

Press Release

FOR RELEASE—January 6, 2004

The Southeast Michigan Commissioners of the HCMA are interested in supporting the urban revitalization of Metro Detroit and the surrounding areas. The region is home to a declining tax base, diminishing property values and is also having great difficulty retaining its top young professional talent. The State of Michigan as a whole ranks 47<sup>th</sup> in the country in terms of retaining young people ages 25-34 to work within the State early on in their careers.

The SE Commissioners are in support of building a Metropark within the Metro Detroit region as one measure of repairing these problems. A park is one mechanism by which we can attract residents and businesses to the central city. This will ensure a strong region by:

- Fostering local investment and increasing property values- Open space will increase surrounding property values. As park patronage increases demand for other services will increase.
- Curbing urban sprawl – over the past several decades Detroit has lost a significant portion of its tax base to the surrounding suburbs. Through economic revitalization the city will increase its tax base allowing for improvements to an aging infrastructure. Current levels of growth in Detroit's suburbs is not sustainable. Bedroom suburbs lack the necessary corporate tax base to sustain the cost of growth over time.
- Improving overall public health—with parks people exercise. Detroit is the fattest city in US. Parks could be incorporated into a greenway and thereby encouraging people to walk to work and enjoy local recreational opportunities.
- Curtailing brain drain – Urban amenities like public parks will help attract young professionals to the Southeast Michigan region. The drain is a serious concern for Michigan due to the lack of amenities to sustain a well-rounded lifestyle. This is important to Detroit because they are unable to utilize the personal reinvestment from the young professional demographic. This drain also impedes Michigan's ability to attract modern industry.
- Increasing regional tourism-Visitors provide additional revenue for local businesses and city services

These potential effects warrant further consideration of an urban Metropark location.