

# 2018

## Annual Report

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Grow Ashland is a comprehensive economic development organization operating under a public-private partnership structure. We strive to strengthen our local economy in these primary areas: business retention, expansion, attraction and entrepreneurship.

### 2019 BOARD MEMBERS

Mike Welch, President  
County Commissioner

Matt Miller, Vice President  
City of Ashland Mayor

Keith Boales, Secretary  
CIC President

Mike Kelly, Treasurer  
Hedstrom

Georgia Kauffman, MAGF

Ben Uselton, At-Large  
BCU Electric

B.J. Harvey, At-Large  
Ohio Carbon Industries

# GROW ASHLAND

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

1483 Sandusky Street // Ashland, Ohio 44805 // P: 419-289-3200

Welcome to the 2018 Annual Report.

If you read the newspaper, follow Grow Ashland on social media, or simply drive through the county, you will notice that the atmosphere in our community is very positive and strong. There is growth and development taking place everywhere; in the Ashland Business Park, along the US Route 250 Corridor, and in the Villages of Hayesville, Jeromesville, Loudonville, and Perrysville.



Below are the highlights from our stellar year of growth as we celebrated five ground-breakings, several entrepreneurs opening new businesses, and the opportunity for job creation.

In February, we received word from SJE, Inc. that they had decided to build their new state-of-the-art facility in our Ashland Business Park instead of renovating the building on Ohio Street. "Project Ruby" was a four-year conversation that included SJE representatives, elected officials and resources to help them through the process of constructing a \$10,350,000 facility in order to retain their 59 employees.

In the Spring, we assisted the City of Ashland Engineer, Shane Kremser in successfully obtaining three grants toward the construction of the Wells Road Extension north of the new SJE, Inc facility in the Ashland Business Park. Oftentimes, projects that involve manufacturing companies can result in funding sources that allow for road and infrastructure improvements. Our collaborative efforts allowed us to partner with Team NEO/ JobsOhio, ODOT Jobs and Commerce, and the Transportation Improvement District to leverage funds in the amount of \$613,250.

The largest project that Grow Ashland has taken on to-date is 'Project Tide', which was COMTEX (Central Ohio Medical Textiles). Myles Noel first contacted our office in August 2017, inquiring about land in the Ashland Business Park. After several meetings and discussions, it was determined that the former Cooper Farm located on the US Route 250 By-Pass would be the best location for this commercial laundry facility. The hours that it takes to get a new company into our community are endless, especially when you are competing with another county. When a company is considering your community, they are looking at the available utilities, zoning, workforce, incentives, financial support, and collaboration among the local and state governments. Grow Ashland received the news in August 2018, one year to the date of the initial call, that Ashland had been chosen. The capital investment is \$20,740,000 with a commitment of 75 to 100 employees.

Looking forward to 2019, we expect more growth not only in Ashland but throughout the entire county. Those retail businesses that everyone hopes will come to Ashland are actually looking at Ashland right now.

*~Kathryn A. Goon, Executive Director*

## 2018 METRICS

Grow Ashland had an active role in twenty-five completed projects throughout Ashland County during 2018.

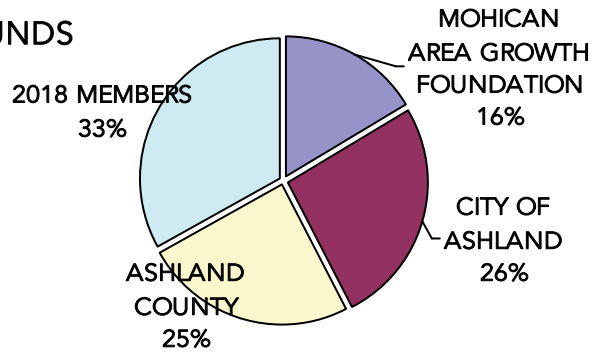
Metric	Total	Healthcare	Hospitality	Housing	Manufacturing	Retail
# of Projects	25	4	3	1	11	6
Capital Investment	\$109.6M	13.86M	9M	8.6M	78M	150K
Job Growth	464	83	0	2	365	14

Metric	Goal	Actual	% Above Goal
Total Capital Investment	\$80M	\$109.6M	36%
Total Job Growth	250	464	86%

2-Year Comparison	Projects	Job Creation	Capital Investment
2017	14	229	\$311.1M*
2018	25	464	\$109.6M**

\* 2017 Capital Investment included the Rover and Eutopia Pipelines.  
 \*\* 2018 Capital Investment included Cabot Oil.

### 2018 SOURCE OF FUNDS



### BUSINESS RETENTION AND EXPANSION VISITS

The Grow Ashland team was joined by volunteers and elected officials on more than twenty-five scheduled Business Retention and Expansion visits throughout the county during 2018. The visits are an opportunity for us to keep a pulse on the county's industry trends. There were two recurring themes during the visits. The positive take-away is that area manufacturers and distributors are seeing an increase in market share and sales; leading to expansions and diversification among product lines and increased workforce needs. The flip side is that workforce demands are hard to meet.

In an effort to find options for companies with employee needs, we partnered with our workforce resources in the community: Ashland County-West Holmes Career Center's Bill Mellick and his YOY Leadership Program, Erv Howard with North Central Workforce Alliance, and Dan Phillip with Transformation Network.

While Grow Ashland generates the opportunity for job creation, we rely on our workforce partners to develop options for the companies. We have full confidence in their abilities to create tailored solutions for each company.

## 2018 EVENTS

**April 3 - SJE Groundbreaking** - The Minnesota-based electric control panel manufacturer broke ground for their new 50,000 sq ft state-of-the-art facility in the Ashland Business Park. The ESOP had been in its original Ohio Street location since purchasing CSI Controls in 2008. Employees moved into the new location in January 2019.

**April 18 - Aber's Towing & Crane Groundbreaking** - Family and community members joined Aaron Aber in celebrating his third-generation towing company's relocation and expansion to Commerce Parkway during April's groundbreaking ceremony. The new 20,000 sq ft facility will allow for quicker response time and more space to store and maneuver the trucks and equipment.

**May 11 - Primal Fitness (Crossfit and 24-Hour Gym) Groundbreaking** - Gym owner Craig Nolletti commemorated his third Ashland expansion in as many years with his wife and children during May's groundbreaking. The new 20,000 sq ft gym, located on Commerce Parkway, opened Fall 2018.

**June 14—Summer Press Conference at Mitchell's Orchard** - Our summer press conference represented four local entrepreneurs that chose downtown for their new business start-ups and expansion. Corinne's Salon, Fig & Oak, The Taproom on Main and Vinyl Marketing shared their upcoming plans for investing in downtown. Michalina Lacy with Small Business Development Center (SBDC), located in Ashland University, spoke on the services and counseling available at no-charge through her office.

**June 28 - Pioneer National Latex Groundbreaking** The 79-year Ashland balloon manufacturer broke ground in June for an additional 12,000 sq ft warehouse to support the 2.5 million balloons manufactured each day at its facility. The project was complete by Fall 2018.

**July 16—Economic Update Luncheon at Whispering Pines Event Center** - Kathy provided a mid-year update on current economic activity, projects and initiatives to Grow Ashland members. Linda Barita, MAGNET Director of Strategic Alliances, shared recent statistics on its Ohio manufacturers survey and reviewed results that included workforce best practices.

**October 4—COMTEX Groundbreaking and Ground Blessing** - In August, COMTEX announced that they had chosen Ashland for its first regional expansion of its Columbus-based, commercial healthcare laundry facility. October's groundbreaking and ground blessing celebrated their future 70,000 square foot state-of-the art building, located on the 250 bypass. Completion is slated for Fall 2019.

**October 18—Ashland Business Park Food Truck Rodeo** - Grow Ashland worked with business leaders in Ashland Business Park and surrounding area to coordinate a food truck rodeo for October's Manufacturers Month. Vendors included Charcoal Mafia, Dan's Deli, Grant's Guac and Roll, Mitchell's Orchard and Moto Pizza. The event was an opportunity for employees to have convenient lunch options while enjoying fresh air and mingle with other area employees.

### MANUFACTURING ROUNDTABLES

Based on the positive response we had with our 2017 business roundtables, we facilitated four in 2018. Lippert Enterprises, Ohio Electric Control, Barbasol and Ashland Scale each hosted one, allowing area executives to congregate and discuss current trends.

### TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT INITIATIVE

The Transportation Improvement District (TID) was established in March of 2018 through the Ashland County Commissioners. The TID was formed to serve a single function for the purpose of coordinating and financing transportation infrastructure improvement programs such as roads and bridges. In most cases, the TID funds are associated with Jobs and Commerce. In May 2018, the TID applied and received their first grant for the Wells Road Extension in the Ashland Business Park.

## 2018 PUBLICATIONS

A portion of 2018's Grow Ashland marketing budget was spent on advertisements and articles in national publications that are viewed by business owners, executives, entrepreneurs, franchisees and site selectors. The articles can be found on our website at [www.growashland.com](http://www.growashland.com) under Latest News.



**Business in Focus** offers a comprehensive view of North American business each month. Grow Ashland joined with Bill Mellick of Ashland County-West Holmes Career Center, Erv Howard of North Central Workforce Alliance and Dan Phillip of Transformation Network for "A Collaborative Effort to Address Workforce Challenges". We consider Bill, Erv and Dan our workforce partners and appreciate what each of them bring to the conversation.



**Business View Magazine North America** focuses on current industry trends and best practices. "America's Sustainability Community Series; Ashland, OH" will be featured in Business View's Feb/March 2019 edition. The article focuses on Ashland County's industry heritage and how it has sustained the test of time.



**Innovation & Technology Today** is a national magazine showcasing the latest cutting edge, innovative technologies, and those individuals driving the industry forward. Grow Ashland and Ohio Carbon Industries partnered for "Business Retooling Spurs Ashland's Digital and Economic Growth". The article was released in the magazine's Winter 2018 edition.

### FIRST ENERGY FOUNDATION PRESENTS \$5,000 TO GROW ASHLAND

With the assistance of the Ashland County Community Foundation, we were once again able to secure a \$5,000 contribution from FirstEnergy Foundation during our mid-year briefing. Victor Coleman, FirstEnergy Manager of External Affairs, presented the check to ACCF Executive Director, Jim Cutright on behalf of Grow Ashland.

This is a relationship that Grow Ashland and FirstEnergy have fostered for over a decade. We appreciate their partnership with the Ashland Community.



## 2018 RECOGNITION

### ASHLAND County, Ohio is Ranked #5 in the 2018 Governor's Cup of Top Micropolitans



We are proud to announce that Ashland, Ohio has been ranked #5 Micropolitan for 2018. While Ashland has continued to grow with the Micropolitan rankings, this is the first year we've broken the Top 5.

Site Selection Magazine's Governor's Cup is the most prestigious national award for economic development; with Micropolitan being a community less than 50,000. The award is based on the previous calendar year's projects; including start-ups, expansions and relocations. To qualify, each project must create 20+ jobs, be \$1M+ new construction (including land and building), or 20,000 square foot construction.

As a member of the community, you can assist by alerting us of construction or projects that you are aware of so we can make sure that **ASHLAND COUNTY, OHIO** continues to be ranked in the **TOP 5** each year.

### #10 Economic Growth Potential for Mid-Sized Metros Business Facilities Magazine 2018 Rankings



In early 2018, Kathy and Erin shared Ashland's increasing economic momentum with Business Facilities Magazine and asked to have the county thrown in the hat for consideration with the magazine's 2018 rankings. In July, we were notified that Ashland had ranked #10 nationally in what they consider their most important category, "Economic Growth Potential for Mid-Sized Metros". The Top 10 list included Reno, NV, Grand Rapids, MI and Lexington, KY.

Factors in the ranking consideration include recent projects, incentives, diversity of growth sectors, support for startups, workforce development, demographics, development strategy, and cost of doing business.

### #1 Marketing & Communications Excellence Award Ohio Economic Development Association (OEDA) 2018 Annual Summit



Grow Ashland earned 1st Place in Excellence Award in Marketing & Communications during the OEDA (Ohio Economic Development Association) 2018 Annual Summit reception held at the Columbus Renaissance Downtown. The award recognizes successful economic development marketing projects or marketing campaigns across the state of Ohio.

The Grow Ashland team spent 2017 and 2018 working with Advantage Marketing to fine-tune the Grow Ashland message. The goal was to make it consistent across marketing material and strengthen its impact from local to international levels. The revamp also included a brand video produced by Vinyl Marketing that showcases local business representatives conveying the Grow Ashland mission statement.

### BOALES INSURANCE PRESENTS \$10,000 TO GROW ASHLAND

Noting Grow Ashland's continued efforts toward supporting business and development in Ashland County, Keith Boales, president of Boales Insurance, presented Kathy with a \$10,000 grant on December 11th. Grow Ashland Board President, Commissioner Mike Welch and Vice-President, Mayor Matt Miller were present.



*"Their efforts in both retention and expansion of existing business and the research and development of a broad variety of new businesses is exemplary."-Keith Boales*

Boales encourages other individuals and businesses in the community to join in financially supporting this important community asset.

## GROW ASHLAND COMMUNITY ROLES



Kathy and Erin are involved in various organizations that strengthen not only community relationships, but helps build opportunities for economic development within Ashland County. These opportunities include, but are not limited to, financing, incentives, infrastructure, and job creation.

The knowledge gained strengthens Grow Ashland's economic development toolbox.

### **Kathy's Various Roles**

**Community Improvement Corporation of Ashland (CIC), Ohio Board Secretary** - The CIC handles economic development projects and can sell land owned by a municipality.

**Community Reinvestment Area Housing Officer** - The CRA is a tax incentive that helps with not only commercial projects but residential housing as well.

**Enterprise Zone Manager** - The Enterprise Zone is a tax incentive for manufacturing, distribution and research projects.

**Vice President of Erie Basin RC&D Council, Inc** - Erie Basin offers financing through their revolving loan fund and downtown revitalization loan program.

**Mohican Area Growth Foundation (MAGF) Executive Director and Board Secretary** - MAGF was created in the 1980s as the economic development arm for Southern Ashland County.

**Transportation Improvement District Secretary / Treasurer Transportation Improvement District** - This allows the opportunity to bring attention to projects that require road or transportation infrastructure improvement.

**Ashland County Council on Aging Board Member** - The information gained from sitting on the board helps with economic development projects involving assisted living, condominiums and retirement homes.

**Erin serves as the Ashland Land Bank Assistant Director.** Her role includes supporting the board with project management, grant submission and administration. Having a hand in addressing blight around Ashland County helps promote a more attractive landscape for developers and investors considering Ashland.

## 2018 MEMBERS

~We appreciate your support~

### LEGACY (\$5,000+)

Ashland County  
Boales Insurance  
City of Ashland

Critchfield, Critchfield & Johnston  
First Energy Foundation  
Mohican Area Growth Foundation

SJE  
University Hospital / Samaritan

### STRATEGIC (\$1,500-\$4,999)

Advantage Marketing  
Ashland University

Aspen Management  
Ball, Bounce & Sport/Hedstrom

First Knox National Bank  
Simonson Construction

### DEVELOPMENT (\$1,000-\$1,499)

Ashland Scale  
American Augers  
BCU Electric  
Buffalo Wild Wings (Spink Properties)

Cabot Oil  
Jones Rental  
Lorain-Medina Rural Electric Co-Op

Minnich Manufacturing  
Ohio Carbon Industries  
Sutton Bank

### GROWTH (\$500-\$999)

Ashland Conveyor Products  
BB&C Car Care  
The Buren Group  
Charles River

Hampton Inn & Suites  
Jackson Township  
Jones Rental  
Kehl Kolor

Moritz Materials  
Dr. Kevin Priest  
Transformation Network

### GOODWILL (\$100-\$499)

Al Farnam Maintenance  
Ashland Board of Realtors  
Ashland Eyecare  
Ashland Railway  
The Balloon Attic  
Baker Bowman & Company  
Barbasol, LLC  
Caleb's Canopies  
Certified Labs & Service

Classy Chassis  
Comprehensive Construction  
Solutions  
Crazy Monkey Baking  
Eric's Home Solutions  
Erie Basin RC&D  
Firelands Electric Co-Operative, Inc  
Irwin Financial Associates  
Johnson Auto Body

Kehl Kolor  
Lippert Enterprise  
Lutheran Village  
Mitchell's Orchard & Farm Market  
Novatex of North America  
Pro Wrench  
Rossi Machinery  
Whitaker-Myers Insurance  
Whitaker-Myers Benefits

### Become a 2019 Member

Grow Ashland is committed to the stability and growth of Ashland County. With the generosity and vision for a better future, our investors make this organization possible. Please contact our office to renew your contribution or become a first time member.

### 2019 FORECAST

The conversations and projects that are lining up for 2019 continue to represent various markets and a combination of expansions and new business coming to Ashland.

The diversity is a healthy sign of balanced growth throughout the county.

#### INITIATIVES

**Foreign Trade Zone (FTZ)** – This is a collaborative effort between the Ashland County Commissioners and Grow Ashland. With the assistance of an outside consultant, we are in the process of setting up the Heartland Ohio as a multi-county FTZ. The grantee will be the Grow Ashland Economic Development Office. The goal is to have the entire Ashland Business Park established in the Foreign Trade Zone. This will allow for not only the companies in the park, but the ones throughout Ashland County, as well as surrounding counties, to obtain the benefits of the lower costs by reducing, eliminating, or deferring duties.

#### ANNOUNCED PROJECTS

**CoffySpace** is remodeling a downtown building to accommodate an open concept space which will serve as an office for Flight Media and allow entrepreneurs a place to gather and start their businesses.

**Eco-Flo** is relocating to Commerce Parkway to expand their distribution and warehouse components along with adding pump assembly and production.

**McClain Development** is set to purchase the Hospice of North Central Ohio building in the spring. It will be renovated for assisted living.

**Primary Colors** is relocating to Commerce Parkway to allow for expansion which will include a cotton candy production line.

**Union Lofts** is breaking ground on Sugarbush Drive this spring for a 47-unit apartment complex that will provide quality, affordable housing.

**Vinyl Marketing** is in the midst of remodeling downtown's Stickman Building to accommodate their growing staff.



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