The Evolution of the Macomb-Oakland University SmartZone Business Incubator located in the Velocity Collaborative Center

Macomb County Small Business Incubator/Accelerator "Concept" Explored

A State "SmartZone" designation is required to have a partnership with a Michigan public university and a local development finance authority

Idea/concept Phase

Macomb County Planning and Economic Development (MCPED) and Oakland University (OU)…

Enter into a Strategic Alliance Agreement to research and develop the "Macomb-OU Incubator" to foster new business development, retain existing jobs and create new jobs for the Macomb County region

August 2008 – (SBA #1 Grant Award)

The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) awards Macomb County Government $282,000 grant to begin the essential planning activities to launch Macomb County's first-ever business incubator/accelerator

September 2008 – (Received SmartZone Designation)

Project was awarded a SmartZone designation by the State of Michigan – Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC)

May 2009 - (MEDC #1 Grant Award)

The project is awarded $250,000 from the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC)

December 2008 - (Sterling Heights SmartZone Agreement with the MEDC)

June 2009 - (Sterling Heights SmartZone Affiliated Party Agreement with Oakland University)

December 2009 – (Third Facility - Acquired Own Facility)

Project acquired donated facility at 6633 Eighteen Mile Road, Sterling Heights, MI from A.J. Damman Co.; the facility is wholly owned by the City of Sterling Heights LDFA

October 2009 - (SBA #2 Grant Award)

The project is awarded $385,000 from the U.S. Small Business Administration

March 2010 – (Began Facility Set-up)

Acquired furniture donations from Sterling Insurance Group and began certificate of occupancy work

June 2010 – (Acquired Client Office Furnishings)

Acquired furniture, fixtures and equipment donation from Hewlett Packard/EDS; donation consisted of over 100 workstations and other various office furnishings

October 2010 – (Acquired Second Anchor Tenant)

General Dynamics Land Systems (GDLS) opens a satellite office in the incubator

October 2010 – (Third Anchor Tenant Moves-In)

The Oakland University Pawley Lean Institute joins the incubator

February 2011 – (National Search for Executive Director Begins)

September 2011 – (Incubator Hires Executive Director)

Julie Gustafson relocated to Michigan from New Hampshire and begins her tenure at Oakland University. Previously, Gustafson managed an incubator that had a graduation rate of 87%.

March 2011 - (MEDC #3 Grant Award)

The project is awarded $250,000 from the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC)

May 2011 – (Second & Third "On-site" Clients Joins)

Terra Telesis and Sanza sign leases and will take advantage of business incubation services offered

October 2011 – (Fourth "Anchor" Tenant Moves-In)

The Oakland University Center for Robotics, Unmanned and Intelligent Systems (CRUIS) joins the incubator

January 2012 - (Macomb-OU INC Gets New Look)

February 2012 - (Michigan Defense Center Joins)

The Michigan Defense Center, which is part of the Michigan Economic Development Corporation, relocated from Lansing to Macomb County to connect the defense industry with Michigan-based companies

Facility #3

2008

JAN. FEB. MAR. APR. MAY JUNE JULY AUG. SEPT. OCT. NOV. DEC.

Facility #1

August through December 2008 – (First Facility)

Lease signed establishing the first site of the Macomb-OU INCubator at 6555 Fifteen Mile Road, Sterling Heights, MI

May 2008 – (SmartZone RFP)

The State of Michigan MEDC is authorized by Public Act 105 of 2008 to designate three additional SmartZones; currently there are 12 designations

2009

JAN. FEB. MAR. APR. MAY JUNE JULY AUG. SEPT. OCT. NOV. DEC.

Facility #2

Strategic Planning and Program Development – (Second Facility)

The Macomb-OU INC ramps-up activities at its second location at 7205 Sterling Ponds Court, Sterling Heights, MI

July 2009 – (Launch Event at Second Facility)

On July 20, 2009, the Macomb-OU INC holds a grand opening at 7205 Sterling Ponds Court, Sterling Heights, MI

Featured Speakers:

1. Video Greeting from United States Senator, Honorable Carl Levin
2. Video Greeting from United States Senator, Honorable Debbie Stabenow
3. United States Congressman, Honorable Sander Levin
4. United States Congresswoman, Honorable Candice Miller
5. Macomb County Commission Chairman, Mr. Paul Gieleghem
6. City of Sterling Heights Mayor, Mr. Richard Notte
7. Oakland University President, Dr. Gary Russi
8. Director of TARDEC, Dr. Grace Bochenek
9. General Dynamics Land Systems President, Mr. Mark Roualet

2010

JAN. FEB. MAR. APR. MAY JUNE JULY AUG. SEPT. OCT. NOV. DEC.

June 2010 - (NEI #1 Grant Award)

The project is awarded $675,000 from the New Economy Initiative (NEI) to promote a regional accelerator network as a tool to attract and retain business in Southeast Michigan, thereby forming the Business Accelerator Network of Southeast Michigan (BANSEM)

July 2010 – (First Anchor Tenant Joins)

Kosch Catering joins the facility and leases the full-commercial kitchen

October 2010 – (EDA #2 Grant Award)

The project receives a grant award from the U.S. Economic Development Administration for $450,000 for strategic management, to complete a defense corridor study and offer diversification training

September 2010 - (SBA #3 Grant Award)

The project is awarded $100,000 from the U.S. Small Business Administration

September 2010 – (MEDC #2 Grant Award)

The project is awarded $100,000 from the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC)

2011

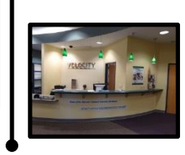
JAN. FEB. MAR. APR. MAY JUNE JULY AUG. SEPT. OCT. NOV. DEC.

March 2011 – (First "On-site" Client)

Brar Technology signs a lease and will take advantage of business incubation services offered

July 2011 – (Major Facility Renovations Begin – EDA #1)

A grant award from the U.S. Economic Development Administration for $412,000 for renovations to make facility into rentable client-office space



October 2011 – (Facility is Named Velocity)

October 17, 2011, a facility launch event is held naming Velocity as the collaborative center that houses the Macomb-OU INCubator, Sterling Heights Economic Development offices and a Macomb County Economic Development extension office

December 2011 – (TIFP Amended/Expanded)

The Sterling Heights City Council approves expanding the tax increment finance plan to include additional parcels for capture area

2012

JAN. FEB. MAR. APR. MAY JUNE JULY AUG. SEPT. OCT. NOV. DEC.

February 2012 - (Fourth "On-site" Clients Joins)

American Hydrogen Injection Distribution signs leases and will take advantage of business incubation services offered

March 2012 – (MEDC #4 Grant Award)

The project is awarded $500,000 from the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC)