



# CUYAHOGA COUNTY FIVE- YEAR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN

2021-2025

June 1, 2021

Armond Budish, County Executive  
Cuyahoga County Economic Development Commission  
Department of Development  
Cuyahoga County Council

## **Economic Development Commission Members**

### **Armond Budish**

Chair

Cuyahoga County Executive

### **Mayor Frank G. Jackson**

City of Cleveland (represented by Edward Rybka, Chief of Regional Development, and by David Ebersole, Director of Economic Development)

### **Jack Schron**

Vice - Chair

County Councilman, Chair of Economic Development Committee

### **Daniel O'Malley**

Executive Secretary, North Shore Federation of Labor AFL-CIO

### **William Friedman**

President and CEO, Cleveland Port Authority

### **Brian Hall**

Executive Director, Commission on Economic Inclusion

### **Baiju Shah**

President and CEO, Greater Cleveland Partnership

### **Mayor Katie Gallagher**

City of Brooklyn, Mayors and Managers

### **Marc Byrnes**

Chairman, Oswald Companies

### *Development Staff*

### **Paul Herdeg**

Interim Chief Economic Development Officer

## Introduction: This update of the Five Year Economic Development Plan is based on Cuyahoga County's 2020 COVID-19 Recovery Plan

As part of Cuyahoga County's overall Five Year Economic Development Plan for 2020-2024, the Cuyahoga County Department of Development recommended, and County Council approved, a focused, shorter term, COVID-19 recovery plan. One year later, with many offices just starting to pivot from largely remote work back to in person work, and with our hospitality sector still struggling with weak demand, while also facing extraordinary difficulty rebuilding its work force, we are not yet past the short term impact. We can, however, see signs of hope as several sectors are recovering more quickly, subject to short term supply chain and logistics disruptions.

## COVID-19 Recovery Plan Strategies

**RESTORE CUYAHOGA: The One-Year Immediate Focus**

- Continue Investment in Support of Small and Minority Businesses and Residents
- Invest in and Expand Innovation
- Accelerate and Scale Existing Workforce Initiatives – Reduce Unemployment

**BUILD CUYAHOGA: Continuation and Growth of Initiatives**

- Market the County Locally and Nationally

**LONG TERM RECOVERY: Sustaining Growth**

- Adjust the Five Year Economic Development Plan

## Outcomes of Cuyahoga County's COVID-19 Recovery Plan

**Small Business:** Extraordinary efforts by state, county, and municipal governments have directed short term resources to small and medium sized businesses, and to residents, for basic survival. Cuyahoga County worked with its network of small business support organizations to grant \$8.68 million of federal CARES Act funds to 1,519 businesses, with 59% of the assisted businesses minority owned. Cuyahoga County has also provided nearly \$20 million of federal funds for emergency rental assistance payments countywide, with another \$10 million set for County Council authorization. Rental assistance is paid to landlords – many of them small businesses.

**Innovation:** Cuyahoga County's major economic development actors completed their work on the Cleveland Innovation Project, with specific targets set for 2030. This project is expected to produce 20,000 additional tech-led innovation jobs, with 25% of additional tech-led innovation jobs held by Black or Latinx persons. Additional expected outcomes include 100% household broadband connectivity by 2022, 20,000 additional digital and STEM graduates with 25% being Black or Latinx, and \$4 billion total invested capital in tech-led companies, with 25% of tech-led companies receiving new investment capital having Black or Latinx executives and 50% having women executives.

**Workforce:** With a "surge" of state resources for displaced worker training in late 2020, branded as "Ohio to Work," supplemented by a modest amount of CARES Act funding, the Cuyahoga County workforce system stepped up its provision of re-training for in demand jobs. To date, Ohio to Work has served 10,226 Cuyahoga County job seekers, with 1,139 job placements and 264 job seekers enrolled in reskilling.

Marketing of Cuyahoga County is underway, with special emphasis on the value of our water resources. There is an additional focus on aligning the talent attraction and talent retention work of organizations active in this field. Preliminary data from LinkedIn showed that greater Cleveland compared favorably to other large cities in population change during COVID. Specifically, from April 2020 through February 2021, Cleveland showed a 6% growth in LinkedIn members physically located in greater Cleveland, which ranked 5<sup>th</sup> out of 38 major metro areas.

## Significant 2021 Adjustments to Five Year Economic Development Plan

Water Resources: Promotion of Cuyahoga County’s extensive fresh water resources, through the Cleveland Water Alliance, will continue to be a central focus of business attraction efforts.

Microgrids: Using its legal power to establish a public utility, Cuyahoga County will expand the planned downtown Cleveland Microgrid to multiple electricity supply districts located in key business attraction and retention areas of the county. Both reliability of power supply and blending in of sustainably generated power will make these microgrid districts attractive.

Lake Front Access: Cuyahoga County’s approach to increased public access to the Lake Erie shoreline, extending its support for the City of Euclid’s public access, will become part of our strategy to leverage natural and cultural assets to attract and retain residents and businesses.

Major Cultural Assets: The importance of supporting Cuyahoga County’s major cultural assets, including not only traditional arts organizations but also its professional sports teams, is noted.

Equity Commitment: Throughout the Economic Development plan, Cuyahoga County’s commitment to acting to overcome the impacts of systemic racial discrimination is prominent. For example, assistance to small businesses must include a focus on the capital needs of minority business owners whose personal wealth is often less than majority business owners.

Equity Zones: As part of its broad commitment to advance equity, Cuyahoga County is adopting an innovative approach to targeting a surge of public resources based on alleviating the impacts of historical racial discrimination – as evidenced by mid 20<sup>th</sup> century federal “redlining” maps.

Closing the Digital Divide: Extending affordable broadband service to every Cuyahoga County household is an essential part of Cuyahoga County’s equity and innovation strategies.

Innovation: Through JumpStart’s access to the State of Ohio’s Third Frontier program, local funding for tech startups is leveraged more than five to one. This Economic Development Plan update notes that resources to allow and encourage startups to grow in Cuyahoga County are essential to realize the full potential of innovation to create new jobs.

Use of American Rescue Plan funds: Unlike the CARES Act, the American Rescue Plan provides funds that can be spent over a five year period, matching the period of the Economic Development Plan. These funds will be used for transformative projects with lasting impact.

## 2021-2025 Five Year Economic Development Plan – Primary Objectives

Cuyahoga County's 2021-2025 Economic Development Plan is built on three primary objectives, each with corresponding Goals, Strategies, and Activities:

1. Re-position and enhance the county brand economically, which will attract capital investment and attract new businesses.
2. Stabilize and seek to increase the county's population with emphasis on attracting and retaining talent needed for business attraction and growth .
3. Advance equity and inclusion, by promoting equity in the allocation of capital, directing supportive services to minority and women owned businesses, and achieving inclusive jobs growth through improving skills and access to jobs.

## Metrics

Cuyahoga County's economic development activities will lead to measurable outcomes, linked to its primary objectives, in the following areas:

1. Opportunity Index: A qualitative measure that reflects a variety of factors impacting the opportunities our residents have to achieve economic success.
2. Entrepreneurship
3. Business Attraction
4. Existing Business Growth
5. Workforce Development
6. Economic Inclusion
7. Population

## Goal 1: Re-establish Cuyahoga County as a national economic hub

Sixty years ago, Cleveland reached its peak population, and was widely regarded as one of the United States' major industrial centers, centered on its heavy manufacturing. Our aspirational goal is to emerge as the Making and Manufacturing Economic Capital of the United States (M<sup>2</sup>EC). While industry has shifted, many of the advantages that made Greater Cleveland an attractive site to locate manufacturing plants, continue to offer an ideal setting for advanced manufacturing and other new economic endeavors. Greater Cleveland already possesses many assets. These assets include higher-education and medical institutions; a track record of supporting innovation, advanced manufacturing; ample supplies of fresh water; a vibrant interstate and international maritime trade industry, and nationally-recognized arts and culture. Building on these strengths, Cuyahoga County will convene and, with our partners, facilitate regional efforts to return Greater Cleveland to a more prominent position in the national economy.

### Strategy 1.1: Facilitate the creation of a workforce that is a competitive advantage for Northeast Ohio.

**Activity 1.1.1: Support business growth and profitability through a workforce pipeline that delivers a sufficient and steady supply of qualified candidates at all skill levels to keep jobs filled.**

Workforce Connect: Provide a shared systems-level focus on eliminating the demand-supply gap for in-demand jobs now and in the future in a sustainable way. Cuyahoga County Government will utilize a variety of approaches, including leveraging intermediary, provider, and sector partnerships, to achieve specific targets and systems-level strategies; access reliable & dynamic data; and create results at scale and accountability for eliminating the demand-supply gap for in-demand jobs in each sector.

The Sector Partnerships Initiative will continue to focus on talent needs of Manufacturing, Health Care, and Information Technology.

**Activity 1.1.2: Assist residents with employment barriers that keep them outside the pipeline to attain employment that is career and wage pathway focused.**

Cuyahoga County Government, through its Propel Cuyahoga initiative, will utilize a variety of approaches to redefine workforce system “success” as a career pathway leading to a family sustaining wage and employment benefits without public support. The County will utilize existing career pathways and establish new pathways in tandem with business leaders, service providers, labor unions, and educational institutions to train workers for in-demand jobs in each sector as part of a sector partnership approach (above). The Skill-Up program will be expanded to include additional services to private sector employers.

Cuyahoga County Government will support existing efforts and create new opportunities to help job seekers establish career plans that integrate support, readiness, education, employment, career advancement, and entrepreneurship services. Job quality will be a focused priority of these activities to assist businesses and service providers with opportunities for career pathways, advancement, retention and mobility.

Cuyahoga County Government will support existing workforce development programs to promote rehabilitation and social reintegration of the re-entry population and will encourage private-sector employers to remove bright-line barriers to employment for job-seekers with criminal records.

Cuyahoga County Government will support and encourage the region's youth (future workers and future entrepreneurs in Pre-K – higher ed ) to enroll in and complete academic programs to improve long-term career prospects (i.e. Technical Education, Apprenticeships, Internships, and other programs that directly connect post-secondary coursework to careers).

**Activity 1.1.3: Build alignment among public, private and philanthropic funders to invest our workforce dollars in ways that advance shared goals and priorities, and measure success by shared outcomes and impact.**

Through a Workforce Funders Group, Cuyahoga County is participating in creating shared systems-level goals and priorities that drive better coordination and guide all local and regional workforce planning and funding decisions. Northeast Ohio has been moving toward a more coordinated systems approach for many years directed at sector partnerships, career pathways, and other opportunities for closer alignment between workforce, economic development, education and human services strategies. Consensus has been achieved among Cuyahoga County's public, nonprofit, and private sectors to create a more comprehensive workforce system. This effort is ongoing and will lead to the creation of sector intermediaries in manufacturing, health care, and Information Technology. Cuyahoga County Government will build on the work that has been done separately in our community, to better integrate and align activities for more effective outcomes.

**Activity 1.1.4: Focus workforce innovation and effort on the hospitality sector, as a key component of our economy. Partner with Destination Cleveland and its partner network to collaboratively research training needs, promote career opportunities, and explore further job training coordination between Cuyahoga Community College and tourism related businesses.**

While the County's travel and tourism industry grows, so do jobs in this sector. Visitor volume in Cuyahoga County has outpaced the U.S. domestic travel growth rate since 2012, rising by 16.4% in this time span. Between 2015 and 2016, employment in the leisure and hospitality employment sector increased by 10%, the highest employment growth rate of any sector in Cleveland with 5,000 new jobs since 2011. This industry supported 8.1% of Cuyahoga County jobs in 2015 and generated more than \$1 billion in sales tax revenue. The U.S. Travel Association maintains that the tourism industry provides a pathway into the workforce for young adults and persons without higher education. Tourism industry employees have an opportunity to start at the bottom and build a career.

## Strategy 1.2: Support manufacturing, including international exports, and promote innovation among small and medium manufacturers

Activity 1.2.1: Cuyahoga County will recognize and support its legacy industries, including steel, automotive, and machine tools, as well as the growth of newer industries. Among significant driver industries of Cuyahoga County are existing businesses that export products/services. Some of these are manufacturers, whose export-driven activities bring in revenues that multiply the manufacturing's impact on the economy. Growth in advanced manufacturing itself drives higher than average pay because use of the more advanced and technical machines and processes requires a higher-skilled workforce.

Activity 1.2.2: Through economic development partners like MAGNET, and maker spaces like ThinkBox, Cuyahoga County will work to strengthen, grow, and accelerate advanced manufacturing through innovation and advanced technologies like 3D printing and digital manufacturing, while simultaneously ensuring there is a vital pipeline of trained workers to fuel that growth. Cuyahoga County supports an effort to become a center of innovation for the Internet of Things.

Activity 1.2.3: Support the Port of Cleveland's "Cleveland to Europe Express" which offers regional manufacturers reliable and local means to export products to international markets. Quicker delivery timelines have and will continue to increase global competitiveness of the region.

Activity 1.2.4: Work with the Port to develop a more holistic export strategy including goods, services, and tourism.

## Strategy 1.3: Create an innovation / entrepreneurship continuum supported by place based strategies including electric supply Microgrids

Supporting the innovation economy in Cuyahoga County and Northeast Ohio will continue to be a key economic priority. The County will continue to support Team NEO's efforts in advancing innovation clusters. This effort is a critical component of positioning regional economic growth with respect to the industries of the future.

Activity 1.3.1: Form partnerships with public and private entities to ensure funding for startup and early stage businesses creating jobs of the future in, for example, the technology and health care sectors. Strive to include minority entrepreneurs and organizations in these partnerships and funding streams.

Activity 1.3.2: Create opportunities for both young people and adults in all neighborhoods and communities to begin to transform business ideas into operational plans. Focus on driving innovation as a cultural aspiration to under-served parts of the County. Examples are the partnership with the County Libraries to open Innovation Centers at key locations and the Cleveland Innovation Project's explicit focus on engaging minority and female youth in STEM career preparation.

Activity 1.3.3: Provide and leverage funding for innovative small businesses, both high-tech and conventional, to start and grow, particularly in neighborhoods. Support technology transfer from NASA Glenn Research Center, in partnership with the Ohio Aerospace Institute and others. Support the creation of Innovation Hubs in strategic locations including the Aerozone, Downtown, the Health Tech Corridor, and in historically underserved neighborhoods and communities, leveraging NELA park in East Cleveland.

Activity 1.3.5: Build upon existing assets, such as development of the world's first freshwater wind farm on Lake Erie and our existing supply chain network to foster manufacturing of component parts for the wind and solar industries.

Activity 1.3.6: Utilize existing assets, including Greater Cleveland's strong health technology innovation system, and the major hospital systems, to attract health care businesses to the region.

Activity 1.3.7: Develop Microgrid districts in multiple locations across the county. Power supply reliability and local generation of sustainable power will attract and retain business in these areas.

Activity 1.3.8: Leverage JumpStart's access to Ohio Third Frontier funding to magnify the impact of locally generated funding for support of startup and early stage technology innovation firms. As these firms mature, provide resources to encourage and support their growth within Cuyahoga County.

## Strategy 1.4: Carry out key County activities to re-establish standing as a regional and national economic hub

Activity 1.4.1: Allocate Cuyahoga County's American Rescue Plan funding, in collaboration with municipal partners whenever possible, to support transformative activities and projects with lasting impact.

Activity 1.4.2: Partner with the County's education stakeholders to improve the County's educational attainment and competitive position. This includes Pre-Cle, K-12 education providers, Say Yes, and Tri C.

Activity 1.4.3: Promote key regional business assets, including NASA Glenn Research Center, JumpStart, Nottingham Spirk, and our major hospital systems, to drive innovation and development.

Activity 1.4.4: With Team NEO, Greater Cleveland Partnership, the Cleveland Water Alliance, Destination Cleveland, and other key partners, leverage brand and research insights to establish a regional, national, and, as appropriate, global branding campaign for the region, focused on top economic growth clusters, which may include industries related to water/maritime, advanced manufacturing, health care / medical technology, financial technology, and arts / entertainment.

Activity 1.4.5: Partner with early-stage business assistance and funding organizations such as JumpStart to foster new industries, particularly where Cuyahoga County has a competitive advantage. Examples include industries related to water, advanced manufacturing and health care.

Activity 1.4.6: Partner with Cuyahoga County communities, the Greater Cleveland Partnership, and Team NEO and the County Land Bank to refine and make more useful a current inventory of developable sites and buildings available for re-use, in each Cuyahoga County community.

Activity 1.4.7: Increase the sources and amounts of public and private sector investment capital, including capital to make brownfield sites economically viable, and leveraging the Opportunity Zone tax incentive.

Activity 1.4.9: Extend affordable access to broadband to every county resident, as a path to digital technology literacy and innovation, for full workforce participation, and to enhance the education system.

Activity 1.4.11: Collaborate with JumpStart, and with the Aerozone Alliance and its member municipalities and organizations to facilitate technology transfer and business creation that maximizes the advantage of proximity to NASA-Glenn Research Center, Cleveland Hopkins Airport, and other airports in the County.

## Goal 2: Foster positive job and population growth & opportunity

### Strategy 2.1: Attract and retain residents with in demand skills

Activity 2.1.1: Actively promote Greater Cleveland as an immigrant friendly community. Partner with Global Cleveland to foster an environment that supports immigrants' effective immersion into the Greater Cleveland community.

Activity 2.1.2: Promote the County's post-secondary education system, which includes nationally ranked private universities, to foreign students. Advocate for national policy changes to allow foreign graduates to remain in Greater Cleveland as skilled workers contributing to our talent pool.

Activity 2.1.3: Develop a strategy to engage regional college students to stay in Greater Cleveland – connect them with projected job openings.

Activity 2.14: Utilize resources including Destination Cleveland's brand assets and insights to market the entire County as an attractive living and working environment for millennials.

### Strategy 2.2: Improve transportation, labor mobility, and job access

Activity 2.2.1: Partner with the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority, the Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency, the Fund for our Economic Future, and the City of Cleveland to establish an integrated transportation and economic development plan for the County and to advocate for transportation improvement, growth, diversification, and connectivity. Implement innovative solutions to the "First Mile" and "Last Mile" problems that make job access via public transit difficult and time consuming for workers.

Activity 2.2.2: Implement Vibrant NEO 2040's recommendation to increase affordable public and other transportation options better connecting communities to workplaces, particularly in Cuyahoga County's suburbs. Align this work with ongoing research into Job Hubs as a tool for focusing reinvestment in the urban core and appropriate transportation infrastructure.

### Strategy 2.3: Improve business retention and expansion

Activity 2.3.1: Assist Cuyahoga County's 59 member communities to identify and market their key real estate sites to attract national and regional businesses. Support existing systems such as Ohio One while advocating for regional and statewide site promotion efforts to include Cuyahoga County sites. Work to secure funding for environmental assessments and environmental remediation of sites that are well positioned to attract new business once remediated.

Activity 2.3.2: In a collaborative marketing effort, promote Cuyahoga County's assets including affordable housing, quality of life, and skilled workforce, to attract both regional and national business relocations.

Activity 2.3.3: Continue partnerships with Ohio Means Jobs, the Greater Cleveland Partnership, Team NEO, and municipal economic development staff, to coordinate targeted, strategic business-calling programs among these regional actors, municipalities, and the County's Skill-Up business concierge service, to accelerate business growth in Cuyahoga County.

## Strategy 2.4: Emphasize place-based development

Economic development and community development are inextricably linked. Place-based development reduces the public expense of economic development by capitalizing on the region's existing human capital, infrastructure, community and neighborhood assets, institutional and industrial strengths, and cultural resources that are already in place.

Cuyahoga County boasts assets that would be the envy of other regions: cultural institutions that are unmatched, access to abundant fresh water and existing infrastructure (from roadways and an international port to information superhighways) with capacity to accommodate growth.

Activity 2.4.1: Maintain and continue to enhance Cuyahoga County's high quality natural and cultural assets, including its parks, its nationally renowned arts organizations, and its major professional sports teams.

Activity 2.4.2: Expand and leverage the economic value of public access to the Lake Erie waterfront through innovative approaches such as the City of Euclid's development of a publicly accessible lakefront promenade in conjunction with long term publicly financed shoreline erosion control measures.

Activity 2.4.3: Continue to engage with the County Planning Commission to update priority areas for Place Based Economic Development, and leverage unique municipal assets to resource place based economic development projects which have potential for positive economic development impact on a regional scale. As part of this work recommend needed zoning changes to facilitate appropriate development projects.

## Strategy 2.5: Address Climate Change through a Climate Action Plan

Climate Change is a reality that Cuyahoga County will address through a Climate Action Plan. Cuyahoga County's Climate Action Plan addresses these areas:

- **Energy:** 100% Renewable Energy by 2050.
- **Transportation:** Cleaner Fuel Vehicles. More Public Transit, Biking, and Walking
- **Ecosystems:** Understand What's Coming. Expand and Protect What's Here.
- **Health:** Extreme Weather. Extreme Heat. New Diseases. New Stresses. Be Prepared and Ready.
- **Land Use:** Develop Wisely. More Trees and Greenspace.

Activity 2.5.1: Invest \$5 million to plant thousands of trees across the region by 2024

Activity 2.5.2: Organize and fund a Green Bank to lend money and invest in clean energy projects, such as commercial and residential solar panels.

Activity 2.5.3: Build more pedestrian bike paths and connect existing networks of bike paths.

Activity 2.5.4: Provide economic development incentives such as below-market-rate financing to companies moving to or expanding within walking distance of transit routes and/or within transit connected job hubs.

Activity 2.5.5: Create a robust electric vehicle charging station infrastructure.

Activity 2.5.6: Work with the Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency to better time traffic signals, reducing idling and speeding up commutes.

Activity 2.5.7: Add rooftop solar panels to multiple County owned buildings and make this technology available to business at the same affordable pricing.

## Goal 3: Embrace equity as a driver of countywide economic growth

### Strategy 3.1: Implement Economic Development Equity Initiatives

Cuyahoga County has activated its Equity Commission in conjunction with its Citizens Advisory Council on Equity. Initial countywide work in 2020 set the stage for Cuyahoga County's ongoing commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion as an employer, and also through all of its programs, services, and activities. Economic Development equity initiatives include:

Activity 3.1.1: Support implementation of the Cleveland Innovation Project, which emphasizes inclusion and resource access to minority tech-based businesses and talent.

Activity 3.1.2: Small business support will include new funding to small business support partners for their focused support to minority and women-owned businesses.

Activity 3.1.3: Funds will be allocated for working capital loans to minority-owned businesses.

Activity 3.1.4: Cuyahoga County will seek to negotiate affirmative minority hiring and subcontracting efforts in its direct economic development lending programs.

Activity 3.1.5: Job Hubs with access for residents of distressed communities will be supported as preferred locations for new business attraction and business

Activity 3.1.6: Establish Equity Zones, in communities where historic racial discrimination (“redlining”) still causes lasting negative economic impacts, and direct a “surge” of public sector resources to support economic opportunities for residents and businesses in these Equity Zones.

### Strategy 3.2: Implement the Housing Policy through the Housing Program

Activity 3.2.1 Based on housing policy development work led by the County Executive and Deputy Director of Development for Housing, in collaboration with County Council, Cuyahoga County will lead coordinated efforts to improve housing conditions in six key areas:

- Access to Capital
- Tax Collection and Delinquency
- Housing Insecurity
- Special Populations
- Fair Housing
- Confidence in the Housing Market

Activity 3.2.2. Cuyahoga County will operate the Cuyahoga County Housing Program to provide resources for implementation of Housing Plan components, specifically, Access to Capital and Confidence in the Housing Market. The Program includes the Cuyahoga County Land Reutilization Corporation as a partner and runs from 2020 – 2025. Thirty million dollars allocated to the Housing Program over six years focuses on expanding and creating programming for home repair, low dollar mortgages, and other activities to increase property values throughout the County.

## Appendix 1: Current County Economic Development programs and tools / Portfolio of financial assistance products and programs

### Innovation and Entrepreneurship

Innovation is the life blood of any healthy economy. The ability to create better or more effective products, processes, services, technologies, or ideas that are accepted by markets, governments, and society is a direct indicator of an economy's ability to add value and grow. It is vital for the County to facilitate and accelerate innovation development, technology transfer and commercialization activity in order to create an environment conducive for economic growth. Channeling capital to promising companies with a pipeline of inventive products and services, the County adds critical funding to the creative mixture of concepts, employees and management.

Supporting entrepreneurship not only helps drive economic growth, but it is also an effective way to generate economic opportunity for low-income individuals or groups that have traditionally been economically isolated. Entrepreneurial development creates opportunities to achieve economic self-sufficiency, create wealth, and transform underserved neighborhoods.

The County supports key aspects of innovation and start-up business development designed to cultivate entrepreneurs and innovation and to nourish early stage companies along the capital formation continuum and product life-cycle.

**Innovation Centers:** All residents can access resources to develop their business concepts and early commercialization efforts, including collaboration with mentors, at libraries.

**Microenterprise Loan Program:** Through nonprofit partner, Economic & Community Development Council (ECDI), identifies and finances very small startup businesses not yet ready to apply for funding from traditional lenders.

**Pre-Seed for Innovation Ventures Fund:** Through nonprofit partner, JumpStart, Inc., pre-seed growth loans to early-stage companies.

**Early Stage Fund:** Through nonprofit partner, JumpStart, Inc., funds Series A-Venture capital to next-stage companies seeking new equity financing.

**Aerozone/SBIR:** Creating a technology transfer program to support and encourage innovative startup businesses using NASA technology with federal support, to locate and grow in Cuyahoga County.

## Real Estate Finance

Firms that are growing need to modernize and expand. Having development properties ready to meet the expansion and relocation plans of companies is essential. When companies are growing and require more and better space, they seek properties that can be available in a timely manner. Many sites often are more complex, uncompetitive and costly by virtue of environmental issues, abandonment, and/or functional obsolescence. Vacant buildings are often hampered by contamination issues that require remediation or demolition posing significant cost disadvantages.

Our legacy industries have left blighted buildings and contaminated land in the core city and many inner-ring suburbs. The problem of these older commercial and industrial properties is often destructive to the neighborhoods and contributes to continued disinvestment. Growing businesses, unfortunately, often lack the capital and expertise necessary to address these complicated redevelopment opportunities.

The key to reutilizing and redeveloping these properties and land is to provide applicable and relevant subsidy tools that provide faster and clearer solutions and pathways for the companies to address them. The County is actively engaged with companies seeking to locate, expand, or modernize in areas that are served by existing infrastructure and transportation networks, but suffer from the above-described urban disinvestment. As such, the clean-up of land for shovel-ready redevelopment or rapid response for modernization of existing properties is a key piece in the County's place-based economic development plan. The County has devised a strategy to address the property needs for successful companies already in Cuyahoga County, and to help them grow in place.

**USEPA Brownfield Revolving Loan Fund:** Loan funding for clean-up and redevelopment of brownfield sites and properties.

**Redevelopment and Modernization Loans:** Loan financing for significantly blighted and/or underutilized structures and their property improvements, including remediation and modernization for identified end users.

**Place-Based/Mixed-Use Development Loans:** Loans targeted toward strategic, mixed-use and high density (mixture of residential, office, retail, and/or commercial uses) redevelopment projects concentrated in the urban core; downtown, Cleveland's neighborhoods, or inner-ring suburbs.

## Business Growth and Attraction

Both business expansion and attraction are critical sources of job creation and economic growth. Creating a globally competitive economic environment for businesses to grow and thrive requires a development approach that attracts entrepreneurs, businesses, professionals, and investment capital to locate, expand, and remain in Cuyahoga County. Creating access to flexible, dynamic sources of capital that address the growth needs of businesses will stimulate private investment and improve the economic landscape.

Supporting this growth not only helps drive economic development but is also an effective way to generate economic opportunity for minority & female-owned businesses low & moderate-income individuals or groups that have traditionally been economically isolated. Entrepreneurial development creates opportunities to achieve economic self-sufficiency, create wealth, and transform underserved neighborhoods.

**Business Growth and Attraction Loans:** Economic development gap-financing business loans for new construction, physical expansions, real estate acquisition, machinery and equipment and other growth and relocation project needs.

**Large Scale Attraction:** Gap-financing loans and forgivable loan incentives for large-scale & special attraction business projects.

**Grow Cuyahoga County Fund:** Through nonprofit partner, National Development Council (NDC), this program provides direct SBA-backed loans (with County funded gap fillers) for small to medium-sized established businesses.

**Capital Access Fund:** Through a nonprofit partner, the Urban League of Greater Cleveland, this program provides low-cost loans and technical pre- & post-loan counseling for minority-owned small businesses.

**Accelerated Growth Loan Program:** With nonprofit partner, Growth Opportunity Partners, loan financing for the growth of existing small, female & minority-owned businesses.

**SBA-Municipal-County Small Business Initiative:** Through the cities of Cleveland, Cleveland Heights, Fairview Park, Lakewood, Maple Heights, and Shaker Heights, this program provides bank-financed, SBA-backed loans (with Municipal-County funded equity fillers) for small to medium-sized businesses located within these six municipalities.

**Small Business Growth Programs:** Lending partnerships increasing small business access to traditional lending markets, including SBA-Municipal Matching Grants, the Grow Cuyahoga Fund, and the Capital Access Fund.

**Early Stage Loan Program:** With nonprofit partner, Growth Opportunity Partners, loan financing for the growth of existing small, female and minority-owned businesses.

**Actaris Impact Fund & Opportunity Zone Fund:** Cuyahoga County, Arctaris Impact investors, and other philanthropic and civic investors have launched a program to invest in companies and projects within the County's Opportunity Zones.

## Quality of Place Development

Economic Development is inextricably linked to community development. Place-based development reduces the public expense of economic development by capitalizing on region's human capital, infrastructure, community and neighborhood assets, institutional and industrial strengths, and cultural resources that are already in place.

County programs and initiatives are a diverse portfolio of community development and housing assistance offerings that work together to create strong, vibrant communities in which people want to live and work. Below is a listing of our current programs in these areas.

**Municipal Grant Program:** Competitive program that awards grants up to \$150,000 to municipal governments for projects that improve their community.

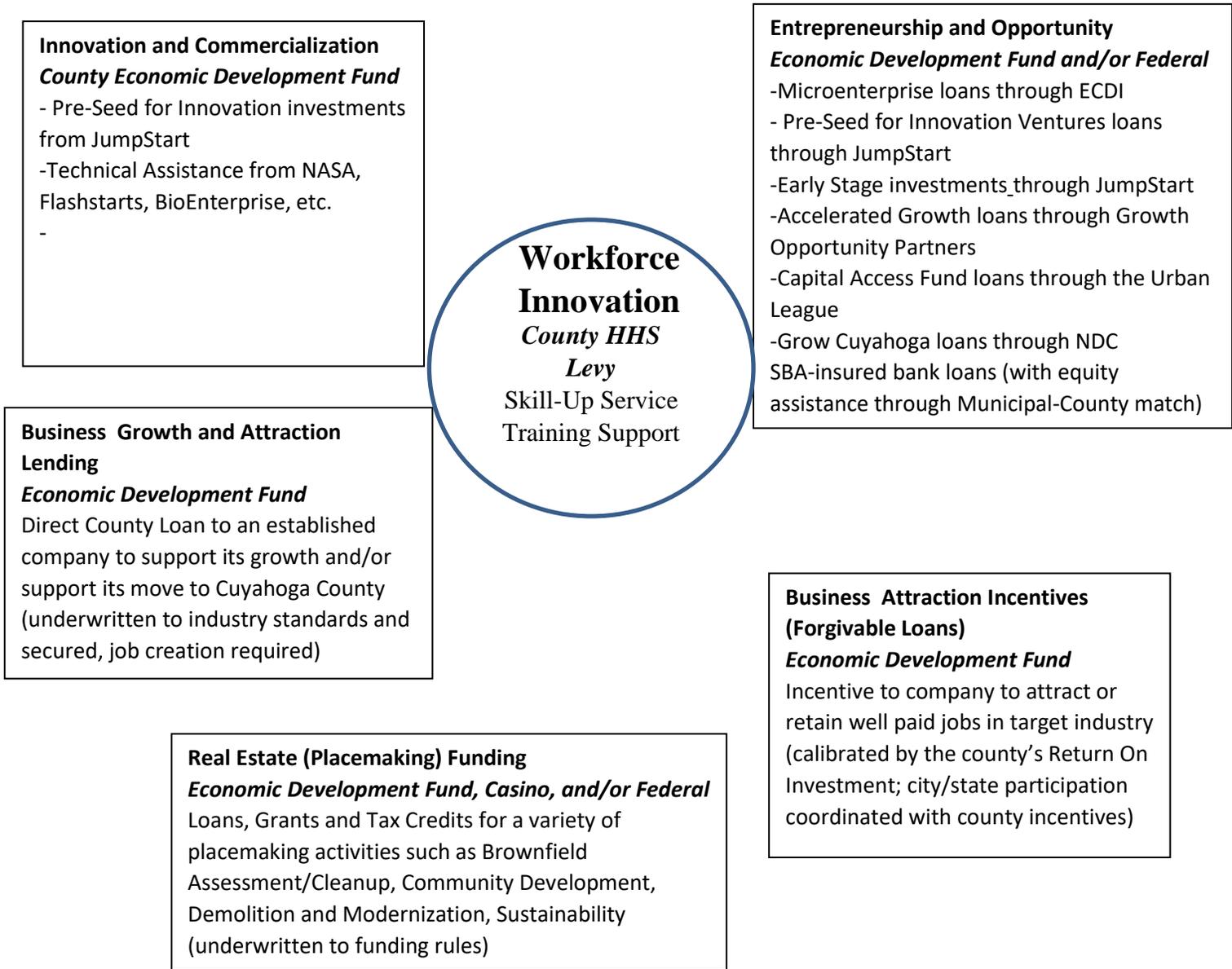
**Commercial Storefront Renovation:** Competitive program designed to help municipalities update or revitalize local retail corridors.

**Homeownership, Repair & Foreclosure:** Down payment assistance, home repair funding and housing counseling to support homeownership.

**Affordable and Fair Housing Initiatives:** Initiatives that promote all areas in the County as welcoming places for our residents.

**Community Wellness Development Program:** Program to incent development of high caliber neighborhood and community assets in sectors that may not achieve the generally accepted success metrics of other job-creation focused development projects, but have an important positive impact on quality of place and community wellness.

## Appendix 2: Cuyahoga County Economic Development Financing Product and Program Offerings



### Future Initiatives

Infrastructure, Redevelopment, and Modernization – new sources of capital for Brownfield Cleanup, Site Preparation, and Placemaking

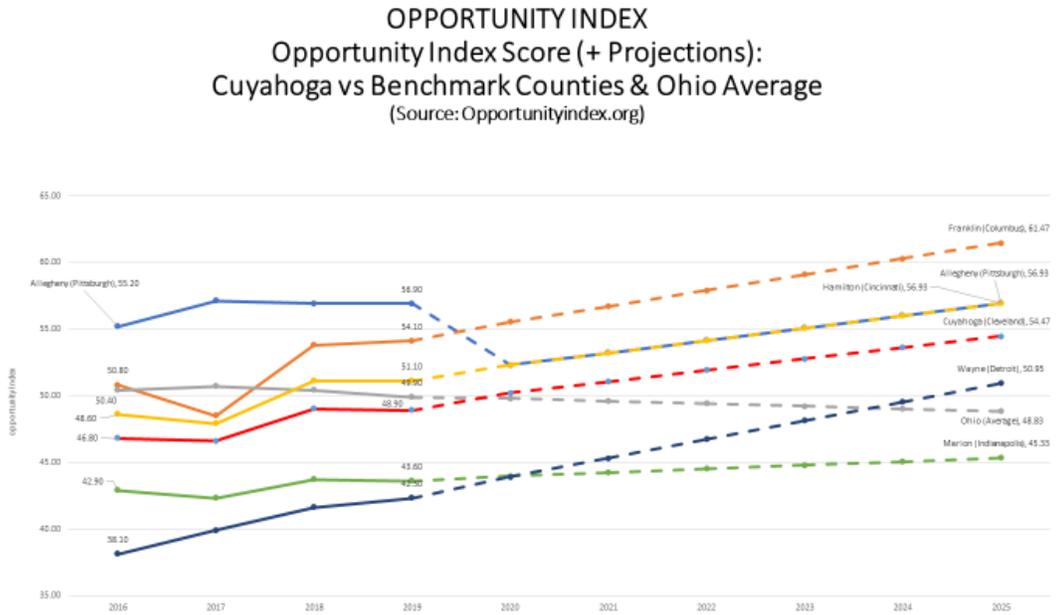
Export Assistance leveraging Cuyahoga County's Advanced Manufacturing industry cluster and prime logistical location for water, rail, road, and air transportation.

# Appendix 3: Economic Development Measures

## Appendix 3: Metrics Charts

### Metric 1: Opportunity Index

#### Chart 1: Opportunity Index



#### Metric 1 Activities:

Activity 2.5.1: Invest \$5 million to plant thousands of trees across the region by 2024.

Activity 2.5.3: Build more pedestrian bike paths and connect existing networks of bike paths.

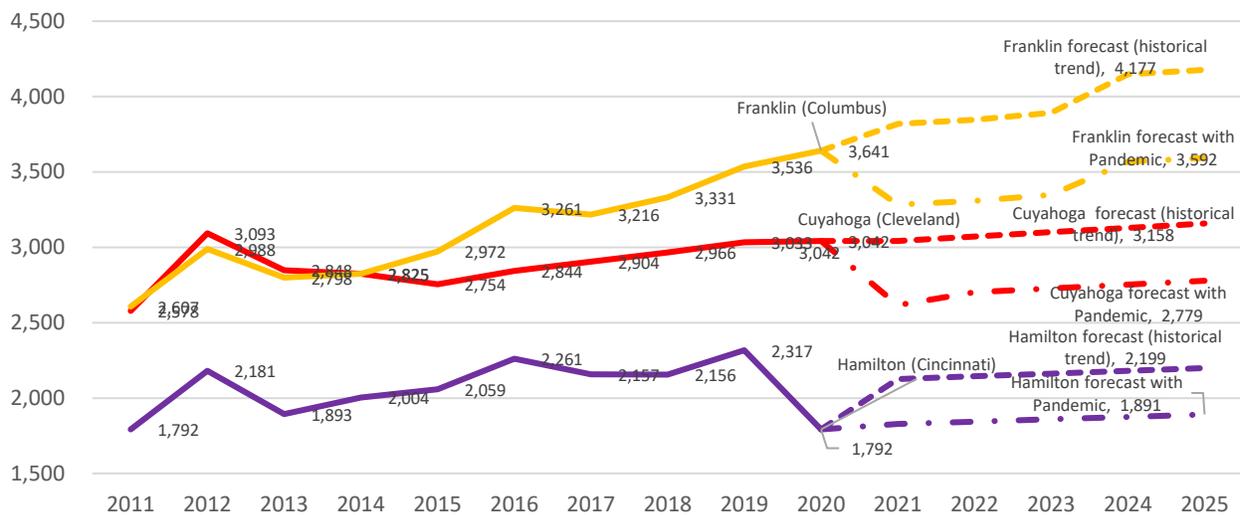
## Metric 2: Entrepreneurship

### Chart 2: Entrepreneurial Start-Ups

#### ENTREPRENEURSHIP: BUSINESS STARTS

#### Annual Business Starts: Cuyahoga vs Ohio Benchmarks (+ Projections)

(Source: ODJFS Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages | Center for Economic Development @ CSU)



### Metric 2 Activities:

Activity 1.3.1: Form partnerships with public and private entities to ensure funding for startup and early stage businesses creating jobs of the future in, for example, the technology and health care sectors. Strive to include minority entrepreneurs and organizations in these partnerships and funding streams.

Activity 1.3.3: Provide and leverage funding for innovative small businesses, both high-tech and conventional, to start and grow, particularly in neighborhoods. Support technology transfer from NASA Glenn Research Center, in partnership with the Ohio Aerospace Institute and others. Support the creation of Innovation Hubs in strategic locations including the Aerozone, Downtown, the Health Tech Corridor, and in historically underserved neighborhoods and communities, leveraging NELA park in East Cleveland.

### Metric 3: Business Attraction

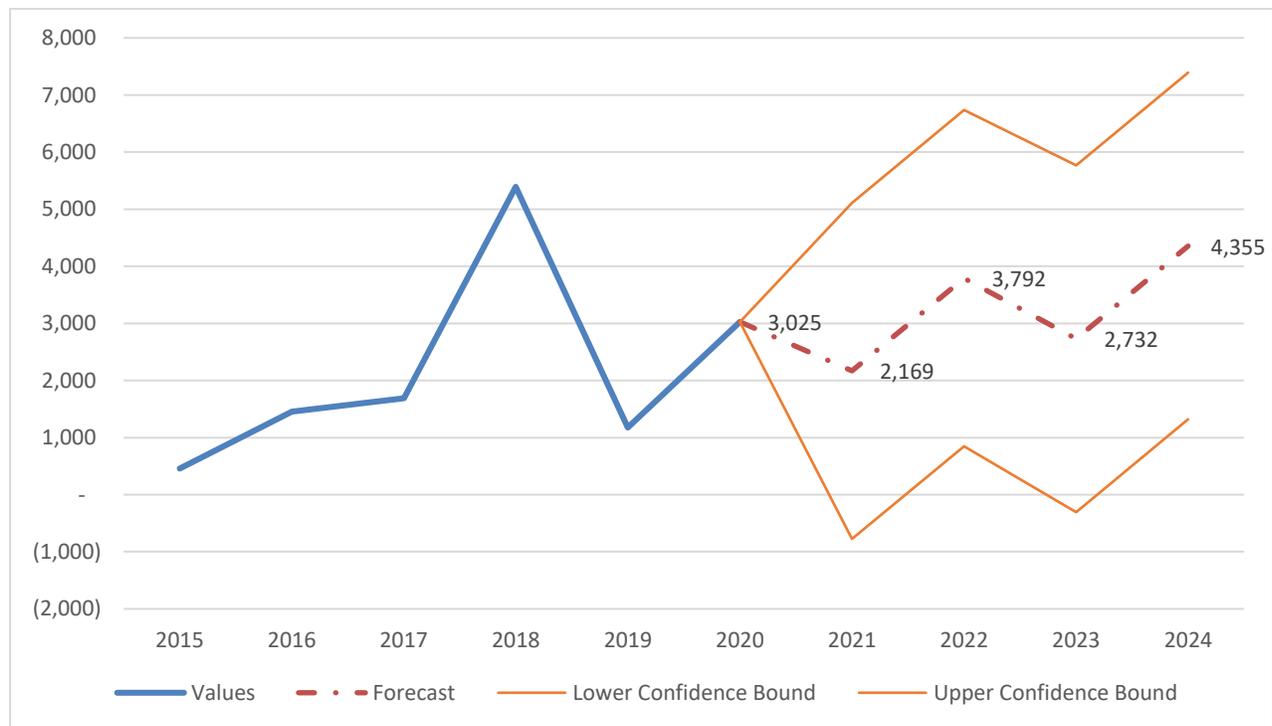
#### **Chart 3: Job Attraction/Retention**

Business Attraction: JobsOhio Attraction/Expansion

Annual Jobs Attracted to Cuyahoga, 2015-2024 (+ Projections)

(Source: JobsOhio Monthly Executed Grants and Loans Reports, 2015-2019)

**Annual Jobs Attracted to Cuyahoga, 2015-2024 (+ Projections)**



Source: JobsOhio Monthly Executed Grants and Loans Reports, 2015-2019

#### **Metric 3 Activities:**

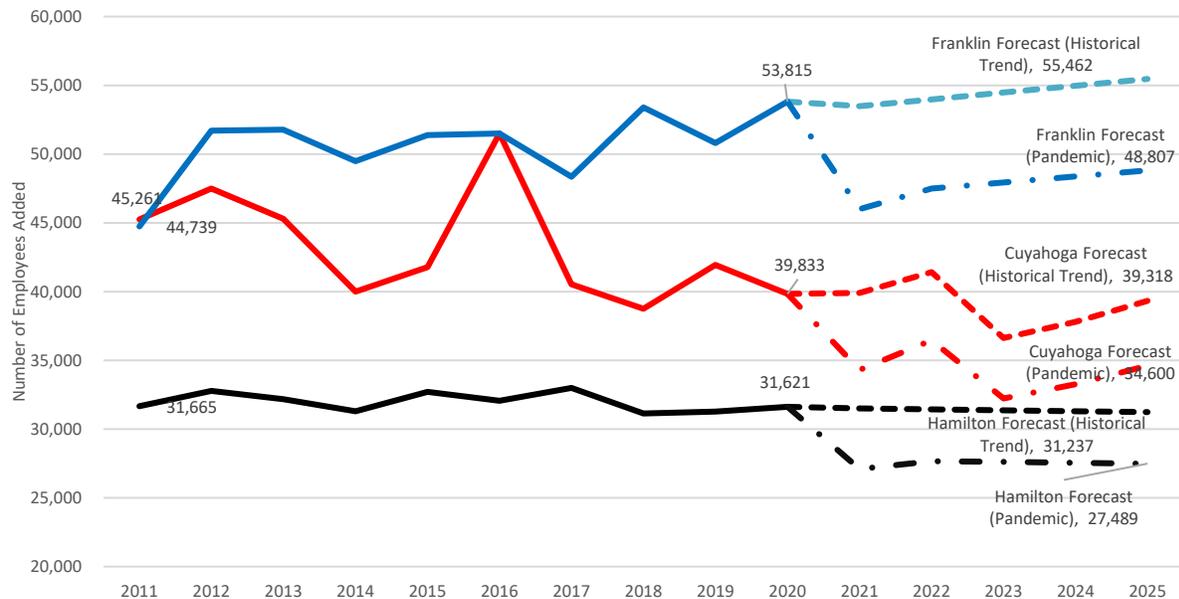
Activity 1.4.1: Allocate Cuyahoga County’s American Rescue Plan funding, in collaboration with municipal partners whenever possible, to support transformative activities and projects with lasting impact.

Activity 1.4.3: Promote key regional business assets, including NASA Glenn Research Center, JumpStart, Nottingham Spirk, and our major hospital systems, to drive innovation and development.

## Metric 4: Existing Business Growth

**Chart 4: GROWTH OF EXISTING BUSINESSES**

**Total Added Employees by Business that Added Employment: Cuyahoga County vs Ohio Benchmarks (+ Projections)**



Source: JobsOhio Monthly Executed Grants and Loans Reports, 2015-2019

### **Metric 4 Activities:**

Activity 1.4.5: Partner with early-stage business assistance and funding organizations such as JumpStart to foster new industries, particularly where Cuyahoga County has a competitive advantage. Examples include industries related to water, advanced manufacturing and health care.

Activity 2.3.3: Continue partnerships with Ohio Means Jobs, the Greater Cleveland Partnership, Team NEO, and municipal economic development staff, to coordinate targeted, strategic business-calling programs among these regional actors, municipalities, and the County's Skill-Up business concierge service, to accelerate business growth in Cuyahoga County.

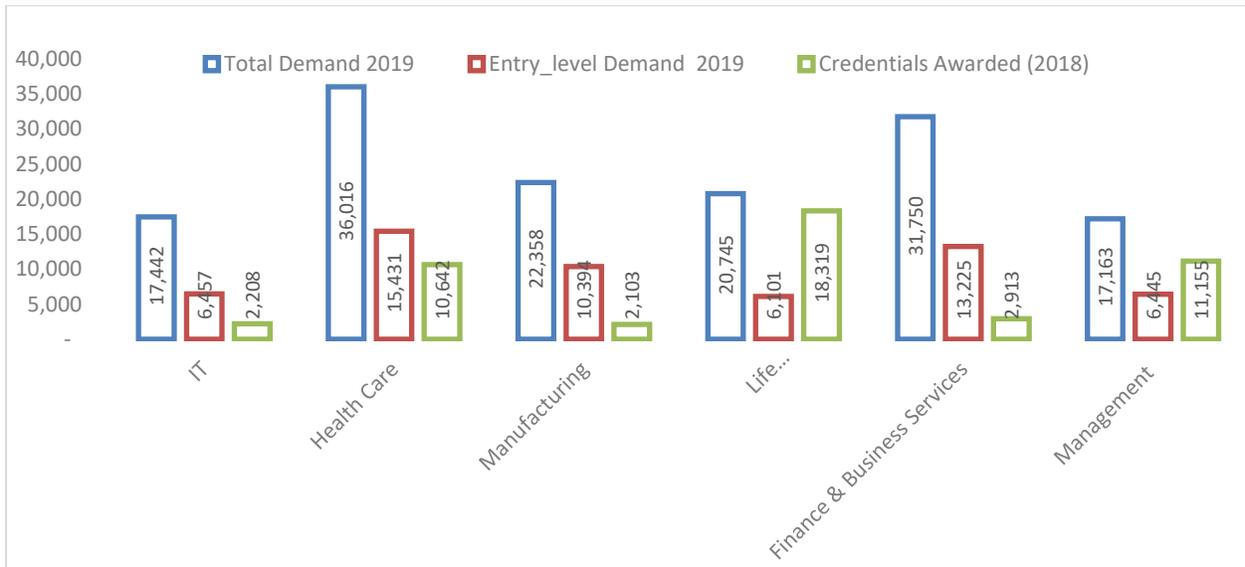
## Metric 5: Workforce Development

### Chart 5.1: Talent Gap

#### WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT (TALENT GAP)

2019 Demand Versus Credentials Awarded in 2018

(Source: Team NEO 2020 Aligning Opportunities Executive Summary)



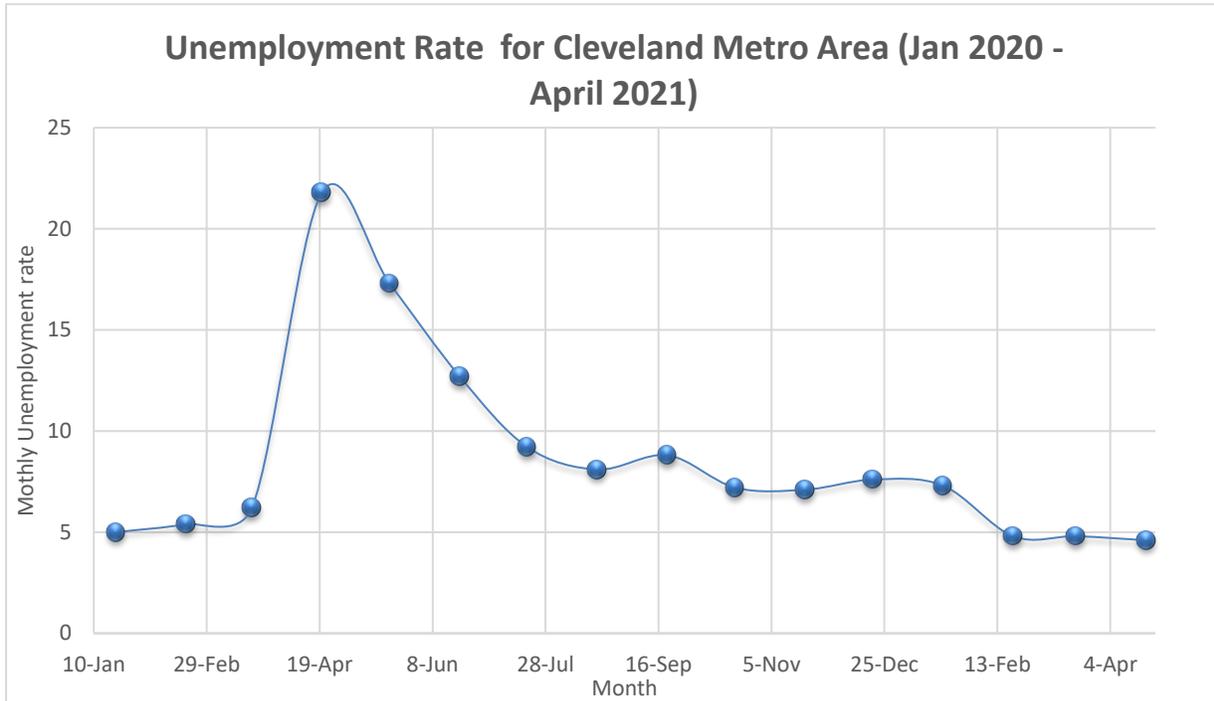
Source: Team NEO 2020 Aligning Opportunities Executive Summary

The top four professions with the largest entry level negative gap include Finance and Business Services, Manufacturing, management, Health Care professions.

The top four professions with the largest total negative gap include Finance and Business Services, Health Care, Manufacturing, and IT.

### Chart 5.2: Labor Market performance

Even though COVID19 related restrictions cause a massive spike in unemployment in the county, reaching an alarming 21% by April of 2020, the rate has dropped significantly below 5% by May 2021. This indicates the success of the pandemic assistance provided by the county, its partners, and the federal government. It also speaks to the resilience of the county's job market.



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

### Chart 5.3: Leisure and Hospitality Employment

Due to COVID19 restrictions, there was a massive drop in the employment levels for the leisure and hospitality industry in the Cleveland Metro area between February and April 2020. The employment levels for this sector have been on the increase since. However, the employment levels are yet to reach pre-pandemic levels.



### Metric 5 Activities:

#### Activity 1.1.2: Assist residents with employment barriers that keep them outside the pipeline to attain Employment that is career and wage pathway focused.

Cuyahoga County Government, through its Propel Cuyahoga initiative, will utilize a variety of approaches to redefine workforce system “success” as a career pathway leading to a family sustaining wage and employment benefits without public support. The County will utilize existing career pathways and establish new pathways in tandem with business leaders, service providers, labor unions, and educational institutions to train workers for in-demand jobs in each sector as part of a sector partnership approach (above). The Skill-Up program will be expanded to include additional services to private sector employers.

Cuyahoga County Government will support existing efforts and create new opportunities to help job seekers establish career plans that integrate support, readiness, education, Employment, career advancement, and entrepreneurship services. Job quality will be a focused priority of these activities to assist businesses and service providers with opportunities for career pathways, advancement, retention and mobility.

Cuyahoga County Government will support existing workforce development programs to promote rehabilitation and social reintegration of the re-entry population and will encourage private-sector employers to remove bright-line barriers to Employment for job seekers with criminal records.

Cuyahoga County Government will support and encourage the region's youth (future workers and future entrepreneurs in Pre-K – higher ed ) to enroll in and complete academic programs to improve long-term career prospects (i.e. Technical Education, Apprenticeships, Internships, and other programs that directly connect post-secondary coursework to careers).

**Activity 1.1.4: Focus workforce innovation and effort on the hospitality sector, as a key component of our economy. Partner with Destination Cleveland and its partner network to collaboratively research training needs, promote career opportunities, and explore further job training coordination between Cuyahoga Community College and tourism related businesses.**

While the County's travel and tourism industry grows, so do jobs in this sector. Visitor volume in Cuyahoga County has outpaced the U.S. domestic travel growth rate since 2012, rising by 16.4% in this time span. Between 2015 and 2016, Employment in the leisure and hospitality employment sector increased by 10%, the highest employment growth rate of any sector in Cleveland with 5,000 new jobs since 2011. This industry supported 8.1% of Cuyahoga County jobs in 2015 and generated more than \$1 billion in sales tax revenue. The U.S. Travel Association maintains that the tourism industry provides a pathway into the workforce for young adults and persons without higher education. Tourism industry employees have an opportunity to start at the bottom and build a career.

## Metric 6: Economic Inclusion

### Chart 6.1: ECONOMIC INCLUSION: LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATE

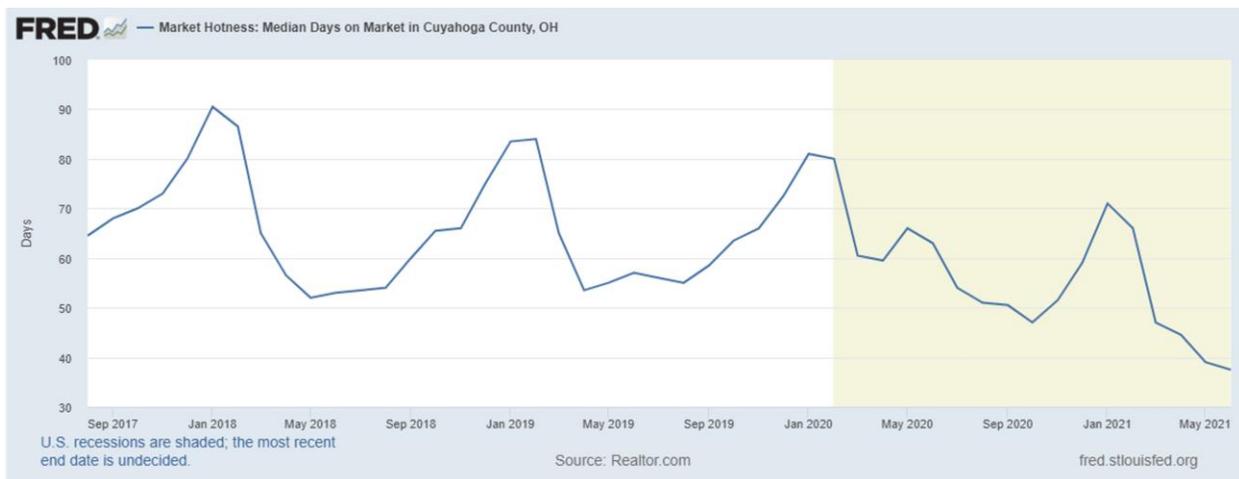
#### 2018 Unemployment rates by race for Ohio MSAs

MSA	White	African-American	Asian-American	Hispanic	Unemployment gap: White & African-American
Cleveland	3.8%	11.7%	3.2%	8.0%	7.9 pts.
Northeast Ohio	4.5%	11.5%	3.2%	10.2%	7.0 pts.
Columbus	3.5%	7.4%	2.7%	4.6%	3.9 pts.
Cincinnati	3.4%	6.1%	1.9%	5.9%	2.7 pts.

Data Source: Fund for Our Economic Future | Two Tomorrows Scorecard

### Chart 6.2: FRED Market Hotness Index

The FRED Market Hotness Index, which tracks the average number of days a listed price stays on the market, shows that there is some level of seasonality in the market, where the market slows down in the first quarter of each year. Overall, it seems since 2017, the average days on the market have been on a downward trend.



### Chart 6.3: Rental Vacancy

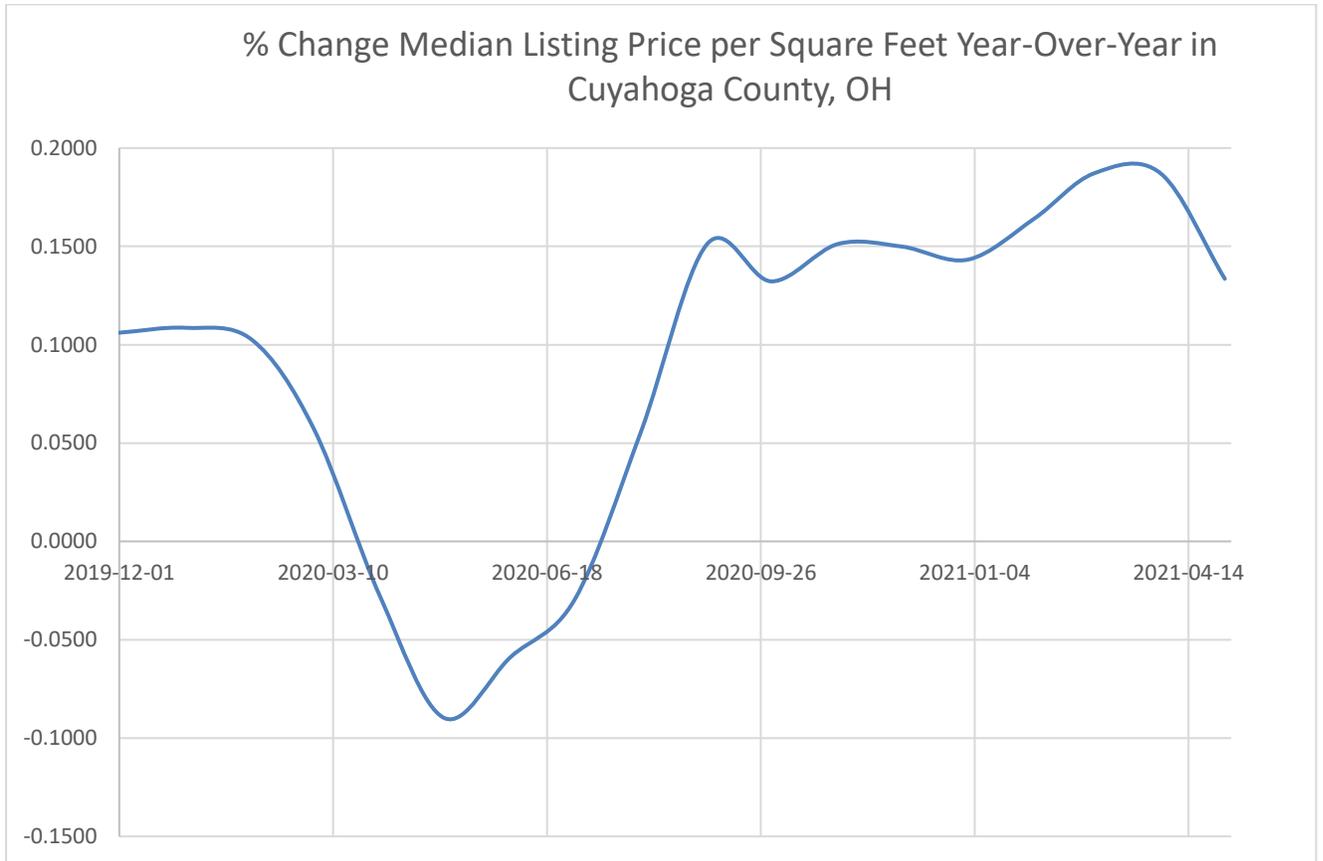
The rental vacancy rates have generally been higher for 2020 and 2021 comparing quarter to quarter. This may purely be due to the COVID19 pandemic. The county and their partner's housing assistance programs most likely cushioned a large portion of the negative impact of the pandemic.



Source: <https://www.census.gov/housing/hvs/data/rates.html>

### Chart 6.4: Listing Price

After a significant drop between the end of 2019 till July of 2020, the average listing price for housing rebounded, reaching an almost 20% positive swing in March of 2021.

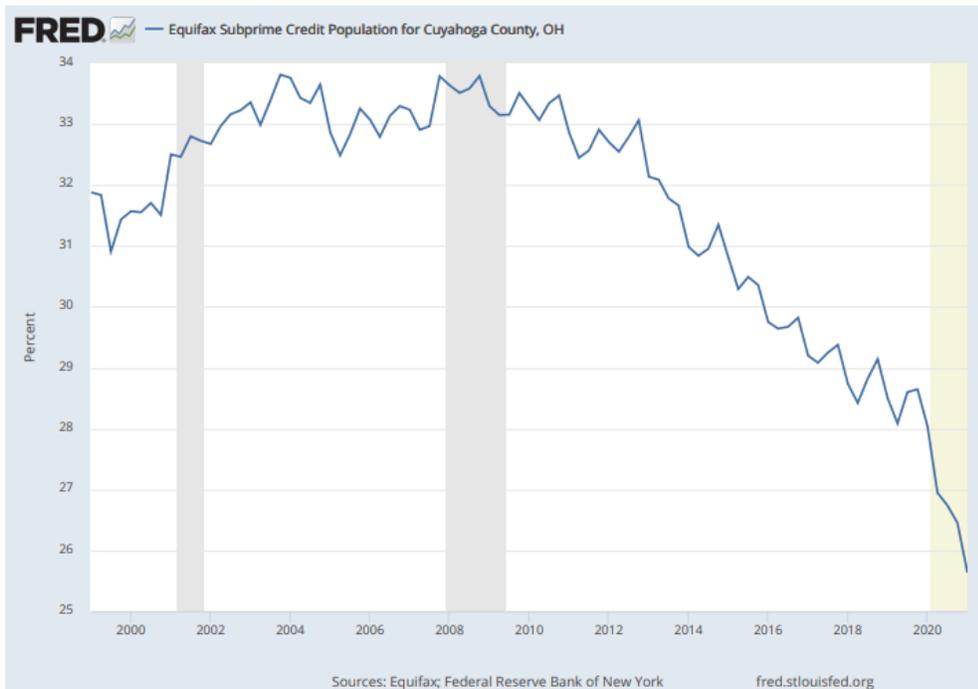


Source:

[https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/MEDLISPRIPERSQUFEEYY39035/?utm\\_source=rss&utm\\_medium=rss&utm\\_campaign=fred-updates](https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/MEDLISPRIPERSQUFEEYY39035/?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=fred-updates)

### Chart 6.5: Subprime Credit Population

The percent of subprime credit population for Cuyahoga County has been on the decline since 2009, with a few spikes. It is interesting to note that the trend remained unabated during the pandemic period.



### Metric 6 Activities:

Activity 2.2.2: Implement Vibrant NEO 2040's recommendation to increase affordable public and other transportation options better connecting communities to workplaces, particularly in Cuyahoga County's suburbs. Align this work with ongoing research into Job Hubs as a tool for focusing reinvestment in the urban core and appropriate transportation infrastructure.

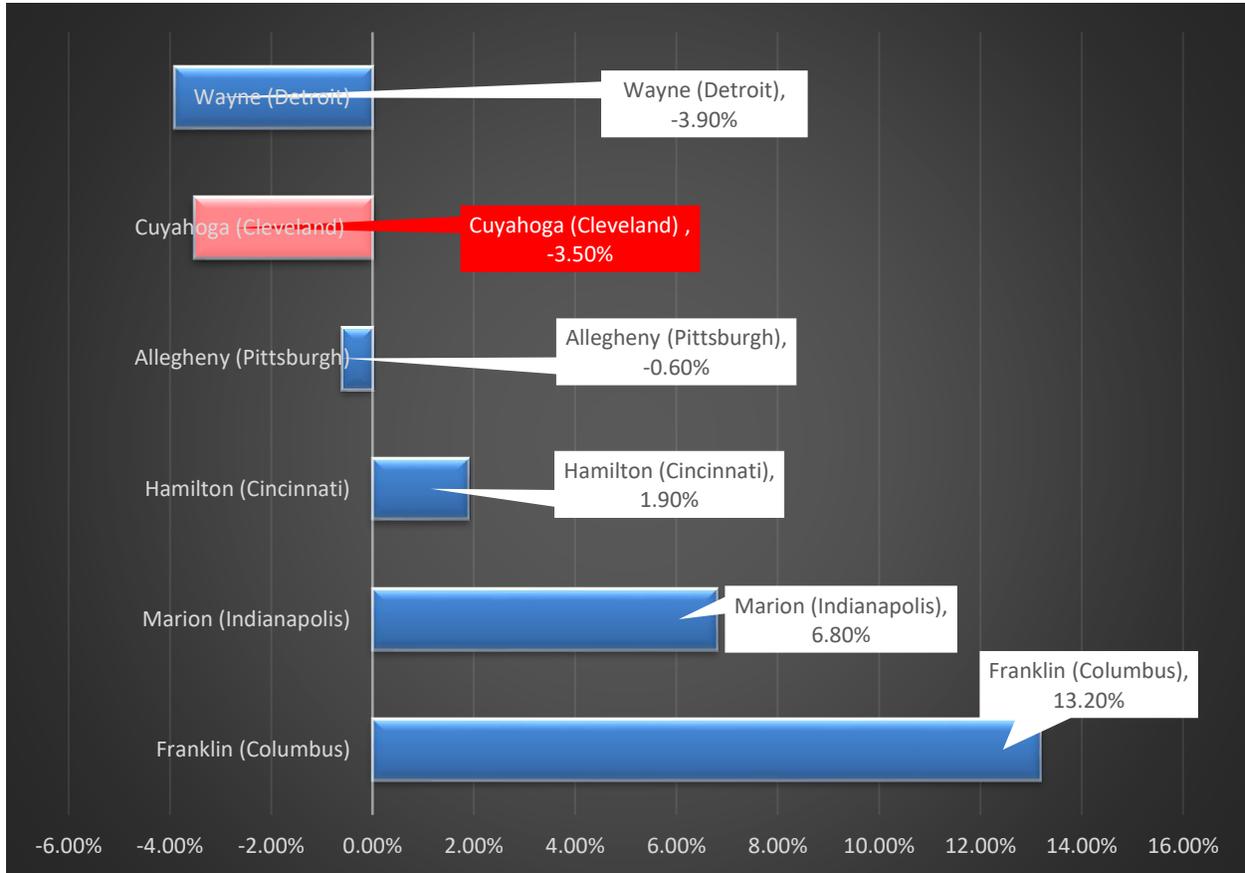
Activity 3.1.1: Support implementation of the Cleveland Innovation Project, which emphasizes inclusion and resource access to minority tech-based businesses and talent.

Activity 3.1.3: Funds will be allocated for working capital loans to minority-owned businesses.

Activity 3.2.2: Cuyahoga County will operate the Cuyahoga County Housing Program to provide resources for implementation of Housing Plan components, specifically, Access to Capital and Confidence in the Housing Market. The Program includes the Cuyahoga County Land Reutilization Corporation as a partner and runs from 2020 – 2025. Thirty million dollars allocated to the Housing Program over six years focuses on expanding and creating programming for home repair, low dollar mortgages, and other activities to increase property values throughout the County.

## Metric 7: Population

**Chart 7.1: POPULATION Dynamics: Cumulative Estimates of Resident Population Change, April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2019**

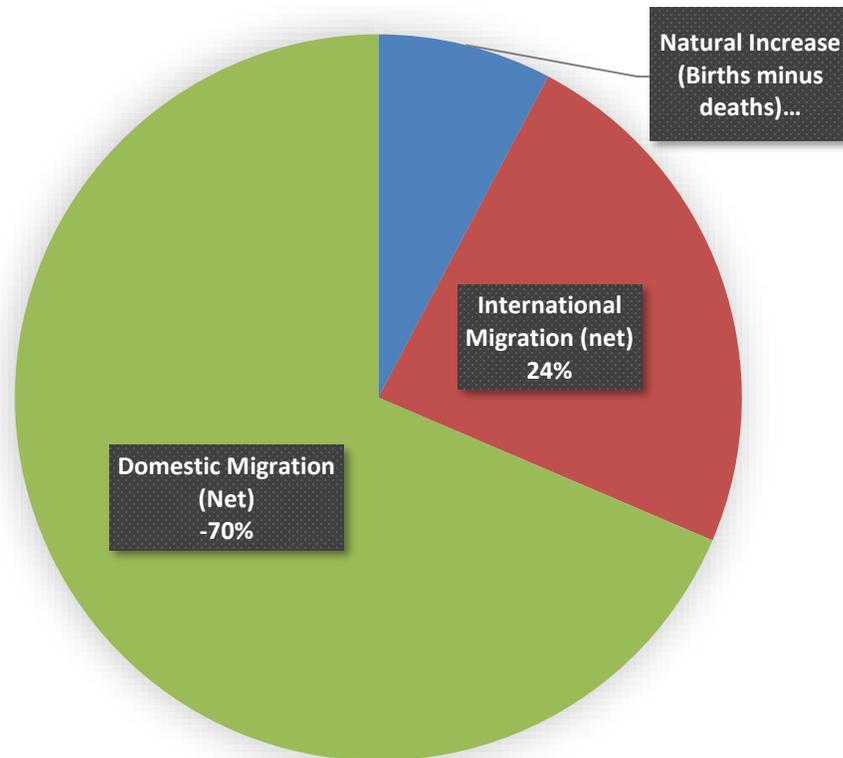


Data Source: US Census Bureau County Population Totals: 2010-2019

**2020 Total Cuyahoga Population Estimates = 1,227,883**

**2025 Total Cuyahoga Population Projection = 1,161,331**

**Chart 7.2: Explanation for Cuyahoga County's Cumulative (2010-2019) Population Change**



Data Source: US Census Bureau County Population Totals: 2010-2019

**Metric 7 Activities:**

Activity 2.1.1: Actively promote Greater Cleveland as an immigrant-friendly community. Partner with Global Cleveland to foster an environment that supports immigrants’ effective immersion into the Greater Cleveland community.

Activity 2.3.1: Assist Cuyahoga County’s 59 member communities to identify and market their key real estate sites to attract national and regional businesses. Support existing systems such as Ohio One while advocating for regional and statewide site promotion efforts to include Cuyahoga County sites. Work to secure funding for environmental assessments and environmental remediation of sites that are well positioned to attract new business once remediated.

Activity 2.3.2: In a collaborative marketing effort, promote Cuyahoga County’s assets including affordable housing, quality of life, and skilled workforce, to attract both regional and national business relocations.

Activity 2.4.1: Maintain and continue to enhance Cuyahoga County’s high quality natural and cultural assets, including its parks, its nationally renowned arts organizations, and its major professional sports teams.