



Economic Recovery & Resiliency Plan
City of Avon Lake, Ohio
June 5, 2025

Presented By: Jamie N. Beier Grant and Lauren O. Falcone
Kleinfelder, Inc.

Table of Contents.

Acknowledgements.....	5
Executive Summary.....	6
Background and Purpose.....	8
The Planning Process.....	10
Demographic, Economic, Industry Cluster, and Workforce Analysis.....	12
Zoning and Land Use Analysis.....	50
Collaboration and Visioning.....	55
Recommendations.....	64
Conclusion.....	176
Endnotes.....	177
Appendices.....	181
Appendix 1. Tapestry Segmentation	
Appendix 2. SWOT Analysis Meeting #1 Summary Notes	
Appendix 3. Redevelopment Boards – SWOT Analysis Meeting #2	
Appendix 4. SWOT Analysis Meeting #2 Summary Notes	
Appendix 5. Avon Lake ER&R Public Survey Detail	
Appendix 6. Avon Lake BR&E Survey Template	
Appendix 7. Avon Lake Economic Development Program	
Appendix 8. TIF Analysis Template	
Appendix 9. Endangered Species Report	
Appendix 10. Financing Programs	
Appendix 11. Implementation Matrix	

About Kleinfelder, Inc. Kleinfelder, Inc. is a leading engineering, construction management, design, and environmental professional services firm. Kleinfelder operates from over 105 office locations in the United States, Canada, and Australia. Established in 1961, we draw from a solid foundation of experience and thorough understanding of environmental, regulatory, economic, and civic conditions, to identify and address challenges with innovation and common-sense. For our clients, this means leveraging our integrated network of industry experts across services, geographies, and markets to develop leading-edge solutions for projects of any size. Our diverse teams quickly assemble and deploy the most appropriately qualified resources to safely deliver projects that exceed client expectations.

Using our multidisciplinary services, we collaborate with clients throughout the entire project lifecycle. Our understanding of each project phase allows us to develop innovative, cost-effective, and practical solutions that offer our clients increased flexibility, continuity, and coordination across all aspects of a project. Kleinfelder's team leading this Economic Recovery & Resiliency Plan has worked together in multiple capacities on comprehensive planning, economic development planning, environmental planning and resilience, and site development planning and brings more than 25 years' experience to the project.

Kleinfelder appreciates the opportunity to be involved in this process.

About the U.S. Economic Development Administration. The mission of the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) is to lead the federal economic development agenda by promoting innovation and competitiveness, preparing American regions for growth and success in the worldwide economy.

EDA's investment policy is designed to establish a foundation for sustainable job growth and the building of durable regional economies throughout the United States. This foundation builds upon two key economic drivers — innovation and regional collaboration. Guided by the basic principle that sustainable economic development should be locally driven, EDA works directly with communities and regions to help them build the capacity for economic development based on local business conditions and needs. EDA's grant investments in planning, technical assistance, and infrastructure construction are designed to leverage existing regional assets to support the implementation of economic development strategies that make it easier for businesses to start and grow, as well as to grow sustainable local economies.

Congress designates a portion of EDA's annual Economic Adjustment Assistance (EAA) funding to support communities and regions that have been negatively impacted by changes in the coal economy. "Coal economy" is a term that reflects the complete supply chain of coal-reliant industries. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Coal mining,
- Coal-fired power plants, and
- Related transportation, logistics, and supply chain manufacturing.

To support these projects, EDA prioritizes ACC implementation projects and activities that:

- Will produce multiple economic and workforce development outcomes, such as
 - promoting regional economic growth and diversification,
 - new job creation, and

- reemployment opportunities for displaced coal economy workers.
- Are specifically identified under local and regional economic development plans that have been collaboratively produced by diverse local and regional stakeholders.

EDA continues to regularly support coal-impacted communities with a variety of economic development strategies through its Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance Programs (PWEAA). As the only federal government agency focused exclusively on economic development, EDA plays a critical role in facilitating regional economic development efforts in communities across the nation. It is with this in mind that the City of Avon Lake, Ohio thanks the EDA for its ongoing support of economic recovery and resiliency efforts underway in the community and region to address closure of the Avon Lake Power Plant.

About Esri, Inc. ArcGIS Business Analyst. Esri's Business Analyst data includes 15,000+ variable options from more than 130 countries, including demographics, business locations, consumer spending, and market potential, at multiple geographies. With ready-to-use and custom data infographic templates and 40+ reports, sharing the analysis done using the data included with Business Analyst alongside proprietary data is both informative and captivating. Kleinfelder used Esri, Inc. ArcGIS Business Analyst software to conduct more detailed research during the Discovery Phase, providing insights into consumer spending, generational representation, expanded demographic and economic analysis, and mapping.

Acknowledgements.

The City of Avon Lake would like to thank all members of its Economic Recovery & Resiliency Project Team for their assistance with the completion of this Plan. The city would like to also thank the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration for its \$75,000 investment in this Plan. This EDA project was matched by \$75,000 in local funds from the City of Avon Lake.

Avon Lake Economic Recovery & Resiliency Plan Project Team Members

Rob Shahmir – Ward I
Councilman / City of Avon Lake

K.C. Zuber – Council At-Large
Councilman / City of Avon Lake

Christine Raymond – Pro-Tem
Member / Avon Lake Planning Commission

Ronald Kovach
Member / Community Improvement Corporation

Ted Esborn
Community Development Director / City of Avon Lake

Kelly LaRosa
Planning & Zoning Manager / City of Avon Lake

Austin Page
Planning & Zoning Manager / City of Avon Lake

Kyle Rose
Vice President, Corporate Communications / Avient Corporation

Mike Stanek
Co-Owner & CFO / Hunt Imaging

Jennifer Toth
Owner / Floor Coverings International – Cleveland West

Jamie Beier Grant – Lead Consultant
Principal Professional / Kleinfelder, Inc.

Lauren Falcone, AICP
Principal Professional / Kleinfelder, Inc.

Executive Summary.

The City of Avon Lake is located in Lorain County along the shores of Lake Erie and is part of the Greater Cleveland metropolitan area. The city is known for its high quality of life and lakefront access, with three and a half miles of Lake Erie shoreline that offers scenic views, beaches, and public parks. Avon Lake is comprised of a mix of residential neighborhoods, commercial corridors, and industrial areas, particularly near its southern and western borders. Much of the city's economic success can be attributed to the Cleveland Electric Illuminating Company's decision in 1924 to invest \$30 million in the construction of the Avon Lake Power Plant. The coal-fired power plant, located on 195 acres in Avon Beach Park along Lake Road in the City of Avon Lake, became the largest of its kind in the world and supported the attraction of major manufacturing facilities in proximity to the plant site. Today, Avon Lake's economy is represented by a mix of light industrial, manufacturing, and office-based employers, including legacy industries and newer service-sector jobs. In 2015, the Avon Lake Power Plant owner, GenOn Holdings, Inc. announced its intention to shutter operations due to changing economic conditions, higher costs including costs associated with environmental compliance, and difficulty competing with other generation types; however, the plant continued its operations for six more years until the final decision to close the plant was announced in 2021.

The Economic Development Recovery and Resiliency Plan (ER&R Plan) serves as a strategic roadmap for guiding Avon Lake's growth, investment, and long-term economic stability in the face of evolving challenges and opportunities. This plan was developed to proactively address vulnerabilities exposed by recent economic disruptions, with the announced closure of the Avon Lake Power Plant, and to position the city for future success through sustainable and resilient development strategies, and aligns with priorities defined within NOACA's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. The now-decommissioned Avon Lake Power Plant represents a major redevelopment opportunity for the city and complements Avon Lake's efforts to diversify its economy by attracting businesses in sectors like advanced manufacturing, healthcare, logistics, and technology.

Rooted in community input, economic data, and best practices, the ER&R Plan focuses on three core goals:

- Support Economic Recovery by reactivating key sites, strengthening local businesses, and creating conditions for job creation and reinvestment.
- Advance Economic Resiliency by diversifying the economic base, modernizing infrastructure, and encouraging sustainable development practices.
- Align Land Use, Infrastructure, and Workforce to better support priority industry sectors and capitalize on Avon Lake's strategic location and talent.

Key recommendations include:

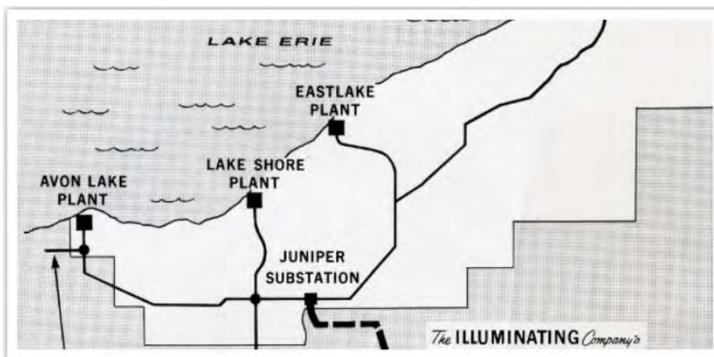
1. Establish a coordinated Business Retention & Expansion (BR&E) Program that builds on Avon Lake's valuable relationships with its existing businesses, strengthens local industry sectors, and supports existing businesses in their efforts to achieve long-term sustainability and success in Avon Lake.
2. Use the city's existing CIC structure to promote a Public-Private Partnership model that brings together government and private sector stakeholders to prioritize, analyze, implement, and fund a targeted suite of economic development and site development strategies.

3. Implement the Avon Lake Business Attraction & Marketing Strategy to actively promote the City of Avon Lake as a desirable location for companies and talent. This strategy aims to attract new businesses across key industry sectors that will diversify, build resilience and strengthen the local economy, while focusing on development and redevelopment opportunities in designated commercial, industrial, and mixed-use areas.
4. Actively support and participate in the redevelopment of the former power plant site, exploring innovative funding strategies to transform the site into a thriving mixed-use district that attracts businesses of all sizes, encourages entrepreneurship, and maximizes its location along Lake Erie's shoreline while prioritizing sustainability, connectivity, and public waterfront access.
5. Integrate environmental sustainability practices into citywide economic development and business attraction efforts, applying traditional economic development and land use practices that recognize the interconnectedness of economic growth, local ecosystems, and community well-being.
6. Complete a Comprehensive Infrastructure Plan that evaluates and guides the development, maintenance, and improvement of the city's critical infrastructure systems, including roads, water and sewer lines, stormwater systems, utilities, and public facilities that meet the current needs and support future growth in Avon Lake.

By investing in smart growth, sustainability, and innovation, Avon Lake is committed to building a more resilient and prosperous future for its residents, businesses, and future generations.

Background and Purpose.

In 1924, the Cleveland Electric Illuminating Company (CEI) announced one of the company's most significant investment projects to bring electrical power to the northeast Ohio region and support the creation of new industrial opportunities along the shores of Lake Erie. The Avon Lake Power Plant was a \$30 million investment constructed between March 1925 and July 1926.ⁱ The coal-fired power plant, located on 195 acres in Avon Beach Park along Lake Road in the City of Avon Lake, became the largest of its kind in the world and supported the attraction of major manufacturing facilities in proximity to the plant site including Avient Corporation (formerly PolyOne Corporation), Ford Motor Company, and Lubrizol Corporation. These major industries sought out Avon Lake and its availability of reliable electricity to power facilities and formed an industrial foundation in Avon Lake that was diverse in nature and reflective of northeast Ohio's expanding industry base strong in automotive, chemical, and polymer sectors. Collectively, these operations employed more than 2,500 individuals and contributed substantially to the growth and overall economic well-being of the City of Avon Lake and surrounding region. At peak capacity, Avon Lake Power Plant provided electricity to major industrial customers and more than 800,000 homes across the region. In 2015, the plant's owner, GenOn Holdings, Inc. announced its intention to shutter operations due to changing economic conditions, higher costs including costs associated with environmental compliance, and difficulty competing with other generation types; however, the plant continued its operations for six more years until the final decision to close the plant was announced in 2021.ⁱⁱ At the time of closure, approximately 50 employees were working at the site and the plant operated only at peak usage times.ⁱⁱⁱ



Source: Cleveland Memory Project, Cleveland State University Library

Economic Development and Its Role in Resiliency and Recovery. Economic development is the intentional practice of improving a community's economic well-being and quality of life. It includes a broad-range of activities to attract, create, and retain jobs, and to foster a resilient, pro-growth tax base and balanced economy.^{iv} Economic development programs aim to bring new businesses in and promote the community as a location for economic activity; help existing local businesses solve problems that would cause them to lose competitive positioning, close, or relocate; help local businesses grow and expand; work with partners to prepare residents for available careers, connect businesses to skilled workers, and build a future workforce pipeline; help entrepreneurs and small businesses start up and access resources; and improve the community's overall quality of life.^v

Successful economic development efforts grow the economy and increase revenues for communities so they can provide services, amenities, and opportunities for their residents in a way that aligns with the community's vision and values. Developing and implementing an intentional economic development initiative will not solve every issue facing a community but can serve as a driving force to build a better future. As the practice of economic development has evolved and become more nuanced – more scientific, data driven, results-oriented, specialized and broader –

local efforts become tailored to identifying businesses that fit within the fabric of the community/region while building business resources and services that help businesses succeed. Economic development practices must also consider other community-wide priorities, and the impact economic development activities have on residents, visitors, and local economy. Consideration for local housing and community infrastructure needs, addressing access to economic opportunity, understanding what skills and training are needed for the current and future workforce, and how to create a sustainable, nimble economy that is resilient in the face of economic disruption all must be evaluated.^{vi} In summary, economic development is not a one-size-fits-all proposition. It is unique to a community's desires, values, competitive strengths, resources, and challenges.



Figure 1.1
Economic Development Recovery & Resiliency Cycle

The Planning Process.



The planning process started in October 2024 with establishing a city-appointed Economic Recovery & Resiliency Project Team and a subsequent Project Team Kick-Off Meeting was held on November 18, 2024. A four-phase approach was used during this six-month planning process and combined research, review of existing planning documents and strategies, community stakeholder and public input, land use, zoning and resilient development principles, and economic development best practices together to deliver a final planning document. Phase 1 focused on Discovery, Phase 2 led Collaboration/Visioning efforts, Phase 3 focused on Plan Development, and Phase 4 concluded the project with Plan Adoption/Implementation. The Discovery phase included time to learn and gather information necessary to develop a shared understanding of the community, including a review of existing planning strategies and planning documents. In addition to the region's EDA-approved Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA) Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), Avon Lake's Comprehensive Plan, West End Plan, Lorain County Economic Development Plan, and TeamNEO's Core Strategies were all reviewed and relevant elements were inventoried. The Collaborative and Visioning phases provided the opportunity to have important and informed conversations about existing conditions and begin to build a community vision for future development and redevelopment at the former power plant site. Key stakeholders were identified by the Project Team and a SWOT-style meeting was hosted by the city. To further gain perspective of future development and redevelopment of the former power plant site, a public survey was used and promoted to Avon Lake residents, youth, employees, business leaders, and community organizations. The Plan Development phase included assembly of the components of the Strategic Economic Recovery Strategy and drilled down into specific implementation steps and funding strategies.

Avon Lake Recovery & Resiliency Planning Activities Included:

- A City Economic and Demographic Profile
- Current Conditions and Marketing Analysis of Growing Industry Sectors and Potential Business/Industry Opportunities
- Review of City Infrastructure, Land Use, and Zoning
- Summary Matrix of Local and Regional Planning Documents and Strategies, including NOACA Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) and Relevant Planning Priorities
- Review of Development Agreement, Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Agreement, and Local Incentives Programs
- Two Site Development/Redevelopment SWOT Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) Meetings with Local Stakeholders
- Citywide Public Input Survey to collect Community Input
- Present Findings, Project Updates and Next Steps in Regular Project Team Meetings
- City Leadership Updates to Support Ongoing Planning Communications

- Inventory of current Federal, State, County and City Incentive and Lending Programs
- Development of Achievable Recommendations and Corresponding Implementation Action Steps
- Final Report Presentation to all Stakeholders, in Partnership with Project Team

Through this comprehensive Economic Recovery & Resiliency Plan process, the city aims to align stakeholders and foster collaboration around redevelopment and new development at the former power plant site, build consensus around redevelopment priorities and pursue implementation strategies that lead to new investment opportunities, support existing businesses of all sizes, encourage job creation, and ultimately increase the tax base and lead to economic recovery in the City of Avon Lake.

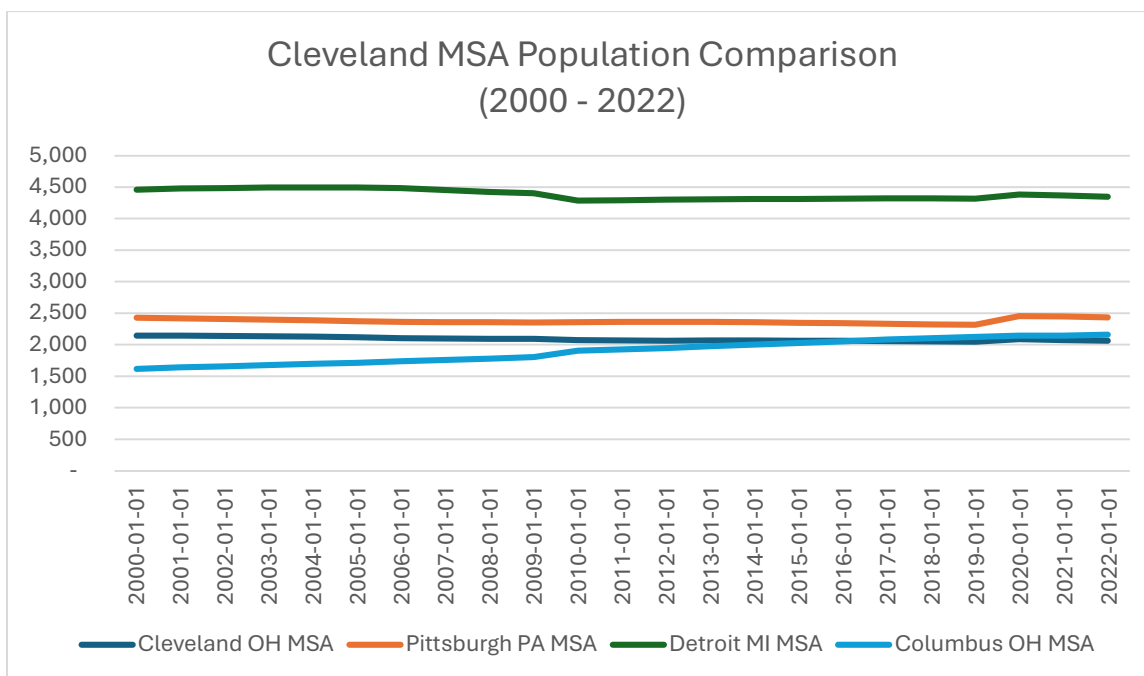
Demographic, Economic, Industry Cluster, and Workforce Analysis.

Any economic development strategy must first consider *what* the data says about a community and its broader region. Understanding *what* the data tells us can then be used to inform and shape visions for development/redevelopment, economic development strategies, policies, implementation actions, and other recovery and resiliency responses. The economic baseline (the *what*) provides objective measures for defining a local or regional economy, its strengths and weaknesses, and how change might potentially impact its future. Geography, demographic makeup, economic indicators, industry cluster strengths, and talent all help shape what direction a community should take based on where its competitive advantages lie.

The City of Avon Lake is located along the shores of Lake Erie in Lorain County, Ohio and is approximately seventeen miles west of the City of Cleveland, northeast Ohio's largest urban center. The City of Avon Lake and Lorain County are located in the Cleveland Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). Avon Lake's location along the lakefront, its proximity to major employment centers, convenient access to museums, professional sporting events, vibrant and expansive parks and recreation assets, and its' location near major transportation routes makes the city one of the most desirable places to live in northern Ohio. Avon Lake has experienced significant population growth over the last decade, and a diverse industry base calls the city home. More than 61 percent of Avon Lake residents have an associate's degree or higher and nearly 54 percent have a bachelor's degree or higher, and the median household income of residents is 48 percent higher than the nation and 47 percent higher than the State of Ohio. The city has a strong presence of quality K-12 educational institutions with the Avon Lake City School District receiving an overall district rating that significantly exceeds state standards as rated by the Ohio Department of Education. Lorain County Joint Vocational School District (JVSD) which serves as the Career Technical Planning District (CTPD) is also recognized as exceeding state standards in career technical education. In 2025, the school's High School Program Supervisor was named the 2025 YouScience Brightpath Work-Based Learning Professional of the Year which is a national recognition celebrating excellence in career-connected learning. The award recognized the JVSD's work-based learning programs that have grown into dynamic pathways that align education with high-demand careers across manufacturing, health sciences, engineering, and more.^{vii} Lorain County Community College (LCCC) provides numerous educational programs for young and adult learners. In May 2018, LCCC was named the top community college in the country for Excellence in Student Success by the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) for the school's success in the completion, transfer, and overall education that leads to jobs with labor market value for students and the community.^{viii} Higher education institutions such as Baldwin Wallace University, Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland State University, John Carroll University, and Oberlin College are located within a one-hour drive of Avon Lake. The city continues to see growth across major industry sectors, with industry growth rates exceeding national growth rates in sectors such as Construction, Real Estate, Agriculture, Information, Manufacturing, and Utilities. Major employers calling Avon Lake home include Avient Corporation, Ford Motor Company, and Lubrizol; however, the city is also home to a thriving small business base and is home to healthcare assets such as Cleveland Clinic, Bons Secours Mercy Health, and University Hospitals that provide some of the nation's top healthcare services to the community.

Demographic Analysis.

Population growth is a key marker of the economic health in a region and local community. Population growth is connected to economic growth and innovation, wealth generation, and quality of life. From an economic development perspective, regions and markets with growing populations are more attractive to companies looking to locate or expand in and offer a more abundant workforce base that possesses diverse skill sets. The City of Avon Lake is located in Lorain County and is part of the Cleveland Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). Like many midwestern metropolitan statistical areas, the Cleveland MSA has seen population trends that are relatively flat and, since the pandemic, are beginning to slowly decline. According to the St. Louis Federal Reserve Economic Data (FRED), the Cleveland MSA population in 2000 was 2.148 million people. By 2010, the population declined by 73,000 and the most recent data from 2022 shows a further decline of 12,000 in population which is an overall decline of 4 percent over the 22-year period. The Detroit MSA saw similar population declines over the 2000 to 2022 timeframe, with a net population loss of 2.4 percent. Pittsburgh's MSA region saw similar stagnant population trends between 2000 and 2019 (-4.6%) however the region experienced a notable uptick between 2019 and 2022, where population growth shifted from a net decline of 4.6% to a net increase of 4.9%. Conversely, the Columbus MSA population has seen exponential population growth over the 20+ year timeframe, with population growth estimated at 33.5 percent.



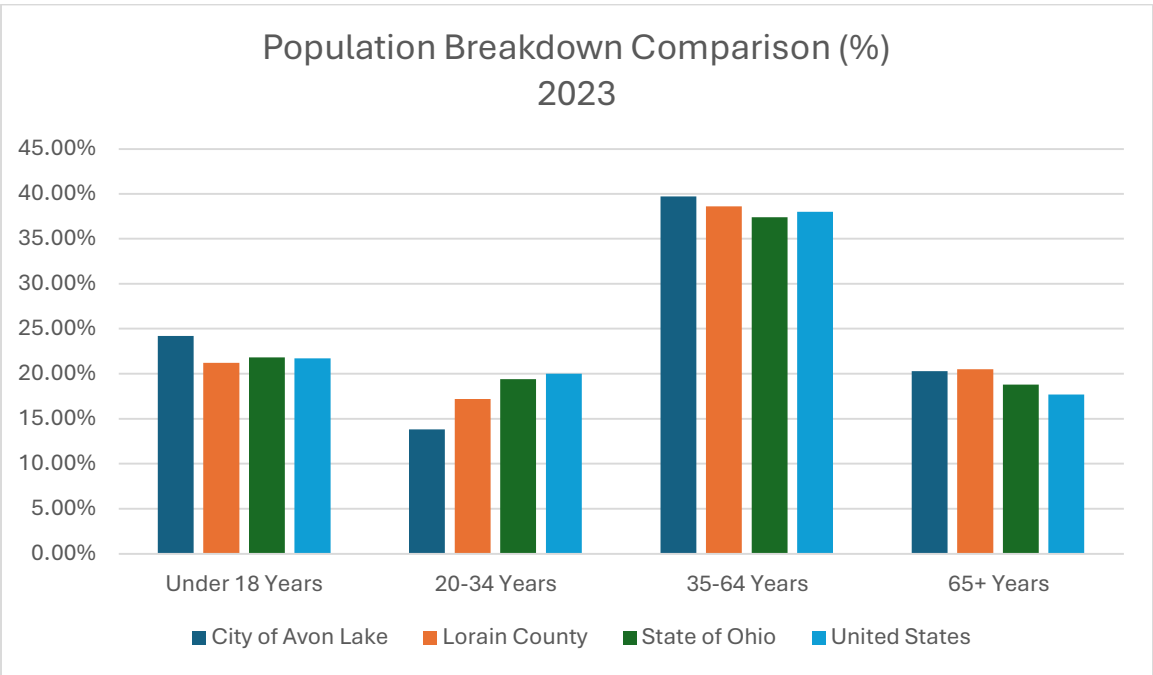
Source: St. Louis Federal Reserve Economic Data (FRED)

While Cleveland's MSA population has experienced a gradual decline since 2000, the City of Avon Lake has recorded steady population growth which can be attributed to the city's location along Lake Erie, the overall quality of life offered in western ring suburbs of Cleveland, and the quality of schools in the city. Between 2010-2023, the City of Avon Lake's population grew by 12.96 percent from 22,581 residents in 2010 to 25,942 residents in 2023. The city has averaged 1 percent in population growth between 2010 and 2023, and it is estimated this growth will remain constant over the next five years.

The median age of Avon Lake residents is 45 years, which is higher than Lorain County (42.4 years), the State of Ohio (39.9 years), and the United States (39.2 years).

Despite some stabilization in retaining a younger population, like many communities, Avon Lake is not retaining enough of its young residents who set their roots down in the community, take jobs locally, and raise a family.

When looking at the breakdown of Avon Lake’s population, roughly 53.5 percent (12,678 residents) fall within the working age population of 20 to 64 years old. This is slightly lower than county, state and national figures, however the city’s percentage of population under the age of 18 is higher (24.7%) than county, state, and national numbers and suggests the city has an advantage in growing its population and workforce pipeline of the future, and the city should look at ways to retain this younger population.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey

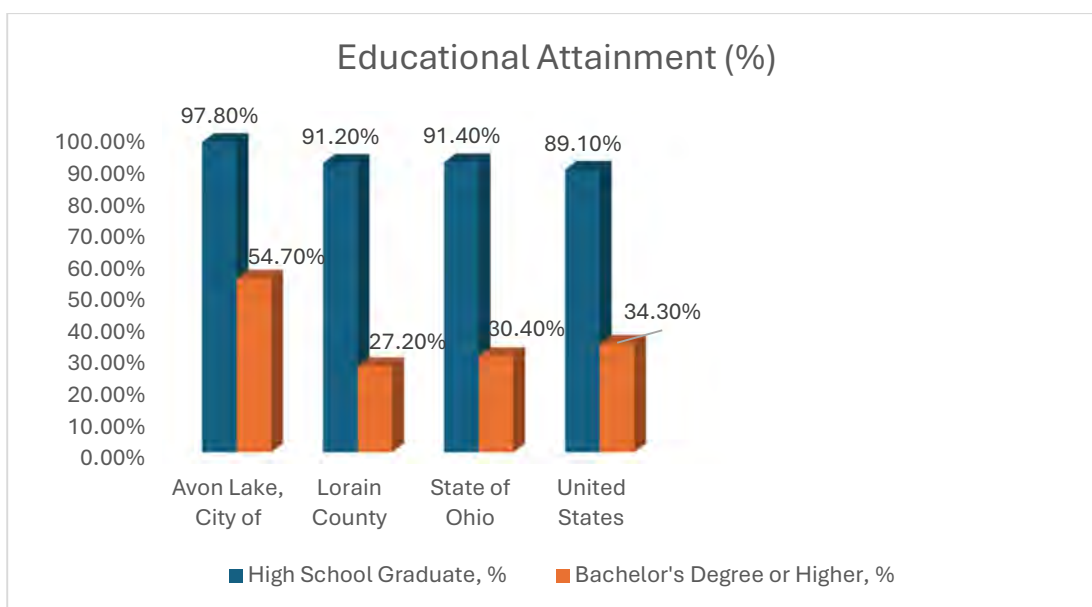
Historical data on the age distribution of residents in Avon Lake shows the city follows many of the same patterns of growth and decline in age distribution as the county and state. The most notable



upward trending age distribution for Avon Lake is in residents between the ages of 30 to 49 years. The city has experienced growth in this age distribution of 7 percent between 2019 and 2023, while Lorain County (6%) and the State of Ohio (5%) have seen similar increases in 30- to 49-year-olds. As national population trends are seeing the Baby Boomer generation age, it is no surprise that Avon Lake, Lorain County, and the State of Ohio are seeing the largest growth in residents 60 years and older. Avon Lake has seen a 9 percent increase in residents aged 60 years

and older, while Lorain County has a 10 percent growth in residents aged 60 years and older, and the State of Ohio has a 6.63 percent increase, respectively.

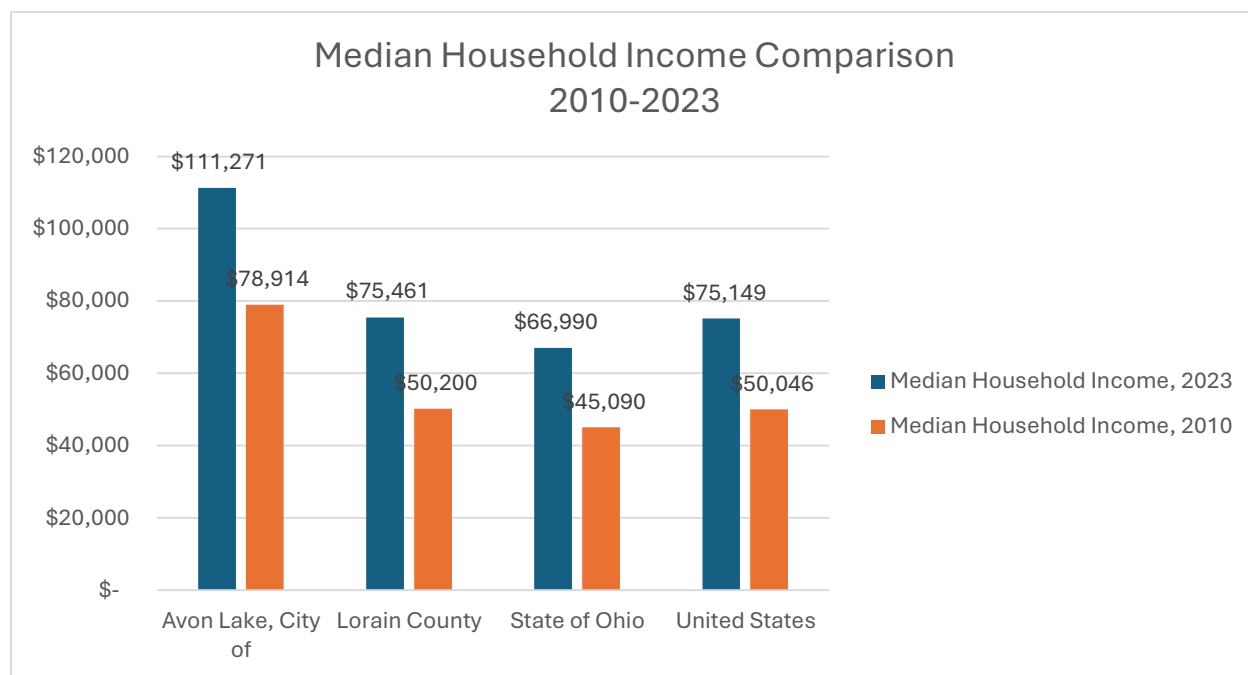
A well-educated population is important to communities, regions, and states as educational attainment directly correlates to wealth generation, consumer spending power, a resilient tax base, and overall community prosperity. Communities can increase their competitive position and overall economic strength by growing and attracting well-educated, high-wage residents.^{ix} Areas with a high concentration of college-educated workers find success in retaining and attracting professional jobs in health care, information technology, research & development, and professional services. Avon Lake outperforms county, state and national averages in educational attainment when looking at the percentage of high school graduates and percentage of residents with a bachelor's degree or higher. Close to 98 percent of all Avon Lake residents have a minimum of a high school diploma and 55 percent have a bachelor's degree or higher. The city's residents with a bachelor's degree or higher are double Lorain County residents (27%), it is twenty-four percentage points higher than the State of Ohio and twenty percentage points higher than the country. Avon Lake's proximity to public and private higher educational institutions, including Baldwin Wallace University, Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland State University, Oberlin College, and teaching healthcare institutions such as Cleveland Clinic are a strategic advantage for economic development attraction activities and accessing a qualified workforce pipeline to support existing and future needs of local businesses.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, JobsOhio Moody's Analytics

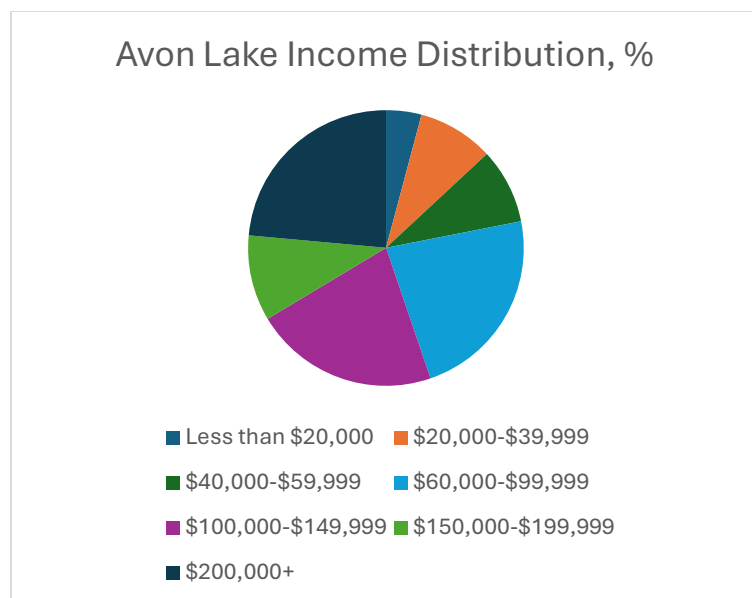
Taking a financial snapshot of a community's median household income, poverty rate, and employment rate helps measure economic stability and general wellbeing. Strong median household income points to several positive factors in a community, including having a healthy economy where residents are actively engaged in the workforce and have the financial capacity to adequately access the needed and desired resources. A significant portion of the money a household earns will be returned directly to the local economy in which residents live. Whether purchasing weekly groceries or larger items like cars and homes, income is a major factor impacting a community's health and well-being. Median household income in the City of Avon Lake has grown by

41 percent since 2010, accounting for inflation, from \$78,914 to \$111,271. Lorain County's median household income over the same period grew by an estimated 50.3 percent, while the State of Ohio's median household income grew by 48.6 percent, and the nation experienced a 50.2 percent increase over the same timeframe. While the percentage increase in median household income growth is less than the county, state and national rates, the city's median household income has remained substantially higher than the county, state, and national levels. In 2010, the city's median household income of \$78,914 was \$28,714 higher than the rest of Lorain County, \$33,824 higher than the State of Ohio and \$28,868 higher than the nation. By 2023, the city's median household income was \$35,810 higher than Lorain County's median household income, \$44,281 higher than the state and \$36,122 higher than the nation.



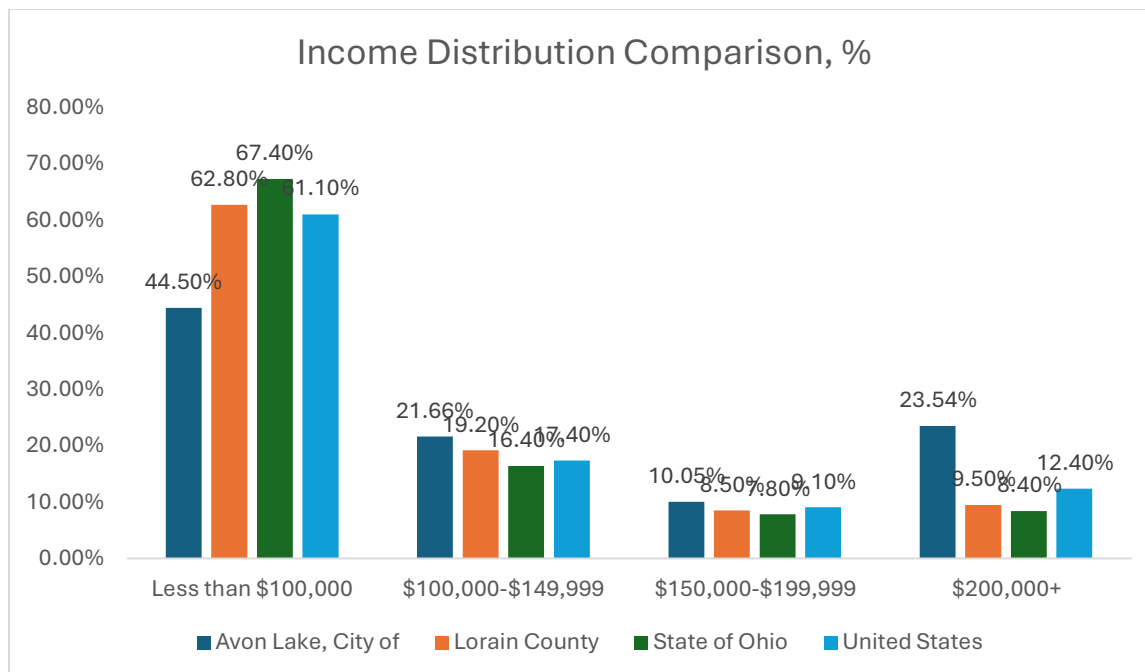
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010-2023

The distribution of income in Avon Lake shows 78.1 percent of residents have income that is \$60,000 a year or greater, with 23.5 percent of residents making \$200,000 a year or more. Residents making \$40,000 to \$59,999 annually in Avon Lake represent 8.8 percent of the total employed population and 13.1 percent of residents make less than \$40,000 annually. Overlaying the distribution of income with leading occupations in the city helps explain this income distribution. As described in the more detailed analysis below, many residents are employed in retail/service and health care and social services occupations and are likely earning wages towards the lower end of the income breakdown. There is also a significant portion of the population that works in management, scientific, skilled trades, and technical positions that would place them in the higher band of wages.



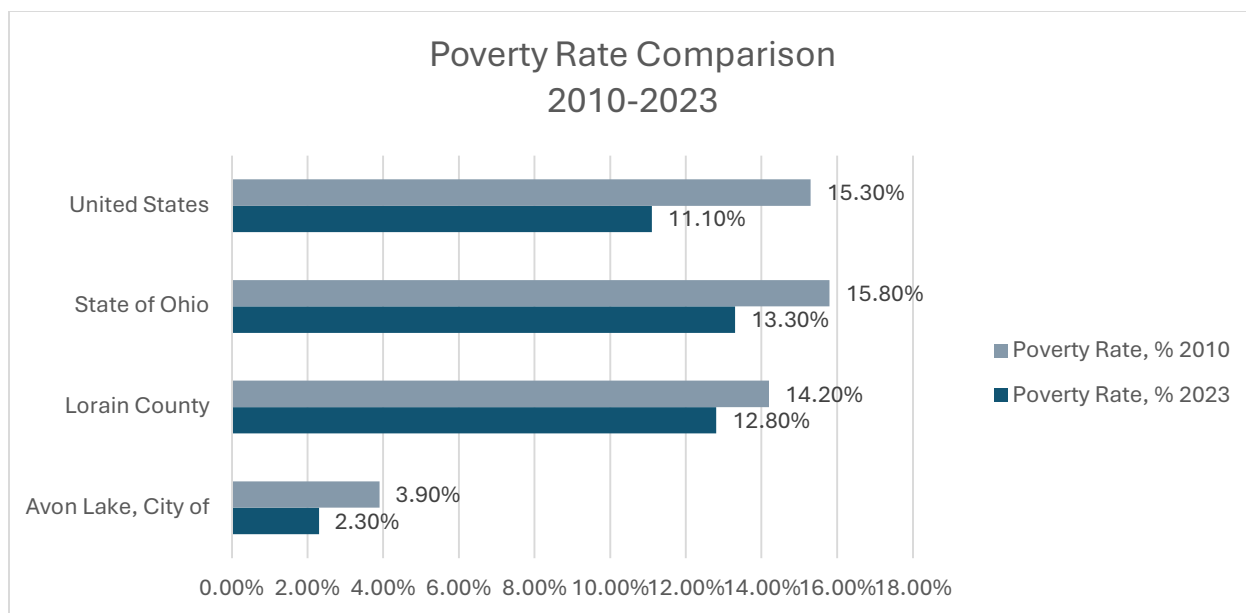
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2023

Federal data from the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey reports on percentages of the population earning an annual income that is less than \$100,000 a year, income between \$100,000 and \$149,999, \$150,000 and \$199,999, and \$200,000 or more a year. While 55.25 percent of Avon Lake residents earn an income of \$100,000 or more a year, Lorain County has just 37.2 percent of its countywide population earning more than \$100,000 a year. The State of Ohio has just shy of 33 percent of the population earning more than \$100,000 a year and nationally, 39 percent of the population earns more than \$100,000 annually. Avon Lake's educational attainment, which is much higher than county, state, and national figures, and its diversity of well-paying jobs across technical and management occupations are key data points that help explain income distribution in the city.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2023

Poverty rates tell us about a community's overall economic well-being and whether various social issues exist that may impact overall quality of life and demands for public services. A high poverty rate indicates that a significant portion of the population may be living in difficult economic conditions, which may lead to elevated social issues such as crime, poor health, and educational challenges.^x Poverty rates can also reveal potential disparities in economic status across demographic groups, highlighting structural challenges within the community.^{xi} A low poverty rate suggests more people can afford essentials like food, housing, and healthcare. Together, these factors contribute to a more stable and resilient society and support economic and social mobility and reduce disparities in wealth distribution.^{xii} Avon Lake's poverty rate is substantially lower than the double-digit rates at the county, state, and national levels. The most current poverty rate of Avon Lake is 2.3 percent, which is a 1.6 percent decrease since 2010. Lorain County's poverty rate in 2023 was 12.5 percent higher than Avon Lake (12.8%), while the state's poverty rate was 11 percent higher (13.3%) and the U.S. poverty rate was 8.8 percent higher (11.1%). While Avon Lake's poverty rate is considerably lower than county, state, and national averages and has improved over the last 13 years, it is important to recognize there are residents in the city that struggle to afford basic necessities and access basic services. Providing economic opportunity and supportive services to existing residents that ensures they can afford housing, transportation, childcare, and medical costs is important to the long-term health and vibrancy of the city. Additionally, as the city looks for ways to retain and attract the next generation of residents and workers, it is important to balance a variety of housing price points and housing types (townhomes, single family, multi-family), support growth of a diverse business base, and encourage a diversity of employment opportunities that have career advancement/career ladder pathways where entry level employees can acquire new skills, increase earnings potential, and grow median household income for long-term economic stability.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010-2023

The U.S. Economic Development Administration measures the economic distress of Census tracts, counties, MSAs, and states when considering eligibility for investment assistance, and follows 13 CFR 301.3 of the Code of Federal Regulations. Certain economic distress criteria must be met to apply for EDA's Public Works or Economic Adjustment investment projects, including:

- An unemployment rate that is, for the most recent twenty-four (24) month period of which data is available, or
- At least one (1) percent greater than the national average unemployment rate; or per capita income that is, for the most recent period for which data is available, eighty (80) percent or less of the national average per capita income; or
- A "special need" (certain unemployment or economic adjustment problems) as determined by EDA.^{xiii}

The most recent Economic Distress Criteria for Lorain County includes an unemployment rate ending January 2025 and Per Capita Personal Income and Per Capita Money Income as of 2023.

Economic Distress Criteria – Lorain County, OH						
Location	24 Month Unemployment	Threshold Calculation	Per Capita Personal Income (BEA PCPI)	Threshold Calculation	Per Capita Money Income (ACS 5-Year PCMI)	Threshold Calculation
Lorain County, OH	3.94	0.09	\$59,141	84.7	\$39,638	91.6
U.S.	3.85	0.00	\$69,810	100.0	\$43,289	0.00

Source: StatsAmerica Economic Distress Criteria, 2025



Based on this distress criteria, Lorain County is not located in an area that qualifies as economically distressed. The City of Avon Lake, however, could qualify for EDA investment assistance based on “special need.” Within EDA, communities that have experienced economic distress caused by changes in the coal economy, including the complete supply chain of coal-reliant industries, meets the definition of economic distress. As such, Avon Lake and Lorain County could be eligible to pursue EDA Public Works and Economic Adjustment funding that supports economic recovery and resiliency initiatives.^{xiv}

Homeownership is a central element to the “American Dream” and contributes to economic stability, wealth generation, and local property taxes that support basic governmental services. Housing significantly impacts access to employment, education, public and social services, and critical amenities that help families achieve economic mobility.^{xv} Strong median home values and high percentages of owner-occupied households are important to any community. Home ownership often generates an emotional connection to the community, civic and social engagement of owners, and stable tax revenues for localities. J.P. Morgan Research expects national housing prices to rise by three percent overall in 2025 while demand remains low. Housing inventory has been a challenge to backfill and remains below historical averages. This can be attributed to multiple factors, including people remaining in existing homes longer due to higher interest rates leading to housing stock not being freed up. Mortgage rates are likely to ease only slightly to an estimated 6.7 percent by the end of 2024 and will likely continue contributing to inventory shortages.^{xvi}



Avon Lake has a large percentage of its land use dedicated to residential and there is limited land available for new housing developments. As the city looks to attract younger residents and families, affordability and diversity of inventory for younger families and current residents wanting to “age in place” are important to account for. New developments are being considered in the city, including Harbor Crest Towns, a 70+ unit townhome development south of Walker Road and east of State Route 83. Harbor Crest Towns will offer primarily first-floor bedroom layouts at price points around \$500,000 that would likely attract retirees, empty nesters, and those looking to rightsize or downsize. Empty nesters and retirees downsize to smaller homes to reduce expenses and simplify their lifestyles. When a homeowner “rightsizes”, they are looking to balance space and functionality in a way that better fits their current lifestyle and needs.

Attracting young professionals and families helps build the future of a community. Housing availability and affordability remains one of the nation’s greatest challenges. A commonly used benchmark of housing affordability, as noted by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, sets no more than 30 percent of household income as the most a household should spend on housing costs and, households spending above this 30 percent threshold are considered “cost burdened.” A recent Pew Research Center survey found 69 percent of Americans were “very concerned” about the cost of housing, with 31.3 percent of all households currently cost burdened.^{xvii} Ohio’s percentage of households defined as cost burdened falls in the 10-19.9 percent range, which is similar to much of the country.^{xviii} A lack of housing affordability is the product of several factors intersecting in sometimes unpredictable ways. Interest rates, new home construction, population growth, population shifts, rising home prices and rents, disposable incomes, and local economic conditions all affect how easy or difficult it can be to find a home you can afford in a place you want to live.^{xix} As the housing market in Avon Lake evolves, residents looking to downsize or rightsize could help generate new inventory of existing homes which may lead to attracting younger residents. Additionally, the city should evaluate how new housing units balance price points and how new units may impact the school district.

Demographic Comparison Summary

	City of Avon Lake	Lorain County	Cleveland MSA	State of Ohio	United States
2023 Population	25,942	317,910	2,063,132	11,785,935	334,914,896
Population Change, 2010-2023 (%)	12.96%	5.49%	-0.6%	2.16%	8.48%
Population, 18 years and under (%)	24.2%	21.2%	20.9%	21.8%	21.7%
Population, 19 to 64 years (%)	53.5%	55.8%	57.9%	56.8%	58.0%
Population, 65+ (%)	20.3%	20.5%	21.2%	18.8%	17.7%
Owner-Occupied Housing Units (%)	82.5%	72.9%	74.0%	66.8%	64.8%
Value, Owner-Occupied Housing	\$318,800	\$191,900	\$216,417	\$183,800	\$281,900
Median Household Income	\$111,271	\$75,461	\$76,736	\$66,990	\$75,149
Poverty Rate (%)	2.3%	12.8%	11.5%	13.3%	11.1%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, St. Louis Federal Reserve Economic Data

Economic Analysis.

Examining economic trends in a community is important to understanding the health and vibrancy of a community and its relationship to the surrounding region. Identifying the composition of the economic base entails drilling down into how jobs, establishments, and/or wages are distributed. Economic analysis considers a wide range of different measures and classifications but, in general, the most relevant way to research an economy is by industry. This helps communities and economic development professionals identify what drives the local and regional economy, and where the jobs, business establishments, and wages are concentrated. Economic analysis can help C-level executives, developers, and investors make informed decisions regarding the competitiveness of operating in, or locating to, a community. It also helps shape the priorities a community establishes

and carries out around facilitating economic development opportunities and growth strategies.

The City of Avon Lake is home to more than 720 establishments that employ 9,017 individuals. Health Care and Social Services has the largest number of total establishments (145) followed by Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (83), Other Services-Repair, Personal Care, Laundry, Religious, etc. (79), Retail (64), and Construction (55). While Health Care and Social Services represents the largest number of total establishments in Avon Lake, it represents only 13.32 percent of total employment, at 145 employees. Manufacturing represents the largest combined sector for total employment with 2,173 employees (24.10%), followed by Education with 895 employees (9.93%), Wholesalers with 885 employees (9.81%), and Accommodation and Food Services with 571 employees (6.33%).^{xx} Combined, Avon Lake private sector businesses generate more than \$1.64 billion in annual sales.

Avon Lake Industry Overview (Non-Governmental)				
Industry	Establishments	Employees	Employees, %	Total Sales, 2024
Accommodation and Food Services	54	571	6.33%	\$24,268,000
Administrative, Support, Waste Management and Remediation Services	22	180	2.00%	\$14,333,000
Arts, Sports, Entertainment, and Recreation	17	196	2.17%	\$15,359,000
Banking, Finance and Insurance	41	130	1.44%	\$28,284,000
Construction	55	265	2.94%	\$44,631,000
Health Care and Social Services	145	1,201	13.32%	\$84,444,000
Information	5	88	0.98%	\$14,297,000
Manufacturing – Chemical, Fuel, Paper, Plastic, Wood	7	91	1.01%	\$10,680,000
Manufacturing – Electronics, Furniture, Machinery, Metal, Transportation, Misc.	21	2,063	22.88%	\$329,541,000
Manufacturing – Processed Food, Textiles, Clothing	5	19	0.21%	\$2,293,000
Other Services – Repair, Personal Care, Laundry, Religious, etc.	79	489	5.24%	\$816,2000
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	83	448	4.97%	\$32,157,000
Real Estate and Rentals	18	74	0.82%	\$3,708,000
Retail – Hobby, Media, General Merchandise	43	197	2.18%	\$39,699,000
Retail – Home, Food, Automobiles, Personal Care	21	545	6.04%	\$101,752,000

Transportation and Warehousing – Couriers and Messengers, Warehousing and Storage	1	5	0.06%	N/A
Transportation and Warehousing – Private/Public Transportation, Oil and Gas Pipelines, Sightseeing	5	93	1.03%	\$4,172,000
Unclassified	40	5	1.03%	N/A
Utility Services – Power, Gas, Steam, Water, and Sewage	3	226	2.41%	\$4,838,000
Wholesalers	16	885	9.81%	\$965,242,000

Source: JobsOhio, Zoom Prospector Community Profile, 2025

Major domestic and international companies call Avon Lake home. Ford Motor Company's Ohio Assembly Plant is the city's largest employer with 1,740 employees and produces the Ford E-Series, Super Duty, and F-650/F-750 vehicles. Avient Corporation employs 500 individuals in Avon Lake and more than 9,000 employees worldwide and is a manufacturer/wholesaler in the chemical and allied products sector. Other leading employers in the manufacturing sector include Lubrizol Advanced Materials (185 employees), Alumalloy Metal Casting Company (100 employees), and Watteredge LLC (80 employees). The city is home to large healthcare providers including Towne Center Community Campus (150 employees) and Main Street Care Center (173 employees), and is also home to Chemtron Corporation, a Research & Development/Biotechnology company employing 100 individuals.

Top 10 Avon Lake Employers (Non-Governmental)

Employer	# of Employees, approx.	Industry Sector
Ford Motor Company	1,740	Manufacturing
Avient Corporation	500	Manufacturing/Wholesale
Giant Eagle	400	Retail/Service
Lubrizol Advanced Materials	185	Manufacturing/Wholesale
Towne Center Community Campus	150	Healthcare
Main Street Care Center	173	Healthcare
Alumalloy Metal Casting Company	100	Manufacturing/Wholesale
Chemtron Corporation	100	R&D/Biotechnology
Avon Lake Pet Grooming	100	Retail/Service
Watteredge LLC	80	Manufacturing
Discount Drug Mart	75	Retail/Service
Independence Village of Avon	75	Healthcare

Source: JobsOhio, Zoom Prospector Community Profile, 2025

Industry Cluster Analysis.

Avon Lake is located in the TeamNEO economic development region. The TeamNEO region encompasses 14 counties and three major metropolitan areas (Cleveland, Akron, and Canton) which makes it the 19th largest market in the United States. The region is home to a workforce of more than 1.8 million and 700-plus business headquarters thrive in northeast Ohio. With twenty-five higher education institutions graduating 40,000 students annually, the diverse economic base welcomes significant investment opportunities.

Northeast Ohio Key Industry Sectors

Advanced Manufacturing	Aerospace & Aviation	Automotive	Financial Services
Food Processing	Headquarters & Professional Services	Healthcare & Biotechnology	Information Technology
Logistics	Metal Production & Fabrication	Polymers & Materials	Semiconductors

Developing priorities to pursue new economic development opportunities requires an examination of local and regional economic strengths and weaknesses. Communities must understand where they have competitive advantages in industry sectors, workforce and talent, and availability of sites and buildings that facilitate the decision-making process in an efficient and informative manner. Industry clusters take a broader perspective by examining all parts of a production chain and how the relationship between different parts of that chain fit together. Cluster analysis has been a key tool in helping to understand an economy and define economic development priorities. Clusters can include a combination of core industries as well as suppliers and post-production service providers with an export orientation that generates net wealth for a region. Industry cluster analysis looks at how these components interact and create interdependencies and economic opportunities for each other. This analysis can also reveal common vulnerabilities for an economy if the core industries in a cluster are disrupted, as well as emerging opportunities for growing sectors that have not yet reached high levels of concentration.

Any planning effort designed to address economic recovery and resiliency needs to inventory the types of businesses and employers that generate jobs and economic activity at the local and regional

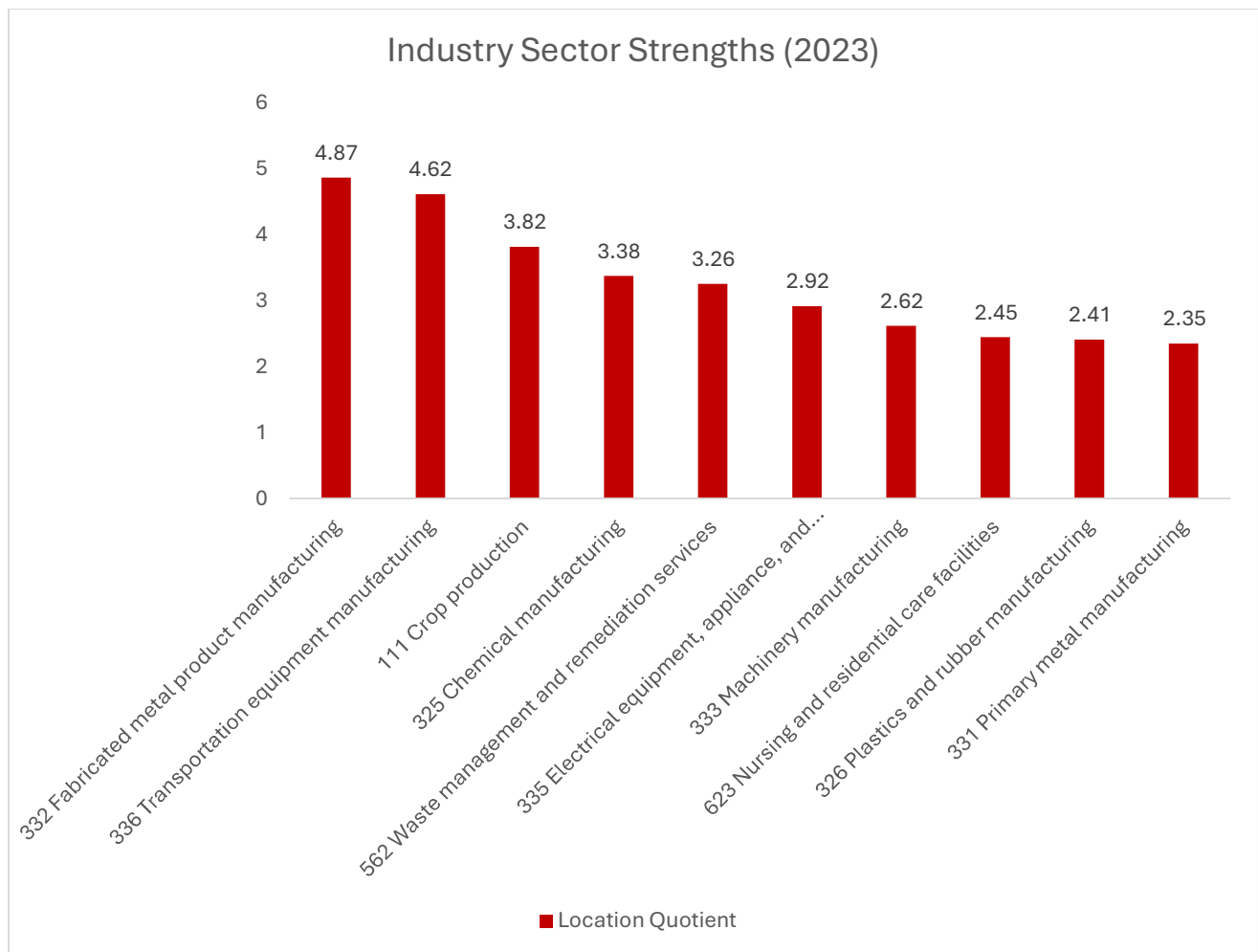
levels. Communities also need to understand how the mix of businesses and occupations has evolved over time and how this connects to external and internal factors. A common tool used to analyze local economic strengths and weaknesses is the location quotient (LQ). LQs are ratios that allow an area's distribution of employment by industry, ownership, and size class to be compared to the national distribution.^{xxi} Most industry-specific information is classified using the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS), which utilizes a hierarchical arrangement with the most aggregated industry definitions using two-digit numerical codes (e.g., 31-33 Manufacturing), and more specific industry definitions using six- and eight-digit codes.^{xxii} For purposes of this plan, three-digit NAICS codes are examined.

NAICS Hierarchy Example	
NAICS Code	Industry Description
31-33	Manufacturing
331	Primary Metals Manufacturing
3315	Foundries
331524	Aluminum Foundries

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

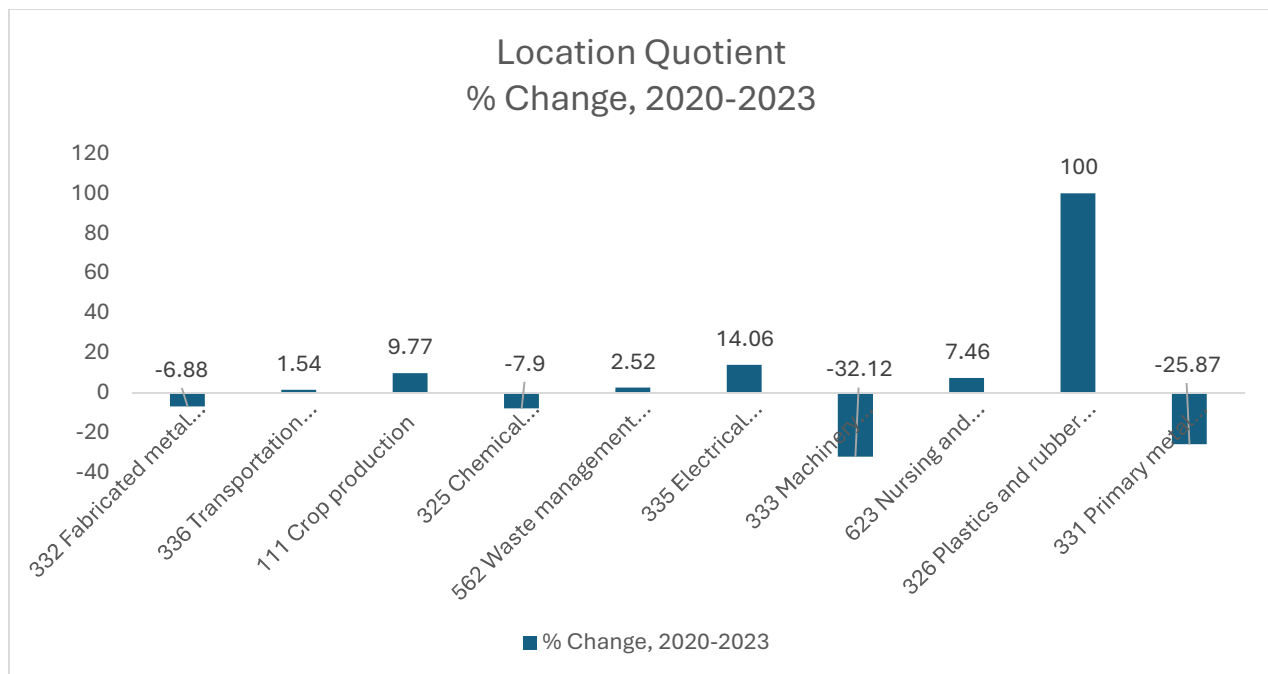
The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) uses LQs to see where occupations or industries are concentrated in the United States. LQs compare local employment in an occupation or industry to national employment in that occupation or industry and indicates what a local area or region's economy specializes in.^{xxiii} An LQ equal to one indicates the industry has the same share of its area employment as the nation. An LQ greater than one indicates an industry with a greater share of the local area employment than is the case nationwide.^{xxiv} The BLS measures this industry concentration down to county level data and, for purposes of this analysis, LQs for Lorain County, Ohio were examined. For resiliency and disaster recovery, the LQ can point to potential future vulnerabilities or opportunities. If an area has a high concentration of economic activity in an industry that has declined nationally, that would be a potential vulnerability for a community.

Lorain County shares a strong manufacturing and industrial base that aligns with northeast Ohio industry sectors. Key industries include manufacturing, polymers and chemicals, bio-health, and food packaging. A nexus of several major highways, rail and water transportation keep Lorain County businesses connected and many of these infrastructure assets benefit Avon Lake's industry base. In addition to Ford Motor Company and Avient, notable employers in the county include Republic Steel, US Steel, Ridge Tool (Emerson), Duck Brand Duct Tape, Cleveland Clinic, University Hospitals, Carvana, AdvancePierre Foods, Camaco, Riddell, Bendix, and BASF.^{xxv} Agribusinesses calling Lorain County home include production companies such as AdvancePierre Foods and Green Circle Growers, and research and development resources including Flavor Seal Flexible, Shrink & Sensor Transfer, Packaging Research & Development.^{xxvi} When looking at LQ data for Lorain County, many of the county's leading industry sectors can be attributed to major employers in Avon Lake.



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2025

The most recent LQ data for Lorain County shows strong industry competitiveness across major manufacturing sectors when compared to the rest of the country. Lorain County's strongest industry is Fabricated metal product manufacturing with a LQ of 4.87, demonstrating this sector has a 4.87 times higher concentration of activity compared to the U.S. Approximately 3,675 employees work in the Fabricated metal product manufacturing sector in Lorain County with an average annual wage of \$63,128. Transportation equipment manufacturing has a LQ of 4.62 and employs approximately 3,943 individuals with an average annual wage of \$86,632, followed by Crop production (3.82 LQ) which employs 859 with an average annual wage of \$49,556; Chemical manufacturing (3.38 LQ) which employs 1,481 with an average annual wage of \$108,680; and Waste management and remediation services (3.26 LQ) which employs 797 with an average annual wage of \$71,448.



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2025

From 2020 through 2023, Lorain County experienced solid growth in Electrical equipment, appliance, and component manufacturing (14.06%), Crop production (9.77%), and Nursing and residential care facilities (7.46%). This growth can be attributed to both employment level increases and wage increases that occurred over the four-year timeframe. The largest loss in industry sector strengths is found in Machinery manufacturing (-32.12%), Primary metal manufacturing (-25.87%), Chemical manufacturing (-7.9%), and Fabricated metal product manufacturing (-6.88%). While each of these sectors saw a reduction in employment between 2020 and 2023, Primary metal manufacturing saw an increase in average annual wages of \$12,324, Chemical manufacturing had average annual wages increase by \$9,516, and Fabricated metal product manufacturing had average annual wages increase by \$6,500. Only Machinery manufacturing saw average annual wages decline, with an estimated decline of \$9,464. Plastics and rubber products manufacturing had a 100% increase in LQ, which can be attributed to a reclassification of NAICS codes between 2020 and 2023.

Shifts in Industry Sector Strengths (2020-2023)



Lorain County industry sectors that experienced employment growth between 2020 and 2023 directly correlate to growth in LQ strengths. Employment in Electrical equipment, appliance, and component manufacturing jobs grew by 26.23 percent for a net of 187 new jobs over the four-year period. Plastics and rubber products manufacturing gained a net of 187 new jobs which is a 26.23 percent change. Nursing and residential care facilities increased employment by 684 jobs, which is a 20.16 percent increase from 2020 to 2023.

Lorain County, OH Leading Industry Sector Employment Changes (2020-2023)		
Industry	Lorain County, % Change	United States, % Change
332 Fabricated metal product manufacturing	-1.87%	5.11%
336 Transportation equipment manufacturing	2.18%	11.13%
111 Crop production	3.74%	0.35%
325 Chemical manufacturing	-6.38%	6.01%

562 Waste management and remediation services	15.51%	12.10%
335 Electrical equipment, appliance, and component manufacturing	26.88%	8.58%
333 Machinery manufacturing	-8.61%	7.66%
623 Nursing and residential care facilities	20.16%	-1.25%
326 Plastics and rubber products manufacturing	26.23%	6.00%
331 Primary metal manufacturing	-25.92%	6.13%

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Shift-share analysis is a frequently used measure that tracks comparative change. The analysis combines three different calculations to arrive at an “actual growth” figure when comparing the employment growth for a local area with a larger region, state, or national total.^{xxvii} These components are the national growth, industry mix, and competitive share. For a simple comparison of geographic areas, the competitive share (also referenced as the differential shift, regional shift, or competitive component) provides a good indicator of the relative growth and competitive advantage of a locality in a particular industry. This, partnered with LQ, can help communities and regions narrow in on which industries and corresponding supply chains to target in business attraction efforts while also identifying where existing business growth opportunities or risk threats may emerge and must be prioritized in retention and expansion support services.

Lorain County industry sectors with the healthiest outlook for growth, when performing a shift-share analysis, include Nursing and residential care facilities (21.41% industry premium); Plastics and rubber products manufacturing (20.23% industry premium); Electrical equipment, appliance, and component manufacturing (18.29% industry premium); Waste management and remediation services (3.41% industry premium); and Crop production (3.39% industry premium).

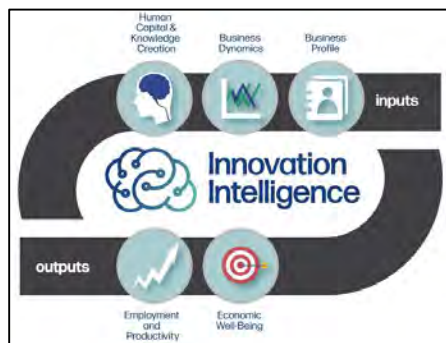
A higher-level review of changes in employment in the City of Avon Lake shows growth across a majority of the city’s industry sectors. The city’s largest sector by employment is Healthcare and Social Assistance with 2,170 total jobs in 2024, which grew by 2.55% since 2022. Manufacturing is the second largest sector with 2,004 jobs and grew by one of the highest percentages at 28.79%. Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services employ 1,607 and had 10.45% growth in employment, followed by Retail Trade with 1,166 jobs and 12.66% growth. It is important to note that some sectors had larger percentage changes in employment but a smaller total job count. For example, Agriculture, Fishing and Hunting had a 23.08% increase in employment, which totaled a net growth of just six jobs between 2022-2024.

Avon Lake, OH Industry Sector Employment Changes (2022-2024)			
2-Digit NAICS Industry Sectors	Avon Lake, OH, % Change	Avon Lake, OH 2024 Total Jobs	United States, % Change
Accommodations and Food Services	-15.81%	708	3.15%

Administrative, Support and Waste Management Services	25.84%	375	7.38%
Agriculture, Fishing and Hunting	23.08%	32	-6.34%
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	18.09%	333	13.23%
Construction	38.46%	666	4.80%
Finance and Insurance	-1.43%	830	5.82%
Healthcare and Social Assistance	2.55%	2,170	5.92%
Information	34.56%	183	7.91%
Manufacturing	28.79%	2,004	5.12%
Other Services, excluding Public Administration	1.98%	515	1.99%
Real Estate, Rental and Leasing	30.84%	280	-1.72%
Retail Trade	12.66%	1,166	0.02%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	10.45%	1,607	10.73%
Transportation and Warehousing	24.25%	333	7.12%
Utilities	78.46%	116	12.92%
Wholesale Trade	-37.43%	219	-13.75%

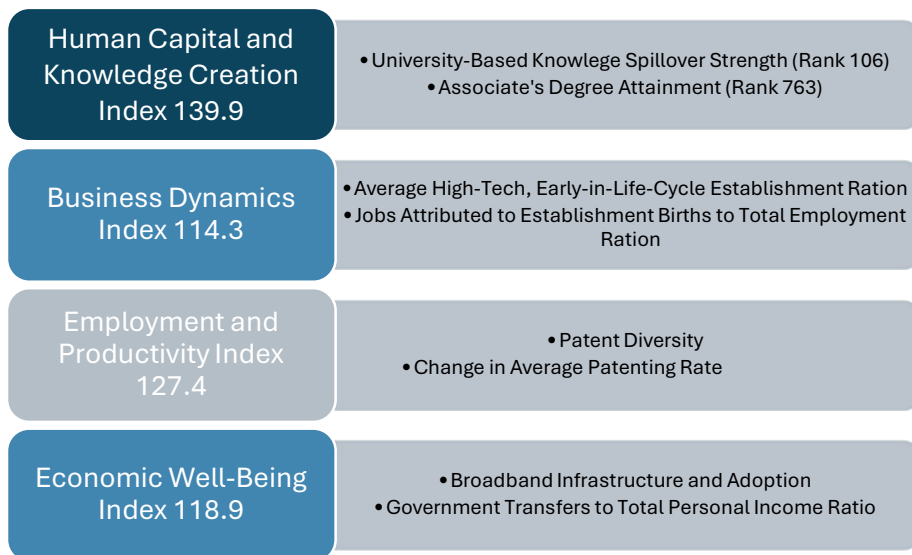
Source: Esri, Inc. ArcGIS Business Analyst

The U.S. Economic Development Administration measures innovation and entrepreneurship at the national, state, MSA, and county levels and by Economic Development District. EDA's StatsAmerica Innovation Index provides a set of analytic tools that can help economic development and community leaders build a strategy for the types of businesses it should pursue.^{xxviii} Crafting data-driven development strategies reflects what the research says about a region and helps determine capacity for innovation and regional competitiveness. This EDA tool allows economic developers and other stakeholders to quickly see where their region falls in terms of relative innovation capacity compared to its peers.



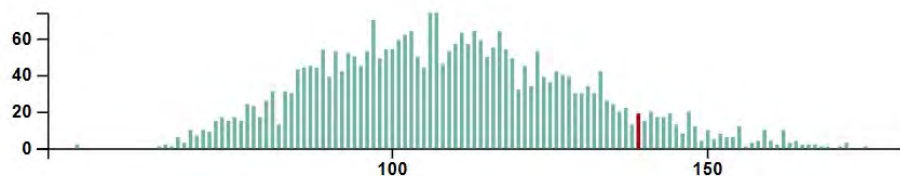
Lorain County is the most granular detail available to analyze Innovation Index data. Lorain County's composite Innovation Intelligence Index is 121.1 and categorized as moderate relative to Innovation Capacity. Lorain County ranks the county 616 out of all counties throughout the country. The Innovation Index can be broken down into Human Capital and Knowledge Creation, Business Dynamics, Business Profile, Employment and Productivity, and Economic Well-Being. A summary of key takeaways from the Innovation Index report on Lorain County is detailed below. Based on this index analysis, Lorain County excels in its Business Profile which is differentiated based on utilization

of technology by farm operators and overall industry diversity. The county is ranked as moderate across all other categories.



Human Capital and Knowledge Creation has an index of 139.9 and is ranked as the 247th county in the U.S. for the availability of human capital resources. This index suggests the extent to which a region's population and labor force have the collective cognitive capacity and know-how to engage in innovative activities.^{xxix} This ranking is attributed to a relatively high university-based knowledge spillover ranking of 106, which is reflective of an abundance of well-regarded institutions of higher learning and working learning institutions, such as Cleveland Clinic. Additionally, counties such as Lorain County with high levels of human capital are those with enhanced knowledge, measured by educational attainment, patent diffusion, knowledge spillovers, STEM degree holders and occupations, and the share of higher-tech employment.^{xxx} As evidenced from the index below that reflects a normal distribution, Lorain County (represented by the red bar) is ranked above most of the country and has a competitive advantage in human capital and knowledge creation. Given that a skilled workforce and a strong pipeline of future talent remains one of the most critical economic development needs, **Lorain County's competitive advantage in human capital and knowledge creation suggests Avon Lake and the surrounding region are well positioned to attract companies that employ highly skilled, well-educated, and creative employees.**

Human Capital and Knowledge Creation Index
Lorain County, OH

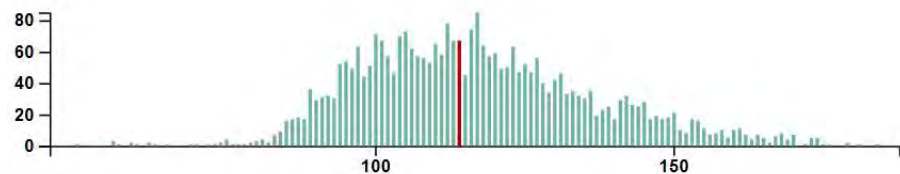


Source: StatsAmerica, Innovation Index, 2023

Business Dynamics index gauges the competitiveness of a region by investigating the entry and exit of individual firms (the creative destruction measures). Lorain County has an index of 114.3 and ranks as the 1,610th county in the U.S. The county scores higher than the rest of the country in

Establishment Formations (117.3 Index) and Establishment Dynamics (111.4 Index). Establishment Formations are defined as a measurement of new business formation and the extent to which a region is creating new business ventures, an indicator that a region is undergoing positive economic change. Establishment Dynamics is defined as a measurement of establishment churn, which is at the heart of competition—creating new industries, invigorating old ones and relegating inefficient practices to the pages of history.^{xxxix} This section focuses on the creation of new firms and the availability of venture capital (VC). The latter — investment — is needed for new firms to achieve market scale and VC tends to follow the passions and vision of venture capitalists. More recently, the lion’s share goes into “tech”, but not all VC is technology. VC funds can flow into a wide range of products and services, from meat substitutes to real estate ventures to pharmaceuticals.^{xxxix} Lorain County’s moderate ranking indicates that while it is not falling behind in business dynamism, it is also not leading. The pace of new industry creation and revitalization of existing sectors remains steady but unexceptional. **To foster greater innovation and accelerate the development of next generation industry, Avon Lake and surrounding communities could benefit from stronger engagement with northeast Ohio’s venture capital network and regional foundations to help attract investment and entrepreneurial support.**

Business Dynamics Index Lorain County, OH

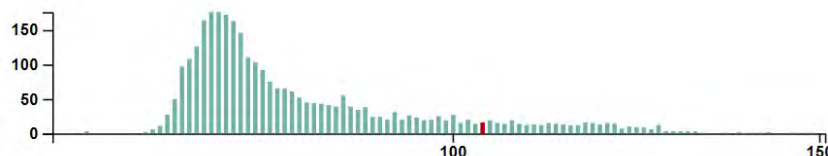


Source: StatsAmerica, Innovation Index, 2023

Business Profile has an index of 104.8 and Lorain County is ranked as the 342nd county in the U.S. This index measures local business conditions and resources available to entrepreneurs and businesses. The Business Profile Index attempts to gauge the overall business climate of a region by measuring local business conditions and resources available to entrepreneurs and companies.^{xxxiii} The components identify the possible resources a region might offer that can lead to growth and subsequent innovation. These resources can be found in the form of capital (foreign investments), connectivity within one’s own or with other regions, and proprietorship. The county scores slightly below the national average in VC Dollar measures (85.3), which explores the amount and type of VC money that has flowed into a region. VC Count Measures scores 91.4 in the county and focuses on the number of VC deals, as well as initial public offerings (IPOs) in a region. Attractiveness of Foreign Direct Investment scores a 90.5 and measures the degree to which foreign or domestic companies are investing in the region relative to the U.S. average. Proprietorship (152.2) looks at entrepreneurial activity and a proximate signal that workers may have migrated from working in a “safe” job in an established company to the “gig economy.” Lorain County’s Proprietorship index is well above the national average, suggesting residents in the county have a higher tendency to start up and work in their own business and have tired of the traditional 9am-5pm/Monday - Friday job. Looking for more flexibility in work schedules, residents are more inclined to work when they need to versus on a steady basis. Additionally, there are likely more residents interested in owning and operating their own small business which could be an advantage for the City of Avon Lake if it looks to attract new, small business and boutique-style businesses to the community. Important questions to consider through this index include whether regions with characteristics similar to our own are attracting

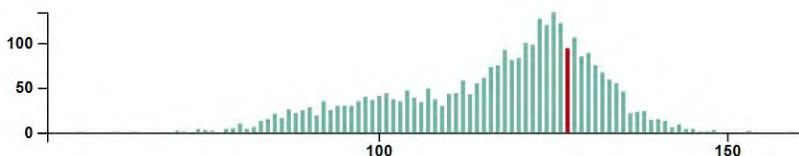
Foreign Direct Investment; in what industries do we specialize; is the region constrained by the lack of utilities or distance to market; is broadband and connectivity improving over time, and why or why not; are the county's larger firms investing in continuous product improvement; and whether smaller firms are growing. **Focusing on Avon Lake and Northeast Ohio's core competitive industry sectors (considering LQ), consistent growth/investment activities in larger firms, and a relatively strong tendency for entrepreneurial activity in the region are important to the business retention and expansion (BR&E), new business attraction, and small/entrepreneurial support the city offers.**

**Business Profile
Index
Lorain County, OH**



Employment and Productivity is classified as moderate and has an index of 127.4 and Lorain County is ranked as the 774th county in the U.S. The top measures of this index are patent diversity (357 ranking) and the change in average patenting rate (839 ranking). This index describes economic growth (gross domestic product [GDP]), job growth and the direct outcomes of innovative activity. There are three general indicators: productivity (or GDP per worker), industry growth, “latent innovation” (or the hard-to-measure sophistication of industry production) and the classic, go-to measure, patents. Measures in this index suggest the extent to which local and regional economies are moving up the value chain by producing more sophisticated and differentiated products and are increasing the high-value talent pool. Typically, no one is going to “innovate” if it doesn’t result in higher wages, higher profits, expanded employment and improved social outcomes. The variables in this index begin to show the results and benefits of innovation.^{xxxiv} **As Avon Lake looks to support existing business growth and new business attraction, it is important to gain a better sense of what technologies and industry advancements are being developed which will lead to “jobs of the future,” what supply chain opportunities exist to attract and retain companies, how businesses innovations’ improve productivity, profits and business retention, and tracking how industry sectors are contributing to the overall job and wage growth in the region.**

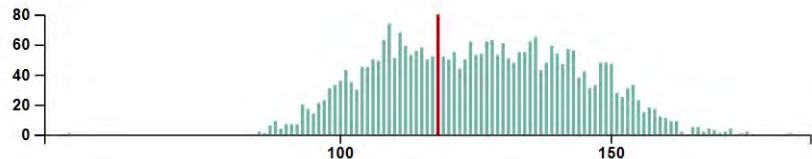
**Employment and
Productivity Index
Lorain County, OH**



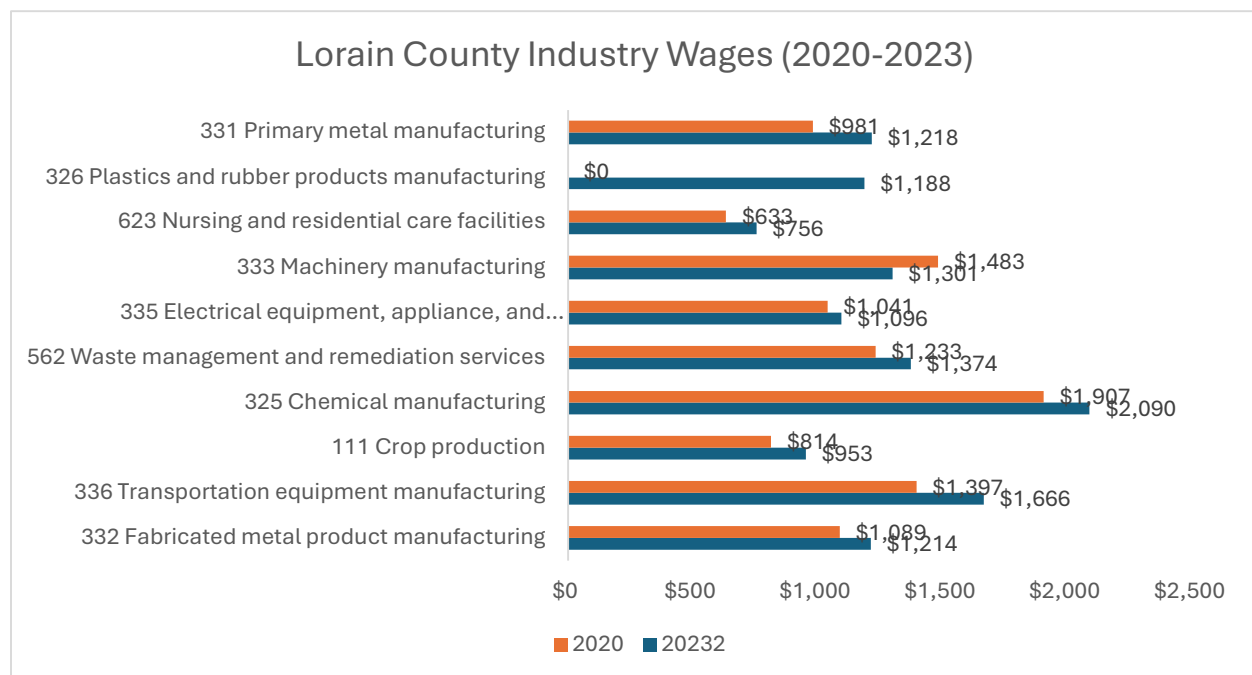
Economic Well-Being is considered moderate in Lorain County with an index of 118.9 and ranking the county 1,910th in the U.S. As with the Employment and Productivity Index, this well-being index signals the benefits of innovation but one or two links lower in the causality chain. Growth in GDP is desirable, but the follow-on question is the degree to which wages have improved and to what degree the economic benefits of innovation are shared equally. Innovative economies are thought to generally improve economic well-being because residents earn more and have a higher standard of living. Decreasing poverty rates, increasing employment, in-migration of new residents and improvements in personal income signal a more desirable region in which to live. These well-being

measures and indexes are another way to measure changes in the standard of living in the region.^{xxxv} While Lorain County has a moderate index and ranking, the City of Avon Lake's demographic data shows a high standard of living represented by high income and wage rates, low poverty rates, higher educational attainment, and population growth. Combined these data points help show the desirability of the city as a place to live and do business. Avon Lake can use this demographic and economic data, and overall economic well-being, when selling the city as a competitive place to locate with access to a highly educated and skilled workforce.

Economic Well-Being Index Lorain County, OH

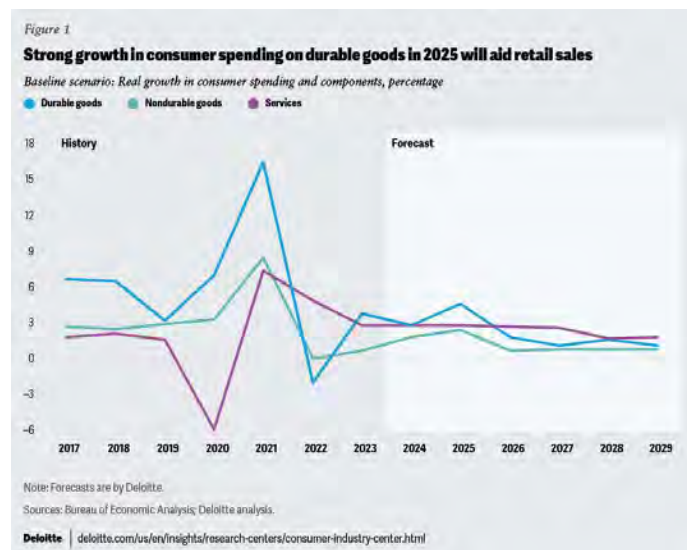


Industry Wages. In addition to examining the concentrations of industry competitiveness in a community, it is important to research industry wages. Annual wage growth is important because it reflects how workers' living standards are changing, whether employers face rising costs, and whether the labor market is tight or has room for improvement.^{xxxvi} Wage growth also reflects on consumer purchasing power in the economy and the level of living standards. Lorain County's key industry sectors saw average annual wages rise between 2020 and 2023 in each sector with the exception of Machinery manufacturing. Primary metal manufacturing experienced the greatest growth in annual wages during this period, with a 24.1 percent increase, followed by Transportation equipment manufacturing (19.3%) and Crop production (17.1%). Machinery manufacturing experienced a decline in average annual wages of 12.3 percent which equates to \$182 per week, an 8.61 percent reduction in annual employment and the largest decline in LQ (-32.12%).



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Retail Market Analysis. In January 2025, Deloitte issued a retail industry outlook that projects overall



consumer spending to grow 3.1 percent in 2025 followed by strong consumer spending growth in subsequent years. Retail sales in the U.S. will outpace our advanced-economy peer countries and will benefit from a growing economy, with an annual growth rate of retail sales hovering around 2 percent until 2029.^{xxxvii} Deloitte economists point to three factors supporting this retail growth: easing inflation, continuation of a healthy labor market and nonfarm payroll, and expected relief from high borrowing costs as the Federal Reserve eases monetary policy. Risks to retail sales outlooks revolve primarily around hikes in tariffs that may

result in a broader economic slowdown and corresponding rate hikes by the Federal Reserve to adjust for the slowdown.^{xxxviii}

Esri U.S. Retail Demand data estimates spending in retail trade, food services, and drinking places industries. Data provides an understanding of where consumers are spending their dollars on an annual basis in 13 NAICS (North American Industry Classification System) Subsectors and 30 NAICS Industry Groups and are based on the latest Consumer Expenditure Surveys by the Bureau of Labor Statistics and the Economic Census by the U.S. Census Bureau. Data includes total expenditures by all households, average spending per household which represents the typical amount spent by household, and a spending index comparing spending in the City of Avon Lake to the U.S. average. The Spending Potential Index is household-based, and represents the amount spent for a product or service relative to a national average of 100. As noted previously, Avon Lake's median household income is \$111,271 and is approximately 32.5 percent higher than the national median household income of \$75,149 which suggests households in Avon Lake have higher levels of disposable income and purchasing power. This is reflected across every industry group when analyzing retail demand, with every industry group having a Spending Potential Index well above the national average. Across the Retail Trade, Food Services and Drinking Places sectors, the Avon Lake household spends an average of \$37,820.17 annually on these products and services. This average household spending and Spending Potential Index represents *what* Avon Lake residents spend disposable income on in the retail sector but does not represent *where* they spend their money. As the city looks to attract new retail businesses to the former Power Plant site and in primary retail centers along the Walker Road corridor, Avon Belden Road, and Lear Road areas, data suggests there is strong spending amongst Avon Lake residents and opportunity to meet the needs and desires of residents across all retail trade, food services, and drinking places spectrum.

Avon Lake, OH Retail Demand by Industry (2024)		
Industry	Average Spend per HH	Spending Potential Index
Industry Summary		

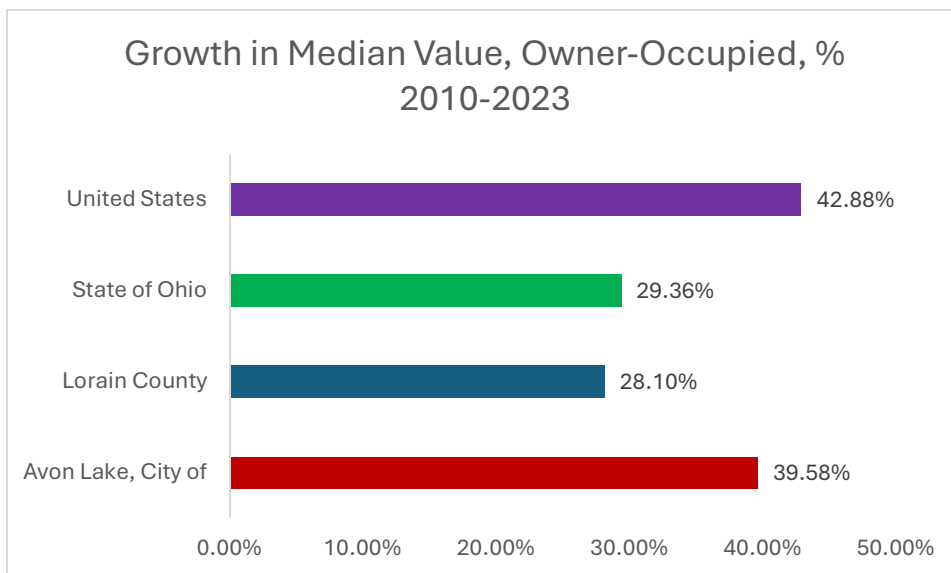
44-45, 722 Retail Trade, Food Services & Drinking Places	\$37,820.17	126
44-45 Retail Trade	\$32,249.80	126
722 Food Services & Drinking Places	\$5,570.37	127
Industry Subsector		
441 Motor Vehicle & Parts Dealers	\$3,928.98	127
442 Furniture and Home Furnishings Stores	\$1,434.41	131
443, 4431 Electronics and Appliance Stores	\$402.22	125
444 Bldg Material & Garden Equipment & Supplies Dealers	\$2,079.15	136
445 Food and Beverage Stores	\$7,077.94	125
446, 4461 Health and Personal Care Stores	\$1,006.37	127
447, 4471 Gasoline Stations	\$4,341.72	119
448 Clothing and Clothing Accessories Stores	\$1,499.26	124
451 Sporting Goods, Hobby, Musical Instrument, and Book	\$586.47	125
452 General Merchandise	\$5,528.47	125
453 Miscellaneous Store Retailers	\$755.22	126
454 Nonstore Retailers	\$3,609.59	129
722 Food Services & Drinking Places	\$5,570.37	127

Source: Esri, Inc. ArcGIS Business Analyst

We can further examine where spending on specific products and services are most likely to occur in a community or geographic area using Esri's Retail Demand Outlook which breaks down current and forecasted consumer spending. This outlook provides a breakdown of projected spending as a percentage of overall spending by what Esri terms a "tapestry segment." Tapestry segmentation is a detailed summary of communities where residents are grouped together into smaller segments based on shared demographic, socioeconomic, and lifestyle characteristics. A complete list of Avon Lake and surrounding community tapestry segmentation summaries are included in Appendix 1. The forecast of future demand, projected spending growth, and tapestry segment can help the City of Avon Lake identify where there will be future growth in spending and where opportunities may exist to attract and grow retail and service businesses to meet this growing demand. It is reasonable to expect consumers have a willingness to travel outside their place of residence for various goods and services and, if sought-after businesses are in Avon Lake, residents from surrounding communities will travel to Avon Lake to make purchases. For purposes of this study, Retail Demand Outlook data for communities immediately adjacent to the City of Avon Lake were examined and include the cities of Avon, Bay Village, and Sheffield Lake where travel times into Avon Lake do not exceed thirty minutes.

In general, the City of Avon Lake and the benchmarked surrounding communities are each estimated to see more than 14 percent growth between 2024 and 2029, with Bay Village expected to see the lowest growth of 14.32 percent and Sheffield Lake expected to see the highest growth at 23.05 percent. The largest increases in spending are seen in the purchase of food, however significant spending increases are also projected in home maintenance and remodeling services and materials.

Year-over-year cost increases in health insurance are to be expected and are reflected in this retail demand outlook. Consumers spend a significant amount of money on entertainment and recreation and there is modest growth in childcare costs in each community. An interesting trend observed in consumer spending in Avon Lake and benchmark communities is the projected increase in spending on pets. Research from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics between 2013 and 2021 reported consumer spending on pets skyrocketing by 77.9 percent in just eight years.^{xxxix} The Bureau of Labor Statistics noted consumers view their pets as important members of their families that are great companions and provide their humans with many mental and physical health benefits. In 2013, pet expenditures were \$57.8 billion, and, by the end of 2021, this figure had climbed to \$102.8 billion.^{xl} Additionally, research suggests there will be significant demand for residential improvements and remodeling goods and services over the next five years as homeowners look to reinvest in their properties. The combined spending estimate for Maintenance and Remodeling Services is \$34 million and is likely impacted by strong gains in homeownership and high home values, and tappable equity driven by rising home values which can be used to fund renovations. In Avon Lake alone, the median value of owner-occupied housing rose by 39.58 percent between 2010 and 2023, compared to a 28.1 percent increase in median value in Lorain County, a 29.36 percent increase in median value in the state of Ohio, and a 42.88 percent increase nationally.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010-2023

Avon Lake, OH Consumer Spending Trends (2024-2029)

Avon Lake, OH	Avon, OH	Bay Village, OH	Sheffield Lake, OH
•Estimated Overall Retail Spending Growth +17.15% •\$16.68 million growth in Food, At Home •\$9.07 million growth in Food, Away from Home •\$11.81 million growth in Maintenance/Remodeling Services •\$9.74 million growth in Entertainment & Recreation	•Estimated Overall Retail Spending Growth +17.08% •\$15.77 million growth in Food, At Home •\$8.91 million growth in Food, Away from Home •\$11.89 million growth in Maintenance/Remodeling Services •\$9.44 million growth in Entertainment & Recreation	•Estimated Overall Retail Spending Growth +14.32% •\$8.98 million growth in Food, At Home •\$4.97 million growth in Food, Away from Home •\$6.87 million growth in Maintenance/Remodeling Services •\$5.37 million growth in Entertainment & Recreation	•Estimated Overall Retail Spending Growth +23.05% •\$5.30 million growth in Food, At Home •\$2.72 million growth in Food, Away from Home •\$3.40 million growth in Maintenance/Remodeling Services •\$3.05 million growth in Entertainment & Recreation

Source: Esri, Inc. ArcGIS Business Analyst

Retail spending in the **City of Avon Lake** and **City of Bay Village** primarily resides with *Savvy Suburbanites* and *Comfortable Empty Nesters*. Savvy Suburbanites are well educated, well read, and well capitalized residents that live in older neighborhoods outside the urban core, with suburban lifestyle preferences around home remodeling and gardening plus an active pursuit of sports and exercise. Savvy Suburbanites enjoy good food and wine, plus the amenities of a city's cultural events. Comfortable Empty Nesters represent a large, growing population with a median age of 48 years old and nearly half of all householders aged 55 or older and still living in the suburbs where they have spent much of their life. Most Comfortable Empty Nesters are professionals working in government, health care, or manufacturing, earn a comfortable living, benefit from years of prudent investing and saving, are transitioning from raising children to retirement, and value their health and financial well-being.

The City of Avon Lake is projected to see 17.15 percent growth across all retail segments over the next five years. The largest segment of retail growth in dollars in Avon Lake is food purchases, which is estimated to grow by \$25.76 million between 2024-2029. Food for consumption at home represents 64.70 percent of total food purchased by Avon Lake residents and is expected to grow by \$16.68 million (14.66%) while food purchased away from home is estimated to grow by \$9.07 million (14.62%). Spending on maintenance and remodeling services and materials are expected to grow by \$11.81 million and \$2.19 million, respectively. Entertainment and Recreation expenditures are forecasted to grow by \$9.74 million between 2024 and 2025, with the largest monetary growth seen in membership fees for clubs (\$795,130), fees for recreational lessons (\$427,504), and fees for participant sports, excluding trips (\$350,107). Health insurance costs are expected to increase by \$11.9 million (14.63%). In Avon Lake, spending on pets is expected to grow by \$2.39 million (14.67%) between 2024 and 2029.

Retail spending in the **City of Avon** is dominated by *Professional Pride* and *Workday Drive* residents. Professional Pride consumers are well-educated career professionals that have prospered through the Great Recession and desire maintaining their upscale suburban lifestyles. To maintain this lifestyle, they often commute far distances and work long hours; however, their schedules are adjusted to meet the needs of their school-age children. Professional Pride consumers are financially savvy, invest wisely, and their annual household income runs at more than twice the national level. They take pride in living in newer homes and spend valuable time and energy upgrading so homes are furnished with the latest in-home trends, including finished basements equipped with home gyms and in-home theaters. Workday Drive residents are affluent, family-oriented individuals who are partial to new housing located away from the bustle of the city but are located close enough to commute to professional job centers. Workday Drive consumers typically live in two-parent working households with growing children and they favor time-saving devices (e.g., online banking and housekeeping services) and family-oriented pursuits.

The **City of Sheffield Lake** total retail spending is dominated by *Rustbelt Traditions* consumers who are the backbone of older industrial cities in Great Lakes states, followed by *Home Improvement* consumers. Rustbelt Traditions residents are a mix of married-couple families and singles living in older residential developments of single-family homes. Rustbelt Traditions residents represent a large market of stable, hardworking consumers with modest incomes but an average net worth of nearly \$400,000. Most have lived, worked, and played in the same area for many years. Home Improvement residents represent married-couple families living primarily in single-family homes. These residents and families spend a lot of time on the go and tend to eat out regularly. When at home, weekends are consumed with home improvement and remodeling projects.

Sheffield Village total retail spending is dominated by *Comfortable Empty Nesters* consumers and the village has a median age of 51 years. Comfortable Empty Nesters represent a large, growing population with a median age of 48 years old and nearly half of all householders aged 55 or older and still living in the suburbs where they have spent much of their life. Most Comfortable Empty Nesters are professionals working in government, health care, or manufacturing, earn a comfortable living, benefit from years of prudent investing and saving, are transitioning from raising children to retirement, and value their health and financial well-being.

The **City of Westlake** total retail spending is more evenly distributed across consumers. *Exurbanites* represent the largest tapestry segment of consumers at 20.7 percent of total retail spending, followed by *Golden Years* (15.2%), *Bright Young Professionals* (11.4%), *Midlife Constants* (10.7%), and *Savvy Suburbanites* (8.7%). Exurbanites residents are approaching retirement but showing few signs of slowing down. They are active in their communities, generous in their donations, and seasoned travelers. They take advantage of their proximity to large metropolitan centers to support the arts but prefer a more expansive home style in less crowded neighborhoods and have cultivated a lifestyle that is both affluent and urbane. Golden Years residents are best described as independent, active seniors nearing the end of their careers or already in retirement. This market is primarily singles living alone or empty nesters. Those still active in the labor force are employed in professional occupations; however, these consumers are actively pursuing a variety of leisure interests—travel, sports, dining out, museums, and concerts. They are involved, focused on physical fitness, and enjoying their lives. This market is smaller, but growing, and financially secure. Bright Young Professionals is a large market, primarily located in urban outskirts of large metropolitan areas, similar to a community like Westlake. These communities are home to young, educated,

working professionals and more than one out of three householders are under the age of 35. Slightly more diverse couples dominate this market, with more renters than homeowners. More than two-fifths of the households live in single-family homes; over a third live in 5+ unit buildings. Labor force participation is high, generally white-collar work, with a mix of food service and part-time jobs (among the college students). Median household income, median home value, and average rent are close to the US values. Residents of this segment are physically active and up on the latest technology. Midlife Constants residents are seniors, at or approaching retirement, with below-average labor force participation and below-average net worth. Although located in predominantly metropolitan areas, they live outside the central cities, in smaller communities. Their lifestyle is more country than urban. They are generous but not spendthrifts. As previously described, Savvy Suburbanites are well educated, well read, and well capitalized residents that live in older neighborhoods outside the urban core, with suburban lifestyle preferences around home remodeling and gardening plus an active pursuit of sports and exercise. Savvy Suburbanites enjoy good food and wine, plus the amenities of a city's cultural events.

Avon Lake, OH & Surrounding Communities						
Retail Demand Outlook						
Top Tapestry Segments	Avon Lake, OH Total Spending, %	Avon, OH Total Spending, %	Bay Village, OH Total Spending, %	Sheffield Lake, OH Total Spending, %	Sheffield Village, OH Total Spending, %	Westlake, OH Total Spending, %
Savvy Suburbanites	35.0%		42.1%			8.7%
Comfortable Empty Nesters	24.1%		26.8%			
Professional Pride	12.2%	36.0%				
Workday Drive		31.3%				
Rustbelt Traditions				84.2%		
Home Improvement				15.8%		
Comfortable Empty Nesters		23.9%			100.0%	
Exurbanites			7.1%			20.7%
Golden Years						15.2%
Bright Young Professionals						11.4%
Midlife Constants			12.7%			10.7%
Parks and Rec		8.8%				
Old and Newcomers	21.4%					
Green Acres	5.1%					
In Style			7.1%			
Projected Spending Growth						
	Avon Lake, OH	Avon, OH	Bay Village, OH	Sheffield Lake, OH	Sheffield Village, OH	Westlake, OH

Estimated Growth Across Retail Segments	+17.15%	+17.08%	+14.32%	+23.05%	+18.74%	+15.50%
Retail Segments	Avon Lake, OH	Avon, OH	Bay Village, OH	Sheffield Lake, OH	Sheffield Village, OH	Westlake, OH
Apparel and Services	\$5,447,214	\$5,277,187	\$2,951,715	\$1,703,381	\$889,378	\$7,242,508
Entertainment & Recreation	\$9,741,849	\$9,441,367	\$5,367,492	\$3,049,179	\$1,614,180	\$12,877,927
<i>Membership Fees for Clubs</i>	\$795,130	\$755,598	\$445,097	\$228,608	\$128,317	\$1,026,050
<i>Fees for Participant Sports, excl. Trips</i>	\$350,107	\$345,010	\$197,478	\$95,137	\$54,861	\$453,970
<i>Fees for Recreational Lessons</i>	\$427,504	\$453,929	\$242,969	\$95,382	\$58,512	\$579,977
Pets	\$2,394,895	\$2,294,295	\$1,321,312	\$767,702	\$398,863	\$3,174,492
Food, At Home	\$16,682,971	\$15,769,643	\$8,981,642	\$5,301,574	\$2,775,520	\$22,250,429
Food, Away from Home	\$9,072,611	\$8,912,405	\$4,967,120	\$2,717,280	\$1,458,631	\$12,139,959
Alcoholic Beverages	\$1,544,495	\$1,448,243	\$835,957	\$460,984	\$248,905	\$2,086,717
Maintenance and Remodeling Services	\$11,812,644	\$11,893,683	\$6,865,220	\$3,402,047	2,002,543	15,366,213
Maintenance and Remodeling Materials	\$2,186,424	\$2,198,366	\$1,274,756	\$750,922	\$398,844	\$2,718,493
Household Furniture	\$2,336,909	\$2,295,266	\$1,301,325	\$740,552	\$397,180	\$3,076,496
Household Major Appliances	\$1,393,318	\$1,353,447	\$781,507	\$441,921	\$241,679	\$1,806,749
Childcare	\$1,362,179	\$1,396,689	\$768,919	\$381,011	\$206,325	\$1,770,052
Health Insurance	\$11,904,670	\$11,112,268	\$6,524,202	\$4,029,436	\$2,100,600	\$15,444,678

Source: Esri, Inc. ArcGIS Business Analyst

Retail Void Analysis. Retail Demand Data by Industry helps us understand the estimated current and future levels of spending by activity, however it does not tell us where residents spend their money to purchase goods and services. To better understand where residents may travel within the local area to make these purchases and frequent establishments, a high-level void analysis was conducted. Void analysis is a powerful tool that allows organizations and policymakers to identify gaps in services or resources in specific geographic areas (cities, counties, MSAs, etc.). This method uses point of interest (POI) data to compare a target area with a reference area to detect businesses,

services, or amenities that are lacking or in surplus. In practical terms, void analysis reveals what exists in one area but not in another, pinpointing which services may be under-represented.^{xli} For businesses, void analysis is one tool that helps identify potential new market opportunities by revealing the specific types of services that are lacking in an area. Void analysis is equally useful for addressing social issues, such as assessing the distribution of healthcare centers, educational facilities, or public services in one area compared to another. It plays an important role in helping decision-makers allocate resources equitably, ensuring all communities have comparable access to essential services.

Void analysis also measures a consumer’s preferences to gain high-level insight into purchasing decisions. Consumer preferences shape how consumers evaluate and choose products or services based on their perceived value, utility, and alignment with needs and wants. There are two primary commercial/retail locations in Avon Lake at the intersection of Avon Beldon Road and Walker Road, and Lear Road and Walker Road. National and regional storefronts are located in these commercial developments; however, local businesses, educational, and healthcare operations can also be found. Previous planning efforts, including the city’s Comprehensive Land Use Plan, and the Economic Recovery & Resiliency Plan stakeholder sessions and community survey, note a desire for more locally owned, entrepreneurial commercial/retail businesses that could be located along the Walker Road commercial corridor or at the former power plant site and would contribute to creation of a stronger community identity and sense of place. The 2019 Comprehensive Land Use Plan’s public survey notes the majority of respondents “wish to not see duplicate retail options from surrounding cities be located within Avon Lake, but rather other services not offered, or services at a smaller scale that would fit into the nature of the community.”^{xlii} For purposes of this plan, an analysis that looked at consumer’s preferences of shopping at locally owned and operated businesses versus big box retailers and national chains was done to help determine if spending preferences could support a larger base of locally owned and operated businesses.

While most residents do their shopping outside of the city limits, they would still prefer to have certain retail options available in town. They would like to see the creation of a downtown center, which housed some additional amenities that are not currently available.

- 2019 Avon Lake Comprehensive Land Use Plan

Local vs. National Spending Preference Comparison (2024)

Location	Spending Preference	Local vs. National Stores Index
City of Avon Lake, OH		
	4 – Agree Completely	88
	3 – Agree Somewhat	104
	2 – Disagree Somewhat	102
	1 – Disagree Completely	91
Lorain County, OH		
	4 – Agree Completely	100
	3 – Agree Somewhat	104
	2 – Disagree Somewhat	97

	1 – Disagree Completely	97
State of Ohio		
	4 – Agree Completely	101
	3 – Agree Somewhat	102
	2 – Disagree Somewhat	97
	1 – Disagree Completely	99

Source: Esri, Inc. ArcGIS Business Analyst

A retail void analysis was completed using the City of Avon Lake as the analysis area and the communities of Avon, Bay Village, Sheffield Village, Sheffield Lake, and Westlake as the reference area. This geographic footprint was used based on the radius of target consumers and their willingness to travel no more than 30 minutes to a location to shop. Big box retail, clothing, financial, healthcare, and restaurants were examined. While voids exist across many of the sectors researched, the City of Avon Lake should consider not only if the community would benefit from having a specific retailer located in the city, or whether a similar type of retailer would also provide comparable benefit to the city's business base.

Establishment Void/Surplus Inventory				
Sector	Establishments in Analysis Area	Establishments Expected in Analysis Area	Establishments Void/Surplus	Establishments in Reference Area
Big Box Retail	0	7	-7	25
Department Stores	0	3	-3	9
Shopping Centers & Malls	0	2	-2	8
Home Centers	0	1	-1	4
Wholesale Clubs	0	1	-1	4
Clothing	0	10	-10	34
Clothing-Retail	0	8	-8	26
Women's Apparel-Retail	0	2	-2	7
Men's Clothing & Furnishings-Retail	0	0	0	1
Financial	7	13	-6	43
Banks	6	9	-3	31
Investments	1	3	-2	12
Healthcare	22	50	-28	171
Dentists	7	16	-9	56
Clinics	2	12	-10	41
Pharmacies	4	7	-3	24
Home Health Service	2	6	-4	20
Mental Health Services	2	3	-1	11
Medical Centers	0	1	-1	5
Optometrists OD	5	3	+2	10
Restaurants	33	53	-20	181
Subway	2	2	0	7
Chipotle Mexican Grill	0	1	-1	5

McDonald's	1	1	0	4
Zoup!	0	1	-1	3
Wendy's	0	1	-1	3
Panera Bread	0	1	-1	3
Jimmy John's	0	1	-1	3
Taco Bell	1	1	0	3
Penn Station East Coast Subs	0	1	-1	2
Five Guys	0	1	-1	2
Bob Evans	0	1	-1	2
BIBIBOP Asian Grill	0	1	-1	2
Arby's	0	1	-1	2
Win Street	1	1	0	2
Mr. Hero	1	1	0	2

Source: Esri, Inc. ArcGIS Business Analyst

When looking at consumer spending preferences to shop at local stores or national stores, Esri measures preferences on a scale of 1 to 4, with 1 representing 'disagree completely' and 4 representing 'agree completely.' The national index is represented as 100 and a score above 100 shows stronger preferences to a ranking while a score below 100 shows weaker preferences to a ranking. Residents in the City of Avon Lake do not have a strong preference one way or another for shopping at local establishments versus national stores, with an index above 100 in both somewhat agreeing (104 index) and somewhat disagreeing (102 index) with preferring local over national stores. Lorain County and the State of Ohio, conversely, have much stronger preferences to shop locally. Lorain County's spending preference ranking of 4 – agree completely has an index of 100 that matches the national average and has an index of 104 when ranking of 3 – somewhat agree. The State of Ohio is similar to Lorain County with an index of 101 and 102, respectively. In the context of Avon Lake's commercial and retail business landscape being concentrated more in regional and national based stores, this is likely a contributing factor to spending preferences as residents shop at the stores available to them. Online convenience shopping is likely a strong contributor to these spending preferences as well with retailers and delivery services such as Amazon, Chewy, and Instacart offering consumers easy access to essentials and nonessentials. Additionally, the city's geographic proximity to Avon and Westlake and a higher concentration of regional and national stores located in these communities is another likely contributing factor to Avon Lake spending preferences.

Comparison of Preferences to Shop Nearby (2024)

Location	Spending Preference	Prefer to Shop at Stores Nearby
City of Avon Lake, OH		
	4 – Agree Completely	98
	3 – Agree Somewhat	104
	2 – Disagree Somewhat	97
	1 – Disagree Completely	86
Lorain County, OH		
	4 – Agree Completely	97
	3 – Agree Somewhat	100

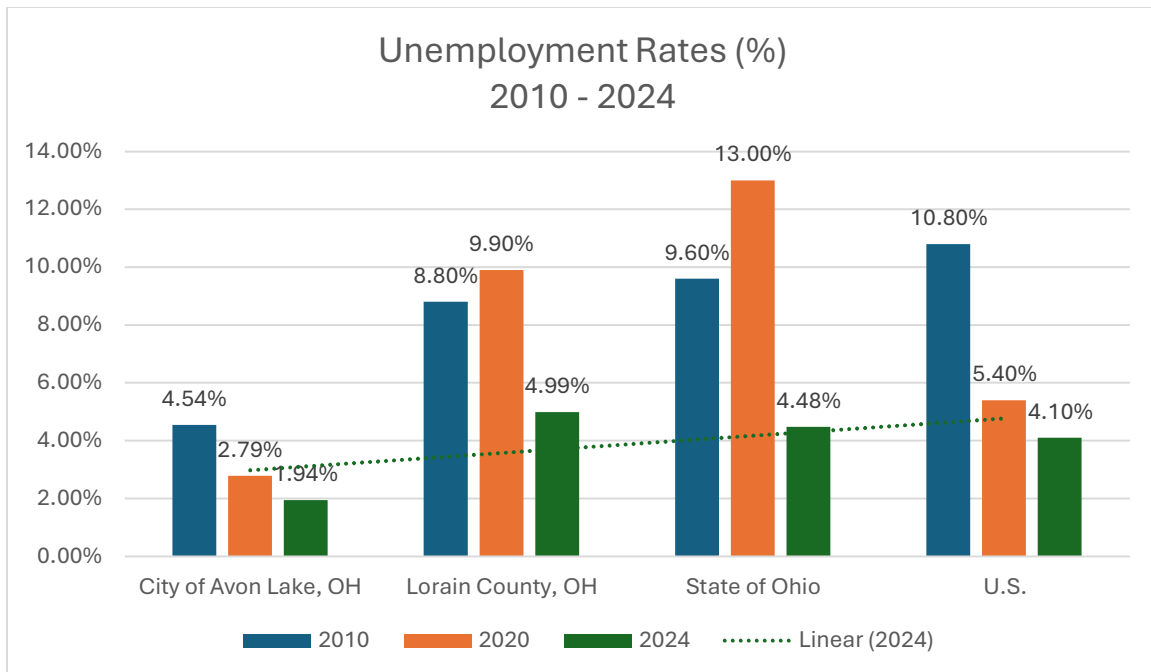
	2 – Disagree Somewhat	102
	1 – Disagree Completely	104
State of Ohio		
	4 – Agree Completely	99
	3 – Agree Somewhat	99
	2 – Disagree Somewhat	102
	1 – Disagree Completely	104

Source: Esri, Inc. ArcGIS Business Analyst

Geographic proximity to the resources residents need and desire should also be taken into consideration when determining whether locally owned and operated businesses could be supported. In this analysis, Avon Lake residents have a stronger preference to shop at stores nearby when compared to the county and state. Residents of Avon Lake have a spending index above the national average (104 index) when ranking ‘3 – Agree Somewhat’ and an index of 98 when ranking ‘4 – Completely Agree.’ Conversely, Lorain County residents and residents across the State of Ohio do not exhibit strong preferences to shop at establishments located in close proximity to home. Attracting new commercial/retail businesses to the City of Avon Lake, and encouraging startups of locally owned businesses, could bring more retail activity and spending into the city. The City of Avon Lake should look at the tools available to support this type of business development activity that would fill existing vacant storefronts and that could locate in a mixed-use setting at the former power plant site and take into consideration the spending preferences of residents along with the retail mix where voids exist and could be filled.

Workforce Analysis.

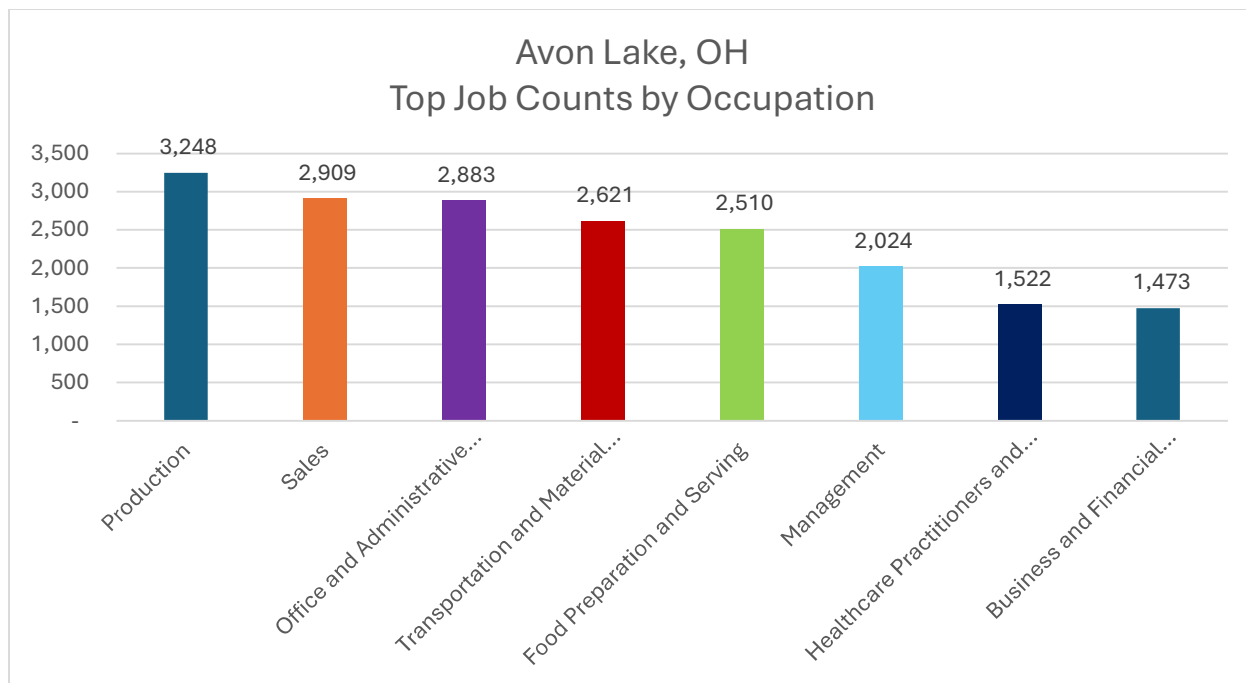
The City of Avon Lake’s population is 25,942, which is a 3 percent increase since 2020. Of the 25,942 residents, 12,422 comprise the city’s labor force and 12,181 residents are currently employed. The 2024 unemployment rate in the City of Avon Lake is 1.94 percent, which is considerably lower than Lorain County (4.99%) and the State of Ohio (4.48%) and, by definition, suggests Avon Lake’s labor force is at full employment. Full employment is defined as an economic situation in which all available labor resources are being used in the most efficient way possible and which embodies the highest amount of skilled and unskilled labor that can be employed within an economy at any given time and is considered when the unemployment rate is at or below 5 percent.^{xliii} The chart below tracks the unemployment of the city, county, state, and nation from 2010 to 2024. It is important to note that 2010 unemployment rates are reflective of residual effects of the 2007 economic downturn that lasted, according to the Federal Reserve Bank, until June 2009 and 2020 unemployment rates reflect the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. While Lorain County, the State of Ohio, and the U.S. all felt the impacts of these economic shocks, the City of Avon Lake weathered these events remarkably well. This is likely a reflection on the types of occupations residents of Avon Lake work in, with many in professional/management and healthcare professions.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Esri, Inc. ArcGIS Business Analyst

Avon Lake has a diverse labor force and industry base which can be attributed in large part to the city's geographic location along Lake Erie and its proximity to the greater Cleveland metropolitan region. Lake Erie borders the entirety of Avon Lake to the north, providing picturesque landscapes that make the community desirable to reside in. This, combined with highly ranked K-12 schools, access to internationally recognized healthcare systems, and easy access to major transportation routes makes living in Avon Lake attractive and accessing major employment centers easy. The city's industry base is also diverse, having a large industrial presence in the western portion of the city, commercial and services businesses along the southern corridor, and residential, small businesses, and green space in the central and northern areas. Avon Lake's employment base is largely comprised of companies in the manufacturing; healthcare; professional, scientific, and technical services; and retail and services sectors. These sectors provide many of the jobs to residents of the city and provides insight into what industries the city has competitive advantages in that could be attracted to the community and provide long-term, resilient economic and workforce opportunities to residents and the region.

Production occupations employ the largest percentage of jobs in Avon Lake with 3,248 positions, followed by Sales (2,909 positions); Office and Administrative Support (2,883 positions); Transportation and Material Moving (2,621 positions); Food Preparation and Serving (2,510 positions); Management (2,024 positions); Healthcare Practitioners and Technical (1,522 positions); and Business and Financial Operations (1,473 positions).



Source: Lightcast, Detailed Workforce Report, 2024

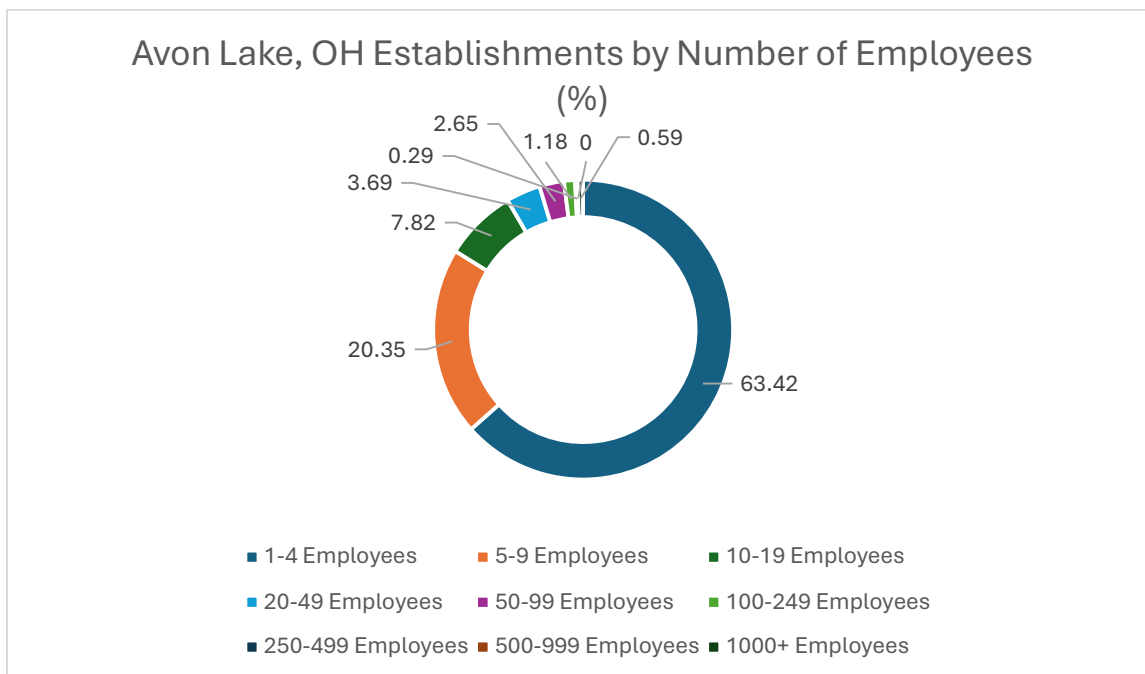
Management occupations have the highest median annual wage of \$87,569 and median hourly wage of \$42.10, followed by Healthcare Practitioners and Technical at \$70,727 and \$34.00, respectively; Business and Financial Operations at \$69,162 and \$33.25, respectively; Office and Administrative Support at \$40,851 and \$16.94, respectively; and Production at \$40,080 and \$19.27, respectively. The top five occupations by median earnings represent 42.9 percent of the total labor force in the city's leading occupation sectors.

Detailed Workforce Breakdown by Leading Occupation Sectors				
Occupation	SOC	Median Annual Wage	Median Hourly Wage	Total Labor Force
Management	11-0000	\$87,568.99	\$42.10	2,024
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical	29-0000	\$70,726.95	\$34.00	1,522
Business and Financial Operations	13-000	\$69,162.47	\$33.25	1,473
Office and Administrative Support	43-0000	\$40,850.86	\$16.94	2,883
Production	51-0000	\$40,079.74	\$19.27	3,248
Transportation and Material Moving	53-0000	\$39,565.50	\$19.02	2,621

Sales and Related	41-0000	\$31,904.16	\$15.34	2,909
Food Preparation and Serving Related	35-0000	\$27,124.25	\$13.04	2,510

Source: Lightcast, Detailed Workforce Report, 2024

Avon Lake is home to several large corporations that employ thousands of employees; however, the majority of Avon Lake's economy is made up of small businesses. The city is fortunate to have multiple large employers calling Avon Lake home, as these businesses employ thousands of people and are major tax contributors to the city and school district. Equally as important is the city's small business community. More than 83 percent of all business establishments in Avon Lake employ less than 10 people. Communities with a strong base of small businesses reflect an entrepreneurial spirit that is thriving. Small businesses are scattered throughout our main streets and downtown areas and contribute to the quality of life and brand of a community. Small businesses are often more in tune with consumers' desires and can pivot to meet changing demands more easily than larger companies. Most local customers remain loyal to their local small businesses, even amid an economic crisis or downturn, suggesting small businesses are more capable of staying relevant in any economic climate.

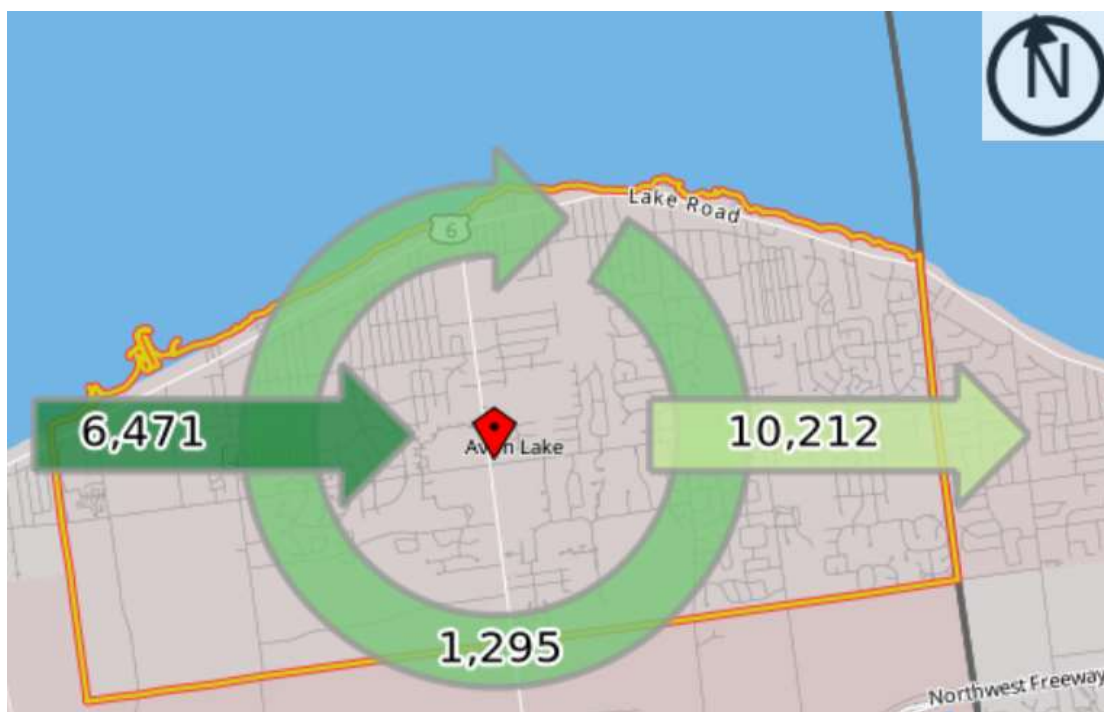


Source: Lightcast, Total Establishments Report, 2024

Avon Lake's location near major metropolitan and suburban employment centers offers a diversity of employment options for residents. The vast majority of Avon Lake residents leave the city daily for employment. More than 10,200 residents travel outside the city for work while just 1,295 residents live and work in Avon Lake and 6,471 individuals travel from surrounding communities into the city to work. With easy access into and out of the city via State Route 83 and proximity to Interstate 90, living where you want and travelling to a job you want is attainable. As Avon Lake works to attract new

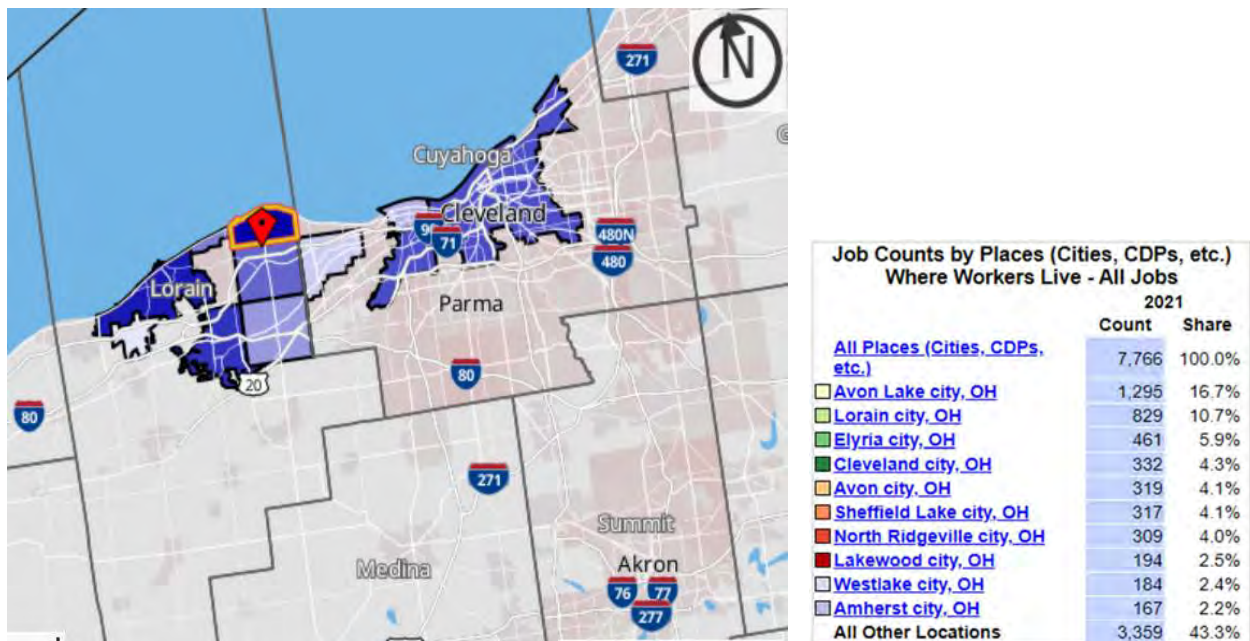
businesses, there is an opportunity to retain the city's outbound commuters by promoting local employment. Encouraging residents to live and work within the community not only reduces out-commuting but also strengthens the local economy by increasing daytime activity and supporting local spending.

Avon Lake Employment Patterns, Residents and Non-Residents



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, On the Map

When looking at where Avon Lake residents travel to for employment, it is evident the western edge of Lorain County and metro Cleveland areas attract the highest density of Avon Lake residents. With large manufacturing, professional, and healthcare employers in this footprint, there is a broad diversity of job opportunities and employers to select from. The City of Lorain attracts the highest concentration of Avon Lake residents for work, with 10.7 percent of residents traveling west on a daily basis. This is followed by the City of Elyria (5.9%), City of Cleveland (4.3%), City of Avon (4.1%), City of Sheffield Lake (4.1%), and City of North Ridgeville (4.0%). Approximately 43 percent of the remaining residents that travel outside the city for employment are travelling to destinations scattered outside the immediate labor shed, across various northeast Ohio communities.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, On the Map

Zoning and Land Use Analysis.

Land use is the process of organizing the use of land to meet a landowner's needs while respecting the capabilities of the land. Land use planning is essential as it guides the future actions of a community, presents a vision with long-range goals/objectives, and plans how people utilize the land for socio-economic activities. Often, there is confusion between land use and zoning. Land use is the categorization of the various types of uses on the land (the uses currently existing on the land, such as residential, commercial, and industrial). Zoning is the establishment of specific rules regarding existing and future land uses based on a comprehensive plan that includes an adopted future land use plan.

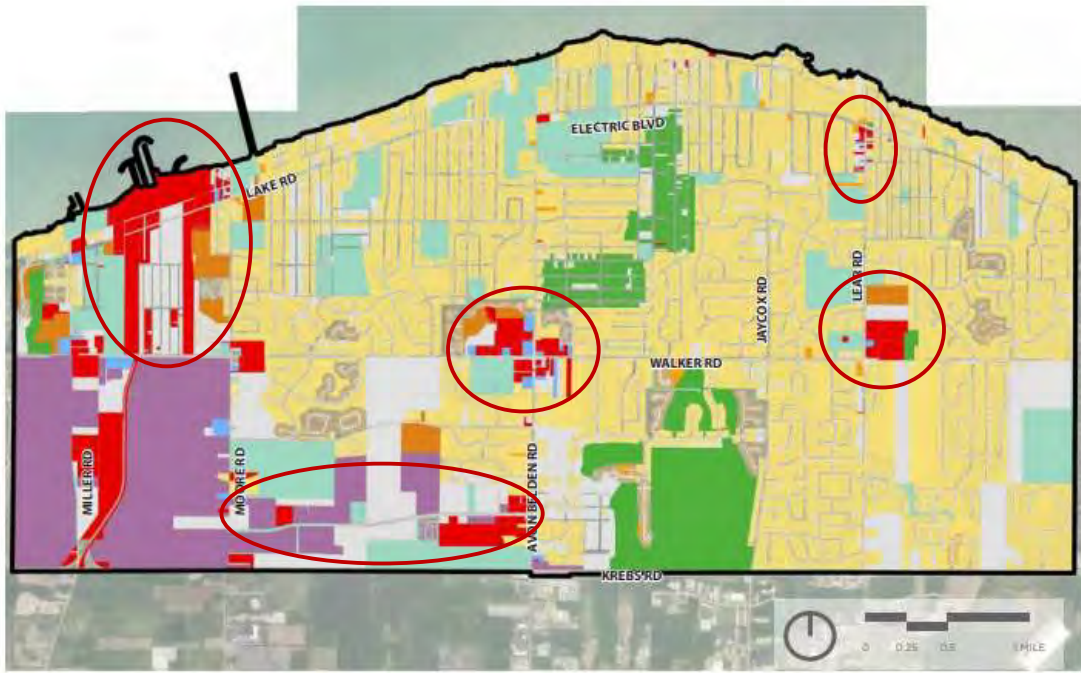
Proper land use is essential because it impacts everyone in the community, including how far residents travel to amenities, services, traffic, sights, sounds, smells, and economic vibrancy. Land use practices have far-reaching and long-lasting implications for any community. Throughout the Economic Recovery & Resiliency planning process of stakeholder engagement and public survey outreach, Avon Lake residents and stakeholders expressed a desire for balanced development, encouraging highest and best use options for redevelopment of the power plant site, recognition of the power plant site as prime lakefront property and a need to "get redevelopment right," and preservation of natural resources and enhanced public access to the lakefront. Integrating broad-based community connectivity was also identified as an opportunity for long-range planning and the city is engaged with connectivity planning being undertaken by the Lorain County Metro Parks. Connectivity relates to mobility, access to residential areas, access to open and public spaces, connectivity to service and commerce areas, and connectivity to fellow residents. Within the city's 2019 Comprehensive Land Use Plan, it was recommended that new open space and park development be easily accessible by multiple modes of transportation, offer multi-generational activities, and incorporate environmental education opportunities.^{xliv} This connectivity enhances

Avon Lake's identity and sense of community and serves residents and visitors of all ages and capabilities. Land use practices influence multiple planning elements as well as built and natural environments and will be important to future activities at the former power plant site and citywide.

Land use regulations are essential enforcement tools to achieve a vision for a community related to planning. Examples include zoning, design review, and property maintenance, and the City of Avon Lake has all three planning and enforcement tools available to them. Once a community can agree on land use, specific legislation can be adopted or updated, including zoning, overlay districts, and design review standards.

The city's 2019 Comprehensive Land Use Plan identified current land uses as defined in the map below. For the purposes of this ER&R Plan, we will focus on key commercial and industrial areas in the city and as identified in both the current and future land use maps. The former power plant site is identified as having commercial uses throughout much of the property's acreage. Areas in grey are "vacant" and include areas where utility infrastructure exists to serve the power plant site and the broader PJM Interconnection grid. Areas directly south of the power plant site, bounded by Miller Road and Walker Road, are home to large industrial/manufacturing facilities such as Avient, Lubrizol, and Ford Motor Company. This area is a mix of commercial and industrial uses, with limited vacant acreage. Primary commercial areas in the city are located along Walker Road at the intersection of Avon Belden Road (Town Center) and Lear Road (Learwood Square). Current land uses of these areas include commercial institutional, and professional office. Pin Oak Parkway is located along the southern edge of the city limits and is currently identified as having a mix of commercial, industrial, institutional, and vacant land uses. Finally, there is a mix of commercial, professional office, and industrial located along Lear Road between Electric Boulevard and Division Road (The 45s).

Current Land Use Map, City of Avon Lake



Source: Lorain County GIS Data

KEY					
	Low Density Residential		Commercial		Institutional
	Medium Density Residential		Professional Office		Parks & Open Space
	High Density Residential		Industrial		Vacant

Source: City of Avon Lake, Ohio Comprehensive Land Use Plan, 2019

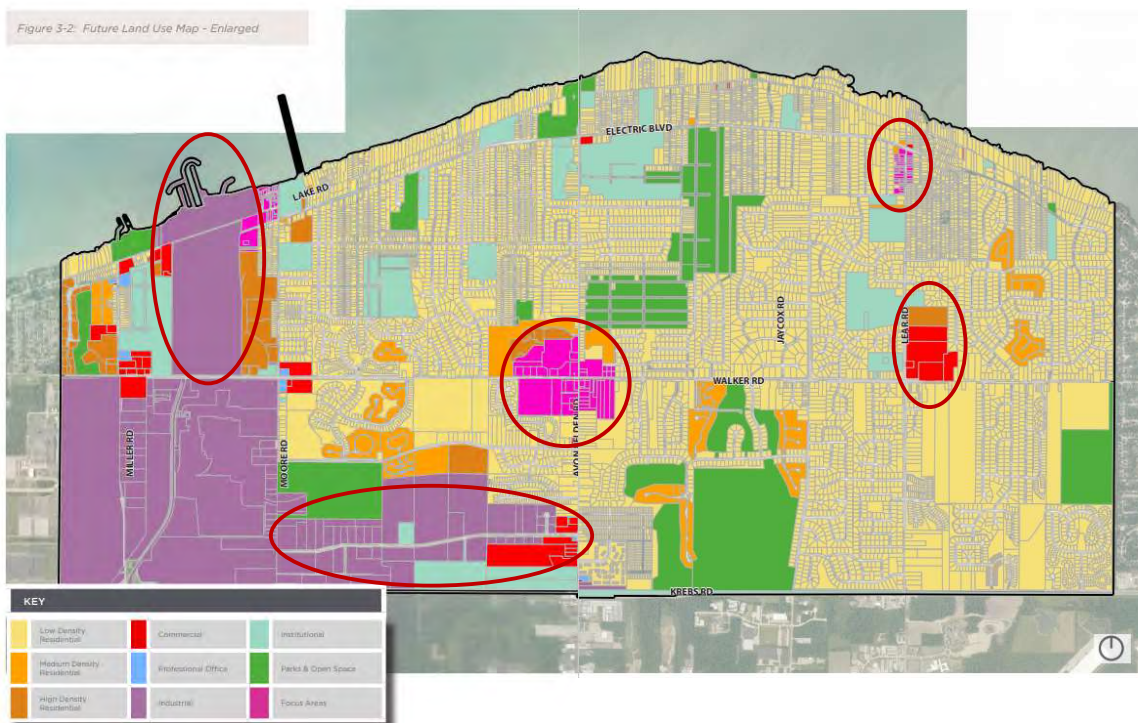
The city's future land use map simplifies the target uses of property throughout the community. The future land use map also identifies three focus areas – Avon Belden Road/Walker Road (Town Center), Electric Boulevard (the 45s), and property on the eastern edge of the former power plant site.

The Comprehensive Land Use Plan calls for the three Focus Areas to be mixed-use districts that allow for both residential and commercial (retail/office/ entertainment) uses that serve the residents within the city. Focus Area uses should be characterized by a vertical and/or horizontal mix of uses that has high public and private realm features and materials and is designed at the neighborhood and human scale to promote walkability and social interaction. Open space should be highly connected and create both small and large places for people to gather including plazas, green lawns, and natural areas. Creating recreational path linkages to the larger trail network is encouraged. Architecture

should consist of high quality, natural materials that reflect an urban environment with buildings that face the street and have narrow, well landscaped setbacks. Buildings should create visual interest on the street. Parking should be to the side or rear and screened from view. Roadways should incorporate “complete streets” that promote all modes of travel.^{xlv}

In the updated future land use map, the former power plant site is identified as almost entirely industrial use, with the exception of the defined eastern Focus Area parcels. Utility infrastructure remains on portions of the property and will likely remain at the site as they are important to serving the broader PJM Interconnection grid; however, land surrounding Avondale Avenue and south of the utility infrastructure could be considered for redevelopment. In the Comprehensive Land Use Plan’s map for future land use, areas directly south of the power plant site, bounded by Miller Road and Walker Road, have been updated to industrial uses and small amounts of commercial. Areas south of Walker Road between Moore Road and Avon Belden Road that were classified as vacant are now industrial uses with potential for industrial/manufacturing development opportunities. Primary commercial areas in the city are located along Walker Road at the intersection of Avon Belden Road (Town Center) and Walker Road at Lear Road. Lear Road/Walker Road has been updated to be consistent with its current commercial uses, with some high-density residential north of the plaza that is anchored by Giant Eagle. Property along Lear Road, between Electric Boulevard and Division Road, has been defined in the future land use map as a Focus Area where industrial, commercial, and focus area uses should be promoted. Additionally, the area along Pin Oak Parkway is prime for development and uses have been updated to be consistent with the primarily industrial existing uses, with some commercial use east of the corridor along Avon Belden Road. Limited institutional and parks and open space uses can be found on the northwest portion of the corridor.

Future Land Use Map, City of Avon Lake



Source: City of Avon Lake, Ohio Comprehensive Land Use Plan, 2019

**City of Avon Lake, Ohio
Zoning and Land Use Evaluation**

Element	West End Redevelopment Plan 2014	Economic Development Program Strategy 2016-2024	City Comprehensive Plan 2019	Lorain County Strategic Action Plan 2024	Comment(s)
200-acre Power Plant Site along waterfront	Power Plant to be converted from coal to natural gas. Future site to be developed in six phases consisting of mixed land uses to include industrial, office, laboratories, commercial, parkland, and residential uses.	Collaborate with West End Commission & CIC with emphasis on business retention, expansion and recruitment. Partner with TeamNEO and JobsOhio.	Remove waterfront barriers. Enhance public access of waterfront. Expand park/rec lands along waterfront. Dev land use plan for waterfront. Update waterfront zoning. Adopt public policy for public acquisition of waterfront land. Seek funding for waterfront property purchases. Promote innovative industrial dev along waterfront.	Promote partnerships for investment and development. Invest in emerging future oriented businesses such as technology, water, food and energy-based sectors. Prioritize community infrastructure such as housing and transportation.	June 2021: Announcement made that the Power Plant is to be decommissioned. Demo of site to be completed by spring 2025. Two buildings to remain: old transformer building and old screen house (built in 1926 Art Deco architectural style)
Land use breakdown			The city is predominantly residential 51%, followed by vacant land 14%, industrial 11%, institutional 10%, commercial 7%, and parks & open space 7%. The industrially zoned areas are located to the west and southwest of the city.		
Zoning	Power Plant Site zoned general industrial (I) with adjacent sites Light Industrial (LI).		The city has 14 zoning districts. Six (6) residential, 3 commercial, 2 industrial, 1 public-institutional, a PUD and one mixed-use overlay district.		
Future Land Use			Power Plant site changed from industrial to commercial. Parcels on the west of site and south of Lake Road changed from mixture		

			of light industrial/residential and commercial to institutional. Some waterfront properties west of the plant changed from institutional to parks & open space.		
--	--	--	---	--	--

These local land use and zoning strategies – particularly the emphasis on mixed-use Focus Areas, connectivity, and public access to the lakefront – reflect broader planning principles aimed at promoting efficient, sustainable development. In particular, these approaches align closely with the concept of Smart Growth.

The American Planning Association identifies “Smart Growth” as supporting choice and opportunity by promoting efficient and sustainable land development, incorporating redevelopment patterns that optimize prior infrastructure investments, and consuming less land otherwise available for agriculture, open space, natural systems, and rural lifestyles. Smart growth principles encourage compact design and direct development to locations where it is more efficient to provide public services and away from open space and agricultural land. It is not a single tool but a set of planning principles that work with local conditions to achieve better development patterns.



Collaboration and Visioning.

Community and stakeholder engagement are important aspects of any planning process. The main idea behind stakeholder engagement is to share information, gain insights, and increase support — leading to better decisions and better project outcomes that benefit organizations and their community. This engagement allows stakeholders an opportunity to voice ideas and opinions and ultimately leads to community members helping to serve as change-agents in determining the community’s strategic planning roadmap. Additional benefits of collaboration and visioning through stakeholder engagement are promoting transparency, building trust, gaining a social license to implement recommendations, boosting accountability, and helping make more informed decisions.^{xlvii}

The Avon Lake Recovery & Resiliency Plan project included two stakeholder meetings and one public input survey. Stakeholders represented a cross section of business owners, business leaders, school

district leadership, and community organization leaders. Stakeholders were identified by the Project Team and were asked to share what recovery and resiliency meant to the city’s efforts to support redevelopment at the power plant site and what it meant to overall economic development activities throughout Avon Lake.

Stakeholder Meeting #1. The first stakeholder meeting was held on January 28, 2025, at The Lake House and a high-level SWOT analysis was conducted. Meeting summary notes are included as Appendix 2.

Stakeholder SWOT Analysis Summary – Meeting #1

Strengths	Weaknesses
• Big box retail will likely not happen/develop in Avon Lake • Retail/service type business growth will come from locally owned/entrepreneurial individuals living in and around the Avon Lake community • Miller Road Park is existing area where community events have taken place • City is home to concentration of boaters and could benefit from a marina	• City is a 3-sided community (with Lake Erie to the north) • Not sure where big growth and population growth would occur • City is pretty much built out and this needs to be considered as we move forward • City lacks places to eat, shop, etc. • City’s economic development strategy is lacking and needs bolstered; ER&R Plan will help define visions/goals and initiatives the city should undertake to be intentional in how it targets economic development activity • Need to develop cohesive, compelling message to market to developers/site selectors/businesses/etc. as part of business attraction strategy • Create a brand and ways to bring people to the city • Lack of communication and city would benefit from a PR campaign and/or communication plan
Opportunities	Threats
• Better leverage of city’s location on the lake, not just for parks/greenspace, but for things to do, shop, etc. (e.g., Solar Eclipse Day gave residents/visitors multiple activities to do while in town) • Create a sense of place and define “who” Avon Lake is as a community • PR campaign around development plan/strategy to promote new opportunities to developers/end users/community • Entrance into community at SR 83 needs to be improved; like the prior vintage coastal town feel/image; somewhere city colors changed to maroon and gold which moved away from the vintage coastal feel • Support business development opportunities (e.g., Vermillion, Huron Boat Basin, Sandusky,	• Seems to be lack of robust communications with residents about status of power plant site • The Interim Development Agreement (IDA) that Avon Lake Executed in November 2024 – and TIF that it contemplates – need to better be explained to impacted stakeholders (e.g., school district) and community ○ TIF is one of the most important tools for public infrastructure investments related to economic development activity; TIF does have potential to divert tax revenue from future development away from the school district, and that needs to be carefully examined ○ TIF and tax abatement can be used together (e.g., springing TIF structure)

Catawba Island, Port Clinton) that create a sense of place and offer variety of things to do when visiting the city ○ Creates opportunities for the city to support each other ○ Cross promotion, multiple events ○ Create an Avon Lake brand/placemaking strategy ○ Better streetscapes that welcome residents/visitors to the city and make those welcome areas pronounced/well-defined • “Coastal Cleveland” brand is a way to look at new opportunities for redevelopment/development in the city • How to think of Avon Lake as a destination community that is on the Coastal Cleveland route that runs from Catawba Island (west) to Cleveland (east) • Lakefront is a strong asset of the city; improved lakefront access would be great and could create new opportunities to hang out on the lake for individuals, families, residents, visitors, etc. ○ City would benefit from a marina • Consider how redevelopment of the former power plant site provides financial benefits back to the city; city leadership does want to maximize benefits of redevelopment activities (tax producing activities) • Avon Lake does not have a defined “town center” but does have places that could be a catalyst for town center-style development: ○ Opportunity for a waterfront district that creates community identity/heart of the city ○ City would benefit from a community center, indoor pool, better/improved senior center; • The Anchor Recreation Facility is an asset that could possibly expand its amenities (e.g., Westlake Recreation Center or T-3 Training Facility type amenities) • Metroparks should plant their flag in the city • Sunset Steps concept (e.g., Solstice Steps, Amphitheater)	○ TIF negotiations must be cognizant of any school district bond issuance or levies placed on the ballot • Need to look at ways to replace the \$270,000 in tax revenues the power plant site generates now and find ways to support development that raises tax revenues beyond the \$270,000 for long-term benefit to city/city services • Residents think tax burden is going to be on them from losing the coal plant or from redevelopment
--	--

When asked about the specific industrial and business development opportunities that exist within the city, stakeholders referenced the relevance of recommendations made in the 2014 West End Plan that studied various development scenarios for the former power plant site and the area south of Lake Road along Avondale Avenue. While the preferred redevelopment design of waterfront acreage

north of Lake Road is mixed-use development with open space/greenspace, design recommendations for the area south of Lake Road along Avondale Avenue included attracting a mix of advanced manufacturing, research & development, technology, and professional office space that created good paying and knowledge-based jobs. These end uses align with Lorain County's 2024 Strategic Action Plan. It was mentioned that the city should explore ways to work with Avon Lake Regional Water to incentivize targeted development activities and consider site control options for the city on property south of Lake Road.

Industrial and Business Development Considerations



General redevelopment comments from stakeholders throughout the meeting included:

- City needs to take ownership of the master plan process for the power plant site
- The project will be a significant challenge we can't get our head around without a strong team leading the way; how do you get there?
- There is so much the city can do today – look at Town Center concept; work to attract developers; focus on redevelopment
- Redevelopment of entire power plant site/area may be pie in sky right now, but maybe if a broader area redevelopment vision is in place, the community can make other improvements that will support longer term redevelopment of the site
- People will come to Avon Lake instead of going east, along lake, if there is a destination to visit
- Create synergy among Avon Lake assets – Ford, Avon Lake Schools, Waterfront, Data Centers (off set cooling, generate tax revenues), possibly become a Smart City
 - Synergies between ED businesses and bringing key business leaders together
 - Dialogue amongst residents, community, businesses
- Ford is bringing 1,800 jobs to area which creates potential opportunities for ancillary investments to support the facility's growth
- Growing retail development and increasing population leads to a larger tax base
- Possibly consider more housing options, ways to lower property taxes, etc. as way to attract new residents/businesses to area
- Maybe it is ok to not have a dedicated city center; different mixed-use districts could be ok
 - Smaller communities have free ride services that take people between districts

- Hard to do tourism in city for fishing tournaments; local businesses try to direct visitors locally, but most times visitors come in, fish, and leave
- ER&R project is not just about redevelopment of site, but how do you undertake it
- Business attraction strategy overall must be intentional and focused
 - Can't be all things to all people; economic development efforts should be focused and looking at how to market development and redevelopment potential

Stakeholder Meeting #2. A second stakeholder meeting was held on February 26, 2025, at the Avon Lake Public Library and the discussion was focused on benchmarking of redevelopment sites across the U.S. and effective engagement of stakeholders in overall economic development activities. Stakeholder input included the following:

- *Is residential or commercial more beneficial to the schools?* A balance is needed and, while there is a housing underproduction nationally, new residential in Avon Lake must be balanced with existing capacity of school facilities and growing the business base.
- *Redevelopment processes and economic development takes time.* Patience and persistence in working a project is important to understand. Savannah's Riverside District redevelopment of its former coal fired power plant started in 2012 and opened in 2020 with additional phases of development underway. Construction and funding often come in phases.
- *Importance of partnerships, understanding what partners are asking for/need, and identifying who is part of the project team and who is leading the charge.*
 - Understand economics and numbers of financing/incentives agreements related to investment and having a transparent engagement process with key stakeholders (business/developer, schools, city, residents).
 - Current infrastructure capacities are strained. Need capital improvement plan and infrastructure development plan. (Note: this is not within the scope of the EDA project)
 - Private portion vs public portion. How to connect with a buyer/developer for the site? Valor Acres used DiGeronimo; Vermilion has one developer. Need vision to shop to developers. Developers are out there (inside and outside area, county, state, country). Developers want to have plans in place, incentives in place. City needs to figure out what benefits everyone (city, schools, developer, etc.).
 - The Interim Development Agreement states "the City's administration agrees to support the Land Developer's efforts to secure the Avon Lake School District's agreement for the largest TIF exemption feasible to support the Project." A TIF application analysis should consider terms that maximize the value and benefit to the applicant, the city, and the schools. Schools, city, property owner(s), and county should be involved in negotiations.
 - Need roadmap for transparent conversations and coordination.
- *How to properly value city greenspace?* Developers will gain the most with the proposed public greenspace. Need conversations on vision/plan, solving any problems, negotiations/strategies, and consideration for proper value of land to be used as green/open space.

A copy of the meeting presentation is included as Appendix 3 and meeting summary notes are included as Appendix 4.

Public Survey Results. The City of Avon Lake conducted public surveys/community outreach during the 2014 West End Plan and 2019 Comprehensive Land Use Plan work with the intention of collecting opinions, ideas, and aspirations of residents as it relates to economic development, community planning, and land use. Approximately 448 individuals responded to the 2019 Comprehensive Land Use Plan community survey and a smaller number of individuals participated in engagement discussions during development of the 2014 West End Plan. Public surveys help elected leaders and staff understand how the people they represent feel about particular issues and how the policies and strategies they enact affect individuals. Public surveys also help city leaders set priorities and guide decisions around what the community may likely support. Across the West End Plan and Comprehensive Land Use Plan there were themes that emerged from public input which included:

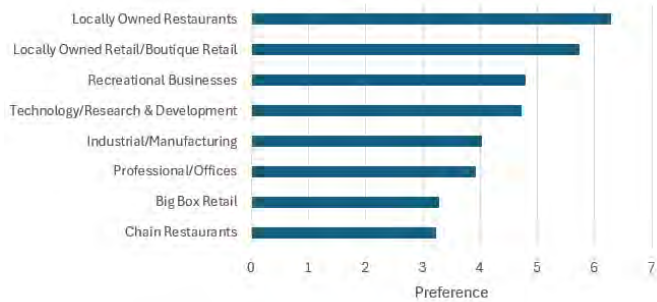
1. Expanded public access to the lakefront to recreate and enjoy the natural assets offered by Lake Erie.
2. Desire for the creation of a “town center” where local businesses operate and residents and visitors can eat, shop, and gather in open spaces for events and community activities.
3. Sensitivity to how new residential developments impact city services, city finances, local schools, and community resources.
4. Promotion of land use strategies that enhance multi-modal connectivity and examines the impacts of development on existing public infrastructure capacity.

As part of the ER&R Plan process, it was important to conduct a public survey to gain specific insights into redevelopment desires at the former power plant site and overall economic development priorities that impact the city in general. Survey results were compared against input gathered from the West End Plan and Comprehensive Land Use Plan to identify commonalities and shifts in desires of respondents since feedback from those plans is more than five years ago – all of it predating knowledge about when the power plant would be demolished. It is important to note that the Economic Recovery & Resiliency Plan survey does not represent a statistically significant percentage of the overall population of Avon Lake; however, survey results do help provide indicators of potential shifts in perspectives and steadfast feedback of respondents and is one tool to help reflect on the types of development desired and supported in the community.

The ER&R Plan public survey recorded 454 responses and 93 percent of respondents indicated they are currently city residents while 27 percent of respondents work or own a business in Avon Lake. To gain insight into preferred economic development efforts, survey respondents were asked to rank various priorities and land uses, and opportunities to leave comments were offered throughout the survey. Respondents answered a majority of the questions in the survey, and the total number of respondents to each question is identified in the survey summary. Detailed survey results can be found in Appendix 5.

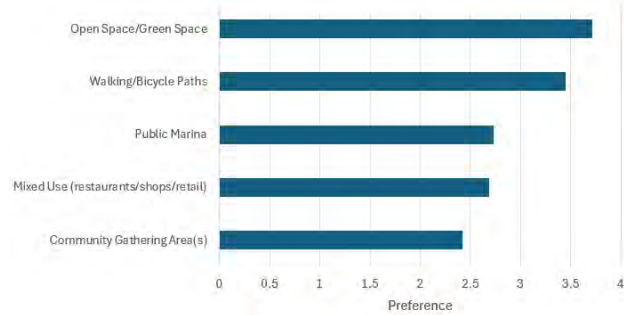
Four hundred fifty (450) respondents ranked locally owned restaurants, retail/boutique retail, recreational businesses, technology/research & development, and industrial/manufacturing as the top five preferred business types to attract to the city.

Q3. Efforts to attract new businesses to Avon Lake should both improve and sustain economic vitality in the city. Please rank the business types below in the order you believe provides the greatest economic impact to Avon Lake.



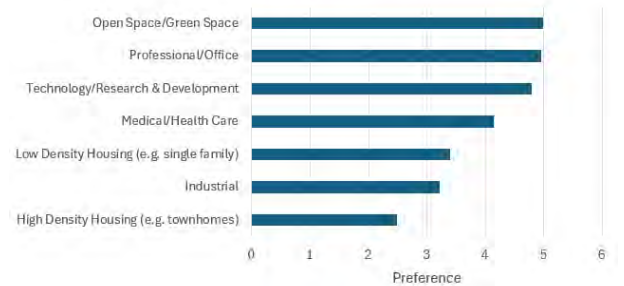
Specific to the 45.6 acres of lakefront property at the former power plant site, 422 survey respondents felt open space/greenspace and walking/bicycle paths as the most suitable land uses at the site, followed by a public marina and mixed-use.

Q4. The former power plant site encompasses 45.6 acres of lakefront property. Please rank the type of land use(s) you feel best suit the site.

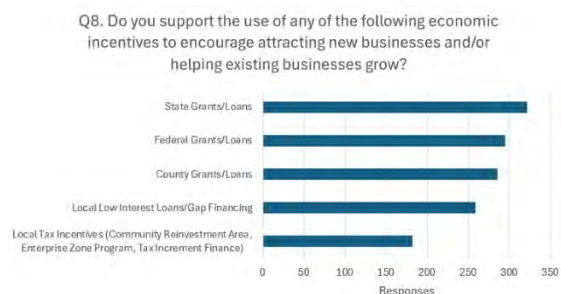
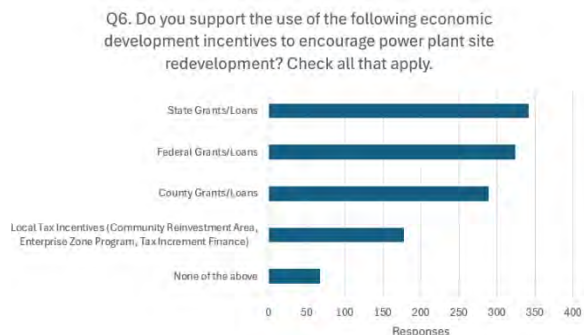


When asked about the 60.5 acres of property located south of Lake Road along Avondale Avenue, 448 respondents ranked the top three redevelopment opportunities that best suite this area as open space/greenspace, professional/office, technology/research & development, and medical/health care.

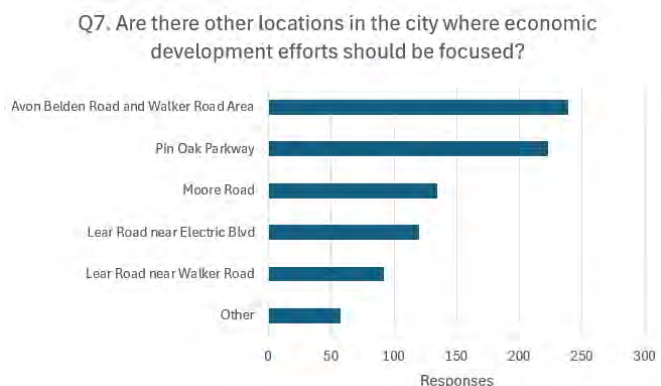
Q5. Approximately 60.5 acres of property are located south of Lake Road along Avondale Road. Please rank the types of redevelopment opportunities you feel best suit the area.



Grants and loans from the state, federal, and county levels were the most supported economic development incentives to support redevelopment at the former power plant site (436 responses) as well as encouraging economic development throughout the city for supporting existing businesses, helping existing businesses grow in Avon Lake, and attracting new businesses (416 responses).



When asked what locations outside the former power plant site should be considered for economic development, the Avon Belden Road and Walker Road area, Pin Oak Parkway, and Lear Road near Electric Boulevard areas were most preferred. Of the 416 responses, 239 (57.45%) felt Avon Belden Road and Walker Road should be a focus area; Pin Oak Parkway was identified by 223 (53.61%) as a preferred development area; and 120 (28.85%) identified Lear Road near Electric Boulevard as a preferred area.



Other areas where economic development efforts should be focused, as identified by 57 open comments are summarized as being at the former Tops store, the general Town Center area, Miller Road, Miller Park area, Beach Park, Moore Road, along Walker Road between Miller Road and Taylor Road, along the Avondale Avenue corridor, and the coal yard area between Lake Road and Walker Road.

Finally, respondents were asked to leave other comments important to the ER&R Plan, with 139 comments provided. Five key themes emerged as follows:

1. **Opposition to High-Density Housing** – concerns include overburdened infrastructure, school crowding, loss of greenspace, traffic congestions, and change in small-town character.
2. **Desire for Lakefront Revitalization** – emphasis on keeping lake views open to the public and the need to define a clear, enthusiastic vision for transforming the former power plant site into a mixed-use destination for

greenspace/beach access/walking and bike paths, restaurants, boardwalk, marina, and outdoor dining and shopping.

3. **Call for a Recreation Center** – suggestions included a facility with an indoor pool, senior/youth facilities, turf fields, and fitness areas. Westlake and Rocky River were listed as benchmarks for recreation center designs.
4. **Infrastructure and Public Services** – concerns for aging water, sewer, electric, and road conditions and a request to focus on infrastructure improvements before new development occurs.
5. **Protect and Expand Greenspace** – concerns for deforestation and overdevelopment, and support for more parks, trails, bike paths, and nature preservation.

Recommendations.

Community and economic development strategies in the City of Avon Lake should be rooted in local data, guided by proven economic development tools, and informed by the community's competitive strengths. These strategies must be paired with intentional marketing and outreach to developers and businesses. Collectively, they should drive targeted private sector capital investment in key development locations throughout the city (including the three define Focus Areas), catalyze growth in key industry sectors, create meaningful employment opportunities for current and future residents and sustain the city's unique character as a vibrant lakefront community for generations to come.

The 2019 Comprehensive Land Use Plan identifies "continued development of the industrially zoned areas of Avon Lake" as Goal 6, which serves as a foundational guidepost for ongoing economic development efforts. Since the adoption of that plan, more than 500,000 square feet of new development has occurred along the industrial-zoned Pin Oak Parkway. Avon Lake should examine the factors that contributed to this success – such as infrastructure improvements, streamlined permitting, or incentive use – and apply those lessons to further advance implementation of Goal 6.

The goal's specific objective to strategically plan for and enhance the city's industrial corridors is reflected throughout the ER&R Plan. Key recommendations – such as launching a Business Retention & Expansion (BR&E) program, developing a centralized Business Resource Guide, and leveraging tools like Tax Increment Financing (TIF) and a locally administered RLF, are all designed to strengthen the long-term viability and resilience of Avon Lake's industrial base.

These initiatives are not only responsive to the goals outlined in the city's land use policy, but they also reflect a forward-looking approach to economic recovery, workforce alignment, and infrastructure readiness that positions Avon Lake for sustainable growth in a post coal economy.

GOAL 6:

Continue development of the industrially zoned areas of Avon Lake.

	TIMEFRAME	POTENTIAL PARTNERS
OBJECTIVE 6.1: Continue to plan for strategic development to further enhance the industrial area.		
<i>Action 6.1.1:</i> Establish design guidelines to maintain a high quality of site orientation and building design.	M	PC LD Z PW
<i>Action 6.1.2:</i> Develop marketing and communication tools to promote site development and innovations.	O	ED LO P
<i>Action 6.1.3:</i> Ensure that future development within the industrial areas still includes pedestrian elements for employees.	L	PC Z PW
<i>Action 6.1.4:</i> Meet with local companies to discuss opportunities to expand and capture more local demand for their product(s) and identify challenges and barriers to expansion.	S - O	M C ED LO P
<i>Action 6.1.5:</i> Collaborate with regional organizations to support and attract new industrial businesses.	O	M C ED PW
<i>Action 6.1.6:</i> Identify and create economic development incentives to advance the development of the district.	L	M C PC LD ED P
<i>Action 6.1.7:</i> Ensure that the roadway network meets the demand and requirements for the industrial businesses.	O	M C PW

Source: Avon Lake Comprehensive Land Use Plan, 2019

The City of Avon Lake should pursue the following recommendations that enable economic recovery and resiliency and ensure stability to weather future economic downturns or shock that may occur.

1. Establish a coordinated Business Retention & Expansion (BR&E) Program that builds on Avon Lake's valuable relationships with its existing businesses, strengthens local industry sectors, and supports existing businesses in their efforts to achieve long-term sustainability and success in Avon Lake.
2. Use the city's existing Community Improvement Corporation (CIC) structure to promote a Public-Private Partnership model that brings together government and private sector stakeholders to prioritize, analyze, implement, and fund a targeted suite of economic development and site development strategies.
3. Implement the Avon Lake Business Attraction & Marketing Strategy to actively promote the City of Avon Lake as a desirable location for companies and talent. This strategy aims to attract new businesses across key industry sectors that will diversify, build resilience and strengthen the local economy, while focusing on development and redevelopment opportunities in designated commercial, industrial, and mixed-use areas.
4. Actively support and participate in the redevelopment of the former power plant site, exploring innovative funding strategies to transform the site into a thriving mixed-use

- district that attracts businesses of all sizes, encourages entrepreneurship, and maximizes its location along Lake Erie’s shoreline while prioritizing sustainability, connectivity, and public waterfront access.
5. Integrate environmental sustainability practices into citywide economic development and business attraction efforts, applying traditional economic development and land use practices that recognize the interconnectedness of economic growth, local ecosystems, and community well-being.
 6. Complete a Comprehensive Infrastructure Plan that evaluates and guides the development, maintenance, and improvement of the city’s critical infrastructure systems – including roads, water and sewer lines, stormwater systems, utilities, and public facilities – to meet the current needs and support future growth in Avon Lake.

Recommendation #1. Establish a coordinated BR&E Program that builds on Avon Lake’s valuable relationships with its existing businesses, strengthens local industry sectors, and supports existing businesses in their efforts to achieve long-term sustainability and success in Avon Lake.

Existing businesses and the local workforce are key “barometers” of a community’s economic health (as a place to live, work and play). Research shows that 80 percent of all economic development investments are made by businesses that already exist and operate in a community.^{xlvi} Avon Lake’s strong and growing industrial base—including 720+ establishments employing over 9,000 people – and its diverse mix of small businesses (83% with under 10 employees) and international companies such as Ford Motor Company, Avient Corporation, Lubrizol, and Chemtron Corporation, position the city to benefit substantially from an intentional BR&E strategy.

In Avon Lake, key employment sectors include Manufacturing (24.10% of employment), Healthcare (13.32%), and Wholesale Trade (9.8%). The city has also seen notable job growth in Construction (+38.46%), Utilities (+78.46%), and Professional, Scientific & Technical Services (+10.45%) from 2022 to 2024. A BR&E program can help the city monitor and respond to these trends by maintaining active dialogue with business leaders to understand and support their evolving needs.

Consistently, the City of Avon Lake has shown itself to have an economic philosophy that is focused on supporting existing businesses. This is not surprising given the large number of Avon Lake residents that are involved in Avon Lake businesses as owners, employees, or customers.

The city puts this philosophy into practice most significantly with its Jobs Growth Incentive Program (JGIP). This program has been in place since 2012, and annually it gives grant awards to Avon Lake businesses that are growing. JGIP is an automatic program—the businesses do not apply for it. The city looks at the payroll tax information from the prior tax year, and the grants are based on a percentage of the business’s increase in payroll tax increase from the year before. These are not huge grant awards. They are intended to be a recognition by the City of Avon Lake that a business has

stayed and grown in the city. This is a rare, unique program. There are few like it in surrounding communities. But that is consistent with the value that Avon Lake places on its existing businesses.

Since 2016, Avon Lake's Economic Development Committee has discussed whether it would be beneficial for Avon Lake to create a business attraction incentive, based on payroll tax, that is more aggressive than the existing Jobs Growth Incentive Program (JGIP). Each time, the Avon Lake City Council members on that committee have decided that such a program would not be fair to existing businesses. Attracting new businesses is great, they said, but not if it means we're turning our backs on the businesses that got our economy to this point.

As such, a BR&E program in Avon Lake should be built on that long-standing philosophy. It should be conducted in an on-going manner and includes businesses of all sizes and across all industry sectors but acknowledge and even focus on the industry sectors that exist currently—notably polymers and advanced materials, the industry sector for Avient, Lubrizol, Thogus Products, and Mexichem. A BR&E program involves a dialogue with local businesses to better understand their issues and concerns. These efforts can show the community's appreciation for business contributions and enable local leadership to identify economic development strategies informed by local businesses as well as inform the community at large about individual and community-wide business concerns.^{xlviii} Such a program would build on the work of Avon Lake's Business Navigation Ad Hoc Committee of 2021-2022, the goal of which was to improve points of contact between the City and businesses. That committee's recommendations resulted in the City's Community Development Department, Development Review Committee, and Business Navigator role. Equally as important, a BR&E program facilitates improved relationships among local development organizations and business leaders. This collaboration can lead to more effective communications and long-term working partnerships resulting in more cooperative community policy and decision-making.

Key Results of a Successful Business Retention & Expansion Program



Strategy 1.1. Develop Coordinated BR&E Program to Support and Grow the Local Business Base.

As noted above, BR&E is the cornerstone of any economic development effort in a community and should serve as the foundation to build, maintain, and grow a local economy. Communities should intentionally market to new companies that are compatible with economic dynamics; however, a consistently run BR&E program can pay even greater dividends. Benefits to a robust BR&E program include:

- Create ongoing interaction with business leaders, owners and decision makers.
- Reinforcing the city's desirability as a business location due to its skilled workforce (54% hold a bachelor's degree or higher), high quality of life, and low poverty rate (2.3%).
- Promoting resilience by understanding threats in sectors like Machinery and Primary Metal Manufacturing, which have experienced employment losses.
- Increasing business satisfaction and fostering expansions by providing targeted solutions.
- Success of existing businesses creates a vibrant business environment where other companies want to locate.
- A vibrant business environment signals to new businesses that resources are available to start, grow and succeed.
- Tracking economic and workforce trends helps a community better understand the current business climate, determine shifts that may be benefitting or harming existing businesses, and shape future efforts to support the existing business community.
- It costs little to work with existing businesses versus continually hunting for new companies.

With a business landscape that spans more than 680 establishments- 83 percent of which are small businesses that employ less than 10 people-which means that the City's relationships with small businesses are critical. Avon Lake has worked closely with the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) located at Lorain County Community College. As partners, the City and the SBDC have even created programs specifically for Avon Lake small businesses. In 2020 and 2021, when Covid 19 was devastating small businesses, the City of Avon Lake used federal funds to create grant programs for its small businesses, awarding grants totaling \$250,000 during those years. Avon Lake's BR&E program will build on these past efforts with small businesses.

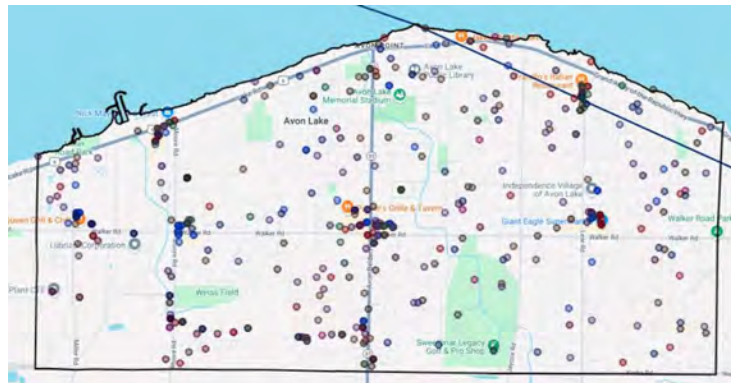
Additionally, the city is home to major domestic and international companies (Alumalloy Metal Casting Company, Avient Corporation, Chemtron Corporation, Ford Motor Company, Lubrizol Advanced Materials, Main Street Care Center, Thogus Products, Towne Center Community Campus, Watteredge LLC) that employ thousands of individuals. Collectively, this dynamic business base not only helps ensure economic stability, but it also presents the challenge of understanding and responding to diverse business needs.

This range of businesses, from local entrepreneurs to international employers, underscores the importance of developing an intentional BR&E strategy that recognizes the differing needs across sectors and company sizes. A successful BR&E Program should include direct outreach to targeted lists of employers and facilitate groups in a way that identifies companies that are similar in size, market, and priorities. In each of these groups, the city would have one-on-one engagement with decision makers, Human Resource leads, operations managers, and other key representatives to

gather intelligence/business trends, challenges and opportunities and understand the resources companies need to keep them competitive in Avon Lake. These touchpoints will help the city respond proactively to changing market conditions, talent demands, and infrastructure needs.

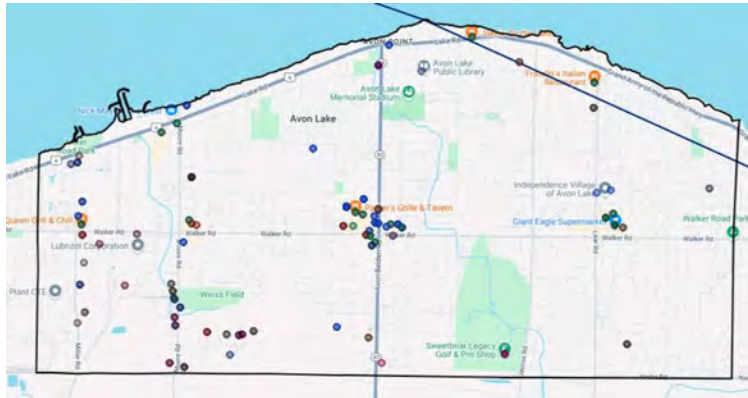
Given Avon Lake's economic profile, where high growth sectors like Construction (+34%) and Utilities (+78.46%) are expanding while other sectors such as Machinery and Primary Metal Manufacturing are showing signs of decline-this engagement will enable city leaders to direct resources effectively and provide tailored support. The Community Development Department has been doing BR&E visits at Avon Lake businesses alongside the Lorain County Development Department and should continue to leverage this partnership and involve other local, regional, state and federal agencies to co-host business visits, share intelligence, and connect businesses with tools such as small business financing, TIF, PACE financing, or workforce incentives. A structured BR&E Survey will help collect consistent information and data points on BR&E visits and will assist the city in identifying trends, concerns, and opportunities (Appendix 6). Ultimately, a well-structured BR&E program will strengthen Avon Lake's economy from within, foster long-term resilience, and reaffirm the city's commitment to its business community.

Business Locations Map – 0 – 10 Employees Avon Lake, OH



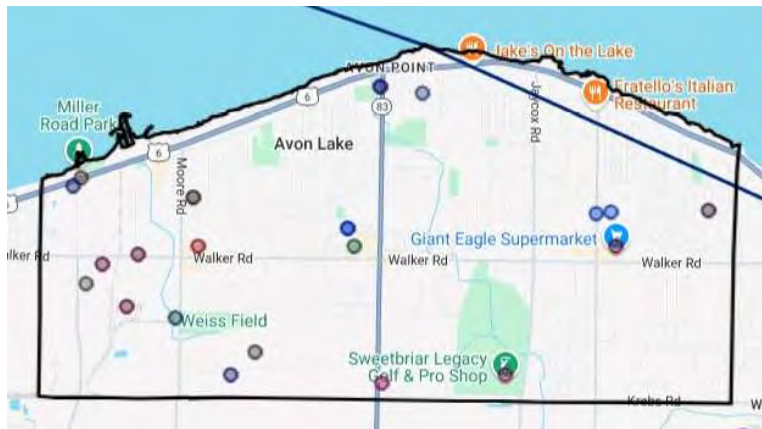
Source: Lightcast, Total Establishments Report, 2024

Business Locations Map – 11 – 49 Employees Avon Lake, OH



Source: Lightcast, Total Establishments Report, 2024

Business Locations Map – 50+ Employees Avon Lake, OH



Source: Lightcast, Total Establishments Report, 2024

Avon Lake Business Retention & Expansion Program Structure

Develop annual list of target companies

- In partnership with local regional stakeholders—including Lorain County, NOACA, Team NEO and JobsOhio—create an annual list of target companies for engagement. This list should be informed by: employment size (top employers and high impact small businesses), market growth (e.g., recent expansions, capital investment activity), workforce demand (e.g., activities hiring or anticipated talent shortages), alignment with strategic industry clusters such as Advanced Marketing, Professional and Technical Services, Construction and Biohealth, Sectors identified through regional economic development plans or location quotient analysis as either high opportunity or at-risk. This list should be dynamic, revisited quarterly, and used to guide proactive outreach, business visits and follow-up support efforts through the BR&E program.

Coordinate Planned BR&E Visits

- Organize and lead coordinated BR&E visits by assembling a team of local, regional, and state partners—including workforce development agencies, economic development organizations, and government representatives, as appropriate. These visits should focus on engaging directly with business executives to gather insights on operational challenges, growth opportunities, workforce needs, and infrastructure concerns.
- Use a standardized BR&E survey tool during each visit to ensure consistent data collection and to evaluate each company's growth potential or risk profile. Summarize findings in a shared reporting format to identify trends, inform policy decisions, and prioritize follow-up support.

Organize Resources

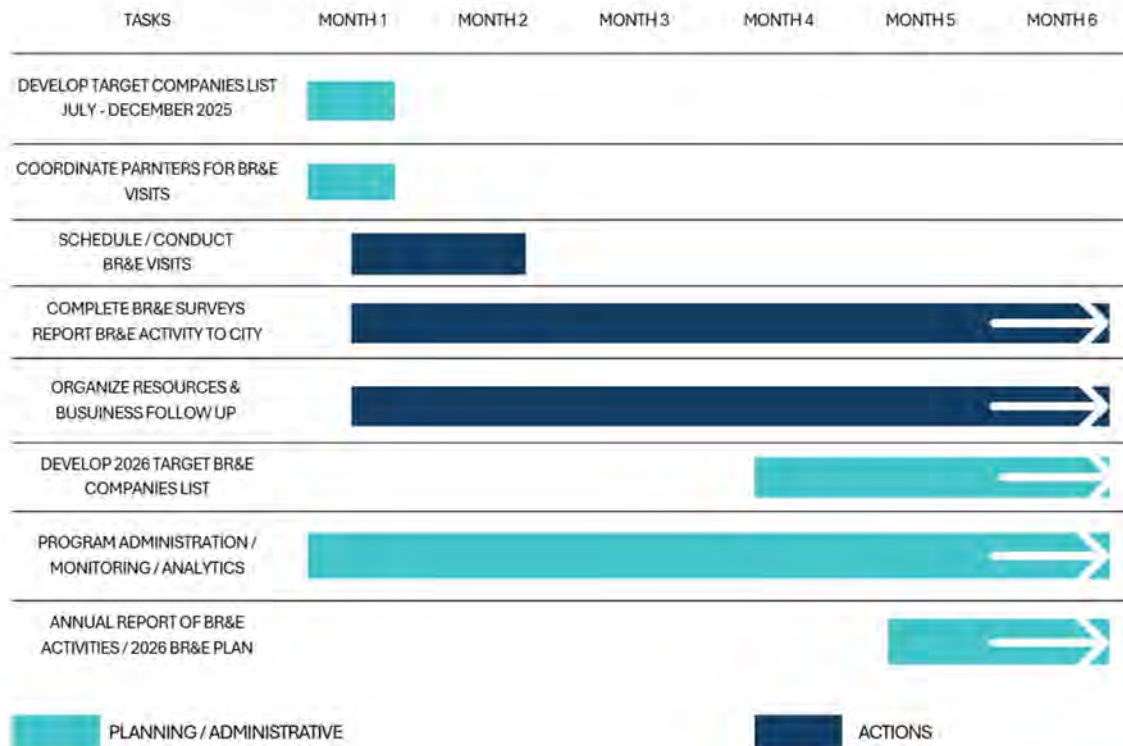
- Coordinate follow-up efforts after BR&E visits by facilitating funding discussions, resolving regulatory or permitting concerns, and addressing current or future public infrastructure needs that may impact business operations or growth.
- Assess whether broader business or policy issues exist—such as zoning, workforce, or transportation challenges—that the City of Avon Lake can help address through internal coordination, policy updates, or partner engagement.

Project Administration

- Ensure the BR&E program is properly staffed with dedicated city personnel who can lead outreach efforts, coordinate partner engagement, and manage follow-up activities.
- Establish a system to consistently track and monitor BR&E data, allowing the city to identify emerging trends, unmet business needs, service gaps, and opportunities for program or policy improvements.

RECOMMENDATION #1. BUSINESS RETENTION & EXPANSION PROGRAM

Establish Business Retention & Expansion Program



Strategy 1.2. Create Avon Lake Business Resources Guide and Promote Local, Regional and State Programs that Compliments Avon Lake's BR&E Program.

To assist Avon Lake's existing business community and support the city's vibrant business climate, we recommend producing a comprehensive, web-friendly Avon Lake Business Resource Guide that consolidates all citywide economic development programs together with the various resources and support offered by Avon Lake economic development partners, such as Lorain County, NOACA, and the State of Ohio. A comprehensive guide that serves as a rolodex of resources and can be found on one easy-to-navigate site makes access to these resources more readily available and accessible, driving increased interest in programs and value of the City's Community Development Department. This aligns with Avon Lake's goal to diversify economic tools and was echoed during stakeholder engagement, where businesses requested easier access to program information.

By organizing these resources into a centralized guide, Avon Lake can strengthen the connection between its local business community and the broader network of support available throughout the region. The region is home to various resources that can support Avon Lake's existing businesses, such as low-interest loans and gap financing, building renovations and façade improvements, small business grants, and financing and incentives for larger capital investment projects. Using the Avon Lake Business Resources Guide as a tool that supports the needs of local businesses helps ensure

Avon Lake retains and grows local businesses, contributing to the general economic resiliency of the city. A sample of the programs the city should promote in one consolidated site includes:

City of Avon Lake Programs

Program	What It Offers	Who It's For	Details
Job Growth Incentive	35% rebate on additional income tax from added jobs or wages (up to \$50,000/year)	Businesses hiring or increasing wages	Job Growth Incentive Program Details
CRA Tax Abatement	Property tax exemption for new construction or major renovations	Businesses in CRA zones	CRA Tax Abatement Program Details

Lorain County Programs

Program	What It Offers	Who It's For	Details
Revolving Loan Fund	Loans up to \$550,000 at below-market interest rates	For-profit industrial/commercial businesses	Lorain County RLF Program Details
Recycling Loan Fund	Up to \$150,000 for businesses using recyclable materials	Eco-conscious manufacturers and businesses	Lorain County Recycling RLF Program Details
CDBG Flexible Grant	Up to \$250,000 for downtown building improvements	Projects meeting CDBG eligibility	
Tax Increment Financing (TIF)	Uses future property tax revenues to finance public infrastructure improvements	Developers with projects requiring public improvements	Lorain County TIF Program Details
Port Authority Construction Financing	Sales tax exemption on construction materials	Projects \$10 million or more	Port Authority Construction Financing Details

Program	What It Offers	Who It's For	Details
Property Assessed Clean Energy Special Improvement District (PACE)	Long-term financing for energy efficiency and energy systems upgrades	Commercial property owners within eligible districts	Ohio PACE Program Details

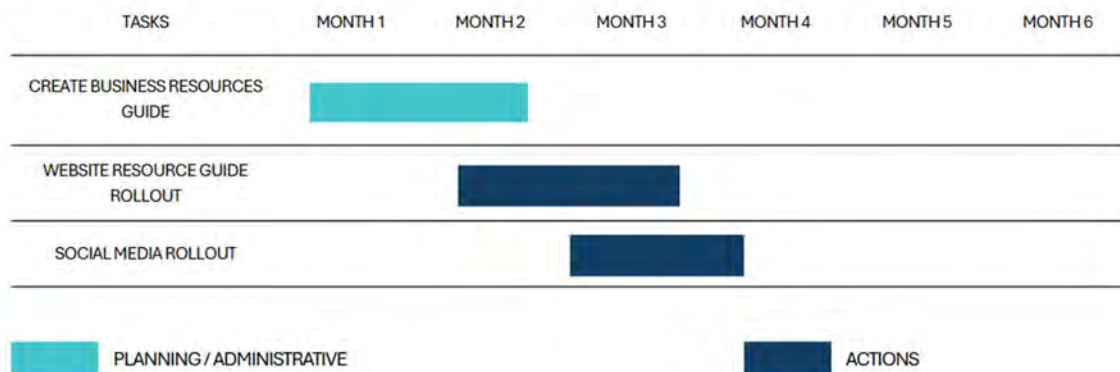
State of Ohio Programs

Program	What It Offers	Who It's For	How to Apply
Women's Business Enterprise Loan	\$45K–\$500K for business growth	Existing women-owned businesses	Women's Business Enterprise Loan Program Details
Ohio GrowNOW	3% interest reduction on loans up to \$400,000	Small businesses retaining/creating jobs	Ohio GrowNOW Program Details
JobsOhio Incentives	Customized incentive packages	Companies planning significant growth	JobsOhio Program Details
VetLoan Advantage Program	Application fee waived and appraisal rebate up to \$3,000	Veteran-owned businesses (50%+ ownership)	VetLoan Advantage Program Details
Ohio Enterprise Bond Fund	Up to \$10 million in fixed-rate, long-term capital asset financing	Growing businesses needing capital	Bond Fund Details
Job Creation Tax Credit (JCTC)	Refundable tax credit based on new payroll (10+ jobs, \$660,000+ payroll)	Businesses creating significant new jobs	JCTC Info
Data Center Tax Exemption	Sales tax exemption for qualifying equipment purchases	Data centers meeting investment and payroll minimums	Tax Exemption Info
R&D Investment Loan Fund	\$500K–\$5M for research and development-focused businesses	Companies engaging in R&D activities	R&D Fund Info

Federal & National Programs

Program	What It Offers	Who It's For	How to Apply
SBA 504 Loans	Up to \$5 million for long-term, fixed asset financing	Small businesses expanding facilities or equipment	SBA 504 Loan Program Details
EDA Revolving Loan Fund	Gap financing for businesses without access to traditional loans	Small businesses, MWBE-owned businesses	EDA RLF Program Details
Amber Grant	Monthly \$10,000 and annual \$25,000 grants for women-owned businesses	Women entrepreneurs in various sectors	Amber Grant Program Details

RECOMMENDATION #1. BUSINESS RETENTION & EXPANSION PROGRAM Create Business Resources Guide



Strategy 1.3. Establish Avon Lake CIC Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) Program through U.S. Economic Development Administration Economic Adjustment Assistance Grant to Support BR&E Needs that Builds Resilience.

EDA provides Economic Adjustment Assistance grants to eligible recipients to capitalize or recapitalize lending programs that service businesses that cannot otherwise obtain traditional bank financing (and in limited situations to governmental entities for public infrastructure).^{xlix} These loans provide access to capital as gap financing to enable small businesses to grow and generate new employment opportunities with competitive wages and benefits. Financing also helps retain jobs that might otherwise be lost, create wealth, and support minority and women-owned businesses. As described previously, the City of Avon Lake is eligible to pursue U.S. EDA Public Works and Economic Adjustment funding programs due to the closure of the Avon Lake Power Plant, categorizing the city as a Coal Communities Commitment. **The Avon Lake CIC, as a public non-profit organization, should pursue a \$500,000 grant award through the U.S. Economic Development Administration's [Revolving Loan Fund \(RLF\) Program](#) to establish the Avon Lake RLF Program.**

To inform and strengthen the development of Avon Lake's RLF Program, the City can look to successful models implemented in other communities as benchmarks. These examples illustrate how EDA funded RLF programs can be structured to effectively support small business growth, job creation, and local economic resilience.

REVOLVING LOAN PROGRAM EXAMPLES

City of Springfield, Ohio RLF Program. Working in partnership with the Springfield Small Business Development Center, the City of Springfield offers an EDA-seeded RLF program for new and existing for-profit businesses located in the city. Up to 90 percent of financing is available through the City of Springfield RLF program and job creation and/or retention is required to be eligible.

Black Hawk Economic Development, Inc. Revolving Loan Fund Program. The purpose of the Black Hawk Economic Development, Inc. (BHED) RLF Program is to promote new business start-up, expansion, and/or retention projects. In fulfilling its purpose, the organization seeks to “foster capital investment, as well as job creation and retention.” The RLF Program was funded through a U.S. EDA RLF program grant request and is administered by the organization on a local level with the Loan Committee responsible for program supervision. As such, the Loan Committee reviews [loan applications](#) for compliance with the organization's RLF Plan and makes the decision as to the organization's participation in a project. The Loan Committee is also responsible for loan servicing issues (e.g. loan extensions, collateral subordination, etc.). To be eligible for the RLF Program, a business must meet the generally accepted definition of a small business: for profit, independently owned and operated, not dominant in its field of operation, and meet certain employment and/or sales size standards. RLF Program projects are reviewed on a competitive basis with emphasis on those projects whose primary operation involves manufacturing, commercial services, or wholesaling of commercial goods.^l

Eligible Use of Funds

- Acquisition of real estate (to include land, building, etc.)
- Building construction or improvement
- Purchase of machinery or equipment

- Working capital

Ineligible Use of Funds

- If credit is otherwise available on reasonable terms and conditions
- If the loan is to solely pay off a loan to another creditor to reduce its risk
- A loan for agricultural or speculative purposes
- A loan to an enterprise primarily engaged in lending or investing activities or whose principal income is derived from gambling activities
- If the loan encourages monopoly, or is inconsistent with the accepted standards of the free competitive enterprise system
- If the loan is used solely to relocate a business from one commuting area to another or inside or outside of a target area

The RLF Program is a "gap financing" program which emphasizes maximum private sector participation in each project.

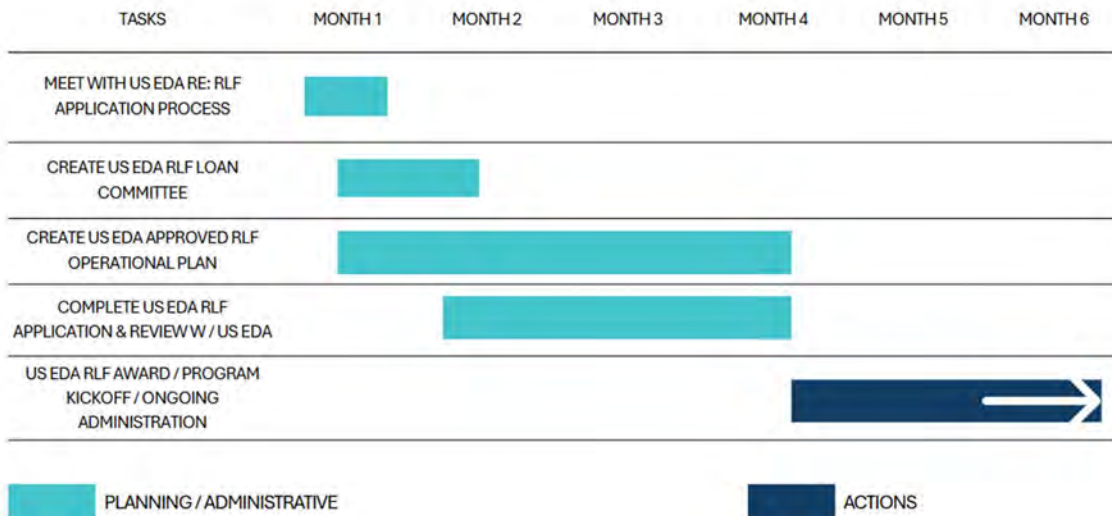
The RLF Program offers two types of business assistance:

Direct loans are usually made concurrent with a participating loan from the commercial lender. The RLF loan typically does not exceed twenty five percent (25%) of the total project cost or \$50,000, whichever is less. Loans for fixed assets typically do not exceed five years while working capital loans are typically for three to five years.

Direct loan interest rates are typically at 6%-7% interest and may vary based upon the application and financial need of the applicant. The Borrower is responsible for the loan closing cost.

Loan guarantees are used to facilitate a direct loan between a small business and a commercial lender. The amount of the guaranty or guaranteed portion of the loan is based upon the merits of the application and financial need of the applicant. The Borrower is responsible for a guaranty fee of one to two percent on the guaranteed portion of the loan and associated loan cost.

RECOMMENDATION #1. BUSINESS RETENTION & EXPANSION PROGRAM US Economic Development Administration Revolving Loan Fund



Strategy 1.4. Establish the Avon Lake Business Roundtable to coordinate a C-level executive roundtable initiative that brings together local business leaders to share ideas.

An effective leader understands that building a broad network of colleagues and resources is vital to business and professional success. Building and engaging with local colleagues is equally important and can lead to a creative environment where C-level executives learn and innovate together, solving business problems and addressing community needs. A well-developed professional network is filled with individuals who are highly skilled in diverse areas of expertise and can be called on to lend perspective and share experiences that help leaders maneuver through various complexities. The Collaborate Phase brought together a diverse representation of business leaders from Avon Lake to formulate ideas on redeveloping the former power plant site and other key development areas throughout the city. It was evident from this SWOT-style meeting that continued dialogue around the ER&R Plan and other general business leadership discussions were desired by those in attendance. Use this business roundtable to inform future zoning updates, infrastructure improvements, and economic development policies that reflect actual business needs-especially as the city reaches near build-out and must balance infill, redevelopment, and industrial land preservation. Avon Lake's CIC can play an integral role in establishing and facilitating these interactions which ultimately creates a healthier business community that is apt to foster innovation and creative investment opportunities in the community, as well as advocate for new business attraction opportunities. Communities can establish this Business Roundtable opportunity in a structured manner following best practices from leading entrepreneurial centers like The Edward Lowe Foundation or take an organic approach to convening these types of conversations like Morrow County, Ohio's Development Office.



The Edward Lowe Foundation has developed a unique CEO roundtable methodology, PeerSpectives, that is designed specifically for leaders of second-stage growth companies. The Foundation defines a second-stage growth company as one that has moved beyond the start-up phase but has not yet reached full maturity. Typical C-level roundtable formats are structured to ensure there is balanced representation from the local business community. Conversations are usually structured, and an emphasis is placed on sharing experiences rather than offering advice.^{li} The Foundation's approach to PeerSpectives varies in that it provides a confidential environment for discussing sensitive business and even personal issues with colleagues.^{lii} Participants have reported they have gained new ideas on everything from marketing strategy and financial issues to dealing with difficult personnel problems.^{liii} PeerSpectives roundtables were originally designed for CEOs, presidents and owners of second-stage companies. Over the years, the Foundation found the system works for any professional in a position of leadership and who possesses final decision-making authority, such as leaders of nonprofit organizations, department heads of municipalities and business owners of first-stage companies. In short, it benefits any leader who encounters decisions they have never faced before.^{liv} The Edward Lowe Foundation's PeerSpectives program is a proven format being utilized by communities and organizations across numerous states, Canada, and in various nonprofit organizations including the National Association of Women Business Owners.^{lv}

The Edward Lowe Foundation has facilitated and sponsored their signature PeerSpectives programs in conjunction with local communities and economic development organizations, including recent opportunities in [Grand Rapids and Lansing, Michigan](#). Additionally, the Foundation has independently hosted PeerSpectives retreats for C-suite executives where personnel/HR insights, acquisitions acumen, Gino Wickman's Entrepreneurial Operation System (EOS) best practices, and business accountability questions have been answered.^{lvi}



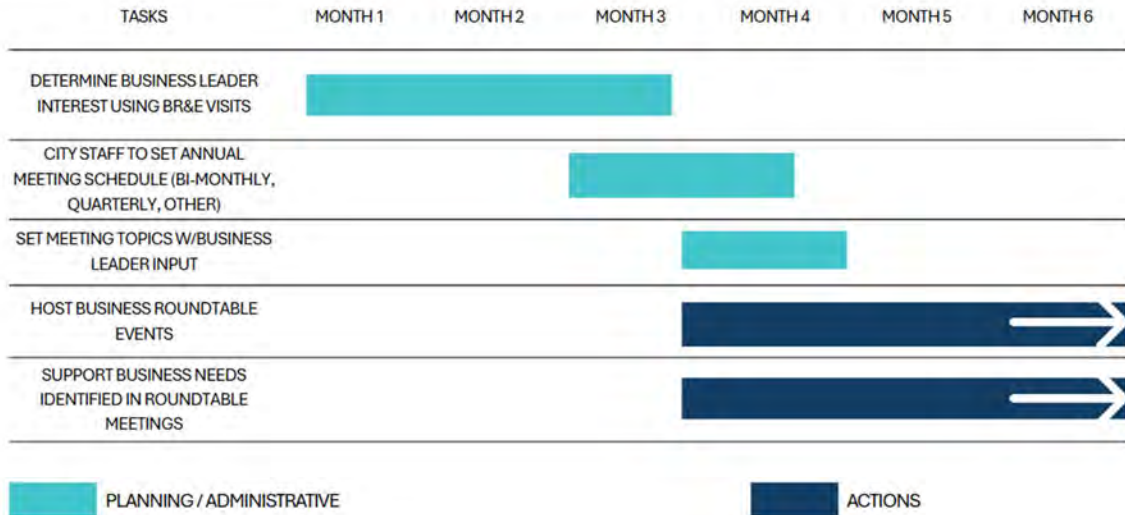
In 2023, Morrow County initiated a **C-Level Round Table** that came out of recommendations from their Strategic Economic Development Plan. The purpose of this roundtable discussion is to facilitate meaningful interactions with local business leaders.^{lvii} Through a C-level executive roundtable, local business leaders will be brought together to be a sounding board for challenges they are facing/have faced, as well as encourage discourse that could lead to solutions to these challenges. By sharing their experiences with fellow executives, they can work toward creating a healthier business community, which will ultimately lead to business expansion and retention, as well as new business attraction for Morrow County.^{lviii}

The appetite from existing business owners and C-suite executives to have a forum to discuss industry trends, operational approaches, and build lasting relationships in the community is evident

and the benefits to the business community that evolve out of these roundtable relationship-building forums should not be ignored.

RECOMMENDATION #1. BUSINESS RETENTION & EXPANSION PROGRAM

Establish Avon Lake Business Roundtable



BUSINESS RETENTION & EXPANSION PROGRAM KPI EXAMPLES



Existing Planning Alignment: BR&E is the foundation of economic development success. Partnering with county, regional, state, and federal resources to support existing business success is important for long-term economic wellbeing and resilience. The **Lorain County Strategic Plan** does not specifically define BR&E as a priority; however, it is integrated into broader countywide priorities. Pillar 2: Facilitate Greater County-Wide Collaboration focuses on improving government services across Lorain County to build new approaches that help spur new solutions and accelerate outcomes that benefit residents and business. Pillar 3: Foster a Strong Local Workforce and Education System is important for creating a future-ready workforce that can adapt to emerging trends and changing needs of business. To continue to build a strong future, the county must ensure that the educational systems are high quality and provide relevant and future-orientated skill sets. Pillar 4: Support Innovative Industry and Economic Development sets the objective of building existing industries in creative ways as economic development drives community prosperity. Proactively engaging in innovative economic development is at the forefront of the county plan and Lorain County recognizes it has a range of tools to support various economic development efforts. Pillar 5: Facilitate Creative Solutions to Transportation, Housing, and Infrastructure needs is relevant to BR&E as this objective focuses on solutions that improve quality of life, pathways to prosperity, and overall community resiliency.

Similar to the Lorain County Strategic Plan, BR&E efforts align with the **NOACA CEDS** across multiple CEDS priorities as these priorities help create an environment where existing business can thrive:

- **Access to Broadband:** Broadband infrastructure enhances overall economic and community development impacts in Avon Lake and drives NOACA's goal of building resilient infrastructure and a vibrant, innovative economy.
- **Manufacturing:** Growing a diverse manufacturing base that supports the adoption of technological advancements creates a more competitive and up to date manufacturing industry, supports entrepreneurial activities in manufacturing, and grows the region's workforce are all key to creating a local environment where business can succeed.
- **Transportation:** Building resilient infrastructure, efficient and affordable transportation systems that connect residents to employment, and support a vibrant, innovative economy are all important to the ongoing efficient operations of existing businesses. Additionally, a connected transportation system is important for workforce mobility that also ensures efficient operations of existing businesses.
- **Housing:** Creating a diverse mix of housing, whether located at the former power plant site or in other areas of the city, aligns with NOACA's goal of building resilient communities, equitable investments in affordable housing, and reclaiming Brownfields. Housing supports the local workforce, attracts talent, and helps ensure local businesses can access local talent.
- **Innovation & Entrepreneurship:** Supporting innovation and entrepreneurship activity promotes the growth of high-value, future-oriented sectors and supports small business development-core tenets of NOACA's innovation objectives. These businesses bring new ideas and new partnerships to the local economy that offer value-added services and continue to foster a competitive economic climate where existing business can succeed.
- **Economic Resilience:** BR&E is the foundation to economic development success. Communities that create an environment where existing businesses can efficiently and competitively operate increase the potential for business retention and growth. A sound

BR&E effort enhances the existing industry base, strengthens the tax base, and maintains a diverse economy that can weather future economic shock.

Recommendation #2. Use the city's existing CIC structure to promote a Public-Private Partnership model that brings together government and private sector stakeholders to prioritize, analyze, implement, and fund a targeted suite of economic development and site development strategies.

The way a community manages its economic development program is equally as important as the plan or strategies it adopts. The City of Avon Lake adopted an Economic Development Program when it created a department and director position in 2016 that gives a comprehensive overview of the core elements of conducting economic development activities (Appendix 7 – Avon Lake Economic Development Program). Elements range from supporting programs that create a competitive and accommodating business climate, establishing and implementing a comprehensive economic development strategy, marketing the city as a place to locate, using economic development tools to facilitate new investment and job creation, and establishing a rapid response team that can quickly address economic development leads.

The City of Avon Lake is in a unique position as a largely built-out suburban community with limited remaining acreage for new development. This makes it especially important to use various targeted economic development tools that align with land use and zoning policies while creating positive economic and financial impacts for the city and its constituents. While almost 500,000 square feet of warehouse and industrial space was built on Pin Oak Parkway between 2021 and 2024, the availability of existing industrial and professional office space is currently limited and must be addressed. Speculative office space has been listed along Pin Oak Parkway, but it has not materialized in recent years. At the same time, the closure and demolition of the Avon Lake Power Plant has created an opportunity to redevelop more than 45 acres of lakefront property, returning it to a productive, tax generating use. Additional areas, such as parcels south of the power plant site along Avondale Avenue, sites on Pin Oak Parkway, the intersection of Electric Boulevard at Lear Road, and key commercial areas along the Walker Road corridor also present significant redevelopment potential and should be actively marketed to attract investment in high-value competitive industry sectors.

To support and facilitate economic development activities throughout the city, **Avon Lake should enhance the use of its existing CIC to lead economic and site development strategies that complement the priorities and work of the City's Community Development Department in undertaking to support existing business growth and attract new investment.** The Avon Lake CIC was originally created in 2003 and reinstated in 2018 by the Secretary of State as the Second Avon Lake CIC (AL CIC). The AL CIC is a not-for-profit entity authorized under the Ohio Revised Code. CICs are designated agents of local governments and are empowered to promote industrial, commercial, and civic development through a wide range of economic development tools.

As a quasi-public organization, the AL CIC can acquire and convey property, administer grants and loans, coordinate with state and regional economic development partners, and facilitate programs such as tax abatements or site preparation efforts.^{lix} With over 235 CICs active statewide these organizations serve as flexible, powerful mechanisms to carry out economic development strategies that align with local land use policies and financial goals.^{lx} By more fully utilizing the AL CIC's statutory powers, such as property marketing, development facilitation, and partnership building, Avon Lake can more efficiently implement the recommendation outlined in this plan. CICs have broad power to assist local governments with economic development programs and services as delineated in Section 1724.02 of the Ohio Revised Code. Unique powers and authority of CICs include:

- Borrowing money for any purpose of the CIC
- Providing loans to individuals for businesses
- Acquire, convey, dispose of, hold, lease, purchase, receive, sell, sublease, and/or transfer real and personal property
- Acquire associations, businesses, corporations, firms, goodwill, joint stock companies, other assets of any persons, partnerships, real and personal property, rights, and trusts
- To charge fees to political subdivisions for services
- Entering into contracts with federal, state, and local governments
- Serve as an agent for grant applications and for the administration of grants; and
- To do all acts necessary or convenient to carry out its statutory powers

CICs have been utilized to coordinate SBA loans, CDBG loans, local RLF programs, Brownfield development, establishing entrepreneur centers, and developing technology and broadband initiatives. CICs can provide grants and loans to startup businesses, and are frequently utilized for promotion and marketing, economic development branding, website development, and to promote and coordinate economic development meetings and trade shows. CICs cannot exercise eminent domain, cannot levy taxes and can only recommend tax abatement and tax incentive programs to entities with authority to initiate the same.^{lxi} CICs are subject to audit by the State Auditor's Office and are subject to the Sunshine Law and Public Records Laws, with limited exceptions. Membership on the CIC board is not a "public office" and CICs can negotiate incentive deals in private so long as it negotiates in accordance with Ohio's Sunshine Laws.

Since 2021, when Avon Lake updated the structure of AL CIC, the group has been led by seven Directors on its board. The Mayor, Chair of the Economic Development Committee, and Community Development Director all serve as AL CIC Directors. The remaining four Directors are volunteer Avon Lake residents who are appointed to the board by the Mayor and Council.

From 2021 through 2023, AL CIC was very active in the City's relationship with ALERG, having monthly meetings where ALERG would provide updates on the status of the power plant demolition project. In 2024, with a new mayoral administration, ALERG updates moved to the City's Economic Development Committee meetings – a committee of City Council comprised of three Council members. With that shift, AL CIC has been dormant, having met only twice in 2024 and not since February of that year. This recent history presents an economic development organization in search of a mission and purpose; a potent agent for Avon Lake if the city can breathe life back into it.

A key for the city in this task will be to determine what composition the CIC board should have to give it the necessary agency to carry out this recommendation and its strategies. Before 2021, AL CIC was a group of five non-elected and non-appointed residents, and their activities were not entwined enough with Mayor and Council's priorities. Since 2021, with the new board structure, the CIC has been seen by many to be part of the Administration, with the city's Community Development Director serving as the Secretary/Treasurer. Going forward, "*Who is AL CIC?*" will be a very important question, and the city must find a winning strategy for the group to have the buy-in that it needs.

Strategy 2.1. Adopt Avon Lake ER&R Plan as the Roadmap for Driving Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies in Partnership with the City of Avon Lake.

The AL CIC should adopt this Avon Lake ER&R Plan as a formal roadmap to guide site development, investment attraction, and property marketing in close partnership with the City. This work should be coordinated with the city's BR&E efforts to ensure site readiness and incentive programs respond to real-time business needs and sector-specific opportunities identified through employer engagement. The City of Avon Lake should coordinate site and incentive readiness with the city's BR&E program to ensure investments align with current employer needs, workforce dynamics, and sector growth trends identified through business outreach. Together, the AL CIC and city staff should use the fundamental responsibilities outlined within the city's existing Economic Development Program to guide day-to-day activities that move initiatives of the plan forward. While BR&E is at the foundation of any successful economic development organization, this activity should be led by the City of Avon Lake's Community Development Department and, when appropriate, the AL CIC can serve as a conduit to advance relevant BR&E projects. The City of Avon Lake should, however, look to the powers of the AL CIC to pursue targeted marketing and business attraction activities. Specific initiatives the AL CIC should drive include the following:

Branding and Communication	Promote Available Land and Buildings	Land/Building Acquisition and Development	Loan/Grant/Incentives Funding Administration	Operational Activities
• Partner with the City to create and maintain digital marketing tools including logos, graphics, images, property flyers, website materials • Conduct marketing campaigns and direct marketing activities to companies, real estate brokers, and site consultants • Establish and promote the City of Avon Lake as a premier location to invest	• Inventory available commercial and industrial sites and buildings for sale or lease in the city • Manage an online site and building database, in cooperation with TeamNEO and JobsOhio, to promote available properties • Utilize online and social media platforms to market sites/buildings to end users, brokers, real estate agents, site location consultants, etc.	• Evaluate opportunities to facilitate economic development investment through the acquisition of existing land or buildings, including publically or privately held properties • Obtain financing/funding to pursue acquisition of key properties in the city • Sell or lease properties to carry out the economic development priorities of the City of Avon Lake	• Research and secure funding that facilitates land/building acquisition and site development activities (e.g., U.S. EDA, JobsOhio OSIP, All Ohio Future Fund, ODOT Jobs & Commerce, local foundations, Lorain Port Authority) • Secure \$500,000 in one-time funding from U.S. Economic Development Administration to establish Avon Lake Revolving Loan Fund Program and offer gap financing to eligible projects, including small businesses • Support analysis of new tax incentive programs, including City of Avon Lake Community Reinvestment Area Program	• Engage engineering, design, or technical assistance firms to advance economic development priorities • Partner with consultant firms to deploy a comprehensive business attraction strategy on behalf of the City of Avon Lake and public/private property owners and businesses • Attend economic development and site selection events to promote Avon Lake opportunities

AL CIC’s marketing efforts should align with a broader digital and branding strategy coordinated through the city’s BR&E program and partner agencies.

Branding and Communication. In today’s highly competitive business landscape, economic development has become a top priority for regions seeking growth and prosperity. With an increasing focus on attracting investment, talent, and visitors, communities are realizing the significant impact branding can have on their economic development strategies. Branding refers to the process of creating a unique identity and reputation for a product, service, or entity. It encompasses various elements, including the brand’s name, logo, design, messaging, and overall perception in the minds of its target audience. To effectively leverage branding in economic development marketing, a well-defined brand strategy is essential. This strategy should align with the community’s goals, values, and target audience, and should reflect Avon Lake’s distinct competitive advantages. The branding strategy should focus on Avon Lake’s unique differentiators: its highly educated workforce, lakefront location, and connectivity to major regional employment hubs. Marketing efforts should also align with target sectors identified in this plan and in Lorain County’s 2024 Strategic Action Plan, including advanced manufacturing, chemical production, data centers, and professional services.

A compelling brand should also highlight Avon Lake’s natural resources, quality infrastructure, business friendly environment, and overall quality of life.^{lxii} When investors recognize a region’s

unique strengths and feel confident in its potential, they are more likely to consider it as a viable location for investment and expansion opportunity.

BRANDING CAMPAIGN EXAMPLE

“Discover Batesville” Campaign – Batesville, Indiana. The City of Batesville in Indiana undertook a branding and communication effort geared towards driving economic development activity, retain and grow their workforce, establish Batesville as relevant to the greater global conversation, and attract new residents to their growing community. The city launched a new “Discover Batesville” website in early 2023, featuring a distinct brand voice, updated aesthetics, and informative content highlighting resources for businesses and prospective employees. In less than one year, the city tracked a 210% increase in website users, a 155% increase in website views, and an average engagement rate of 71% showing the content was appealing, informative, and engaging.



Promote Available Land and Buildings. A community can have a compelling story to tell, but without available real estate to support it, it lacks substance and fails to compel businesses or investors to dig deeper. The City of Avon Lake has attractive demographic and economic characteristics and its location near major metropolitan economic hubs such as Akron, Cleveland, and Lorain creates a competitive advantage that should be told to target audiences. The city does, however, lack available land and buildings that make it difficult to capture the attention of decision-makers in the business attraction arena. As other communities market vacant buildings, speculative buildings, and prime industrial park land, Avon Lake must consider how it participates in this space. These development sites should be marketed with a focus on industry clusters showing growth in Avon Lake, such as construction, professional services, and advanced manufacturing, while also offering flexibility to accommodate new sectors emerging from BR&E outreach and shifts in the State of Ohio’s competitive position.

Currently Listed Avon Lake Inventory. Currently, the City of Avon Lake has one tract of industrial land listed on JobsOhio’s Site and Building database and there are three commercial/retail and industrial properties advertised through local real estate offices and on the national LoopNet database. A snapshot of property availability at the time of this plan’s creation are summarized below.

Industrial Property Availability

Pin Oak Parkway Available Sites – The Pin Oak Parkway industrial corridor located along the southern portion of the City of Avon Lake is home to several of the community’s industrial and distribution facilities. Chemtron Corporation, Cleveland Premier Pickleball, Cutting Dynamics, Inc., Eyring Movers, Great Lakes Integrated Hinkley, Inc., Moto Unlimited, North American Composites Company, Penske Truck Rental, Pilgrim Harp, Thogus Custom Plastic Injection Molding, ValenSil Technologies, LLC, Unistrut Service Company, and Western Enterprises are some of the employers

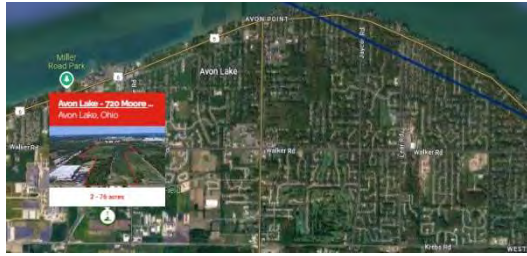
located along the industrial corridor. While there are multiple undeveloped parcels along Pin Oak Parkway, only three parcels are currently available as denoted in the map below. These parcels are owned by ABK Limited, August Properties LLC, and Coveland Partners LLC and represent a total of 21.16 acres. An additional 75.68 acres of land is available along Moore Road and adjacent to Pin Oak Parkway.



720 Moore Road – Approximately 75.68 acres of land at 720 Moore Road in the Pin Oak Parkway Industrial Park area are available for commercial or industrial development and the land is currently zoned industrial. All utilities are at the site, rail access onto the site is feasible, and the land is in an Enterprise Zone/Community Reinvestment Area. The site is three miles west of State Route 83, less than two miles from Interstate 90 and 19 miles north of the Cleveland-Hopkins International Airport.^{bxi} The property is listed for \$19,000 per acre, which is reasonable given the turnkey nature of the property and its location adjacent to the Ford Assembly Plant.



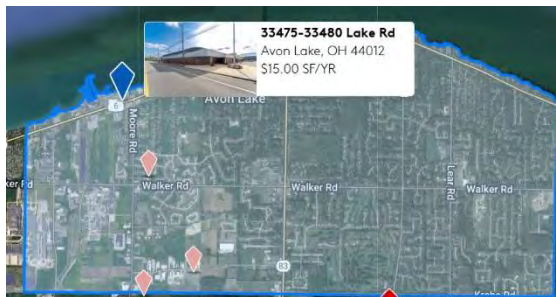
Site Attribute	Details
Lot Size	76 acres
Zoning	Industrial
Flood Zone	Yes



Electric – FirstEnergy	3 Phase, 138 kVa
Natural Gas – Columbia Gas	10-inch line PSI – >60 psi
Water – Avon Lake Municipal Utilities	36-inch line Current capacity – 2.7M GPD
Sewer – Avon Lake Municipal Utilities	24-inch line Current capacity – 2.7M GPD

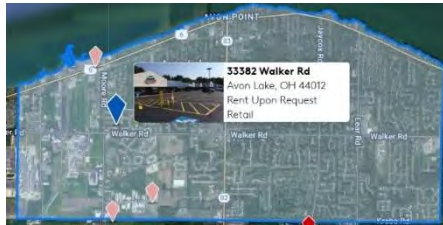
Commercial Property Availability

33475-33480 Lake Road – Beach Park Station – Approximately 29,949 square feet of commercial space is available in this multi-tenant building along Lake Road, near the former power plant site and in an area identified as a “heavy traffic area.” The property currently has four tenants – Ibiza (restaurant), Tailgators Sports Bar (restaurant), The Anchor (fitness center), and U.S. Postal Service (government). The property is listed for \$15.00/SF per year. The minimum space available for lease is 4,383 SF and a separate space with 25,566 SF is also available and accounts for the total 29,949 SF available.^{lxiv} This property is listed with the local realty group, Russell Real Estate Services and is listed on the national LoopNet database.



Site Attribute	Details
Lot Size	30.89 acres
Zoning	Commercial
Year Built	1954
Parking	574 spaces
Ceiling Height	12’ – 16’
Traffic Count, average	6,822 vehicles/day
Condition	Full Build-Out

33382 Walker Road – Approximately 775 square feet of commercial/retail space is available in this multi-tenant building on Walker Road. The property is anchored by Discount Drug Mart and is in an area surrounded by new housing development.^{lxv} This property is listed with local realty group, NAI Pleasant Valley Commercial Real Estate out of Independence, Ohio and is listed on the national LoopNet database.



Site Attribute	Details
Lot Size	6.48 acres
Zoning	Commercial
Year Built	1973
Parking	218 spaces
Traffic Count, average	10,355 vehicles/day
Condition	Partial Retail Build-Out

Land and Building Acquisition and Development. CICs have the power to initiate land and building acquisition and development efforts that help build out a more robust site and building offering and advance economic development investments. The City of Avon Lake has limited sites and buildings available to market for economic development investment across the industrial and commercial sectors; however, the community’s proximity to major employers and industry leaders suggests the city, through the AL CIC, should take a more active role in facilitating land and building development. In doing this, the AL CIC should consider ways to gain site control of strategic properties, pursue available funding to support site control and development, and facilitate the sale or lease of properties that result in targeted industry sector investments. Industries the City of Avon Lake and AL CIC should target include advanced manufacturing, research & development, enterprise data centers, metal components and metal manufacturing, and chemical manufacturing.

Loan/Grant/Incentives Funding Administration. The AL CIC has the authority to pursue funding opportunities that support various economic development and community development priorities outlined in this plan. The AL CIC should work with the City of Avon Lake to prioritize projects and determine the types of loan/grant/incentive programs that would help fund project implementation. Together with the city, the AL CIC should look at federal programs such as the U.S. Economic Development Administration, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and U.S. Department of Transportation; state programs such as Ohio Department of Development, Ohio Department of Transportation, Ohio EPA, Ohio Air Quality Development Authority, and JobsOhio; and regional resources including Lorain County and Lorain Port Authority. The AL CIC can apply for, receive, and administer these programs to ensure compliance and proper project implementation measures. The AL CIC can also serve an active role in reviewing new tax incentive programs, including the City of Avon Lake CRA.

Operational Activities. The AL CIC can hire engineering, design, or technical assistance firms to move economic development priorities along and should seek legal counsel to determine if engaging firms must be done through the public bidding process or if it can be done through a Request for Qualifications/Proposals process. The AL CIC can also fund and participate in economic

development and site selection events that promote Avon Lake as a premier location to invest and do business, in partnership with regional and state economic development organizations.

To strengthen the city's competitiveness in site selection and real estate marketing, Avon Lake should establish a proactive digital strategy that connects property listings with regional campaigns and professional outreach.

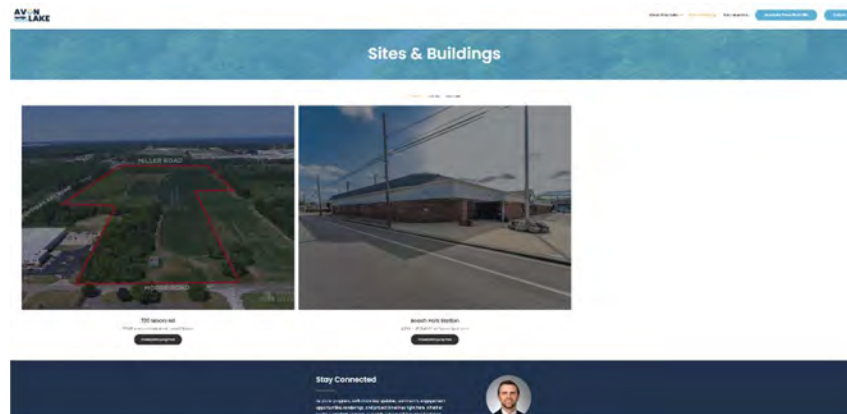
Strategy 2.2. Create a City of Avon Lake Site & Building Database.

The City of Avon Lake currently lacks a centralized online platform that consolidates and promotes available sites and buildings for sale or lease. In today's economic development landscape, communities typically market available properties in a designated website database and through social media platforms such as LinkedIn, Facebook, and Instagram. Promoting sites across multiple online formats reaches the target audience more effectively. Industrial prospects often rely on online searches to assess opportunities, while brokers, site selectors, and local small businesses/entrepreneurs increasingly turn to social media and professional networks for site discovery.

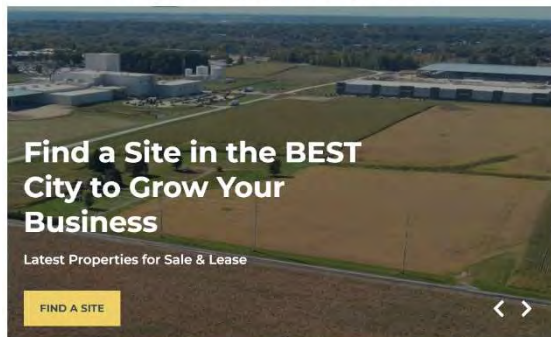
To address this gap and enhance Avon Lake's competitiveness, the AL CIC should develop and maintain a searchable, interactive Site & Building Database as part of the city's broader economic development branding and digital strategy. Properties should be featured on the city's website and actively promoted through professional networks, state-level platforms like JobsOhio's site selector tool, and targeted regional marketing campaigns to reach key audiences more effectively.

Communities promote available sites and buildings in different formats. The City of Wooster's Economic Development Department situates available properties front and center on their website. The City of Marysville houses economic development activities within the Union County – Marysville Economic Development Office. The city promotes available sites and buildings in an interactive map, color-coding property types, and listing property summaries within the site. The City of Fremont promotes sites and buildings with specific property profiles and links to the Sandusky County Economic Development Corporation's site and building database for interactive searches. **The City of Avon Lake, in coordination with the AL CIC, should design and operate an updated Site & Building Database to effectively promote available properties and support local real estate opportunities in the commercial and industrial sectors.**

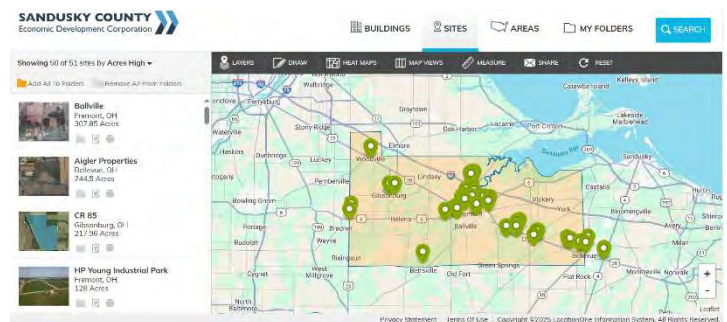
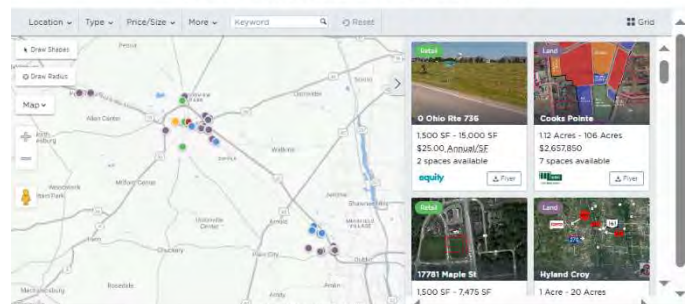
SITE & BUILDING DATABASE EXAMPLES



Economic Development



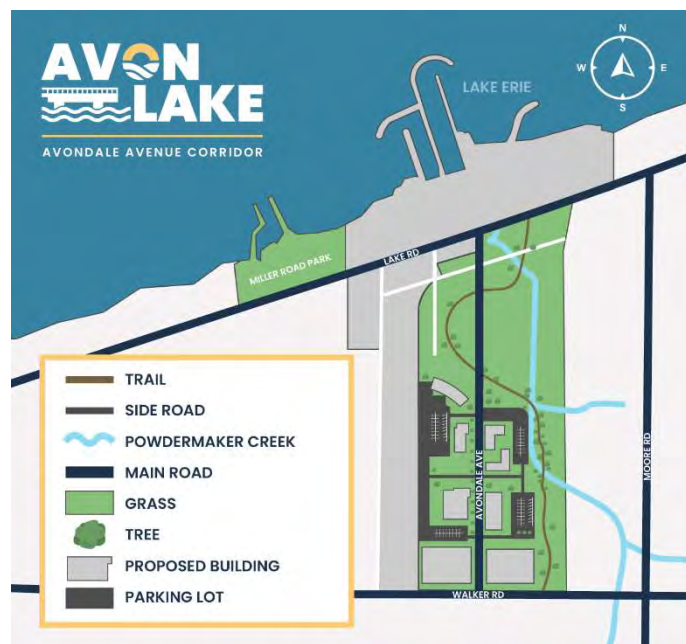
SITE CERTIFICATION



The AL CIC should prioritize properties with the greatest potential for investment in target sectors such as advanced manufacturing, chemical processing, professional services, and data centers, aligning both local business trends and countywide economic goals.

Strategy 2.3. Proactively Support and Convey Property with Development Potential.

As noted previously, CICs have the power to acquire, sell, lease, and dispose of property that advances economic development opportunities for the community. Approximately 119.5 acres of

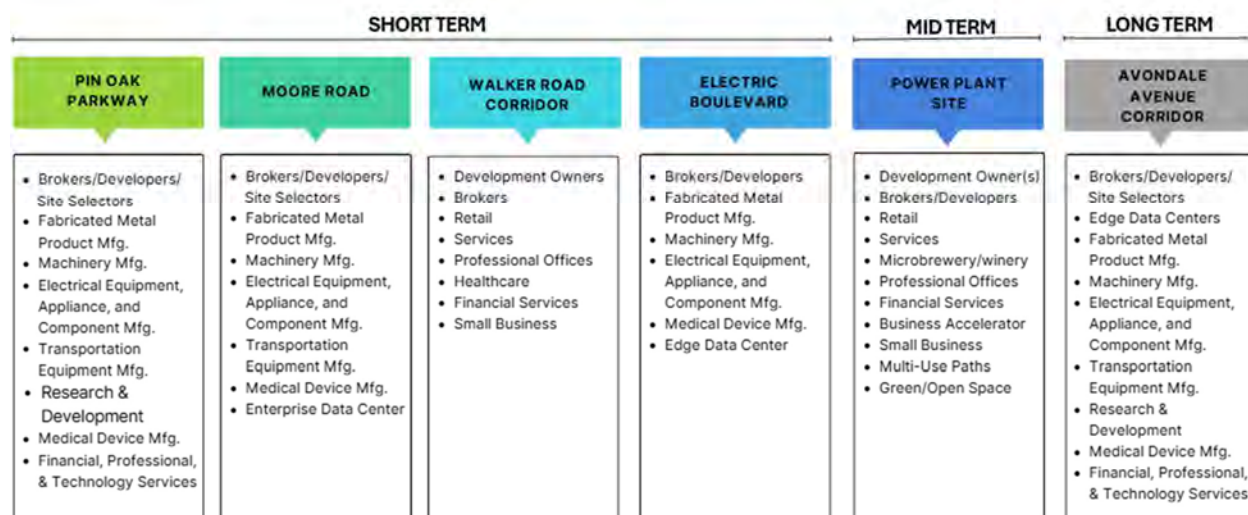


land is located south of the former power plant along Lake Road that has the potential for attraction of new business investment to the community and is some of the only remaining industrially zoned land in the city. This property is owned primarily by Cleveland Electric Illuminating Company (CEI) and Avon Lake Regional Water (ALRW). This acreage is identified in the Future Land Use Map for Industrial use and the land sits adjacent to the city's primary industrial area. The acreage is near electric, rail, and regional water infrastructure that positions the site well to attract businesses within the community's industry sector strengths, suppliers to surrounding companies, research & development activities, professional offices, and

advanced manufacturing and technology operations. While these types of activities fall within the city's sector strengths, they are also identified as target sectors in the Lorain County 2024 Strategic Action Plan.^{lxvi}

Securing site control and preparing land for future development is a critical but time-intensive process. It often involves negotiations with property owners, due diligence activities such as environmental assessments, title research, and infrastructure evaluations. Site preparation activities such as demolition, grading, utility upgrades, or remediation also requires coordination, funding, and regulatory approvals. These steps are essential to making sites development-ready and competitive for private investment, but they require thoughtful planning and sufficient lead time. As the city and AL CIC work together to determine the potential for redevelopment along this Avondale Avenue corridor, other "development ready" properties throughout the city can be prioritized for marketing and business attraction efforts. The City and AL CIC should annually review and update the prioritization of target development area activities to ensure that marketing and business attraction efforts reflect the most current property information and development opportunities.

Focus Area Prioritization



Create Avon Lake CIC Real Estate Marketing Agent Agreement. To acquire or help convey land south of the power plant site along Lake Road, the AL CIC should enter into a real estate marketing agent agreement with ALRW and CEI. ALRW and CEI would continue to retain ownership of the property, and AL CIC would serve as the primary marketing agent for the sale of property. A predetermined price per acre should be set before marketing property and a predetermined percentage of the proceeds of the sale of each acre AL CIC would receive should be agreed upon in the marketing agreement. As a public entity, ALRW cannot sell land without going through the public bidding process or utilizing the powers of AL CIC. To support private sector investment, using the AL CIC offers an appropriate mechanism, dictated through Ohio Revised Code, to convey property for economic development investment. Upon successful negotiation of the sale of property, ALRW would enter into a purchase agreement with AL CIC for said purchase price including a breakdown of the proceeds distributed to ALRW and AL CIC as determined in the real estate marketing agent agreement. Once the real estate marketing agent agreement is established and the AL CIC begins marketing the property, the AL CIC can serve as a conduit to convey property. As suitable economic development projects arise and land is sold, the AL CIC would use its authority under Ohio Revised Code to transfer ownership of the property to an end user to proceed with their project. AL CIC should enter into a similar real estate marketing agent agreement with CEI. The AL CIC should use the proceeds received from the sale of property to fund future investments that meet the mission of the organization.

For analysis purposes, we assume the price per acre is aligned with average price per acre of similarly-zoned industrial land in Lorain County which ranges from \$35,000 to \$65,000 per acre.^{lxvii} We also assume the AL CIC will receive 15 percent in proceeds from the sale of land via the agreed upon terms of the marketing agent agreement and one hundred percent of the available acreage is developable. **The AL CIC should use proceeds from the sale of property to reinvest in**

recommendations and strategies outlined in this plan, including but not limited to using funds as a match to establish a U.S. EDA RLF, use a portion of proceeds as equity to construct speculative industrial/professional office space, or invest in business attraction tactics.

**Estimated Land Sale Proceeds
AL CIC Marketing Agent Agreement**

Property Acreage	Price per Acre	Total Estimated Proceeds from Sales	Total Estimated Proceeds to AL CIC
119.5 acres	\$55,000	\$6,572,500	\$985,875

CIC MARKETING AGENT FOR SITE DEVELOPMENT EXAMPLE

South Afton Commerce Park (Batavia, OH). In 2016, the Clermont County CIC purchased 242 acres of land in Williamsburg Township to develop as the South Afton Commerce Park, a “business-ready” site for manufacturers. The \$4.9 million purchase helped address a need for available properties in



South Afton Commerce Park, Vacant Land

the southwest Ohio region ready for development. At the time, JobsOhio’s regional economic development organization, REDI Cincinnati, stated that sixty-one percent of companies looking in the greater Cincinnati region were looking for existing shovel ready sites. In Clermont County, 83 percent of site and building inquiries were unable to be fulfilled due to a lack of market-ready properties.^{lxviii} To prepare South Afton Commerce Park for potential tenants, the CIC provided water, sewer and

natural gas extensions; storm water infrastructure; telecom infrastructure; and roads. The CIC pursued grants to help defray those costs, which leveraged the use of local public funds as match. The purchase price of the land was funded from proceeds of Clermont County’s Ivy Pointe site that the CIC once owned and sold to businesses that created a business park – TQL, Tata Consultancy Services, Senco and others. Mercy Health and Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center also purchased over 20 acres of land at Ivy Pointe for future expansions. Proceeds from the sale of Ivy Pointe land was used to fund acquisition of the South Afton Commerce Park property. At the time, Clermont County CIC and REDI Cincinnati’s economic impact analysis

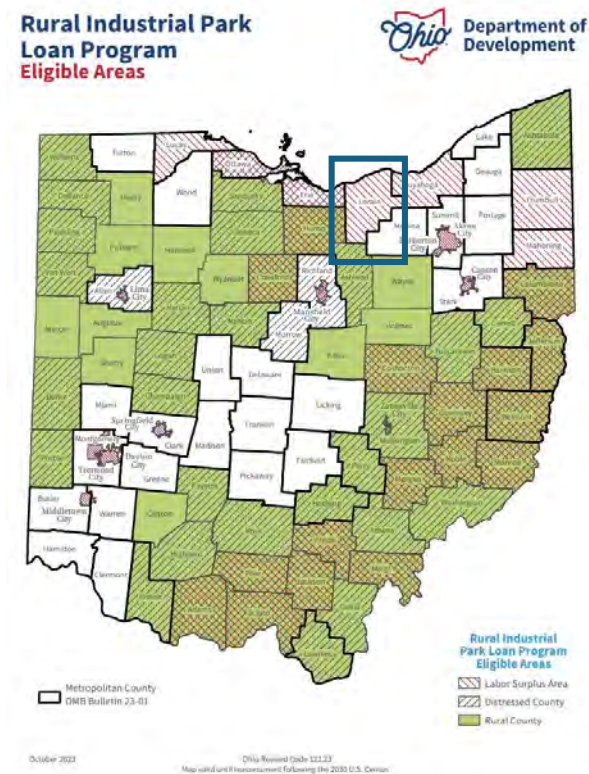


Nestle Purina PetCare Factory, \$550 MM Project

estimated leveraging the \$5 million initial investment facilitated an estimated \$94 million of new property value, and \$32 million in new property taxes, a phenomenal return on investment that benefits residents and agencies.^{lxix} In September, 2024, Clermont County announced Nestle Purina PetCare would be constructing a \$550 million new facility in the South Afton Commerce Park and would be one of the most expensive new plants along U.S. Route 32 in the county.^{lxx} The 1.3 million

square foot facility was built on 192 acres and employs more than 300 individuals making an average hourly wage of \$33.^{boxi}

Ohio Rural Industrial Park Loan Program. Another option the AL CIC could pursue to acquire land south of the power plant site along Lake Road is the Ohio Department of Development Rural Industrial Park Loan Program. As denoted in the map, Lorain County is designated as a “labor surplus area” making the entire county eligible for funding. The Rural Industrial Park Loan Program (RIPL) promotes economic development by providing low-interest direct loans to assist eligible applicants in financing the development and improvement of industrial parks and related off-site public infrastructure improvements. Eligible applicants include counties, municipalities, townships, non-profit organizations, port authorities, CICs, and private developers willing to develop and improve industrial parks in rural areas of the state. Eligible rural areas include distressed, labor surplus and situational distressed counties as defined by the Ohio Revised Code. The loan can finance up to 75% of allowable project costs with loan amounts from \$500,000 to \$4,000,000 and a minimum of 10% equity contribution from the borrower is required. One of the unique and attractive



features of the RIPL program is the opportunity for partial loan forgiveness. At least 50% of the outstanding loan balance may be forgiven upon successful completion of the project as described in the application and loan agreement.^{boxii}

Ohio Rural Industrial Park Loan Program AL CIC Use of Funds

Project Type	Use of Funds
Creation of New Industrial Park	Property acquisition, site preparation activities, and construction and extension of utilities and infrastructure
Construction of Speculative Industrial Building	Property acquisition, site preparation activities, construction of speculative industrial building

CIC AS SITE & BUILDING DEVELOPMENT LEAD EXAMPLE

Ottawa County Improvement Corporation Speculative Building Construction and Acquisition (Oak Harbor, OH). In 2007, the Ottawa County Improvement Corporation purchased 10 acres of land from the Ottawa County Commissioners for the construction of a 50,000 square foot speculative industrial building in the county-owned Lake Winds Industrial Park. The Ottawa County CIC serves as the marketing agent on behalf of the Ottawa County Commissioners and acquired land in the Lake Winds Industrial Park to construct the speculative industrial building. Similar to Clermont County CIC, Ottawa County lacked quality industrial space and was missing opportunities to compete for new investments. The Ottawa County CIC was awarded \$1 million in loan and \$500,000 in grant funding from the Ohio Department of Development's Rural Industrial Park Loan Program to construct the speculative facility and the CIC secured private bank financing to complete the financial capital stack. Construction commenced in the Fall of 2007 and was completed in 2008. Local manufacturing company, Northern Manufacturing, signed a purchase agreement



with the Ottawa County CIC to acquire the building and 10 acres and expanded their operations to house a second stainless steel fabrication line in the community. Upon sale of the land and building, the Ottawa County CIC repaid the Ottawa County Commissioners for the 10 acres of land and received 15 percent of the land sale proceeds from serving as the marketing agent. The roughly \$5 million capital investment led to the creation of 25 new jobs and today, Northern Manufacturing has expanded the building to more than 150,000 square feet.

JobsOhio Ohio Site Inventory Program (OSIP) Funding. The primary goal of OSIP is to fill gaps in Ohio's real estate inventory with real estate targeting near-term sector wins to ensure our state is more competitive for reactive site selection projects. The OSIP offers grants and low-interest loans to support speculative site and building development projects with no identified end user.^{lxxiii}

Program goals include:

- Fill gaps in Ohio's real estate inventory
- Assist with mitigating developer risks preventing development
- Accelerate the process of bringing in-demand projects and sites online

JobsOhio seeks a diverse portfolio of inventory types and locations such as:

- Both sites and buildings
- Small, medium, and large projects
- Office or R&D, as well as manufacturing, warehousing, and distribution
- Urban, suburban, and rural locations
- Developed real estate that aligns with one of JobsOhio's targeted industry sectors

Other Key OSIP Components:

- A lead development entity (i.e., community, port authority, private developer, etc.) should be identified

- Loans will typically support new construction
- Grants will typically support costs associated with demolition, environmental remediation, building renovations, site preparation, and infrastructure improvements

OSIP Projects will be evaluated based on the following guiding principles:

- A clearly identified lead development entity
- Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) must be completed
- Phase II ESA must be completed if Phase I recommends it
- Program is reimbursement based

Strongly Preferred:

- Diverse statewide portfolio
- Experienced development partner
- 30+ acres for site development (no proposed building)
- New building construction is typically supported by a loan

Prioritized:

- Projects anticipated to result in near-term job creation
- Brownfield redevelopment projects
- Projects that fill inventory gaps within JobsOhio targeted industry sectors^{lxxiv}

Ohio Department of Development All Ohio Future Fund (AOFF) Program. The 2024-2025 state operating budget (Ohio House Bill 33) established the AOFF with a historic \$750 million investment to support local communities with site-readiness and preparation to attract economic development projects and the most recent budget bill continues to fund the AOFF program. The Ohio Department of Development will work in coordination with JobsOhio, other state agencies, and the Ohio General Assembly to establish more project-ready sites for economic development opportunities across Ohio. Eligible applicants include counties, cities, villages, townships, port authorities, CICs, conservancy and park districts or other similar park authorities, land reutilization corporations, nonprofit organizations, transportation improvement districts, and organizations for profit willing to develop project-ready sites to improve the economic welfare of the people of the State of Ohio.^{lxxv}

Awardees will be expected to find site occupants within five years. Eligible costs include infrastructure costs such as public roadwork, water/wastewater and related infrastructure, design and engineering, demolition, wetland mitigation, utility-gap funding, and other one-time site enhancements. Funding cannot be used for land/site acquisition. To determine a project's eligibility, applicants must complete and submit an Indication of Interest checklist, narrative form, and data form which will be accepted and reviewed on a rolling basis until funding is depleted.^{lxxvi}

U.S. Economic Development Administration Economic Adjustment Assistance Implementation Grant. Following the successful completion and adoption of the Avon Lake ER&R Plan, the city should consider pursuing funding through the U.S. EDA's Economic Adjustment Assistance (EDA EAA) program. The EDA EAA program provides a wide range of technical, planning, and public works and infrastructure assistance in regions experiencing adverse economic changes that may occur suddenly or over time. These adverse economic impacts may result from a steep decline in manufacturing employment following a plant closure, changing trade patterns, catastrophic natural

disaster, a military base closure, or environmental changes and regulations. EDA has authority to provide grants to meet the full range of communities' and regions' economic development needs from planning and technical assistance to construction of infrastructure. These grants are made through a series of Notices of Funding Opportunity (NOFOs) that can be found on EDA's website at <https://www.eda.gov/funding/funding-opportunities>.^{lxvii}

EDA supports bottom-up strategies that build on regional assets to spur economic growth and resiliency. EDA encourages its grantees throughout the country to develop initiatives that present new ideas and creative approaches to advance economic prosperity in distressed communities. Implementation Grants to support the execution of activities identified in a CEDS, such as infrastructure improvements, including site acquisition, site preparation, construction, rehabilitation and equipping of facilities. Specific activities may be funded as separate investments or as multiple elements of a single investment.^{lxviii}

Strategy 2.4. Create an Economic Development Incentives Policy that Guides Local Incentives Considerations and act as Coordinator of Local Economic Development Incentives Programs.

The City of Avon Lake currently offers two locally-driven economic development incentives programs – Community Reinvestment Area (CRA) and JGIP and is in the process of establishing a TIF district at the former power plant site and surrounding area. Each program offers attractive financial benefits to a business that meets criteria related to eligible real property improvements and/or hiring new employees that provides an increase to a community's tax base. While the laws and rules for these economic development incentives are spelled out in the Ohio Revised Code and at the local government level (e.g., JGIP), their use is at the direction and approval of local entities such as counties, municipalities, and townships.

Create Economic Development Incentives Policy to Guide Local Incentives Considerations. Tax incentives have been used as a policy tool for local communities looking to spur economic development, attract and retain quality jobs, and support improvements to public infrastructure and utilities. While tax incentives can influence economic growth and opportunity in communities, defining values of such incentives based on supporting targeted industry sectors, the creation of high-value jobs, and supporting business investments that have overall positive impacts on the local community are important.

When an incentive program is requested by a business locating or expanding in the City of Avon Lake, certain key factors should be considered, including:

1. An incentive package should be competitive with those offered by other communities in the northeast Ohio region or other competing locations.
2. An incentives package should be structured in a manner where projects generating new, full-time jobs, higher wage jobs, and/or substantive additions to the local tax base should receive stronger consideration for more favorable incentives.
3. Some flexibility should be built into an incentives package offered in order to adapt to the particular needs/dynamics of projects/businesses/developers.
4. BR&E projects should be considered for incentives when possible. The retention of a business and its associated jobs, along with the potential new investment and creation of

new jobs, helps solidify a company's presence in the community long term and provides ongoing positive impacts to the community.

5. Performance based incentives provisions should be analyzed to ensure businesses fulfill commitments to jobs, payroll, and investment are upheld. Claw-back provisions should always be part of any direct financial incentive, including property tax abatement or municipal income tax credits.
6. Businesses engaged in targeted industry sectors that advance the economic development priorities of the city should be targeted for the use of tax incentives.
7. Incentives packages offered must be demonstrably, economically, and financially viable.
8. The City of Avon Lake should review incentives compliance at a minimum on an annual basis.

This defined incentives structure provides consistency and clarity regarding local incentives and demonstrates the city's efficient negotiating process with business prospects.

Maintain Active Status of City of Avon Lake, Ohio CRA Legislation and Review Active Agreements for Compliance. The City of Avon Lake established a citywide CRA designation that offers tax abatement incentives to commercial and industrial activities. This designation was activated through passage of city legislation, as required by Ohio Revised Code. Parameters of the abatement levels, maximum term of an abatement, and minimum investment have been defined by the city as outlined in the table below.

**City of Avon Lake, OH
Community Reinvestment Area Parameters**

Investment Type	Rate	Term	Investment
<i>Commercial</i>			
New Construction	Up to 100%	Maximum, 15 years	None
Expansion	Up to 75%	Maximum, 12 years	Minimum \$5,000
<i>Industrial</i>			
New Construction	Up to 100%	Maximum, 15 years	None
Expansion	Up to 75%	Maximum, 12 years	Minimum \$10,000

Source: City of Avon Lake, Ohio Resolution No. 113-2019

Currently, the City of Avon Lake has seven active CRA tax abatement agreements. In compliance with Ohio Revised Code and City legislation, the AL CIC should work in partnership with the CRA Housing Council to conduct annual compliance reviews for each CRA agreement. These reviews should assess whether businesses have met their obligations—such as meeting investment thresholds, creating or retaining jobs, or other performance measures. Based on those findings, the CRA Housing Council should submit a formal recommendation to City Council on whether to continue, modify, or terminate each abatement. Additionally, the AL CIC should support legislation that maintains the CRA program's active status, confirm the program's implementation parameters, and ensure the incentive process remains transparent and aligned with citywide economic development priorities.

**Avon Lake
Community Reinvestment Area (CRA)
Active Tax Abatements
June 2024**

Property Owner / Abatement Holder	Business	Address	Year Approved	Term of Years	Percent	Market Abatement	Last Year of Benefit
1 216 Miller Road LLC (original abatement for Aquamarine)*	Kopf Properties	216 Miller	2004 (original approval)	16 different abatements			2033 for the final one
2 Towne Care Center LLC	Sprenger Health Care	300 Community Drive	2014	10 Years	100%	\$5,155,290	2027
3 JESS Lake Company, LLC	The Goddard School	430 Avon Belden	2017	10 Years	100%*	\$474,310	2028
4 Dorin Properties, LLC	Catania Medallie Specialty	668 Moore	2019	10 Years	50%	\$76,450	2030
5 NHW Properties, LLC	Northern Hammerworks	531 Miller	2019	10 Years	50%	\$75,240	2030
6 T Randall Properties, LLC	Randall's Lawn Care and Landscaping	33710 Walker	2020	10 Years	50%	\$171,200	2031
7 Lumin—Avon Lake LLC	Hinkley	33000 Pin Oak Parkway	2021	15 Years	100%	\$8,983,400	2038

* 216 Miller Road LLC abatement is for Aquamarine. Kopf (or created corporation) files separately for each building/section of Aquamarine, with the most recent just being filed this month.

*The CRA Agreement for JESS Lake calls for the applicant to make payments to the school district in the amount of 25% of the abated taxes. Also, JESS Lake has a second abatements filed for the Goddard School, but the second abatement has not yet begun to provide benefit for the company as that project (an addition to the building) has not happened

Source: City of Avon Lake

Utilize Avon Lake CRA Housing Council for Incentive Review, Analysis, and Recommendations.

The AL CIC should use the Avon Lake CRA Housing Council to review, analyze, and recommend incentives for approval to eligible projects. The AL CIC should review the net benefit to the community and taxing authorities, including consideration of tax collection, number of jobs proposed, or community involvement, and review the tax generation over the term of the incentive and provide an analysis to the affected taxing authorities and school district.

The Avon Lake CRA Housing Council is comprised of seven members. According to Resolution No. 20113-2019 Section No. 11, two (2) members shall be appointed by City Council; two (2) members shall be appointed by the Mayor; and the City Planning Commission shall appoint one (1) of its citizen members. The majority of the foregoing members shall then appoint two (2) additional members who shall be residents of the City. One (1) of the seven (7) foregoing members shall be a representative of the Avon Lake City Schools. Section No. 11 further defines the terms of each member and the requirement of the Housing Council to make an annual inspection of properties within the CRA.^{lxix}

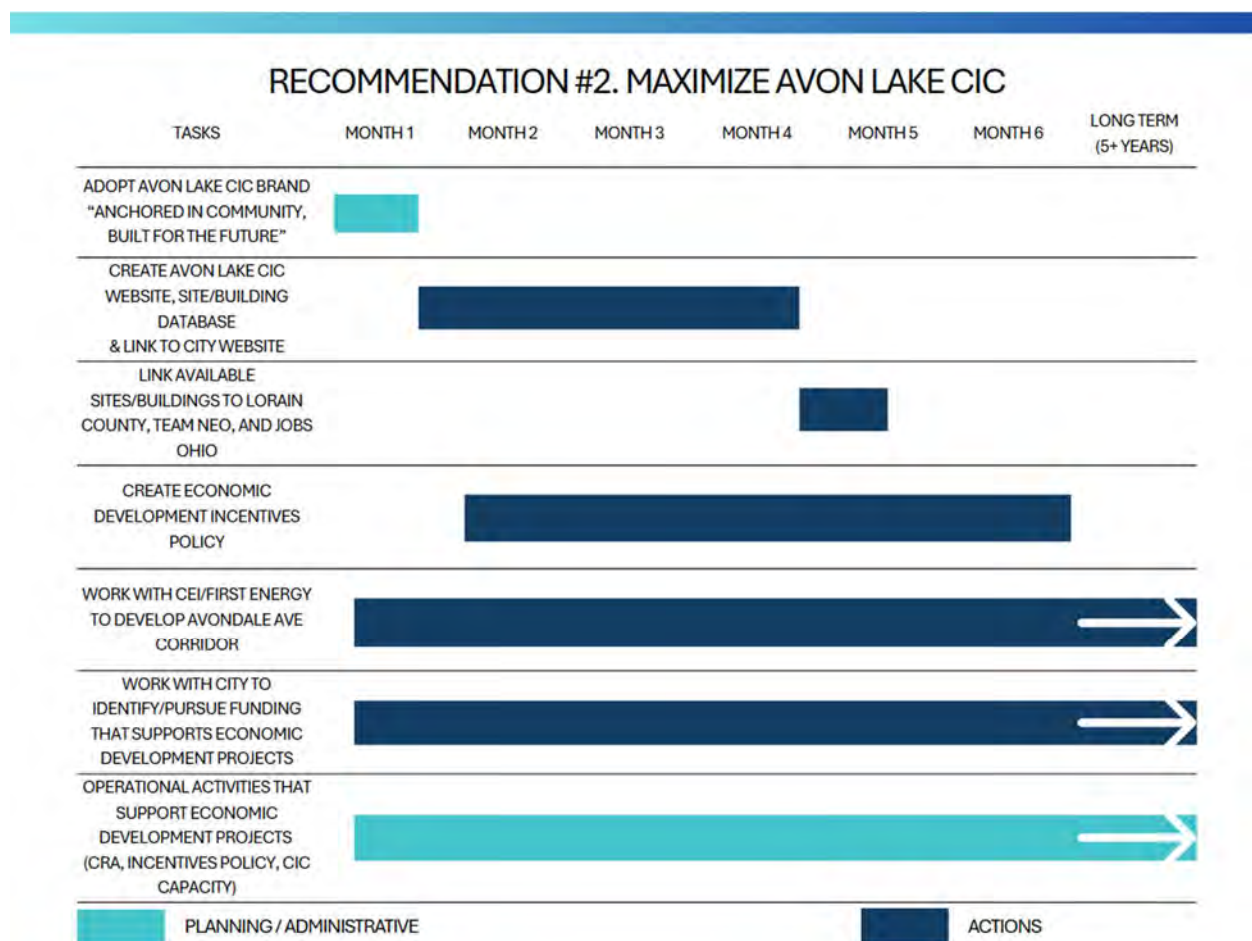
Three positions on the Housing Council are currently vacant and should be filled to appropriately represent the interests of businesses, the school district, and the broader community.

Finally, the Housing Council should be used not only for compliance reviews but also as a strategic advisory body for new CRA applications. It should help evaluate proposed incentive packages, assess their alignment with citywide economic development goals, and analyze long-term fiscal impacts before making recommendations to City Council. The AL CIC can support this function by preparing financial and programmatic analyses for each proposal, including an assessment of the incentive's economic viability and any potential claw-back provisions in the event of noncompliance.

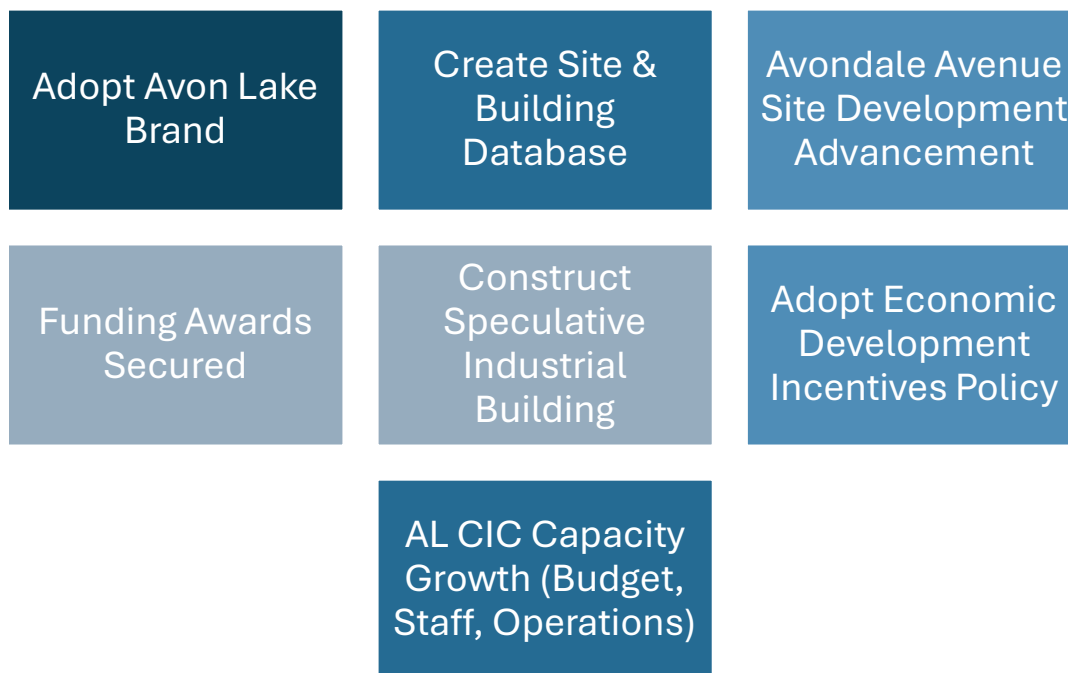
Through proactive management, transparent evaluation, and strategic coordination between the AL CIC and the Housing Council, Avon Lake can ensure its CRA program remains a responsible and effective tool for supporting business investment and long-term community prosperity.

Strategy 2.5. Strengthen AL CIC Capacity to Deliver Economic Development Priorities.

As AL CIC expands its role in land and building development, incentive coordination, and real estate marketing, it must also evaluate its internal capacity to deliver on these targeted economic development priorities. The AL CIC should consider establishing a small operating budget, developing an annual work plan, and appointing a staff coordinator or contracted economic development professional to work with the AL CIC trustees and city leadership. This will ensure continuity, project tracking, grant compliance, and consistent representation of the City of Avon Lake at site selection and business attraction forums.



AVON LAKE CIC TARGETED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY KPI EXAMPLES



Existing Planning Alignment: The AL CIC is an important partner for citywide and regional economic development success. Pillar 2 of the **Lorain County Strategic Plan** emphasizes fostering greater county-wide collaboration, serving as a cornerstone for achieving the goals outlined across all other pillars. As stated in the plan, greater county-wide collaboration will help provide better access to services and new efficiencies and quality in service delivery. Additionally, any of the biggest challenges in the county, such as housing and transportation, will require government solutions and public-private partnerships. Building these collaborative approaches will help spur new solutions and accelerate outcomes.

Utilizing Avon Lake's CIC as a tool to advance economic development and community development activities aligns with the **NOACA CEDS** across multiple CEDS priorities where the powers of a CIC can be leveraged to advance various local and regional efforts:

- **Access to Broadband:** Building a regional broadband implementation plan that secures funding for infrastructure investments and expands digital accessibility will enhance overall economic and community development impacts in Avon Lake and drive NOACA's goal of building resilient infrastructure and a vibrant, innovative economy.
- **Manufacturing:** Growing a diverse manufacturing base that supports the adoption of technology advancements creates a more competitive and up to date manufacturing industry, supports entrepreneurial activities in manufacturing, and grows the region's workforce.
- **Transportation:** Building resilient infrastructure, efficient and affordable transportation systems that connect residents to employment, supports a vibrant, innovative economy, and advances manufacturing clusters with shorter supply chains are all goals of this strategy.

Avon Lake's participation in NOACA planning efforts and its support for enhancing transportation networks is important for the northeast Ohio region and local business attraction opportunities.

- **Housing:** Creating a diverse mix of housing, whether located at the former power plant site or in other areas of the city, aligns with NOACA's goal of building resilient communities, equitable investments in affordable housing, and reclaiming Brownfields. The AL CIC's powers under the Ohio Revised Code can serve as a conduit to support housing investments and attract future residents to the city.
- **Innovation & Entrepreneurship:** The AL CIC can support transforming the former power plant site into a hub that attracts businesses of all sizes and fosters entrepreneurial ventures. This activity promotes the growth of high-value, future-oriented sectors and supports small business development-core tenets of NOACA's innovation objectives.
- **Economic Resilience:** The AL CIC can support and lead various economic development priorities for the city, including revitalizing a legacy industrial site into a mixed-use waterfront district, supporting small businesses and innovation, attracting new business investments that enhance the existing industry base, and strengthening the tax base. These efforts reduce reliance on single-sector employment and positions Avon Lake to weather future economic shifts more effectively.

Recommendation #3. Implement the Avon Lake Business Attraction & Marketing Strategy to actively promote the City of Avon Lake as a desirable location for companies and talent. This strategy aims to attract new businesses across key industry sectors that will diversify, build resilience and strengthen the local economy, while focusing on development and redevelopment opportunities in designated commercial and industrial areas, and mixed-use Focus Areas.

Avon Lake's economic development approach must simultaneously support the success of existing businesses and strategically attract new investment. A well-designed economic development program sets BR&E as the foundation of its work, fostering a community where existing businesses have the resources and support to thrive. Attracting new businesses that complement and diversify the industry base adds a new dimension to the economy and brings new dollars and wealth creation from outside the community or region. Additionally, attracting new industries creates a multiplier effect by generating new jobs, income, and other economic activity within the community which helps reinforce a robust and resilient economy.

Successful business attraction programs require significant strategic thinking around local and regional strengths and a firm internal understanding of those strengths to communicate a clear and compelling message to prospective businesses. The highest payoffs from business attraction efforts come from projects that are part of a holistic strategy to boost growth within certain economic sectors or address areas where investment might not otherwise occur. These efforts can drive long-term growth and competitiveness that exceeds the impact of any singular business or sector. With industry sector strategies, this occurs because sector clusters create a field of gravity that attracts other companies in their supply chain or benefits from sharing a location.ⁱ

Strategy 3.1. Create Economic Development Brand and Collateral Material Development that defines “Why Avon Lake.”

In a competitive landscape where cities and regions are vying for business investment, talent, and funding, a clear brand helps Avon Lake stand out. A strong identity answers the questions - *Why here?* and *What makes Avon Lake uniquely positioned for success?* A compelling brand goes beyond logos and slogans — it articulates Avon Lake’s values, strengths, and vision in a way that’s memorable and meaningful.

AVON LAKE

**Anchored in Community,
Built for the Future**

**Discover the Advantage of
Avon Lake, Ohio**

Avon Lake is more than a beautiful lakeside community—it's a city on the move. With prime development opportunities, a skilled local workforce, and strategic access to Northeast Ohio's major business corridors, Avon Lake is ready for the future.

Why Avon Lake?

- Strategic Location
- Pro-Business Climate
- Educated Workforce
- Concentration of High Value Industries
- Proximity to Major Research Institutions
- Strong Community Support

Want to Learn More?

VISIT OUR SITE

Ted Esborn
Community Development Director
TEsborn@avonlake.org
440-930-4167

Business attraction efforts in economic development relies on building trust and clarity with site selectors, investors, and government partners. An intentional message ensures all stakeholders — from City Hall to business development specialists — are aligned and speaking with one voice about Avon Lake’s assets, goals, and opportunities. Branding helps guide what kinds of industries a community attracts, where to focus incentives, and how to develop sites. For example, a brand built around clean industry, innovation, and waterfront revitalization supports strategies for advanced manufacturing, tech, and sustainability-driven development.

AVON LAKE

**Anchored in Community,
Built for the Future**

Why Avon Lake?

- Strategic Location
- Pro-Business Climate
- Educated Workforce
- Concentration of High Value Industries
- Proximity to Major Research Institutions
- Strong Community Support

GrowAvonLake.com

**Discover the Advantage
of Avon Lake, Ohio**

Avon Lake is more than a beautiful lakeside community—it's a city on the move. With prime development opportunities, a skilled local workforce, and strategic access to Northeast Ohio's major business corridors, Avon Lake is ready for the future.

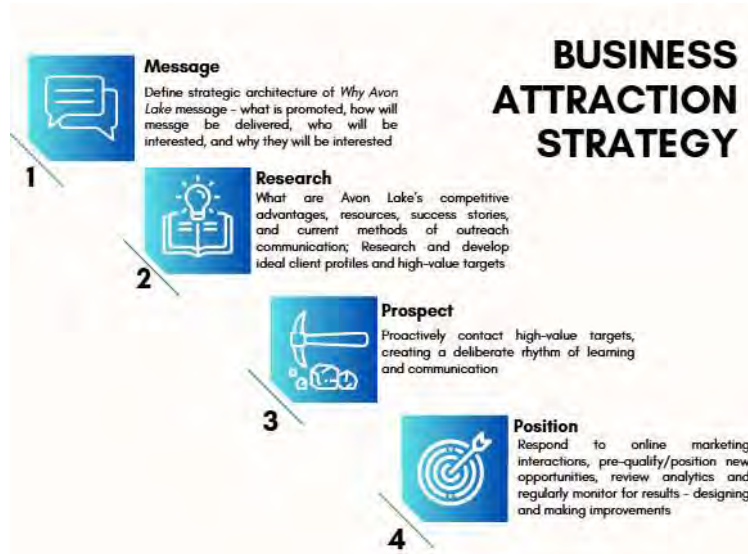
Be Part of the Progress

The City of Avon Lake is actively investing in the future—and we're ready to partner with forward-thinking developers and businesses to bring big ideas to life.

Ted Esborn
Community Development Director
TEsborn@avonlake.org
440-930-4167

Strategy 3.2. Message – Research – Prospect – Position.

Avon Lake's Business Attraction efforts should focus on recruiting new businesses to strategic locations that would settle in redevelopment sites like the Avon Lake Power Plant, the Avondale corridor, and underutilized parcels along Pin Oak Parkway. To establish a sound Business Attraction Strategy that generates interest and quantifiable results, the City of Avon Lake should *define its target industries based on its demonstrated economic strengths*.



Recent data highlights sector-specific momentum that can guide targeting: Manufacturing (+28.79%), Construction (+38.46%), and Professional, Scientific & Technical Services (+10.45%) experienced significant growth from 2022–2024. LQ analysis shows concentrated advantages in fabricated metals manufacturing (LQ 21.47), chemical manufacturing (LQ 13.72), and motor vehicle parts (LQ 6.06), reinforcing these as viable clusters for further investment.

In addition, the strategy should incorporate community strengths such as a highly educated workforce (55% with a bachelor's degree or higher), a median household income of \$111,271, and regional connectivity to suppliers and talent. The city must also understand the key factors that influence the site location process - such as infrastructure readiness, workforce availability, and incentive predictability—and assess how it compares with peer communities across Lorain County and Northeast Ohio. From there, Avon Lake can understand how the community compares to its neighbors. The city can also build the narrative that speaks directly to what the city wants to share with target industries and create a suite of marketing tools and platforms – including digital media, site selector content, and social channels—that consistently communicate the city's value proposition. A structured and ongoing outreach effectively shares the message and commits to an ongoing outreach campaign that keeps Avon Lake in front of decision-makers whether they are actively pursuing a project or still in the early stages of the planning process.

The ideal target prospect profile the City of Avon Lake should engage with is three-fold – C-level executives and decision-makers within target firms, real estate brokers and site selection firms, and economic development partners. Avon Lake's outreach should prioritize industry engagement on a mix of sectors where competitive advantages are supported by local and regional data—such as metal fabrication, chemical production, plastics/polymers, and automotive components—as identified through shift-share and LQ analysis. Additionally, sectors showing strong employment growth from 2022 to 2024, including construction businesses (+38.46%), manufacturing (+28.79%), and professional services (+10.45%), represent natural focal points for proactive engagement.

Companies often engage site selectors because they provide valuable expertise, data, efficiency, and access to communities and sites that best fit the needs of an expansion or relocation. Real estate brokers, likewise, facilitate the buying, selling, and leasing of properties and are often at the front-end of inquiries into available properties. Economic development partners at the county, regional, and state levels view business attraction as a key strategy to lead on behalf of individual communities. Regional and state partners, such as One Lorain County, Lorain County Growth Partnership, Greater Cleveland Partnership, TeamNEO, and JobsOhio build the brand and the competitive advantages to promote on a broader scale to target audiences and have built strong networks with key decision-makers who are interested in learning about regions versus individual communities (i.e., economies of scale in messaging). These organizations also have larger budgets and staffing to attend, promote, and follow up on business attraction opportunities. Like real estate brokers, utility companies such as FirstEnergy and Columbia Gas, are often at the front-end of project inquiries as companies and consultants determine where infrastructure is available to meet operational demands. **While there is value in conducting direct outreach to companies in target sectors to build relationships with prospects, working with site selectors, real estate brokers, and economic development partners to promote Avon Lake should be the primary focus at the onset as these partners have broad organizational bandwidth and can efficiently reach audiences of targeted industry decision-makers that the city cannot do on its own.**

Target Industry Sector Prospect Examples

Industry Sector	Location Quotient
111 Crop Production	
1114 Greenhouse, nursery, and floriculture production	11.51
325 Chemical Manufacturing	
3255 Paint, coating, and adhesive manufacturing	13.72
3259 Other chemical products and preparation manufacturing	8.96
32599 All other chemical products and preparation manufacturing	10.91
331 Primary Metal Manufacturing	
3315 Foundries	6.04
332 Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	
3321 Forging and stamping	2.02
3323 Architectural and structural metals manufacturing	1.34
3327 Machine shops; turned product; and screw, nut, and bolt manufacturing	7.37
33272 Turned product and screw, nut, and bolt manufacturing	21.47
3328 Coating, engraving, heat treating, and allied activities	10.70
33281 Coating, engraving, heat treating, and allied activities	10.70
3329 Other fabricated metal product manufacturing	4.29
333 Machinery Manufacturing	
3334 HVAC, and commercial refrigeration equipment manufacturing	7.40
3335 Metalworking machinery manufacturing	2.56
3339 Other general purpose machinery manufacturing	4.76
335 Electrical Equipment, Appliance, and Component Manufacturing	
3359 Other electrical equipment and component manufacturing	3.96
33592 Communication and energy wire and cable manufacturing	20.75

336 Transportation Equipment Manufacturing	
3363 Motor vehicle parts manufacturing	6.06
33636 Motor vehicle seating and interior trim manufacturing	26.72
33637 Motor vehicle metal stamping	12.83
3364 Aerospace product and parts manufacturing	2.05
562 Waste Management and Remediation Services	
5622 Waste treatment and disposal	9.25
623 Nursing and Residential Care Facilities	
6231 Nursing care facilities (skilled nursing facilities)	3.13
Emerging Sectors for Consideration	
Edge/Enterprise Data Centers	
Software and Artificial Intelligence Development	
Semiconductor Supply Chain	
Advanced Healthcare and Medical Device Research & Development and Manufacturing	
Financial, Professional & Technology Services	

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Target Brokers, Site Selectors, and Economic Development Partner Examples

Brokers/Site Selectors	Economic Development Partners
Agracel, Inc.	Lorain County Growth Partnership
Avison Young	Lorain County Manufacturing Sector Partnership
CBRE - Cleveland/Columbus/Toledo/Pittsburgh	Team NEO
CRESCO Real Estate	JobsOhio
Cushman & Wakefield	Avon Lake Chamber of Commerce
Colliers	Small Business Development Center
Duke Realty	Municipal Infrastructure/Utility Providers
Hanna Commercial Real Estate	Utility Companies – FirstEnergy, Columbia Gas, etc.
Hillwood	Norfolk Southern
ING Clarion Partners	Center for Automotive Research at OSU
Newmark	Greater Cleveland Partnership
NorthPoint Development	JumpStart Inc.
Panattoni Development Co.	MAGNET Northeast Ohio
ProLogis Logistics Real Estate & Supply Chain Logistics	Ohio Aerospace Institute
Xebec Realty	Cleveland Water Alliance
NAIOP Northern Ohio Chapter	Ohio Aerospace Institute

OPPORTUNITIES IN EMERGING SECTORS

Data Centers, Artificial Intelligence and Software. The rapid growth in digital services, cloud computing, artificial intelligence (AI) and 5G is driving a persistent surge in demand for data center capacity. Applications on cell phones, smart devices, laptops and desktops (IoT) are constantly increasing the need for processing, storing and computing data.^{lxxx} Key components and site features necessary to attract data centers to a community include power and power infrastructure (substations, high voltage lines, large scale generation), availability of properly zoned sites, fiber connectivity or short distances to major fiber hubs, tax incentives that are simple, financeable and effective, and skilled labor and educational partnerships.

Despite record construction activity, the data center market is struggling to keep pace with demand, leading to higher demand for existing facilities. Additionally, communities and developers must consider proactive approaches to preparing land and buildings to market to site data centers. While there will be continued competition for land and resources to build new data centers in traditional data center markets (northern Virginia, Silicon Valley, Dallas-Ft. Worth, Atlanta, Chicago), more data center expansions in secondary and emerging markets are expected to alleviate reliance on traditional hubs and tax incentives will be very important for new development in emerging geographies.^{lxxxi}

Critical to the attraction of data centers is power availability and fuel mix. The market is seeing legacy nuclear partnerships providing colocation opportunities for data centers, while unique opportunities for retired coal plants to convert to advanced energy sources with interconnection already in place offers a different approach.^{lxxxii}

Coldwell Banker Richard Ellis (CBRE) is one of the world's largest commercial real estate services and investment firms. CBRE's 2025 report on the future of data centers shows data center projects under construction are expected to reach record highs. Demand for modern data center facilities continues to soar, as hyperscalers and enterprises plan to expand their digital infrastructure. As the power supply struggles to keep up with the rapid pace of new development, many construction projects are being delayed until power infrastructure is either upgraded or increased. This backlog will create more competition for the limited power resources in high-demand areas. The pressure to secure power will lead to more innovative solutions, such as on-site power generation (e.g., microgrids or partnerships with energy companies) and power-sharing agreements with local utilities.^{lxxxiii}

Traditional types of data centers are hyperscalers, edge, and enterprise. Hyperscalers focus on Core Services and AI/ML workloads and typically require between 15-1,000MW of power per campus. Edge data centers are small, carrier/fiber heavy facilities that process data closer to end users and the devices they serve. These facilities require between 2-10MW of power per site and are primarily focused on reducing latency and improving performance for the end users they serve. Enterprise data centers are facilities owned or leased by a single company to support its data processing and storage needs and require between 2-20MW of power per facility. Companies such as financial institutions, healthcare providers, commercial retailers, and airlines are examples of enterprise data center facilities.

Hyperscaler Data Center



Credit: Data Center Dynamics

Edge Data Center



Credit: Intel, Corp.

Enterprise Data Center



Credit: 5C Data Centers

Data centers are **high-value investments** that often involve hundreds of millions of dollars in capital investment. They require adequate infrastructure and, often times, **infrastructure upgrades** that make improvements to fiber, power grids, and cooling technologies. While these facilities typically have moderate levels of new jobs created, they generate **significant property and utility tax revenues** and **attract supporting sectors** such as IT, maintenance, and utilities that ultimately enhance a city's attractiveness to advanced manufacturing, Research & Development, technology, and professional firms.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, between 2016 and 2023 the United States saw an increase in data center employment of sixty percent. Computing infrastructure providers, data processing, web hosting, and related services jobs nationally have an annual mean wage of \$122,480.^{lxxxiv} In Ohio, growth in the share of data center employment was 70.5 percent.^{lxxxv} [Digital Technology careers](#) that focus on developing digital systems for communication and data storage using technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), data analytics, and cybersecurity are identified as careers with a “bright outlook.”

Examples of Digital Technology Career Occupations

Position	Location	Annual Median Wage
Blockchain Engineers, Computer Systems Engineers/Architects		
	U.S.	\$104,920
	Ohio	\$103,460
	Cleveland-Elyria, OH	\$98,050
IT Support & Services: Network Systems & Cybersecurity, Software Solutions, Web & Cloud		
	U.S.	\$169,510
	Ohio	\$162,280
	Cleveland-Elyria, OH	\$169,650
Data Warehousing Specialists		
	U.S.	\$134,700
	Ohio	\$127,230
	Cleveland-Elyria, OH	\$127,370

Source: O*Net

Land acquisition, build-to-suit data centers, powered land, and speculative shell buildings are all activities Avon Lake should consider as it determines if data centers are beneficial companies to pursue.

Semiconductor Supply Chain. The U.S. semiconductor industry is rapidly expanding due to global demand, federal incentives, like the Creating Helpful Incentives to Produce Semiconductors and Science (CHIPS) Act, and a push for domestic production. The U.S. semiconductor industry continued its robust growth in 2024, with sales of \$627 billion and 19 percent overall growth and a 7.5 percent compound annual growth rate (CAGR) between 2025 and 2030.^{lxxxvi} Assuming the industry continues to grow at that rate, it could reach US\$2 trillion in 2040.^{lxxxvii} One driver of industry sales has been the demand for gen AI chips: a mix of central processing units (CPUs), graphics processing units (GPUs), data center communications chips, memory, power chips, and more that collectively is worth more than \$125 billion in sales – over 20 percent of total chip sales for the year.^{lxxxviii} This growth requires a strong, reliable supply chain — from raw materials and specialty chemicals to precision manufacturing, packaging, testing, and logistics.

Avon Lake can position itself as a critical node in the semiconductor ecosystem by leveraging:

- **Proximity to Intel’s Ohio fabrication facilities** (under development near Columbus)
- **Utility and infrastructure capacity** (ideal for high-precision, energy-intensive operations)
- **Strong transportation links** (rail, highway, and port access to national and global markets)

- **Chemical and materials expertise** in the region (semiconductors rely on ultrapure chemicals, which can align with existing or recruitable talent)
- **Redevelopment-ready industrial sites** that can accommodate supply chain functions (warehousing, fabrication support, component packaging)
- **Business-friendly incentives** and workforce development strategies tailored to high-tech manufacturing

The city should integrate semiconductor supply chain development into a targeted business attraction strategy, with a focus on mid-tier suppliers, logistics providers, specialty equipment manufacturers, and materials processors. Strategies should include:

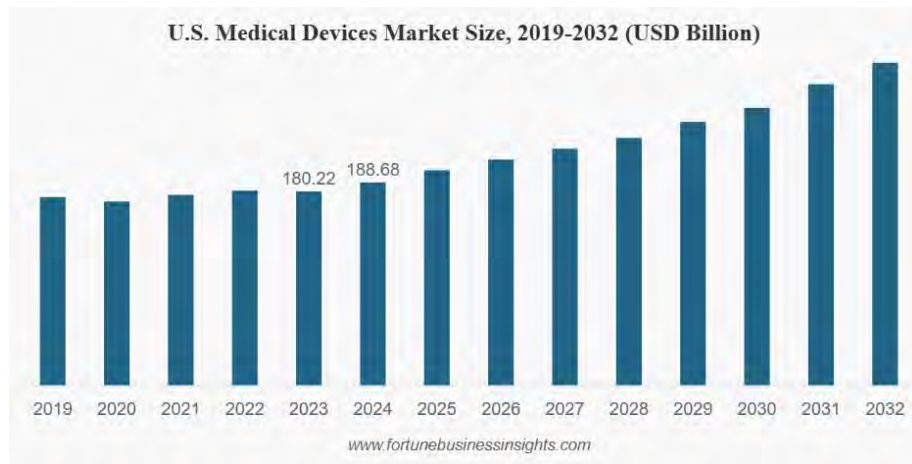
- **Site Readiness:** Identifying and preparing sites suitable for clean manufacturing, warehousing, and advanced logistics. Ensure these sites have adequate utility capacity, appropriate zoning, and high-speed broadband in place.
- **Marketing and Positioning:** Develop tailored marketing materials positioning Avon Lake as a semiconductor-adjacent destination. Emphasize the city's infrastructure, talent pool, industrial history, and proximity to Intel's Ohio facility.
- **Workforce Alignment:** Partner with local colleges, trade programs, and state workforce initiatives to align training around the needs of advanced manufacturing, precision machining, and chemical safety.
- **Incentives and Partnerships:** Leverage partnerships with JobsOhio, the Ohio Department of Development, and relevant federal agencies such as the U.S. Economic Development administration to access CHIPS Act funding, site development grants, tax credits, and workforce training support.
- **Target Outreach:** Engage in targeted outreach with Intel's suppliers and subcontractors' network as well as other chip manufacturers — highlighting Avon Lake as a cost-effective, logistics-friendly alternative to crowded urban industrial zones.
- **Sustainable Development:** Market Avon Lake's available industrial sites as sustainably redeveloped, highlighting opportunities for reliable energy infrastructure, adaptive reuse of land, and energy-efficient design to attract ESG-conscious companies and investors.

Advanced Healthcare and Medical Device Research & Development and Manufacturing. The medical device and advanced healthcare technology industries are expanding rapidly due to aging populations, increased demand for personalized medicine, and post-pandemic supply chain realignments. Northeast Ohio — anchored by institutions like Cleveland Clinic and University Hospitals — is already a national leader in biomedical innovation, making Avon Lake a prime location for spillover growth in R&D and precision manufacturing.

Polymers, plastics, and advanced materials are a core component to Avon Lake's economic past, present, and future. Decades ago, the BF Goodrich plant on Walker Road generated materials that were used in millions of products around the world. Avon Lake now has a strong cluster of advanced material businesses, including Avient, Thogus Products, Lubrizol, and Mexichem. In 2019, in its annual magazine, the city focused on the polymer industry in Avon Lake, and each of these businesses talked about the benefit of having the local industry cluster.

Additionally, the region's strong polymer industry plays a vital role in R&D activities related to medical devices and medical device manufacturing, and this important supply chain should not be ignored.

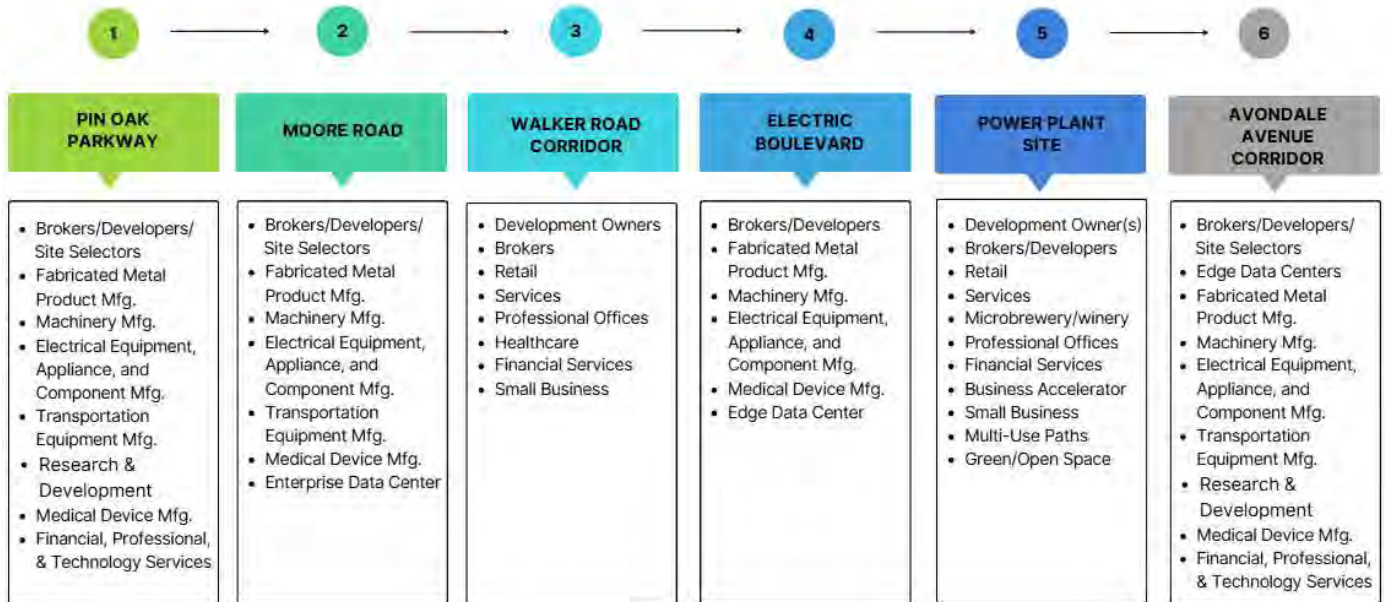
The U.S. medical devices market size in 2024 was valued at \$188.68 billion and the market is projected to grow from \$199.06 billion in 2025 to \$314.96 billion by 2032, exhibiting a CAGR of 6.8% during the forecast period.^{booxix} The steady growth in the medical devices market should be expected to continue this growth pattern well into the future. From digital health solutions to the rising demand for preventive care and chronic disease management, the future of healthcare in emerging markets is bright — and the companies that can adapt to these trends will play a crucial role in shaping that future.



Financial, Professional & Technology Services. Financial, Professional, and Technology Services refer to a broad and high-value segment of the economy made up of knowledge-based industries that provide essential support to businesses, consumers, and government. These services are typically **high-wage, low-footprint, and scalable**, making them ideal for suburban office developments, business parks, or mixed-use districts. These targets include Engineering & Design Firms, IT & Software Services, Logistics, and the support staff/industries associated with those operations.

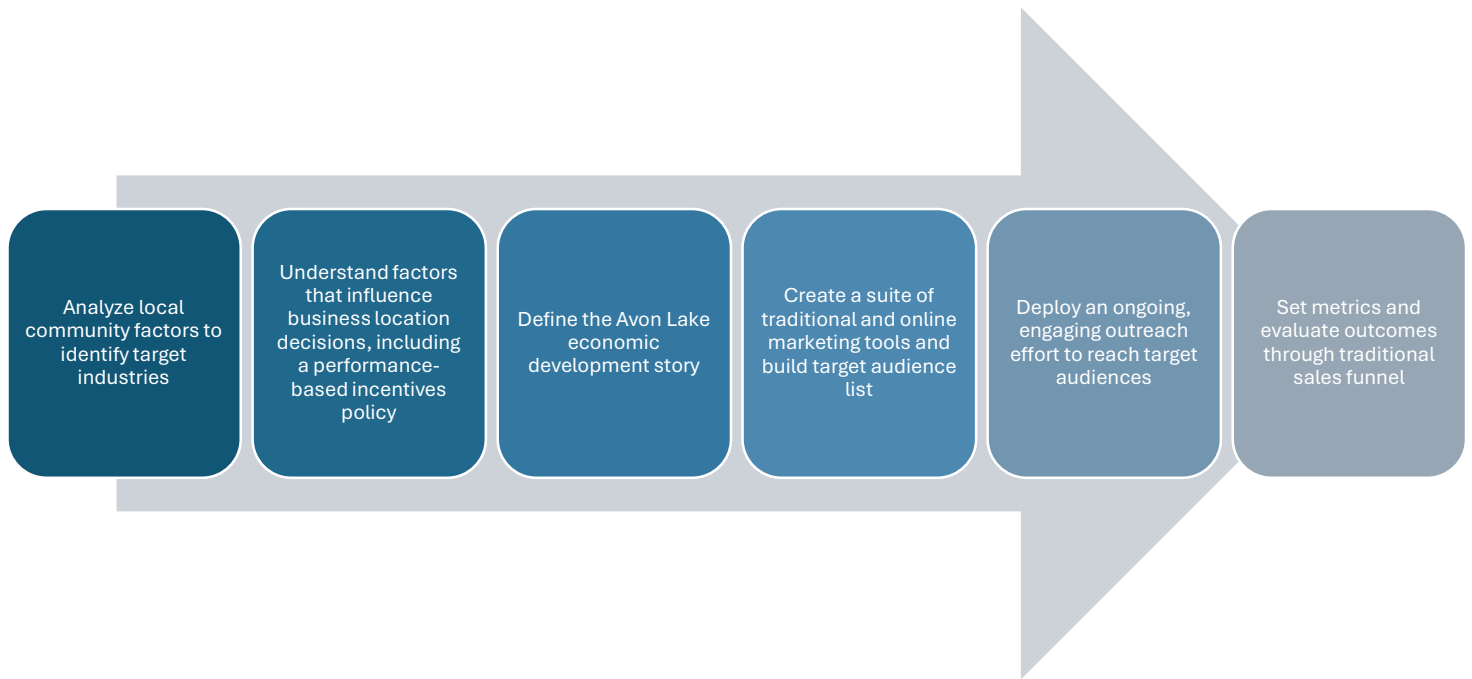
With several Fortune 500 companies located in the region, a diverse industry mix across northeast Ohio, and a highly educated workforce – 54.7% of Avon Lake residents age 25 and older hold a bachelor’s degree or higher – the city should explore opportunities to attract high-value business operations by creating appealing, well-equipped spaces for them to locate in the city.

Focus Area Prioritization



Avon Lake can attract these firms across the city's key development areas by promoting:

- Proximity to Greater Cleveland's talent and client base
- High-quality of life for remote/hybrid professionals
- Opportunity to develop or repurpose walkable, green professional office parks
- Access to digital infrastructure and clean energy
- Redevelopment areas that can be tailored for Class A office, coworking, or innovation space

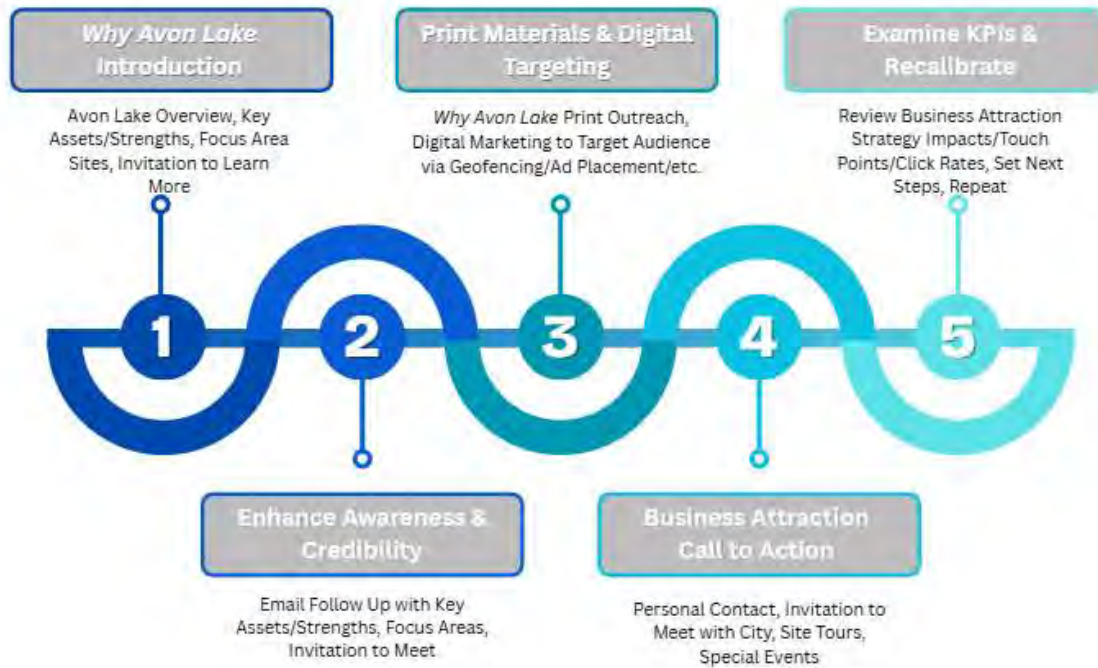


Strategy 3.3. Conduct the Avon Lake Business Attraction Strategy as an organized rhythm of outreach that promotes the message, enhances awareness and credibility of the City of Avon Lake from an economic development perspective, establishes consistent communication, collects key performance indicators (KPIs) and makes data-driven adjustments to recalibrate the message and begin the rhythm of outreach once again.

Staying in front of the target audience is crucial, especially concerning investment opportunities. The moment those ideas or concepts start to move into real-world execution, timing is everything. Avon Lake wants to be the first to capture their attention and maintain that awareness so that when they're ready to make decisions, they think of the City of Avon Lake. Building consistent visibility, whether through content, communication, or direct engagement, helps nurture those relationships and keep Avon Lake on their radar. Developing a rhythm for outreach in marketing is all about consistency and strategic planning. The key is to create a cadence that does not overwhelm the audience but ensures Avon Lake remains top of mind. Once the city has analyzed results and adjusted messaging, it should continue the rhythm of outreach cadence and measurement of KPIs. Outreach is a continual process, and the more consistently Avon Lake follows this cycle, the more the city will build recognition, trust, and successful economic development outcomes.

To operationalize its outreach, Avon Lake should implement a year-round outreach calendar. This schedule balances weekly digital engagement (social media and newsletters), monthly deep content (blogs and virtual tours), and quarterly long-form materials (case studies, whitepapers, media releases). This structured approach allows the city to track engagement through KPIs, refine messaging based on performance, and maintain visibility with key decision-makers.

Avon Lake Business Attraction Rhythm of Outreach



A smooth rhythm of outreach involves a blend of different strategies and formats, each targeting a specific segment of the audience at the right time. The city should determine the cadence of outreach as well as the methods used (email, social media, newsletters, print postcards, special events, etc.) that fit the city's calendar and staffing capacity. An example of an outreach calendar includes:

Weekly Outreach (Consistent Touchpoints)

- Social Media (LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook):
 - Share industry-specific content to highlight Avon Lake's strengths in each sector.
 - Post testimonials or case studies from businesses that have successfully located in Avon Lake.
 - Run interactive polls or share updates on business incentives or economic development news.
 - Engage with followers by responding to comments and sharing relevant local or regional news to strengthen the city's online presence.
- E-Newsletters:
 - Distribute monthly or quarterly newsletters targeting business owners, site selectors, and key stakeholders.
 - Include updates on new incentives, success stories, economic forecasts, relevant policy changes and infrastructure developments.
 - Consider segmenting the email list by industry (tech, manufacturing, retail, etc.) for a targeted approach.

Monthly Outreach (In-Depth Communication)

- Blog Posts and Articles:
 - Publish content on the city's economic growth, infrastructure developments, or new business initiatives.
 - Feature interviews with local leaders, developers, or executives who have moved their companies to Avon Lake.
 - Showcase data-driven insights such as Avon Lake's economic development trends, workforce availability, or cost comparisons with nearby cities.
- Virtual Tours:
 - Provide interactive virtual tours of key development sites, zoning opportunities, or even local success stories,
 - Highlight the city's economic development team and resources available for businesses.

Quarterly Outreach (Long-Form Content)

- Case Studies / Whitepapers:
 - Publish a quarterly report or case study of a business that's made a successful transition to Avon Lake.
 - Create industry-specific whitepapers that address key questions businesses may have when looking for a new location (e.g., "How a former coal plant re-emerged as a community anchor." or "Why Choose Avon Lake for Tech Startups?").
 - Include economic data that compares Avon Lake to nearby areas in terms of business climate, workforce quality, and cost of living.
- Press Releases / Media Engagement:
 - Use press releases to announce major new investments, partnerships, or developments in Avon Lake.
 - Cultivate relationships with local, regional, and trade media outlets to keep Avon Lake in the news for its positive business environment.

Define the Message, Track Performance, and Continuously Refine the Strategy.

Define the Message. Avon Lake's economic development strategy must evolve beyond the traditional model of pursuing development solely based on available vacant land. With limited developable land available in Avon Lake, the city's approach should prioritize the optimal use of its remaining development areas to support high-value industry sectors, foster job creation, and align with the skills and capacities of the local workforce. This shift positions Avon Lake to focus on long-term economic productivity and resilience, ensuring that future investments deliver meaningful returns for residents, businesses, and the broader regional economy.

Track Performance and Continuously Refine the Strategy. Consistent outreach is key, but it must be backed by tracking and analysis to see what is working and what is not. The real power of outreach comes when it is paired with smart tracking and strategic analysis and is how a strategy moves from just "doing marketing" to doing effective marketing that attracts interest and converts results. To effectively assess the Business Attraction Strategy's impact, the city must develop key performance indicators (KPIs) such as open rates, click-through rates, social engagement, inquiry volume, and lead conversions. Regular evaluation of these metrics will help determine what's working and where adjustments are needed. If certain aspects of Avon Lake's business climate aren't resonating, tweak the messaging to appeal more to the audiences the city hopes to reach. If social media engagement

is low, consider adjusting the frequency or timing of posts. Alternatively, if emails are not being opened, test different subject lines, content, or calls to action. Finally, consider further segmentation of the messaging, creating custom outreach for tech entrepreneurs versus industrial manufacturers.

BUSINESS ATTRACTION STRATEGY KPI EXAMPLES

Website Traffic	Social Media Engagement	Email Engagement	Lead Generation	Event Participation	Investment Results
- Visitors to economic development site - Most visited links/pages within economic development site	- Track number of likes, shares, comments - Track click-through rates on posts with a "call to action" - Monitor times of day when posts are most active - Media mentions, reshares, tags	- Track open rates - Track click-through rates on correspondence with a "call to action"	- Inquiries or leads generated from outreach efforts - Categorization of inquiries - are the right people interested?	- How many targets participate in virtual tours - Quality and diversity of target audience attendance at Avon Lake Site Selector Days-style events	- Number of new business inquiries (companies, site selectors/brokers, etc.) - Qualified leads generated - Number of site visits - Projects in the pipeline - New capital investment secured - New companies and sector diversity quantified

Existing Planning Alignment: Undertaking redevelopment of the former Avon Lake Power Plant and surrounding area to attract a mix of new businesses and land uses aligns with the **Lorain County Strategic Plan's** Pillar 4: Support Innovative Industry and Economic Development. Within this pillar, encouraging the attraction of emerging future-oriented industries, and promoting the county's strategic positioning in manufacturing and food industries are action steps Lorain County is to pursue and would be aligned with business attraction in key development areas. Additionally, Pillar 2: Facilitate greater county-wide collaboration, as intergovernmental and public-private partnerships will be important to supporting new business attraction opportunities and coordinating infrastructure improvements for redevelopment.

This redevelopment initiative is also well-aligned with the **NOACA CEDS** in several key areas:

- **Innovation & Entrepreneurship:** The proposed land uses for the site-potentially including clean tech, specialty manufacturing and logistics-mirror CEDS goals to encourage innovation and build on Northeast Ohio's strengths in industrial transformation.
- **Manufacturing:** NOACA's CEDS identifies manufacturing as a foundational sector in the regional economy. Avon Lake's redevelopment can accommodate advanced and diversified manufacturing operations, supporting both job creation and regional competitiveness.
- **Workforce Development:** The city's potential partnerships with Lorain County Community College, trade programs, and regional workforce agencies aligns with NOACA's emphasis on growing the talent pipeline to meet future industry demands.
- **Economic Resilience:** Redevelopment of the power plant site supports the CEDS goal of long-term resilience by converting a legacy industrial property into a flexible, modern

employment hub-strengthening the tax base, supporting infrastructure reuse, and reducing brownfield vacancy.

Furthermore, the **NOACA CEDS** notes three principles for resilient systems. Principle 1: Maintain Diversity and Redundancy expresses the need to avoid “putting all your eggs in one basket.” The goal of resilience strategies is to remain as efficient as possible, while acknowledging that preparing for inevitable downturns and disasters does have an initial and ongoing investment cost.

In summary, Avon Lake’s business attraction strategy and site redevelopment priorities reinforce regional goals to grow a more resilient, innovation-driven, and collaborative economy, making the city a key contributor to broader regional and countywide planning efforts. Given Avon Lake’s limited developable land, future growth must prioritize quality over quantity, emphasizing economic outcomes rather than purely on land development.

Recommendation #4. Actively support and participate in the redevelopment of the former power plant site, exploring innovative funding strategies to transform the site into a thriving mixed-use district that attracts businesses of all sizes, encourages entrepreneurship, and maximizes its location along Lake Erie’s shoreline while prioritizing sustainability, connectivity, and public waterfront access.

Redeveloping a waterfront brownfield of this scale requires intensive coordination across disciplines including land use, real estate finance, environmental remediation, infrastructure engineering, and public engagement. It also involves working through complex regulatory frameworks and identifying appropriate funding sources at all levels of government. When sequenced properly, this redevelopment effort offers a once-in-a-generation opportunity to turn a decommissioned site into a major civic and economic asset for the region.

Regenerating waterfront brownfields is an extraordinarily complex process that weaves together ecology, land use, community benefits, real estate economics, design, and numerous related disciplines. It also involves navigating a web of regulatory and funding agencies at the federal, state, and local levels. While the mixed-use redevelopment of former waterfront power plant sites has become a critical — yet challenging — component of urban revitalization, it also presents a significant real estate opportunity and communities must organize and sequence design, remediation, land reuse planning, shoreline improvements, market analysis, feasibility studies, and the extensive regulatory reviews required to ensure redevelopment results in activities that generate the most valuable economic and community benefit.

Strategy 4.1. Consider and Analyze Multiple Economic Development Tools that Generate Funds to Support Community Facilities and Site Redevelopment Efforts at the former Avon Lake Power Plant and Adjacent Sites.

The former Avon Lake Power Plant site is one of northeast Ohio's last lakefront redevelopment sites along Lake Erie and despite the attractive location of the site, there are several redevelopment activities and investments that must be undertaken to return the site to a new tax generating and community gathering area in Avon Lake. The Avon Lake Environmental Redevelopment Group (ALERG) is responsible for the demolition, cleanup, and satisfactorily addressing environmental issues on the site. Returning the property to a condition that allows for redevelopment is necessary for the process of attracting private developers and reassuring the city that investing in measures to preserve open space and create public accessibility are both sound pursuits. In November 2024, Avon Lake executed an interim development agreement with ALERG, which included a proposed overlay zoning district oriented toward mixed-use development with open space on the site north of Lake Road. Prior planning efforts, including the West End Redevelopment Plan (2014) and Gensler's Conceptual Master Plan (2022), promote mixed-use development with open space and connectivity.



Gensler Conceptual Master Plan, 2022

Additional acreage owned by CEI exists south of Lake Road and straddles Avondale Avenue. This property is identified as industrial zoning in the future land use map and is adjacent to the city's primary industrial and manufacturing areas. Future development of this area could include advanced manufacturing, edge and enterprise data centers, industrial, research & development, and professional offices. Open space and connectivity to neighborhoods and the former power plant site north of Lake Road are highly desirable and should be incorporated into any planning efforts.



- 1 Industrial Expansion**
 - Designate areas for PolyOne / Lubrizol
 - Create "campus" environment along Walker Road
 - Provide for facility expansion, incremental growth
- 2 Office / Technology Development**
 - Phasable office park
 - Clustered buildings to share parking / loading
 - Orient towards Avondale
 - Position parking / loading behind buildings
 - Attract water related businesses
- 3 Green Infrastructure**
 - Divert, collect and treat stormwater
 - Reduce impacts / costs of traditional infrastructure
 - Permeable paving, parking lots
- 4 Buffer & Enhanced Landscaping**
 - Expand Powdermaker Ditch
 - Connect to trails for lunchtime walkers
 - Use landscaping to define zones
- 5 Improved Walker Road Streetscape**
 - Enhanced to serve as two-sided street
 - Provide presence for companies, facilities

West End Redevelopment Plan, 2014

Revenue generating mechanisms that help facilitate private and public investments at the site will be required to ensure redevelopment is financially feasible. Programs such as TIF and special improvement districts such as New Community Authority (NCA) are two mechanisms the city should analyze to determine what funds could be generated and reinvested in eligible site development investments. As with any project looking to employ creative funding mechanisms, considerations of the tradeoffs, limitations, and long-term implications made by using funding mechanisms/economic development tools/financing programs/grant funds must be evaluated and accounted for before final decisions are made to proceed with any program. The City of Avon Lake should consider the footprint these creative funding mechanisms cover and whether it makes sense to include adjacent industrial parcels south of Lake Road along Avondale Avenue to encourage cohesive redevelopment and business attraction in advanced manufacturing, datacenters, research & development, and professional office. By planning early and comprehensively, Avon Lake can ensure that redevelopment efforts are financially grounded, strategically sequenced and aligned with the city's long-term economic and land use goals.

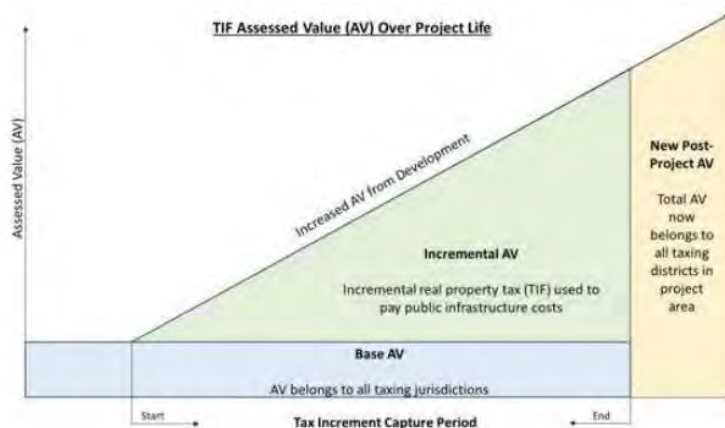
Strategy 4.1.a. Conduct a TIF Analysis of the Former Avon Lake Power Plant Site to Determine Potential Revenue Generation from Redevelopment.

To support the long-term financial viability of redeveloping the former Avon Lake Power Plant site, the City of Avon Lake should conduct a comprehensive TIF analysis. TIF is a powerful economic development tool that allows municipalities to redirect a portion of the real property taxes created by the increase in the assessed value of land, new structures, and remodeled structures to pay for the provision of public improvements and eliminate blight in a community. Public infrastructure improvements include, but are not limited to, public roads and highways; water and sewer lines; public parking structures; continued maintenance of those public roads and highways, water and sewer lines, and parking structures; environmental remediation; land acquisition, including acquisition in aid of industry, commerce, distribution, or research; demolition, including demolition on private property when determined to be necessary for economic development purposes; stormwater and flood remediation projects, including such projects on private property when determined to be necessary for public health, safety, and welfare; the provision of gas, electric, and communications service facilities, including the provision of gas or electric service facilities owned by nongovernmental entities when such improvements are determined to be necessary for economic development purposes; and the enhancement of public waterways through improvements that allow for greater public access.

Counties, municipalities, and townships may establish a TIF district for a period not to exceed ten (10) years and for an exemption of not more than seventy-five percent (75%). The TIF district may be established for up to thirty (30) years and for an exemption of one hundred percent (100%) with the approval of the impacted school district. The County or jurisdiction and the appropriate school district are required to approve a TIF compensation agreement where the jurisdiction and school district share the TIF property taxes collected after the debt service is paid. Existing property taxes continue to be paid to the respective government entities. The owner of the property makes “service payments in lieu of taxes” (commonly referred to as “PILOTs”) instead of the exempted real property taxes. The PILOTs are used to pay debt service on bonds issued.^{xc}

SAMPLE TIF ANALYSIS

A sample TIF analysis provides a high-level illustration of how revenues could be generated based on a hypothetical development scenario. This sample analysis explains how incremental property tax revenues could be captured over time, allocated to a separate TIF account, and used to support public improvements tied to any eligible development activity in the city. **To gain an accurate estimation of TIF revenues, the city should engage a firm with strong knowledge of Ohio’s TIF laws and a team of professionals that can appropriately model TIF calculations. This analysis**



would define sequencing of how and when TIF revenues would be generated, estimate future effective tax rate escalation, and suggest how TIF revenues could be utilized.

For purposes of this sample analysis, the following simplified assumptions were made:

SAMPLE TIF ANALYSIS			
TIF Rate:	75%	Phase I TIF Proceeds:	\$ 424,473.31
TIF Term:	10 Years	Phase II TIF Proceeds:	\$ 160,078.59
Total Capital Investment:	\$10,000,000	Phase III TIF Proceeds:	\$ 110,914.60
Phase I Construction:	\$5,000,000	TOTAL TIF PROCEEDS:	\$ 695,466.50
Phase I Construction Start Date:	2026		
Phase I Completion:	2028		
Phase II Construction:	\$2,500,000		
Phase II Construction Start Date:	2029		
Phase II Completion:	2030		
Phase III Construction:	\$2,500,000		
Phase III Construction Start Date:	2031		
Phase III Completion:	2032		
Estimated Taxable Value:	50%		
Assessed Value:	35%		
Industrial/Commercial/Mineral Effective Rate:	63.66864		
Escalation Rate:	1.03		

For discussion purposes only, not related to a specific development or redevelopment project

New development and redevelopment activities typically occur over multiple phases and multiple years. To sample how a multi-year and multi-phase project would generate TIF revenues, we assume a simplified total capital investment of \$10 million. Phase I will include \$5 million in new construction over a three-year period; Phase II will include \$2.5 million in new construction over two years; and Phase III will include \$22.5 million over three years. Of the total capital investment, it is assumed 50 percent of the investment is attributed to labor and 50 percent is attributed to construction costs. The effective tax rate used in this analysis is Lorain County's 2024 tax rate and an escalation rate of three percent is used to account for inflation. This analysis also assumes the TIF would be established for maximum rate and term prescribed by the Ohio Revised Code that does not require school board approval. This maximum rate equals 75 percent for a maximum term of 10 years.

Phase I Construction							
Tax Year	Parcel ID	Address	Estimated Capital Investment	Estimated Taxable Value	Assessed Value	New Real Property Taxes	TIF Proceeds
	40000123456	1234 Any City Road Avon Lake, OH 44012					
2025							
2026		\$5,000,000.00	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-
2027			\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-
2028				\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-
2029				\$2,500,000.00	\$875,000.00	\$55,710.06	\$41,782.55
2030						\$57,381.36	\$43,036.02
2031						\$59,102.80	\$44,327.10
2032						\$60,875.89	\$45,656.92
2033						\$62,702.16	\$47,026.62
2034						\$64,583.23	\$48,437.42
2035						\$66,520.73	\$49,890.54
2036						\$68,516.35	\$51,387.26
2037						\$70,571.84	\$52,928.88
							\$424,473.31

For discussion purposes only, not related to a specific development or redevelopment project

Phase I involves \$5 million in capital investment with a construction start date of 2026 and completion date of 2028. It is assumed the capital investment would hit the tax duplicate in the

following year and taxes would be due that year – 2029. Of the \$5 million in Phase I capital investment, \$2.5 million is estimated to represent the taxable value of real property improvements. The assessed value equals 35 percent of the taxable value, or \$875,000, and at an effective tax rate of 63.66864, the total estimated new real property taxes generated in the first tax year as a result of Phase I would be \$55,710. Using a TIF rate of 75 percent for 10 years, Phase I would generate \$424,473.31 between the years 2029 – 2037.

Phase II Construction							
Tax Year	Parcel ID	Address	Estimated Capital Investment	Estimated Taxable Value	Assessed Value	New Real Property Taxes	TIF Proceeds
	40000123456	1234 Any City Road Avon Lake, OH 44012					
2025							
2026							
2027							
2028							
2029			\$2,500,000.00	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-
2030				\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-
2031				\$1,250,000.00	\$437,500.00	\$27,855.03	\$20,891.27
2032						\$28,690.68	\$21,518.01
2033						\$29,551.40	\$22,163.55
2034						\$30,437.94	\$22,828.46
2035						\$31,351.08	\$23,513.31
2036						\$32,291.61	\$24,218.71
2037						\$33,260.36	\$24,945.27
							\$160,078.59

For discussion purposes only, not related to a specific development or redevelopment project

Phase II assumes \$2.5 million in capital investment will be constructed between 2029 - 2030, of which \$1.25 million is estimated to be the taxable value of real property improvements. The assessed value equals 35 percent of the taxable value, or \$437,500, and at an effective tax rate of 63.66864, the total estimated new real property taxes generated as a result of Phase II would be \$27,855.03 and would hit the tax duplicate during tax year 2031. Using a TIF rate of 75 percent for 10 years, Phase II would generate \$160,078 between the years 2031-2037.

Phase III Construction							
Tax Year	Parcel ID	Address	Estimated Capital Investment	Estimated Taxable Value	Assessed Value	New Real Property Taxes	TIF Proceeds
	40000123456	1234 Any City Road Avon Lake, OH 44012					
2025							
2026							
2027							
2028							
2029							
2030							
2031			\$2,500,000.00	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-
2032				\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-
2033				\$1,250,000.00	\$437,500.00	\$27,855.03	\$20,891.27
2034						\$28,690.68	\$21,518.01
2035						\$29,551.40	\$22,163.55
2036						\$30,437.94	\$22,828.46
2037						\$31,351.08	\$23,513.31
							\$110,914.60

For discussion purposes only, not related to a specific development or redevelopment project

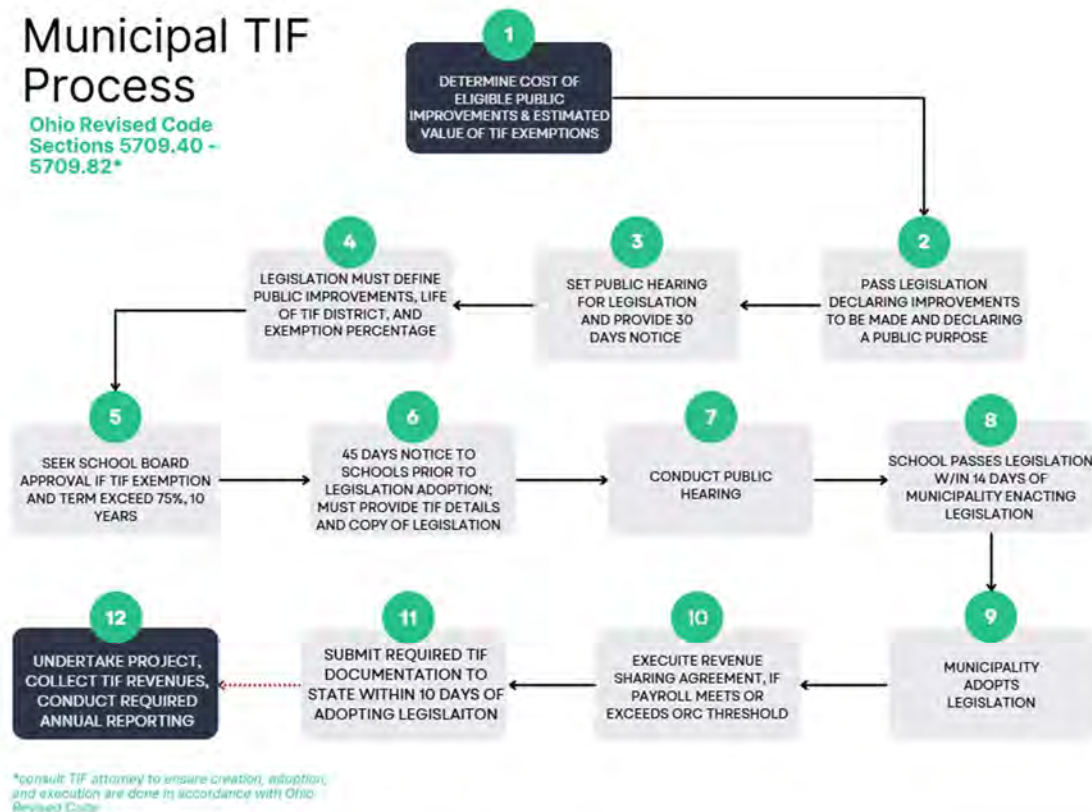
Phase III assumes \$2.5 million in capital investment will be constructed between 2031 - 2032, of which \$1.25 million is estimated to be the taxable value of real property improvements. The assessed value equals 35 percent of the taxable value, or \$437,500, and at an effective tax rate of 63.66864, the total estimated new real property taxes generated as a result of Phase II would be \$27,855. Taxes in Phase III improvements would be due in the tax year following project completion – 2033. Using a TIF rate of 75 percent for 10 years, Phase III would generate \$110,914 between the years 2033-2037. The total estimated taxes generated through the TIF over the 10-year period is estimated at \$695,466.

As the City of Avon Lake considers the structure of a TIF, it must understand the potential for multiple phases of new construction to be undertaken at a project site, the time for each phase of construction to be completed, the total estimated construction costs associated with each phase, and the sequencing of when new taxes would come onto the tax duplicate that would generate TIF revenues. The full spreadsheet of this sample TIF analysis is included as Appendix 8.

An Interim Development Agreement between ALERG and the City of Avon Lake was executed on November 27, 2024, and details cooperative redevelopment efforts between the two parties at the former power plant site to include mixed-use development, public park, multi-family residential, office and/or retail uses. Within this agreement, utilization of an Ohio Port Authority for the issuance of bonds to finance the acquisition of public park property with debt serviced in part through PILOT payments. TIF bonds may be issued on a taxable or tax-exempt basis, primarily based upon the use of proceeds. The bonds are non-recourse to the municipality and the Port Authority, and do not count against the city's general obligation bond cap unless the city specifically agrees to provide credit support.^{xcii} There are a variety of TIF provisions under Ohio state law. The most common use of TIF proceeds is for public infrastructure, however, there is some ability to issue TIF debt for broader economic development purposes. TIF bonds are backed by some form of security in addition to the TIF proceeds. The form of this security varies depending on the structure of the deal, but it can take the form of a reserve fund, a minimum service payment agreement with the developer, a letter of credit provided by a bank, the backing of a bond fund, and/or a special assessment.^{xciii} **To properly estimate the tax revenues generated from redevelopment at the former power plant site, the estimated revenues attributed to the TIF district, and PILOT payment estimates to properly service debt and corresponding taxing authorities (e.g., schools) over the term of the TIF, the City of Avon Lake should work with a law firm or consulting firm with specific knowledge and expertise in running TIF analysis prior to making final commitments at the project site/TIF district.**

Municipal TIF Process

Ohio Revised Code
Sections 5709.40 –
5709.82*



Comparable Redevelopment Precedent. To better understand the scale of opportunity presented by the Avon Lake Power Plant site, it is helpful to consider successful models of waterfront power plant redevelopment in other cities.

Kessler Collection Plant Riverside Redevelopment Project – Savannah, Georgia. The Plant Riverside, located in Savannah, Georgia, is a transformational redevelopment project of a former power plant located along the Savannah River that has been undertaken by Richard C. Kessler’s luxury hotel and hospitality management company, The Kessler Collection. Plant Riverside District® is Savannah’s largest and most transformative adaptive reuse development to date, converting a 1912 power plant into the city’s new epicenter of culture and entertainment. The multi-billion-dollar project transformed an architectural icon and created a new legacy and vibrant destination on Savannah’s riverfront.^{xciii} The district is home to the JW Marriott® Savannah hotel, a myriad of restaurants, retail, music and entertainment venues, and inspiring art at every turn, repurposed into an electric waterfront gathering place.



Source: The Kessler Collection, [Plant Riverside District](#)

The district is anchored by a portion of the plant's original structures, including the iconic smokestacks and turbine building. These structures are designated as historic by the National Register of Historic Places as part of the Savannah Historic District (Ref# 66000277).^{xciv}

Plant Riverside Project Financing and Incentives Support. Phase I of the project involved more than \$350 million in capital investment with an estimated 700 new jobs created at an average salary of \$32,000 a year. To support this phase of the redevelopment project, \$26 million in state and local historic preservation tax credits were awarded and \$33 million in city-backed bonds were issued in 2016 with another \$9.7 million issued in 2019 to help finance the construction of a 488-space parking garage. Under the terms of the garage management agreement with the city, Kessler was granted exclusive use of 251 of the 488 parking spaces for the J.W. Marriott hotel. Kessler is responsible for operating and maintaining the garage and retains revenues derived from it. Kessler made interest-only payments on the bonds starting in 2019 and running through the first half of 2022 when principal payments began.^{xcv} Kessler agreed to pay the city an annual \$100,000 risk premium fee for 30 years upon completion of the parking garage followed by \$50,000 in a risk premium fee for 20 years thereafter.^{xcvi} An initial property tax payment was made in 2022 for the garage structure in the amount of \$658,753.^{xcvii} In addition to backing the bonds, the City of Savannah invested \$14 million in public infrastructure improvements for the project, including a westward extension of the Savannah Riverwalk.

ADDITIONAL WATERFRONT REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT EXAMPLES

The Tin Building by Jean-Georges – NYC Historic Seaport – New York, New York



Project Features:

- \$200 million Capital Investment
- 53,000 SF culinary marketplace
- 3rd floor kitchens/prep areas for onsite cooking
- 12 dining venues/restaurants (fine dining, cafés, breakfast/lunch/dinner), bars, marketplace, flower shop, shopping, outdoor seating/bar area



Promenade Park – Toledo, Ohio



Project Features:

- Concept part of city master plan
- Project started in 2017 and completed in 2022
- \$60 ProMedica HQ investment
- ProMedica HQ in former Toledo Edison steam plant building and adjacent office building
- Promenade Park hosts Summer Concert Series
- Event lawn with LED screen for family movie nights, local sports viewing, community programmed events
- Riverfront docks for boat access



City of Sandusky Master Plan Concepts – Sandusky, Ohio



Project Features:

- Concept part of city master plan
- Jackson Street Pier Concept w/kayaks and Jet Express dock
- Hogrefe Building – 1st floor commercial/retail; 2nd floor law firm; 3rd floor multi-family housing
- Battery Park Concept puts greenspace along lakefront w/marina areas and mixed-use buildings set closer to streets
- .41 TIF, City CRA, JobsOhio Vibrant Community Funding



Strategy 4.1.b. Public-Private Partnership to Construct and Finance Needed Infrastructure and Facilities at the former Avon Lake Power Plant Site using New Community Authority (NCA).

Public-Private Partnerships are used extensively throughout the State of Ohio to facilitate innovative development priorities as they offer structures where sharing in the development of ideas and the associated costs for the development and operation of future capital facilities and city services is feasible. An NCA is a well-planned, diversified, and economically sound community, or an addition to an existing community, that includes facilities for the conduct of industrial, commercial, residential, cultural, educational, and/or recreational activities.^{xcviii} It is designed in accordance with planning concepts for the placement of utilities, open space, and other supportive facilities.

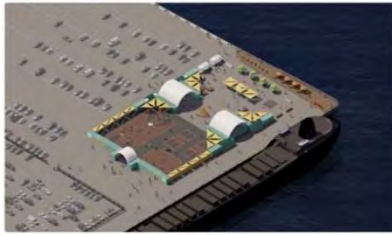
Authority for the formation of an NCA is directed under Ohio Revised Code Chapter 349 and an NCA is initiated by a petition signed by all owners of the real property to be included within the boundaries of the NCA. An NCA is a separate public body governed by a board of trustees with seven to 13 members as established in the petition. Appointed trustees are eventually replaced by elected

trustees as the NCA area is developed. Developer appointed trustees must constitute the minority of any quorum for board of trustee actions.^{xcix} that may oversee, coordinate, construct, and finance public infrastructure improvements and community facilities. The petition for an NCA establishes its community development program. Community development programs set forth the land development activities (e.g., constructing roads, sanitary and storm sewers, water distribution systems, sidewalks, and other public improvements) and community facilities (e.g., public buildings, parks, and educational, cultural and recreational facilities) the NCA will construct, operate or maintain. Community development programs may be adjusted by amending the petition or, if permitted by the petition, by resolution of the NCA board of directors.^c NCAs have broad statutory powers to implement their community development program. These powers include the ability to acquire and dispose of property, enter into agreements with governments, developers or other parties (without competitive bidding, but subject to prevailing wage) for land development activities, and to construct community facilities (such as community and recreation centers, auditoriums, parks, daycare centers, schools, hospitals and utilities), levy and enforce community development charges, hire employees and issue bonds. Ohio Revised Code Chapter 349 also provides NCAs and governmental entities or agencies the power to cooperate to carry out the community development program. NCAs do not have zoning or subdivision regulation powers or the power to provide fire or police protection. NCAs may only supply water or sewage treatment and disposal services if they cannot be obtained from existing political subdivisions.^{ci} An NCA can levy a "community development charge" within its boundaries to pay for its community development program if permitted by its petition and real property instruments encumbering land within its boundaries. Community development charges can be determined based on real property assessed valuation, the income of residents of the NCA, the profits of businesses within the NCA, a uniform fee per parcel or any combination of the foregoing. Community development charges can be collected by the NCA or certified to the county auditor for collection with real property taxes.^{cii} An NCA can also take on debt by issuing bonds to fund its community development program. These bonds can be paid for and secured by community development charges or other income sources (e.g., rentals, user fees, sale proceeds, grants, gifts, etc.). The bonds are a debt of the NCA and not a debt of any county, township, municipality or other subdivision.^{ciii} New community authorities can be utilized in addition to traditional public financing on projects. NCAs are often combined with CRA tax abatements or TIF as part of a project's overall financing strategy. NCAs can be used to create a replacement charge as a way to monetize tax abatement. For projects with large public infrastructure needs, NCAs can be used to create revenue in addition to a traditional TIF. The flexibility to design charges specific to the economic activity created by the new development can supercharge development possibilities.^{civ}



Source: City of Cleveland

NCAs are widely used throughout Ohio; however, only one NCA has been established in northeast Ohio. In March 2025, the City of Cleveland established the **North Coast Waterfront NCA** which includes property along the lakefront owned by the North Coast Waterfront Development Corporation, the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame, the Great Lakes Science Center, Huntington Bank Field, and small apartment and retail buildings at North Coast Harbor. The property is city-owned, but nonprofits and businesses lease some of the acreage. The corporation is looking to construct the North Coast



Source: North Coast Waterfront Development Corp.

Yard pop-up park, with room for basketball courts, roller skating, pickleball, and live music as part of efforts to bring more people to the waterfront north of Huntington Bank Field where 25 acres of city-owned land sits vacant for much of the year. The North Coast Waterfront NCA will levy surcharges on users and visitors within the designated area, with fees capped at \$5 for parking, \$2 for admissions, and five percent on retail sales.^{cv}

NCA Redevelopment Case Study

Bridge Park New Community Authority – Dublin, Ohio. Bridge Park is a historic transformation of place in the City of Dublin, Ohio that brings mixed-use development into the city as a development that was planned with higher density than most of the city's traditional suburban acreage. Crawford Hoying developed the site that today encompasses both sides of the Scioto River and has added hundreds of residences, dozens of new businesses, and new urban experiences.^{cvi} The project has been successful only because of the strong public-private partnership that includes the City of Dublin, Crawford Hoying Development Partners, Bridge Park Community Authority, and Columbus-Franklin County Finance Authority.^{cvi} Responsibilities of the parties include:



Credit: City of Dublin, Ohio

City of Dublin – Establishes TIFs, authorizes tax abatements, and funds Phase 1 roadway improvements and two parking garages (Block B & C).

Public Improvements (City Issued Debt)

- Phase 1 Roadway Improvements - \$11.1 million
- Parking Garage B - \$16 million (851 reserved/public parking spaces)
- Parking Garage C - \$16 million (869 reserved/public parking spaces)

Funding for City Debt

- All TIF revenue (service payments) generated within Block B & C directed towards payment of debt service associated with garages and roadways
- Minimum Service Payment Guarantee – approximately \$2.625 million annually, calculated on the anticipated 30-year principal and interest payments on City debt

Crawford Hoying Development Partners – Develops and owns private development and constructs and manages community facilities.

Developer Expenses

- Parking Garages (A, D, F, G, Z, and Events Center) - \$54.97 million
- Phase 2 Roadway Improvements - \$2.9 million
- Phase 3 Roadway Improvements - \$2.6 million

Funding for Developer Expenses

- TIF revenue (service payments) generated on all development blocks other than Blocks B & C
- NCA Charge – owner-occupied properties during CRA; backstop on all properties
- NCA Bed Tax Revenue – separate from the City’s bed tax
- Bed Tax Grant
- Sales charges
- Private Sources

Bridge Park Community Authority (BPCA) – Levies and collects community development charges.

Columbus-Franklin County Finance Authority (CFCFA) – Issues bonds and owns community facilities.

Community Facilities

- Parking Garages A, D, F, G, and Z (\$48.47 million) and Event Center (\$6.5 million)

The Development Agreement with Crawford Hoying Development Partners notes there is no limit in the amount of debt the CFCFA can issue for community facilities, however, coverage in terms of annual TIF and NCA revenue must be 120% of the annual debt service.^{cvi}

North Market Bridge Park New Community Authority – Dublin, Ohio. Within the Bridge Park development, a second NCA was established. The North Market Bridge Park opened in 2020 in the City of Dublin, Ohio at the Bridge Park development. This market features eighteen local “tastemakers” that offer fresh groceries, prepared foods, and gifts. This NCA was created to fund ongoing infrastructure improvements, including new garages, streets, and the public market. The NCA established a Board of Trustees in accordance with the Ohio Revised Code and that Board approved an NCA community development charge of 0.5% on gross receipts at restaurants and retail businesses and 1% on hotels.^{cix}



Credit: NorthMarket.org

Establishing an NCA at the former power plant site and levying a community development charge for surface parking, parking garages, construction and maintenance of public/open spaces, admissions to events held in public open spaces, and retail and hospitality sales will help fund necessary public infrastructure and facilities construction and ongoing maintenance

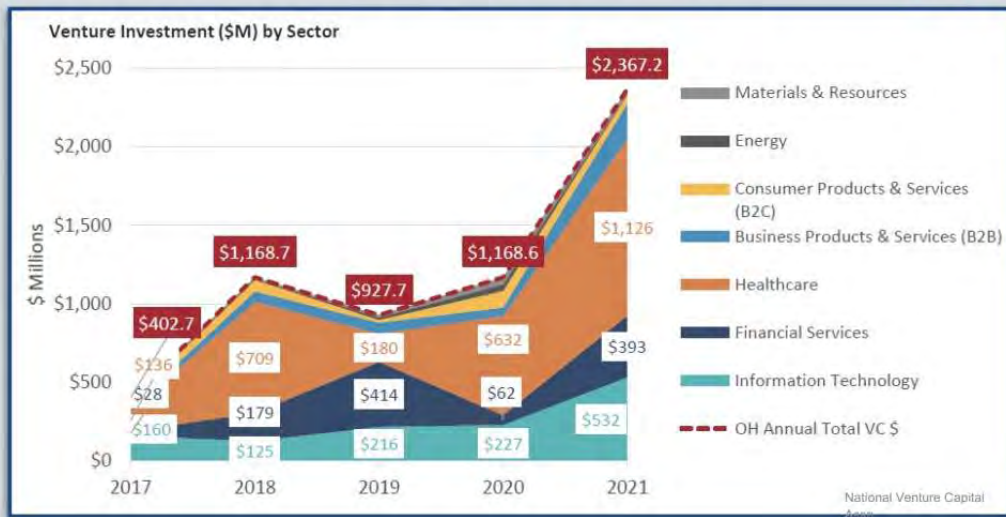
at the project site. The Avon Lake NCA should also analyze the feasibility of issuing bonds to fund certain community development investments to construct such facilities.

Strategy 4.1.c. U.S. Economic Development Administration Public Works, Economic Adjustment Assistance, and Assistance to Coal Communities Programs. Redevelopment of the former power plant site and the surrounding area includes attracting a dynamic mixed-use district designed to attract a range of retail, service, and professional businesses and complimentary advanced manufacturing, industrial, and professional office facilities south of the site along the Avondale Avenue corridor. EDA's Public Works and EAA Programs fund a variety of activities, including business accelerators and public infrastructure improvements for advanced manufacturing, industrial, and associated operations. As redevelopment along this Lake Road area unfolds, the city and AL CIC should consider pursuing relevant EDA funding to enhance these diverse, yet compatible, business opportunities.

EDA Funding for Small Businesses, Maker Spaces, and Co-Working Hubs. Locating entrepreneurial uses here offers a strategic advantage, allowing businesses to leverage proximity to Avon Lake's industrial and advanced manufacturing sectors while strengthening and diversifying the overall business mix at the site. EDA has invested in business accelerators, maker spaces, and incubators around the country whose purposes share similarities with Avon Lake. The city and AL CIC should look to EDA for funding of an Avon Lake Business Accelerator that would be a primary ground-floor anchor tenant that could locate either on the power plant site or in Avondale industrial and office corridor, giving proximity to business activities along this corridor and fostering partnerships between local entrepreneurs and established businesses.

The Ohio Venture Pipeline is a grassroots collaboration that provides deal flow as a public service and tracks completed investment deals throughout the state, including those made by venture capital firms, angel investors, and private equity groups.^{cx} The organization's most recent report on capital flows in Ohio is for the years 2017-2021 where significant growth in venture capital investments have been made in materials and resources, consumer products and services (B2C), business products and services (B2B), and healthcare. Notable growth has also taken place in the financial services and IT sectors as well and, at the end of 2021, more than \$2.3 billion in venture investments had been made across these sectors in Ohio.^{cxii}

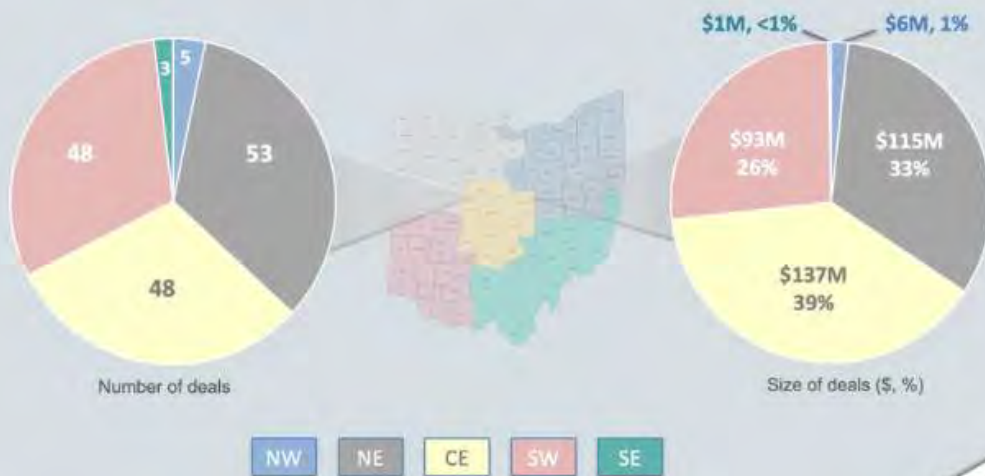
Capital Flows into Ohio 2017-2021



SMARTMONEY
VENTURES

Source: Ohio Venture Pipeline, National Venture Capital Association

Funding Across the State Illustrates Momentum 1H-2023



SMARTMONEY
VENTURES

Source: Ohio Venture Pipeline, National Venture Capital Association

Given that most of the deal flow in Ohio occurs at the pre-seed and seed stages, and with the Northeast Ohio region represented 33% of all venture capital investments in 2023, there is a clear opportunity for Avon Lake to position itself as a supportive environment for early-stage businesses. With **strong local industry and workforce assets, and access to regional entrepreneurial resources the city should explore the creation of a business accelerator or maker space at the former power plant site or at the adjacent Avondale Avenue corridor.** These facilities could provide critical space and technical support to help startups launch and scale. **Businesses successfully “graduating” out of the accelerator or maker space should then be supported in their search for available commercial, retail, or industrial spaces in designated development areas and targeted Focus Areas throughout the city.** Additionally, working in partnership with local, regional, and state partners and regional foundations, the City of Avon Lake should explore how to leverage venture capital and startup funds to creatively invest in pre-seed and seed stage companies.

To illustrate what this could look like in practice, the following examples highlight how communities successfully leveraged EDA support to create a manufacturing and tech-focused accelerator that fueled local innovation and job creation.

Warehouse Business Accelerator – Loveland, Colorado. The Warehouse Business Accelerator received a \$544,000 EDA grant to support the expansion of local capacity and technology resources in Larimer County, Colorado. EDA’s investment was instrumental in enabling the Warehouse Business Accelerator to grow its entrepreneurship program by serving more early-stage tech and advanced manufacturing businesses and bringing greater economic impact and opportunity to the community. Using EDA funds, the accelerator is leveraging existing private-sector partnerships to help second-stage manufacturing and technology companies overcome barriers to scaling, ensuring their long-term sustainability and economic impact. The project also aligns with broader goals of fostering economic resilience, supporting disaster recovery, and driving technology-driven economic development while ensuring equitable access to essential business resources.^{cxii}



Warehouse member, Meshcomm Engineering, collaborates on product development at the Warehouse Innovation Hub (Credit: WHO13 News).

The Fort – Columbus, Ohio. The Fort is a business ecosystem that is home to a diverse community of makers and entrepreneurs. In 2017, longtime Columbus furniture company, Fortner Upholstering, consolidated from three manufacturing facilities to one in an historic array of buildings at 2000-2050 S. High St. The legacy of craftsmanship within these walls made it the perfect home for Fortner Upholstering. After renovations were completed on the former industrial building and the upholstery business operations were underway, The Fort was established as a creative maker space to open other areas of the Fortner campus for lease.^{cxiii} Today, there are over 50 businesses within the main campus. Fortner and The Fort has expanded its footprint to include two neighboring properties at 2108 and 2025 S. High St. which have brought in three more neighbors, including an event space and a brewery.^{cxiv}

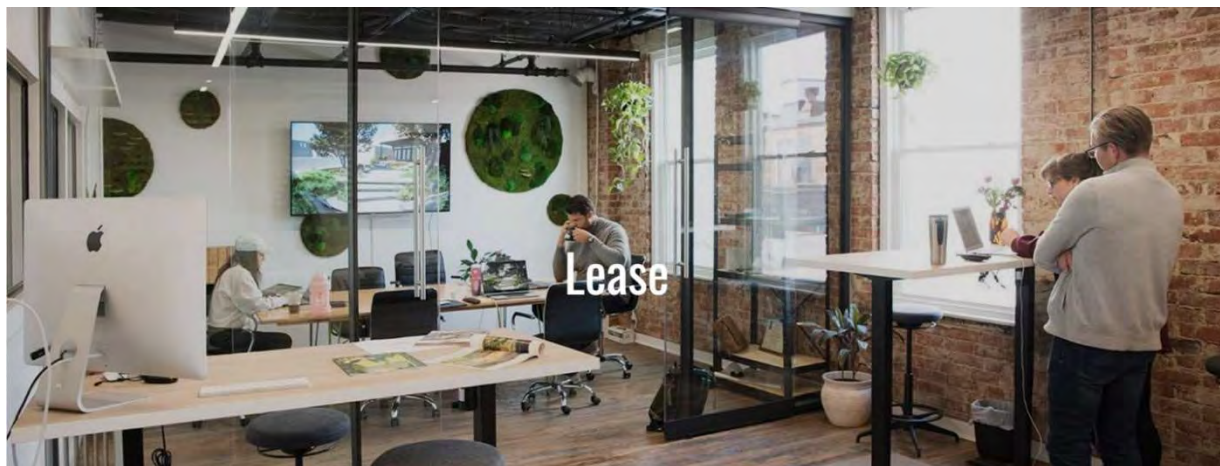


Source: The Fort Columbus

The Fort offers predefined spaces and community gathering spaces for tenants and is ideal for makers, restaurants, distribution, and other office uses. The Fort leases space ranging from 1,000 to 16,000 square feet and lease rates are based on space requirements and build out needs.



Community Maker Space
Source: The Fort Columbus



Creative and Flexible Spaces
Source: The Fort Columbus

The Fort Community of Tenants^{cxv}

Main Campus

[Aiden & Grace Specialty Rentals](#)

[Columbus Printed Arts Center](#)

[Dyonna James Photography](#)

[Ghost River Furniture](#)

Marc Desrosiers
Mary Dietsch Architecture & Design
[Menges Design](#)
[Miss Birdy](#)
[Milliennial Suite, LLC](#)
[Mynte Design Co.](#)
[Nick Fancher Photography](#)
[Prema Designs](#)
Capture 614 Photography
Rachelle Smith Art Studio
[Rent Wedding Chairs](#)
Roof Die Tool & Machine
[STUMP Plants](#)
Tenet Construction
[Kiln Room](#)
[The Yusufs](#)
[TOTE collab](#)
[Vanish Point Photography](#)
[VR Patients](#)

2060 S. High St.

[Upright Press](#)

2050 S. High St.

[And Here We Are](#)
[The Actors' Theatre of Columbus](#)
[Common Species](#)
[Crew Supply Co.](#)
[Flinsee](#)
[Foreground Studio](#)
[Fortner Upholstery](#)
[Jehan LLC Photography](#)
[Matchbox LTD](#)
Meghan Kerr
[Planthropy](#)
[Steelton Glass Co.](#)
[The Smithery](#)
[The Speculo Group](#)

2025 S. High St.

[17th Star Distributing](#)
Balancing Life
Brigham Visuals

Continuum Transportation Services

[Deep Clean Black Products](#)

[Dotson Cooke](#)

Hans Kruze Photo

Karen Hamilton Law

SAW Transportation

Sewing Simplified

The Kingdom Fashion

[Two Men & A Vacuum](#)

UJJO Coffee

[Wild Ohio Brewing](#)

2055 S. High St.

S&S Trucking

Architectural Roof Solutions

Sky Dogs Training

2108 S. High St.

[Via Vecchia Winery](#)

2112 S. High St.

[Topper Supply](#)

1981 S. High St.

Rhombus Construction

EDA Funding for Public Infrastructure Improvements to Support Manufacturing Business Growth. EDA offers targeted funding programs specifically designed to support the critical development and modernization of public infrastructure improvements that enable manufacturing business growth. These investments focus on building the foundational assets — such as roads, utilities, broadband, water and sewer lines, stormwater systems, and energy systems — needed to attract, retain, and expand manufacturing operations.

By leveraging EDA infrastructure funding, communities like Avon Lake can proactively upgrade or expand infrastructure in targeted industrial and manufacturing corridors, enhancing site readiness and creating competitive advantages for business development. These improvements not only support the expansion of existing manufacturers but also position the community to attract new investment from advanced manufacturing sectors, boosting local employment and diversifying the tax base.

Infrastructure projects supported by EDA often prioritize resiliency, sustainability, and futureproofing, ensuring that the investments meet the evolving needs of modern industries. **For Avon Lake, pursuing EDA funding could catalyze development along the Avondale Avenue corridor that strengthens supply chain ecosystems and creates new opportunities for entrepreneurship and innovation tied to manufacturing.**

To better understand how EDA funding can be effectively leveraged to expand industrial capacity and stimulate economic growth, the following case study highlights a community that pursued similar infrastructure goals. Like Avon Lake, the City of Milbank sought to improve public infrastructure adjacent to its primary industrial corridor to attract private investment, support job creation, and enhance site readiness for future development.

Milbank Industrial Park - Milbank, South Dakota. The City of Milbank, in partnership with the Grant County Development Corporation (GCDC), was awarded a \$2.5 million grant from the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) in 2024 to finance essential infrastructure enhancements for their industrial park expansion that EDA expects will support substantial enhancements to Milbank's industrial infrastructure which lays the groundwork for sustainable regional economic growth.^{cxvi}

Milbank Industrial Park is currently home to several businesses, including Apex, J&J Earthworks, Valley Ag, and Valley Rental & Recycling. The grant will support the development of 12 additional lots, along with the construction of new infrastructure (streets, curb, and gutter, storm sewer, drainage facilities, watermain, sanitary sewer) and other necessary work for infrastructure and grading costs to facilitate development.^{cxvii}

The assistance from the EDA will be combined with \$615,400 from GCDC funds that include a \$500K grant from the South Dakota Local Infrastructure Improvement Program (LIIP). As a result of the investments, the city estimates \$8 million in private investments and new job creation will be induced, further aligning with the goals of the City of Milbank and the GCDC. Similar to Avon Lake, this industrial park is located adjacent to the City of Milbank's primary industrial area and is adjacent to a majority of the city's residential areas.



Source: South Dakota Zoom Prospector

Strategy 4.1.d. Other Funding Mechanisms and Economic Development Program Considerations. Leveraging a variety of funding programs and economic development tools is

important for supporting business growth and attracting new investment. Different programs — such as grants, tax incentives, low-interest loans, and infrastructure funding — can be layered to lower development costs, reduce financial risk for companies, and enhance Avon Lake’s competitiveness. By using these tools in combination, the city of Avon Lake can focus on key priorities like upgrading public infrastructure, supporting small businesses and entrepreneurs, attracting advanced manufacturing, and revitalizing underutilized sites. This approach helps maximize the impact of each dollar invested, accelerates project timelines, and ensures that growth is sustainable, holistic, and aligned with the community’s long-term vision.

Economic Development Tool Examples	Program Ownership
Community Reinvestment Area	City of Avon Lake
Community Development Block Grant	Lorain County
Small Business Administration 504 Loan	SBA Approved CDCs – Growth Capital Corporation (Cleveland), Cascade Capital Corporation (Akron)
Small Business Loans	SBA Economic & Community Development Institute (ECDI)
ODOT Jobs & Commerce Grant	ODOT Jobs & Commerce Division
Roadwork 629 Fund	Ohio Department of Development
Special Improvement District/Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE)	Northeast Ohio Public Energy Council (NOPEC)
Rural Industrial Park Loan Program	Ohio Department of Development
Transportation Alternatives Program	Ohio Department of Transportation
Bond Funding, Capital Lease Transactions, Infrastructure Financing	Lorain Port and Finance Authority, Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Port Authority, Toledo-Lucas County Port Authority
Capital Improvements, Public Infrastructure	Ohio Public Works Commission
Clean Air Improvement Program, Building a Healthy Ohio, Small Business Assistance, Solar Generation Fund	Ohio Air Quality Development Authority

Strategy 4.2. Prioritize Public Lakefront Access and Mixed-Use Development Land Uses.

Prioritizing public lakefront access and mixed-use development at the former power plant site is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to reclaim a historically restricted industrial property and turn it into a vibrant, accessible, and economically productive asset for the entire community. Avon Lake’s location along the Lake Erie shoreline is one of its most valuable natural and civic resources. Ensuring public access allows all residents and visitors – not just private interests – to enjoy the lakefront through open spaces, trails, and community events.



Gensler Conceptual Master Plan, 2022

A thoughtfully planned mixed-use development can attract a diverse mix of businesses, support local entrepreneurship, generate new tax revenue, and create year-round activity that strengthens the city’s economic base. Additionally, integrating sustainable design and environmental restoration helps repair the site’s industrial legacy, enhance climate resilience, and restore habitats and ecological health.

Together, these priorities reflect a forward-looking vision for Avon Lake – one that embraces economic innovation, environmental stewardship, and balanced community development. This approach transforms a legacy site into a civic destination and economic driver that benefits current and future generations.

INNOVATIVE FUNDING SOLUTIONS KPI EXAMPLES

Sufficient TIF Revenues	NCA Development Charge Revenues Funding Eligible Projects	Grant Funding Awards Secured	Long-Term Revenue Generation
-------------------------	---	------------------------------	------------------------------

Existing Planning Alignment: Undertaking redevelopment of the former Avon Lake Power Plant and surrounding area to attract a mix of new businesses and land uses aligns with the **Lorain County Strategic Plan's** Pillar 4: Support Innovative Industry and Economic Development. Within this pillar, helping to facilitate the revitalization of key downtown areas, encouraging the attraction of emerging future-oriented industries, and promoting the county's strategic positioning in manufacturing and food industries are action steps Lorain County is to pursue and would be aligned with economic development activities on and around the former power plant site. This also aligns with the county's Pillar 5: Facilitate creative solutions to transportation, housing, and infrastructure needs.

This activity aligns with the **NOACA CEDS** across multiple strategic priorities, reinforcing the region's vision of a more innovative, equitable, and resilient economy. Specifically, the redevelopment of the former Avon Lake Power Plant aligns with CEDS goals in:

- **Tourism and Cultural Activities:** Enhancing public access to the shoreline, restoring ecological function, and incorporating public art or interpretive elements all contribute to increased visitation, civic pride, and cultural vibrancy consistent with NOACA's tourism and community identify goals.
- **Housing and Parks & Recreation:** The potential for integrating housing and recreational amenities into the waterfront plan supports NOACA's emphasis on quality of place. Mixed-use development near Lake Erie not only expands housing choice but also fosters livability and wellness.
- **Innovation & Entrepreneurship:** by transforming the site into a hub that attracts businesses of all sizes and fosters entrepreneurial ventures, the project promotes the growth of high-value, future-oriented sectors and supports small business development-core tenets of NOACA's innovation objectives.
- **Manufacturing:** The site's redevelopment provides an opportunity to modernize and diversify Avon Lake's industrial base, welcoming advanced and clean manufacturing that aligns with NOACA's regional strengths and promotes job creation in high-skill sectors.
- **Workforce Development:** The project opens pathways to engage local educational institutions, technical programs, and workforce agencies in preparing residents for emerging industries. This aligns with CEDS strategies to build a robust and adaptive regional workforce capable of supporting next-generation employers.
- **Economic Resilience:** Revitalizing a legacy industrial site into a mixed-use waterfront district enhances the region's resilience by reactivating dormant land, strengthening the tax base, and creating a diverse mix of uses. This reduces reliance on single-sector employment and positions Avon Lake to weather future economic shifts more effectively.

Recommendation #5. Integrate environmental sustainability practices into citywide economic development and business attraction efforts, applying traditional economic development and land use practices that recognize the interconnectedness of economic growth, local ecosystems, and community well-being.

Following the adoption of the ER&R Plan, the city will pursue strategies to make sustainability a core principle in land use and business attraction:

Strategy 5.1. Apply advanced energy infrastructure and stormwater best practices.

Strategy 5.2. Encourage LEED certification and energy-efficient building design.

Strategy 5.3. Restore native ecosystems and protect biodiversity near development zones.

Environmental sustainability practices are important to economic development because they protect the very resources that businesses and communities depend on for long-term prosperity. Redevelopment and economic development activity on high-profile sites—such as the former power plant along the Lake Erie shoreline—should align with environmental sustainability goals and emphasize sustainable design and construction practices that support Avon Lake’s long-term environmental and economic vitality. The city should not limit these practices only to the former power plant site and should expand environmental sustainability practices citywide to make sustainability a core principle of all new development.

Benefits of Environmental Sustainability Practices:

- **Resilient Infrastructure:** Sustainable practices (like stormwater management, nature-based systems, and climate adaptation) make communities more resistant to flooding, coastal erosion, severe weather, and other hazards — protecting businesses and reducing costly disruptions.
- **Talent Attraction and Retention:** Workers, especially younger generations, increasingly want to live and work in communities that value sustainability, walkability, green spaces, and clean environments.
- **Cost Savings:** Energy efficiency, advanced energy systems, and sustainable land use lower long-term operating costs for businesses and communities.
- **Access to Funding:** Many state and federal grant programs, investment funds, and incentives prioritize projects that demonstrate environmental stewardship and climate resilience.
- **Market Competitiveness:** Sustainable communities and developments are more attractive to forward-looking companies, investors, and industries that see environmental responsibility as key to their brand and supply chain.
- **Community Health and Quality of Life:** Cleaner air, water, and greenspaces lead to healthier residents, reduced healthcare costs, and stronger local economies.

- **Future-Proofing:** Regulations around carbon emissions, land use, and water quality are tightening; communities that act now will be better positioned to adapt and thrive as policies change.
- **Wetland Management as Part of Property Development:** When a potential stakeholder is evaluating a property in Avon Lake, wetlands are most likely a factor, and it is critical to have knowledge about wetland regulations as they relate to development activities.

Strategy 5.1. Apply Sustainable Infrastructure and Stormwater Best Practices.

Environmental sustainability should not be viewed as a cost, but rather as an investment in economic strength, competitiveness, and prosperity. By prioritizing sustainable practices, Avon Lake can build resilience against future climate risks, protect vital natural resources, and create a more stable and attractive environment for business investment.

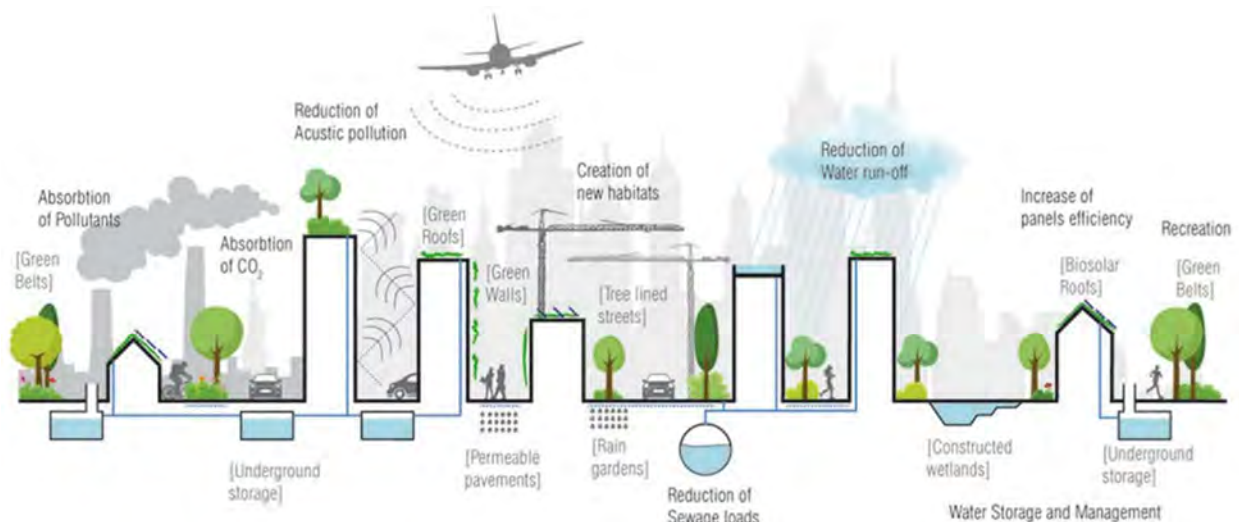
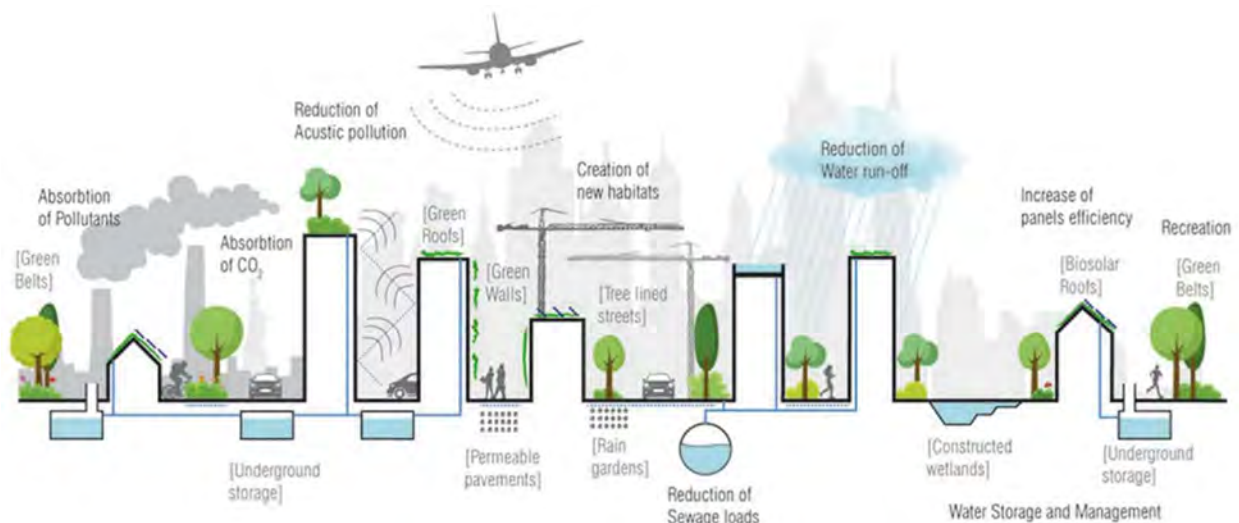


Figure 5.1



Source: *Rethinking The Future – Sustainable Architecture*

Sustainable practices are important for projects along waterfronts and the benefits are passed along to the community and environment in the form of social resilience, improved environmental health, and enhanced economic prosperity. Social resilience emphasizes benefits like public health, equitable access, livability, and community well-being—all of which are bolstered by sustainable waterfront design. Sustainable environmental solutions can be integrated into the building and throughout the site at a variety of scales, including at the waterfront, through energy and efficient building design, and with stormwater management and sustainable infrastructure practices (Figure 5.1).

Sustainable practices are also important to consider given existing environmental constraints and historic resource considerations that exist in development areas throughout the city.

Environmental Constraints and Historic Resource Considerations.

Historical and Archaeological Considerations. In accordance with federal and state requirements, all redevelopment activities, particularly those involving federal funds, must consider the presence of historic or archaeological resources that may be impacted. The former Avon Lake power plant site and its surrounding properties may contain elements of industrial heritage or cultural significance, and any major site redevelopment should coordinate with the Ohio State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) to ensure compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. Additionally, consideration should be given to whether adaptive reuse of industrial structures can contribute to placemaking, heritage tourism, or educational programming. Preservation of cultural assets can support the city's broader goals of sustainable and resilient redevelopment while honoring the community's historical identity.

Table 5.1 – Environmental Constraints Prioritization

Area	Environmental Feature or Concern	Level of Constraint	Recommended Strategy
Power Plant Site	Brownfield contamination	High	Remediation and reuse funding (EPA, EDA)
Power Plant Site	Proximity to Lake Erie	High	Shoreline stabilization, wetland buffers
Walker Rd. & Lake Rd.	Endangered bat habitat	Medium	Tree preservation; seasonal construction limits

Pin Oak Parkway	Limited wetlands	Low	Standard permitting and BMPs
Avondale Ave.	No known constraints	Low	Advanced energy infrastructure incentives
Entire City	Cultural/historic resources (unknown)	Variable	SHPO coordination, Phase I Archaeological Survey if needed

Natural Hazard Mitigation.

The Avon Lake power plant site presents a generational opportunity to integrate the site back into the fabric of the neighborhood, create renewed financial and economic benefit, and address the environmental issues associated with past uses. Within the region's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), managed by NOACA, prioritizing economic resilience activities are vital to the overall success of the multi-county region. Within the NOACA CEDS, *"integrating economic development and natural hazards mitigation planning"* is listed as the second priority for economic resilience.^{cxviii} NOACA conducted a Hazards and Vulnerabilities summary, and findings are in Table 5.2, noting that state and local governments are required to develop and adopt natural hazard mitigation plans (NHMPs) which are required to address known natural hazards within the jurisdiction.^{cxix} Natural hazard mitigation is defined as any sustained action taken to reduce or eliminate the long-term risk to human life or property from natural hazards. NHMPs include an inventory of natural hazards and a vulnerability assessment. Consistent with the Statewide hazard rankings, the county plans identified flooding, severe storm events (winter and summer), tornadoes, drought, and earthquakes as the key hazards in the Region.^{cxx}

Hazard	Score	Rank
Flooding	21.09	1
Winter Storms	20.54	2
Severe Summer Storms	18.44	3
Tornado	18.04	4
Earthquake	16.91	5
Dam/Levee Failure	15.67	6
Invasive Species	14.71	7
Landslide	11.97	9
Land subsidence	11.97	10
Wildfire	11.21	11
Coastal Erosion	10.39	12

Table 5.2 - Source: 2019 State of Ohio Hazard Mitigation Plan

Hazard mitigation and economic development activities are both critical to the long-term prosperity of regions and communities; however, they are typically conducted separately. According to the National Association of Development Organizations, "as a result, hazard mitigation plans and economic development strategies can be disconnected, making it difficult to ensure that businesses and regional economies are prepared for natural disasters and able to recover quickly."^{cxxi} A region's success is inherently linked to its economic resilience – in other words, its ability to anticipate, withstand, and bounce back from any shocks to its businesses and overall economy, whether those stem from natural hazards or shifting economic or market conditions.

NOACA's economic resiliency priority of *integrating economic development and natural hazards mitigation planning* has particular relevance to Avon Lake and the former power plant site, with its location along the shores of Lake Erie and with waterways like Powdermaker Creek having immediate proximity to properties where redevelopment and new business development are likely to occur. To address this CEDS priority, the former power plant site can modify its relationship with the environment by daylighting Powdermaker Creek and restoring waterfront open spaces, reducing impervious surfaces, remediating the soil, treating stormwater runoff, and adding natural features to the neighborhood.

Waterfront Redevelopment and/or Preservation.

As noted in the Avon Lake Comprehensive Plan, the city's top land use planning goal is to identify and establish new points of access to the lakefront through public green spaces where residents can interact with Lake Erie. The power plant site encompasses 45.6 acres of lakefront property and is an ideal site in the city where enhanced access to Lake Erie can be designed. The former power plant site is one of only a few remaining shoreline areas in northeast Ohio with redevelopment opportunity and care should be taken to encourage environmental restoration and preservation in coordination with structural redevelopment.

Communities across the country that are fortunate to have natural assets in their backyard are increasingly looking for ways to capitalize on these assets and are realizing the benefits of preserving and enhancing these assets. Waterfront development has led to increased community vibrancy, gathering areas, economic development, recreation, and quality of life and many of these waterfront sites have taken former industrial uses and transformed the area into multi-use sites that balance economic activity with the creation of a sense of place. Whether it be redevelopment of a former steam plant along the Maumee River that is now home to ProMedica Health System's \$70 million headquarters and community park area at Promenade Park in the City of Toledo (Lucas County, OH), or the \$500 million+ mixed-use redevelopment of a former coal plant in Savannah, Georgia's Plant Riverside District, these projects did not happen by accident and were the result of communities rallying together to reimagine their waterfront and transform it into something that advances the local economy, creates valuable jobs, encourages new businesses, creates a sense of place for residents, and welcomes visitors.

Waterfront Marina & Open Space
Promenade Park – Toledo, OH



Plant Riverside District
Savannah, GA



Natural Landscapes.

To preserve the natural landscape and enhance lakefront access, communities need to consider likely development types and end users, and design improvements to new buildings and structures that incorporate varied passive and active recreational uses. Trees in and around cities provide a range of benefits to community and human health, such as maintaining or enhancing a better environment (air, water, soil, etc.) and enhancing the visual character of a place. The preservation of



Source: GreenBlue.com, Urban Tree Canopy Design Element

existing trees and the planting of new trees is an important element that enhances urban and rural quality of life and, as cities around the globe grapple with the mounting impacts of environmental preservation measures, local leaders are looking to waterfront parks as powerful tools with which to build resilience. With thoughtful planning and design, public parks and access points along a waterfront can withstand flooding and storms, recover quickly from weather occurrences, and protect the neighborhoods around them from climate impact.

As redevelopment of the former power plant site unfolds, the city and developers should consider opportunities to expand the area's tree canopy to add shade along the waterfront and design these canopies thoughtfully so as not to block waterfront views. The waterfront should be connected through pathways to existing and planned multi-modal routes that provide ease of access from the site to various community, commerce, residential, and workforce areas. The expanded waterfront open space should be designed in a way that connects and relates to the development and uses of the former power plant site to increase access and views of the waterfront, such as incorporating existing industrial elements into the design of open spaces, site, and building design.



Strategy 5.2. Encourage LEED Certification and Energy-Efficient Building Design.

Energy is fundamental to all facets of our lives, our community, and powers our economy. Most global electricity consumption still comes from non-renewable fossil fuels, such as coal, oil, and natural gas, which produce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and are major contributors to environmental and air quality health. Sustainable building practices create structures and use processes that are environmentally responsible and resource-efficient throughout a building's life-cycle, from siting to design, construction, operation, maintenance, renovation and deconstruction.^{cxvii} According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, buildings in the U.S. account for roughly 39 percent of total energy use, 12 percent of total water consumption, 68 percent of total electricity consumption, and

38 percent of carbon dioxide emissions. Sustainable buildings are designed to reduce the overall impact of the built environment on human health and the natural environment by efficiently using energy, water, and other resources; protecting occupant health and improving employee productivity; and reducing waste, pollution, and environmental degradation.^{cxxiii}

Environmental Benefits	Economic Benefits	Social Benefits
• Enhance and protect biodiversity and ecosystems • Improve air and water quality • Reduce waste streams • Conserve and restore natural resources	• Reduce operating costs • Create, expand, and shape markets for sustainable product and services • Improve occupant productivity • Optimize life-cycle economic performance	• Enhance occupant comfort and health • Heighten aesthetic qualities • Minimize strain on local infrastructure • Improve overall quality of life

Table 5.3 - Green Building Benefits, Source: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Green Building

For example, buildings may incorporate sustainable materials in their construction (e.g., reused/recycled content, or made from renewable resources); create healthy indoor environments with minimal pollutants (e.g., reduced product emissions); and/or feature landscaping that reduces water usage (e.g., by using native plants that survive without extra watering) (Table 5.3).^{cxxiv}

Sustainable building practices are not limited to just the former power plant site, and the City of Avon Lake can look to zoning and building ordinances to determine if these practices can be recommended for redevelopment and new development activity throughout the city. These activities should prioritize reducing energy consumption and strive to produce energy locally and sustainably through the installation and promotion of advanced energy and efficient energy technologies. Examples of active and passive energy design strategies for future buildings include site design, building envelope optimization, high-performance lighting and daylighting, active plug-load management, and the use of advanced heating, ventilation, and air conditioning technologies. For example, considering the orientation of buildings to effectively benefit from sunlight exposure, wind energy collection, and positive air flow through the buildings starts with site design.^{cxxv} Optimizing the building envelope, which includes the walls, roofs, windows, doors, insulation, and air barriers, will improve the building's energy performance – when well-designed, the building envelope can significantly reduce energy consumption and minimize environmental impact.^{cxxvi} Replacing windows and doors with energy-efficient models will help minimize heat transfer and maximize natural daylight; installing continuous insulation and utilizing advanced framing techniques can contribute to efficient and structurally robust building envelopes.



Photo Credit: Efficient Windows Collaborative

Associated benchmarking programs should be implemented to facilitate ongoing energy performance measurement and reporting of energy performance results. Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) or comparable systems used to provide third-party accreditation of buildings should be considered.^{cxxvii} Sustainable building standards emphasize good insulation, which reduces the need for excessive heating and cooling, and strategies for passive cooling like shading also help maintain comfortable temperatures around the building.

Due to its size, the power plant site could **pursue a district-wide energy strategy with possible cogeneration systems to reduce energy consumption and associated carbon emissions and optimize energy availability/capacity at the site that could facilitate industrial, data center, or mixed-use style uses.**^{cxxviii} District energy systems deliver hot water, steam, or chilled water from a central plant(s) to multiple buildings via a network of pipes. A variety of energy sources may be used to accommodate demand. Simultaneous electricity generation, through Combined Heat and Power (CHP) technologies, can increase the efficiency and effectiveness of energy sources as well.^{cxxix} Where feasible, development should consider including innovative energy technologies, such as geothermal systems and photovoltaic/solar infrastructure, which will reduce energy demand and GHG emissions. When employed, sustainable building practices can reduce external temperatures around buildings and mitigate urban heat island effects.

Stormwater Management and Sustainable Infrastructure.

Low impact development (LID) techniques are stormwater management and land use strategies that are designed to use more natural processes to facilitate stormwater. Techniques often mimic pre-development site hydrology and offer water quality and quantity benefits by reducing stormwater runoff volumes.^{cxxx} By slowing water and holding it or allowing it to infiltrate the ground, chances of flooding are reduced. On-site retention of stormwater also reduces the volume of stormwater that is conveyed through the pipe network.

The land at the former power plant site has likely been contaminated due to the nature of the use and will be undergoing remediation activity to return the site to a developable state. Additional stormwater management techniques can support these efforts and help rehabilitate the land for the benefit of the environment. A combination of sustainable infrastructure like bioswales, along with engineered solutions such as catch basin filters and detention basins, can mitigate some of the negative effects of any pollution that may be present.



Stormwater tree pits line a permeable paver pedestrian walkway.

Photo Credit: EPA Green Stormwater Solutions for Congregations

Principles for low impact development techniques on the site will preserve and recreate natural landscape features, minimize impervious surfaces to create functional and appealing site drainage to treat stormwater as a resource, and when applied, the practices work with nature to manage stormwater as close to the source as possible.

LID benefits a variety of stakeholders. For developers, LID practices reduce land clearing and grading costs, reduce storm water management costs, and can increase lot and community marketability. Environmental benefits include the preservation of the ecological system integrity, protected water quality, and preservation of trees and natural vegetation.^{cxxxi}

Increased tree canopy around the former power plant site can provide shade and reduce heat effects while also benefiting stormwater management. This increased tree canopy will also work towards meeting the goals of the Avon Lake Urban Forest Management Plan (2025) and the Avon Lake Tree Commission Strategic Plan (2025). Stormwater best management practices can also reduce the amount of nutrients that runoff into waterways, particularly around Lake Erie, that can contribute to harmful algal blooms and aid in improving the overall health of the lake.

Strategy 5.3. Restore Native Ecosystems and Protect Biodiversity Near Development Zones.

Ecology is the study of how living organisms interact with each other and their environment, a perspective that is important in understanding potential restoration efforts and goals along Avon Lake's waterfront. In the Lake Erie region, centuries of deforestation, urbanization, and industrialization have disrupted the natural habitats and transformed nutrient cycles, leading to challenges such as eutrophication and ecosystem degradation. Eutrophication is the gradual increase in the concentration of phosphorus, nitrogen, and other plant nutrients in an aging aquatic ecosystem such as a lake.^{cxxxii} By understanding these ecological processes, Avon Lake can develop strategies, such as phytoremediation, wetland restoration, and other nature-based solutions, that will restore native biodiversity and improve water quality while also enhancing community resilience and public recreational opportunities. Phytoremediation technologies use living plants to clean up soil, air and water contaminated with hazardous contaminants.^{cxxxiii} It is defined as "the use of green plants and the associated micro-organisms, along with proper soil amendments and agronomic techniques to either contain, remove or render toxic environmental contaminants harmless."^{cxxxiv} This ecological foundation is essential to restore the natural balance of Lake Erie's basins and Avon Lake community to lead to a healthier and more sustainable environment.^{cxxxv}

Phosphorous and Lake Erie Central Basin.

Lake Erie's Central Basin is a vital component of the lake's physical makeup, with an average depth of 60 feet and 82 feet at its greatest depth. This basin is especially significant in the nutrient cycle, receiving nutrient dense waters from the lake's Western Basin and from the Sandusky River which both contribute excess phosphorous nutrients that lead to algae blooms. As the phosphorous is consumed and oxygen is lost through decomposition of algae, hypoxic conditions are created, leading to "Dead Zones" in the lake.^{cxxxvi}

In response to these conditions, the United States and Canada have agreed to limit the total phosphorus load entering the Central Basin to 6,000 metric tons per year. This target is designed to ensure that dissolved oxygen in the basin's bottom waters remain at or above the critical threshold (2 mg/L) during the summer stratified period that is critical to sustaining aquatic life. The Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement was first entered into by the U.S. and Canada in 1972 and was most recently updated in 2012 to enhance water quality programs that ensure the "chemical, physical, and biological integrity" of the Great Lakes.^{cxxxvii} The 2012 agreement was designed to facilitate U.S. and Canadian action on threats to Great Lakes water quality and includes strengthened measures to anticipate and prevent ecological harm. At the time, new provisions were added to address aquatic invasive species, habitat degradation and the effects of environmental changes, while supporting continued work on existing threats to people's health and the environment in the Great Lakes Basin such as harmful algae, toxic chemicals, and discharges from vessels.^{cxxxviii} The Agreement recommended measures such as upgrading municipal discharges, investing in sustainable infrastructure, and restoring natural buffers and wetlands as strategies to preserve the ecological health of the Central Basin.^{cxxxix}

Avon Lake Native Ecosystems, Invasive Species, and Environmental Adaption.

The legacy of industrial use is evident in both the landscape and environmental challenges the community faces. The former coal plant, which was part of northeast Ohio's early industrial boom, has left behind potential contaminants that can pose a threat to soil and water quality. Addressing the industrial past requires a multi-system approach with techniques previously described but also leveraging native plants to help in sequestering pollutants and stabilizing the lakeshore's edge. Protecting native ecosystems and species must also be taken into consideration as any activities on and around the power plant site are undertaken.

Native ecosystems in Avon Lake consist of wetlands, riparian buffers, and aquatic vegetation which have historically provided the essential functions of water filtration, shoreline stabilization, and habitat for wildlife. Over time, industrialization and urbanization have degraded these natural areas, allowing for invasive species to be introduced and not only thrive, but alter the nutrient dynamics within the lake. Compounding these prevalent issues, environmental changes introduces additional stressors to the dynamic ecological system through rising temperatures, changing weather patterns and more frequent extreme weather events. Together, these issues highlight the importance of restoring native habitats and preserving these habitats long term.

Endangered Species.

Of the many species of flora and fauna that call Avon Lake home, some are considered threatened or endangered by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and need special habitat considerations. The Indiana Bat and Northern Long-eared Bat can be found throughout the Lake Erie coastal region which includes Avon Lake, and each are listed as endangered. The Rufa Red Knot migratory bird is listed as threatened and the Monarch Butterfly is proposed threatened, meaning the species are likely to become endangered within the foreseeable future and will need to be considered in how new developments and habitat preservation activities are designed.



Photo Credit: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Rufa Red Knot

Bald and Golden Eagles are protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, and activities that may impact their habitats have to be appropriately avoided. Increasing habitat opportunities for eagles is beneficial and should be accounted for, especially given the tremendous growth in nesting and population throughout Ohio. Other migratory birds, like Belted Kingfishers, Red-headed Woodpeckers, and Eastern Meadowlarks, are protected and measures to avoid impacts to habitat are required.

Incorporating sustainability features into the power plant site design can attract and restore habitat for the flora and fauna that call Avon Lake home. Environmentally sensitive efforts should be made to preserve the natural habitat that currently exists and restore what is missing to support the ecological health of the region. A report on endangered species native to the City of Avon Lake can be found in Appendix 9.

Restoration Solutions and Their Benefits.

Restoration solutions are the actions taken to repair, enhance, or reestablish natural ecosystems and environmental functions that have been degraded by development, pollution, or industrial activity. These solutions are particularly important for post-industrial, waterfront, or brownfield sites where redevelopment intersects with environmental recovery.

Wetland Restoration.

Wetland Restoration is the manipulation of a former or degraded wetland's physical, chemical, and biological characteristics to return to its natural functions. This includes re-establishment, which focuses on rebuilding the former wetland, or rehabilitation which repairs the functions. Restoration is a key effort of environmental preservation efforts as wetlands play a major role in providing critical habitats, breeding grounds, and sources of food for shellfish, fish, birds, amphibians, and other organisms. Wetlands also control erosion, limit flooding, moderate groundwater levels, assimilate nutrients, and buffer coastal areas.^{cxl} Avon Lake's location along the shores of Lake Erie, combined with the decommissioning of the former power plant site, create opportunities and need for analyzing, designing, and investing in appropriate wetland restoration efforts.

Phytoremediation and Native Vegetation. Phytoremediation is the use of plants to treat and control waste in water, soil, and air and is an important part of ecological engineering. Applications for wetlands have been successful for a variety of wastes, usually when concentrations are not acutely



phytotoxic. A key consideration for a sustainable ecosystem to manage waste revolves around selecting the necessary diversity of plants to optimize the ability to transform or accumulate pollutants.^{cxli}

Native vegetation with deep root networks can help stabilize coastal beaches, dunes and bluffs. Under the ground, roots hold and add strength to the soil while also absorbing excess moisture. Above the ground, vegetation slows the speed of erosive runoff and wind. Native vegetation also provides habitat and can filter nutrients and pollutants from runoff. In low wave energy environments, vegetation alone may provide sufficient protection to the shore. In higher wave energy environments, vegetation is often used with other practices that reduce wave energy and erosion to increase the likelihood of plant survival and habitat preservation.^{cxlii}

Edging. Edging is the placement of erosion-resistant materials along the toe of the shoreline in low to moderate wave environments. The purpose of edging is to prevent erosion, allowing vegetation to establish on the slope. A variety of materials can be used as edging based on the wave environment, including coir logs, logs or stones. This practice is typically used in combination with shoreline stabilization methods such as erosion-control matting. Edging is generally smaller than a revetment and closer to the shoreline than a sill or breakwater. While Avon Lake has not and is not expected to experience severe nearshore erosion, these two solutions can be used in conjunction to aid in the establishment of native plantings.^{cxliii}

WETLAND RESTORATION CASE STUDY EXAMPLES

Case Study: Bradford Beach, Milwaukee, WI



1 Bioswale along the beach with well-established native vegetation. Credit: Stevan Keith

Overview: Vegetation was planted in and around bioswales at Bradford Beach in downtown Milwaukee, WI to improve water quality. Bioswales are shallow depressions that collect stormwater runoff and filter out pollutants as the water soaks into the ground. Prior to the project, Bradford Beach was frequently closed due to high levels of bacteria brought to the beach by stormwater runoff. Milwaukee County led this effort in collaboration with the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District, the University of Wisconsin's Great Lakes WATER Institute, Milwaukee County's Public Works and Parks departments, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, the city of Milwaukee and several corporations. The cost to construct five standard infiltration basins was approximately \$200,000. A sixth structured basin included a retaining wall and modifications to a nearby parking lot for a total project cost of \$450,000. Note that this project cost more than a typical coastal vegetation project due to the construction of the bioswales.

Results: Following this project, Bradford Beach earned the Blue Water certification from the Clean Beaches Council. The beach has experienced lower levels of bacteria and fewer beach closures, as well as an increase in visitors. The two-year maintenance plan for the basins has involved inspections, debris removal and weeding. Standing water does occur occasionally at the beach when heavy rainfall overflows the bioswales, and one of the basins was damaged by an extreme rainfall event. During record high Lake Michigan water levels in 2020, bioswales on the narrower part of the beach have suffered some damage while those on the wider part of the beach have remained intact. Overall, the bioswales have been a success and the design has been a model and has been applied to other sites along the Lake Michigan shoreline.^{cxliv}

Case Study: Domino Sugar Site, Brooklyn, New York



Overview: Two Trees' Domino Sugar site reconnects South Williamsburg to its waterfront and incorporates elements of the historic Domino Sugar factory. The project addresses the unique conditions along the East River, focusing on enhanced public access to the waterfront and resilient strategies in response to changes in environmental conditions. A new five-block-long waterfront edge will replace the dilapidated, existing bulkhead and will be raised to support a world-class waterfront park built with storm-resistant materials and high-performance landscapes featuring large areas of native and resilient vegetation. The design elements found below contributed to its restoration.

Results:

- The waterfront park, a combination of active and passive areas and informed through community outreach, includes recreational fields and courts and a dog run to the south; native plant gardens and gathering spaces in the center; and picnic areas, a large lawn, and a play space to the north.
- The waterfront park is 43% vegetated with large areas of native and resilient vegetation, and there are 169 new proposed street trees. Overall, access and east-west connections to the waterfront will be improved, with streets and view corridors extended to the elevated park, reconnecting upland areas to the water.

Restoration solutions are deliberate interventions that repair, replicate, or enhance natural systems in areas that have been disturbed by human activity — such as industrial development, shoreline erosion, or pollution. They are not just environmental fixes; they are strategic tools to make land more valuable, safer, and sustainable for long-term use. These solutions typically occur alongside development and infrastructure projects — especially on waterfronts, brownfields, and former industrial sites — and are increasingly required by regulatory frameworks, funding programs (e.g., federal EDA, EPA, Army Corps), and community expectations.

In a city like Avon Lake, restoration solutions on waterfront and brownfield sites (e.g., the former power plant) as well as citywide, can play a transformational role by balancing economic growth with ecological repair, setting a strong example of sustainable development.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY KPI EXAMPLES

Environmental Benefits	Economic Benefits	Social Benefits
•Creation of new biodiversity and ecosystems •Restoration of natural habitats •Shoreline preservation	•Reduce infrastructure and administrative operating costs •Attract environmentally-conscious businesses •Optimize life-cycle performance	•Enhance occupant comfort and health •Heighten aesthetic qualities •Minimize strain on local infrastructure •Enhance overall quality of life

Existing Planning Alignment: Understanding the link between environmental sustainability and community resilience supports the goals outlined **Lorain County Strategic Plan's** Pillar 6: Maintain and enhance the County's important natural resources. This pillar was identified during the strategic plan's engagement process and reflects on the importance stakeholders and residents have for taking a proactive approach to preserving Lorain County's natural resources. Within this pillar, emphasis was placed on how cities and counties adopt more environmentally sustainable management practices and how Lorain County intentionally manages the future of natural resources by investing in planning, policies, and infrastructure to adapt and build a climate resilient future.

This activity aligns with the **NOACA CEDS** across multiple strategic priorities, reinforcing the region's vision of a more innovative, equitable, and resilient economy. Specifically, the redevelopment of the former Avon Lake Power Plant aligns with CEDS goals in:

- **Parks & Recreation:** Environmental sustainability and resiliency efforts that reinforce efforts to enhance community health and quality of life supports NOACA's emphasis on ensuring all communities have access to safe parks and recreational opportunities and also fosters livability and wellness.
- **Tourism and Cultural Activities:** Prioritizing environmental sustainability and resiliency in planning and development is important to the success and growth of Avon Lake's tourism and cultural assets. Enhancing public access to the shoreline and restoring ecological function both contribute to the long-term health of Lake Erie and its ecosystem which are consistent with NOACA's goal of promoting the region as a waterfront community, with access and amenities related to Lake Erie.
- **Water Resources:** Lake Erie and its watershed have unique industrial, commercial, recreational, environmental, and aesthetic features that must be acknowledged and protected. Supporting the region's water and wastewater treatment agencies is important to

ensure these agencies have the resources needed to safeguard water quality, prevent and mitigate natural disasters, and protect the overall health of Lake Erie and its watershed.

Recommendation #6. Complete a Comprehensive Infrastructure Plan that evaluates and guides the development, maintenance, and improvement of the city's critical infrastructure systems, including roads, water and sewer lines, stormwater systems, utilities, and public facilities that meet the current needs and support future growth in Avon Lake.

Following the adoption of the ER&R Plan, the city should pursue the following strategies to ensure infrastructure meets the needs of current and future growth:

Strategy 6.1. Inventory and evaluate roads, water/sewer lines, and utilities.

Strategy 6.2. Identify priority upgrades to support focus areas and redevelopment sites.

Strategy 6.3. Coordinate funding strategies (e.g., state/federal grants, TIF) and align priority projects with funding cycles.

A Comprehensive Infrastructure Plan (Plan) is a thorough assessment of a city's core infrastructure systems, such as roads, water and sewer lines, stormwater management, utilities, broadband, and public facilities, and forecasts a community's future needs based on population growth, land use, and economic development goals. It identifies and prioritizes capital improvements, outlines realistic cost estimates, and maps out potential funding sources from local, state, and federal programs. The plan also integrates sustainability and resiliency strategies to ensure infrastructure can withstand environmental conditions, while aligning with broader goals like smart growth, equitable access, and long-term fiscal efficiency.

To set the city up for success, particularly in areas of potential growth, there are several key initiatives a Comprehensive Improvement Plan would address.

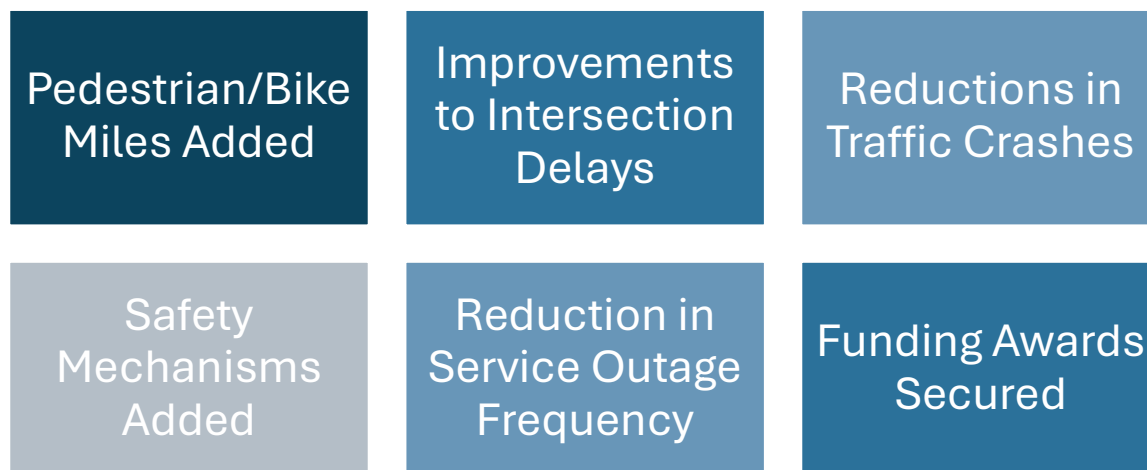
1. **Capital Improvement Plan:** The City of Avon Lake, through its Public Works and Engineering Departments, maintains a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) that strategically prioritizes both short- and long-term infrastructure projects. The CIP serves as a framework for aligning projects—such as utility upgrades, sidewalk installations, bike infrastructure, and traffic signal improvements—with available local, state, and federal funding sources. It enables the city to sequence projects efficiently based on budget cycles and funding opportunities. Avon Lake reviews its road program annually to establish priorities and has actively implemented recommendations from key planning documents, including the 2022 Comprehensive Plan and the 2022 Active Transportation Plan Update. Ongoing use and refinement of the CIP will remain critical to advancing comprehensive infrastructure planning across the city.
2. **Comprehensive Traffic Analysis:** Avon Lake should complete a comprehensive traffic analysis based on the future land uses that may occur in redeveloped areas and priority

development sites. Identifying potential future land uses will allow for the projection of the amount of traffic that may be generated by the specific land uses. It would also be important to have a traffic growth rate established to project the existing traffic to a future horizon year.

3. **Pursue Available Funding:** As part of the Capital Improvement Plan, funding sources should be identified, such as grant funding available through NOACA, ODOT Safety (HSIP) and multimodal federal grants (such as the Transportation Alternative Program and Safe Routes to Schools), and Ohio Public Works Commission (OPWC) grants and loans to underwrite pavement and drainage investments. The Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (OEPA) also offers various programs with grants and loans through its Division of Environmental and Financial Assistance (DEFA) for both sanitary and water improvements that could be targeted to increase capacity and update existing facilities for current needs, maintain required provision for the city, and help fund associated road and sidewalk improvements.
4. **Regional Resiliency Coordination:** Avon Lake should establish a regional stakeholder committee made up of the various utility providers to plan for potential disruptions in operations and/or service and develop a central hub of information related to existing facilities, informed by the city and other utility stakeholder's planned capital improvements. NOACA, ODOT, and Lorain County would be important partners for such a planning endeavor, as well as adjacent communities like the cities of Avon and Sheffield Lake. Many of these utilities are interconnected such as electric service required to operate traffic signals and water filtration. While the city might not serve as the primary lead to such an effort, Avon Lake could work with a regional partner such as Lorain County to spearhead this coordination. The Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency provides valuable resources to develop an Infrastructure Recovery and Resiliency Plan.^{cxlv} Such a plan would be relevant to recent microburst storms/tornadoes that occurred in August 2024 which upended trees along Walker Road and Lake Road impacting power, roads, and other key services. With a large industrial base located in Avon Lake, an Infrastructure Recovery and Resiliency Plan would be particularly important to ensure minimal disruptions during weather events that may impact manufacturing operations.

Performance Monitoring. Avon Lake should set Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to track the success of implementing proposed infrastructure improvements. The city should review KPIs annually and determine adjustments or reprioritization of improvement projects because of KPIs.

COMPREHENSIVE INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN KPI EXAMPLES



These measures, grounded in existing studies and legislative commitments, will position Avon Lake to accommodate growth, ensure reliable emergency response, and advance sustainable, resilient transportation.

Within the city's 2019 Comprehensive Land Use Plan, the need to properly address existing and future public infrastructure improvements are woven throughout the land use planning goals. Many of the objectives within Avon Lake's planning goals align with local and regional transportation planning efforts undertaken by city partners:

- City of Avon Lake 2015 and 2022 Active Transportation Plan
- NOACA sponsored Lorain County Coordinated Transportation Plan (2024-2028)
- Ohio Department of Transportation

Existing Conditions Summary. The infrastructure framework in the City of Avon Lake has good “bones.” Situated on Lake Erie, Avon Lake Regional Water oversees the city's water distribution and wastewater (sanitary sewers) collection in the city along with serving many regional customers in Lorain County, providing 22 million gallons per day from its Lake Road Water Filtration plant. The storm sewer and sanitary sewers were separated in large part under a 2019 improvement. The transportation network has several good north to south and east to west collectors/arterials, with proximity and connection to the I-90 Interstate in nearby Avon. The city typically implements a round of capital improvements related to roads, and/or partners utilizing Ohio Public Works Commission funding to advance capabilities to maintain improvements, such as the Walker Road reconstruction project to be constructed in late 2025. The city prepared an Active Transportation Plan in 2015 and updated this plan in 2022. The Comprehensive Land Use Plan in 2019 implemented many recommended key pedestrian and bicycle improvements from that plan utilizing Safety Funding and

working with developments as they come online (Figure 6.1). Ohio Edison and Columbia Gas provide electric and gas utilities to the city. The city is served by multiple telecommunication providers in the area. The Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) also has major maintenance responsibilities on some of the main roads and culverts/ bridges that exist in the city, while Avon Lake has routine maintenance responsibilities.

The city is proactively implementing capital and roadway improvements that support multi-modal transportation, leveraging available safety funding to address sidewalk gaps, enhance pedestrian crossings, and improve bicycle connectivity. As these efforts are underway, bolstering transportation and infrastructure readiness and resiliency through a Comprehensive Infrastructure Plan (Plan) is needed to responsibly plan for and fund improvements. These improvements not only enhance the quality of life for residents, but they also build a resilient infrastructure system throughout Avon Lake that supports existing businesses, new business attraction, and workforce mobility. Key elements of the Plan that should be addressed include:

1. Strengthen Multimodal Connectivity
2. Upgrade Traffic Signal and Intersection Controls
3. Expand Roadway Capacity and Pavement Resiliency
4. Bolster Stormwater and Utilities Resiliency
5. Integrate Land Use and Transportation Planning



Figure 6.1 2019 Comprehensive Plan Infrastructure Highlights

Identifying priority upgrades is essential for supporting Focus Areas and key redevelopment sites because it ensures that development efforts are well thought out, feasible, and “investment ready.” Upgraded infrastructure signals to developers and businesses that the city is committed and prepared for development opportunities. Identifying and planning for improvements early helps a community assess the true cost of development, making it easier to phase improvements or align with grant cycles and capital planning. Identifying priority upgrades also supports sustainable growth by coordinating land use with infrastructure to ensure new development is efficient, environmentally responsible, and minimizes long-term maintenance costs.

Strengthen Multimodal Connectivity. Strengthening multimodal connectivity focuses on improving how different forms of transportation such as walking, biking, driving, and public transit are connected and work together within a city or region. The goal is to create a seamless, safe, and accessible transportation network that gives people multiple options for how they move around, whether for commuting, running errands, recreational use, or for business. Benefits to strengthening multimodal connectivity include promoting accessibility by serving people without cars, reducing traffic congestion and emissions, supporting healthy lifestyles, and enhancing economic development by improving access to commercial areas and workforce mobility. Avon Lake has existing infrastructure in place throughout the city, with proposed additions running along the Lake

Road corridor on the city's northern edge, completing connectivity along Electric Boulevard east to existing all-purpose trails south of Resatar Park, southern connections along Avon Belden Road, Jaycox Road, and Lear Road, a north-south connection near Walker Road Park, and along the perimeter of Sweetbriar Golf Course. Specific details on proposed additions are depicted on Map 6.1.

Map 6.1 Future Active Transportation Map



Source: Draft City of Avon Lake Multimodal Study, 2022

As the city studies multimodal connectivity, there are specific connectivity improvements to be considered.

- **Fill Sidewalk Gaps:** Prioritize construction of sidewalks along Avondale Avenue and Moore Road, where existing plans identify “paper streets” and partial coverage.^{cxlvi} The city has two projects proceeding this year along Lake Road to fill in necessary sidewalk gaps. Future development plans should also be tasked with updating adjacent facilities for forward compatibility with improved facilities as recommended in either the Avon Lake Active Transportation Plan or other planning studies such as a future comprehensive transportation study.
- **Complete Bike Network:** Build on the 2015 Avon Lake Active Transportation Plan’s call for continuous on-road bike lanes and off-road trails. Extend protected lanes along key corridors

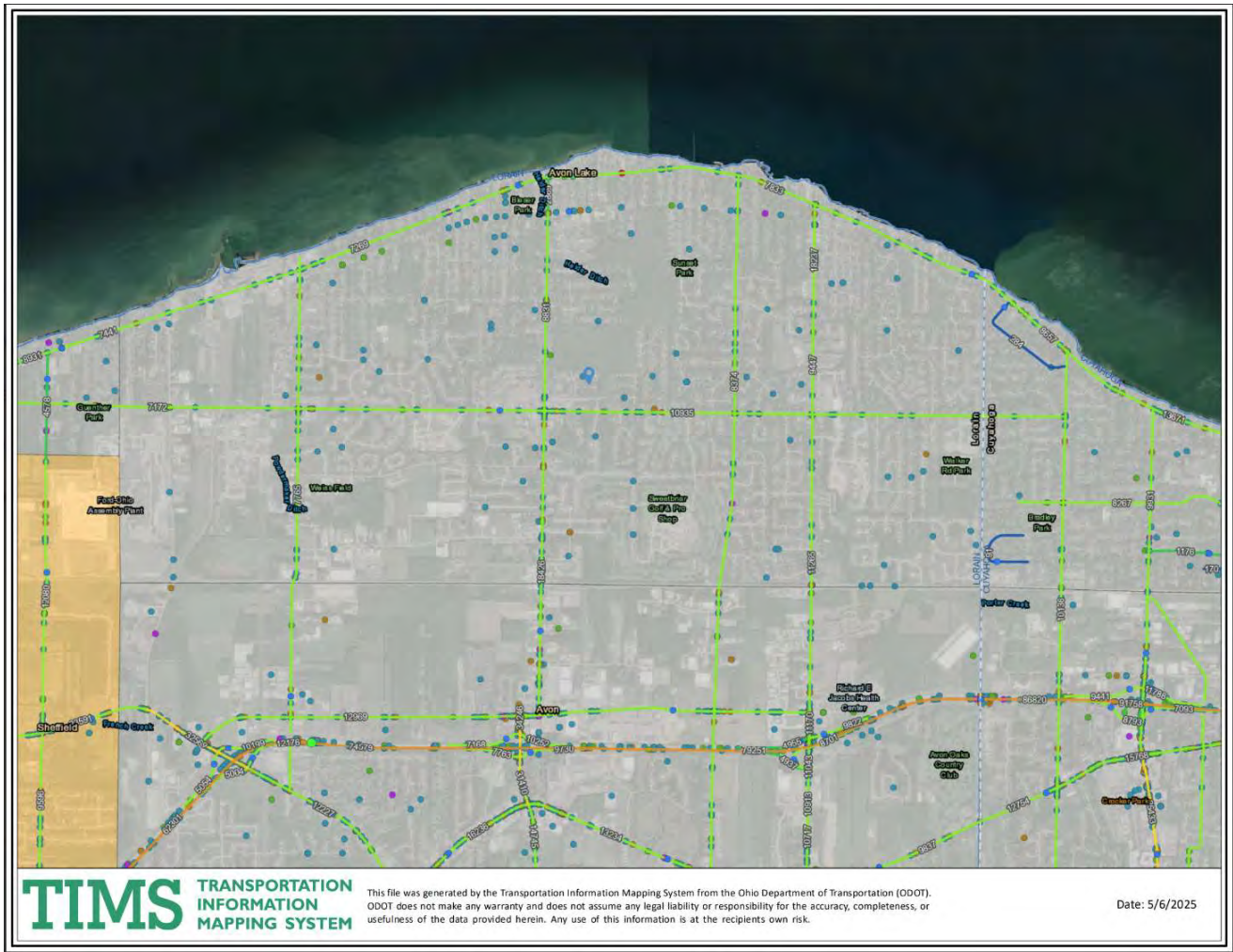
(Lake Road/US-6, Lear Road, Nagel Road, and Walker Road) and implement the Lorain County Lakefront Connectivity Plan's 10-ft multi-use trail along US Route 6. A project is proceeding later this year to reconstruct Moore Road to the western edge of the city limits, replacing pavement and updating on-street bike lanes.

- **Wayfinding & Education:** Launch a "Safe Routes" outreach program (education, encouragement, enforcement) as scoped in the TLCI study where the City of Avon Lake placed a high priority on integrating bicycle and pedestrian facilities into its infrastructure with the vision of becoming one of northeast Ohio's more developed non-motorized networks.^{cxlvi}

Upgrade Traffic Signal and Intersection Controls. Improving how traffic signals, signs, and intersections operate are important measures to analyze to enhance safety, efficiency, and mobility for all transportation infrastructure users. This activity is important for reducing traffic delays and bottlenecks, improving safety at high-crash locations, enhancing access for pedestrians, bikes, and transit, and supporting Smart City technologies. In 2024 and 2025, Avon Lake has had multiple conversations about how new residential developments impact traffic. Analysis and design considerations typically involve:

- Modernizing traffic signals with smart technology (e.g., adaptive signals that adjust based on real-time traffic flow)
- Installing or upgrading pedestrian signals (e.g., countdown timers, audible cues)
- Improving intersection geometry (e.g., adding turn lanes or roundabouts)
- Upgrading controllers and software for better coordination across intersections
- Integrating sensors, cameras, or vehicle detection systems to improve timing and reduce congestion
- Adding safety features like high-visibility crosswalks, curb extensions, or leading pedestrian intervals

Map 6.2 City of Avon Lake Traffic Counts & Crash Statistics



There are several corridors throughout Avon Lake where traffic counts (Table 6.1) are particularly high, and where varying levels of crashes have occurred.

Table 6.1 – County Traffic Counts

Traffic Data (Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) – 2023/ Crashes 2021-2023)		
Location	AADT 2023	Crashes (approx.)
Lake Road - City Limits to Moore Road	7,441	14
Lake Road – Moore Road to Avon Belden Road	7,269	14
Lake Road - Avon Belden Road to Lear Road	7,833	12
Lake Road – Lear Road to City Limits	8,657	21
Moore Road – Lake Road to Chester Road	7,765	25
Avon Belden Road – Lake Road to Walker Road	8,831	13
Avon Belden Road – Walker Road to City Limits	18,426	16
Jaycox Road – Lake Road to City Limits	8,374	16

Lear Road – Lake Road to Learwood Middle School	18,237	7
Lear Road – Learwood Middle School to Walker Road	9,447	3
Lear Road – Walker Road to City Limits	11,265	8
Walker Road – City Limits to Moore Road	7,172	5
Walker Road – Moore Road to City Limits	10,935	39

Source: Ohio Department of Transportation, Transportation Information Mapping System (TIMS)

The City of Avon Lake should analyze the following traffic signal and intersection controls features in the CIP:

- **Signalize High-ADT Crossings:** Add signals at unsignalized/high-volume intersections to improve traffic flow and emergency detour capacity—mirroring mast-arm installations on SR 83 intersections.
- **Backup Power & Resilient Operations:** Equip all major signalized intersections (mast-arm and catenary-controlled) with battery- or generator-backed uninterrupted power supply (UPS) to maintain operations during power outages, aligning with NOACA’s resiliency goals and as identified in the Lorain County Coordinated Transportation Plan.^{cxlvi}
- **Optimize Turn Lanes:** As development proceeds in the city, traffic studies should account for ways to optimize turn lanes and identify if the need for future or immediate improved capacity or right-of-way may be available. This should be analyzed due to coordination required approvals of adjacent development and the potential need to add or lengthen Left Turn/Right Turn lanes to reduce queueing and improve emergency vehicle access.

Expanding Roadway Capacity and Pavement Resiliency. Expanding roadway capacity and pavement resiliency are two interrelated infrastructure goals that analyze and design how much traffic a road can handle and how to make road surfaces more durable and able to withstand stress from weather, use, and time. Expanding roadway capacity looks at ways to increase the ability of roads to carry more vehicles or heavier vehicles, reducing congestion, and improving traffic flow. This could include adding new lanes or turn lanes, widening roads in key corridors, upgrading intersections, and improving access management (e.g., reducing conflict points from driveways or side streets). Properly addressing roadway capacity is important as population and business growth occurs and demands for improved commute times and freight movement are desired. Improving pavement resiliency makes roads longer-lasting, weather resistant, and cost-effective to maintain. Using higher-performance or climate-adapted paving materials, designing for better drainage and stormwater resistance, incorporating regular pavement condition assessments, and adapting designs for freeze/thaw cycles, heavy truck traffic, or flooding are all characteristics to consider. Ultimately, improving pavement resiliency reduces long-term maintenance costs, prevents potholes and deterioration, and improves safety and reliability.

The City of Avon Lake should analyze the following roadway capacity and pavement resiliency areas in the CIP:

- **Walker Road Paving (Phases I & II):** Continue OPWC-funded pavement projects on Walker Road to ensure durable surfaces for heavy-truck routes serving commercial and industrial sites.^{cxlix}
- **Targeted Widening & Shoulder Upgrades:** Where right-of-way permits are in place or could be allocated in adjacent proposed development, the city could pursue improvements such as adding paved shoulders (per the 10-ft trail guidelines) on Lear Road and Nagel Road, Jaycox Road, and Avondale Avenue to accommodate emergency lane shifts and bicycle traffic. The city could also consider installing wide sidewalks on at least one side of these streets to serve as a shared use path.

Bolster Stormwater and Utilities Resiliency. Strengthening a city’s infrastructure systems, especially stormwater management, water, sewer, and electric/utilities, is important to ensuring this infrastructure can withstand extreme weather, environmental change, and long-term stress, while continuing to serve residents and businesses reliably. Stormwater resiliency refers to improving how a city handles rain and runoff to reduce flooding, erosion and pollution. Solutions to consider include:

- Nature-based infrastructure like rain gardens, bioswales, or permeable pavements
- Upgrading storm drains and culverts
- Improving detention basins or stream buffers
- Analyze if the completion of Central Drainage Improvements may be accelerated to reduce flooding risk on low-lying streets and protect adjacent water/sewer mains.^{cl}

Utility resiliency focuses on ensuring critical systems like water, sewer, electricity, and broadband stay functional and protected from power outages, storm surges or flooding, and aging infrastructure or capacity failures. Solutions might include:

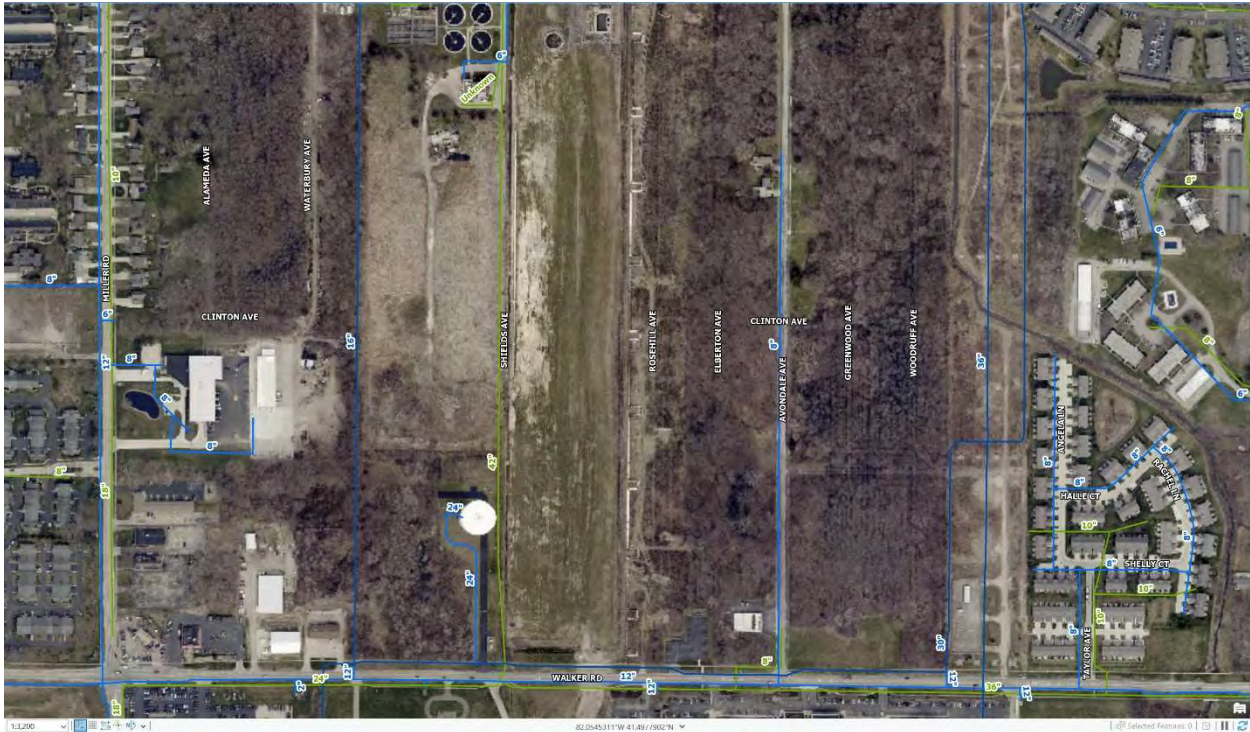
- Upgrading water and sewer lines
- Installing backup generators or underground electric lines
- Expanding capacity for growth and emergency preparedness

Map 6.2 Existing Water and Sewer Infrastructure (2025) – Avon Lake Power Plant Site



Lake Road includes 12-inch diameter water distribution lines which are fed by a 42-inch transmission waterline coming from the Water Filtration plant to the east. Water Transmission (36", 30" diameter) lines are located east of the Power Plant south property, servicing Avon Lake and the other regional communities Avon Lake Regional Water serves. The city has a 36-inch diameter sanitary sewer line to the west of the Power Plant site, which continues south along Shields to the Avon Lake Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP). There is a 36-inch diameter sewer increasing to 42-inch diameter draining along Electric Boulevard from the east to Shields. There is also a sanitary force main collecting flows from Lake Road to the east of the power plant site and carrying them down Electric Blvd to the WWTP. Additional sanitary lines will likely be required to be installed along Lake Road and Avondale Avenue to service any new development at the former Power Plant properties. It is possible they may also require a sanitary force main.

Map 6.3 Existing Water and Sewer Infrastructure (2025) – Miller Road/Walker Road/Avondale Avenue



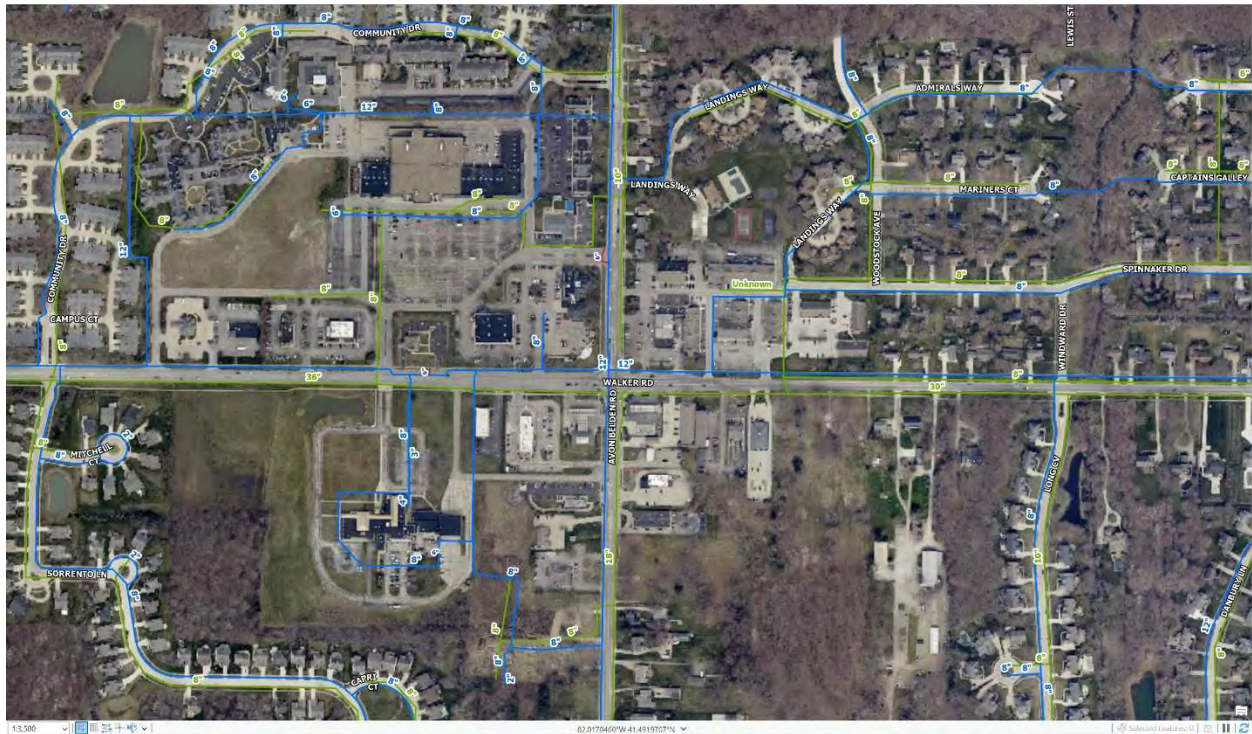
Properties along Walker Road and Miller Roads are serviced by 12-inch diameter water lines that are fed by a 30-inch diameter transmission line east of Avondale Avenue. There is also a connection to the Avon Lake Regional Water Tower off Walker Road at Shields Avenue. There is an existing 8" water main under Avondale that may need to be upsized if these properties adjacent are built out. Walker Road includes a 24" diameter sanitary sewer to the west of Shields Avenue and a 36-inch diameter sanitary sewer east of Shields Avenue both draining to the 42-inch diameter sewer north on Shields Avenue towards the WWTP. From Map 6.3, no sewer lines are shown along Avondale Avenue and may need to be added for any new facilities along here.

Map 6.4 Existing Water and Sanitary Sewer Infrastructure (2025) – Pin Oak Parkway



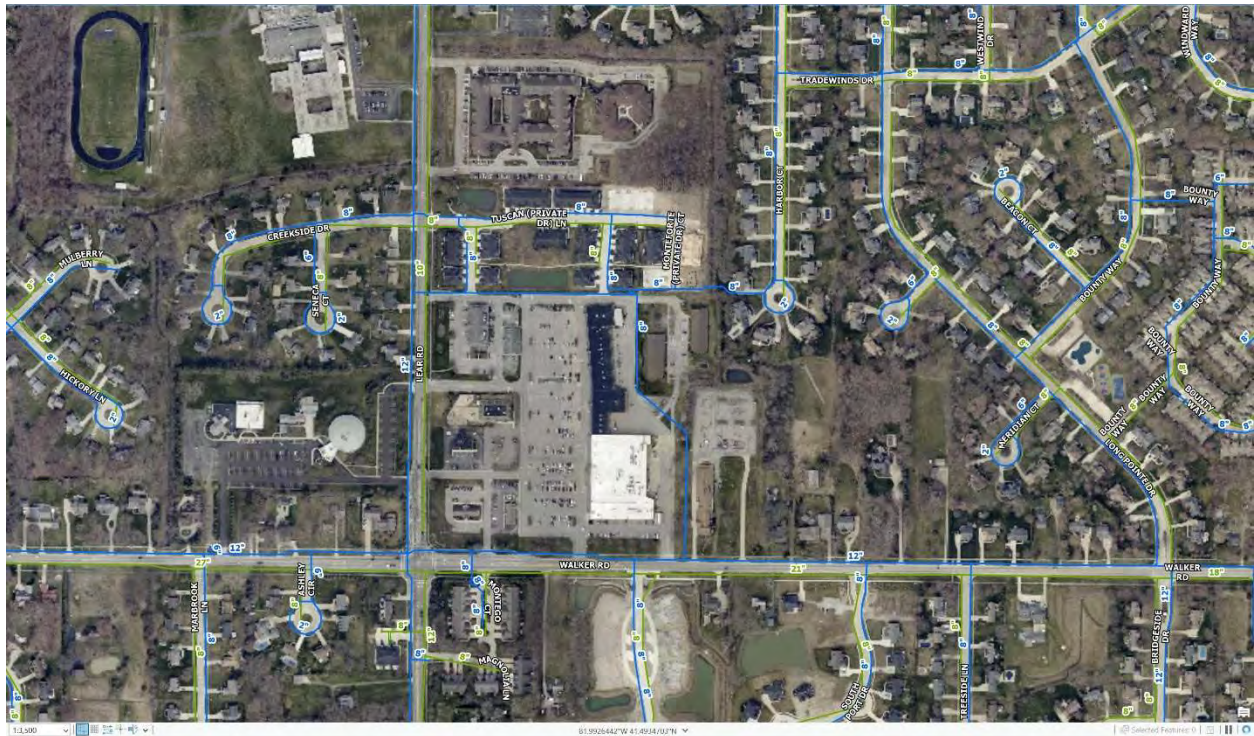
Pin Oak Parkway includes both water distribution lines varying in size from 6" to 18" and a 24" diameter transmission water line coming from the north and running west towards Moore Road. Pin Oak is serviced by 10" diameter sanitary sewers on the east from Avon-Belden Road (SR 83), increasing to 16" diameter and 18" diameter sewers as they flow west towards Moore Road.

Map 6.5 Existing Water and Sanitary Sewer Infrastructure (2025) – Avon Belden Road/Walker Road



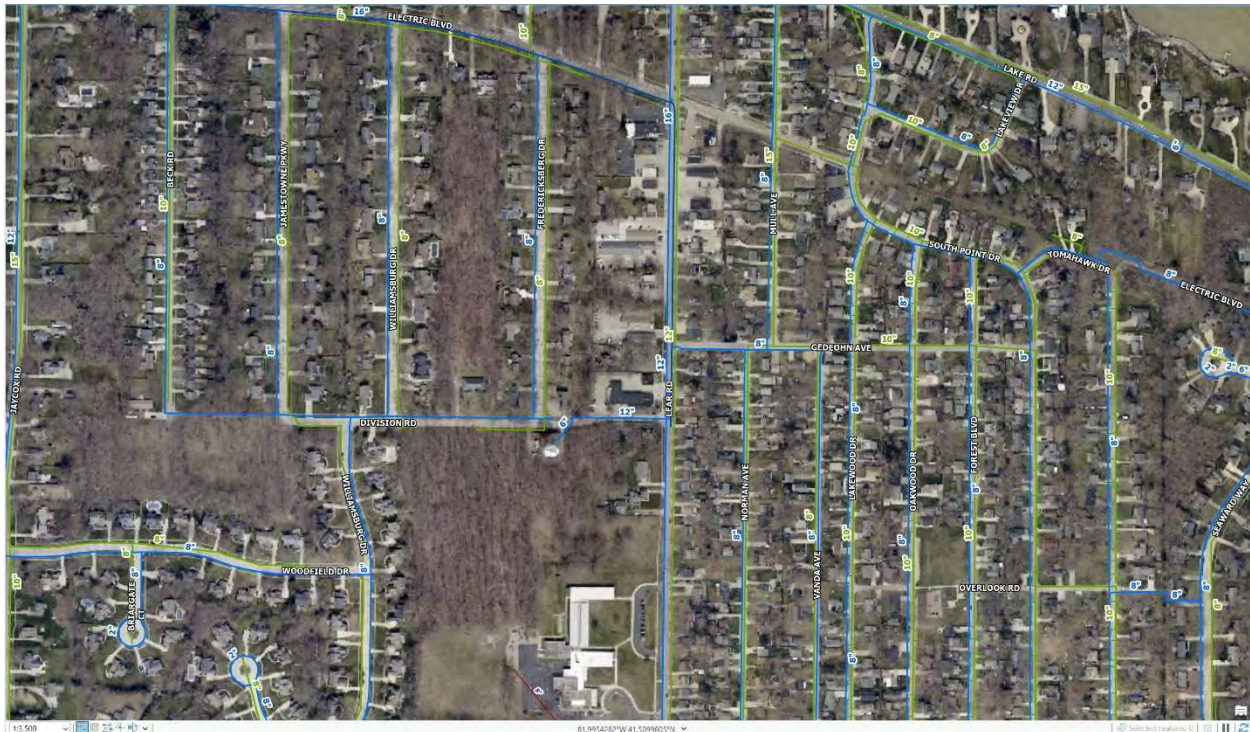
Properties along Walker and Avon Belden Roads are both fed by 12-inch diameter water lines and the residential and commercial developments have existing interior 12"-8"-6" diameter service lines. Walker Road includes a 30" diameter sewer west of Avon Belden Road which feeds into the 36-inch diameter sewer to the west of Avon Belden Road. Sanitary sewers along Avon Belden Road may need to be upsized from the existing 10-inch diameter north of Walker, and 18-inch diameter south of Walker for any new development built adjacent.

Map 6.6 Existing Water and Sanitary Sewer Infrastructure (2025) – Lear Road/Walker Road



Properties along Walker and Lear Roads are both fed by 12-inch diameter water lines with the adjacent developments being fed by interior 8-inch diameter service lines. Sanitary sewer lines along Walker Road vary from 18-inch to 21-inch diameter lines east of Lear Road, feeding into a 27-inch diameter sewer west of Lear Road. Lear Road properties are serviced by a 10-inch diameter sewer north of Walker Road and a 12-inch diameter sewer south of Walker Road, and both may need to be upsized if there is any development growth along Lear Road.

Map 6.7 Existing Water and Sanitary Sewer Infrastructure (2025) – Lear Road/Electric Boulevard



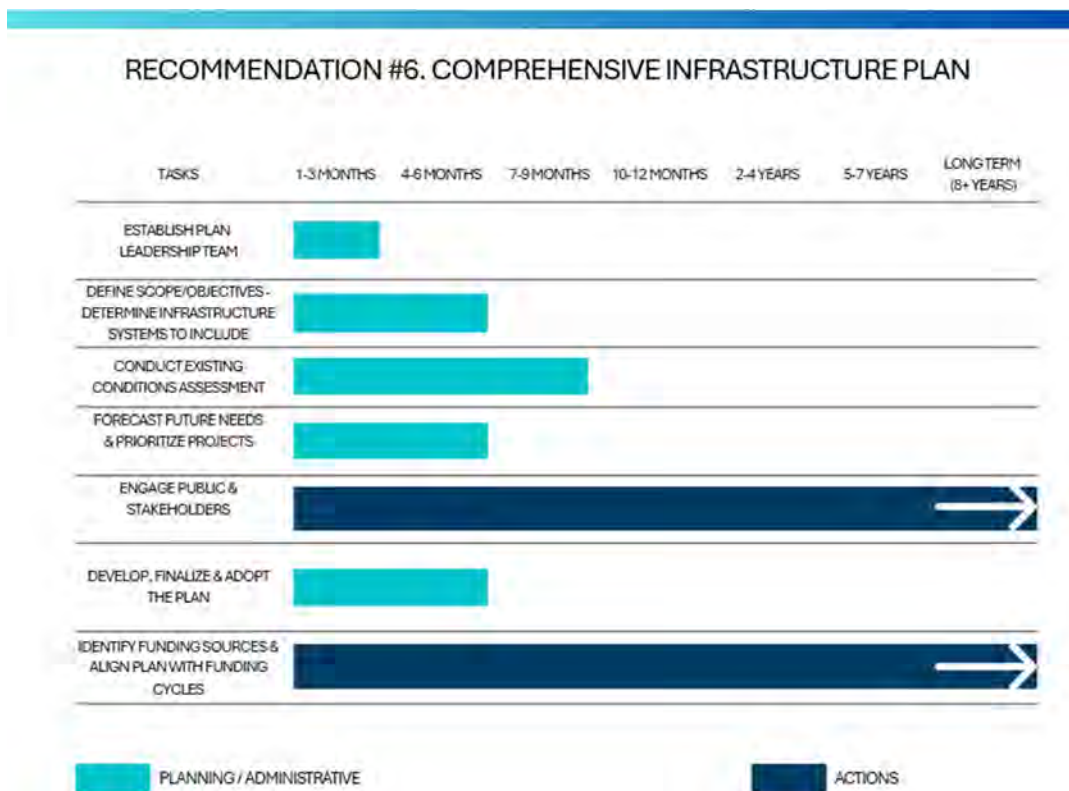
A 16-inch diameter transmission coming west from Electric Boulevard and turns south along Lear Road waterline provides water to the 12" diameter distribution water line running along Lear Road. Sanitary sewer lines along Lear Road are 12-inches in size flowing south towards Walker Road. Electric Boulevard sanitary sewers dead end before reaching Lear Road, servicing the developments to the east and west of Lear Road.

Integrating Land Use and Transportation Planning. Integrating land use and transportation planning is important to the coordination of how land is developed and how people move around so that homes, jobs, schools, and services are connected by efficient, safe, and accessible transportation options. The city should look at ways to plan development near existing or future multimodal routes, encouraging mixed-use areas where people can live, work, and shop without driving long distances, design streets that support walkability, bike access, and transit use, and using zoning and policy tools to shape development that reduces traffic demand and promotes sustainability.

The City of Avon Lake should analyze the following land use and transportation planning designs in the CIP:

- **Coordinate Zoning Updates:** Leverage recent zoning amendments (e.g., TIF, and redevelopment activity along Chester Road and Detroit Road) to require complete-street standards (sidewalks, bike lanes, street trees) as conditions of adjacent development or use of TIF funds.

- **Leverage “Paper Streets”:** Look at key corridors in the city’s Comprehensive Land Use Plan to establish pedestrian cut-throughs and utility easements, enhancing network redundancy and emergency egress options.^{cli}



Existing Planning Alignment: Building and maintaining robust infrastructure systems is critical to community resiliency and economic development success. A Comprehensive Infrastructure Plan supports the goals outlined in **Lorain County Strategic Plan’s** Pillar 5: Facilitate Creative Solutions to Transportation, Housing, and Infrastructure Needs. This pillar was identified during the strategic plan’s engagement process and reflects on the need to tackle the ‘hard’ infrastructure and the ‘soft’ infrastructure such as childcare, community amenities, and services which are basic building blocks for people to have successful and productive lives. Pillar 5 recognizes the need for clever solutions, long term investment and high levels of collaboration between agencies and governments, each of which are relevant to community resiliency and economic development success. Within Pillar 5, Lorain County specifically notes action taken to forecast future infrastructure needs and developing long-term investment plans.

The **NOACA CEDS** acknowledges the importance of critical supply chain and infrastructure analysis to building resilient communities. Specifically, the CEDS notes disaster events can impact a range of private and public sector systems the economy depends on. Disasters can contribute to decreased production capacities, irregular cash flows, and an inability to transfer goods and services compared

to times of strong economic health.^{clii} NOACA's CEDS goes on to state that, increasingly, the economy is viewed as a complex adaptive system rather than a mechanism and interdependencies between the economy and infrastructure cannot function separately.^{cliii} Aging infrastructure poses both an immediate threat to the region's economy, as well as a long-term threat. Planning, intergovernmental cooperation, and action will serve to improve economic resilience in the NOACA region.

Conclusion. This ER&R Plan aims to address economic development priorities that support redevelopment of the former Avon Lake Power Plant site and creates a roadmap for broader, citywide economic development efforts. At its core, economic development is about creating the conditions for businesses to grow, jobs to be created, and communities to thrive. It drives increased tax revenues that fund public services like schools, parks, and infrastructure. It supports entrepreneurship and innovation, helps existing businesses thrive and grow, attracts new private investment, and helps diversify the local economy to weather downturns. In a broader sense, economic development improves quality of life by expanding access to employment, promoting workforce development, revitalizing underused areas, and creating vibrant places where people want to live, work, and visit. It also plays a crucial role in addressing social and environmental challenges by promoting equitable opportunities, sustainability, and smart growth. In short, economic development is not just about economics, it is about building stronger, healthier, and more forward-looking communities.

Redevelopment of the former power plant site presents a rare and strategic opportunity to shape the future of Avon Lake's economy and lakefront identity. To maximize the long-term value of this site, meaningful and intentional economic development efforts, and stakeholder cooperation, are essential. This means going beyond basic redevelopment processes and instead investing in a thoughtful approach that aligns land use, infrastructure, BR&E, business attraction, and environmental goals. Supporting thoughtful economic development at the former power plant site and in key development areas throughout the city ensures that activities and investments are economically viable, environmentally responsible, and community centered. It can attract a diverse mix of businesses, foster innovation and entrepreneurship, and serve as a model for sustainable development. Such efforts also help generate long-term tax revenue, create quality jobs, and build a resilient local economy.

This plan is intended to serve as a living guide that encourages collaboration, creative problem-solving, and a sustained focus on long-term resiliency and prosperity. By continuing to revisit, refine, and implement these ER&R Plan strategies through community and leadership engagement, Avon Lake can position itself to thrive amid changing economic landscapes while preserving the unique qualities that make the city a desirable place to live, work, and invest.

While not every recommendation in this plan may be pursued or fully implemented, the value of this effort lies in its ability to spark meaningful dialogue and inspire forward-thinking efforts that help shape Avon Lake's economic future and provide benefit to the community as a whole. The ideas and strategies presented in this ER&R Plan are not rigid prescriptions, but rather a flexible and adaptable framework that can evolve as local needs, opportunities, and priorities shift over time.

Endnotes.

-
- ⁱ [Avon Lake Power Plant | Cleveland Historical.](#)
- ⁱⁱ [Avon Lake coal-fired power plant to close.](#)
- ⁱⁱⁱ [Press Releases - Coal-Fired Power Plant to Close, City Committed to Reimagine Public Lakefront Space.](#)
- ^{iv} [Championing Economic Development - International Economic Development Council.](#)
- ^v [IEDC Why and Impact Economic Development.pdf.](#)
- ^{vi} [Economic Development Recovery and Resiliency Playbook.](#)
- ^{vii} [Article: Capturing National Attention for Workforce Innovation.](#)
- ^{viii} [LCCC Recognized as Top Community College in the Nation for Excellence in Student Success by American Association of Community Colleges - Lorain County Community College.](#)
- ^{ix} [A Well-Educated Workforce Is Key to State Prosperity | Economic Policy Institute.](#)
- ^x [How the Census Bureau Measures Poverty.](#)
- ^{xi} [Effects of poverty, hunger and homelessness on children and youth.](#)
- ^{xii} [Income and Poverty.](#)
- ^{xiii} [Eligibility-Requirements-and-Criteria.pdf.](#)
- ^{xiv} [Assistance to Coal Communities \(ACC\) | U.S. Economic Development Administration.](#)
- ^{xv} [Spurring economic mobility through affordable housing | McKinsey.](#)
- ^{xvi} [The Outlook for the U.S. Housing Market in 2025.](#)
- ^{xvii} [Economic ratings and concerns | Pew Research Center.](#)
- ^{xviii} [The state of affordable housing in the US | Pew Research Center.](#)
- ^{xix} [Ibid.](#)
- ^{xx} [AVON LAKE Community Profile | JobsOhio.](#)
- ^{xxi} [QCEW Location Quotient Details: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.](#)
- ^{xxii} [https://www.census.gov/naics/.](https://www.census.gov/naics/)
- ^{xxiii} [Economics Made Easy: Location Quotients.](#)
- ^{xxiv} [QCEW Location Quotient Details: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.](#)
- ^{xxv} [Lorain County Economic & Demographic Profile | Team NEO.](#)
- ^{xxvi} [Food Processing in the Northeast Ohio Region.](#)
- ^{xxvii} [https://support.implan.com/hc/en-us/articles/4402334035611-Shift-Share-Analysis.](https://support.implan.com/hc/en-us/articles/4402334035611-Shift-Share-Analysis)
- ^{xxviii} [About Innovation Intelligence: StatsAmerica.](#)
- ^{xxix} [Innovation Intelligence: StatsAmerica.](#)
- ^{xxx} [Innovation Intelligence User Guide.](#)
- ^{xxxi} [Innovation Intelligence: StatsAmerica.](#)
- ^{xxxii} [Innovation Intelligence User Guide.](#)
- ^{xxxiii} [Ibid.](#)
- ^{xxxiv} [Ibid.](#)
- ^{xxxv} [Ibid.](#)
- ^{xxxvi} [When It Comes to Wage Growth, the Measure Matters - Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago.](#)
- ^{xxxvii} [2025 US Retail Industry Outlook | Deloitte Insights.](#)
- ^{xxxviii} [Ibid.](#)
- ^{xxxix} [We love our pets, and our spending proves it : Beyond the Numbers: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.](#)
- ^{xl} [Ibid.](#)
- ^{xli} [Mapping the gaps: Use void analysis to uncover underserved senior citizens.](#)
- ^{xlii} [Avon-Lake-Comprehensive-Plan-2022-min.pdf](#)
- ^{xliii} [Full Employment: Definition, Types, and Examples.](#)
- ^{xliv} [Avon-Lake-Comprehensive-Plan-2022-min.pdf.](#)
- ^{xlvi} [Ibid.](#)
- ^{xlvi} [Stakeholder Engagement: What It Means & Why It Matters - Simply Stakeholders.](#)

-
- xlvi [Business Retention and Expansion Program | Community Development.](#)
- xlvi [Ibid.](#)
- xlvi [Revolving Loan Fund \(RLF\) | U.S. Economic Development Administration.](#)
- l [BLACK HAWK ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, INC. ::](#)
- li [Edward Lowe Foundation.](#)
- lii [CEO Roundtables – Edward Lowe Foundation.](#)
- liii [Ibid.](#)
- liv [Ibid.](#)
- lv [Ibid.](#)
- lvi [Jeremy Mortl of Messersmith Mfg. – Edward Lowe Foundation.](#)
- lvii [Morrow County, OH.](#)
- lviii [Ibid.](#)
- lix [SOS Certificate Second Avon Lake Community Improvement Corporation.](#)
- lx [Community Improvement Corporation \(CIC\) | North Canton, OH.](#)
- lxi [https://codes.ohio.gov/ohio-revised-code/section-1724.02.](https://codes.ohio.gov/ohio-revised-code/section-1724.02)
- lxii [https://thepartnership.com/pillar/the-importance-of-a-branding-in-economic-development/.](https://thepartnership.com/pillar/the-importance-of-a-branding-in-economic-development/)
- lxiii [AVON LAKE OH Property Report | Vacant Land for Sale 720 Moore Road, 76 acres.](#)
- lxiv [33475-33480 Lake Rd, Avon Lake, OH 44012 - Beach Park Station | LoopNet.](#)
- lxv [33382 Walker Rd, Avon Lake, OH 44012 - Retail for Lease | LoopNet.](#)
- lxvi [Lorain-County-Strategic-Action-Plan-March-2024.pdf.](#)
- lxvii [Ohio Prospector: Economic Development Available sites, buildings, demographics, businesses and GIS mapping.](#)
- lxviii [County to develop 242-acre industrial park | Clermont County Ohio Government.](#)
- lxix [Ibid.](#)
- lxx [Purina pet food plant opens in Clermont County in March.](#)
- lxxi [Ibid.](#)
- lxxii [Rural Industrial Park Loan Program.](#)
- lxxiii [Support for spec site and building development projects.](#)
- lxxiv [Ibid.](#)
- lxxv [All Ohio Future Fund.](#)
- lxxvi [Ibid.](#)
- lxxvii [Search Results Detail | Grants.gov.](#)
- lxxviii [Economic-Adjustment-Assistance-Program-1-Pager.pdf.](#)
- lxxix [Ibid.](#)
- lxxx [Data Centers | CBRE.](#)
- lxxxi [Ibid.](#)
- lxxxii [Ibid.](#)
- lxxxiii [Ibid.](#)
- lxxxiv [Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics.](#)
- lxxxv [Data Centers Growing Fast and Reshaping Local Economies.](#)
- lxxxvi [WSTS Semiconductor Market Forecast Fall 2024.](#)
- lxxxvii [2025 semiconductor industry outlook | Deloitte Insights.](#)
- lxxxviii [Ibid.](#)
- lxxxix [U.S. Medical Devices Market Size, Share | Analysis Report, 2032.](#)
- xc [B-5-Finance-TIF-Hand-Out.pdf](#)
- lxxxi [Ibid.](#)
- lxxxii [Ibid.](#)
- lxxxiii [Plant Riverside History - Plant Riverside District.](#)
- lxxxiv [https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalregister/database-research.htm.](https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalregister/database-research.htm)

xcv [City: Kessler meeting terms of \\$43 million Plant Riverside bonding agreement – Savannah Agenda.](#)

xcvi <https://www.Georgiapol.com>.

xcvii [Board of Assessors - Home.](#)

xcviii [New Community Authority; NCA; Community Development Authority; CDA; Ohio Revised Code Chapter 349; chapter 349; ARRA; American Recovery and Reinvested Act; Economic Stimulus Act; Toledo Blade Co. v. Seneca; Gilbert v. Cincinnati; Dublin v. State by Squire Sanders.](#)

xcix [Ibid.](#)

c [Ibid.](#)

ci [Ibid.](#)

cii [Ibid.](#)

ciii [Ibid.](#)

civ [New Community Authorities: An Underutilized Tool for Transformative Real Estate Projects.](#)

cv [Parking fees and a pop-up park: Cleveland takes more steps toward lakefront plan.](#)

cvi <https://columbusunderground.com/top-10-urban-development-projects-bo2021/>.

cvi [Bridge-Park-NCA-Information.pdf.](#)

cvi [Ibid.](#)

cix [New Community Authority \(NCA\).](#)

cx [\(2\) The Ohio Venture Pipeline: Overview | LinkedIn.](#)

cx [Ohio-Venture-Pipeline-Report-short-083123.](#)

cxii [About Us | Warehouse Business Accelerator.](#)

cxiii [History — Welcome to The Fort | Columbus, Ohio Commercial Space for Lease.](#)

cxiv [Ibid.](#)

cxv [Contact — Welcome to The Fort | Columbus, Ohio Commercial Space for Lease.](#)

cxvi [Milbank South Dakota Industrial Park Awarded \\$2.5 million EDA Grant
 — Grant County Development Corporation.](#)

cxvii [Ibid.](#)

cxviii [Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy \(CEDS\).](#)

cxix [NOACA CEDS-draft.pdf.](#)

cxix [Ibid.](#)

cxix [Ibid.](#)

cxix [Basic Information | Green Building |US EPA.](#)

cxix [Ibid.](#)

cxix [Ibid.](#)

cxix [Old Town North Urban Design Guidelines 2017.](#)

cxix [Optimizing Building Envelopes for Energy Efficiency: Boost Comfort and Savings.](#)

cxix [Old Town North Small Area Plan 2017](#)

cxix [Old Town North Small Area Plan 2017](#)

cxix [Old Town North Small Area Plan 2017](#)

cxix [Understanding Stormwater Runoff and Low Impact Development \(LID\)](#)

cxix [EPA Municipal Guide to Low Impact Development.](#)

cxix [Eutrophication | Definition, Types, Causes, & Effects | Britannica.](#)

cxix [Phytoremediation - Wikipedia](#)

cxix [Ibid.](#)

cxix [Microsoft PowerPoint - Lake Erie.ppt.](#)

cxix [U.S. Action Plan for Lake Erie | US EPA.](#)

cxix [What is GLWQA? | US EPA.](#)

cxix [Ibid.](#)

cxix [Ibid.](#)

cxl [Basic Information about Wetland Restoration and Protection | US EPA.](#)

-
- cxli [Wisconsin-NBS-Guide.pdf](#).
- cxlii **Ibid.**
- cxliii **Ibid.**
- cxliv **Ibid.**
- cxlv [Home Page | CISA](#).
- cxlvi [Citywide Multimodal Study 2022 PPT](#).
- cxlvii [Avon Lake Active Transportation Plan — Behnke Landscape Architecture](#).
- cxlviii [Lorain County Coordinated Transportation Plan](#).
- cxlix [2023 Passed Legislation](#).
- cl [2023 Passed Legislation](#).
- cli [Citywide Multimodal Study 2022 PPT](#).
- clii [NOACA_CEDS-draft.pdf](#).
- cliii **Ibid.**



Appendix 9. Financing Programs

From the very beginning of this planning process, the City of Avon Lake recognized the need to utilize local, state, and federal funding mechanisms for the implementation of the recommendations and actions of this plan. The following identifies **potential** funding sources the city and/or local businesses should consider as it implements the recommendation and actions within this document.

Local

- **Community Reinvestment Area (CRA) Program.** This program offers a direct incentive tax exemption benefitting property owners who renovate existing or construct new buildings and increase the value of the property where the investment is made. Industrial, commercial, and residential investments are eligible to apply for and receive a CRA direct incentive. On January 3, 2023, Senate Bill 33 (SB 33) was signed by Governor DeWine and included changes to the CRA program with an effective date of April 4, 2023 for those changes. Municipalities, counties, or townships that have adopted limited home rule governments can designate areas where these direct incentive programs can be offered in accordance with Ohio Revised Code, sections 3735.65 to 3735.70. A tax abatement provided under the CRA program exempts from taxation the assessed value of a new structure or the increase in assessed value of a structure that has been remodeled. The CRA program does not provide an exemption from taxation on the increase in the value of the land underneath the new/remodeled structure, nor does it allow for the exemption from taxation of existing taxes on the tax duplicate. SB 33 adjusted income tax thresholds for revenue sharing, increasing the threshold from \$1million to \$2million for commercial and industrial projects but leaving the \$1million threshold for non-CRA property tax abatements. The CRA program is comprised of two distinct designations – pre-1994 CRAs and post-1994 CRAs. Under the CRA program, eligible projects can apply for tax exemptions of up to 100% for up to 15 years for real property improvements as specified in CRA legislation and may require involvement of the local school district in the review and approval process. SB 33 changed the school board approval thresholds, with school board approval no longer required for any agreement that has a minimum tax collection of 25% (previously 50%). Permission is not required if the school board adopts a resolution waiving its rights to approve such exemptions. Stated differently, a CRA commercial or industrial project does not require school board approval unless the project proposes to exempt more than seventy-five percent (75%) of the project's value.

Ohio Community Reinvestment Area Program Summary



Eligible Activity	Pre-1994 CRA	Post-1994 CRA
Real Property Improvements	Must be 100%	Up to 100%
Personal Property	None	None
Inventory	None	None
Exemption Thresholds	Pre-1994 CRA	Post-1994 CRA
Residential Remodeling (2 units or less; minimum \$2500 investment)	Up to 10 years, as specified in CRA legislation	Up to 15 years, as specified in CRA legislation
Residential Remodeling (more than 2 units; minimum \$5000 investment)	Up to 12 years, as specified in CRA legislation	Up to 15 years, as specified in CRA legislation
Residential – New Construction	Up to 15 years, as specified in CRA legislation	Up to 15 years, as specified in CRA legislation
Commercial / Industrial Remodeling (minimum \$5000 investment)	Up to 12 years, as specified in CRA legislation	Up to 15 years, as negotiated and approved in CRA agreement
Commercial / Industrial New Construction	Up to 15 years, as specified in CRA legislation	Up to 15 years, as negotiated and approved in CRA agreement

Source: Ohio Department of Development

- **Special or Business Improvement District (SID/BID).** This is a local program that can be created to add an additional tax/levy on building owners to pay for public improvements including the planning, design, construction, reconstruction, enlargement, or alteration of any facility or improvement, including acquisition of land, for which a special assessment may be levied in accordance with Ohio Revised Code Chapter 727. Infrastructure, activities, and services in a SID/BID must be located within a specified boundary, like a downtown or business district.
- **Lorain County OhioMeansJobs Center.** This business services team can provide targeted job seeking and recruitment efforts, along with the identification of available and eligible prospective employees based on skill sets required for a company's



employment positions. All business services are offered at no cost. The county can also provide workforce development assistance dollars through various programs including its On-the-Job Training (OJT) Program, Incumbent Worker Training Program, and Dislocated Worker Program. These programs offer employers a way to be partially reimbursed for hiring and training eligible jobseekers for permanent positions and supporting existing employees as they gain new skills for employment retention.

- **Lorain County Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE).** The Lorain County Port Authority has partnered with NOPEC and its local communities to create an Energy Special Improvement District (ESID) that has many of the authorities found within a SID as described above. The City of Avon Lake is a NOPEC Electric & Gas Community and is part of the Lorain County Port Authority ESID. The ESID allows property owners to utilize the PACE financing program that can provide financing for significant building upgrades resulting in better indoor air quality, improved tenant comfort, and reduced energy costs for owners and tenants. The PACE model is an innovative mechanism for financing energy efficiency and renewable energy improvements on private property located within an eligible ESID designated area and can finance improvements for commercial properties and residential properties. PACE programs allow a property owner to finance the up-front cost of energy or other eligible improvements on a property and pay the costs back over time through a voluntary assessment where the PACE debt is attached to the property versus an individual. Eligible items include, but are not limited to HVAC upgrades, lighting upgrades, doors/windows, roofing, and solar. Public agencies can be eligible for PACE financing for projects with a public purpose such as streetlights, sewer systems, or underground utility lines.
- **Economic & Community Development Institute (ECDI).** With offices in Akron, ECDI is a leading Small Business Association (SBA) microloan intermediary, a certified Community Development Corporation, and Treasury-designated Community Development Financial Institution. ECDI can provide small business loans, education, mentoring, and training with funding to assist start-up or small businesses with loans ranging from \$500-\$350,000.
- **New Community Authority (NCA).** An NCA is a well-planned, diversified, and economically sound community, or an addition to an existing community, that includes facilities for the conduct of industrial, commercial, residential, cultural, educational, and/or recreational activities. It is designed in accordance with planning concepts for the placement of utilities, open space, and other supportive facilities. Authority for the formation of an NCA is directed under Ohio Revised Code Chapter 349.



- **Tax Increment Financing (TIF).** TIF is a powerful economic development tool that allows municipalities, to redirect a portion of the real property taxes created by the increase in the assessed value of land, new structures, and remodeled structures to pay for the provision of public improvements and eliminate blight in a community. Public infrastructure improvements include, but are not limited to, public roads and highways; water and sewer lines; public parking structures; continued maintenance of those public roads and highways, water and sewer lines, and parking structures; environmental remediation; land acquisition, including acquisition in aid of industry, commerce, distribution, or research; demolition, including demolition on private property when determined to be necessary for economic development purposes; stormwater and flood remediation projects, including such projects on private property when determined to be necessary for public health, safety, and welfare; the provision of gas, electric, and communications service facilities, including the provision of gas or electric service facilities owned by nongovernmental entities when such improvements are determined to be necessary for economic development purposes; and the enhancement of public waterways through improvements that allow for greater public access. Counties, municipalities, and townships may establish a TIF district for a period not to exceed ten (10) years and for an exemption of not more than seventy-five percent (75%). The TIF district may be established for up to thirty (30) years and for an exemption of one hundred percent (100%) with the approval of the impacted school district.
- **FirstEnergy Foundation.** The FirstEnergy Foundation's contributions to local nonprofit organizations help strengthen the social and economic fabric of communities served. The Foundation's giving priorities parallel FirstEnergy's business interests and range from supporting key safety initiatives and promoting workforce and economic development to improving social and cultural aspects of their region. FirstEnergy supports non-profit, tax-exempt organizations within the FirstEnergy operating companies' service areas, including Ohio Edison, The Illuminating Company and Toledo Edison in Ohio; Met-Ed, Penelec, Penn Power and West Penn Power in Pennsylvania; Jersey Central Power & Light in New Jersey; Mon Power and Potomac Edison in West Virginia and Maryland; and where FirstEnergy conducts business. 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations that are public charities and public schools, colleges, and universities may apply for a FirstEnergy Foundation program grant up to \$25,000 via an online platform. Program grant requests that exceed \$25,000, require a separate proposal, as well as meeting with the Foundation President.
- **Job Growth Incentive Program (JGIP).** Municipalities can provide grant funds to businesses who are creating jobs, retaining jobs, and growing the wages of the local workforce. The JGIP provides an incentive to businesses in Avon Lake, regardless of size, in the amount of 35% of additional income tax paid compared to the previous year.



State

- **JobsOhio.** JobsOhio is the state’s private economic development corporation charged with developing and advancing high-growth business investments and job creation across targeted industry sectors. JobsOhio not only supports private sector investment activity but also invests in programs that create development-ready communities. JobsOhio tailors its programs and services around incentives, innovation, site development, talent acquisition services, and venture capital. Incentives programs include an Economic Development Grant, Growth Fund Loan, Workforce Grant, R&D Center Grant, Community Programs such as Vibrant Communities, Pre-project Planning, and Broadband Access, and Small Business support through the Small Business Grant. As an example, the Workforce Grant Program provides funding for the improvement of worker skills and abilities on a reimbursement basis. It requires job creation and training of employees within a specified time period. Funds may be provided per job created and employee trained. Eligible projects are with those companies engaged in Jobs Ohio’s targeted industries and business functions. Retail and other population driven businesses are not eligible. Grants are focused on a company’s training costs, including information technology, maintenance/skilled trades, leadership skills, product knowledge, quality management/processes, safety training, supervisory, technical processes, technical training, on-the-job training, equipment, materials, and travel costs. The Economic Development Grant Program provides funding for businesses promoting economic development, business expansion, and job creation. The Small Business Grant Program provides funding for eligible projects in distressed communities and/or for businesses owned by underrepresented populations like minorities, women, veterans, and people with disabilities across the state. Preparing communities with shovel-ready sites is supported through JobsOhio’s SiteOhio Certified Program and funding opportunities through the **Ohio Site Inventory Program (OSIP)** and **Revitalization Program**. OSIP offers grants and low-interest loans to support speculative site and building development projects with no identified end user to make Ohio more competitive. The Revitalization Program offers loans and grants to mitigate the financial risk of site redevelopment, returning land and buildings to productive uses more efficiently and affordably. JobsOhio’s **Talent Acquisition Program** helps identify a company’s talent challenges and helps companies build a sustainable talent recruitment strategy.
- **Ohio Department of Development (ODOD).** ODOD works to support Ohio’s small and large businesses and has resources across multiple divisions to assist these diverse business needs. Resources include the Small Business Development Centers, Minority Business Development Centers, Community Development Block Grant Program,



International Trade Assistance Centers, Small and Minority Business Financial Incentives Programs, and Ohio's Third Frontier Program.

- o **Ohio Department of Development (ODOD), InvestOhio Program.** This program offers a non-refundable personal income tax credit to investors who provide new equity into Ohio small businesses to acquire an ownership interest in the company. The small business is required to reinvest that equity into one of five categories of allowable expenses and the investor must retain an ownership interest for a two-year holding period before tax credit is claimed. Small businesses must retain property purchased from new equity for the entire two-year holding period.
- o **Ohio Department of Development (ODOD), Roadwork Development (629) Funds.** This program offers grant funds for improvements in public roadways related to new or expanding businesses (manufacturing, research/development, high tech, corporate headquarters, and distribution facilities). Projects must create or retain jobs, and local financial participation is required.
- o **Ohio Department of Development (ODOD), Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program.** ODOD's Office of Community Development administers CDBG's Community and Economic Development programs that provide federal and state funding to communities to address a variety of needs. Eligible communities and nonprofit organizations can apply for funding, with Lorain County currently an eligible community.
- **Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT).** ODOT recognizes the importance of transportation systems to economic development competitiveness and offers communities support to advance transportation improvements. The **Jobs and Commerce Division** within ODOT has funding for necessary road improvements supporting businesses locating or expanding in a community. Projects must be justified by job creation or retention and this funding source should be part of an overall funding package. **Transportation Improvement Districts (TIDs)** are another mechanism for local communities to support investments in transportation infrastructure. TIDs are a form of local government that focuses on promoting intergovernmental and public-private cooperation for deploying transportation resources and investments. Through ODOT, TIDs can apply for funding to support prioritization of transportation improvements. TID funding is limited to 25% of the project total, not to exceed \$250,000 per fiscal year. Funds may be used for construction, right of way acquisition, and design. Funding consideration is based on the project's ability to address economic development and job creation/retention impacts. ODOT'S **Transportation Alternative Program (TAP)** has funding for on- and off-road pedestrian and bicycle facilities,



enhanced mobility, community improvement activities, and recreational trail projects that connect destinations. **Safe Routes to Schools (SRTS)** will fund infrastructure within two miles of schools (K-8) or non-infrastructure activities to improve safety or encourage walking/biking as denoted in planning documents. **STP/Safety funds** are for projects related to safety (on or off the federal system, as long as crash data supports it) and signage may be eligible. Lorain County is an eligible area in ODOT's **Congestion Management & Air Quality Analysis (CMAQ)** program. Through NOACA, CMAQ funds projects that reduce traffic congestion, improve air quality and help urban areas make progress toward meeting federal clean air standards. NOACA typically holds program solicitation every two years. Approximately \$40 million is available for the NOACA region for project implementation. Projects are selected through a statewide competitive process. Together, ODOT programs support and help address diverse transportation improvements based on local community needs and broader economic and community development priorities.

- **Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR).** ODNR offers funding programs to support community investments that encourage outdoor recreation activities and preservation of natural assets. **Clean Ohio Trail Funds (COTF)** can be used for land acquisition for a trail, trail development, trailhead facilities, engineering, and design. **Land & Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)** dollars can be used for public outdoor recreation areas and facilities. **NatureWorks (NW)** funds can be used for recreation and park related projects. **Recreational Trails (RT)** funds can be used for new trail construction, trail maintenance/restoration, trailside/head facilities (parking, restroom, water), purchase/lease of trail construction/maintenance equipment, and acquisition of easements/property.
- **Ohio Public Works Commission (OPWC).** OPWC funds can be used for improvements to roads, bridges, culverts, water supply systems, wastewater systems, storm water collection systems, solid waste facilities, and essential community facilities.
- **Ohio Air Quality Development Authority (OAQDA).** To serve its mission and achieve measurable environmental, economic, and public health benefits for all Ohioans, OAQDA offers a range of financial and technical assistance programs to support air quality facility projects and communities and businesses across Ohio. OAQDA targets the following sectors for funding consideration – Advanced Manufacturing and Suppliers, Local Governments and Community Organizations, Real Estate – Commercial, and Transportation Infrastructure. Programs such as the Clean Air Improvement Program, Small Business Assistance Program, and Solar Generation Fund are examples of funding opportunities projects in Avon Lake should consider as a designated Coal Impacted Community.



- **Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (OEPA).** Ohio EPA has funding available for a wide variety of environmental projects such as helping communities plan and complete water and wastewater projects, promoting environmental education and reducing the impact of nonpoint source pollution. Funding programs such as the Clean Water Act Section 319(h), Community Litter Grants, Lake Erie Protection Fund, Surface Water Improvement Fund, Targeted Brownfield Assessment (TBA) Program, Water Pollution Control Fund, and H2Ohio could be explored for support of various community priorities.
- **State of Ohio Capital Budget Appropriation.** A request could be made for a line item in the state's bi-annual capital budget. The application process varies from jurisdiction to jurisdiction with some legislative districts requiring project vetting by the local legislative representatives or a regional agency. Ohio's budget is adopted every other year (even year) and the project must demonstrate local support.
- **Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) Capacity Building.** This program provides grants, technical assistance and training in areas important to community revitalization such as housing, economic development, safety, education and sports and recreation. Local LISC offices in Cleveland also offer support in lending and equity investments for projects. Organization Development Grants, Strategic Planning Grants/Seed Capital, Project Grants, Technical Assistance, and Training are offered.
- **Governor's Office of Workforce Transformation (OWT), Industry Sector Partnership Grant.** This is a competitive grant to support collaboration between business, education, and other community leaders to meet in-demand jobs and regional workforce needs. Grant funds help support creation and acceleration of industry sector partnerships, including program coordinators, new tools and programs, and related expenses associated with launching new partnerships and supporting existing partnerships, and applications for funding can be made through the Spark Grant that is designed to provide "seed funding" for emerging sector partnerships and the Accelerant Grant that provides funding to advance work being done by existing sector partnerships. Local match is required to leverage funds and funds are available as a two to one match. To be eligible for funding, an industry sector partnership must include multiple private-sector employers focused on common workforce-related goals, be led by the business community, and have a regional and/or industry specific focus.

Federal

- **Economic Development Administration (EDA).** EDA investment priorities are designed to contribute the strongest positive impact on sustainable regional economic growth and



diversification. Through multiple funding programs, EDA looks to invest in projects and programs that contribute to local efforts to build, improve, or better leverage economic assets that allow businesses to succeed and regional economies to prosper and become more resilient. EDA looks at regional priorities and how they impact local activities, and the agency focuses funding awards on its key investment priorities – recovery & resilience, workforce development, manufacturing, technology-based economic development, environmentally-sustainable development, and exports & FDI. EDA funding requests are competitive, and communities should consider participating in broader regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) partnerships to advance local interests. An EDA Application will need a project schedule, program components, and path to implementation. This grant program is on an open cycle and depends on funding allocations approved by the federal budget process. EDA funding priorities include recovery and resilience, critical infrastructure, workforce development and manufacturing, exports, and opportunity zones. The City of Avon Lake is considered a Coal Impacted Community, making the city eligible for various EDA funding programs.

- **Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).** EPA has many grant programs and other assistance agreements designed to improve and protect human health and the environment. Nearly half of EPA’s budget is directed to funding grant programs that help advance the agency’s mission, awarding more than \$4 billion in funding each year to help communities and organizations reach their environmental goals. EPA’s Grant programs and funding opportunities are diverse and range from multipurpose grants to states and tribes to air grants/funding, environmental justice, Great Lakes funding, pollution prevention, Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR), and Office of Land and Emergency Management (OLEM).

Other/Non-Profits/Private Sector

- **Business/Industry.** There are many programs and initiatives that local business/industry can partner in and/or implement. A community should reach out to and engage with local businesses and industries to seek partnerships for advancing community priorities, creating ongoing dialogue around issues important to maintaining a competitive business climate, and supporting partnerships with educational institutions to provide apprenticeships, mentorships, or facilities to train the local workforce.
- **Local Foundations.** These philanthropic groups are valuable resources for connections between business, industry, education, community leaders, and economic development partners, as well as marketing and even potential funding sources. Foundations are important partners in addressing societal issues and supporting various causes, from education and health to the arts and environment.