

# County Council of Cuyahoga County, Ohio

## Resolution No. R2022-0185

Sponsored by: <b>County Executive Budish/Department of Development</b>	<b>A Resolution</b> adopting the 2022 five-year Economic Development Plan in accordance with Section 7.05 of the Cuyahoga County Charter and Section 801.01 of the Cuyahoga County Code; and declaring the necessity that this Resolution become immediately effective.
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WHEREAS, Section 7.05 of the Cuyahoga County Charter requires the Director of Development, in conjunction with the County Executive and in consultation with the Economic Development Commission, to prepare and present to the Council by the first day of June of each year a proposed five-year economic development plan for the County, for actions to be carried out by the County itself, and in cooperation with other public and private agencies and organizations, for the purpose of enhancing the prosperity and well-being of the County and its residents and communities; and

WHEREAS, it is necessary that this Resolution become immediately effective in order that critical services provided by Cuyahoga County can continue and to provide for the usual, daily operation of a County entity.

### **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNTY COUNCIL OF CUYAHOGA COUNTY, OHIO:**

**SECTION 1.** The County's 2022 five-year economic development plan, including all changes thereto approved by Council, is hereby adopted in accordance with Section 7.05 of the Cuyahoga County Charter and Section 801.01 of the Cuyahoga County Code. The final adopted plan is attached hereto as Exhibit A and incorporated herein by reference.

**SECTION 2.** Pursuant to Section 801.02 of the Cuyahoga County Code, the Clerk of Council is hereby authorized to publish the 2021 five-year economic development plan adopted by County Council pursuant to Section 7.05 of the Cuyahoga County Charter on the County Council's website.

**SECTION 3.** It is necessary that this Resolution become immediately effective for the usual daily operation of the County; the preservation of public peace, health, or safety in the County; and any additional reasons set forth in the preamble. Provided that this Resolution receives the affirmative vote of at least eight members of Council, it shall take effect and be in force immediately upon the earliest occurrence of any of the following: (1) its approval by the County Executive through signature, (2) the expiration of the time during which it may be disapproved by the County Executive under Section 3.10(6) of the Cuyahoga County Charter, or (3) its passage by at least


eight members of Council after disapproval pursuant to Section 3.10(7) of the Cuyahoga County Charter. Otherwise, it shall take effect and be in force from and after the earliest period allowed by law.

**SECTION 4.** It is found and determined that all formal actions of this Council relating to the adoption of this Resolution were adopted in an open meeting of the Council, and that all deliberations of this Council and of any of its committees that resulted in such formal action were in meetings open to the public, in compliance with all legal requirements, including Section 121.22 of the Ohio Revised Code.

On a motion by Mr. Schron, seconded by Ms. Turner, the foregoing Resolution was duly adopted.

Yeas: Turner, Simon, Baker, Miller, Sweeney, Tuma, Gallagher, Schron, Conwell and Jones

Nays: None

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
County Council President

7/21/22  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
County Executive

7-21-22  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Clerk of Council

7/21/22  
Date

First Reading/Referred to Committee: June 21, 2022

Committee(s) Assigned: Economic Development & Planning

Committee Report/Second Reading: July 5, 2022

Journal CC047  
July 19, 2022



# CUYAHOGA COUNTY FIVE- YEAR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN

2022-2026

June 1, 2022

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

## **Economic Development Commission Members**

### **Armond Budish**

Chair

Cuyahoga County Executive

### **Mayor Justin Bibb**

City of Cleveland (represented by Jeffery Epstein, Chief Integrated Development Officer, and by Ryan Puente, Chief of Government Affairs)

### **Jack Schron**

Vice - Chair

County Councilman, Chair of Economic Development Committee

### **Daniel O'Malley**

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

### **Baiju Shah**

President and CEO, Greater Cleveland Partnership

### **Mayor Katie Gallagher**

City of Brooklyn, Mayors and Managers

### **Marc Byrnes**

Chairman Emeritus, Oswald Companies

### *Development Staff*

### **Paul Herdeg**

Director of Development

### **Vaughn Johnson**

Deputy Director for Economic Development and Workforce Innovation

## This update of Cuyahoga County's Five Year Economic Development Plan emphasizes ongoing recovery from impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic

### Evaluation of progress to date on 2021 Cuyahoga County priorities

**Water Resources:** Promotion of Cuyahoga County's extensive fresh water resources, through the Cleveland Water Alliance, will continue to be a central focus of business attraction efforts.

*In the spring of 2020, Cuyahoga County's office of Sustainability and the Cleveland Water Alliance (CWA) led an 18 month project supported financially by the Cleveland Foundation (\$200,000 grant), along with staff support from the Greater Cleveland Partnership and Team NEO, to study 1) how to quantify impacts of water stress on water intensive manufactures (those that require great quantity of water within the manufacturing process), 2) rank water intense manufacturing sectors most impacted by water stress, 3) further rank the sectors by Cuyahoga County's ability to address workforce, 4) create an initial target list of 900+ company targets, and 5) create a marketing strategy, landing page, and outreach to 50 initial companies. Further, CWA was tasked with additional tasks for the project which included 1) creating a marketing strategy for water solutions companies to move to Cuyahoga County (those firms that work and develop new products within the water economy market), 2) further develop its strategy and development of the first two (eventually four) water technology testbeds, and 3) develop plans for a water accelerator 'physical' space as part of the attraction marketing plan for non-local companies to work out of. Since that initial work CWA has received over \$4.2 million to begin standing up and building its water technology testbeds through the US EDA, State of Ohio, and local corporations. In the summer of 2021, the initial beta companies began utilizing the testbeds in Cuyahoga County, including companies from France, South Korea, and Israel.*

*Cuyahoga County continues to support this work financially with a new \$1.45 million grant award made possible by its receipt of American Rescue Plan funds for revenue replacement (ARPA).*

**Microgrids:** Using its legal power to establish a public utility, Cuyahoga County will expand the planned downtown Cleveland Microgrid to multiple electricity supply districts located in key business attraction and retention areas of the county. Offering businesses the most reliable electricity in the world, especially in the face of possible interruptions due to hurricanes, floods, heat, and cyber attacks, will make Northeast Ohio attractive to a range of businesses.

*Cuyahoga County Council passed legislation authorizing the formation of a public utility. Multiple suburban business areas have been identified as candidates for microgrid electric supply districts. A Request for Proposals to select a developer for these microgrids will be issued in mid-2022. Substantial federal funding for microgrid implementation is expected, as this project was included in a second stage regional Build Back Better funding proposal submitted to the U.S. Economic Development Administration in spring 2022 - the only Ohio proposal to advance to the second stage of funding.*

**Lake Front Access:** Cuyahoga County's approach to increased public access to the Lake Erie shoreline, extending its support for the City of Euclid's public access, will become part of our strategy to leverage natural and cultural assets to attract and retain residents and businesses. The City of Cleveland administration is also prioritizing lakefront access, with a particular emphasis around the football stadium.

*Cuyahoga County released its lakefront access plan in March 2022, outlining multiple projects to improve public access. Four of these projects are in the active planning stage, collectively adding 5 miles of trails, amenities, and lakefront access points at an estimated cost of \$51.2 million to \$62.2 million. A number of partners are involved, including NOACA, the Greater Cleveland Partnership, the Metroparks, and the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District.*

**Major Cultural Assets:** Supporting Cuyahoga County’s major cultural assets, including not only traditional arts organizations but also its professional sports teams, is a priority for economic development.

*In addition to over \$12 million of ongoing annual arts and culture funding provided by Cuyahoga Arts and Culture, Cuyahoga County will grant \$3.3 million of additional COVID recovery funding to arts and culture organizations in 2022, made possible by its receipt of ARPA funds.*

*Cuyahoga County, along with the Cleveland Guardians, City of Cleveland and the State of Ohio, participated in financing critical improvements to Progressive Field, ensuring the Cleveland Guardians will remain as one of Cuyahoga County’s three major professional sports franchises.*

**Equity Commitment:** Throughout the Economic Development plan, Cuyahoga County’s commitment to acting to overcome the impacts of systemic racial discrimination is prominent. For example, assistance to small businesses must include a focus on the capital needs of minority business owners whose personal wealth is often less than majority business owners.

*Through late 2021, 215 loans were made to minority owned small businesses using funds provided by Cuyahoga County. In the first quarter of 2022, Cuyahoga County committed an additional \$5.5 million in grants and forgivable loans to nonprofit organizations serving its small businesses, to pay for business services and provide new capital funding to small businesses. Another \$2 million made possible by Cuyahoga County’s receipt of ARPA funds will be granted to small businesses later in 2022. Each small business support program has a significant focus on assisting minority owned businesses.*

**Equity Zones:** As part of its broad commitment to advance equity, Cuyahoga County is adopting an innovative approach to targeting a surge of public resources based on alleviating the impacts of historical racial discrimination – as evidenced by mid 20<sup>th</sup> century federal “redlining” maps.

*Cuyahoga County officially established its equity zones in early 2022. Competitive municipal grant applications for federal community development funds will receive additional rating points for projects serving equity zones, in 2022 and beyond. Equity zones are taken into consideration when allocating County infrastructure funding.*

**Closing the Digital Divide:** Extending affordable broadband service to every Cuyahoga County household is an essential part of Cuyahoga County’s economic, equity and innovation strategies.

*Cuyahoga County will be awarding nearly \$20 million of funding, made possible by receipt of ARPA funds, to provide affordable high speed internet service to disadvantaged county residents.*

**Innovation:** Through JumpStart’s partnership with the State of Ohio’s Third Frontier program, local funding for tech startups is leveraged more than five to one. This Economic Development Plan update notes that resources to allow and encourage startups to grow in Cuyahoga County are essential to realize the full potential of innovation to create new jobs.

*Cuyahoga County loaned \$5 million of capital to JumpStart's NEXT II Fund in 2021, leveraging more than \$25 million of additional funds to invest in high growth Cuyahoga County tech companies, and made an additional \$2.5 forgivable loan to JumpStart in 2022 to support services to tech entrepreneurs.*

**Use of American Rescue Plan funds:** Unlike the CARES Act, the American Rescue Plan provides funds that can be spent over a five year period, matching the period of the Economic Development Plan. These funds will be used for transformative projects with lasting impact.

*A substantial amount of the funds made available, due to Cuyahoga County's receipt of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) revenue replacement funding, are directed to activities with direct impact on Economic Development:*

*\$9 million for three workforce development initiatives to amplify the work of Cuyahoga County's Sector Partnership: expanding Manufacturing Sector Access to Employment programming; launching a new internship program for college students in STEM fields, and revamping public middle and high school curriculum to emphasize and specifically develop students' career exploration and career readiness, for all students in grades 6-12.*

*\$5 million for brownfield cleanup activities to return land to productive use. This local funding will leverage up to \$35 million of added state, federal, and private brownfield cleanup funding.*

*\$3.3 million for additional support to arts and culture organizations countywide.*

*\$2.5 million additional funding to stabilize the "Irishtown Bend" hillside on the Cuyahoga River, creating parks space and protecting continued shipping access to the Cleveland Cliffs steel plant.*

*\$2 million additional grant funding to small businesses, emphasizing minority owned businesses.*

*\$1.45 million funding to attract businesses to Cuyahoga County based on its abundant supply of fresh water from Lake Erie, including opportunities to develop water based innovations.*

*\$20 million to extend affordable broadband access to disadvantaged residents countywide.*

*\$5 million to expand the downtown Convention Center to attract additional convention events.*

*\$8 million to expand access to Lake Erie for county residents through four specific projects.*

In addition to funds available due to ARPA, Cuyahoga County has additional funding planned with a specific Economic Development focus:

*\$2.5 million as local match to leverage an additional \$2.5 million of Ohio Third Frontier funds for entrepreneurial support services to Cuyahoga County technology innovators.*

*\$10 million (subject to legislative authorization) for innovations to prevent opioid addiction.*

## 2022-2026 Five Year Economic Development Plan – Primary Objectives

Cuyahoga County's 2022-2026 Economic Development Plan is built on three primary objectives, each with corresponding strategies and activities:

1. Promote the county's available development sites, educational and cultural resources, location and natural resources, and relatively low climate change risk, to attract new businesses and support growth of existing businesses.
2. Increase the county's supply of talent for business attraction and growth, with emphasis on attracting new skilled residents and retaining college graduates.
3. Advance equity and inclusion, by increasing available capital for investment, directing supportive services to minority and women owned businesses, and achieving inclusive jobs growth through improving skills and access to jobs.

### Metrics

Cuyahoga County's economic development activities will lead to measurable outcomes, linked to its primary objectives, in the following areas.

1. Opportunity Index: A qualitative measure that reflects a variety of factors impacting the opportunities our residents have to achieve economic success.
2. Entrepreneurship – Business Starts
3. Business Attraction
4. Business Growth
5. Talent Supply for Key Industry Sectors
6. Economic Inclusion
7. Working Age and Skilled Population



## Objective 1: Promote County assets for business attraction and growth

### Strategy 1.1: Carry out key County activities to re-establish standing as a regional and national economic hub

Activity 1.1.1: Allocate Cuyahoga County's American Rescue Plan funding, to support transformative activities and projects with lasting impact.

Activity 1.1.2: Partner with the County's education stakeholders to improve the County's educational attainment and competitive position. This includes Pre-Cle, K-12 education providers, Say Yes, and Tri C.

Activity 1.1.3: Promote key regional business assets, including NASA Glenn Research Center, JumpStart, Nottingham Spirk, and our major hospital systems, to drive innovation and development.

Activity 1.1.4: With Team NEO, Greater Cleveland Partnership, the Cleveland Water Alliance, Destination Cleveland, and other key partners, leverage 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 1.1.5: 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 1.1.6: Partner with Cuyahoga County communities, the Greater Cleveland Partnership, and Team NEO and the County Land Bank to refine and make more useful a current inventory of developable sites and buildings available for re-use, in each Cuyahoga County community.

Activity 1.1.7: Increase the sources and amounts of public and private sector investment capital, including capital to make brownfield sites economically viable, and leveraging the Opportunity Zone tax incentive.

Activity 1.1.8: Extend affordable access to broadband to every county resident, as a path to digital technology literacy and innovation, for full workforce participation, and to enhance the education system.

Activity 1.1.9: Collaborate with the Ohio Aerospace Institute, Nottingham Spirk and the Aerozone Alliance to facilitate technology transfer and business creation that maximizes the advantage of proximity to NASA-Glenn Research Center, Cleveland Hopkins Airport, and other airports in the County.

## Strategy 1.2: Support business attraction, retention and expansion

Activity 1.2.1: Assist Cuyahoga County's 59 member communities to identify and market their key real estate sites to attract national and regional businesses. Support existing systems such as Ohio One while advocating for regional and statewide site promotion efforts to include Cuyahoga County sites. Work to secure funding for environmental assessments and environmental remediation of sites that are well positioned to attract new business once remediated.

Activity 1.2.2: In a collaborative marketing effort, promote Cuyahoga County's assets including its favorable location to limit business costs and risks due to climate change, affordable housing, quality of life, and skilled workforce, to attract both regional and national business relocations.

Activity 1.2.3: Continue partnerships with Ohio Means Jobs, the Greater Cleveland Partnership, Team NEO, and municipal economic development staff, to coordinate targeted, strategic business-calling programs among these regional actors, municipalities, and the County's Skill-Up business concierge service, to accelerate business growth in Cuyahoga County.

## Strategy 1.3: Support manufacturing, including international exports, and promote innovation among small and medium manufacturers

Activity 1.3.1: 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.

Activity 1.3.2: 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 and digital manufacturing, while simultaneously ensuring there is a vital pipeline of trained workers to fuel that growth. Cuyahoga County supports an effort to become a center of innovation for the Internet of Things.

Activity 1.3.3: 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.

Activity 1.3.4: Work with the Port to develop a more holistic export strategy including goods, services, and tourism.

## Strategy 1.4: Create an innovation / entrepreneurship continuum supported by place based strategies including electric supply Microgrids

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

Activity 1.4.1: Form partnerships with public and private entities to ensure funding for startup and early stage businesses creating jobs of the future in, for example, the technology and health care sectors. Strive to include minority entrepreneurs and organizations in these partnerships and funding streams.

Activity 1.4.2: Create opportunities for both young people and adults in all neighborhoods and communities to begin to transform business ideas into operational plans. Focus on driving innovation as a cultural aspiration to under-served parts of the County. Examples are the partnership with the County Libraries to open Innovation Centers at key locations and the Cleveland Innovation Project's explicit focus on engaging minority and female youth in STEM career preparation.

Activity 1.4.3: 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. Support the creation of Innovation Hubs in strategic locations including the Aerozone, Downtown, the Health Tech Corridor, and in historically underserved neighborhoods and communities, leveraging NELA park in East Cleveland.

Activity 1.4.5: Build upon existing assets, such as development of 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 1.4.6: Utilize existing assets, including Greater Cleveland's strong health technology innovation system, and the major hospital systems, to attract health care businesses to the region.

Activity 1.4.7: Develop Microgrid districts in multiple locations across the county. Power supply reliability and local generation of sustainable power will attract and retain business in these areas.

Activity 1.4.8: Leverage JumpStart's access to Ohio Third Frontier funding to magnify the impact of locally generated funding for support of startup and early stage technology innovation firms. As these firms mature, provide resources to encourage and support their growth within Cuyahoga County.

## Strategy 1.5: 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 1.5.1: Maintain and continue to enhance Cuyahoga County's high quality natural and cultural assets, including its parks, its nationally renowned arts organizations, and its major professional sports teams.

Activity 1.5.2: Expand and leverage the economic value of public access to the Lake Erie waterfront through innovative approaches such as the City of Euclid's development of a publicly accessible lakefront promenade in conjunction with long term publicly financed shoreline erosion control measures.

Activity 1.5.3: Continue to engage with the County Planning Commission to update priority areas for Place Based Economic Development, and leverage unique municipal assets to resource place based economic development projects which have potential for positive economic development impact on a regional scale. As part of this work recommend needed zoning changes to facilitate appropriate development projects.

## Strategy 1.6: Address Climate Change through a Climate Action Plan

Climate Change is a reality that Cuyahoga County will address through a Climate Action Plan. Cuyahoga County's Climate Action Plan addresses these areas:

- **Energy:** 100% Renewable Energy by 2050.
- **Transportation:** Cleaner Fuel Vehicles. More Public Transit, Biking, and Walking
- **Ecosystems:** Understand What's Coming. Expand and Protect What's Here.
- **Health:** Extreme Weather. Extreme Heat. New Diseases. New Stresses. Be Prepared and Ready.
- **Land Use:** Develop Wisely. More Trees and Greenspace.

Activity 1.6.1: Invest \$5 million to plant thousands of trees across the region by 2024

Activity 1.6.2: Organize and fund a Green Bank to lend money and invest in clean energy projects, such as commercial and residential solar panels.

Activity 1.6.3: Build more pedestrian bike paths and connect existing networks of bike paths.

Activity 1.6.4: Provide economic development incentives such as below-market-rate financing to companies moving to or expanding within walking distance of transit routes and/or within transit connected job hubs.

Activity 1.6.5: Create a robust electric vehicle charging station infrastructure.

Activity 1.6.6: Work with the Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency to better time traffic signals, reducing idling and speeding up commutes.

Activity 1.6.7: Add rooftop solar panels to multiple County owned buildings and make this technology available to business at the same affordable pricing.

**Goal 2: Increase skilled talent supply by attracting new skilled residents, retaining college graduates, and increasing labor force participation.**

**Strategy 2.1: Facilitate the creation of a workforce that is a competitive advantage for Northeast Ohio.**

**Activity 2.1.1: 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.**

Workforce Connect: 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 results at scale and accountability for eliminating the demand-supply gap for in-demand jobs in each sector.

Sector Partnerships will continue to focus on talent needs of Manufacturing, Health Care, and Information Technology, adding Hospitality.

**Activity 2.1.2: Assist residents with employment barriers that keep them outside the pipeline to attain employment that is career and wage pathway focused.**

Cuyahoga County 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). The Skill-Up program will be expanded to include additional services to private sector employers.

Cuyahoga County 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 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 – higher ed ) 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 2.1.3: 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.**

Through a Workforce Funders Group, Cuyahoga County is participating in creating 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 has led 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.

## Strategy 2.2: Attract and retain residents with in demand skills

Activity 2.2.1: Actively promote Greater Cleveland as an immigrant friendly community. Partner with Global Cleveland to foster an environment that supports immigrants' effective immersion into the Greater Cleveland community.

Activity 2.2.2: Promote the County's post-secondary education system, which includes nationally ranked private universities, to foreign students. Advocate for national policy changes to allow foreign graduates to remain in Greater Cleveland as skilled workers contributing to our talent pool.

Activity 2.2.3: Develop a strategy to engage regional college students to stay in Greater Cleveland – connect them with projected job openings.

Activity 2.2.4: Utilize resources including Destination Cleveland's brand assets and insights to market the entire County as an attractive living and working environment for millennials.

## Strategy 2.3: Improve transportation, labor mobility, and job access

Activity 2.3.1: Partner with the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority, the Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency, the Fund for our Economic Future, 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. Implement innovative solutions to the "First Mile" and "Last Mile" problems that make job access via public transit difficult and time consuming for workers.

Activity 2.3.2: 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.

## Goal 3: Embrace equity as a driver of countywide economic growth

### Strategy 3.1: Implement Economic Development Equity Initiatives

Cuyahoga County has activated its Equity Commission in conjunction with its Citizens Advisory Council on Equity. With formation and staffing of a new Department of Equity in 2021, Cuyahoga County maintains its ongoing commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion as an employer, and also through all of its programs, services, and activities. Economic Development equity initiatives include:

Activity 3.1.1: Support implementation of the Cleveland Innovation Project, which emphasizes inclusion and resource access to minority tech-based businesses and talent.

Activity 3.1.2: Small business support will include new funding to small business support partners for their focused support to minority and women-owned businesses.

Activity 3.1.3: Funds will be allocated for working capital loans to minority-owned businesses.

Activity 3.1.4: Cuyahoga County will seek to negotiate affirmative minority hiring and subcontracting efforts in its direct economic development lending programs.

Activity 3.1.5: Job Hubs with access for residents of distressed communities will be supported as preferred locations for new business attraction and business

Activity 3.1.6: Establish Equity Zones, in communities where historic racial discrimination (“redlining”) still causes lasting negative economic impacts, and direct public sector resources to support economic opportunities for residents and businesses in these Equity Zones.

### Strategy 3.2: Implement the Housing Policy through the Housing Program

Activity 3.2.1 Based on housing policy development work led by the County Executive and Deputy Director of Development for Housing, in collaboration with County Council, Cuyahoga County will continue to lead coordinated efforts to improve housing conditions in six key areas:

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

Activity 3.2.2. Cuyahoga County will operate the Cuyahoga County Housing Program to provide resources for implementation of Housing Plan components, specifically, Access to Capital and Confidence in the Housing Market. The Program includes the Cuyahoga County Land Reutilization Corporation as a partner and runs through 2025. Thirty million dollars allocated to the Housing Program over six years focuses on expanding and creating programming for home repair, low dollar mortgages, and other activities to increase property values throughout the County.

## Appendix 1: 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.

**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.

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

**Ohio Aerospace Institute / Nottingham Spirk:** 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.



## 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 problem 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.

**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.

**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 a nonprofit partner, the Urban League of Greater Cleveland, this program provides low-cost loans and technical pre- & post-loan counseling for minority-owned small 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.

**Actaris Impact Fund & Opportunity Zone Fund:** Cuyahoga County, Arctaris Impact investors, and other philanthropic and civic investors have launched a program to invest in companies and projects within the County's Opportunity Zones.

## 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.

**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.