

GEAUGA
COUNTY

**STRATEGIC PLAN
FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Submitted: October 23, 2020



Geauga County
Strategic Plan for Economic Development
Submitted: October 23, 2020

Prepared for:

Geauga County
Department of Development
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Mission Statement

Geauga County is a community of communities, each with its own unique history representing a diversity of cultural backgrounds and a mix of suburban and rural opportunities. We enjoy healthy lifestyles rooted in unrestricted access to the natural beauty of our region's lakes and parkland, small town charm, and high quality community services. Geauga County is an inclusive, thriving and sustainable community committed to maintaining harmony between rural and urban areas and fostering economic opportunities for current and future generations. Our success is built on a strong work ethic and productive working relationships with our community and regional partners.

Stakeholder Engagement

The consultant team met individually with each of the Geauga County Commissioners:

- James W. Dvorak
- Timothy C. Lennon
- Ralph Spidalieri

Four stakeholder meetings were conducted by the consultant team virtually due to COVID-19 in July of 2020. County stakeholder participants included:

- Steve Caviness - Director of Project Management, TeamNeo
- Linda Crombie - Director, Geauga County Planning Commission
- John Epprecht - Owner, Great Lakes Cheese
- David Favorite - Director of Community & Economic Development, Geauga County
- Leslie Gambosi-McCoy - Village Administrator, Village of Middlefield
- George "Chip" Hess II - Hess & Associates Engineering, Inc.
- Kimm Leininger - President, Geauga Growth Partnership
- Jeff Markley - Trustee, Bainbridge Township
- Mindy McLaughlin - Managing Director of Global Business Development, Team NEO
- Anthony Nastasi, Planning Commission Chair, Chester Township
- Shawn Neece - Director, NMS Certified Public Accountants
- Bill Patterson - Farm Bureau
- Randy Sharpe - City of Chardon, City Manager
- Steve Yaney - Community Development Administrator, City of Chardon

In addition to the virtual stakeholder meetings, the consultant team presented and facilitate groups discussions at events of Destination Geauga and the Geauga Township Association, as well as a conference call of the Geauga Growth Partnership. Collectively these discussions helped to inform the SWOT Analysis that is summarized beginning on the next page.



SWOT Analysis: Strengths

Competitive Advantages of the County in the Regional Marketplace:

- Community Pride
- Quality of Life
- Location
- Business Community
- Wealth
- Safety



SWOT Analysis: Weaknesses

Weaknesses that hold the County back:

- Consolidated resource for available properties and infrastructure
- Centralized Economic Development Agency and Efforts
- Economic Development Incentive Programs
- Non-Existent or Under-Developed Marketing Materials
- Multi-Family and Workforce Housing
- Euclidean zoning (esp. large lots, lack of mixed-use)
- Utilities (broadband, water/sewer)
- Transit accessibility
- No Growth/young people leaving
- Aging population
- Market perception that the County is not “business and development friendly”



SWOT Analysis: Weaknesses

Weaknesses that hold the County back:

- ***Lack of Available Industrial Real Estate***

While there is a universal lack of industrial real estate across the country, Geauga County is not unlike its US counterparts. According to Costar real estate data, The Geauga county region has only three industrial buildings with availability of 25,000-99,000 square feet and two buildings that have 100,000+ square feet available. Many of the buildings in Geauga's available inventory are either too old or too small to accommodate many warehousing or manufacturing users. Today's manufacturing users are looking for higher clear heights, modern and efficient building systems, and sufficient infrastructure within industrial parks. In addition, industrial users typically prefer to find existing facilities due to the cost and delayed timeline to develop new buildings. With the limited supply of large industrial properties and current age of existing product, it will be difficult for Geauga County to compete with other pier regions for users that are in the market and need to occupy a facility within 6 months to one year.

- ***"Lack of Relevant Housing" - in size, price point, target age cohorts (esp. young adults, seniors)***

In general, there does not seem to be adequate multi-family and Workforce housing stock that could support any employers of significant size to attract workforce. This is particularly true for younger generations (which Geauga is also seeking to attract), as they may not seek home ownership (both preferentially and temporally) nor have the initial capital for a down-payment. While this assessment was not focused solely on housing, the Team does find the quantity and quality of available housing to be an issue that will need to be addressed at a certain point.



SWOT Analysis: Opportunities

Untapped potential Opportunities:

- Real Estate Developer Engagement - attraction campaign with regional developers to consider the County
- Available Sites - market to end users and developers
- Strategic Alliance
- Quality of Place / Healthy Living
- Enhanced partnerships in Eds & Meds
- Increase number of residents working in County
- Create strong partnerships with:
 - Team NEO/JobsOhio
 - Geauga Growth Partnership
 - Greater Cleveland Partnership



SWOT Analysis: Threats

Threats that inhibit future progress:

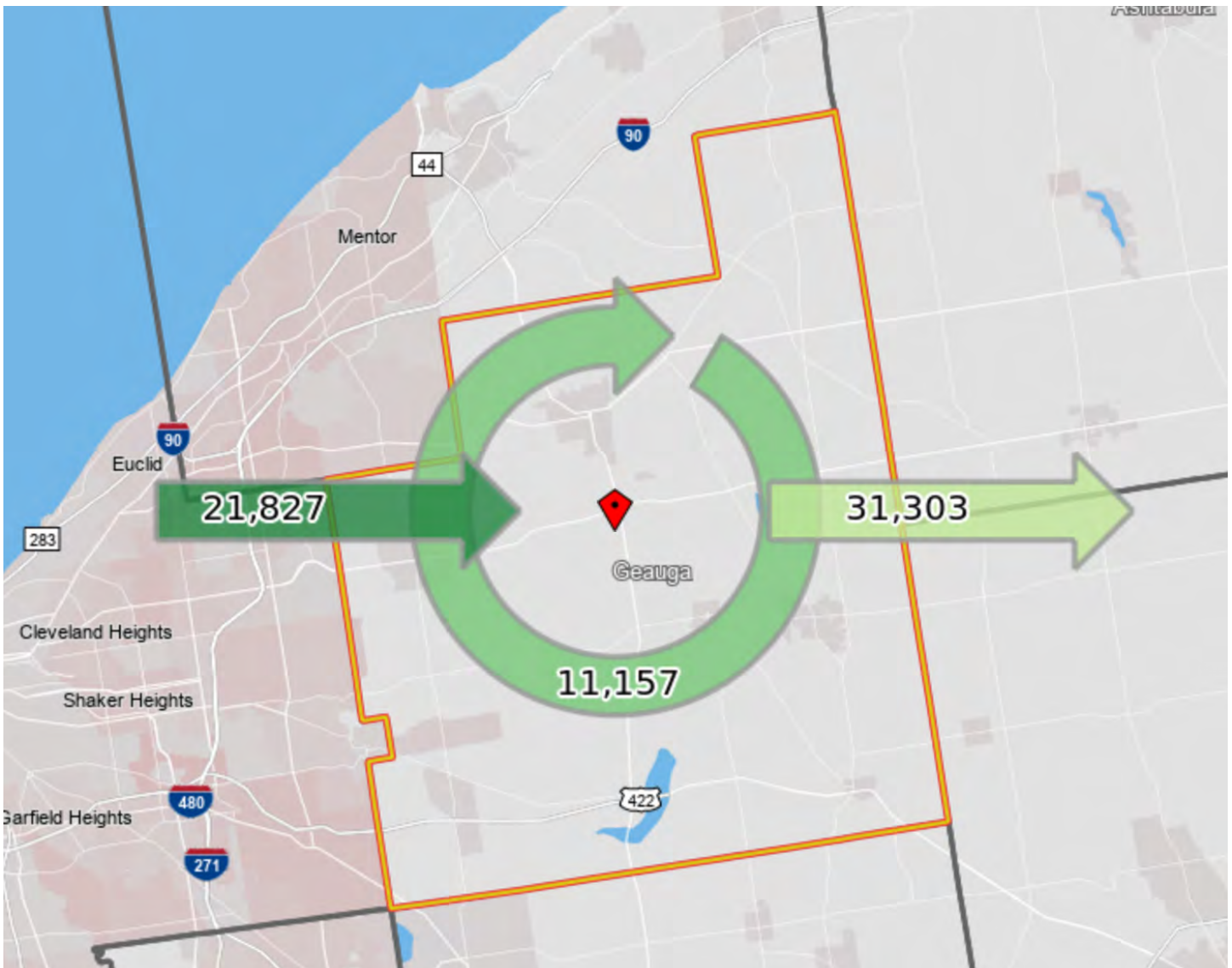
- “Brain Drain” - Young People Leaving and not Returning
- Public Perceptions on Different Housing Types May Prevent Provision of Sufficient Workforce Housing
- Regional/State/Federal Funding Policies that Place Priority on Existing Infrastructure/Urban Core
- Lack of Real Estate Product
- Losing Current Employers
- Lack of Competitive Incentive Programs and Strategies



Demographics

A Bedroom Community!

Outbound commuters living in Geauga County workers employed in the County but residing elsewhere by 1.43 to 1. The County sees a net loss of nearly 9,473 employees in its daytime population.



Source: Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD), U.S. Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies



Demographics

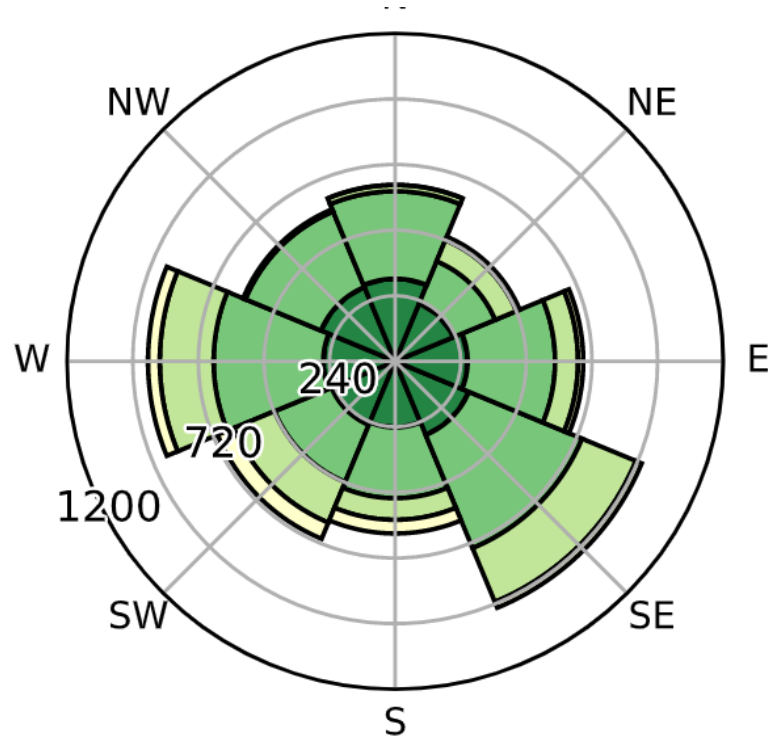
OVER
3 IN 5
EMPLOYEES
COMMUTE
10+ MILES
TO GEAUGA
COUNTY

OVER
1 IN 5
EMPLOYEES
COMMUTE
25+ MILES
TO GEAUGA
COUNTY

Employees in Geauga County - Commute Direction & Distance (2017)

Commute Distance	Employees	Percent
Less than 10 miles	12,657	38.4%
10 to 24 miles	13,447	40.8%
25 to 50 miles	4,738	14.4%
Greater than 50 miles	2,142	6.5%
Total All Jobs	32,984	100.0%

Source: LEHD, U.S. Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies





Demographics

2 IN 3

**GEAUGA COUNTY
EMPLOYEES RESIDE
OUTSIDE THE COUNTY**

Employees in Geauga County - Place of Residence (2017)

By County

Home County	Count	Share
Geauga County	11,157	33.8%
Cuyahoga County	4,928	14.9%
Lake County	4,215	12.8%
Trumbull County	3,511	10.6%
Portage County	2,324	7.0%
Ashtabula County	1,917	5.8%
Summit County	1,566	4.7%
Lorain County	409	1.2%
Mahoning County	378	1.1%
Stark County	326	1.0%
All Other Locations	2,253	6.8%
All Counties	32,984	100.0%

By Statistical Area

Home Statistical Area	Count	Share
Cleveland-Elyria, OH	20,991	63.6%
Youngstown-Warren-Boardman, OH-PA	3,932	11.9%
Akron, OH	3,890	11.8%
Ashtabula, OH	1,917	5.8%
Canton-Massillon, OH	354	1.1%
All Other Locations	1,900	5.8%
All Metropolitan/ Micropolitan Areas (CBSA)	32,984	100.0%

Source: LEHD, U.S. Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies



Demographics

Jobs in Geauga County by Worker Age (2017)

Earnings (Monthly)	Employees	Percent
Age 29 or younger	8,086	24.5%
Age 30 to 54	16,441	49.8%
Age 55 or older	8,457	25.6%

Jobs in Geauga County by Earnings (2017)

Earnings (Monthly)	Employees	Percent
\$1,250 per month or less	8,391	25.4%
\$1,251 to \$3,333 per month	11,549	35.0%
More than \$3,333 per month	13,044	39.5%

Jobs in Geauga County by Educational Attainment (2017)

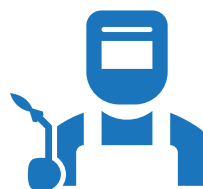
Highest Level of Educational Attainment	Employees	Percent
Less than high school	2,357	7.1%
High school or equivalent, no college	8,119	24.6%
Some college or Associate degree	8,196	24.8%
Bachelor's degree or advanced degree	6,226	18.9%
Educational attainment not available (workers aged 29 or younger)	8,086	24.5%

Source: LEHD, U.S. Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies



Demographics

OVER **1** IN **5**



GEAUGA COUNTY
WORKERS

MANUFACTURING

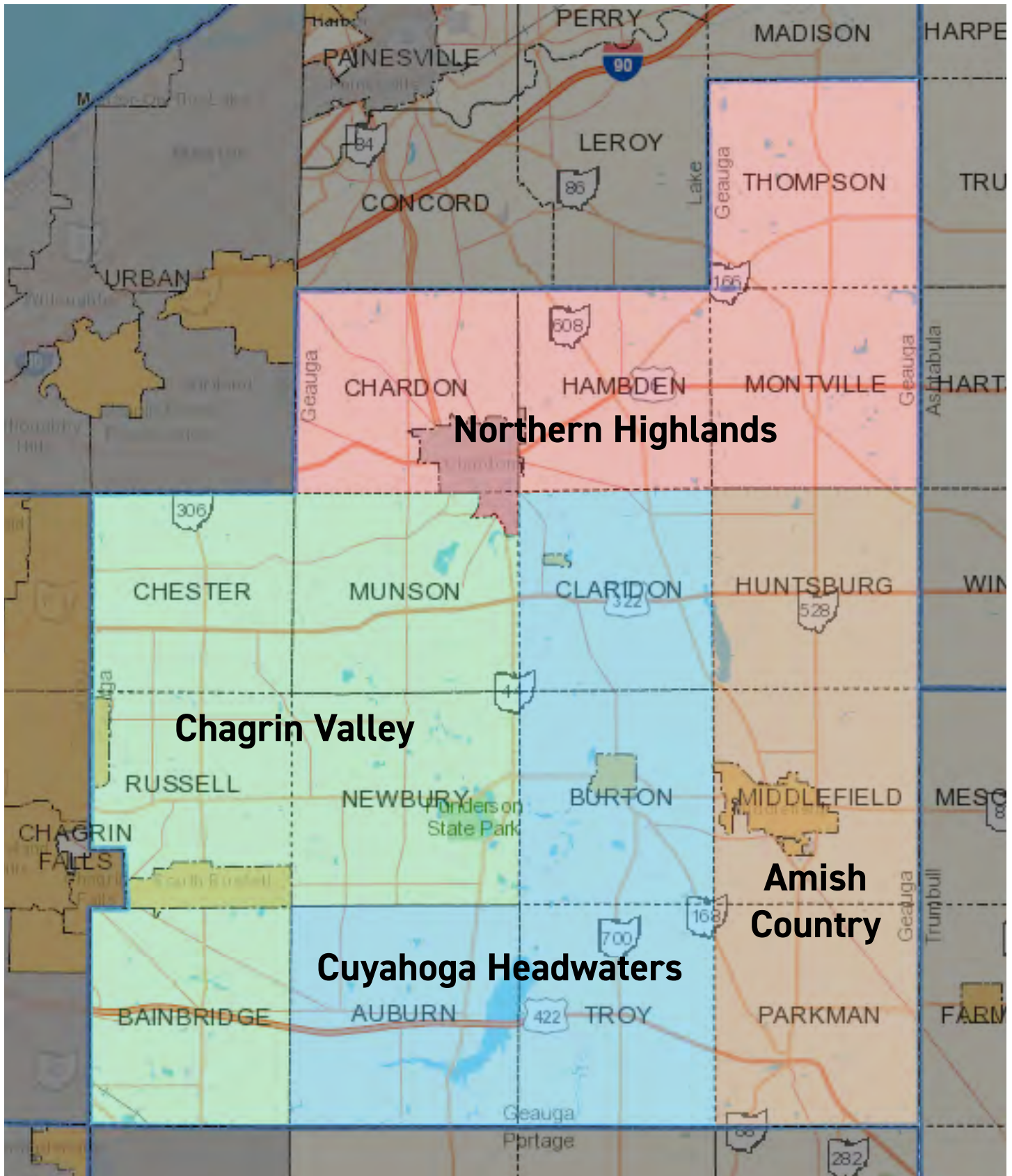
Jobs in Geauga County by NAICS Industry Sector (2017)

NAICS Industry Sector	Employees	Percent
Manufacturing	7,103	21.5%
Health Care and Social Assistance	4,409	13.4%
Retail Trade	4,156	12.6%
Accommodation and Food Services	2,643	8.0%
Educational Services	2,301	7.0%
Construction	2,115	6.4%
Wholesale Trade	2,024	6.1%
Administration & Support, Waste Management and Remediation	1,786	5.4%
Other Services (excluding Public Administration)	1,360	4.1%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	1,304	4.0%
Public Administration	1,042	3.2%
Transportation and Warehousing	603	1.8%
Finance and Insurance	581	1.8%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	361	1.1%
Information	326	1.0%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	303	0.9%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	272	0.8%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	216	0.7%
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	74	0.2%
Utilities	5	0.0%

Source: LEHD, U.S. Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies



Geographic Typologies





Geographic Typologies

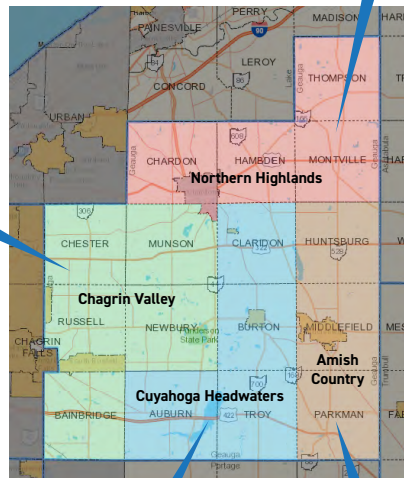
JOBS IN SUBREGION - BY COUNTY OF RESIDENCE

Chagrin Valley

Home County	Count	Share
Geauga County	2,334	36.4%
Lake County	1,662	25.9%
Cuyahoga County	773	12.1%
Ashtabula County	606	9.5%
Summit County	177	2.8%
Portage County	106	1.7%
Trumbull County	102	1.6%
Lorain County	86	1.3%
Mahoning County	78	1.2%
Stark County	68	1.1%
All Other Locations	419	6.5%
All Counties	32,984	100.0%

Northern Highlands

Geauga County	2,334	36.4%
Lake County	1,662	25.9%
Cuyahoga County	773	12.1%
Ashtabula County	606	9.5%
Summit County	177	2.8%
Portage County	106	1.7%
Trumbull County	102	1.6%
Lorain County	86	1.3%
Mahoning County	78	1.2%
Stark County	68	1.1%
All Other Locations	419	6.5%
All Other Locations	2,253	6.8%
All Counties	32,984	100.0%



Cuyahoga Headwaters

Home County	Count	Share
Geauga County	2,184	38.7%
Trumbull County	873	15.5%
Portage County	670	11.9%
Cuyahoga County	613	10.9%
Lake County	413	7.3%
Summit County	251	4.4%
Ashtabula County	244	4.3%
Mahoning County	65	1.2%
Stark County	47	0.8%
Medina County	41	0.7%
All Other Locations	240	4.3%
All Counties	32,984	100.0%

Amish Country

Home County	Count	Share
Trumbull County	2,113	34.0%
Geauga County	1,712	27.5%
Ashtabula County	564	9.1%
Portage County	465	7.5%
Lake County	298	4.8%
Cuyahoga County	239	3.8%
Summit County	185	3.0%
Mahoning County	125	2.0%
Lorain County	74	1.2%
Stark County	67	1.1%
All Other Locations	378	6.1%
All Counties	32,984	100.0%



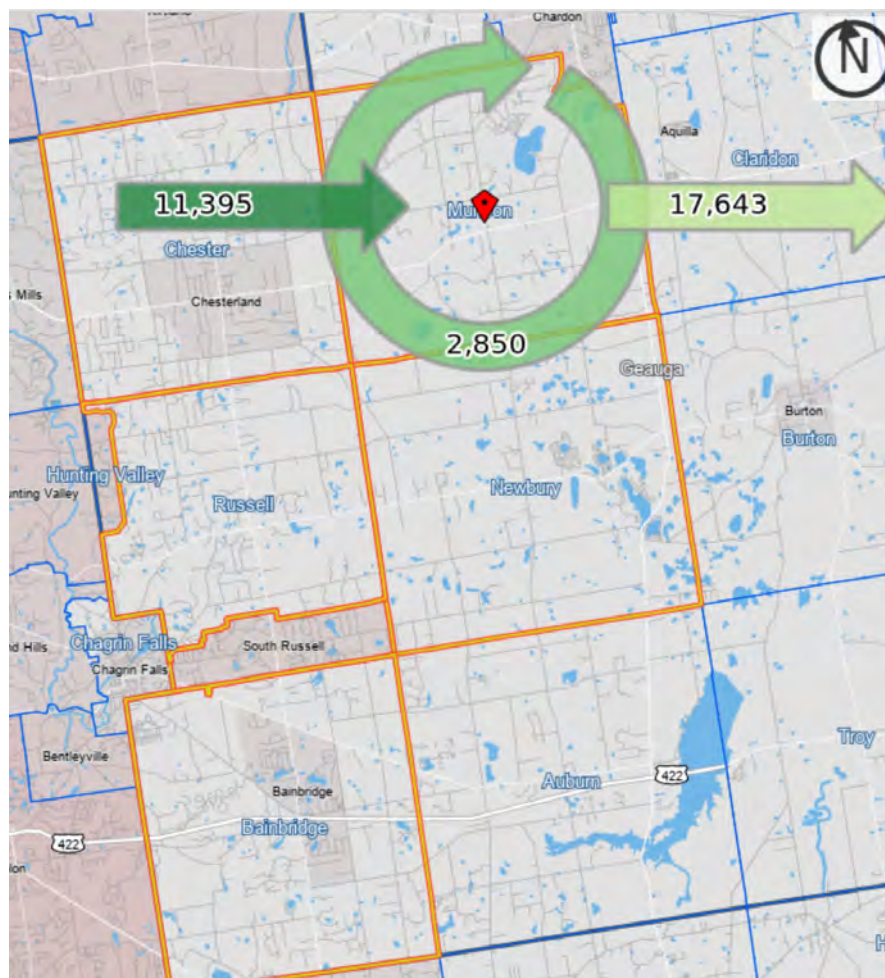
Chagrin Valley

EMPLOYMENT INFLOW-OUTFLOW

Bedroom Community

The area sees a net loss of 6,248 employees in its daytime population.

Employed and Living in the Selection Area	2,850
Employed in the Selection Area but Living Outside	11,395
Living in the Selection Area but Employed Outside	17,643
Net Inflow	-6,248





Chagrin Valley

COMMUTE PATTERNS

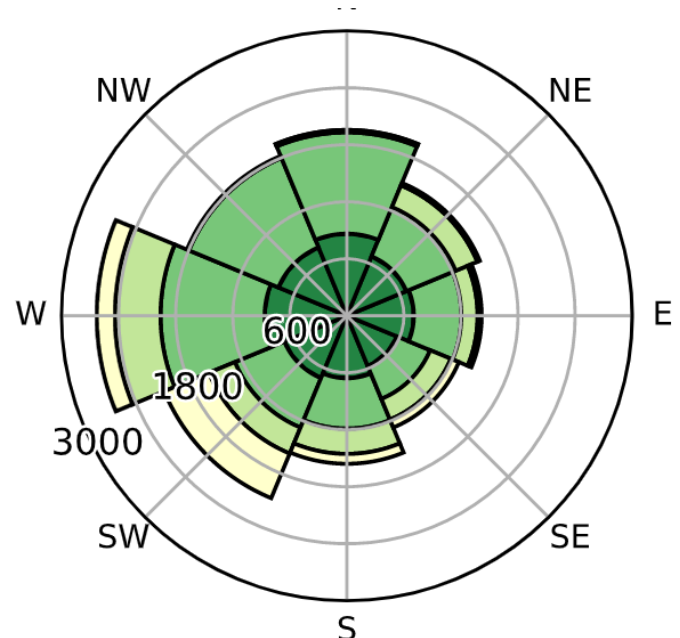
**OVER
1 IN 5** EMPLOYEES
COMMUTE
<10 MILES
TO CHAGRIN
VALLEY

**NEARLY
1 IN 5** EMPLOYEES
COMMUTE
25+ MILES
TO CHAGRIN
VALLEY

**Employees in Chagrin Valley -
Commute Direction & Distance
(2017)**

Commute Distance	Employees	Percent
Less than 10 miles	5,829	40.9%
10 to 24 miles	5,709	40.1%
25 to 50 miles	1,720	12.1%
Greater than 50 miles	987	6.9%
Total All Jobs	14,245	100.0%

Source: LEHD, U.S. Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies





Chagrin Valley

WORKFORCE PLACE OF RESIDENCE

OVER
2 IN 3

CHAGRIN VALLEY
EMPLOYEES RESIDE
OUTSIDE THE COUNTY

Employees in Chagrin Valley - Place of Residence (2017)

By County

Home County	Count	Share
Geauga County, OH	2,334	36.4%
Lake County, OH	1,662	25.9%
Cuyahoga County, OH	773	12.1%
Ashtabula County, OH	606	9.5%
Summit County, OH	177	2.8%
Portage County, OH	106	1.7%
Trumbull County, OH	102	1.6%
Lorain County, OH	86	1.3%
Mahoning County, OH	78	1.2%
Stark County, OH	68	1.1%
All Other Locations	419	6.5%
All Counties	14,245	100.0%

By Statistical Area

Home Statistical Area	Count	Share
Cleveland-Elyria, OH	10,146	71.2%
Akron, OH	1,978	13.9%
Youngstown-Warren-Boardman, OH-PA	525	3.7%
Ashtabula, OH	493	3.5%
Columbus, OH	190	1.3%
All Other Locations	913	6.4%
All Metropolitan/Micropolitan Areas (CBSA)	14,245	100.0%

Source: LEHD, U.S. Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies



Chagrin Valley

INDUSTRY SECTORS

1 IN 6



CHAGRIN VALLEY
WORKERS

HEALTH CARE &
SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

Jobs in Chagrin Valley by NAICS Industry Sector (2017)

NAICS Industry Sector	Employees	Percent
Health Care and Social Assistance	2,461	17.3%
Retail Trade	2,214	15.5%
Accommodation and Food Services	1,352	9.5%
Educational Services	1,280	9.0%
Administration & Support, Waste Management and Remediation	1,103	7.7%
Manufacturing	1,096	7.7%
Construction	910	6.4%
Other Services (excluding Public Administration)	848	6.0%
Wholesale Trade	663	4.7%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	646	4.5%
Public Administration	456	3.2%
Finance and Insurance	361	2.5%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	253	1.8%
Transportation and Warehousing	250	1.8%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	99	0.7%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	90	0.6%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	70	0.5%
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	59	0.4%
Information	34	0.2%
Utilities	0	0.0%

Source: LEHD, U.S. Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies



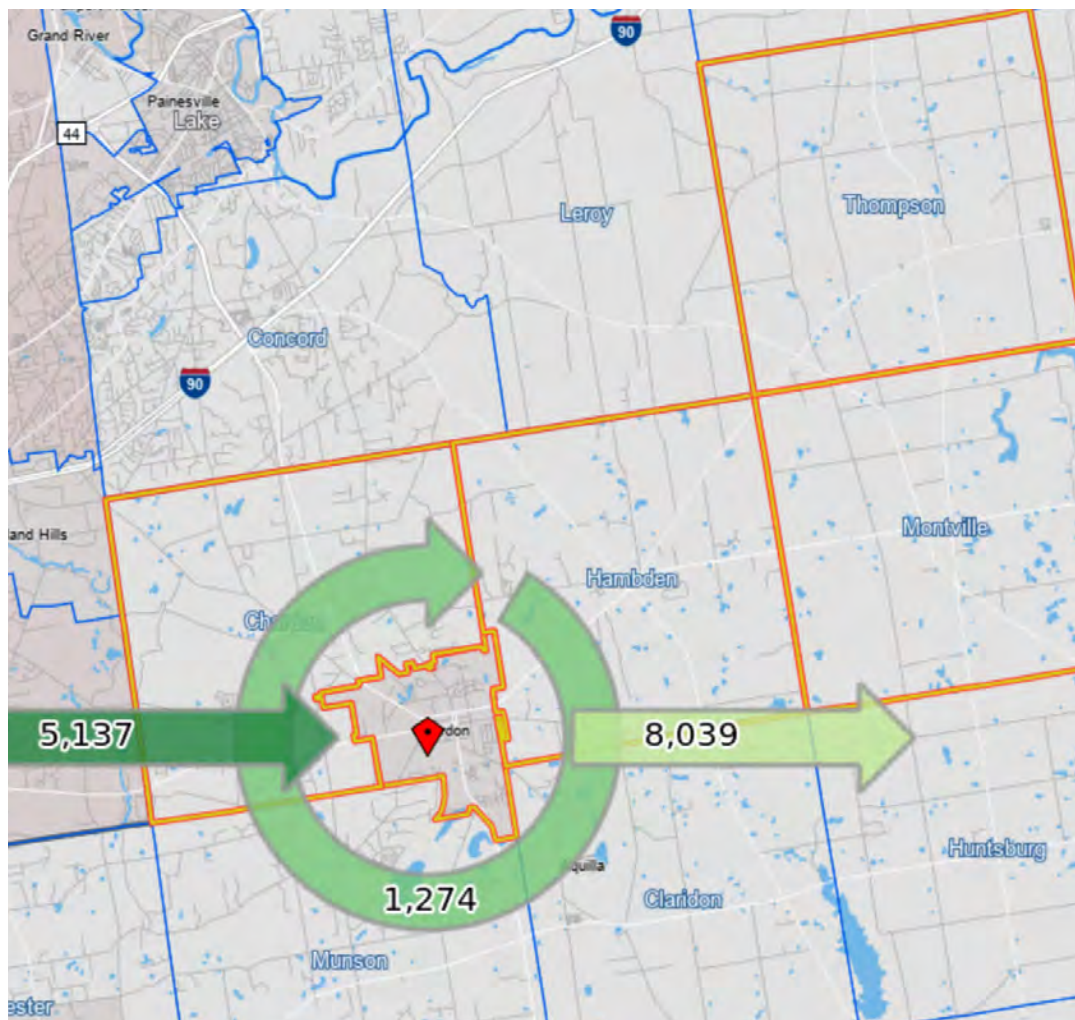
Northern Highlands

EMPLOYMENT INFLOW-OUTFLOW

Bedroom Community

The area sees a net loss of 2,902 employees in its daytime population.

Employed and Living in the Selection Area	1,274
Employed in the Selection Area but Living Outside	5,137
Living in the Selection Area but Employed Outside	8,039
Net Inflow	-2,902





Northern Highlands

COMMUTE PATTERNS

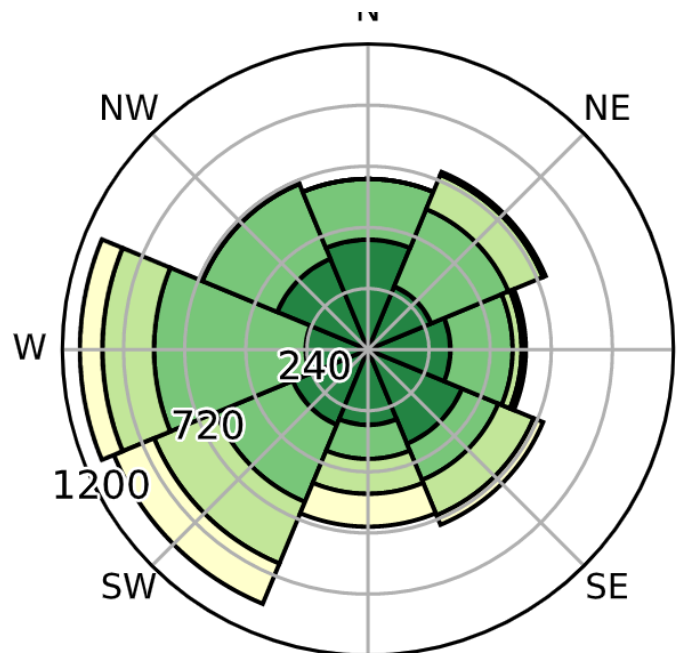
OVER 2 IN 5 EMPLOYEES
COMMUTE **<10 MILES**
TO NORTHERN
HIGHLANDS

OVER 1 IN 5 EMPLOYEES
COMMUTE **25+ MILES**
TO NORTHERN
HIGHLANDS

**Employees in Northern Highlands
- Commute Direction & Distance
(2017)**

Commute Distance	Employees	Percent
Less than 10 miles	2,672	41.7%
10 to 24 miles	2,337	36.5%
25 to 50 miles	933	14.6%
Greater than 50 miles	469	7.3%
Total All Jobs	6,411	100%

Source: LEHD, U.S. Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies





Northern Highlands

WORKFORCE PLACE OF RESIDENCE

OVER
1 IN 4

NORTHERN HIGHLANDS
EMPLOYEES RESIDE IN
LAKE COUNTY

Employees in Northern Highlands - Place of Residence (2017)

By County

Home County	Count	Share
Geauga County, OH	2,334	36.4%
Lake County, OH	1,662	25.9%
Cuyahoga County, OH	773	12.1%
Ashtabula County, OH	606	9.5%
Summit County, OH	177	2.8%
Portage County, OH	106	1.7%
Trumbull County, OH	102	1.6%
Lorain County, OH	86	1.3%
Mahoning County, OH	78	1.2%
Stark County, OH	68	1.1%
All Other Locations	419	6.5%
All Counties	6,411	100.0%

By Statistical Area

Home Statistical Area	Count	Share
Cleveland-Elyria, OH	4,900	76.4%
Ashtabula, OH	606	9.5%
Akron, OH	283	4.4%
Youngstown-Warren-Boardman, OH-PA	180	2.8%
Canton-Massillon, OH	71	1.1%
All Other Locations	371	5.8%
All Metropolitan/Micropolitan Areas (CBSA)	6,411	100.0%

Source: LEHD, U.S. Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies

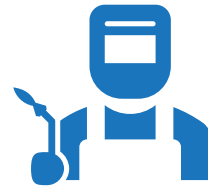


Northern Highlands

INDUSTRY SECTORS

1 IN 6

NORTHERN
HIGHLANDS
WORKERS



MANUFACTURING

Jobs in Northern Highlands by NAICS Industry Sector (2017)

NAICS Industry Sector	Employees	Percent
Manufacturing	1,080	16.8%
Retail Trade	956	14.9%
Health Care and Social Assistance	847	13.2%
Educational Services	586	9.1%
Accommodation and Food Services	580	9.0%
Construction	478	7.5%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	328	5.1%
Public Administration	328	5.1%
Other Services (excluding Public Administration)	266	4.1%
Administration & Support, Waste Management and Remediation	265	4.1%
Wholesale Trade	207	3.2%
Finance and Insurance	118	1.8%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	112	1.7%
Transportation and Warehousing	79	1.2%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	66	1.0%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	46	0.7%
Information	42	0.7%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	27	0.4%
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	0	0.0%
Utilities	0	0.0%

Source: LEHD, U.S. Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies



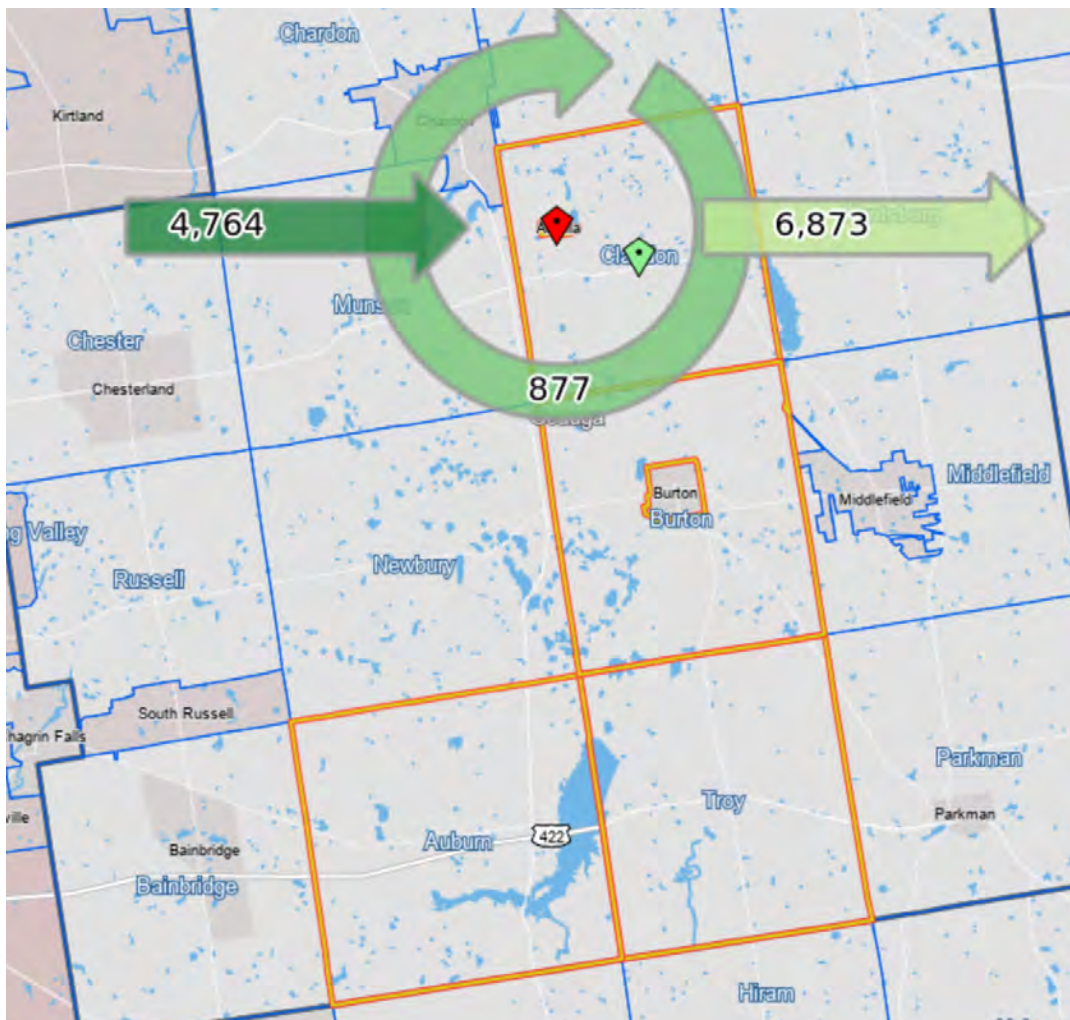
Cuyahoga Headwaters

EMPLOYMENT INFLOW-OUTFLOW

Bedroom Community

The area sees a net loss of 2,109 employees in its daytime population.

Employed and Living in the Selection Area	877
Employed in the Selection Area but Living Outside	4,764
Living in the Selection Area but Employed Outside	6,873
Net Inflow	-2,109





Cuyahoga Headwaters

COMMUTE PATTERNS

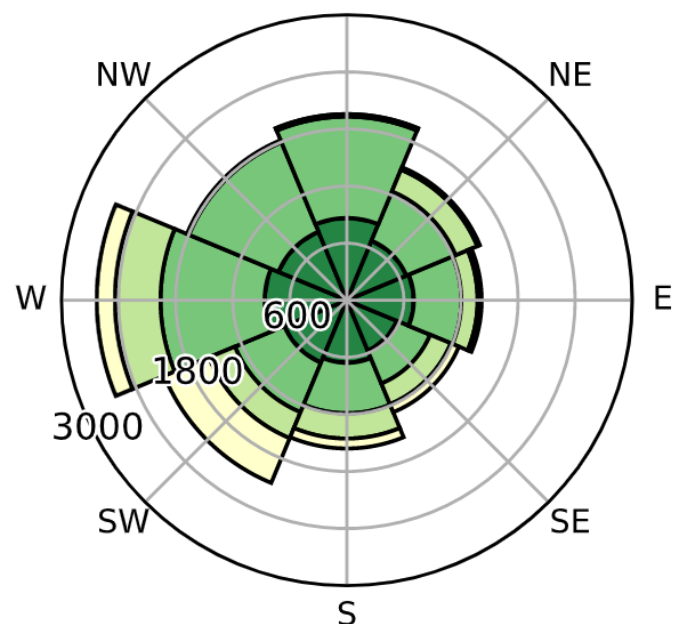
62% EMPLOYEES
COMMUTE
10+ MILES
TO CUYAHOGA
HEADWATERS

NEARLY
1 IN 5 EMPLOYEES
COMMUTE
25+ MILES
TO CUYAHOGA
HEADWATERS

**Employees in Cuyahoga Headwaters
- Commute Direction & Distance
(2017)**

Commute Distance	Employees	Percent
Less than 10 miles	2,140	37.9%
10 to 24 miles	2,439	43.2%
25 to 50 miles	843	14.9%
Greater than 50 miles	219	3.9%
Total All Jobs	5,641	100.0%

Source: LEHD, U.S. Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies





Cuyahoga Headwaters

WORKFORCE PLACE OF RESIDENCE

OVER
3 IN 5

CUYAHOGA HEADWATERS
EMPLOYEES RESIDE
OUTSIDE THE COUNTY

Employees in Cuyahoga Headwaters - Place of Residence (2017)

By County

Home County	Count	Share
Geauga County, OH	2,184	38.7%
Trumbull County, OH	873	15.5%
Portage County, OH	670	11.9%
Cuyahoga County, OH	613	10.9%
Lake County, OH	413	7.3%
Summit County, OH	251	4.4%
Ashtabula County, OH	244	4.3%
Mahoning County, OH	65	1.2%
Stark County, OH	47	0.8%
Medina County, OH	41	0.7%
All Other Locations	240	4.3%
All Counties	5,641	100.0%

By Statistical Area

Home Statistical Area	Count	Share
Cleveland-Elyria, OH	3,288	58.3%
Youngstown-Warren-Boardman, OH-PA	940	16.7%
Akron, OH	921	16.3%
Ashtabula, OH	244	4.3%
Canton-Massillon, OH	50	0.9%
All Other Locations	198	3.5%
All Metropolitan/ Micropolitan Areas (CBSA)	5,641	100.0%

Source: LEHD, U.S. Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies

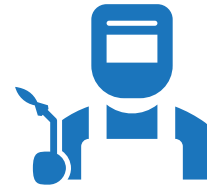


Cuyahoga Headwaters

INDUSTRY SECTORS

26%

CUYAHOGA
HEADWATERS
WORKERS



MANUFACTURING

Jobs in Cuyahoga Headwaters by NAICS Industry Sector (2017)

NAICS Industry Sector	Employees	Percent
Manufacturing	1,472	26.1%
Wholesale Trade	836	14.8%
Construction	573	10.2%
Retail Trade	381	6.8%
Health Care and Social Assistance	307	5.4%
Accommodation and Food Services	303	5.4%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	279	4.9%
Information	242	4.3%
Educational Services	224	4.0%
Administration & Support, Waste Management and Remediation	197	3.5%
Public Administration	195	3.5%
Transportation and Warehousing	186	3.3%
Other Services (excluding Public Administration)	152	2.7%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	140	2.5%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	56	1.0%
Finance and Insurance	41	0.7%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	32	0.6%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	13	0.2%
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	12	0.2%
Utilities	0	0.0%

Source: LEHD, U.S. Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies



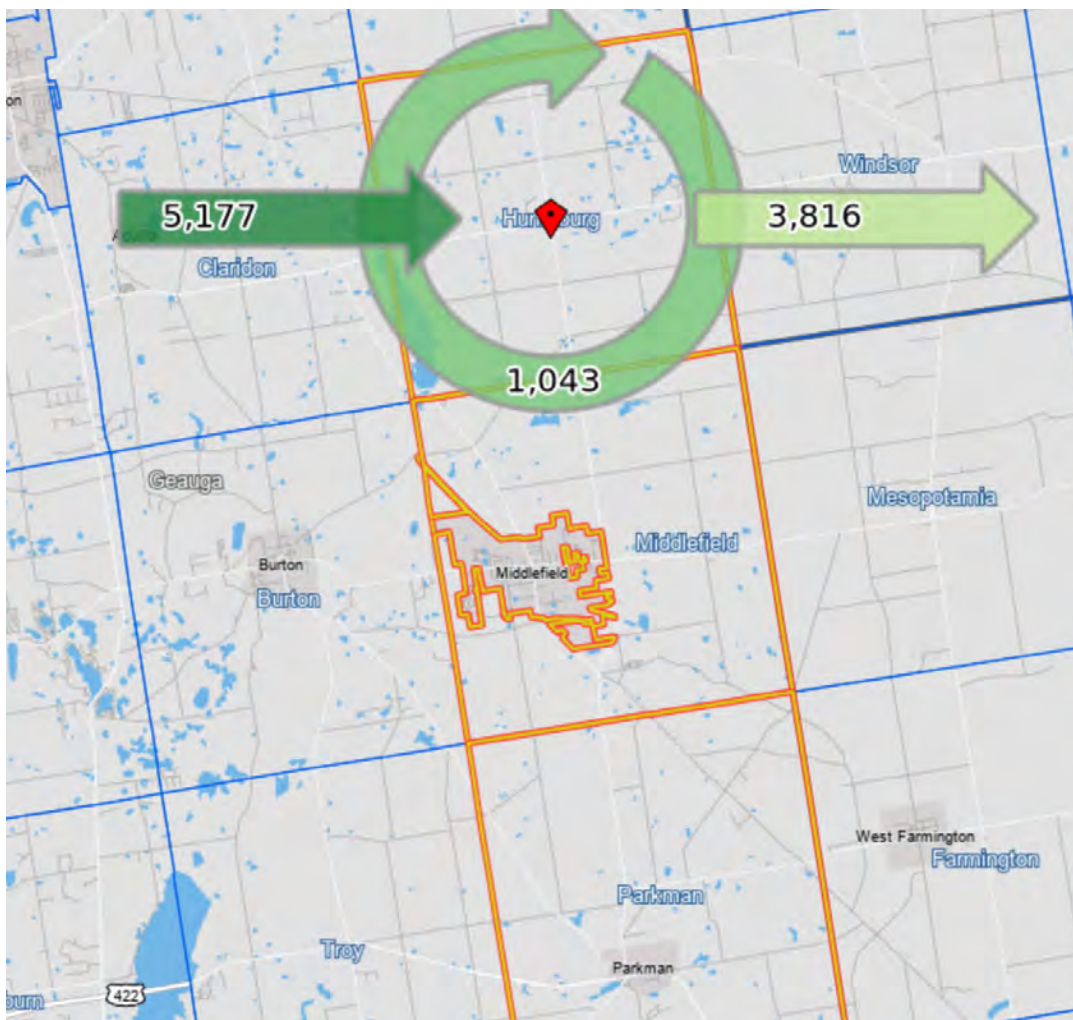
Amish Country

EMPLOYMENT INFLOW-OUTFLOW

Job Center

The area sees a net gain of 1,361 employees in its daytime population.

Employed and Living in the Selection Area	1,043
Employed in the Selection Area but Living Outside	5,177
Living in the Selection Area but Employed Outside	3,816
Net Inflow	1,361





Amish Country

COMMUTE PATTERNS

70%

EMPLOYEES
COMMUTE
10+ MILES
TO AMISH
COUNTRY

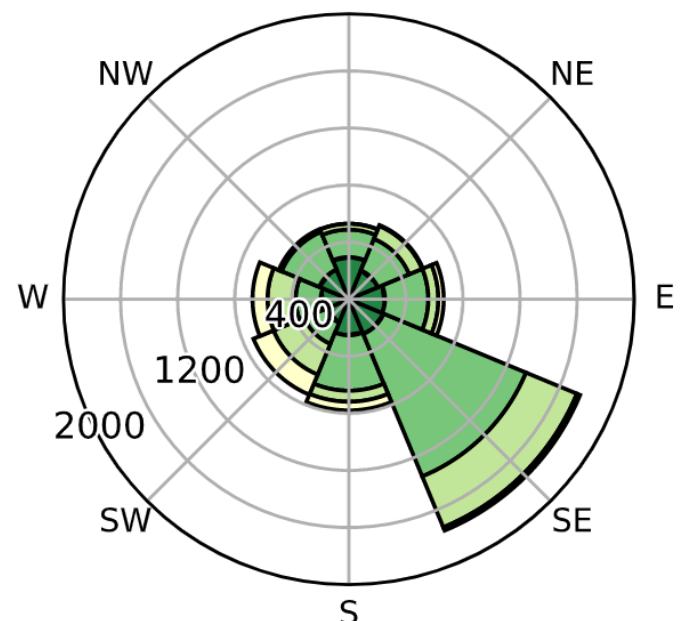
NEARLY
1 IN 4

EMPLOYEES
COMMUTE
25+ MILES
TO AMISH
COUNTRY

**Employees in Geauga County -
Commute Direction & Distance
(2017)**

Commute Distance	Employees	Percent
Less than 10 miles	1,884	30.3%
10 to 24 miles	2,827	45.5%
25 to 50 miles	1,117	18.0%
Greater than 50 miles	392	6.3%
Total All Jobs	6,220	100.0%

Source: LEHD, U.S. Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies





Amish Country

WORKFORCE PLACE OF RESIDENCE

NEARLY
3 IN 4 **AMISH COUNTRY**
EMPLOYEES RESIDE
OUTSIDE THE COUNTY

Employees in Amish Country - Place of Residence (2017)

By County

Home County	Count	Share
Trumbull County, OH	2,113	34.0%
Geauga County, OH	1,712	27.5%
Ashtabula County, OH	564	9.1%
Portage County, OH	465	7.5%
Lake County, OH	298	4.8%
Cuyahoga County, OH	239	3.8%
Summit County, OH	185	3.0%
Mahoning County, OH	125	2.0%
Lorain County, OH	74	1.2%
Stark County, OH	67	1.1%
All Other Locations	378	6.1%
All Counties	6,220	100.0%

By Statistical Area

Home Statistical Area	Count	Share
Cleveland-Elyria, OH	2,355	37.9%
Youngstown-Warren-Boardman, OH-PA	2,273	36.5%
Akron, OH	650	10.5%
Ashtabula, OH	564	9.1%
Canton-Massillon, OH	76	1.2%
All Other Locations	302	4.9%
All Metropolitan/ Micropolitan Areas (CBSA)	6,220	100.0%

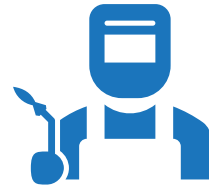
Source: LEHD, U.S. Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies



Amish Country

INDUSTRY SECTORS

56%



**AMISH COUNTRY
WORKERS**

MANUFACTURING

Jobs in Amish Country by NAICS Industry Sector (2017)

NAICS Industry Sector	Employees	Percent
Manufacturing	3,455	55.5%
Retail Trade	605	9.7%
Accommodation and Food Services	408	6.6%
Health Care and Social Assistance	334	5.4%
Wholesale Trade	318	5.1%
Administration & Support, Waste Management and Remediation	217	3.5%
Educational Services	211	3.4%
Construction	154	2.5%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	108	1.7%
Other Services (excluding Public Administration)	91	1.5%
Transportation and Warehousing	88	1.4%
Public Administration	63	1.0%
Finance and Insurance	61	1.0%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	51	0.8%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	28	0.5%
Information	8	0.1%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	6	0.1%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	6	0.1%
Utilities	5	0.1%
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	3	0.0%

Source: LEHD, U.S. Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies

Real Estate Analysis

Industrial Real Estate Conditions

The Geauga County industrial real estate market currently has 10.2 million square feet of existing inventory spanning 419 buildings. As of Q2 2020, there are 2 buildings under construction totaling 350,000 square feet. Overall, there is a lack of buildings with available space both for lease and for sale. As of June 2020, there are only 23 properties with available space for lease and 14 properties listed for sale. The tables below and on the following page provide a snapshot of the Geauga County industrial market inventory, leasing, and sales from the CoStar commercial database as of June 2020, unless otherwise stated.

INDUSTRIAL MARKET INVENTORY SNAPSHOT

Inventory	Current
Total Existing Buildings	419
Total Existing Square Feet	10,151,479
12-Month Construction Starts Square Feet	112,000
Under Construction Square Feet	350,000
12-Month Delivered Square Feet	0

INDUSTRIAL MARKET LEASING SNAPSHOT

For Lease Availability	Current	5-Year Average
Full-Service Rent per Square Foot	\$5.35	\$5.54
NNN Rent per Square Foot	\$4.96	\$4.69
Vacancy Rate	1.1%	1.5%
Vacant Square Feet	110,417	144,077
Months on Market	14.8	18.1

Real Estate Analysis

INDUSTRIAL MARKET SALES SNAPSHOT (June 2019 – June 2020)

For Sale Availability	1-Year Sales	5-Year Average
Asking Price per Square Foot	\$20	\$37
Sale to Asking Price Differential	-5.4%	+2.1%
Properties Sold	8	61
Months to Sale	25.9	15.1
For Sale Listings	13	N/A

INDUSTRIAL MARKET HIGHLIGHTS

There are several indicators from looking at the current industrial real estate inventory:

Lack of Available Industrial Real Estate – Geauga County has only four industrial buildings with availability of 25,000 – 99,000 square feet and 2 buildings that have 100,000+ square feet available for lease. These four buildings are listed in the table below and the square feet available is registered as of June 2020. The lack of larger available spaces for lease is a barrier to attracting modern manufacturing companies that are often looking for larger spaces for their operations.

INDUSTRIAL MARKET INVENTORY SNAPSHOT

25,000+ Square Foot Spaces Available for Lease	Square Feet Available
14880 Bonner Dr	116,416
16490 Chillicothe Rd (Building 1)	104,000
16490 Chillicothe Rd (Building 2)	39,155
10145 Queens Way	30,088
16855 Park Circle Dr	27,400
16625 Wren Rd	25,000

Real Estate Analysis

Age of Inventory – Geauga County has 383 buildings in the CoStar commercial database that have a recorded year-built date. Of those buildings, 56 buildings (roughly 15%), are newer construction. Only 5 of these buildings are over 50,000 square feet. For this assessment, newer construction refers to any building constructed during or after the year 2000. Conversely, functionally obsolete buildings have been defined for this assessment as any building constructed before the year 1980, subject to those that have been renovated. Currently, 265 buildings, or 69%, of the industrial inventory is in this functionally obsolete range, limiting options that modern manufacturing businesses have for locating operations in Geauga County.

INDUSTRIAL YEAR-BUILT SNAPSHOT

Year Built	Number of Buildings	Percent of Total	Square Feet
2010 to 2020	16	5%	278,966
2000 to 2009	40	10%	748,338
1990 to 1999	62	16%	2,521,403
1980 to 1989	59	15%	1,412,659
1970 to 1979	78	20%	1,249,686
1960 to 1969	44	11%	1,034,470
1950 to 1959	45	12%	440,600
1940 to 1949	19	5%	351,044
1939 and Older	20	6%	398,312
Total	383	100%	8,435,478

The lack of available and relevant industrial real estate is one of the primary threats to the retention and attraction of new companies to County. Geauga County's peer groups are extremely proactive and aggressive in building out its industrial supply and companies within the County will find it more advantageous to look outside of the County for facilities that meet their needs. We will cover speculative development later in this report but we would recommend a concerted effort to work local developers and property owners to understand the needs of current employers and implement methods to address those needs.

Real Estate Analysis

Residential Housing Conditions

A balance of available and quality housing can be important in the context of economic development and attraction efforts. In other words, where will people live when they arrive in Geauga County? The following data is provided for a snapshot of the County's housing stock.

According to the most recent five-year estimates by the U.S. Census' American Community Survey. There is a total of 37,075 housing units in Geauga County, of which 95.2% are occupied and 4.7% are vacant. Of the occupied housing units, 86.1% are owner-occupied, while 13.9% are renter-occupied.

According to ACS estimates, the median estimated market rate rent across the County is \$815 per month. Within the range of \$500 to \$900 per month rent, there are 2,215 units, or 50.8% of the current occupied rental inventory where the tenant is paying rent.

There is a sharp decline after the year 2009 on the number of new housing units built in Geauga County. From 2000 to 2009 there were 3,935 new housing units constructed. That number fell to 370 new units constructed between 2010 to 2013 and then again to 319 new units constructed 2014 and after.

Multi-family housing options for individuals and families in particular are very limited in Geauga County. According to CoStar data, as of June 2020, no multi-family housing units were under construction and there were only 74 units listed as vacant out of a total 1,850 units. The units are grouped into 29 different buildings across the County.

We would suggest further action be taken by the County to identify communities that would support additional multifamily development, specifically those communities with a large workforce in need of affordable housing solutions. The Millennial workforce is more so than ever less inclined to make home purchases and prefer to rent in amenity rich Multi-Family complexes. If the County wants to attract and retain this workforce for its employers it needs to undertake this initiative and educate communities of this trend and importance to the overall economic growth of the County. Overcoming the existing stigma of Multi-Family development that currently exists in the County will be the greatest challenge

It would also be our suggestion to identify potential development of higher density, low maintenance housing geared towards the retirement age population. Due to a prevalence of large lot, minimum acreage zoning in the County, seniors are less inclined to purchase homes within the County that carry high levels of maintenance. Bainbridge Township has shown success with this product and has attracted a high income demographic to these developments.

Real Estate Analysis

The following tables provide a snapshot of the County's most recent residential housing statistics for consideration:

RESIDENTIAL QUANTITY BY STRUCTURE SNAPSHOT

Housing Quantity	Number of Units	Percent of Total
Single-Family, detached	32,036	86.4%
Single-Family, attached	1,101	3.0%
2 Units	764	2.1%
3 or 4 Units	511	1.4%
5 to 9 Units	461	1.2%
10 to 19 Units	336	0.9%
20 to 49 Units	299	0.8%
50 or More Units	462	1.2%
Mobile Home	1,105	3.0%
Total	37,075	100%

RESIDENTIAL YEAR-BUILT SNAPSHOT

Year Built	Number of Units	Percent of Total
2014 or later	319	0.9%
2010 to 2013	370	1.0%
2000 to 2009	3,935	10.6%
1990 to 1999	5,763	15.5%
1980 to 1989	4,353	11.7%
1970 to 1979	6,323	17.1%
1960 to 1969	4,337	11.7%
1950 to 1959	5,383	14.5%
1940 to 1949	1,451	3.9%
1939 to earlier	4,841	13.1%
Median Year Built = 1975	37,075	100%



Market Trends

INDUSTRIAL & FLEX

INVENTORY SF 10.6 M 0% Prior Period 10.6 M	UNDER CONSTRUCTION SF 350 K +1,200.0% Prior Period 26.9 K	12 MO NET ABSORPTION SF (17.7 K) -136.8% Prior Period 48.1 K	VACANCY RATE 1.0% +0.1% Prior Period 0.9%	MARKET RENT/SF \$5.96 +1.0% Prior Period \$5.90	MARKET SALE PRICE/SF \$45 +0.9% Prior Period \$44	MARKET CAP RATE 9.0% +0.2% Prior Period 8.8%
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Key Metrics

Availability		Inventory	
Vacant SF	109 K ↑	Existing Buildings	418 ↓
Sublet SF	0 ↓	Under Construction Avg SF	175 K ↓
Availability Rate	5.7% ↑	12 Mo Demolished SF	0 ↓
Available SF	628 K ↑	12 Mo Occupancy % at Delivery	-
Available Asking Rent/SF	\$5.22 ↓	12 Mo Construction Starts SF	319 K ↓
Occupancy Rate	99.0% ↓	12 Mo Delivered SF	0 ↓
Percent Leased Rate	99.0% ↓	12 Mo Avg Delivered SF	-
Sales Past Year		Demand	
Asking Price Per SF	\$47 ↑	12 Mo Net Absorp % of Inventory	-0.2% ↓
Sale to Asking Price Differential	-5.4% ↓	12 Mo Leased SF	39.7 K ↑
Sales Volume	\$3.2 M ↓	Months on Market	12.8 ↑
Properties Sold	11 ↓	Months to Lease	-
Months to Sale	25.9 ↑	Months Vacant	-
For Sale Listings	13 ↓	24 Mo Lease Renewal Rate	91.6%
Total For Sale SF	961 K ↑	Population Growth 5 Yrs	0.1%



Market Trends

MULTIFAMILY

INVENTORY UNITS

1,850 0%
Prior Period 1,850

UNDER CONSTRUCTION UNITS

0 -
Prior Period 0

12 MO ABSORPTION UNITS

10 -5.2%
Prior Period 11

VACANCY RATE

3.9% -0.6%
Prior Period 4.5%

MARKET RENT/UNIT

\$699 +3.4%
Prior Period \$676

MARKET SALE PRICE/UNIT

\$36.6 K +7.5%
Prior Period \$34.1 K

MARKET CAP RATE

8.8% -0.1%
Prior Period 8.9%

Key Metrics

Availability		Inventory	
Vacant Units	72 ↓	Existing Buildings	29 ↓
Asking Rent/SF	\$0.98 ↑	Average Units Per Bldg	64 ↓
Concession Rate	0.4% ↓	12 Mo Demolished Units	0 ↓
Studio Asking Rent	\$550 ↑	12 Mo Occupancy % at Delivery	-
1 Bedroom Asking Rent/Unit	\$561 ↑	12 Mo Construction Starts Units	0 ↓
2 Bedroom Asking Rent/Unit	\$838 ↑	12 Mo Delivered Units	0 ↓
3 Bedroom Asking Rent/Unit	\$874 ↑	12 Mo Avg Delivered Units	-
Sales Past Year		Demand	
Asking Price Per Unit	-	12 Mo Absorp % of Inventory	0.6% ↑
Sale to Asking Price Differential	-	Median Household Income	81.6 K
Sales Volume	\$3.1 M ↓	Population Growth 5 Yrs 20-29	16.7%
Properties Sold	3 ↑	Population Growth 5 Yrs 30-39	-3.4%
Months to Sale	-	Population Growth 5 Yrs 40-54	-9.3%
For Sale Listings	-	Population Growth 5 Yrs 55+	4.7%
Total For Sale Units	-	Population Growth 5 Yrs	-0.1%



Market Trends

OFFICE

INVENTORY SF 2.5 M 0% Prior Period 2.5 M	UNDER CONSTRUCTION SF 0 - Prior Period 0	12 MO NET ABSORPTION SF (27.8 K) -676.4% Prior Period 4.8 K	VACANCY RATE 8.9% +1.8% Prior Period 7.1%	MARKET RENT/SF \$15.27 +0.7% Prior Period \$15.16	MARKET SALE PRICE/SF \$92 +2.1% Prior Period \$91	MARKET CAP RATE 9.6% +0.1% Prior Period 9.5%
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Key Metrics

Availability		Inventory	
Vacant SF	142 K ↑	Existing Buildings	218 ↓
Sublet SF	0 ↓	Under Construction Avg SF	-
Availability Rate	12.1% ↑	12 Mo Demolished SF	0 ↓
Available SF	193 K ↑	12 Mo Occupancy % at Delivery	-
Available Asking Rent/SF	\$16.32 ↓	12 Mo Construction Starts SF	0 ↓
Occupancy Rate	91.1% ↓	12 Mo Delivered SF	0 ↓
Percent Leased Rate	91.1% ↓	12 Mo Avg Delivered SF	-
Sales Past Year		Demand	
Asking Price Per SF	\$123	12 Mo Net Absorp % of Inventory	-1.7% ↓
Sale to Asking Price Differential	-6.6%	12 Mo Leased SF	12.3 K ↓
Sales Volume	\$3.4 M ↓	Months on Market	11.8 ↑
Properties Sold	6 ↓	Months to Lease	-
Months to Sale	15.6 ↑	Months Vacant	-
For Sale Listings	13 ↓	24 Mo Lease Renewal Rate	76.4%
Total For Sale SF	142 K ↓	Population Growth 5 Yrs	0.5%



Market Trends

RETAIL

INVENTORY SF

6.4 M +0.6%

Prior Period 6.4 M

UNDER CONSTRUCTION SF

0 -100%

Prior Period 36.7 K

12 MO NET ABSORPTION SF

(16 K) -115.8%

Prior Period 101 K

VACANCY RATE

2.8% +0.8%

Prior Period 2.0%

MARKET RENT/SF

\$11.99 +0.4%

Prior Period \$11.95

MARKET SALE PRICE/SF

\$97 +1.7%

Prior Period \$95

MARKET CAP RATE

8.5% 0%

Prior Period 8.5%

Key Metrics

Availability		Inventory	
Vacant SF	180 K ↑	Existing Buildings	484 ↓
Sublet SF	0 ↓	Under Construction Avg SF	-
Availability Rate	5.5% ↓	12 Mo Demolished SF	0 ↓
Available SF	355 K ↓	12 Mo Occupancy % at Delivery	98.7% ↑
Available Asking Rent/SF	\$15.56 ↑	12 Mo Construction Starts SF	0 ↓
Occupancy Rate	97.2% ↓	12 Mo Delivered SF	36.3 K ↓
Percent Leased Rate	97.2% ↓	12 Mo Avg Delivered SF	19.9 K ↑
Sales Past Year		Demand	
Asking Price Per SF	\$79 ↓	12 Mo Net Absorp % of Inventory	-0.2% ↓
Sale to Asking Price Differential	-19.8% ↓	12 Mo Leased SF	68.8 K ↑
Sales Volume	\$15.3 M ↑	Months on Market	16.4 ↑
Properties Sold	24 ↑	Months to Lease	-
Months to Sale	23.7 ↑	Months Vacant	-
For Sale Listings	12 ↓	24 Mo Lease Renewal Rate	85.4%
Total For Sale SF	192 K ↓	Population Growth 5 Yrs	0.3%

Development Sites

Development Sites Summary

In our analysis of the County's land development inventory it became quickly apparent that there are a number of potentially great sites that are either under-marketed or don't have infrastructure to support development. There are also a number of industrial parks with available land, however, these are hard to locate with non-existent signage. While we understand that delivering appropriate infrastructure to new development sites is capital intensive, we would however recommend at a minimum that the County begin working with existing land owners and industrial park developers to identify ways for more prominent signage and possible State incentives to deliver infrastructure. For instance, JOBS Ohio has just released their Ohio Site Improvement Program (OSIP) to assist in the funding of infrastructure development. Not all sites will qualify for this program, but it could be a potential resource to activate latent sites within the County.

From our analysis we have identified three sites specifically within the County that we believe present the best near term development opportunity and should be prioritized through marketing efforts and community investment. The three sites are as follows:

1. Bonner Industrial Park – 15213 Madison Rd, Middlefield, Ohio 44062
2. Auburn Land – 17920 Ravenna Rd, Auburn Township, Ohio 44023
3. Merritt Road Site controlled by the County and University Hospital

Development Sites

Site 1 - Bonner Industrial Park – 15213 Madison Rd, Middlefield, Ohio 44062

The Bonner Industrial Park is located within the Village of Middlefield in Geauga County. This build-to-suit industrial site features a total of 152.2 acres, of which 122 acres are contiguous, developable land with utilities available. The site has the ability to be divided to a minimum of 5 acres.

Utility Highlights

- Electric – FirstEnergy
 - o 13,200 V, 3-phase
 - o Property is located 1 mile from a substation
 - o Possibility for redundant power with upgrade
- Gas – Northeast Ohio Gas Corporation/Dominion
 - o 4" gas line
 - o 60 psi
 - o Site could be upgraded to 15 psi and 10,000 – 15,000 MCF
- Water – Village of Middlefield
 - o 10" water line
 - o Capacity At-Site: 500,000 GPD
 - o Excess Water Capacity At-Site: 200,000 GPD
 - o Water Treatment Facility Capacity: 2,000,000 GPD
 - o Water Treatment Facility Excess Capacity: 200,00 GPD
 - Village is currently working to upgrade the water utility system to have 1.5 million gallons of excess water capacity by 2021
- Sewer – Village of Middlefield
 - o 10" sewer line
 - o Capacity At-Site: 400,000 GPD
 - o Excess Sewer Capacity At-Site: 400,000 GPD
 - The system can be expanded another 500,000 GPD on the current system when it hits 80% capacity
- Fiber – Spectrum Business/Everstream
 - o Up to 100 Gbps
- Telecom – Windstream/Spectrum

Development Sites

Site 1 - Bonner Industrial Park – 15213 Madison Rd, Middlefield, Ohio 44062

HIGHWAY ACCESS

Highway	Distance to Highway
US-87	0.5 miles
US-422	6 miles
US-322	6 miles

INTERSTATE ACCESS

Interstate	Distance to Interstate
I-90	21 miles
I-271	22 miles
I-480	30 miles
I-76	32 miles

AIRPORT ACCESS

Airport	Distance to Airport
Geauga County Airport	2 miles
Willoughby Lost Nation Airport	34 miles
Cleveland Hopkins International Airport	50 miles

PORT ACCESS

Port	Distance to Port
Cleveland Port	49 miles

RAIL ACCESS

Rail	Distance to Rail
Jefferson	34 feet

Zoning: Industrial

Acreage: 152.20 acres

Price/Acre: \$60,000

Potential Incentives: The property sits within Middlefield's Community Re-Investment Area (CRA) as well as within a designated Opportunity Zone. A revolving loan fund is offered by both the Village of Middlefield and Geauga County.

Site Benefits: In-place infrastructure, economic incentives, business friendly community, and workforce make this a very attractive site.

Development Sites



Site 1 - Bonner Industrial Park – 15213 Madison Rd, Middlefield, Ohio 44062



Development Sites

Site 2 - Auburn Land – 17920 Ravenna Rd, Auburn Township, Ohio 44023

The Auburn Land on Ravenna Rd is located within Auburn Township in Geauga County. This industrial/office site features a total of 83.16 acres divided into two separate lots of 46.39 acres to the west of Ravenna Rd and 36.77 acres to the east of Ravenna Rd. The parcels can be purchased separately or configured together with additional land options for a total of approximately 100 acres.

Utility Highlights

- Electric – FirstEnergy
- Gas – Northeast Ohio Gas Corporation/Dominion
- Sewer – Auburn Township
 - o \$3 million sewer project completed to accommodate the development of the site

HIGHWAY ACCESS

Highway	Distance to Highway
SR-44	0.1 miles
US-422	14 miles

INTERSTATE ACCESS

Interstate	Distance to Interstate
I-80	13.8 miles
I-271	16 miles

AIRPORT ACCESS

Airport	Distance to Airport
Geauga County Airport	15 miles
Cleveland Hopkins International Airport	37 miles

PORT ACCESS

Port	Distance to Port
Cleveland Port	34 miles

Development Sites

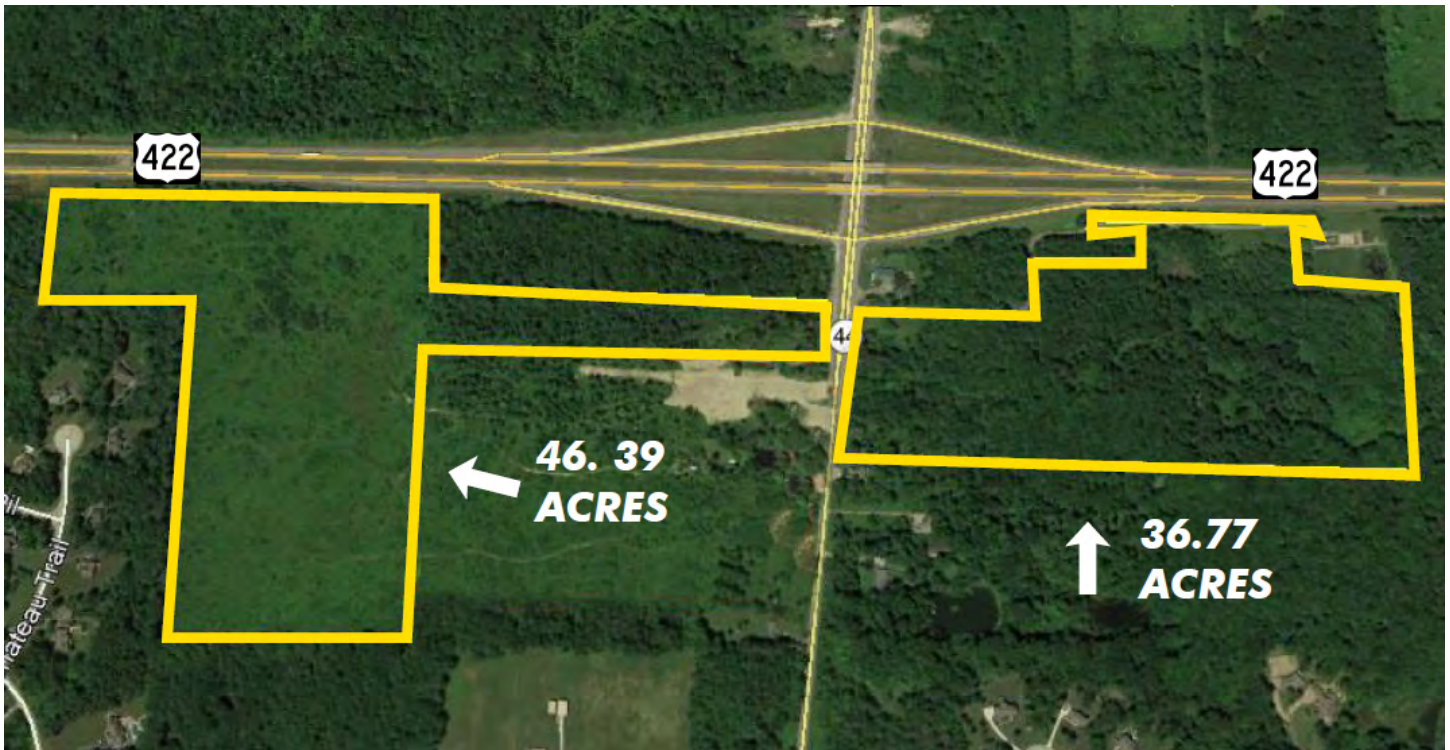
Site 2 - Auburn Land – 17920 Ravenna Rd, Auburn Township, Ohio 44023

Zoning: B-4: Office/Light Industrial

Acreage: 83.16 acres (+- 100 acres with additional land options)

Price/Acre: \$65,000/acre

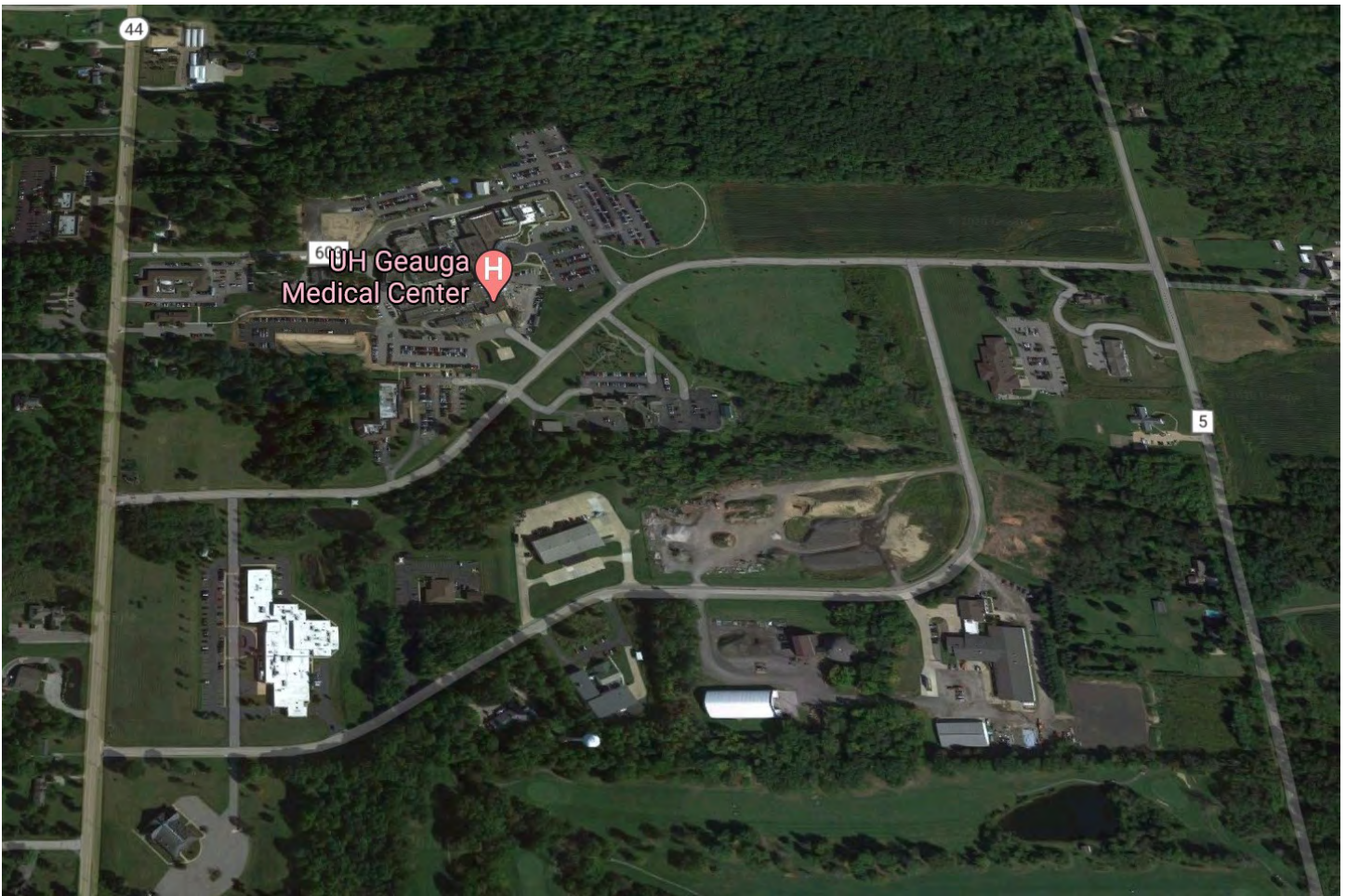
Site Benefits: In-place infrastructure specifically sewer and excellent freeway access to two vital transportation routes. It is our understanding that the sewer assessment burns off in 5 years which will be an added benefit for end users. The County should investigate OSIP program (Ohio Site Improvement Program) to deliver water to the site(s).



Development Sites

Site 3 - Merritt Road Site controlled by the County and University Hospital

The Merritt Road and Ravenwood site represent approximately 100+ acres of future development land that is controlled by the County and University Hospitals. Due to the entities involved, we believe that this would make an excellent site to structure a Public Private Partnership development with the County for Mixed-Use and Industrial. The County's potential consolidation of government offices will act as a catalyst for investment and capital to the area along with University Hospital's desire to add larger conferencing facilities and hospitality to the area. There is also interest from UH to further develop the area for additional senior care services to provide an expanded continuum of care on one campus. The site also benefits from in-place utilities and infrastructure along with being the geographical center of the County.



Development Sites

Consideration for Speculative Industrial Building

The Team's national experience suggests there is a surplus of functionally obsolete real estate and the case for building speculative product is strengthening in many markets across the United States as productive inventory vacancy diminishes. To assess and make a data-driven recommendation, this section of the report looks primarily at the availability of industrial real estate in Geauga County with an emphasis on building age and vacancy rates.

From a high-level perspective, the broader Geauga County industrial market continues to remain strong, but there is no speculative construction underway or proposed to meet that demand. Industrial real estate in the adjacent counties is also included in the analysis. The counties included are Cuyahoga, Lake, Ashtabula, Trumbull, Portage and Summit, Ohio. Note, the statistics of these areas are not included in the real estate sections in prior sections.

The commercial real estate database indicated there are 20 industrial properties currently proposed (12) or under construction (8) in the 7-county area. There are currently no properties listed as "Under Construction" in Geauga County. The following tables provide a breakdown of the proposed and under construction buildings:

PROPOSED BUILDINGS

Address	County	Square Feet	Building Type
9055 Bank St	Cuyahoga	22,800	Warehouse
5530 Chevrolet Blvd	Cuyahoga	200,000	Distribution
6801 Cochran Rd	Cuyahoga	166,400	Warehouse
Erico Dr	Cuyahoga	304,200	Industrial
24800 Miles Rd	Cuyahoga	312,000	Distribution
5141 Richmond Rd	Cuyahoga	40,000	Warehouse
5551 Venture Dr	Cuyahoga	200,000	Manufacturing
42500 Victory Pkwy	Cuyahoga	80,000	Manufacturing
787 Renaissance Pkwy	Lake	33,250	Industrial
8627 Tyler Blvd	Lake	20,000	Showroom
1 Crystal Pkwy	Portage	400,000	Distribution
1925 Empire Pkwy	Summit	339,500	Warehouse

Development Sites

UNDER CONSTRUCTION BUILDINGS

Address	County	Square Feet	Building Type
26855 Bluestone Blvd	Cuyahoga	145,400	Manufacturing
6825 Engle Rd	Cuyahoga	300,000	Warehouse
14720 Foltz Industrial Pkwy	Cuyahoga	159,400	Warehouse
17825 Great Lakes Pkwy	Geauga	290,000	Food Processing
15335 Madison Rd	Geauga	60,000	Warehouse
10069 Wellman Rd	Portage	200,000	Distribution
120 Cole Ave Ext	Summit	116,150	Warehouse
2488 Romig Rd	Summit	695,383	Distribution

The Team also looked at what properties are for sale and lease within the region to fully capture available inventory. In the 7-county region, there are a total of 75 properties built after 1980 with 20,000+ square feet of available space for lease. That number drops to 32 available properties for lease at 50,000+ square feet, 20 properties at 100,000+ square feet, and 4 properties at 200,000+ square feet.

Based on the data above, to keep up with the growing industrial demand as well as competition from the surrounding urban areas, it would be in the best interest of Geauga County to build a speculative building within the range of 50,000-75,000 square feet.

Narrowing the analysis back to Geauga County, the following is a quick snapshot and reiteration of the prior market statistics. Vacancy is tight for newer industrial real estate across the Geauga County market with an overall vacancy rate of 1.1% for all buildings without filtering for age or size. Asking rents for industrial space have decreased over the past four years from a high of \$6.03 per square foot (NNN) to a low in early 2020 of \$5.06 per square foot (NNN). The asking rates are beginning to rebound at \$5.35 per square foot (NNN) as of June 2020.

With that said, the Team specifically recommends further exploration of delivering a 50,000-75,000 square foot building with 32' clear heights. The Team also believes the market could absorb a larger building. The higher end of the range brings more economy of scale and could be multi-tenanted, if needed. The building construction should be flexible such that it can be adapted for warehouse, distribution, or manufacturing users. The proposed site should be in close proximity to utilities and transportation and would ideally have the ability to expand over the long term.

Development Sites

Recommendations and Conclusion:

As previously stated, in order to address the lack of industrial real estate within the County we would recommend the following actions be explored:

1. Actively engage local and regional real estate developers on “The Case for Geauga County”. Prepare marketing materials on available sites, potential development incentives, and supportive data as to why industrial development is attractive within the County.
2. Work with Landlord’s of existing inventory to make sure their properties are being marketed and placed in commercial multiple listing services so the brokerage community is aware of the availabilities.
3. Develop internal public database of available properties
4. Make sure all industrial parks have adequate signage
5. Proactively work with existing companies to understand their growth and real estate expansion needs knowing it could take 1-2 years to develop a new building.
6. Use State and Governmental Incentives to bring infrastructure to latent sites
7. Assemble a County wide “Rapid Response Team” of stakeholders, EDO’s, and Utilities to respond to RFI/RFQ requests from JOBS Ohio.
8. Work with each City, Township, and School Board to put in place economic incentives and development subsidies.
9. Develop outreach program to regional and national site selection consultants.

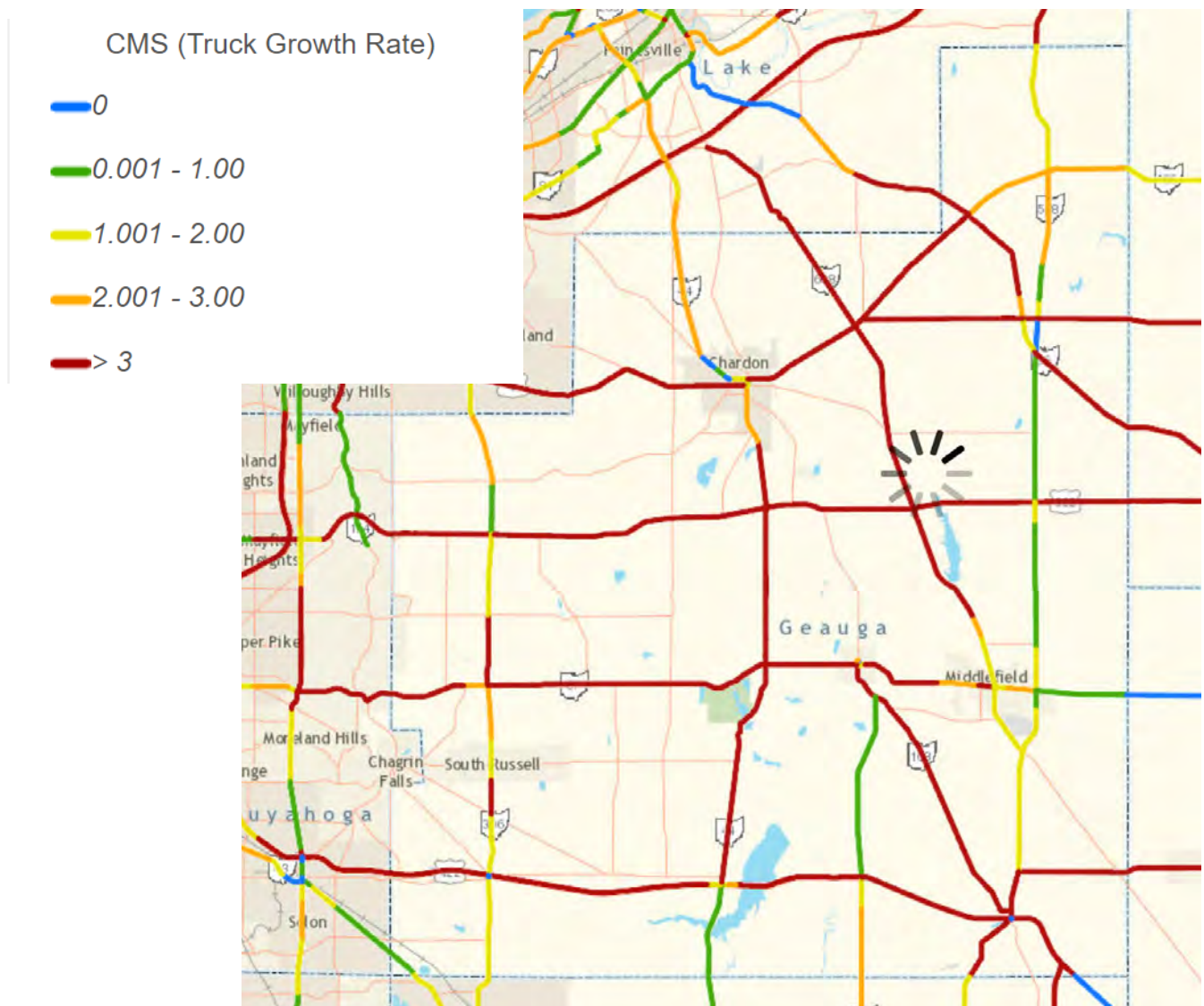
Infrastructure

Transportation Capacity

The County's existing transportation network is primarily comprised of two-lane rural highways, with US 422 providing a limited access freeway in the southwestern communities of Bainbridge Township and Auburn Township, and a semi-limited access highway in Parkman Township.

Current and projected traffic levels do not warrant capacity enhancements (i.e. additional through lanes) along primary highways. Truck traffic is projected to increase in excess of the 3% annually, so incremental improvements (e.g. turn lanes, traffic control upgrades) may be needed along these routes.

ODOT ANNUAL TRUCK GROWTH RATES

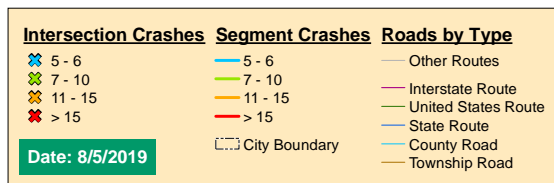


Infrastructure

Transportation Safety

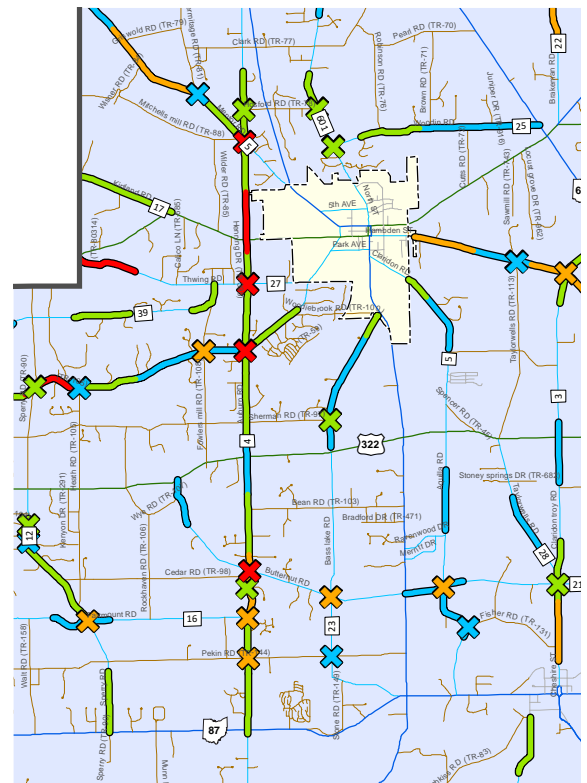
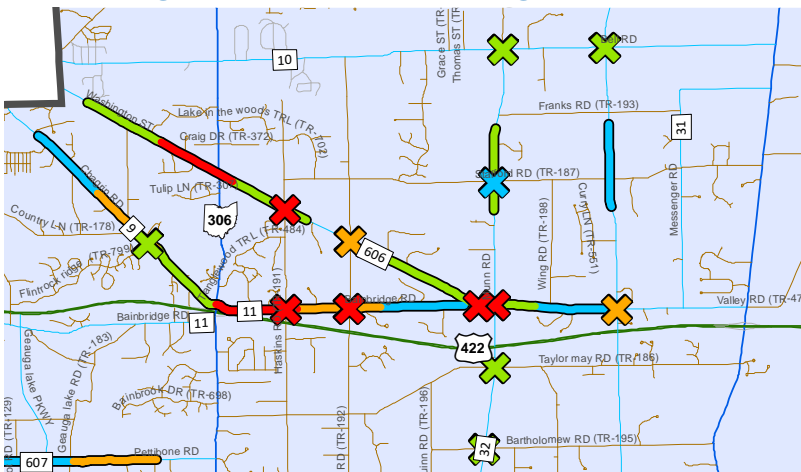
Several County Road corridors and intersections in the County have exhibited high frequency of crashes. In particular, Washington Street, Bainbridge Road, and Auburn Road each have segments and intersections that experienced 15 or more crashes over a five-year period.

COUNTY ROAD CRASH LOCATIONS



Auburn Rd Corridor

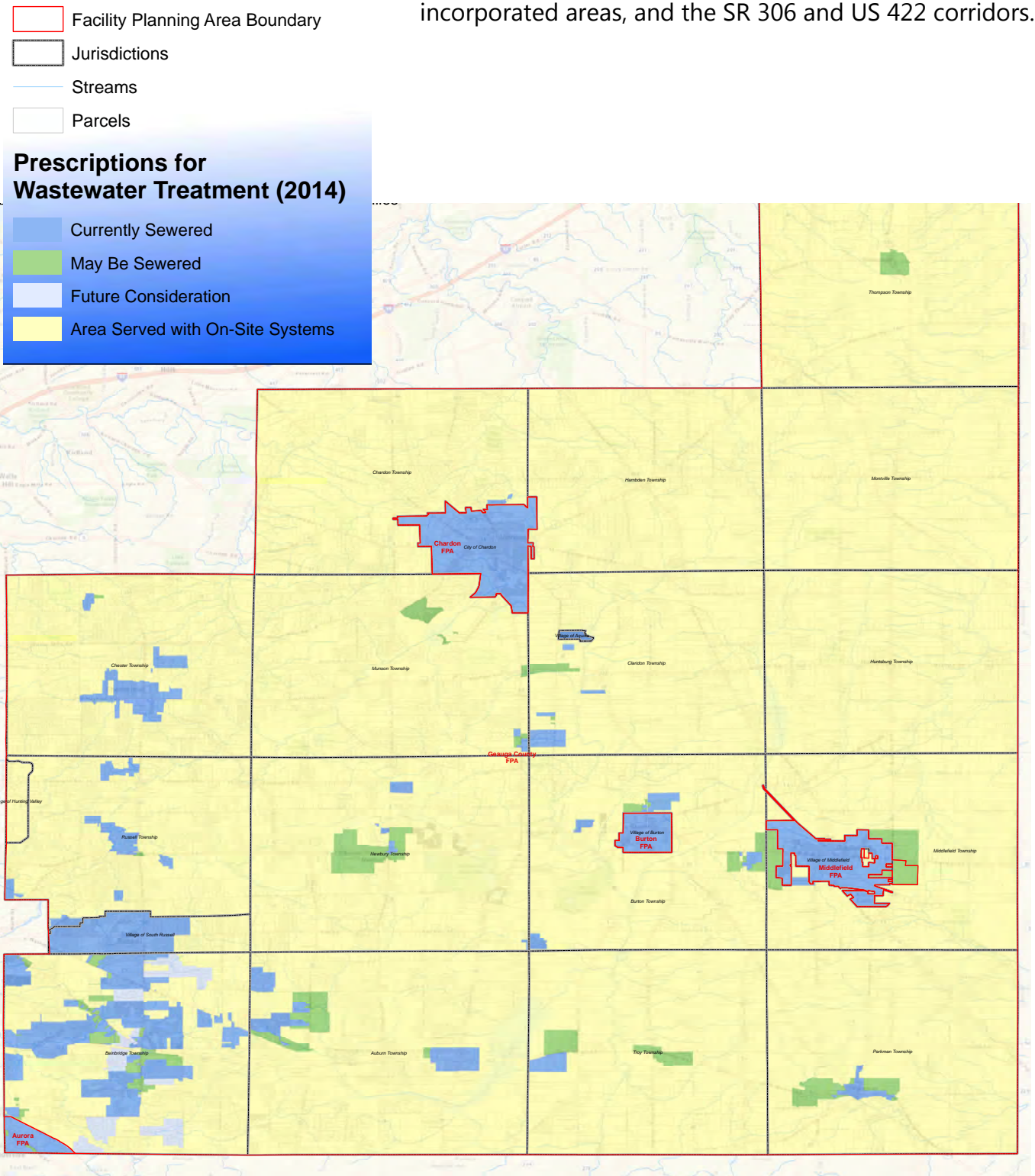
Washington St / Bainbridge Rd



Infrastructure

Sewer Service

Sewer service in Geauga County is limited primarily to incorporated areas, and the SR 306 and US 422 corridors.

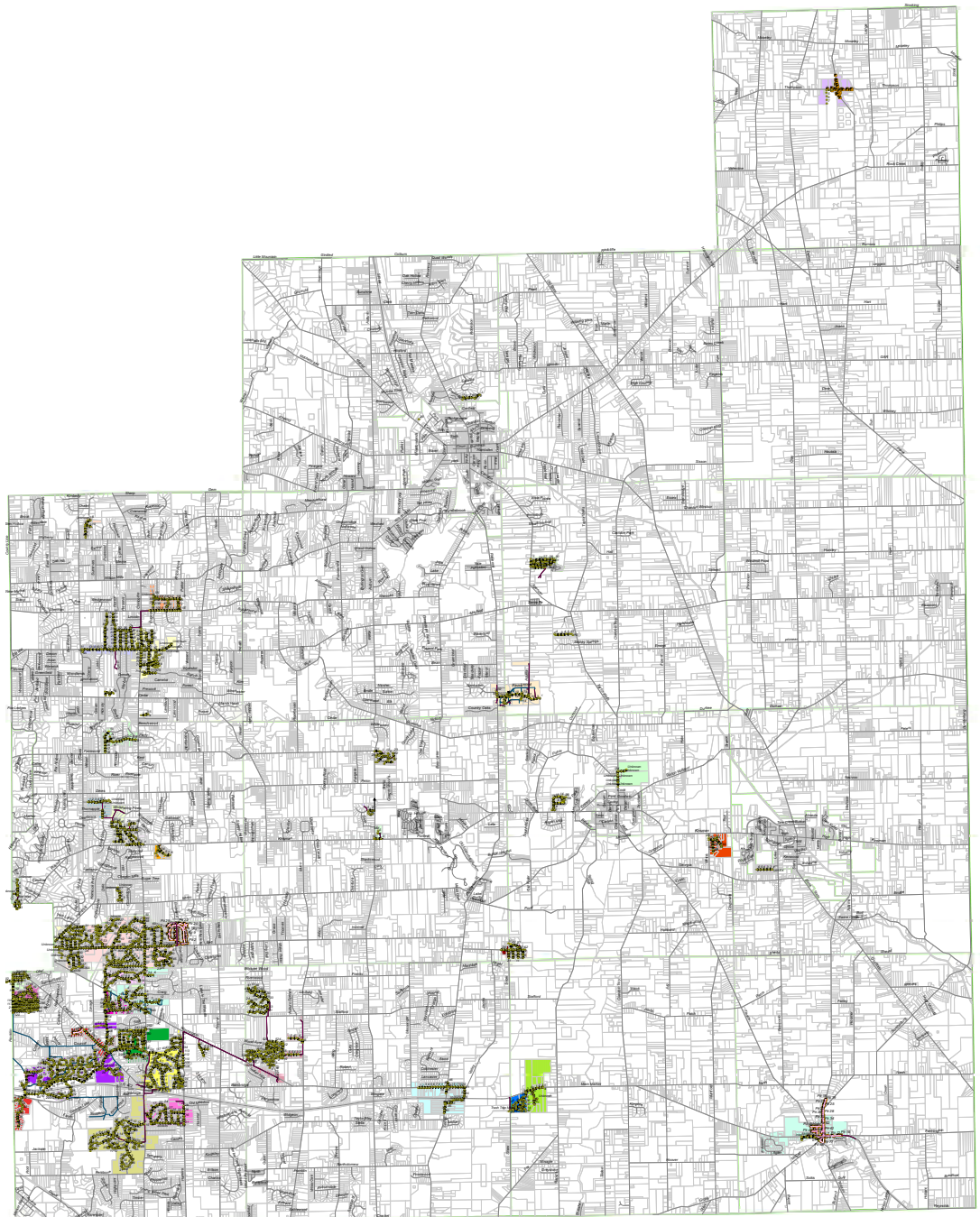


Infrastructure

Water Service

Water service in Geauga County is limited primarily to incorporated areas, and the SR 306 and US 422 corridors.

- 01 - Valley View
- 10 - Chagrin Falls Park
- 11 - Cedar Pine & Oak
- 12 - Chagrin Heights
- 13 - Auburn Industrial
- 14 - Troy Industrial
- 15 - Woods of Wembley
- 16 - Auburn Corners
- 17 - Parkman
- 18 - Thompson
- 20 - Hawkmore Service Area
- 21 - Knowles Industrial
- 22 - Ravenwood
- 23 - South Russell
- 24 - Tanglewood
- 25 - Lake Lucerne
- 26 - Bainbridge
- 27 - Auburn Lakes
- 28 - Lorien Woods
- 29 - Canyon Lakes
- 31 - Opalocka
- 32 - Hodgedale
- 33 - Kimberly Estates
- 34 - Russell Park
- 35 - Wenhaven
- 36 - Hackamore Woods
- 37 - Belle Vernon
- 38 - Scranton Woods
- 40 - Newbury
- 41 - Pilgrim Village Service Area
- 42 - Bainbrook Service Area
- 51 - Broadwood
- 52 - Plymouth Acres
- 53 - Burton Village
- 54 - Aquilla Village
- 55 - Infirmary
- 56 - Troy Oaks
- 61 - Burton Lakes
- 57 - Berkshire Industrial
- 58 - Cloverdale
- 91 - Surrey Downs
- 93 - Willow Hill
- 94 - Sherman
- 96 - Scarsdale

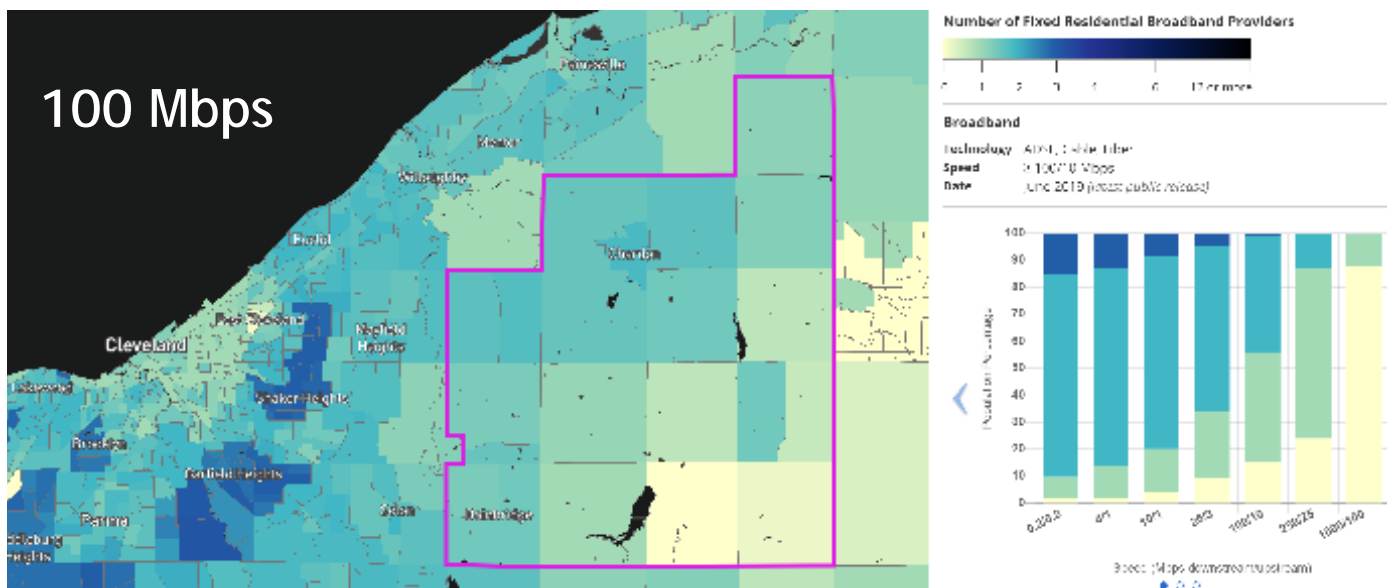
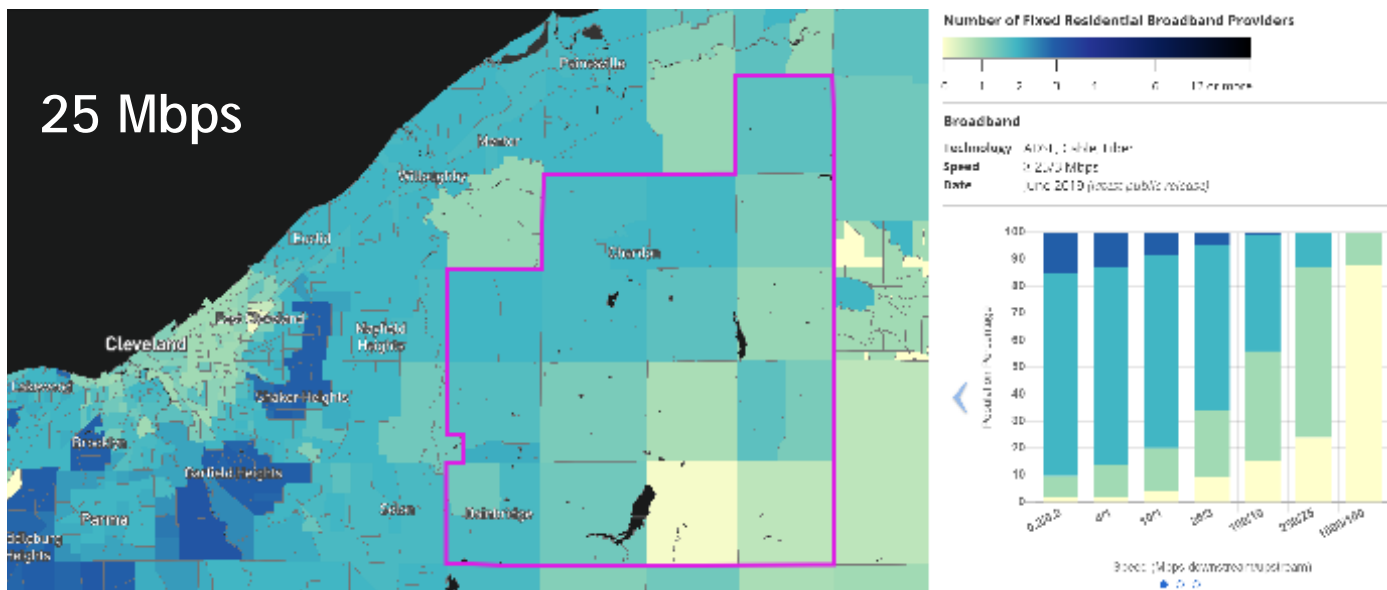


Infrastructure

Broadband Access

Broadband access is increasingly important to remaining connected to the global economy. Increases in telecommuting and virtual education, both exacerbated by the COVID-19 health pandemic, make reliable, high-speed broadband connectivity a necessity in order to stay competitive in economic development. Broadband speeds in the southeastern portion of the County lag behind rest of the County.

BROADBAND ACCESS



Target Industries

Location Quotient

"Location quotients (LQ) are calculated by comparing the industrial composition in the region to a larger reference region, in this case the county of interest in comparison to the nation. Location quotients enable us to quantify how concentrated an industry is in the region, which allows us to determine how that region is unique in comparison to the nation. A location quotient over one suggests that industry is more specialized in the region than the national average."

Mnemonic:	Description:	LQ 2015	LQ 2020	LQ 2025
3252	Resin; synthetic rubber; and artificial synthetic fibers and filaments manufacturing	21.16	21.12	21.51
3261	Plastics product manufacturing	17.85	16.03	16.27
3212	Veneer; plywood; and engineered wood product manufacturing	9.64	11.02	11.44
3322	Cutlery and handtool manufacturing	8.93	9.92	10.46
3262	Rubber product manufacturing	8.57	8.46	8.57
3333	Commercial and service industry machinery manufacturing	7.45	6.85	7.01
3371	Household and institutional furniture and kitchen cabinet manufacturing	6.70	6.67	7.01
3334	Ventilation; heating; air-conditioning; and commercial refrigeration equipment manufacturing	6.37	6.43	6.51
3259	Other chemical product and preparation manufacturing	6.60	6.37	6.63
3169	Other leather and allied product manufacturing	4.69	5.88	5.96

The primary industries in which Geauga County specializes include Chemical Manufacturing, Plastics and Rubber Manufacturing, and Machinery Manufacturing.

Resin, synthetic rubber and fiber, and filaments manufacturing make up the most specialized area of Geauga county's economy.

There are 21 times more jobs in resin, synthetic rubber and fiber, and filaments manufacturing in Geauga County, than would be expected if the county's employment pattern was identical to the nation's.

Over the next 5 years, the county is projected to become even more specialized in resin, synthetic rubber and fiber, and filaments manufacturing, plastics product manufacturing, and veneer, plywood, and engineered wood product manufacturing.

Fiscal Impact Analysis

Hypothetical Redevelopment Scenario

A hypothetical redevelopment scenario - a 100,000 square foot industrial building - was analyzed using IMPLAN software to estimate the overall economic impact to Geauga County. The results of the analysis are summarized on the pages that follow. Definitions of key terms are included below.

Measures of Economic Impact

Direct Effect: The set of expenditures applied to the predictive model (i.e., I/O multipliers) for impact analysis. It is a series (or single) of production changes or expenditures made by producers/consumers as a result of an activity or policy.

Indirect Effect: The impact of local industries buying goods and services from other local industries. The cycle of spending works its way backward through the supply chain until all money leaks from the local economy, either through imports or by payments to value added.

Induced Effect: The response by an economy to an initial change (direct effect) that occurs through re-spending of income received by a component of value added. IMPLAN's default multiplier recognizes that labor income (employee compensation and proprietor income components of value added) is not a leakage to the regional economy.

Value Added: The difference between an industry's or an establishment's total output and the cost of its intermediate inputs. It equals gross output (sales or receipts and other operating income, plus inventory change) minus intermediate inputs (consumption of goods and services purchased from other industries or imported). Value added consists of compensation of employees, taxes on production and imports less subsidies (formerly indirect business taxes and nontax payments), and gross operating surplus (formerly other value added).

Output: Output represents the value of industry production. In IMPLAN these are annual production estimates for the year of the data set and are in producer prices. For manufacturers this would be sales plus/minus change in inventory. For service sectors production = sales. For Retail and wholesale trade, output = gross margin and not gross sales.

Fiscal Impact Analysis

Hypothetical Development Scenario

Middlefield Village, Geauga County, OH Industrial Development Project Model						
Site Data	Total Building(s) Footprint (SF)	Defined Study Area (County and Zip Codes)		Operation Year ² (Stablization)	Date Analysis Conducted	
Bonner Industrial Park 15213 Madison Road Middlefield, OH 44062	100,000	Gauga County		2021	19-Aug-20	
		Village of Middlefield ¹	44062			
Industry	IMPLAN Description	Code	Total SF	Leasable SF (80%)	Non-Leasable SF (20%)	Employees
Building 1 - Industrial						
First Floor			100,000	80000	20000	
Food & Beverage	Cheese Manufacturing	82		80000		200.0
Total:				80000		200.0
Sources:						
¹ United States Zip Code: https://m.usps.com/m/ZipLookupAction and https://www.zipmap.net/Ohio.htm Zip Code 44062						
² Operation Year - year in which that employment took place or is expected to take place.						

Economic Impacts

IMPLAN software was used to estimate the countywide impact of the hypothetical 100,000 square foot industrial building described above. The results are summarized below:

Middlefield Industrial Building Development - Countywide Economic Impacts				
Impact Type	Employment	Labor Income	Value Added	Output
Direct Effect	200	\$24,420,418	\$40,556,638	\$210,865,538
Indirect Effect	468	\$20,283,336	\$28,844,069	\$78,440,263
Induced Effect	90	\$3,510,732	\$6,289,168	\$11,499,394
Total Effect	758	\$48,214,485	\$75,689,876	\$300,805,196

Action Plan

The pages that follow detail the role of the County in facilitating economic development in the following nine strategic areas:

- Public-Private Partnerships
- Intergovernmental Cooperation
- Key Development Areas
- Incentive Package
- COVID-19 Response
- Model Zoning
- Infrastructure Investments
- Marketing and Promotion
- Support Department Initiatives

Collaboration of the Willing

Create a “ Collaboration of the Willing”

It became apparent through our stakeholder interviews that there is an interest from some (but not all) communities to take a thoughtful, sincere, and active approach to creating a meaningful approach to economic development. That being the case we would recommend the following:

- Establish an Economic Development Committee of those communities willing to collaborate for the benefit of all
- Through the committee, develop a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) using this study as the foundation of the plan
- Explore how to create a more leveraged and balanced relationship with the Greater Geauga Partnership to the benefit of the County

Key Development Areas

OPPORTUNITY: UH and County Administrative

Leadership of Geauga UH expressed an interest in collaborating with the County to develop a “mixed use campus” to energize the current footprint into a “health care hub” which will be further enhanced by the relocation of the County Administrative offices to this location. The master plan would include:

- Administrative offices (UH and County)
- Medical Office Building (s)
- Support service retail
- Hospitality
- Conference center
- Other TBD by market demand



Public-Private Partnerships

Taking a Proactive Role in Development

While Geauga County is home to several sites with catalytic development potential, private ownership of discrete parcels poses challenges in establishing site control of a property with critical mass for viable development. Exploring ways to creatively utilize the Geauga County Community Improvement Corporation (CIC) allows the County take a more proactive approach in development as it nears buildout. Under Ohio law, municipalities face strict limitations on their abilities to participate in land acquisition, disbursal and development processes, including open records requirements that can make delicate negotiations with property owners or potential developers all but impossible.

Utilizing the CIC is an effective way to streamline the development process and facilitate a wide range of development scenarios that enhance the municipal tax base. CIC's are non-profit corporations that are enabled under Ohio law to carry out economic development initiatives on behalf of a political subdivision. CIC's can:

- Conduct negotiations in confidence;
- Buy, hold and sell land, including at a loss if necessary;
- Assemble lands for resale, and land bank if necessary;
- Function as a master developer;
- Offer incentives, such as low-interest loans or strategic grants; and
- Conduct other economic development initiatives, including public relations and advertising.

More actively utilizing the CIC would allow the County to take a more active role in ensuring that land available well-suited for development within is put to its highest and best use in order to maximize local government revenue streams.

Many political subdivisions utilize their CIC's as a vehicle to strategically acquire and land-bank key parcels until sufficient mass was accumulated to issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) to private developers. In Geauga County this could potentially include parcels the County already owns at the Merritt Road Site (Site 3 previously discussed) potentially in conjunction with University Hospital controlled-parcels.

Intergovernmental Cooperation

Facilitating Partnerships

Economic Development opportunities exist along major corridors in unincorporated areas beyond municipal boundaries. Potential for a Joint Economic Development District (JEDD) between municipalities and bordering Townships should be explored at a cursory level. If such a cooperative economic development agreement could be implemented in a mutually beneficial manner, a JEDD could facilitate improvements in infrastructure and public services to facilitate desired growth by:

- Upgrading rural roadways to better accommodate truck freight;
- Providing shared emergency response and public safety services;
- Serving as the applicant for infrastructure projects; and
- Offering technical staff expertise for planning, zoning, legal services, and marketing.

To create a JEDD, there must first be a public inspection of the contract and the economic development plan for the JEDD, which consists of a schedule of the new, expanded or additional services, facilities or improvements to be provided, and a schedule for the collection of any income tax to be levied within the JEDD. There must also be a description of the area to be included within the JEDD, including a map. Next, a public hearing must be held to promote public discussion of the contract and the JEDD. Each contracting party must then adopt legislation approving the contract. Finally, the contract must be executed.

Business owners located in a proposed JEDD area may “opt out” of the JEDD by filing an action in a court of common pleas on or before six months after the effective date of the JEDD contract. The owner must show: (1) that it operated within the JEDD area before the effective date of the JEDD contract; (2) that it did not sign a petition in support of the JEDD; and (3) that neither the business nor its employees has derived or will derive any material benefit from the new, expanded, or additional services, facilities, or improvements described in the economic development plan for the district, or the material benefit that has, or will be, derived is negligible in comparison to the income tax revenue generated from the net profits of the business and the income of employees of the business.” The Court of Common Pleas must render a decision within 60 days of receiving the complaint, unless the parties agree to a longer period of time.

Incentive Package

Potential Funding Sources

In today's hyper competitive economic development environment, responding with speed and certainty on possible incentive programs is critical to winning the deal. Many of Geauga's peer counterparts have clear, "pre-approved", incentive programs in place and ready to deploy. While there are various economic incentive programs in place instituted on a municipal level, there does not appear to be a consolidated and consistent message at the County level to coalesce all State, County, and City incentives. The County will not be competitive with other regions unless all County officials, School Districts, and Stake holders, align on clear and actionable programs.

The County should pursue financial assistance and grant funding to help promote investment that increases its tax base. A summary of potentially applicable programs is provided for:

- JobsOhio Grant and Loan Programs
- Ohio Development Services Agency
- State of Ohio Tax Credit Programs
- Local Property Tax Abatement Programs
- State of Ohio Grant Programs

Incentive Package

JobsOhio Grant and Loan Programs		
Funding Name	Issuing Agency	Project Details
Alternative Stormwater Infrastructure Loan Program	Ohio Development Service Agency	Design and construction of green infrastructure as part of economic development projects. The funds can pay for design, demolition, construction, materials and administrative costs associated with the green infrastructure project.
https://development.ohio.gov/cs/cs_altstormwater.htm		
"Local Government Efficiency Program"	Ohio Development Service Agency	Financial assistance to implement projects to create more efficient and effective service delivery. Learn and use Lean Six Sigma to improve an identified process resulting in making services simpler, faster, better, and less costly.
https://development.ohio.gov/cs/cs_localgovfund.htm		
Local Government Innovation Fund	Ohio Development Service Agency	Financial assistance for planning and implementing projects to create more efficient and effective service delivery. Improve business environments and promote community attraction with their plan for efficiency, collaboration, or shared services.
https://development.ohio.gov/cs/cs_localgovfund.htm		
Ohio Brownfield Fund	Ohio Development Services Agency	The Ohio Brownfield Fund is a collection of funding sources that can be used to help plan, assess, and remediate brownfields throughout the state. The program can provide loans up to \$500,000 for Phase II Environmental Assessment. The program can provide loans up to \$5,000,000 for environment cleanup.
https://development.ohio.gov/cs/cs_brownfield.htm		
Ohio Site Inventory Program (OSIP)	JobsOhio	The primary goal of OSIP is to fill gaps in Ohio's real estate inventory with real estate targeting near-term sector wins to ensure our state is more competitive for reactive site selection projects.
https://www.jobsohio.com/osip/		

Incentive Package

Ohio Development Services Agency		
Funding Name	Issuing Agency	Project Details
Economic Development Grant	JobsOhio	The JobsOhio Economic Development Grant was created to promote economic development, business expansion, and job creation by providing funding for eligible projects.
http://jobs-ohio.com/why-ohio/incentives/		
Growth Fund Loan	JobsOhio	The JobsOhio Growth Fund provides capital for expansion projects to companies that have limited access to capital and funding from conventional, private sources of financing. JobsOhio will consider loans to companies that are in the growth, established or expansion stage, and that have generated revenues through a proven business plan.
http://jobs-ohio.com/why-ohio/incentives/		
Revitalization Program Loan and Grant Fund	JobsOhio	The JobsOhio Revitalization Program Loan and Grant Fund is designed to support the acceleration of redevelopment sites. An eligible site is an abandoned or under-utilized contiguous property where redevelopment for the immediate and primary purpose of job creation and retention are challenged by significant redevelopment constraints.
http://jobs-ohio.com/why-ohio/incentives/		
Workforce Grant	JobsOhio	The JobsOhio Workforce Grant was created to promote economic development, business expansion, and job creation by providing funding for the improvement of worker skills and abilities in the State of Ohio.
http://jobs-ohio.com/why-ohio/incentives/		
Ohio Site Inventory Program (OSIP)	JobsOhio	The primary goal of OSIP is to fill gaps in Ohio's real estate inventory with real estate targeting near-term sector wins to ensure our state is more competitive for reactive site selection projects.
https://www.jobsohio.com/osip/		

Incentive Package

State of Ohio Tax Credit Programs		
Funding Name	Issuing Agency	Project Details
Job Creation Tax Credit Program (JCTC)	Ohio Development Services Agency	The Ohio JCTC is a refundable tax credit provided to companies generally creating at least 10 new jobs with a minimum annual payroll of \$660,000. The Ohio Tax Credit Authority reviews and approves application and sets the tax credit rate and term.
https://development.ohio.gov/bs/bs_jctc.htm		
Ohio Historic Preservation Tax Credit Program	Ohio Development Service Agency	The Ohio HPTC provides a tax credit to owners and long-term lessees of historically significant buildings equal to 25 percent of the qualified rehabilitation expenses (QRE), not to exceed the QRE estimates in the application, up to a maximum of \$ 5 Million. A building is eligible if it is individually listed on the Nation Register of Historic Places, located in a registered historic district, certified by Ohio's preservation officer as being of historic significance to the district or listed as a historic landmark by a certified local government.
https://development.ohio.gov/cs/cs_ohptc.htm		
"Ohio New Markets Tax Credit Program"	Ohio Development Service Agency	The program is a nonrefundable tax credit designed to incentivize investors to fund businesses in qualified active low-income communities.
https://development.ohio.gov/cs/cs_onmtcredit.htm		
Workforce Grant	JobsOhio	The JobsOhio Workforce Grant was created to promote economic development, business expansion, and job creation by providing funding for the improvement of worker skills and abilities in the State of Ohio.
http://jobs-ohio.com/why-ohio/incentives/		

Incentive Package

Local Property Tax Abatement Programs		
Funding Name	Issuing Agency	Project Details
Enterprise Zone Program	County or Municipality	The Ohio Enterprise Zone (EZ) Program is a locally administered economic development tool providing real property and/or personal property tax incentives to eligible employers (i.e., enterprises) expanding or locating in Ohio.
https://development.ohio.gov/bs/bs_oezp.htm		
Community Reinvestment Area Program	County or Municipality	The Ohio Community Reinvestment Area (CRA) Program is another locally administered real property tax abatement program benefiting property owners who renovate existing buildings or construct new buildings. The CRA Program permits municipal corporations or counties to designate areas in which investment has been discouraged.
https://www.development.ohio.gov/bs/bs_comreinvest.htm		
Tax Increment Financing	County or Municipality	Tax Increment Financing (TIF) is an infrastructure financing tool authorized under the Ohio Revised Code and administered by local jurisdictions. It is usually viewed as a bedrock economic development tool because it helps fund public infrastructure improvements that “directly benefit” private development. These structures are most commonly used in connection with commercial development, but in limited circumstances (parcel TIFs located in impacted cities and incentive district TIFs) they may serve to capture incremental improvement values in connection with residential development.
https://development.ohio.gov/bs/bs_tif.htm		

Incentive Package

State of Ohio Grant Programs		
Funding Name	Issuing Agency	Project Details
629 Roadwork Development Grant Program	JobsOhio and Ohio Development Services Agency	Funds are available for public roadway improvements, including engineering and design costs. Funds are available for projects primarily involving manufacturing, research and development, high technology, corporate headquarters, and distribution activity. Projects must create or retain jobs. Retail projects are ineligible.
https://development.ohio.gov/cs/cs_r629.htm		
166 Direct Loan Program	Ohio Development Services Agency	The 166 Direct Loan Program provides low interest loan financing assistance to businesses for the allowable costs of eligible projects. Eligible projects include those related to industry, commerce, and distribution or research activities. For land and building acquisition, construction, expansion, or renovation, and equipment purchases for eligible businesses. The program provides low-interest loans up to 40 percent not to exceed \$1.5 million.
http://jobs-ohio.com/why-ohio/incentives/		
"Regional 166 Direct Loan"	Ohio Development Services Agency	The Regional 166 Direct Loan Program provides low-interest loan financing assistance to businesses creating new or preserving existing jobs. Eligible projects include those related to industry, commerce, and distribution or research activities. For land and building acquisition, construction, expansion, or renovation, and equipment purchases for eligible businesses. The program provides low-interest loans up to 40 % not to exceed \$1.5 M.
https://development.ohio.gov/bs/bs_r166dl.htm		
Minority Business Direct Loan Program	Ohio Development Services Agency	The program provides low-interest rate loans to certified minority-owned businesses that are purchasing or improving fixed assets and creating or retaining jobs.
https://development.ohio.gov/bs/bs_ombdlp.htm		

Incentive Package

State of Ohio Grant Programs (continued)		
Funding Name	Issuing Agency	Project Details
"Enterprise Bond Fund Program"	Ohio Development Services Agency	The Program The Ohio Treasurer issues bonds, the proceeds of which are loaned to businesses for allowable costs of eligible projects. The OEBF Loan provides long-term, fixed-rate project financing for qualifying businesses that create or preserve employment opportunities in Ohio. The OEBF Loan provides capital to developed companies with limited access to funding at costs comparable to those of rated multi-national corporations.
https://development.ohio.gov/summary_69ohioenterprisebond.htm		
Rural Industrial Park Loan Fund	Ohio Development Services Agency	The program assists eligible applicants in financing the development and improvement of industrial parks by providing financial assistance in the form of loans and loan guarantees for land acquisition; constructing, reconstructing, rehabilitating, remodeling, renovating, enlarging, or improving industrial park buildings; and infrastructure improvements. It is available to counties with a population less than 125,000 that meet certain economic distress criteria.
https://development.ohio.gov/summary_86riplp.htm		
Research and Development Investment Loans	Ohio Development Services Agency	The Research and Development Investment Loan Fund provides loan financing ranging from \$500,000 to \$5 million for projects primarily engaging in R&D activity. The loans have fixed rates (at or below market rates) and other loan terms similar to those of commercial bank financing. Companies receive a dollar-for-dollar, nonrefundable Ohio commercial activity tax credit for principal and interest payments made during the year up to \$150,000 during the loan term. The credit is non-refundable and any unused credits may be carried forward until expended.
https://development.ohio.gov/summary_68researchloan.htm		

COVID-19 Economic Recovery

What can economic development organizations be doing?

[Times of Crisis: A Toolkit for Economic Recovery and Resiliency](#), a resource developed by IEDC with funding from the U.S. Economic Development Administration, provides useful information and resources on disaster preparedness, crisis response, business continuity and recovery strategies that your business or community can use to mitigate against the risks posed. It's an excellent resource to get familiar with; in the meantime, here's a short list of actions.

1. Do your own continuity planning, if you haven't already.

What are your EDO's critical functions? How will it maintain those functions? For example, how will you effectively communicate with internal staff and external stakeholders? If your office is closed, are staff resourced to work from home, possibly for more than a couple of weeks? What are the potential financial and other impacts to your EDO in three months, six months?

2. Stay up to date on what's happening with businesses in your community.

Use all information channels at your disposal – monitor social media and mass media; make phone calls. Send out a business survey that asks about economic impacts and ideas for what types of services or programs would help. Develop an understanding of which types of businesses have closed, which have stayed open, and the various ways that different industries or sectors and their workers are impacted.

3. What can you do to support businesses in your community?

EDOs are well positioned as trusted information brokers, and can push out relevant news about federal, state and local resources as they come on line.

For example, the Right Place, an EDO that serves West Michigan, has developed a COVID-19 Business Updates webpage. It includes posts about how manufacturers can mitigate the spread of COVID-19; links businesses that are hiring now for high-demand jobs during the pandemic; Michigan-specific resources and executive orders; links to relevant closures/cancellations and more.

COVID-19 Economic Recovery

Advising Businesses

Below is a brief overview of initial steps businesses should be taking to cope with and help contain COVID-19. More in-depth information can be found in [Times of Crisis: A Toolkit for Economic Recovery and Resiliency](#).

1. Communication: a central component of managing crises is consistent communication with employees, business partners, your community and other stakeholders to minimize the disruption. This includes stating an appropriate policy to reduce your business's exposure to COVID-19. Outline the precautions that your employees need to take as guided by the CDC.
2. Explore alternative work options: your organization should be testing technologies (such as server access) in the event that meetings need to occur virtually, or employees need to work offsite.
3. Identify your critical functions and determine the key employees needed to fulfill those functions. It may be necessary to minimize their exposure to other possible unknown carriers, including other employees.
4. Reduce the amount of visits by suppliers and vendors to your workplace by purchasing in larger quantities. Establish a delivery protocol that limits employee interaction with drivers.
5. Assess the possible financial implications of revenue loss, travel restrictions, supply chain disruptions, and explore external resources that could assist in alleviating those pressures (e.g. federal or local funding options).

Model Zoning

Best Practices for Zoning Regulations

Several opportunities exist to modernize the County's Model Township Zoning Resolution (Model Zoning):

Multifamily Residential

The Model Zoning should provide a template for multifamily residential as a Zoning District. The current Model Zoning focuses exclusively on single-family detached residential. While this housing type is the predominant housing type in the County, guidance should be provided for denser housing types at appropriate locations (e.g. interchanges, town centers) to ensure modern housing supports a strong workforce while maintaining the overall rural character of the community.

Mixed-Use Development

The Model Zoning should provide a template for Mixed-Use as a Zoning District. The current Model Zoning does not contain a template for Mixed-Use, which is increasingly being utilized by developers to create vibrant spaces that combine commercial, office, and residential uses in a synergistic layout. While mixed-use development is in most cases best-suited for County's incorporated areas, infill mixed-use redevelopment opportunities may exist in locations such as Bainbridge Township and Chester Township.

Parking Regulations

The Model Zoning contains a template for required spaces based on uses. These types of traditional minimum parking requirements make assumptions about what types of cars people drive, how long they park them and how long they park them — assumptions that are often false. These arbitrary standards require additional pavement and lower building lot coverage, resulting in higher development costs and rents, as well as increased storm water runoff, heat islands and water pollution. Parking lots created by minimum requirements have resulted in huge gaps between buildings in order to ensure that every building is completely self-sufficient in the unlikely event of a parking catastrophe. Land use has thus become financially inefficient, as largely unused asphalt precludes more income-producing development opportunities. As such, the Model Zoning should remove traditional parking minimums in favor of letting the private market determine an adequate number of spaces to meet their specific business needs.

Infrastructure Investments

Broadband Service Expansion

Efforts should be made to support enhanced broadband connectivity throughout the County. Several case studies are described below:

Medina County Fiber Network (Medina County, OH)

Completed in 2013, the Medina County Fiber Network (MCFN) is a project managed through the Medina County Port Authority. Funded through revenue development bonds, the MCFN was designed to help companies grow through access to the best technology available. With an eye to the future, the MCFN allows tomorrow's needs to be met today. Medina County is the owner of the fiber network.

Dublink (Dublin, OH)

Dublink is 125 miles of fiber optics that run underground throughout Dublin and many surrounding Central Ohio communities. This City-owned network makes the City of Dublin the best-connected community in Central Ohio and has brought attention to the city in the form of recognition as a top national and global broadband environment. Dublink's ultra-high speed and ultra-low latency network connectivity is capable of delivering business traffic at the speed of light and provides a superior choice of service providers and global carrier networks.

FairlawnGig (Fairlawn, OH)

FairlawnGig is a municipal broadband utility established by the City of Fairlawn that delivers a better Internet experience for residents and businesses in Fairlawn and the Akron/Bath/Fairlawn JEDD. FairlawnGig's high-speed fiber network offers an unprecedented level of Internet service to the Fairlawn area with a gigabit fiber connection to every home and business. The City of Fairlawn established FairlawnGig as a forward-thinking, economic development strategy founded on the belief that business growth, innovation, and community transformation will follow with every connection.

The \$10.1 Million capital investment required for the fiber network that passes every home and business was paid for through the City's General Fund. The network is a completely city staffed (and city owned), self-sufficient Internet Service Provider. Services for local residents and businesses include internet and phone.

Infrastructure Investments

Demand Responsive Transit Service

Consideration should be given to coordinating with existing regional transit agencies in Northeast Ohio to provide a “last-mile” connection from larger Regional Transit Authority transit hubs to commercial industrial employment centers in Geauga County. Potential connections could include:

- Laketran Connection - Demand response shuttle van from Lakeland Community College Park-N-Ride/transfer point (Kirtland) to Chardon.
- Western Reserve Transit Authority - Demand response shuttle van from Warren junction point to Middlefield.

This transit service could be setup to serve exclusively worker commutes with Geauga County stops only at commercial/industrial parks. One such case study is described below:

Airport Corridor Transit Authority ACTA (Allegheny County, PA)

The Airport Corridor Transportation Association (ACTA) is a non-profit Transportation Management Association (TMA) incorporated in 1990 to increase travel options and support responsible economic development around the Robinson Town Center area 10 miles west of downtown Pittsburgh, PA. RideACTA demand responsive shuttles service over 100 employers, businesses and training centers, complimenting Port Authority of Allegheny County Transit (PAAC) services in the area.

The area is serviced by a Port Authority of Allegheny County (PAAC) route that originates in downtown Pittsburgh and penetrates the Robinson/North Fayette business district by providing a consistent level of service to the “hub” located at IKEA. Beyond this central point there is little or no public transit options and unfortunately most employment opportunities are not located within a safe walking distance of the “hub.”

RideACTA demand responsive shuttle services operate seven days per week and compliments the PAAC route that serves the IKEA bus stop every 30 minutes.. The RideACTA IKEA shuttle serves businesses and employers located within 1.5 mile radius of the IKEA bus stop. In addition, RideACTA Penn Center West provides last mile service to transit riders transferring from Port Authority service on the West Busway. This shuttle takes workers from the busway to the Penn Center West Business Complex on Campbell’s Run Road. The service operates five days a week during peak hours only. The shuttle has provided employers with reliable transportation for their recruiting, interviewing and training purposes to hire hundreds of entry level workers.

Ride ACTA survey data indicates that **98% of riders use the service to travel to work or work-related activity**, and 95% use other public transit in conjunction with the RideACTA shuttle.

Marketing & Promotion

County Identity & Brand

We all know that Geauga County is and can be a “great place to do business”, however, the County may not be on the radar for companies seeking new locations. Many of the Economic Development marketing resources, specifically websites, are not highlighting the great attributes of Geauga County, its workforce, major employers, affordability, etc. Economic Development agencies across the County are investing significant capital into public relations, attraction & marketing campaigns, digital marketing, branding, and innovative technology to capture leads. Often times, a County’s ED website is the first step in the evaluation process by Site Selectors and Corporations.

In order to address this issue, the Department should initiate a marketing campaign to promote the County’s economic development efforts which would include the following specific action items:

- Engage a PR/marketing firm to establish a County Brand/Message
- Formalize the Brand
- Develop an economic development centric website
- Establish a program to develop relationships with the site selection and commercial real estate market
- Establish a program to develop relationships with the real estate development community
- Create digital marketing material library including “Virtual Tour/Story Map”
- Create and publish quarterly ED newsletter
- Create a robust and vibrant social media strategy

Consolidated Resource for Available Properties & Infrastructure

In our analysis of the real estate market in Geauga County it became apparent that available real estate is not adequately being tracked and presented through a system to help users and ED professionals identify available properties. While our primary research was completed through Costar & Zoom Prospector, we found numerous properties that were not listed in either database. From our conversations with GGP, it appears that there is an effort by their organization to track available properties, however, it is critical to have an accurate, accessible, and public consolidated database to quickly respond to potential users and match their need with available real estate. Just as important, we also identified a lack of a conciliated resource to map infrastructure in the County (utilities, fiber, sewer, and water). While various departments within the County seemed to have information on their specific services and infrastructure, there is not a consolidated mapping utility and believe the information that does exist may be outdated.

Departmental Support

Centralized Economic Development Agency and Efforts

A critical element for the attraction and retainment of business, is a centralized economic development effort and “single point of contact” agency. Within the County there are two perceived agencies involved in economic development, The County Economic Development office and Geauga Growth Partnership. While each organization is complementary to the mission, it is our opinion that having a unified message to the market and designating a lead organization will provide clarity and efficient on-boarding of potential prospects and target companies.

The County should continue to support the Office of Economic Development through targeted investments that empower the department to promote economic growth:

- Establish a more responsible budget to support the Office of Economic Development including staffing support
- Membership in OEDA , IDRC, other professional trade organizations promoting ED
- Consider developing a “spec manufacturing facility” subject to addressing other county challenges