Rural Development that provides oversight for the rural Enterprise Community projects across the country, and Jackie Morgan provides oversight for Lake County and Clare County in Michigan.

Morgan points out that the EC has had the benefit of grant writing and local project management from the nonprofit FiveCAP, Inc. “It is the presence of well-established benchmark goals crafted by the EC and an organization with quality leadership that provides an opportunity for positive oversight and a sense of preparedness for the next opportunity,” said Morgan.

“The changes in Lake County because of the designation have had a great impact,” said Morgan. “Everything that the community has done through the EC improved the quality of life for Lake County residents. Without the designation, the funds simply would not have come to Lake County and the benefits to residents would have been almost non-existent.”



# MINDING THE BUSINESS OF LAKE COUNTY

A former banker, David Randall is a welcome addition to the Lake County Board of Commissioners and to the Lake County Enterprise Community Board of Directors.



“  
*The bottom line result has been a better community life for the whole community. It helps adults and kids to learn how to live a better life.*  
 ”

David Randall  
 Lake County Board of Commissioners –  
 representing Chase Township

Grappling with some harsh financial realities for the county, Commissioner Randall remains optimistic. He points to the Courthouse renovation and upgrade as a signature project of the Enterprise Community that happened before his tenure. “Being able to have a facility keep its historic integrity, yet expand to meet the community needs, including an elevator for accessibility, is a point of pride for all the commissioners.”

As a gentleman farmer in Chase Township, Randall has a personal commitment to conservation and a healthy ecology for Lake County. “Lake County is so pristine

with its rivers and lakes – good stewardship of the land is essential,” says Randall. “My personal slogan is – no child left indoors. I want to see a community that promotes healthy living in our beautiful outdoors.” Projects during his tenure on the Lake County Enterprise Community board that are the most personally gratifying to Randall are those that help kids.

Speaking about the entire work of the Enterprise Community, Randall thinks a lot of people don’t understand enough about the money that has been spent and the good that it is doing in the community. “The bottom line result has been a better community life for the whole community. It has helped adults and kids to learn how to live a better life. We have to take care of all of our natural resources, including our children. That is why it is important that the work of the EC includes investing in our future through children,” concluded Randall.

## BENCHMARK HIGHLIGHTS

**\$432,515**

in state and federal grants drawn to Lake County to support community development, housing rehabilitation and preservation programs

**178** new units

of rental housing built and rehabbed in Lake County

**24** single family homes improved or constructed

**\$4.95** million spent to modify and expand county courthouse and related public facilities – create barrier-free access and community safe harbor in jail lobby



**DUVERNAY PARK APARTMENTS  
DEDICATION CEREMONY 2004**



**KAHLIL VILLAGE APARTMENTS**



**DUVERNAY PARK APARTMENTS**



## INVESTING IN PEOPLE

The Human Service needs addressed in the Lake County Enterprise Community (EC) Strategic Plan covered a broad range of categories from education, law enforcement and public safety to general health, child care, substance abuse prevention, recreation needs, school to work and transportation, as well as family support services. Making improvements in all of these categories enhanced, and continues to enhance, the quality of life for our residents. The investments made by the Lake County Enterprise Community placed the emphasis on “community” and programs for the benefit of one of our most precious resources – our human capital.

“Success in these benchmark activities will continue to reap benefits for years to come as we focus on not so much the “what” but the “how and why” we do things. It sends a loud and clear message to our youth and families that they are important and worthy of our best efforts to improve their lives,” said Mary Trucks, Executive Director of FiveCAP, Inc.

More than 20 categories of benchmark tasks received the benefit of EC resources, leveraged investments and favor-funding status. Some of the highlights were the expansion of public transportation through the investment in a research study and education program that yielded a positive response to a transportation millage bond proposal; implementation and improvement of police and community relations programs; improved access to health care through the Tele-Med technology/distance learning hub at the Family Health Care Center and the recent addition of the mobile Dental Care Program which provides services to Lake County Head Start, Baldwin elementary school and senior centers.

Also included in the Human Services benchmark targets under the transportation category was the upgrade of the airport for business development use. While the airport has not been upgraded yet, the Enterprise Community did invest in the completion of a feasibility study. The business environment does not currently have an urgent demand for the airport upgrade, but having a ‘shovel-ready’ study that can be quickly updated means that when the funding opportunity arises, Lake County will be ready.



“  
*There needs to be a college-ready  
and college-going culture in  
Baldwin Community Schools of  
Lake County*  
”

Randall Howes  
Superintendent  
Baldwin Community Schools

## THE PROMISE OF OUR YOUTH

Superintendent Randall Howes has been on the job for the last five years for Baldwin Community Schools. He is absolutely clear on the benefits and opportunities that are available to the 500 children in the school district. The benefits are largely because of the Enterprise Community designation.

Howes is extremely aware of the challenges of a rural-based school – it seems there is never enough critical mass in a rural school

setting to maximize resources. In a smaller district located in a large county, Schools of Choice options can be devastating to a struggling school district. These choices are often made for family economic reasons, not quality.

Besides being situated in a rural county, Baldwin Community Schools has more unique challenges. There are the social challenges of an ethnically diverse population, a devastating rate of poverty, and an economic environment that hampers job opportunities. These conditions limit the area’s ability to attract families with children, and by extension less support for the Baldwin Community Schools. Additionally, while being located in beautiful Northern Michigan, Lake County also has

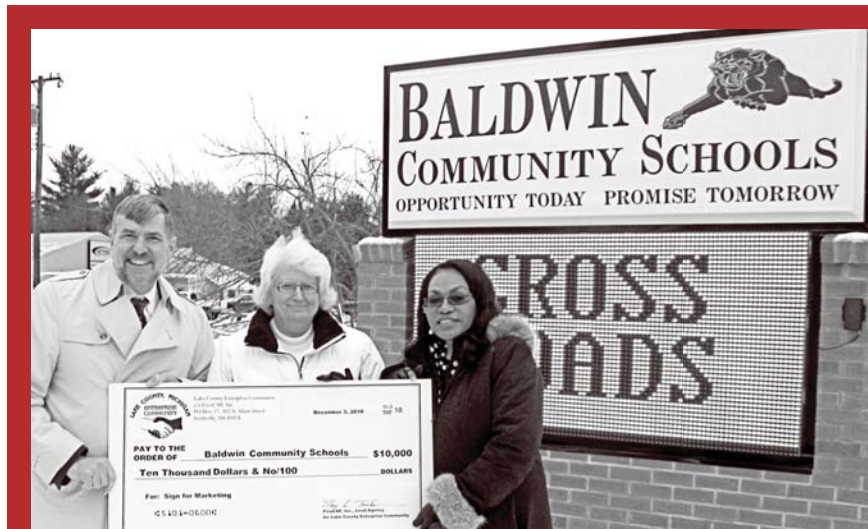


an unusual mix of housing that makes the school revenue difficult to predict. Housing ranges from high-priced resort second homes to uninhabitable blighted houses that contribute nothing to the tax-base. Last, factor into the equation, Michigan's largest National Forest with huge tracts of protected public land, and the challenges of populating and moving a school district forward seem nearly impossible.

Yet here is Baldwin Community Schools today, reaping the benefits of the EC designation. Schools and services have been consolidated to one campus, buildings have been improved, distance learning and technology upgrades have been put in place, the county has effectively addressed school transportation issues, health and dental programs have been instituted, and most amazing of all is the Baldwin Promise, a program that has already met its first two years of fund-raising goals.

The Baldwin Promise, modeled after the ground-breaking Kalamazoo Promise, makes a promise of funds to its students that means further education and college are a possibility. Baldwin Community Schools is only one of ten school districts in the state that have been named Promise Zones, all the other districts are big urban districts. At the time of this report there are no other Promise Zone school districts that have begun their fund-raising efforts.

“The work of the future is for the children. There needs to be a college-ready and college-going culture in Baldwin Community Schools of Lake County. This kind of cultural shift can really make a difference in the community. We can change a cycle for life,” continued Howes. “Right now the biggest issues that we face in our classrooms are attitudes of hopelessness. However, if we get kids that are choosing to come in the door because of the Baldwin Promise we can build a new attitude around the culture of college-going and hope.”



*Randall Howes and Judith Ebersole, president of the Board of Education, receiving check for Baldwin Community Schools. Mary Trucks pictured in front of new sign funded by EC.*

## HEALTH AND CARE IN LAKE COUNTY

Linda Shively, the Executive Director of Family Health Care located in Baldwin has been on the Enterprise Community (EC) Board of Directors from the beginning. As the Director of Family Health Care, she was attuned to the human service needs of the county and made sure that those needs were translated into a priority in the strategic plans.

“The Mobile Dental Service Program funded with seed money from the Lake County Enterprise Community was just one way that we were able to serve

“  
*I remember Mary Trucks saying in the early days of the designation ... we are not going to spend these dollars, we are going to invest them in the community.*

”

Linda Shively  
Executive Director  
Family Health Care





the community better. The Enterprise Community has been very valuable – as community members, we can see positives outcomes that are specific. I remember Mary Trucks saying in the early days of the designation ... we are not going to spend these dollars, we are going to invest them in the community. And, here we are 15 years later and we can see how our investments have grown in Lake County.”

Linda Shively went on to point out other investments made by the EC that had a very direct effect on her work. Right in the Family Health Care building, a global classroom was established that has allowed health care professionals to take part in professional training programs in a cost effective and timely manner. “This is an

active hub in the Health Care Center – an investment that will continue to pay for years to come.”

Like many of the long term Board Members of the EC, Shively demonstrated a personal pride in programs and accomplishments that crossed over into other areas of interest. Shively is particularly proud of the Idlewild Historic and Cultural Center as a specific achievement of the EC. Time and again these community leaders needed to remember that the programs and investments coming before the Board required the focused support and commitment of a whole community.

## INVESTING IN MORE THAN JUST SMILES

The first conversations with the Lake County Enterprise Community (EC) on creating the Mobile Dental Services Program happened in late 2006. Care was taken to be sure that the federal EC criteria would be met – the program needed to cover Lake County and be child-focused. It was not long before the necessary equipment was acquired that would allow dental care professionals to set up cleaning/exam areas at the Baldwin elementary school and Head Start programs within the FiveCAP service area, including Lake County.



“  
*This program is the beginnings of  
 a long term program to promote  
 the good health of this community*  
 ”

Dr. Marilyn Stolberg, DDS  
 Vice President and Chief Dental Officer  
 Baldwin Family Health Care

Some statistics supporting the need for early intervention on dental care:

From the statewide report done in 2003 called Healthy Kids Count, it was learned that 84% of the school age children in Lake County were family income eligible for the free lunch program. From the same report it was learned that 55% of children in Lake County aged 0-17 were in households rated at 185% of the established poverty level.

According to program director Dr. Marilyn Stolberg, the goal of the program

was to start early to establish comfort and consistency with dental care, to be the “dental home” for many of Lake County’s children at risk. “When we have all these children together in their own setting – they are not frightened,” said Dr. Stolberg. “That is why going to the children’s environment created a less threatening environment to offer exams, simple cleaning and preventative procedures like fluoride application and tooth sealants for elementary school-aged children.” The program also satisfies a federal mandate for dental exams for children participating in the Head Start program. This mandate was often an insurmountable obstacle for some parents with children eligible to participate in Head Start.



*Children receiving dental care from the Baldwin Family Health Care Mobile Dental Program.*

“This program is the beginning of a long term program to promote the good health of this community,” continued Dr. Stolberg.

With three years of data on the Mobile Dental Service Program, the EC investment in equipment for this program can be marked as an unqualified success. The program continues to serve Lake County and is growing. The next piece of equipment will be a portable digital x-ray machine to offer better diagnosis for elementary school-aged and above children.

## GETTING FROM HERE TO THERE

Vedra Gant was raised in the Baldwin community from the age of 12. She attended Baldwin Community Schools, and then went on to college graduating from Ferris State College. In 1999, as her youngest child began school full time, she came to work at the Yates Township Dial-A-Ride. Ms. Gant has continued to serve the community through the Dial-A-Ride program, coming to a leadership role. Her leadership skills have become evident as she serves on both the Lake County Enterprise Community (EC) Board and the Baldwin Promise Board.

Yates Township Dial-A-Ride started with a couple of small buses in 1994 because of a community conversation around the need for public transportation for school children.

Dial-A-Ride services continued to grow as more and more need for general transportation in the community was identified. It wasn’t long before the need pulled way ahead of the available funds. “We needed to serve the children to get to school but also the needs of the seniors and those with disabilities. Our community had and has so many programs and resources available to improve our lives and yet there

“  
*It is important that after the EC designation ends, we focus on the county moving forward.*

”

Vedra Gant  
*Executive Director  
Yates Dial-A-Ride*







*Today Yates Township Dial-A-Ride continues to meet critical transportation needs in the community and is also operating some corridor runs that interconnect with different neighboring communities like Reed City and Ludington.*

were no provisions for transportation to these valuable community resources,” said Ms. Gant.

In 2004, the EC provided critical assistance with public education on a millage campaign that included a bond proposal for transportation. The education efforts were successful, resulting in a “Yes” vote for transportation. The result was a financial stabilization of public transportation programs.

Today Yates Township Dial-A-Ride continues to meet critical transportation needs in the community and is also operating some corridor runs that interconnect with different neighboring communities like Reed City and Ludington.

As a Board Member of the EC, Ms. Gant expressed her concern about the end of the EC. “When nothing else was moving in this area, the Enterprise Community

was doing projects. There was consistent planning going on, strategic moves were being made and plenty of community building activity was happening. Even without the EC designation we need to focus on keeping Lake County moving. With the EC we learned valuable lessons around priority. Sometimes it might be your priority, sometimes it might be mine but the decisions had to be around a benefit for the whole community.”

## BENCHMARK HIGHLIGHTS

### Public and commercial TRANSPORTATION EXPANDED

EC funded study and public education campaign

### INCREASED CAPACITY of local food distribution center

\$571,032 invested in building and renovation

### 911 emergency RESPONSE TIME IMPROVED

by an average of 3 minutes

### SERVICE and FACILITY IMPROVEMENT

at Baldwin Family Health Care Center  
\$1.4 million leveraged

### NEW or ENHANCED PROGRAMS

for infants, toddlers, teens, young fathers, families, people with substance abuse and literacy problems





**ROBERT F. WILLIAMS COMMUNITY  
& FAMILY SERVICE CENTER**



**LAKE COUNTY  
COURTHOUSE EXPANSION**



**HEAD START**



**YATES TOWNSHIP TRANSPORTATION**



# FUTURE FORECAST AND CONTINUING PRIORITIES



Considering a brighter future that expands much of the important community and economic development work accomplished over the past 15 years, the Enterprise Community looks to the future. The past accomplishments lead Lake County to important conclusions that drive future efforts.

## YOUTH

An investment in the youth of Lake County is on the top of the list. The children are the human capital that we possess. Together as a community we need to nurture our young people in body, mind and spirit.

## HOUSING

Where and how we live says so much about how we care for the members of our community. It is absolutely essential to have quality, safe, affordable living options for everyone. It is essential to have a continued focus on building and improving housing in Lake County.

## JOBS

The future economic vitality of the Lake County area will be dependent on the ability to continue to create job opportunities. Major employers are a blessing that create waves of positive economic benefit. The added benefits of “jobs by the handful” created and sustained through the entrepreneurial efforts of individual business owners contribute additional vitality and a sense of place that attracts new residents as well as visitors.

## TOURISM

Having rediscovered our historic roots, Lake County continues to welcome visitors to enjoy all of our assets. Evidence of an ongoing project to promote tourism in the Lake County area is the marketing program that enhances gateway signage and provides way-finder signs. Central to the comprehensive marketing plan is the new Lake County logo and tag line: Endless Nature, Timeless Rhythms, Boundless Adventure.

Youth, Housing, Jobs, and Tourism – all are worthy priorities for our attention. Living within these priorities is a “spirit of community” that creates a welcoming environment for all that choose to be residents or visitors of Lake County – a spirit that cherishes the past, plans for the future and seizes opportunity today.



## GETTING READY FOR THE NEXT LEADERS

There are recent EC investments and representative youth programs that continue to be funded. A conference on healthy marriages targeting young African American high school students and a visiting theatrical program called *Jump the Broom* focuses on healthy choices, abstinence and marriage.

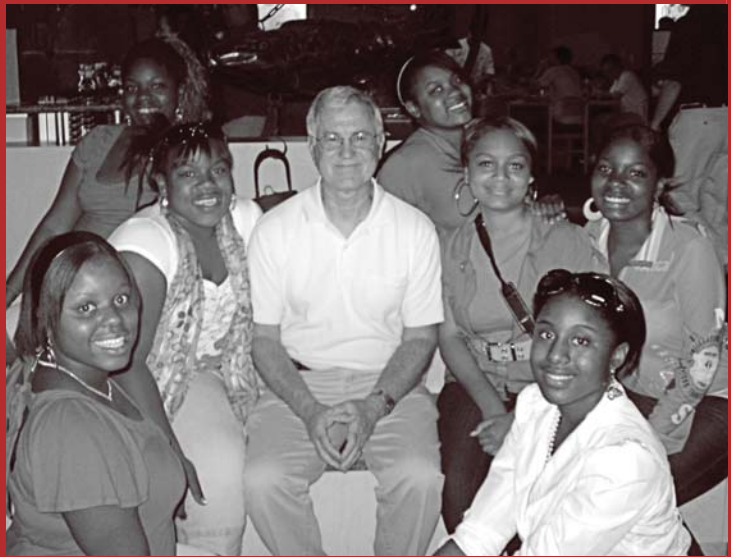
A recent purchase of equipment for the Baldwin School Theatre and Drama program and an ongoing commitment to the Young Ambassador Art of Leadership (YAAOL) program demonstrate a commitment to next leaders. For junior and senior high school students, YAAOL prepares them to become ambassadors for Lake County and the next generation of leaders. YAAOL participants meet regularly to refine their leadership skills, learn to make healthy choices and prepare themselves for employment opportunities. The investment in the Baldwin Theatre and Drama program acknowledges the skills our young people acquire by participating in the arts.

Because of the Baldwin Promise, our children in school, especially the younger children need to be inspired and encouraged to grow and accomplish more through their education, confident that college and better jobs are within their reach.

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## HOUSING – A BASIC NEED

A foundation has been laid in Lake County, a foundation that can be built upon. It is a foundation that creates lasting change for the better. This foundation is more than bricks and mortar – it is a knowledge and understanding of how important housing is to economic vitality. It is the ability to plan and to collaborate with developers and investors. It is the skill to craft proposals that qualify Lake County for state and federal resources for housing development and improvement.



*Top: YAAOL students gather with Larry McDowell, Family Life & Marriage Program Specialist with the Annie E. Casey Foundation of Dallas, at the 2009 Annual African American Health Marriage Initiative Research to Practice Conference.*

*Bottom: Jump the Broom; YAAOL Group with performers and writer/director Professor Thomas Meloncon of Texas Southern University, November 2008.*

*Below: Single family housing developed in the Village of Baldwin.*





*Arial view of expanded facility plan for North Lake Correctional Facility*

## JOB COMEBACK NEWS

It was devastating news when Lake County’s newly constructed Youth Correctional Facility was closed in 2005. So many jobs and opportunities lost, yet still the good citizens of Lake County moved forward. Starting in 2008, glimmers of hope for the site were renewed as the owners of the facility pursued a contract and seized the opportunity to repurpose and expand the capacity of the YCF. By year’s end in 2009, the newly named North Lake Correctional Facility (NLCF) had undergone a significant expansion and a reinvestment estimated at \$30 million in anticipation of a new service contract.

When the NLCF is put into service, there will be a need to fill over 300 jobs. Additionally, the organization promises to be a full stakeholder in the community by providing and sponsoring specialized training for on-site jobs and by being a good corporate citizen as a major employer for the area. The ripple effect of hundreds of jobs and local operational supply provisioning, a positive impact on local business and housing will be just the start.

## TOURISM – SHARING OUR GIFTS

A big priority in the original Enterprise Community planning was a marketing program to promote tourism. Early successes included a beautiful brochure for placement at Michigan visitor centers and the creation of the Idlewild Music Festival. The marketing efforts continue, and for 2010 the Idlewild Music Festival, FiveCAP, Inc. hands off responsibility for the festival to a new leadership group spearheaded by the Yates Township Supervisor.

We have gained greater understanding of the uniqueness of our past history and are honored with an updated Idlewild

Historic and Cultural Center that is a gift to residents and visitors alike. Because of the EC efforts at building awareness for the Idlewild area, the State of Michigan made a grant to renovate/restore the site of the historic Flamingo Club and there is interest in planning a celebration to mark the 100th anniversary of Idlewild in 2012.

Enjoying the great outdoors is always a Michigan favorite pastime and in Lake County there is a deeper appreciation of the natural beauty that is so much a part of this area. The beauty and presence of the thousands of acres of forest in the Manistee National Forest that occupies a significant percentage of Lake County and the pristine waters of the Pere Marquette that winds its way through our county is undeniable. Camping and comfortable lodges and improved facilities such as boat launches and the US Forestry visitor center create hospitable options for visitors.



*Boat ramps improved with help of EC*





# Idlewild Music Fest

Rediscovering our musical roots  
July 10 - 11, 2009

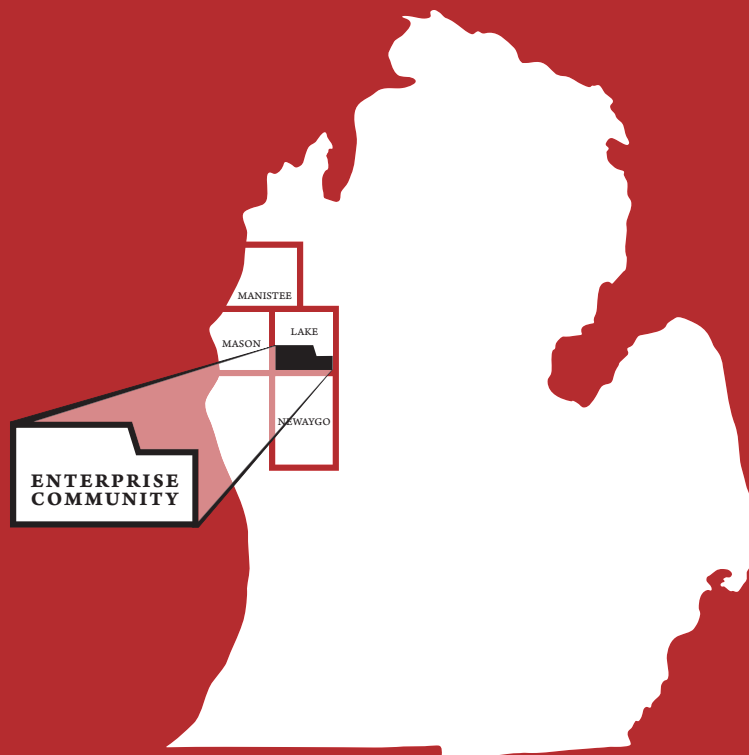
Williams Island  
Idlewild, Michigan

## Welcome to LAKE COUNTY

Endless Nature, Timeless Rhythms, Boundless Adventure  
[www.lakecountymichigan.com](http://www.lakecountymichigan.com)

Funded by the Lake County Enterprise Community and USDA Rural Development





FOR INFORMATION ABOUT ANY OF THE PROJECTS  
OUTLINED IN THIS PROGRAM REPORT PLEASE CONTACT

Lake County Enterprise Community  
c/o FiveCAP, Inc.  
P.O. Box 481  
Baldwin, MI 49304  
231-757-3785  
231-757-9669 fax  
[fivecap@fivecap.org](mailto:fivecap@fivecap.org)