

Section 4: Action Plan – “Working Together For Our Future”

The development of the CEDS was a collaborative effort among the community’s local political subdivisions, community stakeholders, and various economic development organizations to define and address the economic condition and concerns within Lucas County. The process required the community to recognize its assets and shortcomings as a precursor to framing a long-term vision for the community, as well as to develop goals, objectives, and strategies to achieve that vision.

The CEDS Committee adopted the tag line “Working Together for Our Future,” as the slogan for this economic development planning process. The logo featured on the cover and at the bottom of each page of this document was adopted as a graphic representation of this collaborative effort.

The following vision statement and subsequent goals were formulated and approved by the CEDS Committee. The goals are listed in no particular order or ranking, as many of them overlap. Each goal was deemed by the Committee to have equal priority and importance in the future success of Lucas County’s development.



Vision Statement

Lucas County is committed to working cooperatively, across jurisdictional boundaries, to create a diverse, globally-competitive region comprised of sustainable communities that offer a high quality of life for all residents, a vibrant urban core that contributes positively to the overall vitality and economic strength of the region, and opportunities for employment and economic prosperity for all its residents.

Goals

- A. All entities will pursue County-wide economic prosperity by working together to expand the economic base of the region, through a unified vision and a consensus of goals that focus positive energy toward implementation, creating new business and industrial activity, as opposed to transferring activity from one community to another.
- B. Continue to develop and promote active and vital collaboration among local jurisdictions and private economic development agencies, including local institutions of higher education and the business community.
- C. Design and implement strategic business enhancement and development efforts to retain and expand existing business, attract new business, and create and incubate new entrepreneurial efforts.

Section 4: Action Plan – “Working Together For Our Future”

- D. Provide continued assistance to effectively promote and support small, minority, disadvantaged, and women-owned business enterprises and entrepreneurs.
- E. Maintain and enhance the County’s status as an international multi-modal transportation center by continuing to support and develop transportation resources (air, sea, pipelines, communications, rail, and highways) into a fully-integrated network.
- F. Facilitate the creation of developable sites for business location or relocation by assembling property and upgrading and/or expanding public and private infrastructure, specifically with priority given to brownfield sites and other underutilized areas with existing infrastructure.
- G. Improve Lucas County’s competitiveness as a vibrant and diverse community that is an exciting and rewarding place to live, work, play, and conduct business by working together to foster and expand our neighborhood, educational, community, cultural, and recreational assets.
- H. Maintain a high-quality, skilled, competitive workforce that is flexible and responsive to community and business needs through promotion and support of labor, educational, and training resources.
- I. Pursue an industry cluster-based economic development strategy that seeks to strategically diversify the local economic base, building upon existing strengths and emergent opportunities.

Objectives

The following objectives were developed for the listed goals for the County. They were categorized as either short-term or long-term objectives. Short-term objectives are defined as those that are to be accomplished within two years. Long-term objectives are those that will require more than two, but less than ten years to be implemented.

Additionally, the CEDS Committee recognized various organizations’ responsibility for meeting these objectives. Where no specific entity is designated, implementation of the objective is the responsibility of all economic development entities.



Section 4: Action Plan – “Working Together For Our Future”

Goal A: All entities will pursue County-wide economic prosperity by working together to expand the economic base of the region, through a unified vision and a consensus of goals that focus positive energy toward implementation, creating new business and industrial activity, as opposed to transferring activity from one community to another.

Short-Term Objectives:

- All communities and economic development entities within the County will work together, under the auspices of the Lucas County Improvement Corporation (LCIC), to support the new County-wide economic development efforts.
- The CEDS Committee will take a lead role in prioritizing and updating the status of regional economic development projects listed in the CEDS document; annually updating the CEDS.
- The Regional Growth Partnership has become a privately-funded organization in 2005, and will continue to work with local governments and existing and new businesses to expand the economic base of Lucas County and the region, and to implement the region’s industry cluster strategy.
- All entities will endeavor to complete the projects listed in the CEDS document over the next several years, realizing that these projects may change in feasibility, scope, and priority resulting from an updated evaluation of the local economic environment.
- All entities will support the application to EDA of funding assistance for the top-ranked project resulting from this economic development planning process.

Long-Term Objectives:

- Achieve a regional identity through intergovernmental and public/private cooperation, as well as shared information, resources, and service delivery systems, which are based on both regional and world market needs.
- Pursue a regional strategy (or plan) to address identified economic opportunities and obstacles, to promote and guide balanced development.
- All entities will assure that the CEDS is continually updated on a regular basis so that eligibility for EDA funding is current.



Section 4: Action Plan – “Working Together For Our Future”

Goal B: Continue to develop and promote active and vital collaboration among local jurisdictions and private economic development agencies, including local institutions of higher education and the business community.

Short-Term Objectives:

- The LCIC will maintain key contacts for major agencies, organizations and groups involved in the attraction, expansion and retention of manufacturing, research and development, and distribution companies, as well as major office complexes.
- Local economic development partners will refer local industries to appropriate economic development agencies, local governments and the University of Toledo for access to economic development programs and incentives, including information on financing, tax abatement programs, infrastructure assistance, workforce training programs, and other information related to local economic development resources.
- Local economic development partners will take the lead in encouraging local industry to continue to exchange economic information through business associations and trade groups with regard to new development on such issues as marketing, management, and local labor.
- The Regional Growth Partnership will cooperate with economic development representatives of local communities regarding the Retention and Expansion program to maintain regular communication with major local industry. This should facilitate problem solving and satisfy needs before situations become crises. It is understood that some economic problems are inevitable and cannot be resolved such as plant consolidations, company restructures and market adjustments.
- Educational institutions should continue to foster collaborative research efforts among the University of Toledo, the Medical University of Ohio, and Bowling Green State University.

Goal C: Design and implement strategic business enhancement and development efforts to retain and expand existing business, attract new business, and create and incubate new entrepreneurial efforts.

Short-Term Objectives:

- The Regional Growth Partnership will enhance its information center to provide decision-quality data for economic development efforts.



Section 4: Action Plan – “Working Together For Our Future”



- Local economic development partners will collaborate to monitor and assess primary operational costs (labor, utilities, land, building costs, taxes, and financing) within the County to gauge the County’s competitive position as a business location.
- The Regional Growth Partnership will collaborate with FirstEnergy to maintain a comprehensive inventory of available sites and buildings for development with input from other local utility companies, development agencies, commercial realtors, and local governments.
- Local economic development partners will work together to develop a comprehensive, standardized database of all available sites and buildings for development in Lucas County.
- Local economic development partners will work with local utility providers to ensure the lowest utility rates possible.
- Local economic development partners, and the US -Toledo District Export Assistance Center, working with other resource providers, will help local industries expand exports.
- Local economic development partners will coordinate small business development activities and services with participating local entrepreneurs.

Goal D: Provide continued assistance to effectively promote and support small, minority, disadvantaged, and women-owned business enterprises and entrepreneurs.

Short-Term Objectives:

- The LCIC will work with the Toledo Area Chamber of Commerce and others to direct minority, disadvantaged, and women-owned business enterprises and entrepreneurs to small business development programs.
- The LCIC will facilitate the development of a strategy for coordinated delivery of small business development programs and ensure that the menu of programs available is complete, comprehensive, and effectively serves minority, disadvantaged and women-owned business enterprises and entrepreneurs.
- The LCIC, the local Chambers of Commerce, and other economic development partners will aggressively pursue grant opportunities through the federal government, state government, and other private and public sources to assist small business development efforts.

Section 4: Action Plan – “Working Together For Our Future”

Long-Term Objectives:

- The LCIC will work with local governments, financial institutions, investors, and other service providers to facilitate the creation of a special funding assistance program to help raise capital for entrepreneurial and small business development that effectively serve minority, disadvantaged, and women-owned businesses.

Goal E: Maintain and enhance the County's status as an international multi-modal transportation center by continuing to support and develop our transportation resources (air, sea, pipelines, communications, rail, and highways) into a fully-integrated network.

Short-Term Objectives:

- TMACOG will continue to monitor major priority transportation projects which reduce existing congestion on highways and/or improve access to key development areas.
- TMACOG will continue to expedite the completion of the Expressway needs study.
- The Port Authority will continue to lead efforts to insure proper highway access to the Port of Toledo.
- The Port Authority will continue to ensure support for maritime projects and work to obtain suitable water access to key port facilities.
- The Port Authority will continue to work to insure proper planning to accommodate growth of the Toledo Express Airport as an international air cargo and passenger center with connecting flights to key metropolitan areas nationwide.
- The Port Authority and TMACOG will continue to work to insure that the County is served with rail for freight and passenger service.
- Continue to work with TARTA to support its transit operations to insure that public transportation is offered in the County.
- Complete the construction of the new Maumee River crossing to relieve the congestion at the Craig Memorial Bridge on I-280, and capitalize on this improvement with new industries and commercial development areas.



Section 4: Action Plan – “Working Together For Our Future”



- The University of Toledo’s Intermodal Transportation Institute will provide research, education and training, and planning and technical assistance in developing and maintaining technology enabled, efficient, secure, and environmentally sound transportation systems, supply chains, and logistic processes.

Long-Term Objectives:

- The Port Authority will work to strengthen its leadership role in the oversight of key transportation-related economic development projects that involve intermodal cargo movements that will produce a cost-effective flow of goods.
- TMACOG will work to enhance interregional and international transportation connections to develop an integrated system utilizing all modes of transportation.
- TMACOG will develop a ‘sustainable’ transportation system which minimizes negative environmental impacts and is consistent with long-term regional goals for air and water quality.

Goal F: Facilitate the creation of developable sites for business location or relocation by assembling property and upgrading and/or expanding public and private infrastructure, specifically with priority given to brownfield sites and other underutilized areas with existing infrastructure.

Short-Term Objectives:

- Promote the development of existing community assets by redeveloping brownfield sites and revitalizing downtowns throughout the County.
- Inventory community assets, and identify the opportunities and obstacles to promote development.
- Aggressively pursue grant opportunities through the federal and State governments and foundations.
- Continue to provide public infrastructure improvements to key industry and business areas in Lucas County, including:
 - Alexis Industrial Corridor
 - Triad Business Park
 - Briarfield Business Park
 - Farnsworth Industrial Park
 - Timberstone Business and Industrial District
 - Whitehouse Industrial Park
 - Arrowhead Business Park
 - North Cross Industrial Park

Section 4: Action Plan – “Working Together For Our Future”

- Port of Toledo
 - Marina District
 - Fallen Timbers Business Park
 - Cedar Point Industrial Area
 - Holland Business Park
 - The Advanced Technology Park of Northwest Ohio (MUO)
 - Toledo Express Airport Area
 - Westwinds Industrial Park
 - Toledo Downtown Business Area
 - U.T. Science and Technology Corridor
 - Capital Commons
 - Buckeye Basin Industrial Park
- Continue to provide environmental clean-up and infrastructure improvements to key brownfield sites in Lucas County, including:
 - Pilkington Site
 - Stickney Avenue West Area
 - Marina District
 - Chase Site
 - Treasure Island/ Manhattan Dump
 - Summit Street Corridor
 - Doehler-Jarvis Site
 - Anthony Wayne Trail Industrial Redevelopment Area
 - Unicast Property
 - Beazer Property

Long-Term Objectives:

- Continue to encourage the use of shared public services to provide greater efficiency and lower cost of utilities such as water and sanitary sewers to maximize and capitalize on existing sites.
- Continue to advance telecommunications technology and infrastructure to remain in the Top Ten Wireless Cities in the U.S. and work with private entities to make Downtown Toledo wireless.
- Provide equitable distribution of water, wastewater, drainage, and other utilities and services to all areas of the County where such services are consistent with the growth objectives of the Lucas County Land Use Policy plan and the CEDS, to service developable sites and buildings.
- Give special attention to the reuse of existing sites and buildings, utilizing the Brownfield legislation and other related laws.



Section 4: Action Plan – “Working Together For Our Future”

Goal G: Improve Lucas County’s competitiveness as a vibrant and diverse community that is an exciting and rewarding place to live, work, play, and conduct business by working together to foster and expand our neighborhood, educational, community, cultural, and recreational assets.

Short-Term Objectives:

- The Regional Growth Partnership will take the lead role in providing sales, marketing, advertising, and public relations efforts to regional, national and international audiences.
- The Regional Growth Partnership/ University of Toledo will continue to track data and provide information to business executives and site location decision-makers about the strengths of the area’s quality labor force and actual labor costs in the area.
- The Regional Growth Partnership will lead a joint marketing program to improve attitudes and perceptions that key business leaders have about the region’s economic and business climate. An awareness of the local vocational schools and technology training offered at local colleges should also be emphasized. The skilled labor force and labor management record are two other favorable factors that should be publicized.
- Continue to support and preserve important County assets which contribute to the area’s entertainment and quality of life, including local schools, the Toledo Zoo, the Art Museum, recreational facilities, waterways, and historic sites.
- Support and promote downtown Toledo to fulfill its role as the region’s business, cultural, governmental, entertainment, and recreational center; while supporting the revitalization of other downtowns throughout the County.
- Promote and support programs that develop international relationships to establish ties and lines of communications which could lead to new business opportunities.
- Encourage area cultural and ethnic festivals and activities that celebrate the region’s diversity.

Long -Term Objectives:

- TMACOG will continue to take the lead role in coordinating air quality improvements.
- The Ohio Lake Erie Office, assisted by TMACOG, will take the lead role in improving the water quality of Lake Erie and its tributaries.



Section 4: Action Plan – “Working Together For Our Future”

Goal H: Maintain a high-quality, skilled, competitive workforce that is flexible and responsive to community and business needs through promotion and support of labor, educational, and training resources.

Short-Term Objectives:

- The WIBLC will strengthen the linkage between local schools and local industry by expanding the “partnership” programs for secondary and higher education.
- Market the area’s excellent four-year colleges and universities, vocational/technical schools, and community colleges that offer business and industry flexible educational opportunities for their employees.
- The WIBLC will continue to assess of industry work skills demand, develop a comprehensive inventory of area training capabilities, and maximize utilization of public and private resources for training and educational needs with linkages to targeted industry clusters.

Long-Term Objectives:

- Provide all people with access to an educational experience which is second to none, along with equally effective job training and re-training to develop and maintain a motivated, highly- skilled, and educated work force.
- Ensure the availability of an educational and training program to assist minority, disadvantaged and women-owned business start-ups.

Goal I: Pursue an industry cluster-based economic development strategy that seeks to strategically diversify the local economic base, building upon existing strengths and emergent opportunities.

Short-Term Objectives:

- Under the leadership of the Regional Growth Partnership, the University of Toledo-Urban Affairs Center, the Bowling Green State University Center for Regional Development, the Toledo-Lucas County Port Authority, the LCIC, NORED, and others, will work collaboratively to facilitate the development and implementation of an industry cluster-based economic development strategy for the region.



Section 4: Action Plan – “Working Together For Our Future”

- Work with industry leaders, local economic development agencies, and educational and/or professional institutions to develop a strategic plan for each cluster to guide its long-term development and sustainability. (This would include developing marketing plans for each cluster.)
- Work with small business and entrepreneurial development efforts to identify and implement strategies to engage small businesses in cluster strategies.
- Work with the University of Toledo Urban Affairs Center and Bowling Green State University Center for Regional Development to develop an ongoing economic analysis process that includes a careful and regular examination of opportunities within the currently targeted clusters and the identification of other clusters that may be cultivated into targeted clusters.
- Ensure that the regional economic development delivery system is able to respond to the needs and opportunities of targeted industry clusters. This would include: financing needs, site/facility needs, research and technology commercialization needs, infrastructure needs, etc.
- The WIBLC will ensure that workforce training programs are responsive to the needs and opportunities of targeted industry clusters.

Long-Term Objectives:

- Develop evaluation tools to determine if the cluster strategy results in higher levels of competitiveness, innovation, and sustained economic growth for our region. If so, address the sustainability of the industry cluster economic development strategy.

