



Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) **Strategy Committee Meeting**

Thursday, September 6, 2018 at 2:00 p.m.

Second Floor Conference Room
1300 E. Second Street Defiance, Ohio

Present: DonL Parsons, Village of Deshler; Mark Zeller, Wright State University; Patricia Hoover, Ohio Means Jobs Center; Matt Gilroy, Fulton County Economic Development; Kelly Carey, Fulton County Economic Development; Will Burns, BGSU Center for Regional Development; Jerry Zielke, Paulding County Economic Development; Matt Davis, Williams County Economic Development; Jerry Hayes, Defiance County Economic Development; Emma Kirkpatrick, Marissa Lumbrezer, and Dennis Miller, Maumee Valley Planning Organization.

1. Introductions
2. Overview of Last Meeting
 - a. The Committee last met in July 2018 and established a timeline for completing the CEDS update by the end of the EDA grant period (9/30/18). The public comment period was established for the month of August in order to incorporate and address any comments for the final draft of the CEDS before it is approved by MVPO's Executive Board and sent to EDA for final approval. During the last meeting, the Strategy Committee discussed the first Technology Committee meeting which was held in April. One of the goals of the CEDS is to expand broadband availability and adoption in the region by increasing the availability and affordability of broadband options through stakeholder engagement, planning, and grant funding. Convening the Technology Committee has been the first step in reaching this goal.
3. Technology Committee Report
 - a. The Technology Committee met in August 2018 and discussed a recent webinar that was presented by the Ohio Economic Development Association (OEDA). This webinar focused on Broadband and Economic Development, and gave an overview of the impact that emerging technologies are having on broadband within Ohio communities, as well as providing current approaches to expanding broadband access.
 - b. The speakers touched on the importance of broadband in many markets, and how it is viewed as a "4th utility" and other transformative technologies that are driving major initiatives, such as 5G mobile connectivity, which can ultimately support smart cities and enable more uses for internet enabled devices, as well as heighten the demand for high speed connectivity. The infrastructure for 5G is interesting since it requires many sites to be closer together in order to maintain the signal strength needed to support 5G wireless. However, a lot of these infrastructure sites already exist like water towers, utility poles, stadium lighting, flag poles, street light poles, etc.
 - c. There was also an interesting example of a municipal broadband service developed in the City of Fairlawn (population 7,500). The City established "FairlawnGig" to combat

the issues they were having with current internet availability. They ended up investing \$10 million into fiber and have been able to run the utility through the City and offer competitive prices for homes and businesses. The City believes this will have tremendous impact through attracting new businesses to the area, keeping existing businesses in town, enhancing housing, and increasing the tax base as well as the Fairlawn visitor experience.

- d. Grant funding is scarce for our area as the Federal guidelines establish the minimum requirement for internet is 10mbps/1mbps, which is already being met in our area, and therefore grant funding is typically available in Southeast Ohio where they don't have the minimum speeds (according to the provider maps). The Committee still realizes the benefit in creating a technology plan and continuing to meet in order to gather information, advocate for state legislative items, and form partnerships. The plan will also provide a basis for if grant funding does become available.
- e. The committee discussed broadband leadership, particularly in education and awareness, resources to help providers, and to fill service gaps through a regional partnership. Analyzing the gaps in services is incredibly important, as this could help to ensure a long term strategy. In particular:
 - i. Identify strong points of connectivity in each county for all utilities; build from these sites and encourage marketing for development
 - ii. Promote broadband as the 4th utility
 - iii. Raise awareness and build capacity
- f. The next steps for the group are to establish a vision that complements the CEDS, create a request for proposals for a feasibility study within the region, identify strong areas of connectivity in each County, start a marketing/education campaign on the needs and benefits of broadband connectivity and availability, outline the Technology Plan, and advocate for technology based legislative items.

4. Final Plan

- a. The public comment period ended on September 1, 2018. MVPO only received a few comments – one was to incorporate more information on housing, another was a request to elaborate more on broadband for site development, and the last was to include the CEDS projects from the original CEDS document. The Committee discussed including old projects or removing them. Projects were also able to be added during quarterly meetings.
- b. The Strategy Committee approved the CEDS document for submission to the MVPO Executive Board.

5. Next Steps

- a. The next steps for the CEDS will be to submit the final document to EDA for their approval. Once the CEDS is approved, the next step will be to apply to be an Economic Development District.

6. Adjourn

- a. The meeting was adjourned at 2:30 p.m.