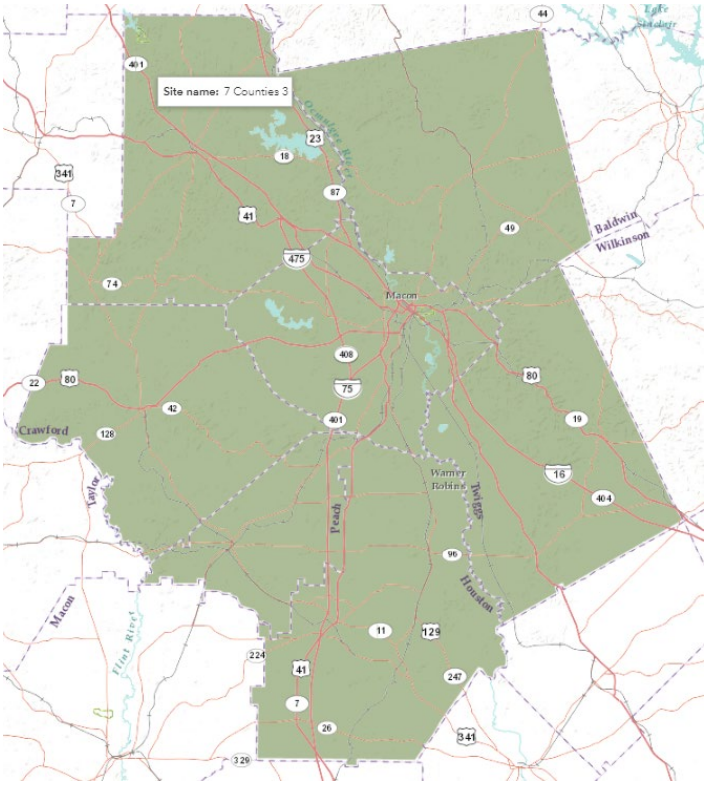


Addendum
to Path Forward Letter

EPA Advance Program

April 2019

Overview



On February 5, 2015, the Middle Georgia Clean Air Coalition (MGCAC) Board voted to submit the Path Forward Letter to the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as part of the Ozone and PM 2.5 Advance Program. That letter, along with the accompanying Strategy and Action Plan, detailed the Middle Georgia region's plan for taking voluntary action to improve air quality. The vote to submit passed unanimously, with over 70 percent of the local governments present at the meeting. The overwhelming support of making these commitments has been equaled only in the members' willingness to act on those commitments in the time since the plan's adoption.

The purpose of this addendum is to address the actions taken by the Middle Georgia Clean Air Coalition to implement the Path Forward since its adoption in early 2015. The MGCAC amended the original Path Forward to account for actions taken during 2015 and again in 2017 to advance the goals of clean air in the region.

This is the third amendment and will detail the actions taken during 2017 and 2018. Additionally, the individual members have implemented portions of the plan that were the most appropriate for their communities. Through the collaboration of the members and the organization, the implementation of the Path Forward continues to advance with some innovative and sophisticated actions.

Review of Commitments

The commitments discussed in the Path Forward Letter were grouped into eight goals, which are listed below with specific action items:

Goal 1 – Implementation of Strategies through Private Action

1. Our "Clean Air Force" campaign has provided access to information regarding consequences of ozone and PM 2.5. The MGCAC monthly meetings of elected officials have recently attracted more members of the public.
2. MGCAC has partnered with Solarize Middle Georgia and has developed a campaign to educate and partner with private citizens to deploy solar in their residence or business. Farmers throughout the region have benefitted from this initiative and we expect to be able to report quantifiable data in the last quarter of 2019.

Goal 2 – Use Environmentally Sound Practices in our Daily Business

1. Each city and county will conduct a review of its operations and maintenance and develop a plan to reduce NOx and ozone-producing chemicals. MGCAC developed an innovative approach to assisting all the counties and the region to assess and implement energy reduction.
2. MGCAC held a mini-summit in Forsyth to assist Monroe County, and the cities of Culloden, Forsyth, Fort Valley, and Roberta. The action plan consisted of the following:
    a) MGCAC would issue an RFQ that would seek a company that could assess LED, solar, and energy efficiencies. This will help these cities in two major ways:
        (1) provide the procurement abilities that these entities do not possess; and
        (2) attract a company to work with smaller cities because we bundled the work
    b) MGCAC issued the RFQ, assessed the capabilities and awarded the contract.
    c) MGCAC will accompany the company to introduce them and provide oversight of any work.
3. Once this work has begun, each city and county in the region will receive the same mini-summit and plan to conduct energy audits in all city and county buildings to assess the potential for LED, solar and energy efficiencies. Part of this review will include procurement practices for equipment, like lawnmowers, automobiles, and backup energy generators, that uses fuels.
4. Provide recommendations to the MGCAC after completion of the review.
5. With mobile source emissions comprising 22 percent of the NOx emissions in Middle Georgia, there is a need to reduce mobile source emissions through the increased use of alternative fueled vehicles for clean air. MGCAC has supported over six electric vehicle charging stations in the region.
6. MGCAC has developed a policy that provides financial support to any city or county that undertakes projects with demonstrable clean air benefits. MGCAC will provide 50 percent or

up to $5000 for any such project. MGCAC made its first award under this program to the City of Forsyth in September 2017.

Goal 3 – Promote and Implement Smart Growth and Sustainable Communities Principles

1. MGCAC has participated in the review and update of all applicable local and regional planning documents to ensure consistency with the principles, policies, and best practices of Smart Growth/Sustainable Communities. Updates will continue be performed in accordance with timelines established by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) Office of Planning and Environmental Management. Applicable documents include local comprehensive plans and corresponding community work programs, the Middle Georgia Regional Plan and Middle Georgia Regionally Important Resources Plan.
2. MGCAC has promoted and will continue to promote and implement activities for Smart Growth/Sustainable Communities identified in local and regional planning documents; investment in infrastructure improvements, development of alternative transportation facilities, dedication of land for parks, recreation areas and conservation use, transportation and land use alignment.
3. MGCAC members have actively participated in updates to the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for the Middle Georgia Economic Development District, ensuring identified strategies for economic development are consistent with the principles of Smart Growth/Sustainable Communities.
4. MGCAC members have engaged in the Development of Regional Impact process, by which local stakeholders are able to offer comments on large-scale developments prior to approval by the host jurisdiction.

Goal 4 – Develop a Toolkit of Reduction Strategies

1. MGCAC developed a website that identifies actions that can be taken by private businesses and citizens.
2. MGCAC designed and made available pamphlets and a sign for business windows that says, “I am a member of the MGCAC Clean Air Force.”
3. MGCAC sent numerous letters inviting businesses to participate and support the MGCAC and the response has been very positive.
4. MGCAC wrote sample ordinances for every city and county to use.
5. At every MGCAC meeting, there is an emphasis on providing case studies of actions taken elsewhere, but also providing forecasts of technology that is emerging and can be accessed.
6. MGCAC has adopted recognition letters, certificate templates, and award plaques to recognize and honor those that participate in and adopt MGCAC strategies.
7. MGCAC continues to write sample resolutions that local governments can adopt.
8. The MGCAC has hosted the Clean Energy Roadshow in partnership with Commissioner Tim Echols of the Georgia Public Service Commission to highlight opportunities for emission reduction

9. MGCAC developed the “Ned Sanders Scholarship Fund” that is given every year to a Mercer University student who is studying environmental science



Goal 5 – Obtain Resources to Take Action

1. MGCAC obtained resources to undertake a number of significant projects to reduce Ozone and PM 2.5. One major project that was implemented this year was the conversion to clean diesel locomotives and mother-slug locomotive replacements at Brosnan Yard. In total, this was a $10 million project, with $6.3 million in grant funding, for which the MGCAC is singularly responsible for securing the help of Senator Isakson.
2. MGCAC has leveraged its resources by working with private companies and associations, e.g., the Solarize Middle Georgia Campaign. Association with the MGCAC has helped their campaign because of the trust that has been built over the last 15 years.
3. MGCAC sought funding through the VW Settlement. We applied, made the case to our state representative and then a delegation, including the state representative, met with the Governor and his senior staff. Unfortunately, MGCAC was not included in the state’s initial allocation plan for VW Settlement funds, but we are continuing to pursue related options.
4. This year we are seeking a federal appropriation that will support capacity building for organizations like the MGCAC across the nation.
5. The education and information provided through the Clean Air Coalition are enormously useful to private organizations. Over the last 15 years, many companies have attended MGCAC meetings regularly and have benefited from discussions and presentations. Companies that have consistently provided resources to support this work are:

- Georgia Power
- Oglethorpe Power
- Macon Water Authority
- Philips North America
- Blue Bird

Goal 6 – Develop a Signature Project

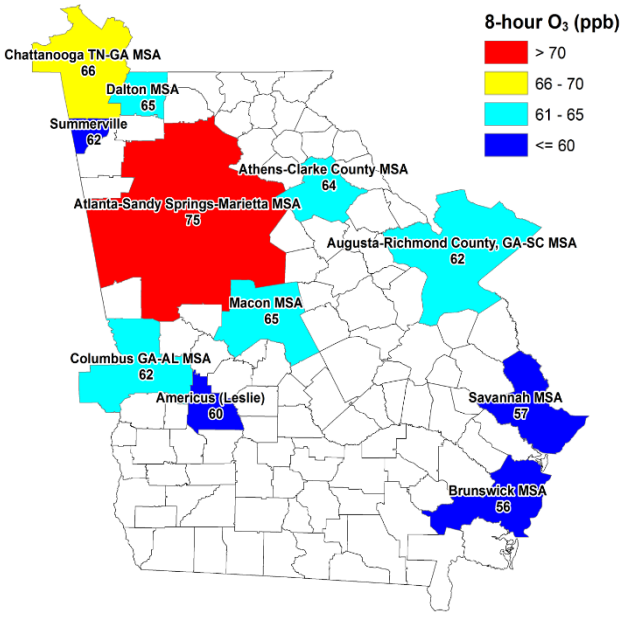
MGCAC partnered with the Central Georgia Joint Development Authority and Georgia Power to develop a 139 MW solar array around Robins Air Force Base. This has been supported by all the mayors, county commissioners, and the Chairman of the Public Service Commission. This array is estimated to reduce NOx by 100 tons a year. This one project has been the most significant effort over the last year and would not be possible without the efforts of Robins Air Force Base, the Mayor of Macon-Bibb, the Chairman of the Houston County Commission, Georgia Power, the Central Georgia Joint Development Authority, and the Middle Georgia Regional Commission,

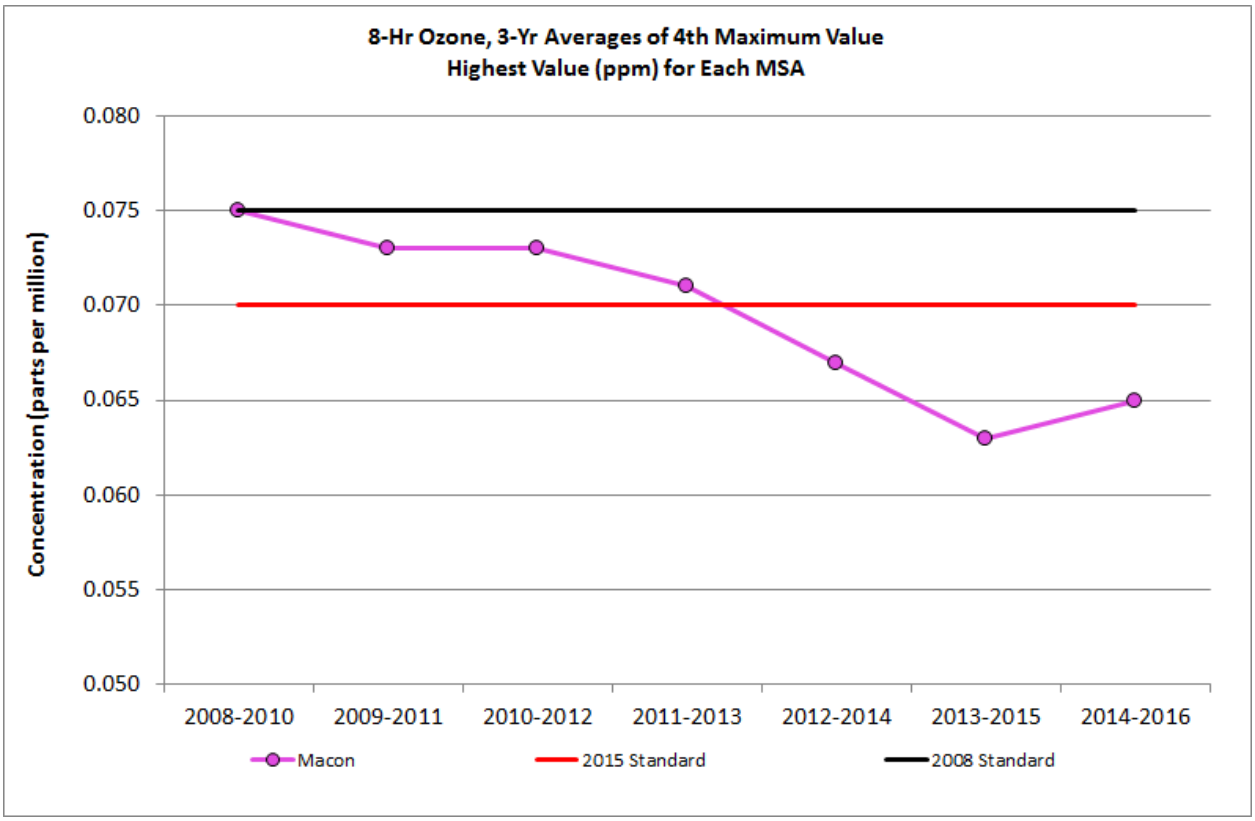
Goal 7 – Develop Public-Private Partnerships to Achieve Goals

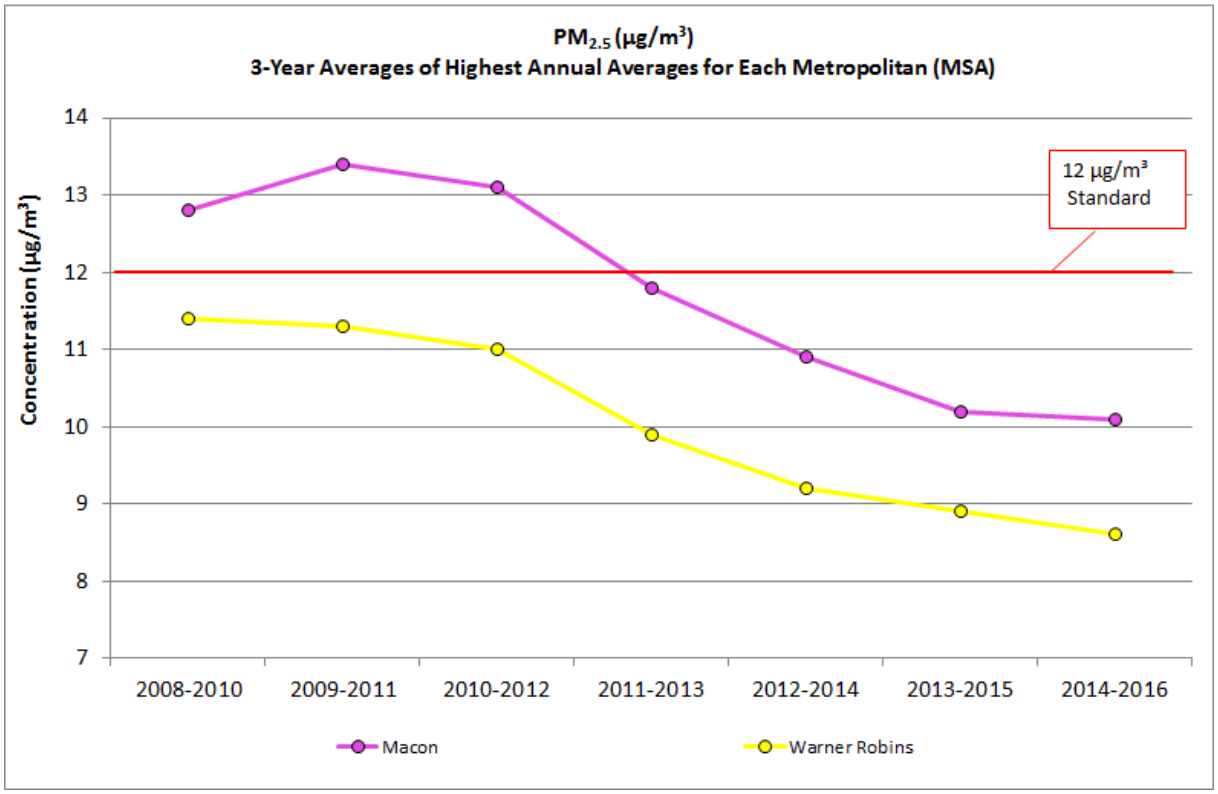
1. MGCAC has partnered with companies to assist the members of the MGCAC in analyzing opportunities to increase efficiencies in operations at no cost to the city or county. The Forsyth Mini-Summit has developed a better template for ways to assist smaller cities and counties to make contributions.
2. The Solarize Middle Georgia is reaching homeowners, private industry and their associations to help them participate in improving air quality.
3. MGCAC often devote an MGCAC meeting to private companies, allowing them to show new technologies and more cost-effective ways to achieve the clean air goals of the region.
4. MGCAC has devoted a meeting to explore the potential for fleet conversions to natural gas with a complete analysis of the costs and return on investment.

Goal 8 – Monitor the Effectiveness of Actions

The Middle Georgia region has remained in attainment of all NAAQS since joining the EPA ADVANCE program in 2015. MGCAC continues to periodically review and assess air quality conformity for the region (as seen on the following page).




8-Hr Ozone, 3-Yr Averages of 4th Maximum Value
Highest Value (ppm) for Each MSA
Concentration (parts per million)
0.080
0.075
0.070
0.065
0.060
0.055
0.050
2008-2010
2009-2011
2010-2012
2011-2013
2012-2014
2013-2015
2014-2016
Macon
2015 Standard
2008 Standard


PM2.5 (µg/m³)
3-Year Averages of Highest Annual Averages for Each Metropolitan (MSA)
Concentration (µg/m³)
14
13
12
11
10
9
8
7
12 µg/m³ Standard
2008-2010
2009-2011
2010-2012
2011-2013
2012-2014
2013-2015
2014-2016
Macon
Warner Robins