



# CUYAHOGA COUNTY FIVE- YEAR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN

2018-2022

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Armond Budish, County Executive  
Cuyahoga County Economic Development Commission  
Department of Development  
Cuyahoga County Council

## **Economic Development Commission Members**

### **Armond Budish**

Cuyahoga County Executive

### **Mayor Frank G. Jackson**

City of Cleveland (represented by Edward Rybka, Chief of Regional Development, and by David Ebersole, Director of Economic Development)

### **Jack Schron**

County Councilman, Chair of Economic Development Committee

### **Harriett Applegate**

Executive Secretary, North Shore Federation of Labor AFL-CIO

### **William Friedman**

President and CEO, Cleveland Port Authority

### **Brian Hall**

Executive Director, Commission on Economic Inclusion

### **Joe Roman**

President and CEO, Greater Cleveland Partnership

### **Mayor Michael Summers**

City of Lakewood, Mayors and Managers

### **Marc Byrnes**

Chairman, Oswald Companies

### *Development Staff*

#### **Theodore Carter**

Chief Economic Development & Business Officer

#### **Paul Herdeg**

Director of Strategic Planning & Analytics

## Overview

Cuyahoga County is enjoying a recent resurgence in national attention as an economic hub for health care services (for which it is recognized globally); a center of health care innovation; a well-organized startup and early-stage funding ecosystem; a fresh water and innovation capital; an advanced manufacturing hub; a tourism, recreation, and convention center; a center of transportation, distribution, and logistics, with its geographic location uniquely suited to being an import/export hub; a home for nationally-recognized arts and culture; a location for an attractive quality of life; and a strong higher-education system that includes a nationally-ranked private university. This attention resulted in the region being selected to host for the 2016 Republican National Convention and ranked as a top-ten Region for Millennials. There is broad consensus that now is the moment to catapult the region to regain its former national economic prominence.

Cuyahoga County is still in the process of economic restructuring and transition--from its traditional manufacturing-dominated economy, to a knowledge-based economy supporting 21<sup>st</sup>-century industries in technology, advanced manufacturing, big-data and health care innovation.

Cuyahoga County is home to 1.2 million people and is comprised of 59 unique and distinctive communities, with Cleveland as its nucleus. The County is also considered the economic nucleus for Northeast Ohio. The County's top industries include healthcare, diversified manufacturing, biotechnology, and other services. Just a few of the County's nationally recognized Fortune 500, middle market, and startup employers include the Cleveland Clinic, University Hospitals, Eaton Corporation, Progressive Insurance, Parker-Hannifin, Key Bank, Case Western Reserve University, General Electric, Cleveland Whiskey, Swagelok, Sherwin-Williams, Lincoln Electric, Nestle USA, Huntington Bank, Jones Day, Baker Hostetler, ArcelorMittal, Hyland Software, BoxCast, Lecco Worthington, and IBM's Explorys Division. The 2018 Economic Development Plan, as proffered by the Cuyahoga County Economic Development Commission, reflects Cuyahoga County's desire to collaborate and align with the region's economic development stakeholders and partners to create and sustain economic and population growth and job creation.

## Snapshot of Regional Assets

Premium Geographic Location  
and  
Transportation Infrastructure

Diverse  
Employer  
Ecosystem

Great  
Professional  
Sport Teams

Strong Civic  
Partnership

World Class  
Arts and  
Culture

## Primary Objectives

Cuyahoga County's 2017-2021 Economic Development Plan is built on three primary objectives.

1. Foster positive employment, economic and population growth in Cuyahoga County.
2. Advance balanced, diverse and equitable economic and job growth through public policies and investment that focus not just on the quantity of jobs created, but also the quality of jobs and neighborhoods. Connect residents of underserved and disadvantaged communities and neighborhoods to economic opportunities.
3. Re-establish the Greater Cleveland region as a national economic hub, recognized both nationally and globally for its:
  - Manufacturing sector;
  - Global center for healthcare, innovation, research and development;
  - Well-organized and well-funded start-up ecosystem, and
  - Modernized workforce system that is both demand and supply focused.; that reflects quality of jobs as measured by benefits, advancement, and career pathways

## Metrics

Cuyahoga County's economic development activities will lead to measurable outcomes, linked to its three primary objectives:

1. Investment from outside Cuyahoga County, exports to national and international markets, new business starts, value of goods and services produced, and positive national media mentions.
2. Employment, population, and educational attainment.
3. Average neighborhood earnings, housing values, opportunity index ratings, and underlying economic, educational, and public health data, both for the County and municipalities within the County, and labor force participation.

## Cuyahoga County Guiding Principles

In achieving these objectives, Cuyahoga County will follow a set of guiding principles, focusing on the vision that Cuyahoga County will convene and, with its partners, facilitate regional economic development work. **Its Department of Development will be recognized as an economic and community development center of excellence and innovation.** It is the desire of the Economic Development Commission that Cuyahoga County economic development stakeholders will:

### Lead

1. Support and facilitate developing the vision for regional economic development.
2. Facilitate and foster job creation and linkage to Cuyahoga County's workforce development priorities.
3. Work collaboratively with education stakeholders to improve the County's education system.
4. Build on and leverage existing partnerships with the 59 Cuyahoga County communities and regional, public, private, and non-profit organizations to achieve the objectives and identify industries of the 21<sup>st</sup> century that will be the source of job creation and regional growth
5. Strive to partner, foster and support sustainable economic development and infrastructure investments/projects and promote sustainability as an end goal in the implementation of our economic development mission.
6. leveraging strategic partnerships to bring new jobs, companies and investment, and grow existing businesses.
7. Integrate social services and transportation with economic development to enhance the County's workforce.
8. Implement and advance the countywide Housing Plan.
9. The County will take prudent risks to achieve and advance its economic vision.
10. With partners, focus on growing target sectors, including healthcare, IT, and manufacturing.
11. Focus on and maximize the economic potential of Lake Erie for trade, recreation, wind energy, transportation, and as a water source.

### Execute

1. Execute programs with the goal of becoming the premier county in Ohio for economic growth, quality of life, education and opportunity.
2. Collaborate with the 59 municipalities in Cuyahoga County to advance and implement this economic and community development vision.
3. **Innovate to create economic value for Cuyahoga County's communities and residents.**
4. Prudently and effectively invest public capital to facilitate job creation and positive economic value for communities and residents countywide, and support efforts to create and maintain quality neighborhoods.
5. **Foster more vibrant communities through investment in place-making, commercial corridor revitalization, increased community access to amenities, assessment of environmental contamination and remediation of contaminated sites with identified end-users, as appropriate.**
6. **Execute economic development with the highest integrity, transparency, and accountability.**
7. **Achieve measurable results through analytic, research-based strategies that focus on results, not process, and report these results to the public.**
8. **Integrate workforce, economic and community development work to make best use of limited resources.**
9. **Continue to support entrepreneurship and small businesses, emphasizing the need for diversity and inclusion in this space.**
10. Leverage existing county assets, including the Global Center for Health Innovation, Huntington Convention Center of Cleveland, and the County Airport.
11. Work with local stakeholders to reduce entrance barriers for small businesses and potential investors looking to locate or grow in the region.

### Market and Communicate

1. **Advocate regionally for transportation, infrastructure, investments and planning that will connect jobs to people and enhance the competitiveness of the county/region.**
2. **Focus on the value of labor mobility as an economic development priority.**
3. Promote the region's ability to manufacture and sell products to international markets by leveraging our location with relation to maritime and roadway accessibility.
4. **Focus on opportunity and inclusion in all economic development work.**
5. Promote arts, culture and tourism as a key component of the county's economic development strategies in the place-making realm.
6. **Promote Cuyahoga County as a global destination, building on its reputation as a medical innovation and manufacturing hub.**
7. **Promote and integrate education and workforce training to create a pipeline of employees for businesses and to create career opportunities for residents.**

## Objective 1: Re-establish Cuyahoga County as a national economic hub

Sixty years ago, Cleveland reached its peak population, and was widely regarded as one of the United States' major industrial centers, based mainly on its heavy manufacturing. Our aspirational goal is to re-emerge as the Making and Manufacturing Economic Capital of the United States (M<sup>2</sup>EC). While industry has shifted, many of the advantages that made Greater Cleveland an attractive site to locate manufacturing plants continue to offer an ideal setting for advanced manufacturing and other new economic endeavors. Greater Cleveland already possesses strong higher-education and medical institutions; a track record of supporting innovation; mature, advanced manufacturing; ample supplies of fresh water; a vibrant interstate and international maritime trade industry; and nationally-recognized arts and culture. Building on these strengths, Cuyahoga County will convene and, with our partners, facilitate regional efforts to return Greater Cleveland to a more prominent position in the national economy. Cuyahoga County's Economic Development Commission will advance the discussion in identifying the four to five big economic development bets that will drive regional economic growth. The County, with its partners, will begin in 2018 to explore opportunities to position export and foreign direct investment as growth strategies. There has been increasing interest by foreign consuls in trade opportunities within the County. This strategy will be coordinated with leaders of the Port and Hopkins International Airport.

### Strategy: Facilitate the creation of a workforce that is a competitive advantage for Northeast Ohio.

There are a number of workforce providers currently existing in Cuyahoga County. The quality of our business ecosystem will be driven by our ability to integrate, align, and scale the workforce system to the benefit of our businesses and workforce.

Private sector feedback suggests that building a globally competitive workforce is the top priority with the greatest potential to increase the region's competitiveness and drive economic growth. There are several activities that can be implemented to achieve success in this area as reflected in a clear and streamlined path to helping companies identify and hire the talent they need to compete, grow and be profitable. We believe the following activities will enable the highest return in achieving that goal:

#### **Activity 1: Support business growth and profitability through a workforce pipeline that delivers a sufficient and steady supply of qualified candidates at all skill levels to keep jobs filled.**

Provide a shared systems-level focus on eliminating the demand-supply gap for in-demand jobs now and in the future in a sustainable way. Cuyahoga County Government will utilize a variety of approaches, including leveraging intermediary, provider, and sector partnerships, to achieve specific targets and systems-level strategies; access reliable & dynamic data; and create large-scale accountability for eliminating the demand-supply gap for in-demand jobs in each sector.

Cuyahoga County Government will help create a shared focus on aligning programmatic efforts of funders and providers to scale up approaches that business leaders believe are effective to eliminate the demand-supply gap for their in-demand jobs now and in the future.

**Activity 2: Assist residents with employment barriers that keep them outside the pipeline to become skilled workers pursuing career and wage pathways inside the pipeline.**

Cuyahoga County Government will utilize a variety of approaches to redefine workforce system “success” as a career pathway leading to a family sustaining wage and employment benefits without public support. The County will utilize existing career pathways and establish new pathways in tandem with business leaders, service providers, labor unions, and educational institutions to train workers for in-demand jobs in each sector as part of a sector partnership approach (above).

Cuyahoga County Government will support existing efforts and create new opportunities to help job seekers establish career plans that integrate support, readiness, education, employment, career advancement, and entrepreneurship services. Job quality will be a focused priority of these activities to assist businesses and service providers with opportunities for career pathways, advancement, retention and mobility.

Cuyahoga County Government will support existing workforce development programs to promote rehabilitation and social reintegration of the re-entry population, and will encourage private-sector employers to remove bright-line barriers to employment for job-seekers with criminal records.

Cuyahoga County Government will support and encourage the region’s youth (future workers and future entrepreneurs in Pre-K - 16) to enroll in and complete academic programs to improve long-term career prospects (i.e. Technical Education, Apprenticeships, Internships, and other programs that directly connect post-secondary coursework to careers).

**Activity 3: Build alignment among public, private and philanthropic funders to invest our workforce dollars in ways that advance shared goals and priorities, and measure success by shared outcomes and impact.**

This activity will ultimately create shared systems-level goals and priorities that drive better coordination and guide all local and regional workforce planning and funding decisions. Northeast Ohio has been moving toward a more coordinated systems approach for many years directed at sector partnerships, career pathways, and other opportunities for closer alignment between workforce, economic development, education and human services strategies. Consensus has been achieved among Cuyahoga County’s public, nonprofit, and private sectors to create a more comprehensive workforce system. This effort is ongoing and will lead to the creation of sector intermediaries in manufacturing, health care, and Information Technology. Cuyahoga County Government will build on the work that has been done separately in our community, to better integrate and align activities for more effective outcomes.

Together, we have the opportunity to design a coordinated workforce system that works for business and job seekers. This alignment will provide greater opportunities to leverage resources across systems and sectors to best serve the needs of both our businesses and residents.



**Activity 4: Focus workforce innovation and effort on the travel and tourism sector, as a key component of our economy. Partner with Destination Cleveland and its partner network to collaboratively research training needs, promote career opportunities, and explore further job training coordination between Cuyahoga Community College and tourism related businesses.**

While the County's travel and tourism industry grows, so do jobs in this sector. Visitor volume in Cuyahoga County has outpaced the U.S. domestic travel growth rate since 2012, rising by 16.4% in this time span. Between 2015 and 2016, employment in the leisure and hospitality employment sector increased by 10%, the highest employment growth rate of any sector in Cleveland with 5,000 new jobs since 2011. This industry supported 8.1% of Cuyahoga County jobs in 2015 and generated more than \$1 billion in sales tax revenue. The U.S. Travel Association maintains that the tourism industry provides a pathway into the workforce for young adults and persons without higher education. Tourism industry employees have an opportunity to start at the bottom and build a career.

## Strategy: Support manufacturing and promote innovation among small and medium manufacturers

Cuyahoga County will recognize and support its legacy industries, including steel, automotive, and machine tools, as well as the growth of newer industries. Among significant driver industries of Cuyahoga County are existing businesses that export products/services. Some of these are manufacturers, whose export-driven activities bring in revenues that multiply the manufacturing's impact on the economy. Growth in advanced manufacturing itself drives higher than average pay, because use of the more advanced and technical machines and processes requires a higher-skilled workforce.

Through economic development partners like MAGNET, and maker spaces like ThinkBox, Cuyahoga County will work to strengthen, grow, and accelerate advanced manufacturing through innovation and advanced technologies like 3D printing, digital manufacturing, , while simultaneously ensuring there is a vital pipeline of trained workers to fuel that growth. Cuyahoga County has organized an effort to become a center of innovation for the Internet of Things.

To help companies grow through innovation, the County has participated in the PRISM program (Partnership for Regional Innovation Services to Manufacturers), a holistic program consisting of hands-on consulting, deep technical assistance, and leveraging regional partners to offer product design, process improvements, workforce development, market diversification and other innovative growth programs. The County is a vital part of this program, and other institutions such as NASA, Case Western, CSU, Tri-C, and many others are already aiming to help small and medium manufacturers grow and can be accelerated further through a focused County effort. Future growth of manufacturing depends on its ability to embrace innovation to compete globally.

## Strategy: Create an innovation / entrepreneurship continuum

Supporting the innovation economy in Cuyahoga County and Northeast Ohio will continue to be a key economic priority. The County will continue to support Team NEO's efforts in advancing three innovation clusters:

- Additive Manufacturing
- Energy Storage
- Smart Devices

This effort is a critical component of positioning regional economic growth with respect to the industries of the future.

Activity 1: Form partnerships with public and private entities to assure funding for startup and early stage businesses creating jobs of the future in, for example, the technology and health care sectors. The County's partnership with JumpStart, building on its success in attracting the Plug & Play business accelerator, will be a part of these efforts.

Activity 2: Create opportunities for young people and adults to begin to transform business ideas into operational plans. One example is through the partnership with the County Libraries to open Innovation Centers at key locations. Focus on driving innovation as a cultural aspiration to under-served parts of the County. The County's partnership with the Economic Community Development Institute (ECDI) provides this type of support.

Activity 3: Provide and leverage funding for innovative small businesses, both high-tech and conventional to start and grow, particularly in neighborhoods. Support technology transfer from NASA Glenn Research Center, in partnership with the Ohio Aerospace Institute and others.

Activity 4: Build upon existing assets, such as the world's first freshwater wind farm on Lake Erie and our existing supply chain network to foster manufacturing of component parts for the wind and solar industries.

Activity 5: Utilize existing assets, like the Global Center for Health Innovation and the major hospital systems, to attract health care businesses to the region.

## Strategy: Carry out key County activities to re-establish standing as a regional and national economic hub

Activity 1: Coordinate active and consistent regional participation in national organizations and activities that focus on economic development and real estate, such as the International Council for Shopping Centers; Select USA, Urban Land Institute, CORENet, Consumer Electronics Show, and SXSW.

Activity 2: Partner with the County's education stakeholders to improve the County's educational attainment and competitive position.

Activity 3: Promote key regional business assets, including NASA Glenn Research Center, Plug and Play, and the increasing number of millennials with advanced degrees.

Activity 4: Leverage Destination Cleveland's brand and research insights to establish a regional, national, and, as appropriate, global branding campaign for the region, focused on top economic growth clusters, which may include industries related to water/maritime, advanced manufacturing, health care / medical technology, financial technology, and arts / entertainment.

Activity 5: Partner with early-stage business assistance and funding organizations such as JumpStart to foster new industries, particularly where Cuyahoga County has a competitive advantage. Examples include industries related to water, advanced manufacturing and health care.

Activity 6: Partner with Cuyahoga County communities, the Greater Cleveland Partnership, and Team NEO to refine and make more useful a current inventory of developable sites in each Cuyahoga County community, with information on sources of funding to fill identified site development deficiencies as specific end users become interested in locating at these sites.

Activity 7: Increase the sources and amounts of public and private sector investment capital, including capital to make brownfield sites economically viable.

Activity 8: Partner with key economic institutions such as University Circle Incorporated, higher education institutions, and the County's healthcare system to support growth in the "Eds and Meds" sectors.

Activity 9: Promote wider and more equitable access to broadband as a tool for business attraction and expansion and to enhance the education system.

Activity 10: Promote vocational training for advanced manufacturing.

Activity 11: Collaborate with the Aerozone Alliance and its member municipalities and organizations to facilitate economic development spin-offs that take advantage of our proximity to NASA-Glenn Research Center, Cleveland Hopkins Airport, and other airports in the County.

## Strategy: Support research, commercialization, and technology transfer

Effectively managing and strategizing around the emerging regional knowledge society can only be done by understanding how Cuyahoga County is economically restructuring. As Cleveland State University's Center for Population Dynamics has noted, the commercialization of knowledge should not be viewed as the cause of economic growth; it is an effect that comes when the best knowledge is being produced.

Greater Cleveland is known for its excellence in "Eds and Meds" – higher education and world class health care. Research at Cuyahoga County's universities, University Hospitals, and the Cleveland Clinic, creates knowledge with high value for commercialization. Research also attracts highly educated and skilled individuals to move to Cuyahoga County. The focused research itself, along with the potential stream of startup companies it spins off, are economic development activities worth funding and supporting.

## Objective 2: Foster positive job and population growth & opportunity

### Strategy: Improve transportation, labor mobility, and job access

Activity 1: Partner with the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority, the Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency, the Port of Cleveland, and the City of Cleveland to establish an integrated transportation and economic development plan for the County and to advocate for transportation improvement, growth, diversification, and connectivity.

Activity 2: Implement Vibrant NEO 2040's recommendation to increase affordable public and other transportation options better connecting communities to workplaces, particularly in Cuyahoga County's suburbs. Align this work with ongoing research into Job Hubs as a tool for focusing reinvestment in the urban core and appropriate transportation infrastructure.

Activity 3: Support the Port of Cleveland's "Cleveland to Europe Express" which offers regional manufacturers reliable and local means to export products to international markets. Quicker delivery timelines have and will continue to increase global competitiveness of the region.

### Strategy: Improve business retention and expansion

Cuyahoga County, collaborating with its partners, will create a more effective business attraction, expansion and retention ecosystem that is coordinated and metrics\results oriented.

Activity 1: Assist Cuyahoga County's 59 member communities to identify and market their key real estate sites to attract national and regional businesses. Tools for this effort include a new Customer Relationship Management System. Offer both environmental assessments, as funding is available for sites, and assistance locating resources for environmental remediation of sites with identified end users.

Activity 2: Promote Cuyahoga County's assets including affordable housing, quality of life, and skilled workforce, to attract both regional and national business relocations.

Activity 3: Partnering with the Greater Cleveland Partnership, Team NEO, and Jobs Ohio, to conduct a targeted, strategic business-calling program to accelerate business growth opportunities in Cuyahoga County.

### Strategy: Encourage immigration of educated and skilled workers

Activity 1: Utilize resources including Destination Cleveland's brand assets and insights to market the entire County as an attractive living and working environment for Millennials. The County's Department of Development will engage with Millennials to design and promote initiatives to attract and retain highly skilled residents county-wide. Housing affordability is a key part of this effort.

Activity 2: Promote the County's post-secondary education system, which includes nationally ranked private universities, to foreign students.

Activity 3: Partner with Global Cleveland to promote the County as a welcoming place for immigrants.

## Strategy: Emphasize place-based development

Economic development and community development are inextricably linked. Place-based development reduces the public expense of economic development by capitalizing on the region's existing human capital, infrastructure, community and neighborhood assets, institutional and industrial strengths, and cultural resources that are already in place.

Cuyahoga County boasts assets that would be the envy of other regions: cultural institutions that are unmatched, access to abundant fresh water and existing infrastructure (from roadways and an international port to information superhighways) with capacity to accommodate growth.

Activity 1: Collaborate with communities to identify and consider modifying local policies, such as tax rates, or land use regulations which might be discouraging businesses from choosing otherwise attractive sites for their locations, and encourage appropriate calibration of economic development incentives.

Activity 2: Maintain and continue to enhance Cuyahoga County's high quality natural and cultural assets.

Activity 3: Build on previous work done by the County Planning Commission in which ten priority areas for Place Based Economic Development were identified, create criteria for funding neighborhood place based economic development projects which have high potential for positive economic development impact on a regional scale.

## Strategy: Integrate sustainability

Climate Change is a reality that should be addressed. As the need for cleaner generation of fuel sources are needed, Cuyahoga County is cognizant of both the need to encourage greener energy development for its own sake, but also the economic development opportunity afforded by being a leader in the field.

Activity 1: Strengthen the County's abilities to finance clean energy projects in order to assist wind, solar and other forms of clean energy development. Build on and expand the efforts of the Department of Sustainability's Clean Energy Finance Hub and work to utilize all of the tools available such as renewable energy tax credits, PACE funding, clean energy bonds and others to expand development.

Activity 2: Prioritize projects which have clean energy components built into them when considering County resource allocation, loans, grants and other forms of assistance.

Activity 3. Assist in development of large scale renewable power projects such as the LEEDCo offshore wind project and the CURP landfill solar project in Brooklyn, and advocate where appropriate for utility distributive generation rules that make renewable power projects easier to achieve.

Activity 4. Develop a Microgrid in downtown Cleveland and use it to attract new businesses.

## Objective 3: Advance balanced, diverse and equitable economic and job growth

Cuyahoga County will promote in its development approach the philosophy that “everybody matters”. The County will seek to promote opportunities to all residents, especially those in disconnected and under-served populations. When considering financial support to business, the County’s Department of Development will consider not only the quantity, but also the quality of jobs created, and accessibility of jobs from neighborhoods with housing affordable to the workers holding those jobs.

### Activity 1: Housing Policy and Housing Plan

In 2015, County Executive Budish directed a thorough review of Cuyahoga County’s housing conditions and policy, in consultation with a wide range of stakeholders. In 2016, the County Planning Commission completed a statistical analysis of housing conditions in Cuyahoga County as a step toward completion of a comprehensive housing plan for Cuyahoga County. Based on this analysis and on significant housing policy development work led by the County Executive and Deputy Director of Development for Housing, Cuyahoga County has set forth six key areas for coordinated effort to improve housing conditions:

- Access to Capital
- Tax Collection and Delinquency
- Housing Insecurity
- Special Populations
- Fair Housing
- Confidence in the Housing Market

The Cuyahoga County Housing Plan was completed in 2017 and is attached to the Five- Year Economic Development Plan as an appendix.

### Activity 2: Inclusion

In order to become a transformative region, the County is striving to be an economically welcoming place, providing opportunity to economically isolated populations, current residents, boomerangers and newcomers, both transplants and immigrants alike. The future success of the County is inextricably tied to the success of historically isolated populations. As part of business growth, we will work to grow the number and size of female and minority-owned enterprises, expand access for minority and economically isolated residents to educational training and business opportunities, and build a sustainable system that generates opportunities for economic access for all residents, particularly historically isolated populations. To advance this goal the County has adopted legislation designed to improve County government opportunities for small, minority and female owned businesses to compete for County government contracts and to support the concept of community benefits. The County additionally supports and will work to increase access to technology and the digital economy for all residents.

# Appendix: Current County Economic Development programs and tools / Portfolio of financial assistance products and programs

## Innovation and Entrepreneurship

Innovation is the life blood of any healthy economy. The ability to create better or more effective products, processes, services, technologies, or ideas that are accepted by markets, governments, and society is a direct indicator of an economy's ability to add value and grow. It is vital for the County to facilitate and accelerate innovation development, technology transfer and commercialization activity in order to create an environment conducive for economic growth. Channeling capital to promising companies with a pipeline of inventive products and services, the County adds critical funding to the creative mixture of concepts, employees and management.

Supporting entrepreneurship not only helps drive economic growth, but it is also an effective way to generate economic opportunity for low-income individuals or groups that have traditionally been economically isolated. Entrepreneurial development creates opportunities to achieve economic self-sufficiency, create wealth, and transform underserved neighborhoods.

The County supports key aspects of innovation and start-up business development designed to cultivate entrepreneurs and innovation and to nourish early stage companies along the capital formation continuum and product life-cycle.

**Innovation Centers:** All residents can access resources to develop their business concepts and early commercialization efforts, including collaboration with mentors, at libraries.

**Microenterprise Loan Program:** Through nonprofit partner, Economic & Community Development Council (ECDI), identifies and finances very small startup businesses not yet ready to apply for funding from traditional lenders.

**Pre-Seed for Innovation Ventures Fund:** Through nonprofit partner, JumpStart, Inc., pre-seed growth loans to early-stage companies.

**Early Stage Fund:** Through nonprofit partner, JumpStart, Inc., funds Series A-Venture capital to next-stage companies seeking new equity financing.

**Ohio Aerospace Institute/SBIR:** Creating a technology transfer program to support and encourage innovative startup businesses using NASA technology with federal support, to locate and grow in Cuyahoga County.

**Plug & Play:** Located at the Global Center for Health Innovations, this internationally recognized startup accelerator nurtures innovative new enterprises that may choose to locate and grow in Cuyahoga County.

## Real Estate Finance

Firms that are growing need to modernize and expand. Having development properties ready to meet the expansion and relocation plans of companies is essential. When companies are growing and require more and better space, they seek properties that can be available in a timely manner. Many sites often are more complex, uncompetitive and costly by virtue of environmental issues, abandonment, and/or functional obsolescence. Vacant buildings are often hampered by contamination issues that require remediation or demolition posing significant cost disadvantages.

Our legacy industries have left blighted buildings and contaminated land in the core city and many inner-ring suburbs. The problems of these older commercial and industrial properties is often destructive to the neighborhoods and contributes to continued disinvestment. Growing businesses, unfortunately, often lack the capital and expertise necessary to address these complicated redevelopment opportunities.

The key to reutilizing and redeveloping these properties and land is to provide applicable and relevant subsidy tools that provide faster and clearer solutions and pathways for the companies to address them. The County is actively engaged with companies seeking to locate, expand, or modernize in areas that are served by existing infrastructure and transportation networks, but suffer from the above-described urban disinvestment. As such, the clean-up of land for shovel-ready redevelopment or rapid response for modernization of existing properties is a key piece in the County's place-based economic development plan. The County has devised a strategy to address the property needs for successful companies already in Cuyahoga County, and to help them grow in place.

**Community Assessment Initiative (CAI):** Provides grant funding and professional services to conduct certified assessments of environmental conditions on eligible properties toward jumpstarting redevelopment.

**USEPA Brownfield Revolving Loan Fund:** Loan funding for clean-up and redevelopment of brownfield sites and properties.

**Redevelopment and Modernization Loans:** Loan financing for significantly blighted and/or underutilized structures and their property improvements, including remediation and modernization for identified end users.

**Place-Based/Mixed-Use Development Loans:** Loans targeted toward strategic, mixed-use and high density (mixture of residential, office, retail, and/or commercial uses) redevelopment projects concentrated in the urban core; downtown, Cleveland's neighborhoods, or inner-ring suburbs.



## Business Growth and Attraction

Both business expansion and attraction are critical sources of job creation and economic growth. Creating a globally competitive economic environment for businesses to grow and thrive requires a development approach that attracts entrepreneurs, businesses, professionals, and investment capital to locate, expand, and remain in Cuyahoga County. Creating access to flexible, dynamic sources of capital that address the growth needs of businesses will stimulate private investment and improve the economic landscape.

Supporting this growth not only helps drive economic development, but is also an effective way to generate economic opportunity for minority & female-owned businesses low & moderate-income individuals or groups that have traditionally been economically isolated. Entrepreneurial development creates opportunities to achieve economic self-sufficiency, create wealth, and transform underserved neighborhoods.

Cuyahoga County provides direct economic development loans in this area to reinvigorate our economic competitiveness, encourage private investment and business growth, and create high value jobs. These four strategies address the fundamental gaps that often stifle growth and hinder investment.

**Business Growth and Attraction Loans:** Economic development gap-financing business loans for new construction, physical expansions, real estate acquisition, machinery and equipment and other growth and relocation project needs.

**Large Scale Attraction:** Gap-financing loans and forgivable loan incentives for large-scale & special attraction business projects.

**Grow Cuyahoga County Fund:** Through nonprofit partner, National Development Council (NDC), this program provides direct SBA-backed loans (with County funded gap fillers) for small to medium-sized established businesses.

**Capital Access Fund:** Through nonprofit partners, NDC and the Urban League of Greater Cleveland, this program provides low-cost loans and technical pre & post-loan counseling for minority-owned small businesses.

**Accelerated Growth Loan Program:** With nonprofit partner, Growth Opportunity Partners, loan financing for the growth of existing small, female & minority-owned businesses.

**SBA-Municipal-County Small Business Initiative:** Through the cities of Cleveland, Cleveland Heights, Fairview Park, Lakewood, Maple Heights, and Shaker Heights, this program provides bank-financed, SBA-backed loans (with Municipal-County funded equity fillers) for small to medium-sized businesses located within these six municipalities.

**Small Business Growth Programs:** Lending partnerships increasing small business access to traditional lending markets, including SBA-Municipal Matching Grants, the Grow Cuyahoga Fund, and the Capital Access Fund.

**Early Stage Loan Program:** With nonprofit partner, Growth Opportunity Partners, loan financing for the growth of existing small, female and minority-owned businesses.

## Quality of Place Development

Economic Development is inextricably linked to community development. Place-based development reduces the public expense of economic development by capitalizing on region's human capital, infrastructure, community and neighborhood assets, institutional and industrial strengths, and cultural resources that are already in place.

County programs and initiatives are a diverse portfolio of community development and housing assistance offerings that work together to create strong, vibrant communities in which people want to live and work. Below is a listing of our current programs in these areas.

**Municipal Grant Program:** Competitive program that awards grants up to \$150,000 to municipal governments for projects that improve their community.

**Commercial Storefront Renovation:** Competitive program designed to help municipalities update or revitalize local retail corridors.

**Homeownership, Repair & Foreclosure:** Down payment assistance, home repair funding and housing counseling to support homeownership.

**Affordable and Fair Housing Initiatives:** Initiatives that promote all areas in the County as welcoming places for our residents.

# Cuyahoga County Economic Development Financing

## Product and Program Offerings

**Innovation and Commercialization**  
**County Economic Development Fund**  
 - Pre-Seed for Innovation investments from JumpStart  
 -Technical Assistance from NASA, Flashstarts, BioEnterprise, etc.  
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**Entrepreneurship and Opportunity**  
**Economic Development Fund and/or Federal**  
 -Microenterprise loans through ECDI  
 - Pre-Seed for Innovation Ventures loans through JumpStart  
 -Early Stage investments through JumpStart  
 -Accelerated Growth loans through Growth Opportunity Partners  
 -Capital Access Fund loans through National Development Council (with technical assistance from the Urban League)  
 -Grow Cuyahoga loans through NDC  
 SBA-insured bank loans (with equity assistance through Municipal-County match)

**Workforce  
 Innovation**  
*County HHS  
 Levy*  
 Skill-Up Service  
 Training Support

**Business Growth and Attraction Lending**  
**Economic Development Fund**  
 Direct County Loan to an established company to support its growth and/or support its move to Cuyahoga County (underwritten to industry standards and secured, job creation required)

**Business Attraction Incentives (Forgivable Loans)**  
**Economic Development Fund**  
 Incentive to company to attract or retain well paid jobs in target industry (calibrated by the county's Return On Investment; city/state participation coordinated with county incentives)

**Real Estate (Placemaking) Funding**  
**Economic Development Fund, Casino, and/or Federal**  
 Loans, Grants and Tax Credits for a variety of placemaking activities such as Brownfield Assessment/Cleanup, Community Development, Demolition and Modernization, Sustainability (underwritten to funding rules)

### Future Initiatives

**Infrastructure, Redevelopment, and Modernization – new sources of capital for Brownfield Cleanup, Site Preparation, and Placemaking**

**Export Assistance leveraging Cuyahoga County's Advanced Manufacturing industry cluster and prime logistical location for water, rail, road, and air transportation.**

## Partner Engagement

Cuyahoga County designs and executes its economic development strategy through engagement with many organizations. The following list is not intended to be complete, but illustrates the range of our engagement:

The Aerozone Alliance

BioEnterprise

Capital Access Fund

Case Western Reserve University

59 Cuyahoga County Cities, Villages, and Townships

Cleveland / Cuyahoga County Port Authority

Cuyahoga County Land Reutilization Corporation (County Land Bank)

CHN Partners (formerly the Cleveland Housing Network)

The Cleveland Foundation

Cleveland Neighborhood Progress

Cleveland State University

The Commission on Economic Inclusion

Cuyahoga Community College

Cuyahoga County Mayors and Managers Association

Destination Cleveland

Digital C

Economic and Community Development Institute

First Suburbs Consortium

The Fund for our Economic Future

The George Gund Foundation

Global Cleveland

Greater Cleveland Partnership

Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority

Growth Opportunity Partners

Jobs Ohio

JumpStart

MAGNET

National Development Council

Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency

Ohio Means Jobs

The RITE Board

Team NEO

United States Department of Housing and Urban Development

United States Small Business Administration

The Urban League of Greater Cleveland