



GRADD

Green River Area Development District

COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

2022 - 2027



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Disaster preparedness meeting in Union County

SOURCE: Union County Judge Executive Office Facebook page

PUBLIC & PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

- ConnectGRADD Inc.
- GRADD Board of Directors
- GRADD Hazard Mitigation Council
- GRADD Regional Transportation Committee
- GRADD Water Management Council
- Greater Owensboro Economic Development Corporation
- Green River Area Council on Aging
- Green River Economic Development Corporation
- Green River Regional Health Council
- Green River Regional Industrial Development Authority
- Green River Workforce Development Board
- Hancock County Industrial Foundation
- Henderson Community College
- Henderson Economic Development
- Kentucky Career Center
- Kentucky State Data Center
- Madisonville Community College
- Murray State Small Business Development Center
- Ohio County Economic Development Alliance
- Owensboro Community & Technical College
- Union County First
- United Way of Ohio Valley
- Webster County Community & Economic Development
- Webster County Economic Development Council
- Webster County Industrial Development Authority
- West Kentucky Coalition
- West Kentucky Regional Industry Development Authority

CEDS COLLABORATORS

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Ohio County Economic Development Alliance

Mike Baker

Hancock County Industrial Foundation

Doug Bell

German American Bank (Henderson)

Tammy Belt

United Community Bank (Union)

Christina Carpenter

Ohio County Economic Development Alliance

Melissa Coker

Union County First

Greg Collins

Commonwealth Bank (Union) (retired)
Citizen (Daviness)

Sandy Dant

First Security Bank (McLean)

Monte Davenport

Independence Bank (Webster)

Brad Davis

Greater Owensboro Economic Development Corporation (Daviness)

Brandon Gentry

Old National Bank (Daviness)

Chad Gregory

Hancock County Bank

Barbara Howard

Farm Credit Services of Mid-America (McLean)

Kim Humphrey

River View Coal (Union)

Will McDowell

Kentucky Utilities (McLean)

Katie Peak

Cecilian Bank (Ohio)

Andy Rideout

Henderson County Cooperative Extension Services

Whitney Risley

Henderson County Economic Development

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Webster County Community and Economic Development

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W2 Pallets (Hancock)

Rachel Yarbrough

Retired - Webster County Schools

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Every five years, the Green River Area Development District develops a new Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) through local planning with stakeholders across many sectors. The CEDS serves as a plan for regional economic development and is updated annually to show progress towards goals. The CEDS includes four main sections: the Summary Background, which provides information on the economic conditions of the region; the SWOT Analysis, which highlights regional strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats; the Strategic Direction, which builds on the SWOT to identify key goals and objectives for the next five-year period; and the Evaluation Framework, which identifies performance metrics to evaluate successful implementation of the CEDS and economic progress.

One of the greatest challenges facing the region is low workforce participation. As of July 2022, Kentucky's workforce participation rate ranks 45th out of 51 (states + Washington, D.C.) at just 58.1% according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Primary causes for GRADD's low workforce participation rate were identified as a **lack of childcare**, slow population growth and barriers to formerly incarcerated individuals when reentering the workforce. Childcare access was highlighted by GRADD committees as a major issue and data supports the claim. Every county except for Union is considered by the Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services as a childcare desert, meaning there are three or more children in the county for every one available slot in a certified childcare facility. According to a 2021 survey by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, 24% of Americans not in the workforce cited care for children or other family members as a main reason for not looking for work. The survey showed that more women than men highlighted this issue as a barrier to workforce participation.

Another workforce issue highlighted in this CEDS is a growing need for more technical skills in the workforce. Several initiatives have been implemented to cultivate needed skills in the labor force, including:

- Lisman Workforce Complex - provides training for utility lineman, CDL certification, and diesel mechanic
- Hire to Operate program - offsets cost of Registered Apprenticeship program for prospective water and wastewater operators

A need for stronger **broadband connectivity**, especially in rural areas, was highlighted in this CEDS. With the completion of the KentuckyWired project, "last mile" projects - or those that connect to individual houses and businesses - are needed next to bring better broadband to the GRADD region.

Lack of housing has become a major concern for the GRADD region, especially affordable and mid-range single and multi family housing. Ensuring adequate housing stock is critical to be able to support the multiple new and growing industries in the region. Stakeholders cited a need to coordinate local and state incentives, especially tax credits and other financial benefits, to encourage private development. Stakeholders also encouraged flexible zoning and communication between local officials and housing developers.

Some industries have reduced in size due to changing global markets, including:

- Century Aluminum in Hawesville temporarily shuttered in August 2022, resulting in layoffs for 628 smelter employees. The company cited rising energy costs as the cause of the shutdown, linked in part to the war in Ukraine. The plant is estimated to remain closed between nine and twelve months.
- In January, Tyson Foods laid off 200 workers at its facility in Robards due to an increased demand for ready-to-eat products, which are produced at Tyson's automated plants.
- The coal industry has been declining across much of the U.S., including Kentucky. However, Union County has continually seen

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

growth in both coal employment and production. River View Coal, announced an expansion to Henderson County in September 2022 that will create 260 well-paying jobs.

However, new industries have begun flourishing across Kentucky, including in the GRADD region:

- Pratt Paper LLC announced a \$500 million investment in 2021 to construct a new recycled paper mill and corrugated box factory in Henderson, creating an estimated 500 jobs with an average wage plus benefits package of \$39 per hour and 700 construction jobs. The paper mill is expected to be completed by fall 2023 and the corrugator by the end of 2026.
- Kentucky Whiskey Co. will build a new distillery in Ohio County with a \$17.7 million investment. The distillery will employ 25 employees and grow to 30 over a 15-year-period with an average pay, including benefits, of \$31.25 an hour.
- In September 2021, Ford announced construction of the new BlueOval SK Battery Park in Glendale, and in April 2022, Envision AESC announced they would construct an electric battery plant in Bowling Green. These projects are the two largest economic development announcements in Kentucky history, and each plant is located about an hour away from the GRADD region. With this new industry developing in Kentucky, GRADD may see growth in the electric battery sector as well.

Ageing water, wastewater and transportation infrastructure remain concerns in this CEDS. Stakeholders also emphasized the importance of developing infrastructure at industrial sites to attract new industries. Incoming funds from the Cleaner Water Grant Program have been allocated towards priority projects in all seven counties. Concerns over the cost and time to complete projects have been raised due to supply chain issues, which are impacting projects on a national level.

Two major transportation projects were announced in 2022:

- In June 2022, Governor Beshear announced the I-69 Ohio River Crossing project would receive \$250 million in the upcoming state budget for transportation infrastructure. Construction of the bridge is estimated to be complete by 2032.
- In September 2022, GRADD was awarded \$17.3 million from the Department of Transportation as part of its Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) program to rehabilitate the century-old Rockport Railroad Bridge, which connects Ohio and Muhlenberg counties across the Green River. The bridge is critical infrastructure for transportation of goods across Kentucky.

Transportation needs also include the development of roads around the new I-69 bridge and the development of four-lane highways to ease industrial traffic.

This CEDS features greater emphasis on quality of life as a factor for economic development. From recreation opportunities to better health care, quality of life is vital to attracting and retaining industries and growing the population and workforce.

From data and information collected in the Summary Background and the SWOT Analysis, the CEDS committee identified the following six goals as GRADD's top priorities for the next five years.

1. Grow and cultivate the region's workforce.
2. Strengthen broadband and cell availability.
3. Expand access to adequate housing.
4. Attract new industries to the region.
5. Upgrade infrastructure systems.
6. Improve the quality of life for residents.

SUMMARY BACKGROUND

WORKFORCE

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a long term impact on the workforce by accelerating preexisting trends and magnifying weaknesses in Kentucky's economy. Workforce participation rate in the United States has been on the decline since the year 2000, with Kentucky's rate already trailing behind the nation.¹ As of July 2022, Kentucky's workforce participation rate ranks 45th out of 51 (states + Washington, D.C.) at just 58.1%². While the workforce participation rate is declining, the Kentucky Center for Statistics projects nearly 2.2 million job openings in Kentucky between 2019 and 2029². A September 2021 report by the Kentucky Chamber Foundation, *20 Years in the Making: Kentucky's Workforce Crisis*³ found that the major causes of the workforce crisis in Kentucky include:

- A gap between the skills workers have and the skills employers need
- Slow population growth
- Incarceration and criminal backgrounds
- A lack of access to childcare services
- A need for better transportation, infrastructure and broadband

The Green River Workforce Development Board concurred that these issues are the same primary issues affecting GRADD's workforce. These issues must be addressed through targeted projects to ensure the region is competitive with other regions across the United States.

Skills Gap

In the last few years, several initiatives have been implemented to enhance skills in the GRADD workforce. In September 2022, the Webster County Fiscal Court held a ribbon cutting for the Lisman Workforce Complex. The facility was acquired from a former coal mine facility using grant funds from the Delta Regional Authority and Community Development Block Grant and converted into a training facility highly in-demand technical career paths. Madisonville Community College will utilize the facility to increase its CDL and utility lineman training program cohort size and develop a new diesel mechanic program. With a shortage of local workers with CDL and lineman training, companies have resorted to hiring individuals outside of the area. However, these

workers often stay only long enough to gain the experience needed to qualify for jobs back home, creating a continuous deficit of skilled and experienced employees for local companies. Both the CDL and utility lineman program at MCC's main campus have had long wait lists for years. The Lisman Workforce Complex will enable more local workers to become certified and more quickly enter the workforce.



Utility lineman training at the Lisman Workforce Complex

OCTC received a grant from the National Science Foundation to enhance Industry 4.0 training, which is critical in the post-pandemic manufacturing industry. The new three-year initiative, titled Reskilling Manufacturing Technicians Post-COVID with an Industry 4.0 Competency-Based Solution began May 1, 2022. The program will build partnerships between the college, industries and other stakeholders to upskill incumbent workers and build a pipeline of new highly skilled technicians, and encourage underserved groups to consider manufacturing as a viable career choice.

Throughout the United States, there is an increased demand for water/wastewater treatment services as the population increases and experienced water/wastewater systems operators are retiring. The Kentucky Center for Statistics Green River Occupational Outlook estimates 6.4% job growth for water and wastewater treatment plant and system operators between 2014 and 2024. The Hire to Operate (H2O)

SUMMARY BACKGROUND

WORKFORCE

project utilizes the Kentucky Rural Water Association's Registered Apprenticeship Program to train ten water and wastewater apprentices in the Delta Regional Authority counties of Henderson, McLean, Union and Webster. Apprentices will become certified Water/Wastewater Systems Operation Specialists for local utilities.

Population Growth

The population of the United States grew 7.4% between the 2010 and 2020 Census, while Kentucky grew 3.8% and GRADD grew only 1.3%. Daviess and Hancock grew faster than the state average at 6.9% and 6.2% respectively, while all other GRADD counties had a population decline.⁴ Union County had the most significant population decline rate at -8.9%. The declining population means a smaller workforce pool, which may make the region less desirable to new or expanding industries that need large employee bases. Additionally, significant decreases in population will result in a decreased tax base and ability to provide services to the community.

Incarceration and Substance Use

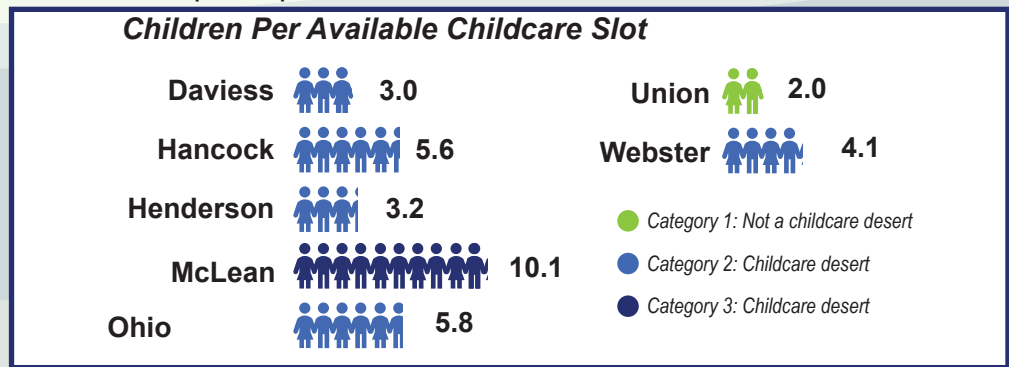
Formerly incarcerated individuals in Kentucky have a 27% unemployment rate³, compared to Kentucky's 2021 unemployment rate of 4.7%¹. Programs in the GRADD region target current and former inmates to help them overcome barriers to successfully reenter the workforce. The Daviess County Detention Center, Owensboro Community & Technical College (OCTC), Daviess County Fiscal Court, City of Owensboro and the Greater Owensboro Economic Development Corporation are providing workforce skills training for inmates through a Reentry Success Program. The program focuses on enhanced operator certification, as well as IT training and other essential workforce skills. The first cohort began classes in July 2022 with forty inmates enrolled.

The Ohio County Fiscal Court used funding from its State and Local Coronavirus Fiscal Recovery Funds allocation to create a new reentry program called Assisting Returning Citizens with Hope, or A.R.C.H. The program's goal is to break the recidivism cycle by providing released inmates with resources they need to succeed in society in

areas including employment, mental health, substance use treatment and housing. A.R.C.H. works with second-chance employers to place program participants with employment and has currently successfully placed all participants interested in returning to work with a job.

Childcare Access

More childcare facilities are needed in the GRADD region to accommodate working parents. According to the Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services, every GRADD county except Union County is considered a Child Care Desert, meaning there are more than three children per available child care slot in licensed facilities.⁷ Lack of available childcare can prevent parents, especially mothers, from working so they can stay home to care for children. GRADD's female workforce participation rate is 53.8%, compared to the overall rate of 58.7%.⁵ According to a 2021 survey by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, 24% of Americans not in the workforce cited care for children or other family members as a main reason for not looking for work.⁶ The survey showed that more women than men highlighted this issue as a barrier to workforce participation.



1. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment 2000-2022.
2. Kentucky Center for Statistics Occupational Outlook 2019-2029.
3. Kentucky Chamber Foundation. *20 Years in the Making: Kentucky's Workforce Crisis*
4. U.S. Census Bureau. 2010 Census and 2020 Census population data.
5. U.S. Census Bureau. 2020 Census. Workforce Participation Rate by Sex.
6. U.S. Chamber of Commerce Poll: The COVID-19 Unemployed. Published 6/3/22.
7. Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Child Care Deserts by County.

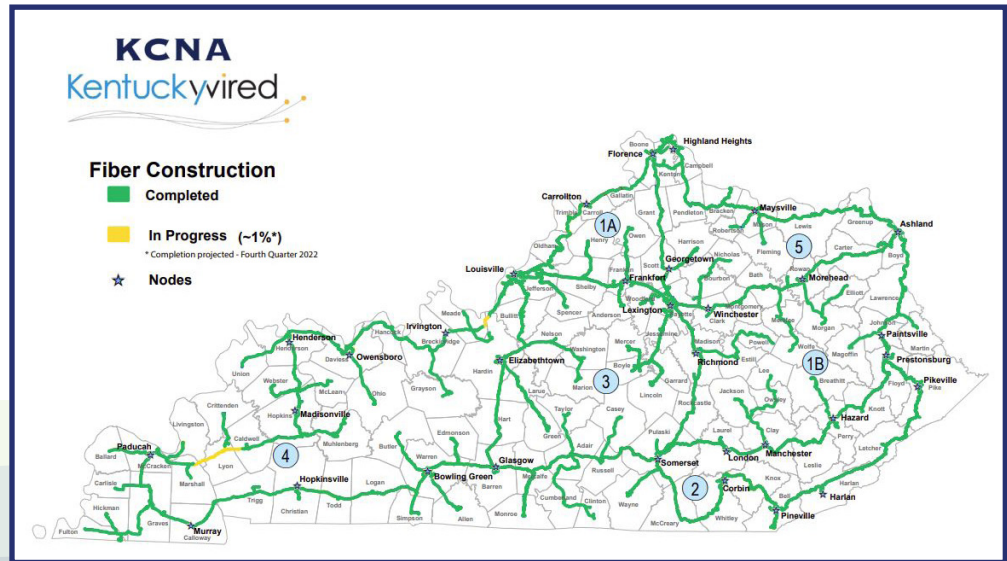
SUMMARY BACKGROUND

BROADBAND

Improved broadband access is the greatest need to promote economic development in the region. According to U.S. News' 2021 Best States rankings, Kentucky ranks 17th among all states in access to high-speed broadband and the broadband subscription rate, according to data from the Census Bureau and the Federal Communications Commission (FCC)¹. According to the rankings, Kentucky ranks 42nd in broadband subscription rate. The Green River region is primarily rural and many portions of the area have inadequate or no internet access. Issues with obtaining adequate internet access are struggles shared by both households and large companies, particularly in rural areas.

ConnectGRADD is a partnership between WATCH Communications and GRADD that provides internet services to rural areas in the seven GRADD counties and Hopkins County. Currently, ConnectGRADD provides service at download speeds of two megabits per second (Mbps) to 20 Mbps to approximately 1,300 rural households. The FCC has identified 25 Mbps as the benchmark for adequate service speed. Connect GRADD is working to improve service to meet those benchmarks, but that process will take time. In 2021, McLean County Fiscal Court was awarded \$498,900 from the Delta Regional Authority to replace a broadband tower that houses equipment from WATCH Communications. This project will raise the height of the communication equipment to allow for increased coverage in McLean County.

KentuckyWired is a state-funded project to construct over 3,000 miles of high-speed, high-capacity fiber optic cable. Kentucky is the first state in the nation to build an open-access fiber optic cable network in every county. This project began in 2015 and is now expected to be completed by the end of 2022. As of September 2022, 99% of the total fiber optic cable construction was completed. All work in the GRADD region is complete. KentuckyWired is a middle-mile initiative to provide the necessary infrastructure and encourage Internet Service Providers (ISPs) to connect to the network and bring faster, more reliable internet to rural areas where previously it would have been too expensive with too low an expected payoff for ISPs to consider serving.



KentuckyWired construction map as of September 2022.

Although broadband availability has been a recognized issue for many years throughout rural America, the COVID-19 pandemic magnified the need for digital access and underscored the many impacts a lack of adequate broadband has on rural communities. Fast and accessible broadband became a necessity for work, school, telehealth, entertainment and communication during the height of the pandemic. The pandemic especially highlighted the digital divide between well-connected areas and those without quality broadband accessibility.

While the migration of services online was initially spurred by social distancing requirements during the pandemic, they have become the “new norm” for many. People and industries alike are increasingly relying on broadband for their daily needs. Communities will need to increase reliable broadband availability to remain viable to attract businesses, industries and people. In 2022, internet infrastructure has become almost as critical to the wellbeing of a community as traditional forms of public infrastructure.

1. U.S. News Best States Internet Access Rankings.

HIGHLIGHTING RESILIENCE

COVID-19 ECONOMIC RECOVERY

In response to the pandemic, the Kentucky Area Development Districts collaborated with the Kentucky Department for Local Government (DLG) and the Economic Development Administration (EDA) through a partnership planning grant funded by the Coronavirus Aid Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act. This allowed GRADD to hire two staff to develop an Economic Recovery and Resiliency Plan, assist communities in the development of recovery and resiliency initiatives and provide technical assistance for reporting requirements associated with the many COVID-19 recovery funding streams.

Through analysis conducted for the Economic Recovery and Resiliency Plan, four main pandemic resiliency themes emerged: broadband; adaptability; trust and communication; and disaster preparedness planning. These four themes were identified as key initiatives to recovery and to building resilience against future economic shocks. The plan recommended utilizing COVID-19 funding opportunities for projects that strengthened one or more of these four categories. The plan serves as a roadmap for rebuilding resilient communities post-pandemic.

Two funding opportunities available to the cities and counties were the Coronavirus Relief Funds (CRF) and the American Rescue Plans State & Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (ARPA SLFRF). Both opportunities allocated funds to every city and county in response to the pandemic. CRF, funded through the CARES Act, was aimed at keeping cities and counties safe and operating during the height of cases. Communities used these funds in a variety of ways to address their immediate needs with the onset of the pandemic. Projects included:

- Purchase of PPE
- Purchase of cleaning supplies
- Purchase of hand sanitizer
- Payroll of critical frontline employees
- Building modifications for social distancing
- Purchase of hardware and software to facilitate virtual meetings and telework

The ARPA SLFRF could be used to replace lost revenue due to the pandemic. This flexibility enabled the funds to be used for steady-state resiliency initiatives to mitigate the potential impact of another similar event on the community and economy.

SLFRF projects included:

- Water/wastewater improvements
- Acquisition and development of public parks
- Purchase of communication equipment
- Broadband improvements and hotspot installation
- Premium pay for essential workers
- Small business grants

The Economic Development Administration (EDA) awarded GRADD \$3.6 million in EDA CARES Act Recovery Assistance to capitalize and administer an RLF to provide critical gap financing to small businesses and entrepreneurs adversely affected by the coronavirus pandemic. GRADD issued 53 loans that created or retained 428 jobs in the region with these funds. Thirty-two of these loans were issued to minority and/or woman owned businesses. Loans ranged from \$5,000 to \$250,000.



COVID RLF Client Jamaican Yard Vibes

SUMMARY BACKGROUND

INDUSTRY

COVID-19 and other global economic changes have impacted local industries, resulting in job loss. Century Aluminum notified employees in June 2022 that its Hawesville plant would temporarily shutter in August, resulting in layoffs for 628 smelter employees. The company cited rising energy costs as the cause of the shutdown, linked in part to the war in Ukraine. The plant is estimated to remain closed between nine and twelve months. In January, Tyson Foods laid off 200 workers at its facility in Robards due to an increased demand for ready-to-eat products, which are produced at Tyson's automated plants.

The coal industry has been declining across much of the U.S., including Kentucky. However, Union County has continually seen growth in both coal employment and production. Union County has been the leading coal producer in Kentucky since 2012, producing 2.7 million tons of coal in the first quarter of 2022, compared to 2.8 million tons produced by all Eastern Kentucky coal producing counties.¹ Union County's only coal producing company, River View Coal, announced an expansion to Henderson County in September 2022. The company will create a new 30,000 square foot facility with a \$35 million investment expected to be completed by December 2024. The project will create 260 well-paying jobs.

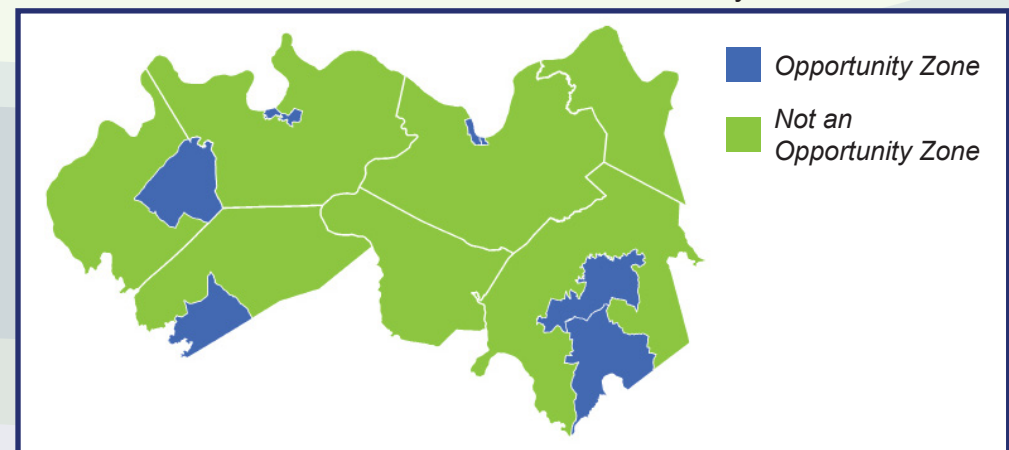
The Kentucky Economic Development Finance Authority will provide \$1 million in tax incentives for The Kentucky Whiskey Co. LLC to build a new distillery in Ohio County. Kentucky Whiskey plans to invest \$17.7 million in the project. The distillery will start with 25 employees and grow to 30 over a 15-year-period with an average pay, including benefits, of \$31.25 an hour. An additional \$700,000 Community Development Block Grant will help extend water and sewer lines to the project site and construct an access road.

In the last two years, the electric vehicle battery industry has expanded in Kentucky. In September 2021, Ford announced construction of the new BlueOval SK Battery Park in Glendale, and in April 2022, Envision AESC announced they would construct an electric battery plant in Bowling Green. These projects are the two largest

economic development announcements in Kentucky history, and each plant is located about an hour away from the GRADD region. With this new industry developing in Kentucky, there may be interest by other related industries to locate in the GRADD region.

Opportunity Zones

Seven Kentucky Opportunity Zones were established in the GRADD region by the U.S. Department of the Treasury and the Internal Revenue Service in 2018. Opportunity Zones were created to encourage long-term private investment in low-income urban and rural communities by offering tax incentives to investors. In the GRADD region, Opportunity Zones have prompted little interest or investment. Researchers from the University of California-Berkeley examined 2019 investments in Opportunity Zones and found that only 16% of Opportunity Zones received any investment that year. The study found that rural areas received little to no investment and that a majority of investments in Opportunity Zones were businesses specializing in real estate, construction and finance rather than industry.²



Map of Opportunity Zones in the GRADD region

1. Kentucky Energy and Environment Cabinet, Quarterly Coal Reports 2012-2022.
2. Kennedy, Patrick and Wheeler, Harrison. *Neighborhood-Level Investment from the U.S. Opportunity Zone Program: Early Evidence.*

HIGHLIGHTING RESILIENCE

EDA PARTNERSHIP - PRATT PAPER

On July 29, 2021, Governor Beshear and Pratt Paper LLC announced a \$500 million investment to construct a new recycled paper mill and corrugated box factory in Henderson. Pratt Paper will build two facilities: a state-of-the-art 650,000 square foot paper mill and a 500,000 square foot corrugator. The project will create an estimated 500 jobs with an average wage plus benefits package of \$39 per hour and 700 construction jobs. The paper mill is expected to be completed by fall 2023 and the corrugator by the end of 2026.



Mayor Steve Austin addressing the crowd at the Pratt Paper announcement
SOURCE: Sam Owens/The Gleaner

This project is the largest industrial investment with the most jobs created in Western Kentucky in twenty-five years and the largest investment ever made by Pratt Paper. Pratt brings a new type of industry to the GRADD region. With a rising global demand for eco-friendly goods, industries producing recycled and sustainable products like Pratt are likely to grow in coming years. Pratt's recycled cardboard products will support Kentucky's thriving logistics and distribution industry, which

employs nearly 75,000 people at 540 facilities statewide.¹ An increase in online ordering throughout the pandemic expanded these industries in Kentucky and led to a greater demand for packaging products, like the cardboard boxes produced by Pratt. Post-pandemic, e-commerce has continued to grow, although at a slower rate than during the pandemic.²

The Pratt Paper project is a collaborative effort between stakeholders. Henderson Economic Development, the City of Henderson, Henderson County Fiscal Court and state partners worked together to provide incentives to Pratt to choose Henderson over other competing locations. The City of Henderson and Henderson Municipal Gas were awarded \$1.5 million from the Delta Regional Authority and \$3 million from the Economic Development Administration to construct new natural gas pipeline to provide the necessary energy for Pratt facilities. Kentucky Economic Development Finance Authority provided Pratt Paper with \$14 million in tax incentives over 15 years to encourage them to locate in Kentucky, alongside \$3.5 million in tax incentives through the Kentucky Enterprise Initiative Act.



Construction at the Pratt Paper site in Henderson
SOURCE: Henderson Economic Development

1. Team Kentucky. https://ced.ky.gov/Existing_Industries/Logistics_Distribution
2. Digital Commerce 360 analysis of U.S. Department of Commerce data; August 2022

SUMMARY BACKGROUND

INFRASTRUCTURE

GRADD has made improving water and sewer infrastructure a top priority. One of the largest obstacles to infrastructure projects is the high cost associated with major water and sewer projects. The Kentucky Infrastructure Authority (KIA) works to develop water and sewer infrastructure throughout the state by helping communities secure the funding needed to complete projects. KIA works with the Area Development Districts to maintain the Water Resource Information System (WRIS), an online database of identified projects under the Safe Drinking Water Act and the Clean Water Act. The WRIS portal is critical in helping communities identify and prioritize their water and sewer needs and develop their projects and find funding assistance. The WRIS portal also contains mapping and general information about water and wastewater systems throughout the state, which can also be a helpful tool in identifying needs and developing projects. Several major projects are underway in the GRADD region.

The Earle C. Clements Job Corps Academy in Union County is a tuition-free residential education facility specifically targeting underserved populations. The Job Corps Sanitary Sewer serves the Job Corps and many businesses nearby. After decades of use, the sewer system must undergo a major replacement project to prevent total failure and the closure of the Job Corps and businesses that rely on it. The project will resolve major infiltration and inflow issues by replacing oversized sewer lines and roughly 300 brick manholes, as well as rehabilitating 67,000 linear feet and replacing 18,000 linear feet of sewer.

In Ohio County, there is a project to rebuild the current 1,000 linear foot ductile iron intake line that is failing and physically falling apart at River Road in Cromwell. If this line were to fail, it would seriously affect all 6,013 customers, including the cities of Beaver Dam, Centertown and Fordsville. The project includes construction of two new submerged intake screening structures, installation of 16-inch ball joint DIP supply lines, construction of an elevation valve access platform, assembly of two intake screenings on Green River, construction of

micropipe foundation for intake screening assemblies, connection to the existing supply line, and erosion control and bank stabilization. By using existing intake screens and a supply line in operation, it will minimize time required for change over to the new system.

The Whitesville Sewer Plant is nearing its lifespan of forty years and will soon require replacements and technology upgrades in order to maintain safety and efficiency standards. Two of the current blowers have malfunctioned and are no longer in use, and the plant will not be in compliance until they are functioning again. There is currently a real possibility that an overflow of wastewater from the lagoons will enter fields and ditches surrounding the treatment plant, posing a health risk for the surrounding community. The project will include the replacement of three blowers, improvements to the UV disinfection system, removal of solids from the lagoons, rehabilitation of the effluent pump station and gravity filters, replacement of leaking air head piping and installation of additional aeration headers.

The Sebree Sanitary Sewer System is also undergoing a replacement. This project will ultimately replace approximately 8,900 linear feet of 8-inch clay pipe, lower an exposed sanitary sewer main and the replace a failing retaining wall. The project impacts all 665 users, including thirty-five industrial customers. If the sewer fails, the entire city and industrial park will be with out service. The completion of this project will not only provide better service to the city's customers, but it will also prevent hazardous conditions if the retaining wall were to fail.

American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds served various strategic investment projects by local governments, some of which earmarked for infrastructure upgrades. Kentucky distributed these funds with the Cleaner Water Program. GRADD communities used these funds for long-term projects to increase the resilience of their water and wastewater infrastructure. Over \$7.9 million across 35 projects was distributed to GRADD communities.

SUMMARY BACKGROUND

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation is critical to economic growth. Industries rely on water, rail, air and road transport for goods. Funding for two major projects was announced in 2022 that will have significant impacts on the region's economy.

A bi-state plan to build a bridge connecting the Indiana and Kentucky I-69 segments is under construction. The bridge will connect Henderson, KY to Evansville, IN and complete the Kentucky portion of I-69. The project has been divided into three sections of construction. Work is underway on Section I in Kentucky with improvements from KY 425 to US 60. Construction on the new bridge, Section II, is expected to begin in 2027. In June 2022, Governor Beshear announced the I-69 Ohio River Crossing project would receive \$250 million in the upcoming state budget for transportation infrastructure. Construction of the bridge is estimated to be complete by 2032. Section III will improve the approach on the Indiana side of the crossing, with construction expected to begin in 2024.



Groundbreaking of the I-69 Crossing Project

In September 2022, GRADD was awarded \$17.3 million from the Department of Transportation as part of its Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) program to rehabilitate the century-old Rockport Railroad Bridge, which connects Ohio and Muhlenberg counties across the Green River. The project is a collaboration with Paducah & Louisville Railway, Inc., (P&L) and will replace the bridge's deck, improve its approaches and upgrade the electrical and mechanical components that allow the bridge to rise and accommodate river traffic. The bridge is P&L's main rail line in Ohio County and is critical infrastructure for transportation of goods across Kentucky.

Door-to-door public transportation for people with disabilities is provided throughout all seven counties at low or no cost by the Green River Intra-Transit System (GRITS). Medicaid-eligible clients without vehicles are provided transportation to approved Medicaid appointments at no cost. Fee-per mile service is available to the general public to anyone for any purpose. Fixed-route public transportation is available in Owensboro and Henderson through the Owensboro Transit System (OTS) and the Henderson Area Rapid Transit (HART). OTS and HART do not operate on Sundays. Fixed-route public transportation isn't available anywhere else in the region, limiting resources and opportunities for rural residents. In 2022, OTS received a \$927,000 grant from the Federal Transit Administration to purchase an electric bus to reduce carbon emissions.

Henderson and Owensboro have riverports that are certified Foreign Trade Zones and have access to road and rail traffic. Having access to river transportation is a huge advantage, as barges are able to carry more cargo using less fuel than other methods of transportation. The ports are connected by the Ohio River to the Mississippi River System, which is one of the largest and most important trade networks in the U.S.

SUMMARY BACKGROUND

QUALITY OF LIFE & HOUSING

Community services affect the quality of life of residents. Community development projects enhance the services that cities and counties provide. Leveraging local funds with grant funding allows GRADD communities to develop quality recreational, public safety and public health services. With better facilities, communities can improve the quality of life of residents while retaining and attracting skilled workers who will continue growing the economy.

Several recreation projects were recently funded through the Land and Water Conservation Fund. Parks in Beaver Dam and Clay are undergoing upgrades with this funding. Vastwood Park in Hancock County is getting a new spray park. Henderson is building a new sports complex to provide space for no- and low-cost youth sports organizations. Creating accessible outdoor spaces for residents to enjoy is important to local officials and appreciated by residents. Webster County recently purchased property for its first county park. Although it needs to be developed from the ground up, many in Webster County look forward to the possibilities of the outdoor spaces it will provide.

Fire departments ensure the safety of their communities, so it is important to ensure they are well-equipped. Henderson Fire Department was awarded an Assistance to Firefighters grants three years in a row for various equipment and training programs. A Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) project for Dukes Fire Station in Hancock County is moving forward, and the Livermore fire station renovation CDBG in McLean County was completed in 2021.



Site of Canaan Ridge Park, a new park in Webster County
SOURCE: Webster County EMA Jeremy Moore

Stakeholders across all CEDS planning meetings cited lack of available housing units as a major concern. There is a lack of adequate data showing housing needs by county. However, an NPR report from June 2022 examined 800 cities and towns, including Owensboro. The report states that the Owensboro metro area had its housing needs met between 2012-2014, but had entered a shortage between 2017-2019.² With incoming industries and a need for a growing workforce, housing developments are an urgent need in the region. GRADD CEDS collaborators cited a need for both more multi-unit dwellings and single-family homes.

Further complicating the housing issue is the rising cost of construction. Supply chain issues post-pandemic have substantially raised the cost of construction and the time needed to secure building materials. GRADD CEDS collaborators stated that state and local incentives are needed to encourage housing developers. The CEDS committee also highlighted the importance of communication between local governments and housing developers and the need for flexible, planning-led zoning reforms.



Ribbon cutting of a new home for victims of the Dec. 2021 tornado in Ohio County

1. United States Census Bureau, 2020 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates

2. Arnold, Chris; Benincasa, Robert; Ganun, Jacqueline; and Chu, Haidee. *There's a massive housing shortage across the U.S. Here's how bad it is where you live.* NPR. 7/14/22

HIGHLIGHTING RESILIENCE

GROWING TOURISM INDUSTRY

Owensboro remains a cultural and tourist hub for the western part of the state. Home to the Bluegrass Music Hall of Fame and Museum, Owensboro also declared itself the Bluegrass Capitol of the World in November 2021. The RiverPark Center hosted a summer concert series, putting on free concerts for locals. The city was also home to the annual ROMP Music Festival which boasted popular bluegrass artists including Marty Start and The Steeldrivers. ROMP tends to attract crowds of 25,000 each year from all over the world. Some events in the last few years operated with limited capacity and required masks in some areas depending on the state of Covid in the area, but venues and communities got creative in their ability to continue offering tourism attractions for the area.



Canoers on the Green River in Livermore
SOURCE: *Livermore - Kentucky Trail Town Facebook page*

The City of Livermore was certified as the 25th Kentucky Trail Town. The Department of Tourism announced that Livermore in McLean County was to be an official trail town, saying “Outdoor recreation is a major economic driver for both Kentucky and the United States. There are thousands of miles of trails and waterways throughout the Commonwealth. These trail towns offer the perfect destination for long

distance adventures or day trips and we are excited to have Livermore join the other 24 destinations who have received this designation.” The Kentucky Trail Town Program is a tourism and economic development initiative designed to help towns capitalize on outdoor and travel opportunities within their communities. Activities that can be found in Livermore include sports on the Rough and Green rivers and three new bicycling routes. They are also home to a local sporting goods supply store offering a canoe and kayak livery, as well as a new River Trails Inn, providing overnight rentals.



Crowd at the Hank Williams Jr. concert at the Beaver Dam Amphitheater
SOURCE: *the Messenger-Inquirer*

The Beaver Dam Tourism Commission was delighted to host country music legend and Grammy Award winner Hank Williams Jr. at the Beaver Dam Amphitheater as part of the First United Bank and Trust Concert series. The Beaver Dam Amphitheater saw a record-breaking crowd of about 6,000 people for the show. Since its first show in 2014, the Amphitheater has hosted visitors from all 50 states and 13 countries. The City of Beaver Dam was also the recipient of the 2021 Government Award, as a part of the Governor’s Awards in the Arts.

SWOT ANALYSIS

A SWOT Analysis is an identification of competitive assets to a region, as well as factors that could hinder economic development. A SWOT Analysis is a helpful tool to determine what features a region has implemented or needs to implement to strengthen and grow their economy.

Strengths are a region's competitive advantages, such as a skilled workforce or robust broadband availability.

Weaknesses are a region's competitive disadvantages, such as low educational attainment or high cost of living.

Opportunities are chances for regional improvement or progress, such as the potential expansion of an existing industry.

Threats are chances for negative impacts or regional decline, such as several companies considering relocating outside of the region.

STRENGTHS

- Precedent of collaboration between local officials and industries
- Strong collaboration between region's water and wastewater systems
- Excellent community colleges with technical training programs
- Strong network of senior centers & services
- Excellent mapping of infrastructure systems
- Strong K-12 school systems

WEAKNESSES

- Lack of decent affordable housing, especially single family homes and apartments
- Lack of comprehensive health care, especially in rural areas
- Poor rural accessibility to public transportation and sidewalks
- Lack of rural broadband and cell coverage
- Lack of childcare options and affordability
- Lack of four-lane highways for industries
- Lack of soft skills in labor force

OPPORTUNITIES

- Expansion of health care facilities
- Expanding tourism industry
- Future I-69 bridge
- Reentry programs for incarcerated individuals
- Potential to attract EV battery industry to region
- Cleaner Water Grant program funds

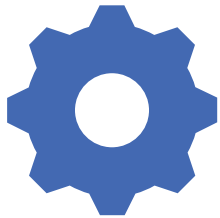
THREATS

- Loss of population to larger cities
- Low workforce participation rate
- Aging infrastructure
- Declining coal industry
- Rising cost of living
- Supply chain issues
- Retiring water and wastewater operators



STRATEGIC DIRECTION

The Strategic Direction outlines GRADD's broad goals and objectives for economic development for the next five years. Goals are priority general intentions for the next five years. Each goal has several objectives, which are specific, measurable and concrete targets.



GOAL 1

Grow and cultivate the region's workforce.



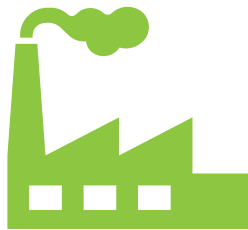
GOAL 2

Strengthen broadband and cell availability.



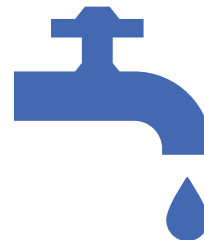
GOAL 3

Expand access to adequate housing.



GOAL 4

Attract new industries to the region.



GOAL 5

Upgrade infrastructure systems.



GOAL 6

Improve the quality of life for residents.

GOAL 1

Grow and cultivate the region's workforce.

WHY IS THIS OUR GOAL?

Availability of labor is one of the primary considerations of industries choosing a new location. With low workforce participation at both the national and state level, having a steady pool of skilled workers gives a region a competitive advantage in attracting industry. Availability of skilled labor is also necessary to retain existing industries.

Additionally, efforts that enable people who are currently unable to enter the workforce could help raise the standard of living in the region. Dual income families have higher household incomes than single income households, which could be a better option for some. Formerly incarcerated individuals who are able to secure stable and quality careers are at significantly lower risk of recidivism.¹

1. Duwe, Grant and Henry-Nickie, Makada. A better path forward for criminal justice: Training and employment for correctional populations. April 2021. Brookings.



HCCFAME students participating in apprenticeships at Century Aluminum Sebree
SOURCE: Henderson Community College Facebook page

- **OBJECTIVE 1 - Cultivate skills in the workforce by increasing the percentage of people aged 25+ with an associate degree by five percent.**
- **OBJECTIVE 2 - Develop childcare facilities in all counties to the extent that no county is considered a childcare desert (no more than three children in the county per available childcare slot).**
- **OBJECTIVE 3 - Implement new technical education and training programs.**

GOAL 2

Strengthen broadband and cell availability.

WHY IS THIS OUR GOAL?

As highlighted by the pandemic, broadband is a necessity for industries, small businesses and individuals. Industries rely on broadband for operations and a region's broadband availability for employees may factor into a company's decision as to where to locate.

Small businesses utilize internet and cell for their day-to-day operations and can also expand online, allowing them to supplement local sales.

Individuals need access to high speed broadband for a variety of needs, including school, remote work, telehealth, communication and more.

Poor broadband and cell accessibility and speed hinders the economic growth of a region and makes it less competitive when attracting both new industries and workers.



*Announcement of partnership between Kenergy and Conexon to launch a fiber network in western Kentucky
SOURCE: Kenergy Facebook pager*

- **OBJECTIVE 1 - Secure funding and work with Internet Service Providers to complete "last mile" projects to provide internet to unserved or underserved households and businesses.**
- **OBJECTIVE 2 - Increase access to 25 Mbps broadband by at least five percent in each county.**

GOAL 3

Expand access to adequate housing.

WHY IS THIS OUR GOAL?

Lack of adequate housing is a concern shared across much of the U.S. There are not enough single family or multi-family housing units being built in the GRADD region to accommodate economic growth. It is critical that local officials work with development companies to encourage new housing construction. Affordable housing and housing for moderate income families were highlighted by stakeholders as being especially needed.

Several local officials also cited issues with maintenance of rental properties, particularly when landlords did not live locally. More stringent code enforcement is needed to ensure renters have access to decent, safe and sanitary housing options.



Owensboro residents receive a Habitat for Humanity home
SOURCE: Messenger-Inquirer

- **OBJECTIVE 1 - Encourage new housing construction through state and local incentives, such as tax incentives and streamlined zoning processes, resulting in at least 200 new housing units across the region by 2025.**
- **OBJECTIVE 2 - Identify and secure funding for affordable housing projects and shelters to meet the demand in each county.**

GOAL 4

Attract new industries to the region.

WHY IS THIS OUR GOAL?

Growth of new industries will allow the GRADD region to diversify its economic base and become more resilient to changes in the economy. New manufacturing industries generate quality, well-paying careers and may stimulate the development of other industries.

It is vital that GRADD cities and counties coordinate with state and federal partners to develop and market industrial sites to interested companies. Improvements to sites to become competitive are incredibly costly. Collaboration between investors, state and federal partners, local governments and organizations can reduce the financial burden on cities and counties and facilitate new investments in the region.



*Site of the new Western Kentucky Distilling Co. facility in Ohio County
SOURCE: Western Kentucky Distilling Co.*

- **OBJECTIVE 1 - Coordinate with the Kentucky Cabinet for Economic Development to identify and market potential sites for investors with a goal of securing at least one new industrial investment in each county.**
- **OBJECTIVE 2 - Attract new industries in emerging clusters, especially distilling and electric vehicle battery production.**

GOAL 5

Upgrade infrastructure systems.

WHY IS THIS OUR GOAL?

Strong water, wastewater and transportation infrastructure are vital to both economic growth and the overall wellbeing of a community. Infrastructure is needed by both the region's existing industries and families. With constantly aging and sometimes failing infrastructure, investments in water, wastewater and transportation projects will always be a top priority. Extending infrastructure to new industrial sites is also vital to site development and attracting new investments to the region.

Hazard mitigation projects are needed to ensure the safety of critical infrastructure, human life and property during emergencies. Hazard mitigation projects enhance the physical and economic resilience of the region.



Lewisport named Kentucky Rural Water Association's Best Tasting Water in Kentucky third year in a row in 2021
SOURCE: City of Lewisport Facebook page

- **OBJECTIVE 1 - Develop water, wastewater and transportation infrastructure to priority industrial sites.**
- **OBJECTIVE 2 - Develop four-lane highways to encourage new industry and improve traffic flow.**
- **OBJECTIVE 3 - Develop roads in proximity to the future I-69 bridge.**
- **OBJECTIVE 4 - Secure funding for water and wastewater projects identified in the WRIS portal.**
- **OBJECTIVE 5 - Secure funding for projects identified in the GRADD Hazard Mitigation Plan.**

GOAL 6

Improve the quality of life for residents.

WHY IS THIS OUR GOAL?

The quality of life in a community can contribute to population and employment base growth. Recreational opportunities, safety, health, education and other quality of life factors are increasingly important determinants of a region's population growth and economic success.¹

Higher quality of life is associated with lower unemployment and poverty rates and higher rates of population growth, even in non-metropolitan areas. A 2021 study suggests that quality of life may even be more important than the quality of the business environment in determining a region's economic success.²

1. Weinstein, Amanda. *A Broader Vision of Quality of Life as Economic Development Policy*

2. Weinstein, Amanda. *An Aggregate Approach to Estimating Quality of Life in Micropolitan Areas.*



McLean County students volunteers landscaping at Myer Creek Park
SOURCE: McLean County, Kentucky Judge-Executive's Office Facebook page

- **OBJECTIVE 1 - Create and develop community facilities including fire stations, libraries, senior centers, parks, community centers, sidewalks, public transit, etc.**
- **OBJECTIVE 2 - Identify and secure funding for the development of health care facilities and initiatives, including mental health and substance use treatment.**

EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

The Evaluation Framework is a set of measures selected to track economic progress. These measures gauge how successful the goals and objectives in the Strategic Direction have been towards economic growth and increasing prosperity.

| | 2010 | 2020 | 2025 Goal |
|---|--------|---------|----------------------|
| Percentage of owner-occupied housing units¹ | 72.0% | 68.9% | 70% |
| Cost-burdened households* - Renters¹ | 42.7% | 39.1% | 38% |
| Cost-burdened households* - Homeowners with a mortgage¹ | 26.1% | 23.6% | 22% |
| Percentage of housing constructed after 2014¹ | ** | 2.5% | 10% |
| Poverty rate¹ | 16.8% | 16.8% | 15.8% |
| High school graduation rate² | 82.4% | 89.1% | 92.0% |
| Associate degree holders in population 25 years and over¹ | 11,393 | 14,512 | 16,000 |
| Employment in manufacturing sector 16 years and over¹ | 19,317 | 18,189 | 19,000 |
| Labor force participation rate¹ | 59.5% | 58.7% | 60% |
| Total number of people in the civilian labor force¹ | 99,762 | 100,276 | 102,000 |
| Percentage of women in the civilian labor force¹ | 65.9% | 53.8% | 55% |
| Number of shovel-ready sites⁴ | ** | 14 | 16 |
| Number of build-ready sites⁴ | ** | 3 | 5 |
| Percent of households with access to 25 Mbps broadband¹ | † | † | ≥90% in all counties |
| Annual median household income¹ | † | † | +5% in all counties |

1. United States Census Bureau, 2020 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates

2. Kentucky Department of Education, Kentucky's School Report Card

*monthly housing costs greater than or equal to 30% of household income

**data not available

†data available by county in the statistics pages of this document

DAVISS COUNTY STATISTICS

POPULATION¹

2020 Population Change Since 2010

103,312 **+6.89%**

Median Age

38.9

Median Household Income

\$54,881

Percent of Population Below Poverty Line

16.1%

Percent of Population with Disability

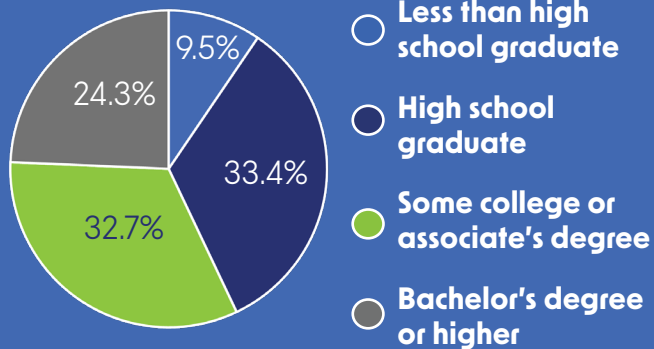
16.4%

Limited English Proficiency Population

2,029

EDUCATION¹

Attainment for Population 25 years and older



WORKFORCE¹

Total Labor Force

48,455

Labor Force Participation

61.6%

Annual Average
Unemployment Rate²

4.3%

LARGEST INDUSTRIES & EMPLOYMENT¹

| | | |
|--|---------------------------------|-----------------|
| | Manufacturing | 7,652 employees |
| | Health Care & Social Assistance | 7,546 employees |
| | Retail Trade | 5,027 employees |
| | Educational Services | 4,063 employees |
| | Accommodation & Food Services | 3,099 employees |

HOUSING¹

Cost Burdened Households

Paying rent

40.5%

With a mortgage

25.4%

Without a mortgage

9.2%

Median Home Value

\$167,900

Households with Broadband Internet Subscription

90.8%

Housing Occupancy

66.6%

Owner

33.4%

Renter

Age of Housing Units

2014 or Later

3.3%

2000 to 2013

13.9%

1980 to 1999

10.4%

1960 to 1979

31.8%

Prior to 1960

27.1%

COUNTY PRIORITIES

- Upgrade the Audubon and Natcher Parkways to interstate standards.
- Expand broadband accessibility in the county and provide redundancy in fiber optics.
- Increase public awareness of drug abuse and strengthen treatment opportunities.
- Continue identification and development of industrial parks.
- Promote regionalism among the GRADD counties, particularly in terms of solid waste coordination, animal shelters, prisons, and E911 call centers.

Sources

1. United States Census Bureau, 2020 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates

2. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Labor Force Data by County, 2021 Annual Averages

HANCOCK COUNTY STATISTICS

POPULATION¹

2020 Population **9,095** Change Since 2010 **+6.19%**

Median Age **40.5**

Median Household Income **\$56,265**

Percent of Population Below Poverty Line **15.3%**

Percent of Population with Disability **18.2%**

Limited English Proficiency Population **27**

WORKFORCE¹

Total Labor Force

6,898

Labor Force Participation

57.1%

Annual Average Unemployment Rate²

4.4%

LARGEST INDUSTRIES & EMPLOYMENT¹

| | | |
|---|---------------------------------|-----------------|
|  | Manufacturing | 1,344 employees |
|  | Health Care & Social Assistance | 474 employees |
|  | Retail Trade | 428 employees |
|  | Educational Services | 296 employees |
|  | Construction | 164 employees |

HOUSING¹

Cost Burdened Households

Paying rent **45.2%**

With a mortgage

16.8%

Without a mortgage

5.8%

Median Home Value

\$113,600

Households with Broadband Internet Subscription

79.3%

Housing Occupancy

81.0%

Owner

19.0%

Renter

Age of Housing Units

2014 or Later

1.6%

2000 to 2013

17.6%

1980 to 1999

13.6%

1960 to 1979

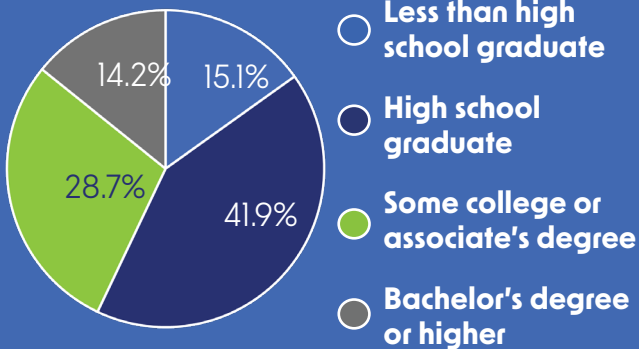
31.4%

Prior to 1960

15.8%

EDUCATION¹

Attainment for Population 25 years and older



COUNTY PRIORITIES

- Complete broadband build-out with Kenergy/Conexon for all county residents.
- Widen Highway 60 to accommodate an increase in truck traffic.
- Completely upgrade all emergency and protective services radio communications.
- Continue to upgrade county parks, including the splash pad project at Vastwood Park, and work with the Chamber of Commerce to promote growth.
- Continue to attract businesses of all sizes and promote economic development.

Sources

1. United States Census Bureau, 2020 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates
2. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Labor Force Data by County, 2021 Annual Averages

HENDERSON COUNTY STATISTICS

POPULATION¹

2020 Population Change Since 2010

44,793 **-3.15%**

Median Age

41.1

Median Household Income

\$50,471

Percent of Population Below Poverty Line

18.2%

Percent of Population with Disability

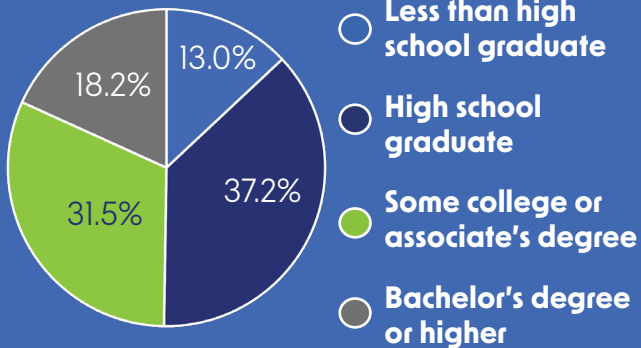
21.7%

Limited English Proficiency Population

446

EDUCATION¹

Attainment for Population 25 years and older



WORKFORCE¹

Total Labor Force

21,273

Labor Force Participation

58.2%

Annual Average
Unemployment Rate²

4.5%

LARGEST INDUSTRIES & EMPLOYMENT¹

| | | |
|--|---------------------------------|-----------------|
| | Manufacturing | 3,904 employees |
| | Health Care & Social Assistance | 3,509 employees |
| | Retail Trade | 2,032 employees |
| | Construction | 1,711 employees |
| | Educational Services | 1,484 employees |

HOUSING¹

Cost Burdened Households

Paying rent

42.5%

With a mortgage

24.0%

Without a mortgage

13.6%

Median Home Value

\$133,200

Households with Broadband Internet Subscription

79.2%

Housing Occupancy

63.4%

Owner

36.6%

Renter

Age of Housing Units

2014 or Later

1.8%

2000 to 2013

12.4%

1980 to 1999

14.9%

1960 to 1979

30.1%

Prior to 1960

27.6%

COUNTY PRIORITIES

- Support efforts to build the I-69 Ohio River bridge.
- Improve internet service in underserved parts of the county.
- Support and complement the Henderson Economic Development agency's efforts in industrial recruitment/expansion and small business development.
- Promote the services and programs at Henderson Community College and Henderson County High School's Career and Technical Education program.
- Maintain and improve infrastructure to support local businesses and industries and improve the quality of life for residents.

Sources

1. United States Census Bureau, 2020 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates

2. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Labor Force Data by County, 2021 Annual Averages

MCLEAN COUNTY STATISTICS

POPULATION¹

2020 Population Change Since 2010

9,152 **-3.98%**

Median Age

43.7

Median Household Income

\$54,181

Percent of Population Below Poverty Line

13.0%

Percent of Population with Disability

21.5%

Limited English Proficiency Population

79

WORKFORCE¹

Total Labor Force

3,991

Labor Force Participation

54.4%

Annual Average
Unemployment Rate²

4.3%

LARGEST INDUSTRIES & EMPLOYMENT¹

| | | |
|---|---------------------------------|---------------|
|  | Manufacturing | 601 employees |
|  | Health Care & Social Assistance | 489 employees |
|  | Retail Trade | 402 employees |
|  | Educational Services | 318 employees |
|  | Construction | 274 employees |

HOUSING¹

Cost Burdened Households

Paying rent

41.6%

With a mortgage

19.7%

Without a mortgage

8.2%

Median Home Value

\$111,800

Households with Broadband Internet Subscription

79.3%

Housing Occupancy

78.3%

Owner

21.7%

Renter

Age of Housing Units

2014 or Later

0.9%

2000 to 2013

10.6%

1980 to 1999

13.1%

1960 to 1979

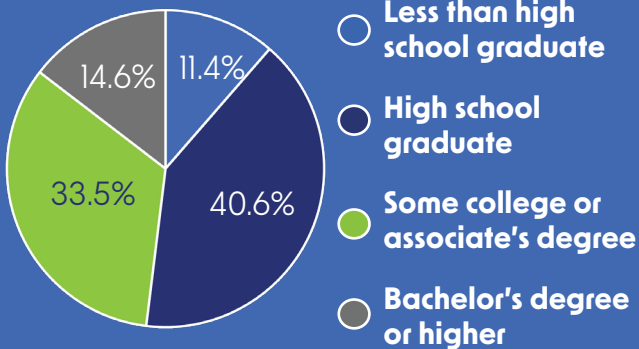
37.2%

Prior to 1960

23.6%

EDUCATION¹

Attainment for Population 25 years and older



COUNTY PRIORITIES

- Complete the reconstruction of the county senior center.
- Seek funding to improve recreational opportunities for residents, especially at Myer Creek Park.
- Encourage new small businesses to open in vacant storefront lots.
- Promote economic development initiatives and site development.
- Analyze county-wide water system to evaluate issues and the need for replacements and improvements.

Sources

1. United States Census Bureau, 2020 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates
2. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Labor Force Data by County, 2021 Annual Averages

OHIO COUNTY STATISTICS

POPULATION¹

2020 Population Change Since 2010
23,772 **-0.29%**

Median Age
40.6

Median Household Income
\$45,773

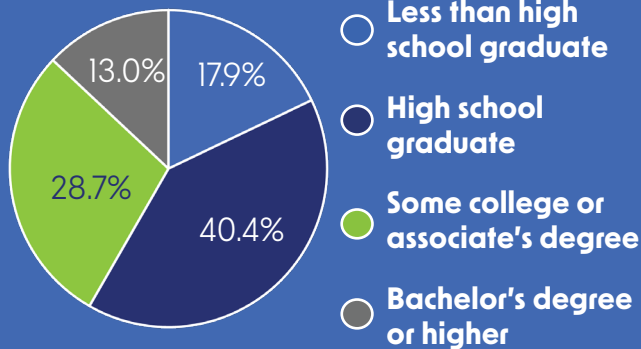
Percent of Population Below Poverty Line
16.2%

Percent of Population with Disability
17.8%

Limited English Proficiency Population
353

EDUCATION¹

Attainment for Population 25 years and older



WORKFORCE¹

Total Labor Force

10,777

Labor Force Participation

57.0%

Annual Average
Unemployment Rate²

5.5%

LARGEST INDUSTRIES & EMPLOYMENT¹

| | | |
|--|---------------------------------|-----------------|
| | Manufacturing | 2,213 employees |
| | Health Care & Social Assistance | 1,199 employees |
| | Retail Trade | 1,086 employees |
| | Educational Services | 961 employees |
| | Construction | 753 employees |

HOUSING¹

Cost Burdened Households

Paying rent
28.6%

With a mortgage

24.5%

Without a mortgage

8.0%

Median Home Value

\$90,400

Households with Broadband Internet Subscription

75.3%

Housing Occupancy

77.8%

Owner

22.2%

Renter

Age of Housing Units

2014 or Later

2.4%

2000 to 2013

18.9%

1980 to 1999

13.1%

1960 to 1979

28.1%

Prior to 1960

19.9%

COUNTY PRIORITIES

- Increase availability of housing.
- Complete efforts to build a regional jail.
- Expand tourism and construct an annex at the Bill Monroe Bluegrass Museum.
- Improve roads.
- Improve parks and outdoor recreation areas, especially through creative funding mechanisms.

Sources

1. United States Census Bureau, 2020 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates

2. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Labor Force Data by County, 2021 Annual Averages

UNION COUNTY STATISTICS

POPULATION¹

2020 Population **13,668** Change Since 2010 **-8.92%**

Median Age **38.0**

Median Household Income **\$49,812**

Percent of Population Below Poverty Line **18.2%**

Percent of Population with Disability **22.7%**

Limited English Proficiency Population **142**

WORKFORCE¹

Total Labor Force

6,642






Labor Force Participation

54.3%

Annual Average Unemployment Rate²

4.4%

LARGEST INDUSTRIES & EMPLOYMENT¹

| | | |
|---|--|-----------------|
|  | Manufacturing | 1,071 employees |
|  | Health Care & Social Assistance | 936 employees |
|  | Retail Trade | 562 employees |
|  | Construction | 491 employees |
|  | Mining, Quarrying & Oil & Gas Extraction | 435 employees |

HOUSING¹

Cost Burdened Households

Paying rent **26.6%**

With a mortgage

11.4%

Without a mortgage

7.8%

Median Home Value

\$90,900

Households with Broadband Internet Subscription

80.5%

Housing Occupancy

71.2%

Owner

28.8%

Renter

Age of Housing Units

2014 or Later

1.1%

2000 to 2013

9.8%

1980 to 1999

16.3%

1960 to 1979

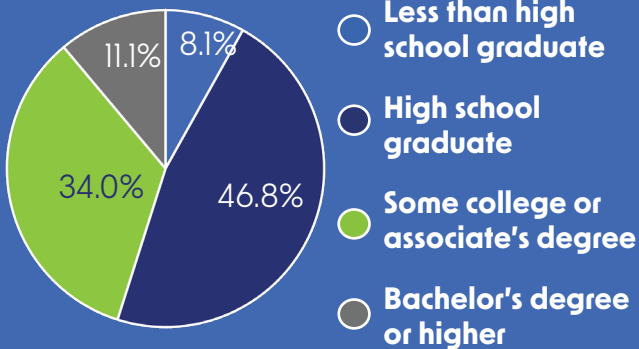
31.1%

Prior to 1960

31.9%

EDUCATION¹

Attainment for Population 25 years and older



COUNTY PRIORITIES

- Work with the State Highway Department to widen US HWY 60 from Henderson Community College to Morganfield.
- Acquire land and develop to build ready status for economic development.
- Acquire land for housing development to generate population growth to coincide with economic development projects.
- Construct a county Emergency Operations Center with potential for future growth.
- Extend broadband service to residents not covered by the current rural broadband project.

Sources

1. United States Census Bureau, 2020 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates
2. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Labor Force Data by County, 2021 Annual Averages

WEBSTER COUNTY STATISTICS

POPULATION¹

2020 Population Change Since 2010

13,017 **-4.43%**

Median Age

40.8

Median Household Income

44,540

Percent of Population Below Poverty Line

20.6%

Percent of Population with Disability

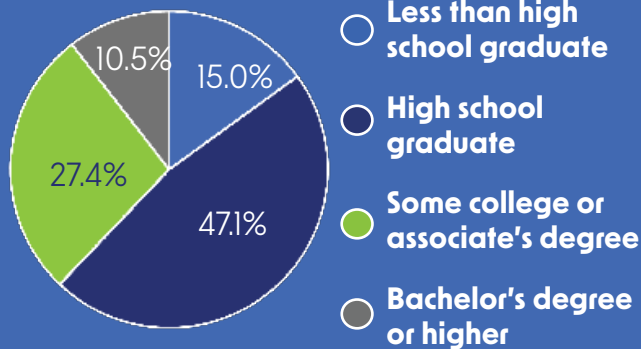
27.5%

Limited English Proficiency Population

234

EDUCATION¹

Attainment for Population 25 years and older



WORKFORCE¹

Total Labor Force

5,338

Labor Force Participation

51.6%

Annual Average
Unemployment Rate²

4.5%

LARGEST INDUSTRIES & EMPLOYMENT¹

| | | |
|--|---------------------------------|-----------------|
| | Manufacturing | 1,404 employees |
| | Health Care & Social Assistance | 632 employees |
| | Retail Trade | 484 employees |
| | Educational Services | 443 employees |
| | Transportation & Warehousing | 431 employees |

HOUSING¹

Cost Burdened Households

Paying rent
29.3%

With a mortgage

27.5%

Without a mortgage

15.2%

Median Home Value

\$76,200

Households with Broadband Internet Subscription

74.2%

Housing Occupancy

72.8%

Owner

27.2%

Renter

Age of Housing Units

2014 or Later

2.3%

2000 to 2013

8.7%

1980 to 1999

14.1%

1960 to 1979

26.6%

Prior to 1960

34.3%

COUNTY PRIORITIES

- Improve broadband access and speeds throughout the county.
- Open Canaan Ridge Park to provide new recreational opportunities to residents and encourage recreation tourism.
- Encourage economic development along the I-69 corridor.
- Expand tourism opportunities.
- Increase availability of housing.

Sources

1. United States Census Bureau, 2020 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates

2. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Labor Force Data by County, 2021 Annual Averages

