



DRAFT – FOR DISCUSSION PURPOSES ONLY

# FORWARD

## Union-Marysville

An Economic Development Strategic Plan



05.2026



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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

**FORWARD Union-Marysville** is a five-year Strategic Economic Development Plan meant to guide the economic development efforts of Union County-Marysville into the future. The effort was led by the Union County Community Improvement Corporation (CIC), also known as Union County-Marysville Economic Development (UCED), and a designated Core Team.

Development of the plan involved engagement with an estimated **1,800 participants**. This significant stakeholder engagement was achieved through interviews and group discussions with numerous identified groups, as well as the launching of an online Resident Survey. It also involved **benchmark research** on six communities including Ankeny, Iowa; Carmel, Indiana; Columbus, Georgia; Greenville, South Carolina; Holland, Michigan; and Smyrna/Murfreesboro, Tennessee to understand what led to their success from an economic development perspective. Highlights from the stakeholder engagement process, as well as the benchmark research, are referenced within this plan and additional detail and research may be found in the Supporting Documentation to this report.

Boyette Strategic Advisors (Boyette) would like to acknowledge and thank the **FORWARD Union-Marysville Core Team** that led the strategic plan process listed to the right, as well as the and the **CIC Board of Directors** and **Marysville-Union County Port Authority (MUCPA) Board of Directors** and other stakeholder groups found on the following page for their valued participation in the development of the **FORWARD Union-Marysville** plan.

FORWARD Union-Marysville Core Team	
Scott Brock	CIC/UCED Board of Trustees
Greg Sehnert	Marysville-Union County Port Authority
Terry Emery	City of Marysville City Manager
Bill Narducci	County Administrator
Eric Phillips	CIC/UCED Executive Director
Ally Pasanen	CIC/UCED Development Projects Coordinator
Inge Witt	CIC/UCED Economic Development Administrator

**CIC Board of Directors**

Barry Adler	Jerome Township	Dave Lawrence	Union County Commissioner
Bart Barok	Rockford Development Investments	Brad Lutz	City of Marysville
Brian Beard	Honda Logistics North America, Inc.	Corry Mason	Memorial Health
Rob Beeler	AES Ohio	Beau Michael	Union Rural Electric Cooperative
Brad Bodenmiller	LUC Regional Planning Commission	Jeff Pister	Honda Marysville & Honda Sports
Scott Brock	Salesforce	Brian Ravencraft	Holbrook & Manter CPAs
Jason Comstock	Clarity Technology Solutions	Jason Stanford	Village of Plain City
Wayne Dellinger	OSU Extension	Jeff Stauch	Union County Engineer
Zack Howard	Marysville Exempted Village School District	Lindsey Williams	Richwood Bank
Scott Hunter	City of Marysville		

**Marysville-Union County Port Authority (MUCPA) Board of Directors**

Chuck Dyas	Dyas Law
Spence Fisher	Memorial Health
Chris Franke	Franke's Wood Products, LLC
Chad Hoffman	Richwood Bank
Jaynie Lambert	Lambert Jewelers
Brad Lutz	MUCPA Assistant Secretary, City of Marysville Finance Director
Eric S. Phillips	MUCPA Executive Director
Greg Sehnert	Sehnert Insurance
Anthony Smith	Union Rural Electric Cooperative

**Other Stakeholder Group Participants**

Agriculture	Major Employers/CEOs
Brokers & Developers	Residents
Educational Leaders	Tourism Board
Elected and Appointed Leaders	Union County Chamber of Commerce
Entrepreneurs/Small Business	Union County-Marysville Port Authority
Main Street Marysville	Utilities

Boyette also engaged with and collaborated with Edwin Mickelson with MICKELSONSTUDIO LLC, who along with REALM Collaborative developed the City of Marysville's Community Vision Plan.



# INTRODUCTION

## INTRODUCTION

Union County, which is in Central Ohio, is part of the fast-growing **Columbus Region**. Union County itself has seen significant population growth of **18 percent** from 2021 to 2026 and is projected to continue to grow at more than **16 percent** over the next five years potentially resulting in a population of more than **80,000**. It is one of the fastest growing counties in Ohio (2026).

With this growing population that is comprised of a **younger and well-educated demographic**, along with a **strong legacy business base**, Union County, which is comprised of 14 townships and six municipalities, including Marysville, the county seat, Dublin, Richwood, Plain City, Milford Center and Unionville Center, is ready to move **forward** to the next iteration of its evolution. The **FORWARD Union-Marysville** plan will serve as a guide to its future.

Related to its legacy business base, the county is home to world-class corporations including but not limited to **Honda Motor Co.**, which encompasses Honda Development & Manufacturing of America (HDMA), American Honda Motor (AHM), and Honda Logistics; the **Scotts Miracle-Gro Company**; the **Transportation Research Center (TRC)**; the **Nestlé Development Center (NDC)**; **Continental/Contitech**; **Parker Hannifin**; **Select Sires**; and **Amazon Web Services (AWS)**, which has built two data centers valued at \$4.1 billion and is constructing another location valued at \$1 billion.

“This plan must meet the needs and desires of the entire county.”

---

”This strategy must meet the goal of providing more resources and better quality of life to the community.”

*Stakeholders*

This legacy business base is also very diverse with lots of **foreign direct investment**, including an estimated **20 Japanese companies** and others from Australia, Brazil, China, Israel, the Netherlands, Spain, Czech Republic, Switzerland and the U.K. This business base and the proximity to Columbus has also resulted in a **diverse workforce** with significant engineering and technology talent.

The **John Glenn International Airport** in Columbus is located within 40 minutes of most locations in the county, offering direct flights to 53 destinations with continued expansion. **Public school systems** are strong, and there is also good access to healthcare with **Memorial Hospital** and **Memorial Medical Group** in Marysville, as well as healthcare facilities in the surrounding area, including Dublin Methodist Hospital, Nationwide Children's Hospital in Columbus, which has an Urgent Care Center in Marysville, and The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center. Memorial Health recently completed construction of a 40,000-square-foot, two-story, \$27.5 million medical office building named the Memorial Jerome Medical Center in April 2026.

Union County-Marysville also continues to become a **hub for R&D and innovation** with the creation of the **U.S. 33 Smart Mobility Corridor**, a 35-mile fiber-connected economic and transportation corridor running between Dublin, Marysville and East Liberty. The Corridor is home to over 250 companies, of which 70 are automotive companies, and represents the largest concentration of manufacturing, R&D and logistics companies in the state. The Corridor also includes **The Beta District**, a public-private partnership, which is a high-tech, innovation region spanning Columbus, Dublin, Marysville, and Union County, focused on testing and deploying autonomous vehicles, connected infrastructure, AI-driven transportation, and smart agriculture. Since 2017, more than \$200 million has been invested in smart technologies with **432 strands of 100-gig fiber** to stream and capture data installed. The District is also home to an estimated 1,600 companies, as well as the **Automotive & Mobility Innovation Center** (AMIC), an 18,000+ square foot publicly supported smart-mobility incubator and innovation hub designed to support startups, research organizations, and corporations working on next-gen transportation technologies.

There is also the **TRC**, which is the largest independent automotive testing grounds in U.S., used for vehicle testing, safety validation, and autonomous vehicle development. The TRC hosts the major vehicle research and test facility for the **National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)** called the **Vehicle Research and Test Center (VRTC)**.

There has also been several new commercial developments in Union County, including **The Silos @ Water and Light** in Uptown Marysville, which is an estimated **\$110 million** mixed-use redevelopment project that will transform the former municipal water and light plant into an 18-acre urban center with housing (an estimated 300 apartments and townhomes), office space, restaurants, event space, a bar and arcade and outdoor gathering areas. Another recent development is **Jerome Village** and **The Jerome Village Market** (Primarily in Jerome Township), which is a more than 2,000-acre master planned community with residential, retail, and recreation. In addition, New Albany Company, also known as Marysville Land Company (MLC), is developing two new business parks named **Marysville East** and **Marysville South** on 1,200 acres total, and 600 acres each, focused on attracting advanced manufacturing and tech companies that has already seen success with the AWS announcement. Marysville South will realize the development of nearly 600 acres of data center development.

In addition, as part of the **benchmark research** previously referenced on the six communities including Ankeny, Iowa; Carmel, Indiana; Columbus, Georgia; Greenville, South Carolina; Holland, Michigan; and Smyrna/Murfreesboro, Tennessee, Marysville ranked positively in several different areas, including population growth, median household income, poverty rate, housing affordability and crime, as shown in the chart below.

Category	Marysville, OH	Ankeny, IA	Carmel, IN	Columbus, GA	Greenville, SC	Holland, MI	Murfreesboro, TN	Smyrna, TN
Population Growth (2020 – 2025)	<b>16%</b>	<b>10.5%</b>	5.8%	(1.4%)	9.4%	2.3%	<b>13.3%</b>	17%
Median HH Income	<b>\$87,526</b>	<b>\$106,642</b>	<b>\$152,660</b>	\$54,287	\$76,859	\$73,611	\$82,267	\$85,001
Poverty Rate	<b>6.30%</b>	<b>5.17%</b>	<b>4.29%</b>	18.57%	14.48%	9.36%	10.45%	9.51%
Housing Affordability Index*	<b>110</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>116</b>	77	63	97	74	85
Crime Index	<b>42</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>33</b>	155	176	80	113	92

\* On Housing Affordability Index, higher score means housing is more affordable.

Although there are many great things happening in Union County/Marysville, there are some challenges that must be addressed that came to light through data and/or the stakeholder engagement process. During the stakeholder engagement process, many participants expressed the view that there needs to be better **collaboration and coordination among the different entities**, including the cities, townships and villages, and the seven different school systems, among other groups.. There is also an increasing growth conscious mentality in the county that must be addressed. The UCED should take the lead to encourage more collaboration and communication moving forward, and to address the aversion to growth.

Another challenge is a lack of job diversity, as well as a **large out-commuting population** of nearly 77 percent. This indicates the need to continue to support legacy companies, while working to diversify the business base to include more R&D, Corporate & Regional Headquarters, and Financial & Business Services, as well as more encouragement and support for Entrepreneurs & Innovators in the community. These are some of the identified target sector opportunities for Union County-Marysville outlined in this plan.

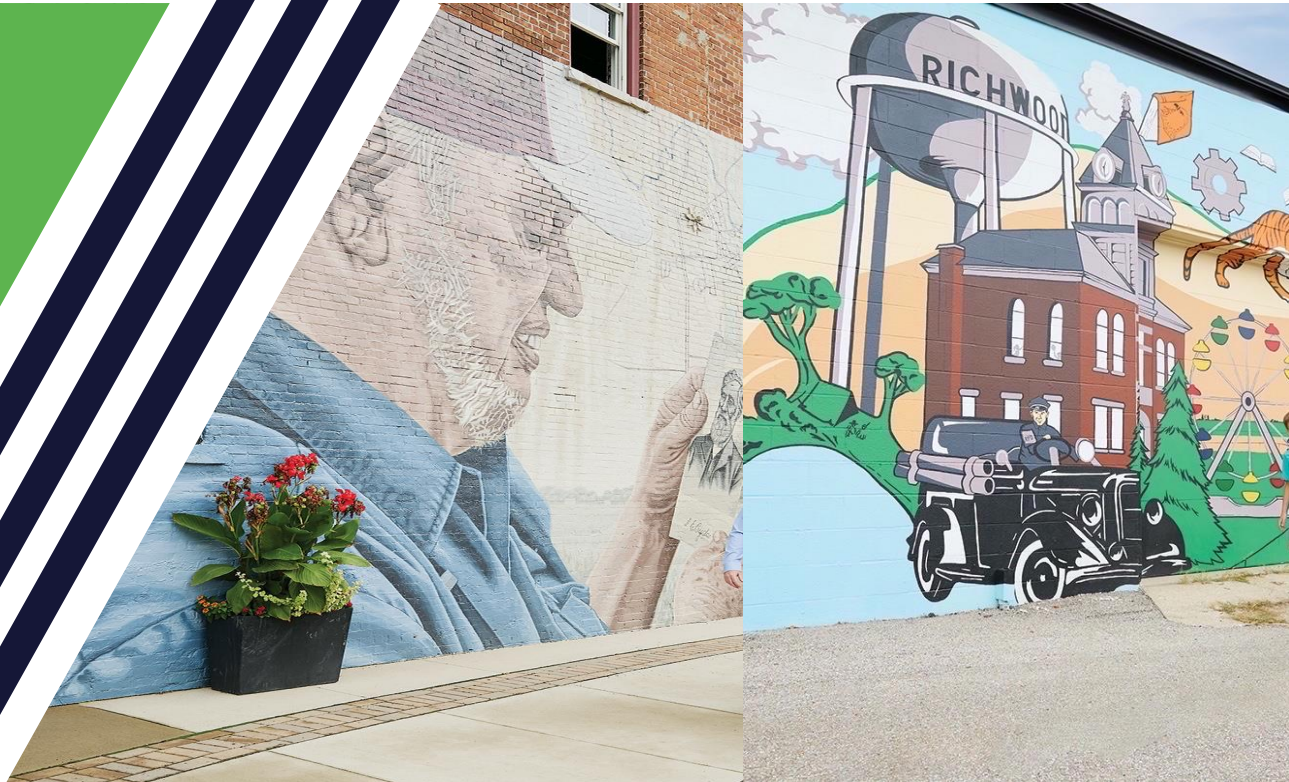
Last, but not least, many stakeholder participants mentioned the lack of retail, restaurants, entertainment and recreation in Union County. Some also mentioned the lack of attainable or workforce housing. The UCED must partner with the county, municipalities, developers and others to focus on

Of 1,700 Resident Survey Respondents, nearly **78 percent** would like to see more Retail/Commercial and/or Mixed-Use Development in Union County-Marysville.

attracting the type of amenities and housing that existing and new residents and businesses desire, which will include a focus on mixed-use development

The focus on the seven Target Sector Opportunities and three Strategic Goals outlined in the **FORWARD Union-Marysville** plan will guide the UCED and its partners **forward** over the next five years and beyond..

Note that this plan both complements and supplements the Union County Comprehensive Plan and other county comprehensive plans, the Marysville Vision Plan and other existing planning documents. This includes several earlier studies that are currently in the process of being updated including, but not limited to, the 2003 Economic Development Action Plan, the 2014 Economic Development Strategy, the 2018 33 Smart Mobility Corridor Economic Development Strategy, the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) and One Columbus Economic Development Strategy.



# TARGET SECTOR OPPORTUNITIES

## TARGET SECTOR OPPORTUNITIES

The UCED currently targets the following six sectors: Advanced Manufacturing; Agriculture; Foreign Direct Investment (FDI); Automotive & Smart Tech; Agriculture; and Research & Development (R&D).

Taking the existing targets into consideration, Boyette conducted a review of the existing business base and recent project successes in Union County-Marysville, as well as analysis of data related to these and other potential opportunities to identify the best target sectors for the UCED to focus its efforts over the next five years. The data reviewed included Industry sector employment data at the two-digit and four-digit North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS) level, including past and future projected growth and wages in the county and city of existing and potential targets. Boyette also reviewed the Location Quotient (LQ) of the potential sectors to assess how concentrated it was compared to the U.S. average of 1.0. The existing targets of JobsOhio and One Columbus were also considered. The team also considered feedback from stakeholders who participated in a Discovery Session and/or the Resident Survey.

The seven updated target sector opportunities for the UCED are outlined on the following page with more detailed target sector profiles to follow.

## TARGET SECTOR OPPORTUNITIES

**LEGACY BUSINESS  
& INDUSTRY**

**ADVANCED  
MANUFACTURING  
AND R&D**

**CORPORATE &  
REGIONAL HQ**

**ENTREPRENEURS  
& INNOVATORS**

**FOREIGN DIRECT  
INVESTMENT**

**FINANCIAL &  
BUSINESS  
SERVICES**

**RETAIL,  
ENTERTAINMENT  
& HOSPITALITY**

# TARGET SECTOR OPPORTUNITIES

(With Subsectors)

LEGACY BUSINESS & INDUSTRY	ADVANCED MANUFACTURING AND R&D	CORPORATE & REGIONAL HQ	ENTREPRENEURS & INNOVATORS	FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT	FINANCIAL & BUSINESS SERVICES	RETAIL, ENTERTAINMENT & HOSPITALITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Agriculture</li> <li>▪ Existing Manufacturers</li> <li>▪ Existing R&amp;D</li> <li>▪ Small Business</li> <li>▪ Other Existing Businesses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Agricultural Technologies (Ag-Tech)</li> <li>▪ Automotive/Mobility/Technologies</li> <li>▪ Life Sciences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Legacy Manufacturers</li> <li>▪ Ag-Tech</li> <li>▪ Automotive/Mobility/Technologies</li> <li>▪ Life Sciences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ag-Tech</li> <li>▪ Automotive/Mobility/Technologies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Advanced Manufacturing</li> <li>▪ R&amp;D (Ag-Tech &amp; Automotive/Mobility/Technologies)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Asset Management</li> <li>▪ Brokerages</li> <li>▪ Investment Services</li> <li>▪ Insurance</li> <li>▪ Other Business Services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Clothing and Accessories Stores</li> <li>▪ Grocery Stores</li> <li>▪ Restaurants</li> <li>▪ Sporting Goods Stores</li> <li>▪ Mixed-Use Developments, including Housing, Office, Restaurants, Retail Entertainment and Hotels</li> </ul>



LEGACY BUSINESS  
& INDUSTRY

# LEGACY BUSINESS & INDUSTRY

## Sector Defined

- Includes legacy or existing employers that make the Union County economy strong and diverse
- Focus will be on supporting these legacy employers to ensure they remain and expand operations in the county

## Sector Focuses

Agriculture

Existing Manufacturers

Existing R&D

Small Business

Other Existing Business

## Local & Regional Assets

Strong existing manufacturing and R&D base

## Select Legacy Employers



Research and Development



**37,600+**

Legacy Employer  
Jobs in Union  
County (2026)

**12%**

Growth in Jobs in  
Union County  
(2021-2026)

**4%**

Projected Growth in  
Mfg./R&D Jobs in  
Union County  
(2026-2031)

**\$76K+**

Wages for Jobs in  
Union County  
(2026)

**ADVANCED  
MANUFACTURING  
AND RESEARCH &  
DEVELOPMENT (R&D)**

# ADVANCED MANUFACTURING and R&D

## Sector Defined

- **Advanced Manufacturing** – Businesses focused on technology-driven research and production processes that utilize precision engineering, automation, robotics, and advanced materials
- **R&D** – Activities that advance technology, products, and processes for industrial and commercial applications

## Sector Focuses

Agricultural Technologies  
(Ag-Tech)

Automotive/Mobility/Technologies

Life Sciences  
(Pharma/Medical Devices)

## Local & Regional Assets

- **Honda Research Institute USA, Inc. (HRI-U.S.)** – Has one location in nearby Columbus on west campus of The Ohio State University (OSU) focused on energy and battery technologies, mobility human-computer-interaction, and software defined mobility
- **99P Labs** - Digital proving ground for mobility and energy innovators, backed by Honda and The Ohio State University
- **US-33 Smart Mobility Corridor** – 35-mile, fiber-connected economic and transportation corridor running along US-33 between Dublin, Marysville and East Liberty hosting **70+ automotive and manufacturing firms** tied largely to regional Honda supply chain within **The Beta District**
- **The Beta District** – High-tech innovation region focused on testing and deploying autonomous vehicles, connected infrastructure, AI-driven transportation, and smart agriculture
- **Transportation Research Center (TRC)** – One of largest independent automotive testing grounds in U.S., used for vehicle testing, safety validation, and autonomous vehicle development

## STRONG EXISTING MANUFACTURING AND R&D BASE

### Honda of America Manufacturing

Manufacturing in Marysville  
and R&D nearby

### The Scotts Miracle-Gro Company

Global HQ, Manufacturing  
and R&D in Marysville

### Continental AG/Contitech

Manufacturing and R&D in  
Marysville

### Nestlé Development Center R&D in Marysville

# ADVANCED MANUFACTURING and R&D

## Local & Regional Assets

### STRONG EXISTING MANUFACTURING AND R&D BASE

**Parker Hannifin  
Hydraulics** Manufacturing  
in Marysville

**Select Sires, Inc.**  
HQ's and Agricultural R&D in  
Plain City (Jerome Township)

**Sumitomo Electric Wiring  
Systems**  
Technical Center and  
Engineering & Development  
in Marysville

**Morioku Technology  
North America**  
Headquarters & R&D Center  
in Marysville

**Ease Logistics**  
New State-of-the-Art  
Logistics & Innovation Facility

- **Life Science Ready Community Designation Program** – Union County received premier designation by Ohio Life Sciences, one of two communities in Central Ohio to receive the highest rating
- **Automotive & Mobility Innovation Center (AMIC)** – 18,000+ square-foot publicly supported smart-mobility incubator and innovation hub designed to support startups, research organizations, and corporate teams working on next-generation transportation technologies
- **National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA) Vehicle Research and Test Center (VRTC)** – Conducts research and vehicle testing to save lives, prevent injuries and reduce traffic-related health care and other economic costs in nearby East Liberty, Ohio
- **Rickenbacker International Airport (LCK)** - A high-speed logistics hub and one of world's only cargo-focused airports offering access to global networks in Columbus
- **Foreign Trade Zone (FTZ) 138** – Located at LCK allowing businesses in Union County to lower costs of customs duties

### Japanese Company Specific Support

- **UCED** offers support to companies and residents through its Japanese Resource website page
- **Japan America Society of Central Ohio (JASCO)** – Provides programs and events to foster cultural understanding, and support Japanese business success in Ohio
- **JETRO (Japan External Trade Organization)** – Supports investment by fostering partnerships between local leaders and Japanese companies, operating through its Midwest office in Chicago
- **Central Ohio Japanese Association of Commerce (COJAC)** – Formed in 1990 in Columbus area in response to expanding Japanese company presence in the region

# ADVANCED MANUFACTURING and R&D

## Infrastructure

- 15 minutes to I-270 (connection to Columbus)
- Direct access to: US-33 Smart Mobility Corridor & Interstates 70, 71, and 270
- Since 2017 more than **\$200 million** has been invested in smart technologies in The Beta District with 432 strands of 100-gig fiber to stream and capture data installed
- Regional connectivity with **John Glenn International Airport**
  - 9.2 million passengers served in 2024
  - Direct flights to 53 destinations and continues to expand
- **Rickenbacker International Airport (LCK)** - A high-speed logistics hub and one of world's only cargo-focused airports offering access to global networks in Columbus
- **Foreign Trade Zone (FTZ) 138** - Located at LCK allowing businesses in Union County to lower costs of customs duties
- **Union County Airport** in Marysville maintains a 4,297-foot runway and has room for expansion
- Potential plans for passenger rail expansion with a station in Marysville possible by 2030 **connecting Columbus to Chicago**

## Product

- **Union County-Marysville Economic Development Partnership** maintains online database of existing properties - <https://www.growunioncountyohio.com/available-sites-and-buildings>
- Select industrial parks and greenfield sites listed below:
  - **Marysville East** – 600-acre business park in Marysville designed to attract advanced manufacturers, tech companies, and biopharmaceutical firms
  - **Creekview Commerce Park** – 515-acres
  - **33 Innovation Park (Marysville)** – 206-acre industrial and R&D park designed to attract advanced manufacturing and technology companies that is also an Ohio Certified Site
  - **Multiple spec industrial/flex buildings** – Over 400,000 square feet of available space
  - **Richwood Industrial Park** – 20-acre industrial park
  - **Industrial Parkway** – Various properties between Marysville and Dublin, with thousands of acres

**8,500+**

Manufacturing Jobs in  
Union County (2026)

**5,000+**

Automotive Mfg. Jobs  
in Union County (2026)

**1,700+**

R&D Jobs in  
Union County  
(2026)

**\$116,000**

Wages for Mfg./R&D  
Jobs in Union  
County (2026)

# ADVANCED MANUFACTURING and R&D

## Key Educational Programs

### Career Tech

- **Ohio Hi-Point Career Center** – Provides career-technical education programs in areas such as Precision Machining, Industrial Automation and Robotics, Electrical and Mechanical Systems, Welding and Fabrication, Computer-Aided Design, and Aviation and Drone Technologies
- **Tolles Career & Technical Center** – Offers courses in Automotive Technology, Engineering Technology, and Welding and Fabrication Technologies, among other
- **Tri-Rivers Career Center** – Offers career-technical programs that prepare students for jobs in fields such as Automotive Technology and Welding

### STEM Schools

- **Marysville Early College High School** – Ohio's first manufacturing-related STEM High School, which offers pathways in Engineering/Advanced Manufacturing, Health Sciences, Automotive and Information Technology
- **Emerald Campus in Dublin** – Offers Academies in Biomedical & Engineering, and Career Communities in Agriculture & Environmental Systems and Engineering, Transportation & Tech

### Other Programs

- **Columbus State Community College (CSCC Dublin)** and **Ohio University (Dublin)**, located partly in Union County, with **30** other colleges and universities within 30 miles including **The Ohio State University**, which includes **Center for Automotive Research (CAR)**, among other research institutes
- **CSCC Manufacturing Solutions** empowers manufacturers to innovate, grow and thrive
- **Japanese Language School**
  - **Columbus Japanese Language School** is nonprofit Saturday supplemental school serving an estimated 550 students each week located at Marysville Creekview Intermediate School
  - **Japanese K-12 language program** at Marysville Exempted Village School District

**30**

Colleges/Universities  
Within a 30-Mile Radius

**~50%**

Union County Population  
w/ Associate's Degree or  
Higher  
(2026)

**~15%**

Union County Population  
w/ Graduate Degree or  
Higher  
(2026)

**CORPORATE &  
REGIONAL  
HEADQUARTERS (HQ)**

# CORPORATE & REGIONAL HQ

## MAJOR CORPORATE & REGIONAL OPERATIONS

### Honda of America Manufacturing

North American HQ Functions +  
Engineering

### The Scotts Miracle-Gro Company

Global HQ Campus

### Parker Hannafin Regional HQ

### Continental AG/ Contitech Regional HQ

### Select Sires, Inc. World HQ

## Sector Defined and Focuses

- Central or regional location where a company's executive management and key staff operate and oversee overall business activities
- Focuses include all target sectors, including Legacy Manufacturers and other operations located in Union County that do not currently have HQ operations in the county
- Special focus on companies in the Ag-Tech, Automotive/Mobility/Technologies and Life Sciences sectors

## Local & Regional Assets

- Columbus Region, which includes Union County, is major corporate hub, home to an estimated **18 Fortune 1000** company headquarters
- **33 Smart Mobility Corridor**
  - 35-mile fiber-connected economic and transportation corridor running along US-33 between Dublin, Marysville and East Liberty that crosses Franklin, Logan and Union counties
  - Home to 70 automotive companies and is one of largest concentrations of manufacturing, R&D and logistics companies in state
  - Includes **The Beta District**
    - Public-private partnership that is high-tech, innovation region along Corridor spanning Columbus, Dublin, Marysville, and Union County
    - Focused on testing and deploying autonomous vehicles, connected infrastructure, AI-driven transportation, and smart agriculture
    - Since 2017 more than **\$200 million** has been invested in smart technologies in District with 432 strands of 100-gig fiber to stream and capture data installed
    - Beta District home to an estimated 1,600 companies
- Home to **Automotive & Mobility Innovation Center (AMIC)**, an 18,000+ square-foot publicly supported smart-mobility incubator and innovation hub designed to support startups, research organizations, and corporations working on next-gen transportation technologies

# CORPORATE & REGIONAL HQ

470+

Jobs in Management  
of Companies in  
Union County (2026)

3,200

Professional Services  
Jobs to support  
Corporate & Regional HQ  
(2026)

\$137K

Wages for  
Management of  
Companies Jobs in  
Union County  
(2026)

## Product

- **Marysville East** – 600-acre business park in Marysville designed to attract advanced manufacturers, tech companies, and biopharmaceutical firms
- **33 Innovation Park (Marysville)** – 206-acre industrial and R&D park designed to attract advanced manufacturing and technology companies that is also an Ohio Certified Site
- **Innovation Park Building 2** – 112,000 sq. ft. building (office/industrial)
- **Creekview Commerce Park** – 515 acres of vacant land

## Infrastructure

- 15 minutes to I-270 (connection to Columbus)
- Direct access to: US-33 Smart Mobility Corridor & Interstates 70, 71, and 270
- Regional connectivity with **John Glenn International Airport**
  - 9.2 million passengers served in 2024
  - Direct flights to 53 destinations and continues to expand
- **Rickenbacker International Airport (LCK)** - A high-speed logistics hub and one of world's only cargo-focused airports offering access to global networks in Columbus
- **Union County Airport** in Marysville maintains a 4,297-foot runway and has room for expansion
- Potential plans for passenger rail expansion with a station in Marysville possible by 2030 **connecting Columbus to Chicago**

# CORPORATE & REGIONAL HQ

## Key Educational Programs

### Colleges/Universities within Five Miles (partially in Union County)

- **Ohio University Dublin**
  - Offers a Professional MBA program
- **Columbus State Community College (Dublin)**
  - Offers Associate Degrees in Communication, Economics, Computer & Information Science and other at Dublin campus

### Colleges/Universities within 25 Miles

- **Columbus State Community College**
  - Main campus in nearby Columbus offers programs in Accounting, Business, Business Office Administration, Economics, Finance, Human Resources and Marketing
- **Marion Technical College**
  - Located in nearby Marion, offers Business Technology Programs including options in Accounting, Business Management, Human Resources Management, Marketing Media Manager, Office Administration, Real Estate, as well as Information Technology programs

### Other Select Colleges/Universities within 30 Miles

- **The Ohio State University (OSU)**
  - Top-tier research university located in nearby Columbus with six campuses in state
  - 200-plus undergraduate majors, 278 graduate and professional programs, and 500-plus specializations in areas such as Business, including MBA, Engineering, Logistics and Law

### Otterbein University

- Offers degrees in Business and Communications in areas such as Accounting, Business Analytics, Economics, Finance, Marketing and many others in nearby Westerville
- Online MBA program available through partnership with Antioch University

### Ohio Wesleyan University

- Majors through Department of Economics & Business include Accounting, Business Administration, Economics, Finance, International Business, Management Economics and Quantitative Economics in nearby Delaware, Ohio
- Other majors include Data Analytics, Engineering and Computer Science

**30**

Colleges/Universities  
Within a 30-Mile Radius

**~50%**

Union County Population  
w/ Associate's Degree or  
Higher  
(2026)

**~15%**

Union County Population  
w/ Graduate Degree or  
Higher  
(2026)

**ENTREPRENEURS  
& INNOVATORS**

# ENTREPRENEURS & INNOVATORS

## Sector Defined and Focuses

- Focused on attraction and support of entrepreneurs & innovators and related startup companies
- Subsectors include **Agricultural Technologies (Ag-Tech)** and **Automotive/Mobility/Technologies**

## Agricultural Assets

- Union County home to nearly **1,000 farmers** and **241,000 acres** of productive crop land
- Estimated **75 percent** of Union County is crop and pastureland
- **The Ohio State University (OSU)**
  - **Extension College of Food, Agricultural and Environmental Sciences** located in Marysville
  - **Ag-Tech Innovation Hub at OSU** – Conducts research focused on developing new solutions to help agricultural community understand, manage, and mitigate climate risk
  - **Large Animal Services at Marysville**, which is part of OSU Veterinary Medical Center (VMC), provides equine and farm animals with routine and emergency care
  - VMC conducts **30 to 50 clinical trials** each year on client-owned animals related to naturally occurring diseases resulting in new treatments for cancer (lymphoma), heart disease, and other

## Mobility Assets

- **33 Smart Mobility Corridor**
  - 35-mile fiber-connected economic and transportation corridor running along US-33 between Dublin, Marysville and East Liberty that crosses Franklin, Logan and Union counties
  - Largest concentration of manufacturing, R&D and logistics companies in state
  - Includes **The Beta District**, a public-private partnership that is a high-tech, innovation region along Corridor focused on testing and deploying autonomous vehicles, connected infrastructure, AI-driven transportation, and smart agriculture
  - Home to **Automotive & Mobility Innovation Center (AMIC)**, an 18,000+ square-foot publicly supported smart-mobility incubator and innovation hub designed to support startups, research organizations, and corporate teams working on next-generation transportation technologies
- **Transportation Research Center (TRC)**
  - One of largest independent automotive testing grounds in U.S., used for vehicle testing, safety validation, and autonomous vehicle development
  - TRC's East Liberty campus (in Logan and Union County) has team of 500 associates
- **99P Labs** – Digital proving ground for mobility and energy innovators, backed by Honda and OSU

**1,700+**

R&D Jobs in Union County  
(2026)

**2,700+**

Engineering Jobs in  
Beta District  
(2026)

**\$177,000**

Wages for R&D Jobs  
in Union County  
(2026)

# ENTREPRENEURS & INNOVATORS

## Select Existing Local and Regional Research Activity

- **Honda Research Institute USA, Inc. (HRI-U.S.)**
  - Has one location in nearby Columbus on west campus of OSU focused on energy and battery technologies, mobility human-computer-interaction, and software defined mobility
- **Scotts-Miracle-Gro**
  - Major R&D facility with global HQ in Marysville
  - Drives innovation in lawn and garden products, including organic, indoor growing, and sustainable solutions
  - R&D efforts focused on developing new, sustainable gardening products, enhancing soil health with natural ingredients (like biochar), and creating drought-tolerant turf
- **Nestlé Development Center (NDC) Marysville**
  - Research focus on coffee extraction, aroma and texture
  - Handles development of many Ready to Drink Beverages and Ready to Use Creamers
- **Other R&D operations** in county include Continental AG/Contitech, Select Sires, Inc., Sumitomo Electric Wiring Services, Morioku Technology North America, and Ease Logistics

## Infrastructure

- 15 minutes to I-270 (connection to Columbus)
- Direct access to: US-33 Smart Mobility Corridor & Interstates 70, 71, and 270
- Since 2017, more than **\$200 million** has been invested in smart technologies in The Beta District with 432 strands of 100-gig fiber to stream and capture data installed
- Regional connectivity with **John Glenn International Airport**
  - 9.2 million passengers served in 2024
  - Direct flights to 53 destinations and continues to expand
- **Union County Airport** in Marysville maintains a 4,297-foot runway
- Potential plans for passenger rail expansion with a station in Marysville possible by 2030 **connecting Columbus to Chicago**

**73,000+**

Population in Union  
County  
(2026)

**18%**

Population Growth  
in Union County  
(2021-2026)

**16%**

Projected  
Population Growth  
in Union County  
(2026-2031)

# ENTREPRENEURS & INNOVATORS

## Key Local and Regional Support Programs

- **AMIC** is a smart-mobility incubator and innovation hub
- **BUILD Space** offers coworking space in Marysville
- **Union County Leadership Institute (Union County Chamber of Commerce)**
  - Offers hands-on education and networking through a 10-month program
- **Techstars Columbus** is powered by OSU and invest in emerging technology companies
- **Rev1** – Venture studio in Columbus that assist startups through guidance, programs and funding
- **NOBLE (Network Of Business Leaders and Entrepreneurs)**
  - Serves aspiring entrepreneurs who want to start, launch and grow their businesses in region

## Key Regional Educational Programs

- **The Ohio State University (OSU) Keenan Center for Entrepreneurship**
  - Offers programs such as accelerators, pitch competitions, mentorships, scholarships, networking, and business development support targeted to OSU students in Columbus
- **Columbus State Community College**
  - Offers programs in Entrepreneurship at the Columbus campus
- **Ohio Wesleyan University (OWU)**
  - Ranked by *Forbes* as **No. 1 entrepreneurial college** in Ohio, and 17th in U.S.
  - Through The OWU Connection, students can gain training and real-world experience in entrepreneurship through the following programs:
    - The Woltemade Center for Economics, Business & Entrepreneurship
    - The Carol Latham Entrepreneurial Scholars Program
    - The Delaware Entrepreneurial Scholars Program
    - The Corns Business and Entrepreneurial Scholars Program
- **The Point at Otterbein University**
  - Over 61,000 square feet of learning labs and maker space, think tanks, networking facilities, event space and designated co-working areas and offices in nearby Westerville

30

Colleges/Universities  
Within a 30-Mile Radius

~50%

Union County Population  
w/ Associate's Degree or  
Higher  
(2026)

~15%

Union County Population  
w/ Graduate Degree or  
Higher  
(2026)

**FINANCIAL &  
BUSINESS SERVICES**

# FINANCIAL & BUSINESS SERVICES

**52,000**

Financial & Business  
Services Jobs in Columbus  
MSA (2026)

**600+**

Financial & Business  
Services Jobs in Union  
County (2026)

**18%**

Growth in Financial &  
Business Services Jobs in  
Union County (2021-2026)

**9%**

Projected Growth in  
Financial & Business  
Services Jobs in Union  
County (2026-2031)

## Sector Defined

- Consists of firms that provide financial intermediation, risk management, professional expertise, and operational support services to businesses, institutions, and individuals
- Typically includes asset management, brokerage firms, investment services, insurance and other financial and business service companies

## Local & Regional Assets

- Columbus Region, which includes Union County, is major corporate hub, home to an estimated **18 Fortune 1000** company headquarters
- Major financial services and corporate headquarters presence in Union County and the Columbus region include but are not limited to:
  - Richwood Banking Co. (Union County)
  - JPMorgan Chase (17,000+ regional employees) (region)
  - Nationwide (≈15,000 employees) (region)
  - Huntington Bancshares (region)
  - Bread Financial (region)
  - Honda Development & Manufacturing of America (Union County)
  - Scotts Miracle-Gro (Union County)
  - Nestle R&D (Union County)
- **33 Smart Mobility Corridor**
  - 35-mile **fiber-connected** economic and transportation corridor running along US-33 between Dublin, Marysville and East Liberty that crosses Franklin, Logan and Union counties
  - One of the largest concentrations of manufacturing, R&D and logistics companies in state
  - Includes **The Beta District**
    - Public-private partnership that is a high-tech, innovation region along the Corridor spanning Columbus, Dublin, Marysville, and Union County
    - Since 2017, more than **\$200 million** has been invested in smart technologies in District with 432 strands of 100-gig fiber to stream and capture data installed
    - Beta District home to an estimated 1,600 companies

# FINANCIAL & BUSINESS SERVICES

## 36%

Growth in Insurance Jobs in Union County (2021-2026)

## 16%

Growth in Portfolio Management Jobs in Union County (2021-2026)

## 13%

Growth in Commercial Banking Jobs in Union County (2021-2026)

## \$87k+

Wages in Financial & Business Services Jobs in Union County (2026)

## Product

- **Marysville East** – 600-acre business park in Marysville designed to attract advanced manufacturers, tech companies, and biopharmaceutical firms
- **33 Innovation Park (Marysville)** – 206-acre industrial and R&D park designed to attract advanced manufacturing and technology companies that is also an Ohio Certified Site
- **Innovation Park Building 2** – 112,000 sq. ft. building (office/industrial)
- **Creekview Commerce Park** – 515 acres of vacant land

## Infrastructure

- 15 minutes to I-270 (connection to Columbus)
- Direct access to: US-33 Smart Mobility Corridor & Interstates 70, 71, and 270
- Regional connectivity with **John Glenn International Airport**
  - 9.2 million passengers served in 2024
  - Direct flights to 53 destinations and continues to expand
- **Rickenbacker International Airport (LCK)** - A high-speed logistics hub and one of world's only cargo-focused airports offering access to global networks in Columbus
- **Union County Airport** in Marysville maintains a 4,297-foot runway and has room for expansion
- Potential plans for passenger rail expansion with a station in Marysville possible by 2030 **connecting Columbus to Chicago**

# FINANCIAL & BUSINESS SERVICES

## Key Educational Programs

### Colleges/Universities within Five Miles

- **Ohio University Dublin**
  - Offers a Professional MBA program
- **Columbus State Community College (Dublin)**
  - Offers Associate Degrees in Economics and Computer & Information Science

### Colleges/Universities within 25 Miles

- **Columbus State Community College**
  - Main campus in nearby Columbus offers programs in Accounting, Business, Economics, and Finance
- **Marion Technical College**
  - Located in nearby Marion, offers Business Technology Programs including options in Accounting and Business Management

### Other Select Colleges/Universities within 30 Miles

- **The Ohio State University (OSU)**
  - Top-tier research university located in nearby Columbus with six campuses in state
  - 200-plus undergraduate majors, 278 graduate and professional programs, and 500-plus specializations in areas such as Business
  - Fisher School of Business offers concentrations in Accounting, Economics, Finance, Information Systems and other, including an MBA program

### Otterbein University

- Offers degrees in Business and Communications in areas such as Accounting, Business Analytics, Economics, Finance, and many other in nearby Westerville
- Online MBA program available through partnership with Antioch University

### Ohio Wesleyan University

- Majors through Department of Economics & Business include Accounting, Economics, Finance, International Business, Management Economics and Quantitative Economics in nearby Delaware, Ohio

30

Colleges/Universities  
Within a 30-Mile Radius

~50%

Union County Population  
w/ Associate's Degree or  
Higher  
(2026)

~15%

Union County Population  
w/ Graduate Degree or  
Higher  
(2026)

**FOREIGN DIRECT  
INVESTMENT**

# 20+

Japanese Companies  
in Union County

*Denyo North America, Inc.*  
*Honda Development & Manufacturing of America*  
*Honda Engineering North America*  
*Honda Logistics*  
*Honda Marysville*  
*Honda Marysville Motorsports*  
*Honda Research & Development*  
*Honda Trading Corporation*  
*KAPI (KG Agri Products, Inc.)*  
*KNB Tools of America, Inc.*  
*MACOHO America*  
*MinebeaMitsumi Inc*  
*Moriroku Technology North America*  
*Neaton Auto Products*  
*Nissin International Transport USA, Inc.*  
*Oyabe Americas, Inc.*  
*PLOTWORK USA, Inc.*  
*Precision Tools Service, Inc.*  
*Sumitomo Electric Wiring Systems, Inc.*  
*Tomita USA, Inc.*  
*Yaskawa America, Inc.*  
*Yonezawa USA, Inc.*

# 60+

Japanese Companies  
Along U.S.-33 Smart  
Mobility Corridor

# FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT (FDI)

## Sector Defined

- Investments made by foreign companies or individuals in the U.S.
- Union County a proven U.S. landing zone for international manufacturers and technology firms
- Strengths include global OEM presence, R&D infrastructure, and workforce pipeline built for advanced manufacturing, mobility and ag innovation

## Sector Focuses

Advanced Manufacturing

R&D (Ag-Tech & Automotive/Mobility/Technologies)

## Local & Regional Assets

- **Honda of America Manufacturing**
  - Major U.S. production and engineering hub with 47 years of successful Japanese investment
- **UCED** supports companies and residents through its Japanese Resource website page
- **Japan America Society of Central Ohio (JASCO)** – Provides programs and events to foster cultural understanding, and support Japanese business success in Ohio
- **JETRO (Japan External Trade Organization)** – Supports investment by fostering partnerships between local leaders and Japanese companies, operating through its Midwest office in Chicago
- **Central Ohio Japanese Association of Commerce (COJAC)** – Formed in 1990 in Columbus area in response to expanding Japanese company presence in the region
- Other countries with investment in Union County include Australia, Brazil, China, Czech Republic, Israel, the Netherlands, Spain, Switzerland and the United Kingdom
- **33 Smart Mobility Corridor**
  - 35-mile **fiber-connected** economic and transportation corridor running along US-33 between Dublin, Marysville and East Liberty that crosses Franklin, Logan and Union counties
  - Home to **250 plus Corridor companies** of which 70 are automotive companies
  - Largest concentration of manufacturing, R&D and logistics companies in state
  - Includes **The Beta District**, public-private partnership that is a high-tech, innovation region along Corridor spanning Columbus, Dublin, Marysville, and Union County focused on testing autonomous vehicles, connected infrastructure, AI-driven transportation, and smart ag
  - Home to **Automotive & Mobility Innovation Center (AMIC)**
- **Life Science Ready Community Designation Program** – Union County received premier designation by Ohio Life Sciences, one of two communities in Central Ohio to receive the highest rating

# FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT (FDI)

**8,500+**

Manufacturing Jobs in Union County (2026)

**1,700+**

R&D Jobs in Union County (2026)

**5,000+**

Automotive Mfg. Jobs in Union County (2026)

**\$116,000**

Wages for Mfg./R&D Jobs in Union County (2026)

## Infrastructure

- 15 minutes to I-270 (connection to Columbus)
- Direct access to: US-33 Smart Mobility Corridor & Interstates 70, 71, and 270
- Since 2017, more than **\$200 million** has been invested in smart technologies in The Beta District with 432 strands of 100-gig fiber to stream and capture data installed
- Regional connectivity with **John Glenn International Airport**
  - 9.2 million passengers served in 2024
  - Direct flights to 53 destinations and continues to expand
- **Rickenbacker International Airport (LCK)** - A high-speed logistics hub and one of world's only cargo-focused airports offering access to global networks in Columbus
- **Foreign Trade Zone (FTZ) 138** - Located at LCK allowing businesses in Union County to lower costs of customs duties
- **Union County Airport** in Marysville maintains a 4,297-foot runway
- Potential plans for passenger rail expansion with a station in Marysville possible by 2030 **connecting Columbus to Chicago**

## Product

- **Union County-Marysville Economic Development Partnership** maintains online database of existing properties - <https://www.growunioncountyohio.com/available-sites-and-buildings>
- Select industrial parks and greenfield sites listed below:
  - **Marysville East** – 600-acre business park in Marysville designed to attract advanced manufacturers, tech companies, and biopharmaceutical firms
  - **Creekview Commerce Park** – 515-acres
  - **33 Innovation Park (Marysville)** – 206-acre industrial and R&D park designed to attract advanced manufacturing and technology companies that is also an Ohio Certified Site
  - **Multiple spec industrial/flex buildings** – Over 400,000 square feet of available space
  - **Richwood Industrial Park** – 20-acre industrial park
  - **Industrial Parkway** – Various properties between Marysville and Dublin, with thousands of acres

# FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT (FDI)

## Key Educational Programs

### Career Tech

- **Ohio Hi-Point Career Center** – Provides career-technical education programs in areas such as Precision Machining, Industrial Automation and Robotics, Electrical and Mechanical Systems, Welding and Fabrication, Computer-Aided Design, and Aviation and Drone Technologies
- **Tolles Career & Technical Center** – Offers courses in Automotive Technology, Engineering Technology, and Welding and Fabrication Technologies, among other
- **Tri-Rivers Career Center** – Offers career-technical programs that prepare students for jobs in fields such as Automotive Technology and Welding, among others

### STEM Schools

- **Marysville Early College High School** – Ohio's first manufacturing-related STEM High School, which offers pathways in Engineering/Advanced Manufacturing, Health Sciences, Automotive and Information Technology
- **Emerald Campus in Dublin** – Offers Academies in Biomedical & Engineering, and Career Communities in Agriculture & Environmental Systems and Engineering, Transportation & Tech

### Other Programs

- **Columbus State Community College (Dublin)** and **Ohio University (Dublin)**, located partly in Union County, with **30** other colleges and universities within 30 miles including **The Ohio State University**, which includes the **Center for Automotive Research (CAR)**, among other research institutes
- **Japanese Language School**
  - **Columbus Japanese Language School** is nonprofit Saturday supplemental school serving an estimated 550 students each week located at Marysville Creekview Intermediate School
  - **Japanese K-12 language program** at Marysville Exempted Village School District

**30**

Colleges/Universities  
Within a 30-Mile Radius

**~50%**

Union County Population  
w/ Associate's  
Degree or Higher  
(2026)

**~15%**

Union County Population  
w/ Graduate Degree or  
Higher  
(2026)

**RETAIL,  
ENTERTAINMENT  
& HOSPITALITY**

# RETAIL, ENTERTAINMENT & HOSPITALITY

## Sector Defined

Quality retail and amenities, including restaurants, entertainment, hospitality and others, to build upon and enhance the livability assets available in a community

## Sector Focuses

- Clothing and Accessories Stores
- Grocery Stores
- Restaurants
- Sporting Goods Stores
- Mixed-Use Developments, including Housing, Office, Restaurants, Retail, Entertainment and Hotels

## Local & Regional Assets

- **Marysville Uptown & Historic District**
  - Boutique shops, local restaurants, and event spaces
- **MainStreet Marysville**
  - Focused on historic downtown preservation, business growth, including boutique retail, restaurants, entertainment venues, and vibrant community spaces
- **GoUptown! - Plain City**
  - Focused on downtown revitalization in Plain City looking to attract new local shops and restaurants
- **Richwood's Historic Downtown**
  - Home to Richwood Park, a 29-acre park that offers fishing, swimming, kayaks, picnic shelters, hiking trails, playground, basketball, and baseball/softball
- **US-33 Innovation Corridor & Business Parks**
  - High-traffic retail frontage for big-box, lifestyle centers
- **Large concentration of international business and corporate and regional headquarters**, which draws business travelers during the week, including but not limited to:
  - Honda of America Manufacturing (North American HQ functions + engineering)
  - The Scotts Miracle-Gro Company (Global HQ campus)
  - Nestlé (Product Development Center (R&D))
- **Union County Tourism** manages marketing, visitor services, and tourism programming for county

**1.6M+**

Population within  
45-Min Drive Time  
Union County (2026)

**\$102K**

Median Household  
Income in Union County  
(2026)

**18%**

Population Growth  
in Union County  
(2021-2026)

**16%**

Projected  
Population Growth  
in Union County  
(2026-2031)

# RETAIL, ENTERTAINMENT & HOSPITALITY

**5,500+**

Jobs in Sector in  
Union County  
(2026)

**17%**

Growth in Sector in  
Union County  
(2021-2026)

**8%**

Projected Growth in  
Sector  
(2026-2031)

## Product

- **Uptown Marysville** has available properties and opportunities for redevelopment and infill, as does Richwood, Plain City and other municipalities
- **The Silos @ Water and Light in Uptown Marysville**
  - \$110 million mixed-use redevelopment project transforming the former municipal water and light plant into a vibrant, 18-acre urban center with 300 planned apartments
  - Slated for completion around 2029
  - Will repurpose historic grain silos into a restaurant, bar, event space, and recreation area
- **Jerome Village and The Jerome Village Market** (Primarily in Jerome Township)
  - Master planned community encompassing more than 2,000 acres with residential, retail, and recreation

## Infrastructure

- 15 minutes to I-270 (connection to Columbus)
- Direct access to: US-33 Smart Mobility Corridor & Interstates 70, 71, and 270
- Since 2017, more than **\$200 million** has been invested in smart technologies in county with 432 strands of 100-gig fiber to stream and capture data installed
- Regional connectivity with **John Glenn International Airport**
  - 9.2 million passengers served in 2024
  - Direct flights to 53 destinations and continues to expand
- Potential plans for passenger rail expansion with a station in Marysville possible by 2030 **connecting Columbus to Chicago**

## Workforce/Talent

- Marysville Early College High School (Hospitality & Business Programs)
- Columbus State Community College – Columbus Campus
  - Hospitality program includes Baking and Pastry Arts, Culinary, Hotel, Tourism and Events Management and Restaurant and Food Service Management
- Career & Technical Centers – Ohio Hi-Point Career Center, Tolles Career & Technical Center and Tri-Rivers Career Center have Culinary Arts programs

# FORWARD

Union-Marysville



## STRATEGIC GOALS

## STRATEGIC GOALS

### OVERVIEW

**FORWARD Union-Marysville** is meant to guide the economic development efforts of the UCED and its partners over the next five years. This will be achieved by focusing on three strategic goals.

#### **GOAL 1: INCREASE COLLABORATION AND COMMUNICATION EFFORTS**

During the stakeholder engagement process, many participants expressed the need for increased collaboration for the different entities, including the cities, townships and villages, and the seven different school systems, among other groups. Some also expressed that there is not enough coordination among these different entities. The UCED should continue to take the lead working with these partners to encourage more collaboration and communication moving forward.

On a different but related note, many stakeholders referenced that many residents in the community do not understand the benefit of economic development and with the recent growth in the county, this has led to an increasing anti-growth or growth conscious mentality that must be addressed. This indicates a need for clear communication and collaboration with not only leadership throughout the county but also to residents. The Resident Survey launched as part of this process was a good start to more communication with residents, but more targeted efforts will need to be initiated throughout the plan implementation process.

## **GOAL 2: SUPPORT LEGACY COMPANIES WHILE DIVERSIFYING BUSINESS BASE**

During the stakeholder engagement process, many mentioned the overreliance on a few major employers in the county for jobs and the lack of job diversity. It was specifically said that “There are not enough professional jobs, and most professionals leave the county for work each day.” This is further supported by nearly 77 percent out-commuting rate in the county.

With that said, the importance of retaining existing or legacy businesses in the county cannot be understated. However, there is significant opportunity to diversify the business base. This will require a focused effort on ensuring legacy employers continue to expand in the county, while having a concentrated effort on attraction of identified target sectors such as more R&D, Corporate & Regional Headquarters and Financial & Business Services. There will also need to be a more of a focus on supporting Entrepreneurs & Innovators in the county.

## **GOAL 3: ENHANCE LIVABILITY ASSETS THROUGH NEW DEVELOPMENT/ REDEVELOPMENT**

According to stakeholders, a lack of amenities such as entertainment and recreational options, as well as attainable or workforce housing, is a challenge in Union County. As such, the UCED must partner with the county, municipalities, developers, Union County Tourism and others to a focus on attracting the types of amenities that existing and new residents and businesses desire. This will include new mixed-use developments to locate in identified areas of development throughout the county that provide attainable housing opportunities, as well as more retail, restaurants, entertainment, recreation and other amenities. This also includes supporting the revitalization of Uptown Marysville, Uptown Plain City, Downtown Richwood and other municipalities, as well as the development of new recreational assets including a potential sports complex and expansion of the trail system. The goal is to ensure that Union County becomes an even more of a livable and vibrant community that is attractive to existing businesses, new companies and residents.

These three strategic goals and the primary strategies under each are outlined on the following page.

## STRATEGIC GOALS

GOAL 1	GOAL 2	GOAL 3
<p>INCREASE COLLABORATION AND COMMUNICATION EFFORTS</p>	<p>SUPPORT LEGACY COMPANIES WHILE DIVERSIFYING BUSINESS BASE</p>	<p>ENHANCE LIVABILITY ASSETS THROUGH NEW DEVELOPMENT/ REDEVELOPMENT</p>
<p><b>Strategy 1:</b> Align Strategies Countywide</p> <p><b>Strategy 2:</b> Communicate Plan Implementation Success and Other Achievements</p> <p><b>Strategy 3:</b> Work to Inform and Address Growth Concerns</p>	<p><b>Strategy 1:</b> Further Embrace Legacy Businesses</p> <p><b>Strategy 2:</b> Increase FDI Focus and Activities</p> <p><b>Strategy 3:</b> Support Existing and Attract More R&amp;D Operations</p> <p><b>Strategy 4:</b> Develop a Recruitment Program Related to HQ and Other White- Collar Targets</p> <p><b>Strategy 5:</b> Enhance Support Programs for Entrepreneurs</p> <p><b>Strategy 6:</b> Address Identified Business Challenges and Pursue Opportunities</p>	<p><b>Strategy 1:</b> Engage in a Targeted Effort to Attract Future Mixed-Use Development Countywide</p> <p><b>Strategy 2:</b> Work to Attract New Diverse Housing Options</p> <p><b>Strategy 3:</b> Support Revitalization of Uptown Marysville and Other Municipality Centers</p> <p><b>Strategy 4:</b> Enhance Recreational Assets</p>

**GOAL 1:  
INCREASE  
COLLABORATION AND  
COMMUNICATION  
EFFORTS**

## GOAL 1: INCREASE COLLABORATION AND COMMUNICATION EFFORTS

STRATEGY 1	STRATEGY 2	STRATEGY 3
Align Strategies Countywide	Communicate Plan Implementation Success and Other Achievements	Work to Inform and Address Growth Concerns
<p><b>Tactic 1:</b> Form the <b>FORWARD-Union Marysville</b> Team</p> <p><b>Tactic 2:</b> Assess future staffing needs of the UCED</p> <p><b>Tactic 3:</b> Work with partners to initiate more countywide policies</p> <p><b>Tactic 4:</b> Assess and stay apprised of discussions related to public sector efficiency, taxing districts, and sharing of resources</p>	<p><b>Tactic 1:</b> Plan for and conduct a roll-out presentation for <b>FORWARD-Union Marysville</b></p> <p><b>Tactic 2:</b> Continue to convene leadership of county, cities, villages and townships regularly</p> <p><b>Tactic 3:</b> Meet with leadership and project managers at state and regional groups</p> <p><b>Tactic 4:</b> Utilize social media to introduce the <b>FORWARD-Union Marysville</b> plan and provide regular updates</p> <p><b>Tactic 5:</b> Develop and present annual summary report of all initiatives and successes</p> <p><b>Tactic 6:</b> Create, monitor and provide updates on metrics</p> <p><b>Tactic 7:</b> Seek adoption of <b>FORWARD-Union Marysville</b> plan</p> <p><b>Tactic 8:</b> Adopt updated 2026 UCED Marketing Strategy</p>	<p><b>Tactic 1:</b> Provide data to support economic development activities and communicate to residents</p> <p><b>Tactic 2:</b> Address Concerns with Speed and Type of Growth</p> <p><b>Tactic 3:</b> Continue to Proactively Communicate Economic Development Success</p>

## STRATEGIC GOALS

### GOAL 1: INCREASE COLLABORATION AND COMMUNICATION EFFORTS

#### Strategy 1: Align Strategies Countywide

##### Tactic 1: Form the FORWARD-Union Marysville Team

During the stakeholder engagement process, it was mentioned by several participants that there may be a need to bring governmental and other entities together to further **align strategies countywide**. Community leaders (elected & appointed) need to build trust and be willing to work together to support economic development.

The **FORWARD-Union Marysville Team** should be formed under the UCED to align policies around development, incentives, infrastructure needs, housing and other economic development matters countywide, all of which are addressed as part of this plan. This team will be comprised of one or more representatives from the UCED, the county, the City of Marysville and potentially Dublin, villages such as Plain City and Richwood, and key townships including Jerome, Paris, Allen, and Millcreek townships. It should also include other local partners such as the Union County Chamber of Commerce, the Union County-Marysville Port Authority, Main Street Marysville,

“There is an issue with development in the county and municipalities because there is no unified plan or policy.”

*Stakeholder*

## GOAL 1: INCREASE COLLABORATION AND COMMUNICATION EFFORTS

Union County Tourism, major employers, and representatives of the different school districts, among others. A representative of One Columbus should also be included or at least updated on activities and progress.

Note that there is an existing **33 Corridor Group** that meets bi-monthly working together in the development of areas along the 33-corridor discussing economic development, land use and infrastructure, and ways to encourage the sharing of information and resources. It may make sense to utilize this group to provide updates as the strategy is implemented.

The **FORWARD-Union Marysville Team** should meet at least bi-monthly, but it may be necessary to form smaller Action Teams to address each of the three goals and 13 strategies of the plan, noting the goals may require more than one working group.

### Tactic 2: Assess future staffing needs of the UCED

As the plan moves forward in the implementation process, it will be necessary to assess the need for more UCED professionals to ensure successful plan implementation over the next five years. This should be evaluated at least annually.

### Tactic 3: Work with partners to initiate more countywide policies

Some stakeholders felt that the policies in the county and municipalities are not always aligned. Focus on policies related to development at the county level, such as the development review process, including zoning, permitting, fees, incentives and other to be determined. Then, work with the cities, townships and villages to implement more unified or aligned development policies and to streamline approval and reduce development fees at the county and municipal level.

## **GOAL 1: INCREASE COLLABORATION AND COMMUNICATION EFFORTS**

### **Tactic 4: Assess and stay apprised of discussions related to public sector efficiency, taxing districts, and sharing of resources**

The UCED should stay apprised of ongoing discussions surrounding public sector efficiency, fewer taxing districts, and the sharing of governmental resources. The UCED should also stay aware and supportive of new funding resources to support economic development and larger discussions supporting efficiency and cost-saving in taxing authorities.

### **Strategy 2: Communicate Plan Implementation Success and Other Achievements**

#### **Tactic 1: Plan for and conduct a roll-out presentation for FORWARD-Union Marysville**

A presentation should be conducted to introduce the seven Target Sector Opportunities and three Strategic Goals of the plan to all partners and others who participated in the process to develop the plan.

#### **Tactic 2: Continue to convene leadership of county, cities, villages and townships regularly**

Communication is critical to the UCED's success long-term. Many initiatives in this plan will require involvement of partners countywide to ensure successful implementation. In addition, there is a need to ensure leadership continues to collaborate on these and other initiatives now and into the future.

These leaders should continue to be convened on a regular basis or as needed to update on economic development activity, discuss initiatives related to plan implementation, and other matters to be identified. At least one of these meetings should be in-person each year with breakfast or lunch served but others can be virtual.

## **GOAL 1: INCREASE COLLABORATION AND COMMUNICATION EFFORTS**

### **Tactic 3: Meet with leadership and project managers at state and regional groups**

Plan to conduct one-on-one virtual or in-person meetings with JobsOhio and One Columbus leadership and project managers to introduce them to the **FORWARD-Union Marysville** plan Target Sector Opportunities and Strategic Goals and Tactics. The UCED should continue to update these groups on a regular basis of successes throughout plan implementation.

### **Tactic 4: Utilize social media to introduce the FORWARD-Union Marysville plan and provide regular updates**

Social media should be used to focus on the implementation of the **FORWARD-Union Marysville** plan. This communication should highlight the seven Target Sector Opportunities and three Strategic Goals of the plan, introducing audiences to a new sector and/or Strategic Goal each day, as well as related Tactics. Success stories related to plan implementation should also be posted.

### **Tactic 5: Develop and present annual summary report of all initiatives and successes**

Develop a summary report each year that highlights the status of **FORWARD-Union Marysville** plan implementation, and all successes. The report and key messaging should be distributed through social media and housed on the UCED website and should also be presented at an annual meeting that includes partners and the press.

## GOAL 1: INCREASE COLLABORATION AND COMMUNICATION EFFORTS

### Tactic 6: Create, monitor and provide updates on metrics

Develop metrics or performance measures to show the success of the **FORWARD-Union Marysville** plan. These metrics should be realistic and quantifiable focusing on results rather than process. They should provide a true barometer of success for evaluating the short-term and long-term effectiveness of the economic development strategies and tactics in the plan. Metrics may include increasing attainable housing, successes around new mixed-use developments, and attraction of target business opportunities, among other measures of change.

Metrics should be monitored at least annually and evaluated at the end of the five-year implementation period. Successes around the metrics should also be communicated to identified partners.

### Tactic 7: Seek adoption of FORWARD-Union Marysville plan

Ensure the CIC Board of Directors adopts the **FORWARD-Union Marysville plan**.

### Tactic 8: Seek adoption of the UCED Marketing Plan

Ensure the CIC Board of Directors adopts the UCED Marketing Plan.

## GOAL 1: INCREASE COLLABORATION AND COMMUNICATION EFFORTS

### Strategy 3: Work to Inform and Address Growth Concerns

#### Tactic 1: Provide data to support economic development activities and communicate to residents

Union County-Marysville is home to many successful large operations, including the headquarters and manufacturing location of Honda, which employs over 7,000; Scotts Miracle-Gro, which was founded in Marysville and employs an estimated 800; and Nestle, which operates an R&D operation in the county, among other businesses that provide significant benefits to the area. In addition, there have been large scale and impactful economic development successes in recent years such as the planned AWS \$1B data center investment and original \$4.1 billion data center investment, as well as new mixed-use and redevelopment projects, The Silos @ Water and Light and Jerome Village.

Some of the newer projects have faced resistance in the county. However, the stories of these projects and their potential impact on the county should be leveraged in messaging to residents and other stakeholders to highlight the importance of economic development.

“The growth is coming, but we must manage the growth and ensure ongoing communication to residents.”

“There is a strong anti-growth sentiment in most of the county.”

*Stakeholders*

## GOAL 1: INCREASE COLLABORATION AND COMMUNICATION EFFORTS

Working with One Columbus, the UCED should develop impact analyses related to each of the existing large employers referenced, as well as the new AWS data center project, which has received a lot of criticism from the public. It may also be helpful to conduct an impact for some of the recent mixed-use project successes as well.

These impact analyses can be used to illustrate the financial and social impact of those projects on Union County. The results and impacts of these efforts should be widely promoted through the UCED website, its newsletter, social media channels, and local media. In addition, the long-term impact of the UCED’s work should be communicated and updated annually.

As part of these efforts, UCED should prioritize educating the community on how economic development incentives work and why they are used. While incentives are often perceived as large tax reductions, the effective value is typically much lower, closer to a net 75 percent abatement when accounting for PILOTs (payments in lieu of taxes) and other required contributions. Additionally, companies receiving abatements continue to contribute to the local tax base through mechanisms such as land increment taxes and other ongoing payments, and many are some of the largest taxpayers in the county as illustrated by the chart to the right.

### 10 LARGEST UNION COUNTY TAXPAYERS

AEP Ohio Transmission Company, Inc.
Honda Development & Manufacturing Of America
Dayton Power & Light Co
Ohio Power Co
Union Rural Electric Co-op Inc.
Amazon Data Services Inc.
Scotts Company LLC
Stillwell Jerome
Kenmore Place Llc
Columbia Gas Of Ohio Inc.

## GOAL 1: INCREASE COLLABORATION AND COMMUNICATION EFFORTS

Clear, consistent messaging should emphasize that incentives are performance-based tools designed to attract investment, support job creation, and generate long-term net fiscal and community benefits.

The UCED may also consider conducting impact analyses for other new significant economic development projects once they are operational and communicating those results as part of its ongoing storytelling and outreach efforts, as well as messaging related to the overall role of the UCED. The purpose would be to educate the community on the importance and benefit of economic development and illustrate that development can be a great thing.

### Tactic 2: Address Concerns with Speed and Type of Growth

Communities across the country are increasingly experiencing anti-growth or growth-cautious sentiment among residents. This is also true in Union County-Marysville, which is growing in population and is expected to continue to grow. It is important to address this mentality by consistently sharing positive messages about economic development success in the county. The focus must be on how the county, cities, townships and villages collectively are planning for that growth.

The **FORWARD-Union Marysville** plan is meant to provide guidance on how the county, cities, townships and villages should work together to become the vision they desire. That message needs to be communicated through all mechanisms recommended previously, including the roll-out presentation and efforts through social media.

## **GOAL 1: INCREASE COLLABORATION AND COMMUNICATION EFFORTS**

The UCED has hosted community events in the past including the recent Housing Summit and a speaker series in 2023/2024. The UCED should also consider hosting an annual community-wide forum focused on addressing growth-related concerns among residents and local leadership, with key takeaways shared through social media and other communication channels. This forum could highlight lessons learned and community benefits from past successful projects as outlined previously.

### **Tactic 3: Continue to Proactively Communicate Economic Development Success**

Economic development successes should continue to be prominently shared through the UCED website, newsletter, social media, and local media to help address anti-growth sentiment. This includes regular updates on current and newly announced projects, as well as other positive economic development news.

**GOAL 2:  
SUPPORT LEGACY  
COMPANIES WHILE  
DIVERSIFYING  
BUSINESS BASE**

## GOAL 2: SUPPORT LEGACY COMPANIES WHILE DIVERSIFYING BUSINESS BASE

STRATEGY 1	STRATEGY 2	STRATEGY 3
<p>Further Embrace Legacy Business</p>	<p>Increase Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) Focus and Activities</p>	<p>Support Existing and Attract More Research &amp; Development (R&amp;D) Operations</p>
<p><b>Tactic 1:</b> Continue to conduct annual retention visits</p> <p><b>Tactic 2:</b> Continue to conduct regular visits with new projects</p> <p><b>Tactic 3:</b> Continue to provide support programs to Japanese companies</p> <p><b>Tactic 4:</b> Continue to host Crafted in Union County</p> <p><b>Tactic 5:</b> Continue to explore partnership opportunities with Columbus State Community College (CSCC) Manufacturing Solutions and Central Ohio Manufacturing Partnership (COMP)</p> <p><b>Tactic 6:</b> Continue to plan for industrial product development</p> <p><b>Tactic 7:</b> Support healthcare sector growth in the county</p>	<p><b>Tactic 1:</b> Promote FDI success</p> <p><b>Tactic 2:</b> Develop FDI Asset Map</p> <p><b>Tactic 3:</b> Continue to engage with partners on FDI business recruitment efforts</p> <p><b>Tactic 4:</b> Track and report information on global or FDI investments</p>	<p><b>Tactic 1:</b> Work to understand, support and market existing R&amp;D efforts</p> <p><b>Tactic 2:</b> Develop R&amp;D Asset Map</p> <p><b>Tactic 3:</b> Leverage OSU R&amp;D activities in agriscience and seek future partnerships</p> <p><b>Tactic 4:</b> Leverage OSU R&amp;D activities in mobility technologies and seek future partnerships</p> <p><b>Tactic 5:</b> Form Automotive/Mobility Consortium to support research along the Corridor utilizing AMIC as its base</p>

## GOAL 2: SUPPORT LEGACY COMPANIES WHILE DIVERSIFYING BUSINESS BASE

STRATEGY 4	STRATEGY 5	STRATEGY 6
<p>Develop Recruitment Program Related to HQs and Other White-Collar Targets</p>	<p>Enhance Support Programs for Entrepreneurs</p>	<p>Address Identified Business Challenges and Pursue Opportunities</p>
<p><b>Tactic 1:</b> Inventory and market office product</p> <p><b>Tactic 2:</b> Continue targeted Corporate Headquarters Visitation Program</p> <p><b>Tactic 3:</b> Identify markets and messaging for Headquarters recruitment, including an asset map</p> <p><b>Tactic 4:</b> Partner with One Columbus and JobsOhio for Financial &amp; Business Services attraction</p>	<p><b>Tactic 1:</b> Recreate initiative to support entrepreneurs/ startups</p> <p><b>Tactic 2:</b> Understand, promote and leverage state, regional and OSU entrepreneurial support programs</p> <p><b>Tactic 3:</b> Develop entrepreneurial support programs</p> <p><b>Tactic 4:</b> Understand existing entrepreneurial education programs and support expansion</p> <p><b>Tactic 5:</b> Explore development of an angel network</p> <p><b>Tactic 6:</b> Consider Incentives to support startups</p> <p><b>Tactic 7:</b> Include section on entrepreneurship on UCED website</p> <p><b>Tactic 8:</b> Track and report entrepreneurial success</p>	<p><b>Tactic 1:</b> Continue to address potential utility infrastructure challenges</p> <p><b>Tactic 2:</b> Work with partners to explore alternative forms of future electricity production</p> <p><b>Tactic 3:</b> Explore innovative tools to fund infrastructure projects</p> <p><b>Tactic 4:</b> Partner to understand and address transportation infrastructure challenges</p> <p><b>Tactic 5:</b> Pursue funding under Transportation Improvement District (TID) program</p> <p><b>Tactic 6:</b> Promote and Support the Union County Airport</p> <p><b>Tactic 7:</b> Approve UCED Economic Development Incentive Policy (EDIP)</p> <p><b>Tactic 8:</b> Assess need for Workforce Talent Gap Analysis of some targeted sectors</p> <p><b>Tactic 9:</b> Pursue development of hotel/conference centers</p> <p><b>Tactic 10:</b> Market AMIC as a business event center</p>

## GOAL 2: SUPPORT LEGACY COMPANIES WHILE DIVERSIFYING BUSINESS BASE

### Strategy 1: Further Embrace Legacy Businesses

#### Tactic 1: Continue to conduct annual retention visits

As previously noted, Union County-Marysville is home to many successful large companies, including Honda, Scotts Miracle-Gro, Continental AG/Contitech, and Nestlé Development Center, among many others. The UCED currently does 25 large company visits each year working with One Columbus.

UCED should continue to meet with its major legacy businesses at least annually to identify any challenges they may be having in the county. Separate visits should also be conducted with uptown and downtown businesses throughout the county. This effort should include conducting a needs assessment, introducing the company to any new developments in the county, as well as the activities and successes of the UCED, and providing other relevant information. There should also be a follow-up by the UCED to ensure any needs or challenges identified are addressed. Legacy business milestones should also be celebrated.

#### Tactic 2: Continue to conduct regular visits with new projects

With new employers locating in the county, during the post-announcement and construction phases of such projects, the UCED should maintain regular engagement with these companies, including monthly check-ins as appropriate, to identify and address needs and support successful project delivery. These efforts should be coordinated with state and local partners.

“Union County has a diverse company base with lots of international, including many Japanese firms.”

*Stakeholder*

## **GOAL 2: SUPPORT LEGACY COMPANIES WHILE DIVERSIFYING BUSINESS BASE**

### **Tactic 3: Continue to provide support programs to Japanese companies**

The UCED has many programs that support the estimated 20 Japanese companies in the county. These programs should continue and be supported and expanded as needed.

### **Tactic 4: Continue to host Crafted in Union County**

Crafted in Union County is a partnership between the UCED, Columbus State Community College (CSCC) Manufacturing Solutions, formerly Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP), and the Marysville Exempted Village School District, where manufacturers throughout the county hold interactive sessions for high school seniors to show them the wide-range of skills and career paths available in the county. Over 400 students participated in the program in 2025. This program should be supported and continued to provide support for legacy manufacturers related to the potential recruitment of future talent.

### **Tactic 5: Continue to explore partnership opportunities with CSCC Manufacturing Solutions and Central Ohio Manufacturing Partnership (COMP)**

CSCC Manufacturing Solutions supports manufacturers in the Columbus region and COMP, is a manufacturing-led Industry Sector Partnership created to solve workforce training, retention and recruitment challenges of participating member manufacturers. The UCED should work with CSCC Manufacturing Solutions and COMP to identify partnership opportunities in Union County to support its Legacy Manufacturers.

### **Tactic 6: Continue to plan for industrial product development**

Although there are sites and buildings available in the county for industrial development, the UCED must continue to identify product that could meet the future needs of legacy and new advanced manufacturing projects. A review

## GOAL 2: SUPPORT LEGACY COMPANIES WHILE DIVERSIFYING BUSINESS BASE

and assessment of existing industrial property and identification of potential new sites for development should continue taking infrastructure availability for such product into account.

### Tactic 7: Support healthcare sector growth in the county

Access to quality healthcare improves livability for county residents. Memorial Health is an independent health system that includes Memorial Hospital's main campus in Marysville, which is a 99-bed primary and emergency care center. It also includes Memorial City Gate Medical Center, which is an outpatient facility, the Memorial Hospital Outpatient Surgery Center, and Memorial Medical Group. Memorial Health employs nearly 1,200 in the county, making it an important legacy business. Memorial Health just completed a 40,000-square-foot, two-story, \$27.5-million medical office building to be named the Memorial Jerome Medical Center.

Nationwide Children's Hospital has an Urgent Care center in Marysville, and OhioHealth has recently completed Jerome Medical Offices.

As Union County continues to grow, Memorial Health and other medical facilities must continue to expand to meet future demand. The UCED should work with Memorial Health and other hospital groups to understand and help address any challenges it faces such as physician and other talent recruitment, as well as supporting and encouraging the hospital and other medical services offered in the county to continue to grow. Note that Memorial Health is currently undergoing a \$56 million expansion of its emergency room.

All growth in the healthcare sector should be publicized by the UCED.

## **GOAL 2: SUPPORT LEGACY COMPANIES WHILE DIVERSIFYING BUSINESS BASE**

### **Strategy 2: Increase FDI Focus and Activities**

#### **Tactic 1: Promote FDI success**

By country of foreign parent, four countries, Japan, UK, Canada and the Netherlands, accounted for over half of total FDI in the U.S. at end of 2024, and over 42 percent of that was manufacturing operations. California, Texas, Illinois, and Florida were leading states for new investment.

Nearly 323,000 jobs are supported by FDI in Ohio with 16 percent of those from Japan, followed by Germany, Canada, Switzerland and the U.K. In Union County alone, there are at least 20 Japanese companies. An estimated nine other countries have investment in Union County including Australia, Brazil, China, Czech Republic, Israel, Japan, the Netherlands, Spain, Switzerland, and the U.K.

This success with FDI in Union County-Marysville should be promoted through a section on the UCED website and through social media. This section on the website should tell the story of FDI in Union County, including a profile of the leading FDI countries. It should also include a map, as referenced below, of existing foreign companies in the county and any recent FDI project success.

#### **Tactic 2: Develop FDI Asset Map**

Develop a map of FDI companies in the county and region. This map should be a centerpiece of the UCED website related to FDI activities and should also be marketed through social media.

## **GOAL 2: SUPPORT LEGACY COMPANIES WHILE DIVERSIFYING BUSINESS BASE**

### **Tactic 3: Continue to engage with partners on FDI business recruitment efforts**

JobsOhio and One Columbus are important partners in successfully retaining and attracting new FDI companies to the county. While ensuring its existing FDI investments are secure, the UCED must increase its FDI business recruitment efforts by participating in targeted sales/marketing events with these and other identified organizations. The focus will be on advanced manufacturing and R&D foreign companies.

UCED and other local representatives have traveled to Japan six times to promote FDI. In addition, representatives have been to Silicon Valley twice and have taken over 25 trips to Detroit. These visits provide crucial networking opportunities with industry leaders and provide Union County with visibility in key locations.

### **Tactic 4: Track and report information on global or FDI investments**

Ensure that FDI is a metric that is tracked and reported on an annual basis.

## **GOAL 2: SUPPORT LEGACY COMPANIES WHILE DIVERSIFYING BUSINESS BASE**

### **Strategy 3: Support Existing and Attract More R&D Operations**

#### **Tactic 1: Work to understand, support and market existing R&D efforts**

Union County-Marysville already has a strong R&D base with the research activities of Scotts Miracle-Gro, Continental AG/Contitech, the Nestlé Development Center, Honda, Select Sires, Sumitomo, Moriroku, and many others. There are also several organizations in the county and region that conduct extensive research including the Transportation Research Center (TRC) and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA) Vehicle Research and Test Center (VRTC) located in nearby East Liberty.

In addition, The Ohio State University (OSU) is a top-tier research university located approximately 30 miles from Marysville that conducts research in automotive mobility at the Center for Automotive Research (CAR) and manages TRC. OSU also conducts extensive research in agricultural science through the College of Food, Agriculture and Environmental Sciences (CFAES). The OSU Ag-Tech Innovation Hub, founded in 2022, is a collaboration of Nationwide Mutual Insurance Company, Ohio Farm Bureau, and OSU CFAES that conducts research and innovation activity focused on developing new solutions to help the agricultural community understand, manage, and mitigate climate risk. It works to accelerate agricultural innovation through cutting-edge technologies like AI and IoT, while meeting real-world needs of farmers. The Large Animal Services at Marysville, which is part of the OSU Veterinary Medical Center (VMC), provides equine and farm animals with routine and emergency care. The VMC conducts 30 to 50 clinical trials each year on client-owned animals related to naturally occurring diseases resulting in new treatments for cancer (lymphoma), heart disease, kidney disease, and more.

## **GOAL 2: SUPPORT LEGACY COMPANIES WHILE DIVERSIFYING BUSINESS BASE**

DriveOhio is an initiative of the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT), serving as the state's hub for smart mobility technology that increase safety, enhance mobility, expand access, and attract, prepare, and retain Ohio's talent.

The UCED should meet with representatives at these companies, organizations, ODOT and OSU regularly to ensure there is an understanding of all current and planned research activities. Use this information to market Union County-Marysville as an R&D hub through the UCED website and social media.

### **Tactic 2: Develop R&D Asset Map**

Develop a map of R&D assets in the county and region, which will include the companies and organizations mentioned above, as well as the relevant research centers at OSU that support both automotive/mobility/technologies and agriscience. This map should be a centerpiece of the UCED website related to R&D activities and should also be marketed through social media.

### **Tactic 3: Leverage OSU R&D activities in agriscience and seek future partnerships**

The OSU CFAES conducts extensive research in applied and basic research focused on addressing challenges in food, agriculture, and environmental sustainability. The CFAES has more than 400 active research projects, over 20 specialized centers and programs, and a network of research stations across the state. Its other research assets previously mentioned and described include the OSU Ag-Tech Innovation Hub and the OSU VMC clinical trials, as well as the related Large Animal Services in Marysville.

## GOAL 2: SUPPORT LEGACY COMPANIES WHILE DIVERSIFYING BUSINESS BASE

Union County is also home to nearly 1,000 farmers and 241,000 acres of productive crop land and Marysville is the location of a county OSU Extension CFAES.

Agricultural Technologies (Ag-Tech) has been identified as a subsector both related to R&D and the Entrepreneurs & Innovators target for Union County-Marysville. Ag-Tech refers to the “use of technology in farming and agricultural practices to increase efficiency, productivity, and sustainability in food production.” It includes several different types of technologies, such as:

- Precision agriculture, which may involve GPS, drones, and sensors that allow farmers to map fields, track soil health, and manage crops more precisely;
- Automated machines for planting, harvesting and milking to increase speed and address labor shortages;
- Controlled Environment Agriculture (CEA), which includes technology such as indoor vertical farming allow for year-round production;
- Farm management software and data analytics, which can collect and analyze data to assist with optimizing logistics, predicting climate risks and overall decision-making

The UCED should partner with OSU CFAES, the OSU Ag-Tech Innovation Hub and the VMC/Large Animal Services in Marysville to assess possible future partnership opportunities related to Ag-Tech research and startup activity that may support the farming community in Union County. This story around this Ag-Tech research and activity in the region should also be told through social media and other outlets. This initiative may also eventually involve partnering with OSU and others to create a smaller Ag-Tech Incubator or Accelerator in Union County to support future startup companies in the Ag-Tech space.

## GOAL 2: SUPPORT LEGACY BUSINESS WHILE DIVERSIFYING BUSINESS BASE

### Tactic 4: Leverage OSU R&D activities in mobility technologies and seek future partnerships

OSU invest \$100 million annually in research to advance next generation mobility systems with many interdisciplinary centers and institutes. This includes the OSU Center for Automotive Research (CAR) through the College of Engineering, which is a preeminent research center in sustainable and safety mobility in the U.S. CAR invest more than \$14 million in R&D projects annually.

Union County is home to Honda of America Manufacturing and the nearby Honda Research Institute USA, Inc. on the west campus of OSU is focused on energy and battery technologies, mobility human-computer-interaction, and software defined mobility. The Transportation Research Center (TRC), which is one of largest independent automotive testing grounds in U.S., is in Union and Logan counties. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA) Vehicle Research and Test Center (VRTC) conducts research and vehicle testing to save lives in nearby East Liberty. Other automotive mobility research assets include the U.S.-33 Smart Mobility Corridor (Corridor) between Dublin, Marysville and East Liberty, and the Automotive & Mobility Innovation Center (AMIC) in Marysville. There is also the Beta District, which is a public-private partnership that represents a high-tech, innovation region along the Corridor spanning Columbus, Dublin, Marysville, and Union County focused on testing autonomous vehicles, connected infrastructure, AI-driven transportation, and other areas.

First, work with the OSU CAR to identify research activity and any existing startups in mobility technologies that have originated from the university and have had success. Representatives from the UCED should meet with and develop relationships with these startups to assess future opportunities as they grow. This will include ensuring they are aware of the U.S. 33 Mobility Corridor within the Beta District and AMIC, which can offer future space to

## **GOAL 2: SUPPORT LEGACY BUSINESS WHILE DIVERSIFYING BUSINESS BASE**

these startups as they grow. As this subsector matures, it may eventually be necessary to explore the feasibility of a Mobility Technologies Accelerator Facility in Union County to support these companies long-term.

### **Tactic 5: Form Automotive/Mobility Consortium to support research along the Corridor utilizing AMIC as its base**

Explore formation of an Automotive/Mobility Consortium comprised of representatives of AMIC, the Beta District Council of Government members, and Lextant, which is a Columbus based firm specializing in user experience research, design, and insights with expertise in automotive/mobility. Representatives of OSU, TRC, and corporate partners such as Honda of America Manufacturing and/or Honda Research Institute USA, Inc., should also be involved. On a related note, Honda recently announced a strategic shift to prioritize next-generation hybrid systems and connected technology, aiming for two million global hybrid sales by 2030. This pivot includes launching 13 new hybrid models by 2031.

Efforts of the Consortium should be focused on supporting new research activity related to Connected Autonomous Vehicles (CAV) along the U.S. 33 Smart Mobility Corridor, as well as within the Beta District. The goal would be for Union County to become a known testing hub for CAV leading to new projects in that space. AMIC should serve as the base for the Consortium.

## **GOAL 2: SUPPORT LEGACY COMPANIES WHILE DIVERSIFYING BUSINESS BASE**

### **Strategy 4: Develop Recruitment Program Related to Headquarters and Other White-Collar Targets**

#### **Tactic 1: Inventory and market office product**

The UCED must ensure it has a comprehensive inventory of available office product across the county, including both existing buildings and potential campus sites for Corporate & Regional Headquarters, Financial & Business Services, and R&D. Once this is complete, the UCED should actively market these opportunities through its website and social media channels. The effort should mainly be targeted to identified brokers and real estate developers who focus on these types of projects.

#### **Tactic 2: Continue targeted Corporate Headquarters Visitation Program**

A corporate headquarters visitation program involves meetings with leadership at the corporate headquarters location of Union County-based operations, which do not have their headquarters in the county, to let them know that their business is appreciated and to identify any challenges they may have encountered in the county/city. This demonstrates the commitment of Union County-Marysville to the success of its legacy companies.

The UCED should develop a list of all out-of-state headquarters of legacy businesses in the county and a plan for conducting corporate headquarters visits every few years to those identified employers should be created and implemented. The idea here is to ensure the legacy company is happy with its current operations in the county/municipality and present Union County-Marysville as a potential future location of a corporate or Regional Headquarters, Finance & Business services or R&D operation of that company.

## **GOAL 2: SUPPORT LEGACY COMPANIES WHILE DIVERSIFYING BUSINESS BASE**

### **Tactic 3: Identify markets and messaging for Headquarters recruitment, including asset map**

In 2024, there were 96 corporate HQ relocations in the U.S. up from 63 and 18 in 2022 and 2023. Also in 2024, 26 percent of HQ relocations were international companies establishing new HQs within the U.S., which ties with the FDI target focus. The most common reasons for the relocation were business climate, including lower costs and incentives, and proximity to key markets or the consumer base. This has resulted in an economic shift within the U.S., where emerging metro areas are more easily competing to attract corporate headquarters.

Texas has been one of the most successful states for corporate relocations in recent years, with the Dallas and Austin markets topping the list. This is due to its growing talent pool, strategic location and business-friendly environment. Other than Dallas and Austin, Nashville, Phoenix, Houston and Denver were the top markets that gained headquarters from 2018 to 2024, while higher cost markets such as California (San Francisco, Los Angeles and San Diego), New York City and Chicago were the top markets that lost headquarters from 2018 to 2024.

The UCED should focus its efforts on headquarters in these higher cost markets, as well as international markets that already have operations in the county. It should also develop and promote key messages for what makes the area an ideal location for corporate and regional HQ's, which are outlined in the Corporate & Regional Headquarters Target Profile. This should include development of an asset map for Corporate & Regional Headquarters.

### **Tactic 4: Partner with One Columbus and JobsOhio for Financial & Business Services attraction**

Finance + Fintech and Insurance + Insurtech are key industries of focus for One Columbus and Financial Services is a JobsOhio target. The UCED should partner with both on efforts to attract this sector, which may include attending certain business events and recruitment trips.

## GOAL 2: SUPPORT LEGACY COMPANIES WHILE DIVERSIFYING BUSINESS BASE

### Strategy 5: Enhance Support Programs for Entrepreneurs

#### Tactic 1: Recreate initiative to support entrepreneurs/startups

To further develop the startup ecosystem in Union County-Marysville, there is a need for a central resource where entrepreneurs and innovators can go for information, assistance and support. The focus of this effort should be on the Technology sector in general but specifically on the Ag-Tech and the Automotive/Mobility/Technologies subsectors identified in the Entrepreneurs & Innovators Target Profile.

This initiative could be called Upstart Union, Startup Union-Marysville, Innovate Union-Marysville, Accelerate Union-Marysville or another name to be determined. It could potentially be housed at AMIC under the UCED but may eventually need its own state-of-the-art facility as it grows.

#### StartUP Columbus Columbus, GA

Nonprofit focused on developing entrepreneurs in region with programs such as:

- Access to coworking/incubation space at **coLAB**, **mentoring**, **workshops**, and **networking** for early-stage companies
- **Cultivate** is 6-month program (10-week curriculum + 3-month mentor support) for entrepreneurs launching/scaling
- **BizPitch Competition** is local pitch event where entrepreneurs present ideas and compete for prizes
- Recently launched **retailLAB**, which is an incubator designed for retail-focused small businesses offering three storefront spaces at below-market rate
- **SHINE** (Supporting Highly Innovative and New Entrepreneurs) is yearly pitch competition for high school students

## **GOAL 2: SUPPORT LEGACY COMPANIES WHILE DIVERSIFYING BUSINESS BASE**

### **Tactic 2: Understand, promote and leverage state, regional and OSU entrepreneurial support programs**

JobsOhio has several programs that support entrepreneurs including Lightship Bootcamps, a two-day bootcamp; Launchpad, a six-week cohort program; JobsOhio Small Business Grant, and the JobsOhio Small Business Academy, Powered by Aileron.

Rev1 is a venture studio in Columbus that assist startups through guidance, programs, space and funding. It has invested in 190 startups, working to position Columbus as the Midwest's hub for startup growth.

The Tim & Kathleen Keenan Center for Entrepreneurship at OSU is focused on assisting student entrepreneurs by providing educational and experiential learning activities. This includes many programs ranging from LaunchpadOSU, which is a startup weekend that fosters student team building to support creation of new businesses, and the President's Buckeye Accelerator, which supports student founders preparing a startup for launch. The Center also offers an Undergraduate Entrepreneurship & Innovation Minor offered through several different colleges.

The UCED should meet with representatives of JobsOhio, Rev1 and the Keenan Center for Entrepreneurship at OSU to gain a better understand of the programs and services offered, which should then be promoted to entrepreneurs in Union County.

## GOAL 2: SUPPORT LEGACY COMPANIES WHILE DIVERSIFYING BUSINESS BASE

### Tactic 3: Develop entrepreneurial support programs

Once the organization is up and running, additional programs should be developed that provide opportunities in the county for entrepreneurs and startups to network with other entrepreneurs, be mentored by more experienced entrepreneurs, and receive education and training.

Programs like Cultivate, a mentorship program, and Bizpitch, which is a local pitch event, and SHINE, an annual pitch competition for high school students, all in Columbus, Georgia described previously are potential ideas. Other ideas include those described to the right from Cherokee County, Georgia such as Fresh Start educational events, a four-week LaunchPad Bootcamp series, Mentorship Program, Lunch Circuit, and 1 Million Cups.

### Fresh Start Cherokee Cherokee County, GA

- Designed to provide educational programming and support for startups
- Housed within Cherokee Office of Economic Development (COED) and home to The Circuit, county's first coworking space
- Programs include:
  - Free Fresh Start Morning events involve educational discussions for startups
  - 4-week LaunchPad Bootcamp series for Cherokee County Emerging Entrepreneurs
  - Mentorship program for startups and entrepreneurs, which had 10 venture companies and 27 mentors in first year
  - Lunch Circuit is an event that allows entrepreneurs to gather over lunch and see a live interview of an entrepreneur who shares lessons learned
  - 1 Million Cups Cherokee program which is a bi-weekly program to help connect entrepreneurs and share ideas

## **GOAL 2: SUPPORT LEGACY COMPANIES WHILE DIVERSIFYING BUSINESS BASE**

### **Tactic 4: Understand existing entrepreneurial education programs and support expansion**

A culture of entrepreneurship in the county should be developed starting at a young age. The UCED should first develop an understanding of any existing entrepreneurial programs at the K-12 level in the county, then work with the different school systems to establish enhanced programs at the middle and high school level to provide students with an understanding of how to start and run a small business. This should include partnering with local and regional STEM schools such as Marysville Early College High School, Emerald Campus in Dublin, Noble Academy and others to be identified.

### **Tactic 5: Explore development of an Angel Network**

As the entrepreneurial ecosystem continues to develop, there may be a need for new funding options to support startups in the county. Consider creation of an angel network in Union County-Marysville over time.

For example, in Columbus, Georgia, the Columbus Angel Network was created in 2022 to focus on early stage/high-growth ventures with typical local investors contributing \$5,000 to \$100,000 with a target investment size for the startup from \$150,000 to \$350,000. It involves investment into local startups and operates as an exclusive investment club.

### **Tactic 6: Consider Incentives to Support Startups**

Eventually, there may also be a need for new funding options to support startups in the county, which may include free or reduced cost rent, which is often valuable to these types of companies, or some type of cash grant to qualifying startups.

## **GOAL 2: SUPPORT LEGACY BUSINESS WHILE DIVERSIFYING BUSINESS BASE**

### **Tactic 7: Include section on entrepreneurship on UCED website**

A section on entrepreneurship should be added to the UCED website that includes information on the programs available and upcoming entrepreneurial events in the county. Other online resources that may be helpful to entrepreneurs may include business plan resources and examples, business structure options, financing and funding options, marketing ideas and educational resources.

### **Tactic 8: Track and Report Entrepreneurial Success**

Success of the entrepreneur/startup program should be tracked and reported annually, including number of entrepreneurs supported, type of company, jobs created, investment made, incentives awarded, and programs held and attended.

## GOAL 2: SUPPORT LEGACY BUSINESS WHILE DIVERSIFYING BUSINESS BASE

### Strategy 6: Address Identified Business Challenges and Pursue Opportunities

#### Tactic 1: Continue to address potential utility infrastructure challenges

Union County has been proactive historically related to planning for water/sewer and fiber infrastructure. In fact, since 2017, more than \$200 million has been invested in smart technologies in The Beta District with 432 strands of 100-gig fiber to stream and capture data installed.

However, as the county continues to grow, infrastructure needs must be assessed at least annually. As such, the UCED should continue to work closely with the county, cities and towns/villages to assess and address existing and future water and sewer capacity needs, as well as natural gas and electricity, particularly in the southern area of the county and any areas with existing and planned industrial and commercial product, to support both business retention and new investment.

“Infrastructure is lacking in the Northern part of the county.”

“Transportation can be challenging as there are no public transportation options.”

*Stakeholder*

## **GOAL 2: SUPPORT LEGACY BUSINESS WHILE DIVERSIFYING BUSINESS BASE**

### **Tactic 2: Work with partners to explore alternative forms of future electricity production**

As with most communities today, there are challenges to the grid and concerns of being able to meet future electricity needs in Union County. The UCED should continue to work with partners to explore alternative forms of electricity production to meet future needs. This may involve assessing the use of Behind-the-meter (BTM), which refers to the energy systems located on the customer's side of the utility meter, such as solar panels, batteries, natural gas, micro nuclear, or efficient appliances that are used to mainly power the home or facility, reducing grid use, and lowering electricity bills.

### **Tactic 3: Explore innovative tools to fund infrastructure projects**

Consider the establishment of additional New Community Authorities (NCA), which is a public-private partnership authorized under Ohio Revised Code Chapter 349 that can be used to finance, develop, and operate public infrastructure and community facilities, to fund future infrastructure projects. The use of Tax Increment Financing (TIF), which allows for infrastructure or other costs of a project to be paid for through the increased property taxes generated by the project, may be another tool to explore. Also, explore the combining of NCA and TIF to fund infrastructure projects.

### **Tactic 4: Partner to understand and address transportation infrastructure challenges**

Transportation infrastructure and the lack of public transportation were also identified as key concerns through the stakeholder engagement process. The UCED should partner with the Union County Transportation Advisory Committee (formerly the UC Moves Coalition), a partnership focused on assessing and improving workforce transportation in Union County, as well as the Union County Health Department, which is working in tandem with the above advisory committee on ways to maximize use of the existing transportation resources and to identify the

## **GOAL 2: SUPPORT LEGACY BUSINESS WHILE DIVERSIFYING BUSINESS BASE**

transportation needs of residents and businesses while connecting them to available resources. The UC Moves Coalition launched a survey targeted to employers and their employees last year. The UCED should review the results of this survey, and partner with both organizations to help address this challenge.

The UCED should also support the efforts of Union County Regional Rideshare, which is focused on assisting riders on the Uber and Lyft Platforms to connect with drivers available in the Marysville, OH area. Including Marysville, Delaware, Bellefontaine, and many others in the Union, Delaware, Madison and Logan County areas.

The UCED should also stay abreast of and potentially get involved in the Columbus LinkUS Plan to improve public transit in the Central Ohio region. This project is a collaboration among the Central Ohio Transit Authority (COTA), the Franklin County Board of Commissioners, the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC), the City of Columbus, and the Columbus Partnership. This will involve more COTA services, sidewalks, bike lanes, trail and crosswalks, as well as Bus Rapid Transit lanes.

The UCED should also continue to monitor and support potential plans for passenger rail expansion with a station in Union County possible by 2030.

## GOAL 2: SUPPORT LEGACY BUSINESS WHILE DIVERSIFYING BUSINESS BASE

### Tactic 5: Pursue funding under Transportation Improvement District (TID) program

A TID is a form of local government that works to promote intergovernmental and public-private cooperation of transportation resources and investments. The Ohio Department of Transportation's (ODOT) TID program provides funding for transportation projects that promote economic development in terms of job creation, job retention and private sector capital investment. TID program funding can be used on all publicly-owned roadways in Ohio. TIDs can permit multiple applications per funding round but the funding provided for each project is limited to \$500,000 per fiscal year but TIDs co-sponsoring a specific project may individually apply for up to \$500,000 for that project.

UCED should work with the county and municipalities to pursue funding under the TID program.

### Tactic 6: Promote and Support the Union County Airport

Many business and government leaders would like to see the future growth of the Union County Airport. The runway length at the airport is currently only 4,300 feet and would need to be extended to around 5,000 feet to accommodate corporate jets on a regular basis. The UCED should promote the use of the Union County Airport . while working with partners to evaluate the long-term viability of a runway extension to support additional business travel.

### Tactic 7: Approve UCED Economic Development Incentive Policy (EDIP)

The UCED has an existing incentive policy that was just updated. This updated EDIP should be adopted and reviewed by the CIC Board, as well as the various municipalities and school districts. Going forward, the EDIP and cost of services model, along with the impact analysis for each project conducted by One Columbus, will be used to validate all incentives offered in Union County to ensure a positive return on investment.

## **GOAL 2: SUPPORT LEGACY BUSINESS WHILE DIVERSIFYING BUSINESS BASE**

### **Tactic 8: Assess need for Workforce Talent Gap Analysis of some targeted sectors**

A Workforce Talent Gap Analysis can provide insight into skills gaps in identified sectors in a labor shed area, as well as potential programmatic deficiencies. The Workforce Talent Gap Analysis should specifically be focused on R&D, Corporate & Regional Headquarters, and Financial & Business Services, which will require more of a white-collar workforce. As part of this process, with a nearly 77 percent out-commute rate each day from the county, it may be helpful to try to identify the skills and job titles of that out-commuting workforce. This would most likely require an online survey targeted to those out-commuters, along with additional research.

The goal at the end of the day would be to determine if the county can provide the skilled workforce talent needed to support these business sectors, and if there is any need for additional programs at the high school, college and university level to further develop that talent for the future.

Note that the UCED has partnered with the Bowling Green State University (BGSU) Center for Regional Development (CRD) in Bowling Green, Ohio and Logan County to develop workforce analytics reports in the past, which are typically completed every two years.

## **GOAL 2: SUPPORT LEGACY BUSINESS WHILE DIVERSIFYING BUSINESS BASE**

### **Tactic 9: Pursue development of hotel/conference centers**

Work to attract one or more larger full-service hotels with conference space to Union County-Marysville to support legacy businesses and attraction of the other recommended Target Business Opportunities. This would also result in more business meetings of Legacy Businesses and new employers that could take place in the county and would also support the proposed development of an indoor and/or outdoor sports complex recommended as part of Goal 3. Union County Tourism should be engaged related to the recruitment of one or more new hotel/conference centers.

### **Tactic 10: Market Automotive & Mobility Innovation Center (AMIC) as a business event center**

AMIC has space remaining to house startup businesses and events. AMIC should be marketed as premiere event space in the county for business functions.

**GOAL 3:  
ENHANCE LIVABILITY ASSETS  
THROUGH NEW DEVELOPMENT/  
REDEVELOPMENT**

**GOAL 3: ENHANCE LIVABILITY ASSETS THROUGH NEW DEVELOPMENT/ REDEVELOPMENT**

STRATEGY 1	STRATEGY 2	STRATEGY 3	STRATEGY 4
<p>Engage in a Targeted Effort to Attract Future Mixed-Use Development Countywide</p>	<p>Work to Attract New Diverse Housing Options</p>	<p>Support Revitalization of Uptown Marysville and Other Municipality Centers</p>	<p>Enhance Recreational Assets</p>
<p><b>Tactic 1:</b> Partner to identify potential development areas</p> <p><b>Tactic 2:</b> Identify and market sites in targeted development areas</p> <p><b>Tactic 3:</b> Identify and target identified retail and mixed-use sustainable developments</p> <p><b>Tactic 4:</b> Explore future public-private partnerships with developers</p>	<p><b>Tactic 1:</b> Conduct Housing Study of Union County</p> <p><b>Tactic 2:</b> Work with partners to develop incentives for attainable or workforce housing developers</p> <p><b>Tactic 3:</b> Identify and market to local and regional housing developers</p> <p><b>Tactic 4:</b> Explore policies to encourage starter home and infill development</p> <p><b>Tactic 5:</b> Continue to host the Annual Housing Summit</p>	<p><b>Tactic 1:</b> Ensure the Silos @ Water and Light comes to fruition</p> <p><b>Tactic 2:</b> Embrace the implementation of the Marysville Community Vision report</p> <p><b>Tactic 3:</b> Support Development in Other Municipality Uptowns or Centers</p> <p><b>Tactic 4:</b> Support Union County Tourism</p>	<p><b>Tactic 1:</b> Support the Union County Family YMCA</p> <p><b>Tactic 2:</b> Determine need and feasibility of a new indoor and/or outdoor sports complex</p> <p><b>Tactic 3:</b> Continue to support trail system development</p>

## GOAL 3: ENHANCE LIVABILITY ASSETS THROUGH NEW DEVELOPMENT/ REDEVELOPMENT

### Strategy 1: Engage in a Targeted Effort to Attract Future Mixed-Use Development Countywide

#### Tactic 1: Partner to identify potential development areas

A mixed-use development typically combines the elements of residential, retail, office and entertainment, and can also include a hotel/conference center and recreational assets. There are several mixed-use developments already planned for Marysville, including The Silos @ Water and Light, previously referenced, which is an almost \$110 million mixed-use redevelopment project that will transform the former municipal water and light plant in uptown Marysville into a vibrant, 18-acre urban center with an estimated 300 plus apartments and townhomes.

Another development previously mentioned is Jerome Village, which is a master planned housing community encompassing more than 2,000 acres located in Jerome Township near Plain City and Dublin. The project includes The Jerome Village Market, a growing retail center anchored by a 123,000-square-foot Kroger Marketplace, as well as a variety of restaurant, retail, and other service businesses.

“We need more eating, shopping and entertainment options.”

*Stakeholders*

## **GOAL 3: ENHANCE LIVABILITY ASSETS THROUGH NEW DEVELOPMENT/ REDEVELOPMENT**

The UCED should partner with the appropriate leadership with the county, cities, villages and townships, as well as local and regional developers, to identify development areas of focus countywide for future mixed-use developments that includes housing, retail and other. This should include areas around city, village or township centers, Jerome Township, Plain City, and Richwood, as well as the area along the 33 Corridor, U.S. 42 and SR 161, which includes critical corridors on the southern and southeastern regions of Union County. The focus will be on growth corridors where infrastructure is available, while other areas will be preserved for farmland. This will also have the effect of encouraging collaboration to promote infrastructure, land use, and economic development coordination related to this type of development.

### **Tactic 2: Identify and market sites in targeted development areas**

Once the development areas are determined, the UCED should continue working with county, cities, villages and townships, as well as local and regional developers to identify sites in each area for potential future mixed-use development. Once these sites are identified they should be heavily marketed on the UCED website, through the site and building database commercial section and social media.

### **Tactic 3: Identify and target identified retail and mixed-use, sustainable developments**

Once potential sites for mixed-use have been identified, developers of these types of projects must be identified and pursued as follows:

- Identify key developers locally and in region that should be focus of marketing efforts and relationship building
- Once identified, work to build relationships with developers, and schedule meetings with them on a quarterly basis, which may include a visit to identified sites in Union County-Marysville
- Such developers should also be one of the primary target audiences for social media posts related to the potential sites

## GOAL 3: ENHANCE LIVABILITY ASSETS THROUGH NEW DEVELOPMENT/ REDEVELOPMENT

### Tactic 4: Explore future public-private partnerships with developers

Public-private partnerships with developers related to retail, entertainment and mixed-use projects can lead to more development overall and a good and trusting relationship between counties, cities and developers. Union County and its cities, villages and townships and must be prepared to invest in future mixed-use or other similar development determined to be viable and beneficial.

This partnership from the county or municipality may be accomplished through the creation or use of Tax Increment Financing (TIF). Development in a designated TIF district would allow for infrastructure or other costs of the project to be paid for through the increased property taxes generated by the project, providing an incentive for the developer. The creation of additional New Community Authorities (NCAs) should also be considered to finance, develop, and operate public infrastructure and community facilities for developer-led projects, noting that NCA is best used in tandem with TIF. NCA's involve an additional "charge" on sales, income, or property values.

Other incentives may include expedited permitting, fee reductions, free or reduced cost land (if county or municipality-owned), designation of a Community Reinvestment Area (CRA), and other to be determined.

### Keystone Project Murfreesboro, TN

- City Council approved phased development agreement in late 2025 for Keystone Project, which will bring apartments, condos, retail space, and a hotel to the city center
- Approved zoning allows for up to 239 leased dwellings, 80 to 100 for-sale units, 80 to 150 hotel rooms, and 30,000 to 40,000 square feet of retail space
- Estimated \$150 million investment
- TIF agreement and public infrastructure investment used to accomplish project
- Proceeds from city-owned property sale of \$4 million will be used to fund public road improvements
- A total of \$26 million being spent in public infrastructure

## GOAL 3: ENHANCE LIVABILITY ASSETS THROUGH NEW DEVELOPMENT/ REDEVELOPMENT

### Strategy 2: Work to Attract New Diverse Housing Options

#### Tactic 1: Conduct Housing Study of Union County

Lack of available and attainable housing was one of the number one challenges referenced by stakeholders. A countywide housing study should be conducted that would be focused on identifying housing gaps in the county and strategies to address those gaps.

#### Tactic 2: Work with partners to develop incentives for attainable or workforce housing developers

It is critical that Union County continue to attract attainable or workforce housing to ensure that moderate and middle-income residents/workers have a place to live. Attainable housing refers to homes that are affordable for individuals and families based on their income levels. On a related note, workforce housing may be defined as housing that is affordable to moderate to middle income, critical workers. Either includes home ownership, as well as rental housing, and is ideally located in proximity to workforce centers.

The UCED should engage with the county and municipalities to encourage adoption of incentive programs that advance future attainable or workforce housing development.

“We must have diverse housing types for many different types of people.”

“Union County has seen a noticeable increase in housing unaffordability.”

*Stakeholders*

## GOAL 3: ENHANCE LIVABILITY ASSETS THROUGH NEW DEVELOPMENT/ REDEVELOPMENT

The following options should be explored:

- Similar to Silos @ Water and light project, utilize an appropriate combination of **TIFs, NCAs, and CRAs** to develop workforce housing options
- Provide **financial assistance for public improvements** such as streetscape and public infrastructure (sewer, stormwater, public parking) for attainable or workforce housing projects
- Creation of additional **NCAs** to finance, develop, and operate public infrastructure and community facilities
- **Zoning Density Bonuses** allowing developers to build additional units if a residential project includes certain percentage of attainable or workforce housing units
- **Expedited permitting and development review** for projects that include workforce or attainable housing
- **Fee waivers or reduced fees** for attainable or workforce housing units

### Tactic 3: Identify and market to local and regional housing developers

Once the housing gaps are identified and potential incentives determined, the UCED should identify local or regional developers of attainable or workforce housing. The UCED should then market development areas and related identified sites for potential single- and multi-family housing development and/or mixed-use development, as well as potential incentives that may be available to those identified.

#### Mixed-Use Development with Attainable Housing Madison, TN

- Madison Station is a \$631 million redevelopment plan that will incorporate attainable housing, office space, retail and childcare into a transit-friendly project
- Under partnership terms, the Urban League will be part of ownership entity, which would allow the nonprofit group to have access to funds to increase programming
- Developer for phase one is LDG Development, which specializes in attainable housing
- Phase one includes 242 attainable condos and apartments including 51 residences for seniors
- Overall plan, approved in 2022, calls for 1,700 housing units
- Project has already received approval for \$69.8 million in tax incentives through a TIF

## **GOAL 3: ENHANCE LIVABILITY ASSETS THROUGH NEW DEVELOPMENT/ REDEVELOPMENT**

Marketing tools should include use of social media channels, as well as inviting the developers to potential housing site visits in the county.

### **Tactic 4: Explore policies to encourage starter home and infill development**

A starter home is a smaller, more affordable, first-time purchase designed to help buyers enter the property market. Infill housing is the process of building new residential units on vacant, abandoned, or underutilized lots within existing, developed urban neighborhoods. Both are needed in Union County.

The Ohio REALTORS™ and Greater Ohio Policy Center have developed a Guidebook that offers three potential tools that local governments, developers, land banks, and homeowners can use to promote infill housing. These tools include free building plans, actionable recommendations for zoning code adjustments, and a guide for local governments to establish a pre-approved plans program, which enables expedited permitting, and eliminates development barriers.

Consider adoption of this Guidebook or utilize it to develop a Starter and Infill Homes Toolkit for Union County with the ultimate goals of increasing density and improving housing affordability.

### **Tactic 5: Continue to host the Annual Housing Summit**

The UCED held its first Annual Housing Summit at AMIC in December 2025 bringing together more than 100 business leaders, community partners, citizens, and elected officials to discuss how central housing has become to the county's future. This summit should continue annually as long as housing remains a concern in the county.

## **GOAL 3: ENHANCE LIVABILITY ASSETS THROUGH NEW DEVELOPMENT/REDEVELOPMENT/**

### **Strategy 3: Support Revitalization of Uptown Marysville and Other Municipality Centers**

#### **Tactic 1: Ensure the Silos @ Water and Light comes to fruition**

The Silos @ Water and Light, as previously described, is an almost \$100 million mixed-use redevelopment project that will transform the former municipal water and light plant in uptown Marysville into a vibrant, 18-acre urban center slated for completion around 2029 with an estimated 300 housing units. This project will be transformational for Marysville and the UCED must continue to support it and work with the developer to ensure it happens.

#### **Tactic 2: Embrace the implementation of the Marysville Community Vision report**

The UCED should support and embrace the Marysville Community Vision report, which includes recommendations for reimagining Uptown Marysville that includes "...expanded pedestrian space, added street trees and flush paving zones to enhance and promote walkability", "...adding additional residences at the edges...", a "...new and enhanced public library," among other. Innovative funding structures will need to be considered for its implementation.

#### **Tactic 3: Support Development in Other Municipality Uptowns or Centers**

The UCED should work with other municipalities in the county, including Plain City and Richwood, to encourage revitalization through retail, restaurant, mixed-use development, including hotels, and other means.

#### **Tactic 4: Support Union County Tourism**

The UCED should support Union County Tourism to ensure the growth of the hospitality sector in Union County. Uptown Marysville and other municipality centers may be great locations for new hotels and restaurants.

## GOAL 3: ENHANCE LIVABILITY ASSETS THROUGH NEW DEVELOPMENT/REDEVELOPMENT/

### Strategy 4: Enhance Recreational Assets

#### Tactic 1: Support the Union County Family YMCA

The Union County Family YMCA opened its original facility in Marysville in 1975, with a newly renovated location opening in 2002. This YMCA is of great value to the community and should be supported by the UCED, as well as the City of Marysville, Union County, and other municipalities in the county. Work with the YMCA to support a capital campaign for future capital improvements, as well as operating expenses to ensure it can continue to serve the community. Additional financial support should be considered by Marysville and Union County.

#### Tactic 2: Determine need and feasibility of a new indoor and/or outdoor sports complex

A sports complex is a large and expansive area that incorporates several fields or courts dedicated to a particular sport or series of sports. Many stakeholders referenced the need for a new indoor or outdoor sports complex to provide the county the opportunity to host more large sporting tournaments, which can be major revenue generators for the county. If possible, this should be developed in partnership with the YMCA.

#### Lakepoint Sports Complex Emerson, GA

- Premier youth sports destination on 1,300 acres serving more than 30 sports year-round, including cheer, baseball, basketball, soccer, volleyball, lacrosse, and gymnastics
- 1.1M visitors each year with a \$100M annual economic impact
- **LakePoint Champions Center** is 170,000 sq. ft. multi-use center, with 8 meeting rooms and world's largest continuous wood floor where 12 full-court basketball games or 24 full-court volleyball games can play at once
- Campus includes eight Major League-sized baseball fields and three multi-use fields, as well as a 10-court beach volleyball pavilion and a three-lake wakeboarding park

## **GOAL 3: ENHANCE LIVABILITY ASSETS THROUGH NEW DEVELOPMENT/REDEVELOPMENT/**

For Union County to successfully attract larger sporting tournaments, including youth sports, a facility like this will most likely be needed, and a feasibility study should be conducted to determine the need for and economic viability of such as complex, as well as the best location for it in the county. Union County Tourism should also be involved in such efforts.

### **Tactic 3: Continue to support trail system development**

Continue to support the efforts of The Union County Parks & Trails Working Group (Let's Roll, Union County!) and its partners to expand Union County's trail network to better connect its communities and to the larger regional trail network. The Trail and Greenway Master Plan was last updated in 2025. Planning and capital funding should be provided to foster more inter- and intra-county connections.



# ENDNOTES

## ENDNOTES

### Introduction

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# FORWARD

## Union-Marysville

An Economic Development Strategic Plan



05.2026

UNION COUNTY  
MARYSVILLE  
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