



**Development Coordination**  
**Concluding 2023 Annual Report**  
 Department of Community Service and Development  
 City of Wooster

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*2023 Aerial showing the completion of the Wooster Brush & Frito-Lay expansions.*

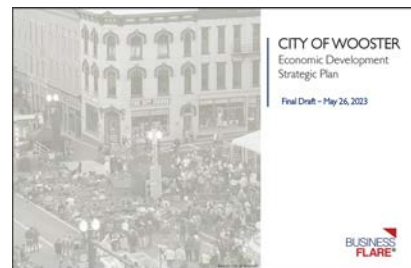
## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### *Creating Opportunities for Prosperity for Wooster Residents, Businesses & Start-Ups in 2023*

**Development** is responsible for supporting **Economic and Community Development** under the direction of the Administration. Development pursues various grants to support City quality-of-life infrastructure projects and housing, provides assistance to businesses with expansion and retention needs, supports major development projects with analysis, and manages local tax incentive programs to encourage reinvestment and basic-sector job creation. Development also performs Project Management for **Wooster Growth**, the City’s community improvement corporation, interfaces with multiple not-for-profit and partner governmental economic development organizations, and offers a direct city resource major development projects.

### *Major Development Highlights*

The ***Economic Development Strategic Plan*** for the City was completed in 2023, outlining a pathway for the community to more intentionally grow its level of service and more comprehensively support economic development. The plan identifies opportunities to expand its program to be more competitive with peer communities and to better coordinate with independent sector partners. The City of Wooster will be launching Working Groups in 2024 to identify new programs and services.



***Daisy Brand Phase III Expansion*** made possible with support JobsOhio and the City of Wooster, allowing for an expanding plant with up to 81 new jobs, for a facility total of 250. **\$142,000,000 new investment, 81 new Jobs with \$4,779,000 payroll.** *City Support: Downstream utility infrastructure investment commitment. JobsOhio is assisting this project through additional grants.*

**Oak Hill TIF Project** This office continues to support the Oak Hill TIF project, which saw the completion of a sanitary sewer lift station and a new roundabout at Oak Hill and Oldman roads, which will be funded with the gain in property tax revenue resulting from improving 91 new lots, approximately 27 of which have been fully-built. The project provides the public with **\$8.3 MM** in new infrastructure funded by private development, while also creating new housing development opportunities in the City.



**Schlabach Homebuilders Project**

Office assisted Schlabach Homebuilders with a 32.24 negotiated annexation with the Wayne Township Trustees. This support enabled the firm to move forward quickly with its planned 71-home single-family subdivision, while securing long-term revenue growth for the City and lowering tax bills for future residents, while ensuring financial well-being for our neighboring township.

**New Funding Secured:**

Ohio is among the Union's largest donor states, meaning approximately for approximately every \$1 paid in federal taxes by Ohio residents and businesses, only about \$0.60 returns. Participating in grant programs is an important avenue to helping our residents maximize their federal tax dollar investment.

**\$1,045,000**  
CHIP GRANT



**\$330,000**  
CHIP GRANT

Development was the lead in an effort to secure a **\$1,045,000 Community Housing Impact and Preservation** with WMHA, which will fund the repair of ~14 homes in Wooster and also ~20 in Wayne County.



The City of Wooster, Wayne County, & City of Orrville CHIP Partnership  
With Wayne Metropolitan Housing Authority

Development secured a **\$144,375** jobs and commerce grant to replace traffic signals at SR/585 and the Rt. 3 northbound ramps. (~13,000 trips daily)

**\$144,375**  
J&C GRANT

Development partnered with Engineering and Admin to secure **\$330,000** ODOT **Transportation Improvement District** funds to support the reconstruction of State Route 585 with turn-lanes in front of the Schaeffler campus. (+7,000 trips daily).



**Ongoing:** Development continues to actively manage a **\$650,000 CDBG grant** to support the expansion of Fire Station 1 and a **\$775,000 Brownfield Remediation Grant** through Wooster Growth to remediate 517 E. Liberty Street.

## Development by the Numbers

### Enterprise Zone

**14** Active EZ Agreements managed through 2023 with an impact of:

**199 / 2,445** jobs created / retained<sup>1</sup>

**Three** EZ agreement actions  
3 Transfers + 1 Followup

For 2023, total 22-Project Portfolio Resulted In:

**\$201,872,289** in new property investment<sup>1</sup>

**\$1,089,307** in new revenues<sup>2</sup>

1. Based on 2022 figures, 2023 actual pending / 2. \$278,026 income tax<sup>1</sup> (This figure excludes payroll from retained jobs. If including all originally committed new jobs, this figure would be \$1,108,239). + \$429,827 created property tax. Note, does not include

### Community Reinvestment Area

**23** Active CRA Agreements managed through 2023 with an impact of:

**100 / 737** jobs created / retained<sup>3</sup>

**Four** CRA agreement action  
3 Transfer, 2 Initiated

For 2023, total 39-Project Portfolio Resulted In:

**\$73,123,291** in new property investment<sup>3</sup>

**\$598,417** in new revenues<sup>3</sup>

3. Based on 2022 figures, 2023 actual pending / 2. \$105,590 income tax<sup>1</sup> + \$429,827 created property tax

### Community Development

**24** Private Business Consultations<sup>4</sup>

**5** Real Estate Site Studies / Reports<sup>5</sup>

**2** Facilitated Real Estate Acquisitions

4. Consultations include meetings, usually several per project, with businesses to assist with information to aid a launch, expansion, or retention effort. Efforts range from general consultation on local ecosystem resources to assistance with fiscal impact analyses to support grant applications to comprehensive expansion proposals.  
5. Most real estate site studies involve assessment

### Managed Reporting for

Local Job Creation Tax Credit Program (L-CTC)  
Two Projects, associated with +139 basic-sector jobs

PY2021 CHIP Program (Countywide Grant)  
Home Repair, Rental Rehab, and Private Rehab grants

CDBG Critical Infrastructure & Allocation Grant  
\$650,000 Fire Station 1, Viola Startzman Clinic  
\$99,285 Salvation Army DC, Viola Startzman Clinic

Tax Incentive Review Council  
As required for EZ, CRA, and TIF programs

Ohio Brownfield Grant  
517 E. Liberty Street Site Remediation

## Wooster Economic Statistics

2023 Available Metrics

**27,232** Residents (55th Largest City in Ohio)<sup>1/1a</sup>

**1,232** establishments JobsOhio (GISplanning)firms<sup>2</sup>

**63.1%** in labor force<sup>1a</sup> (vs. 62.3% Ohio)

**2.9%** unemployment<sup>3</sup> (vs. 3.7% Oh)

**\$66,990** median household income<sup>1a</sup> (vs. \$61,608 Oh)

**13.4%** in poverty<sup>1</sup> (vs. 10.8% Ohio)

**45.3%** Low-to-Moderate Income<sup>4</sup>

**44.5%** Free/Reduced Lunch (WCSD)<sup>5</sup>

**93.75%** high school graduate<sup>2</sup> (vs. 91.96% Ohio)

1. Population uses decennial census. 1a. 2022 American Community Survey estimate is 27,013 (-0.7%, however, margin of error is greater).

2. Figure from gisplanning (JobsOhio sites database platform)

3. 2023 Ohio Labor Market Information System

4. Housing and Urban Development Calculation (2023-adjusted from 2015 American Community Survey)

5. Ohio Department of Education FY2023 Data

## Major Projects and Efforts:

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- Economic Development Strategic Plan
- Launch of Wooster/Sites Service
- Wooster Innovation Park (WIP) Site Authentication officially launched
- Territory Transfer Partnership
- ED Operations Presentations
- Site Suitability Analysis and Coordination with Wayne County Planning
- Conformity Analysis
- North Street Parking Lot Site Acquisitions
- City Hall Real Estate Acquisition
- Economic Development Fund Coordination with independent sector partners
- PY2023 CHIP Grant Application and coordinating regional inter-government partnerships (\$1,045,000 award for 36 homes)
- Management of PY2022 CDBG Grant for Fire Station 1 expansion (\$627,500) and Viola Startzman (\$22,500).
- NEFCO CEDs Committee
- Welch Packaging Wooster Expansion
- Research for 2024 City Comprehensive Plan
- TID Application for SR 585 reconstruction
- ODOT J&C Grant for SR 585 signal systems
- Fair Housing Coordination / Contract Renewal
- Supported RFIs with WEDC on Wooster Sites
- Managing annexation with Wayne Township and 71-home Woodcrest subdivision.
- Demolition and remediation at 517 E. Liberty
- TWG 41-unit fiscal impact analysis assistance
- Changing Housing Dynamics Report
- Continued Business Outreach, Consultation, and Project Management
- Tax Increment Financing Management
- Management of Enterprise Zone Program
  - 14 active projects, 8 graduated
  - \$201 MM invested on all 22 EZ projects
  - 2,447 jobs retained / created (active)
  - \$686,611 property taxes foregone (act.)
  - \$258,905 property taxes paid (active)
  - \$811,876 paid on all 22 EZ projects.
- Management of Community Reinvestment Area Program (4th largest in Ohio)
  - 23 active projects, 16 graduated
  - \$73 MM invested
  - 739 jobs retained, 107 created (active)
  - \$296 K property taxes foregone (active)
  - \$238 K paid on all 22 EZ projects.
- Coordination on revenue sharing between partner school districts and townships

## 2023 Recognition:

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**#1 McSA in Ohio**  
**#17 Wooster McSA in United States**



**#4 (tie) McSA in Ohio**  
**#10 Wooster McSA in United States**

## The Year Ahead

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- Economic Development Strategic Plan Working Groups
  - Wooster Innovation Park Development Plan
    - 2024 CDBG Grant Pursuits
  - Creating New Tools for Local Entrepreneurship
    - Analysis of Fair Housing Impediments
    - 517 E. Liberty Street Remediation Project
- Continued Business Outreach, Consultation, and Project Management

## ***DIVISION GOALS AND OBJECTIVES***

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### **2023 Division Goals and Objectives**

- **Building Out A Revised Economic Development Tool-kit with EDSP Working Groups:** Following our EDSP, the Office of Economic Development is working with partnering agencies to establish working groups to evaluate **seven** key strategy areas:
  - Business Retention and Expansion
  - Market Position and Place Brand
  - Entrepreneurship and Creative Industries
  - Workforce Development and Talent
  - Asset Management
  - Regulation and Efficiency
  - Business Attraction

Each working group will provide direction on exploring policies and opportunities to enhance the City's strength in serving each category. Specific goals are to refine existing programs to be more user-friendly, establish new value-added services to support the community, and prioritize limited resources. Working groups are stakeholders from partnering entities.

- **Wooster Innovation Park:** The Office continues to support business inquiries and site visits to the Wooster Innovation Park. Ongoing work needed includes wetlands delineation for the 56-acre *West* site. Refreshed media and utility metrics are also needed as the overall park continues to build-out. Privately-owned sites are also marketed. Notably, the Wooster Innovation Project is reserved for industrial projects that cannot feasibly be accommodated on another site within the City. Proposals in the past have been declined and instead referred to other private property listings, where they successfully built.
- **Grant procurement and management:** This Office will continue to manage its portfolio of grants with the Department of Development (CDBG, CHIP, Brownfield) and pursue competitive grants as opportunities become available. Separately, this Office coordinates with the Ohio Department of Transportation on funding opportunities to support economic development projects (TID, J&C, TAP). Project management, often involving the procurement of contracts, tracking, reporting, and monitoring are required for all active grants.
- **Continue to Identify and Pursue Development Opportunities with Independent Sector and Governmental Partners.** This Office partners with other agencies and entities in identifying possibilities for future development, both in terms of responding to inquiries, and in preparing for the future.