Goal 1 - ECONOMY

Objective 1.1: Attract and retain high-paying jobs in key sectors.

- Continue to investment in key industries including energy, food processing, automotive, advanced manufacturing, and logistics.
- Enhance and maintain existing inventory of current and potential sites available for development (i.e. vacant land, vacant or underutilized modern warehouse space).
- Maintain inventory of existing office space in the region.
- Support communities with strategic planning to market regional assets.
- Utilize business retention and expansion plans to determine the needs of employers.
- Work with local communities and economic development entities to develop a targeted industry recruitment strategy focused on technology and aerospace.
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Objective 1.2: Promote entrepreneurship and innovation

- Keep in communication with industry on what technologies they are adopting and what training is needed to align with workforce
- Continue to pursue additional capital for small businesses and entrepreneurship, including federal, state, or private capitalization of revolving loan funds (RLF).
- Enhance the region's entrepreneurial ecosystem through increased capacity for technical assistance, programming, and collaborative spaces, forums, and events for entrepreneurs at various stages of the innovative life cycle.

Objective 1.3: Encourage reuse of brownfields and vacant properties for commercial development and industrial reuse.

- Conduct a regional brownfield inventory to identify sites for assessments.
- Develop educational material on brownfields to share with local communities.
- Pursue grants or tax abatements for redevelopment of vacant properties.
- Secure funding to complete assessments and redevelopment plans for brownfield sites.

Objective 1.4: Strengthen the agriculture and food sectors

- Conduct focus groups with the agricultural community to discuss farmland protection and succession planning
- Enhance the region's support network for small farming and food production businesses through increased investment in technical assistance, programming, and networking spaces, forums, and events.
- Expand collaboration with Ohio Agriculture and Research Development Center.
- Pursue funding opportunities to plan and develop the region's food system to promote local food production, processing, distribution, and consumption.
- Research specialization in sustainable agriculture and water quality to sustain the region's agriculture sector, develop new technologies in agriculture and environmental science, and protect the health of the Lake Erie Watershed.
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- Support workforce development in food production, processing, and distribution sectors.

Goal 2 - WORKFORCE

Objective 2.1: Align workforce training with industry needs

- Continue to work with current educational and training programs in the region to identify gaps and opportunities for program development.
- Educate employers on resources available to upskill and train workers.
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- Increase business advisory council participation.
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- Support expansion of registered apprenticeships in manufacturing, health, and construction.

Objective 2.2: Improve professional skills and digital literacy

- Support the development of professional skills and digital tools
- Launch and/or expand community digital literacy classes in libraries and rec centers.

Objective 2.3: Increase labor force participation.

- Identify incentives and funding for new or expanded childcare centers.
- Support flexible childcare solutions (e.g., nontraditional hours, remote work, employer-sponsored, care).
- Support increased transportation access and access to benefits bridge

Objective 2.4: Retain and attract young professionals and recent graduates.

- Provide reports that highlight the facts about income, unemployment, quality of life, etc. of those with 2 & 4-year degrees.
- Continue to promote career opportunities to build awareness
- Encourage students to study local, focus on the transition from community colleges into universities and assist students with some college credit to complete their degree.
- Promote programs that showcase the region to interns and college students

Goal 3 - HOUSING

Objective 3.1: Expand the availability of affordable and workforce housing.

- Apply for state/federal housing tax credits and grants.
- Develop a regional housing strategy (MPO/RTPO).
- Develop and utilize incentives for developers.
- Educate communities on Community Reinvestment Areas (CRA), neighborhood Tax Increment Financing (TIF) zones, and other similar tools.
- Explore more cost-effective construction techniques and identify gap funding to ensure financial feasibility.

- Inventory existing senior housing availability and identify what gaps in housing there are and available funding and incentives.
- Leverage public-private partnerships to maximize funding and implementation.

Objective 3.2: Streamline development and support infrastructure to reduce construction costs and barriers.

- Simplify zoning and streamline permitting processes for housing developments.
- Update local codes to support higher-density or mixed-use development.

Objective 3.3: Promote infill housing and mixed-use development

- Adress vacant spaces as opportunities for housing or commercial development.
- Attract new regional developers and build home-grown developer capacity by being a profitable place to develop.
- Develop a program to provide training and access to capital for smaller, local developers to build housing stock. especially in historically disadvantaged communities.
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Goal 4 - INFRASTRUCTURE

Objective 4.1: Expand and improve multi-modal transportation options

- Build bike lanes, sidewalks, and trail connections.
- Complete infrastructure projects that will promote economic development
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- Continue to develop the Port of Toledo for commercial opportunities.
- Develop pad ready sites at Eugene F. Kranz Toledo Express Airport to support the growing aviation logistics and distribution industries.
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- Encourage communities to invest in planning (transit, active transportation, freight, land use, etc.).
- Enhance region's rail infrastructure to facilitate the movement of commerce and additional job-creation activities.
- Expand transit coverage and frequency, especially in rural areas.

Objective 4.2: Upgrade and maintain utilities

- Conduct an analysis on regional water which will include information sharing on the positives and negatives on implementing regional water.
- Continue to develop, capitalize, and diversify the region's energy resources including natural gas, nuclear power plants, oil refineries, and solar
- Improve collaboration between providers for electricity, generation, distribution, and government to support the increased need of energy to support new developments..
- Leverage the region's access to freshwater by pursuing additional investments in sewer, waterline, and treatment facilities.
- Provide service to unsewered areas
- Provide utility mapping assistance to communities.
- Upgrade water/wastewater facilities.

Objective 4.3 Eliminate barriers and improve availability of broadband and high-speed internet

- Apply for broadband expansion grants to cover underserved areas or complete gaps in middle mile and last mile locations.
- Pursue public-private partnerships to attract resources and investment in broadband capacity and speed expansion in the region's rural communities.
- Review broadband maps to ensure accuracy.
- Support building out broadband infrastructure to more customers.

Goal 5 – COMMUNITIES

Objective 5.1: Promote regional image and community assets

- Engage in local placemaking planning and implementation processes to identify, improve, and promote unique community assets and opportunities to enhance quality of place of all residents.
- Establish advisory groups with broad representations to increase community buy in for redevelopment projects.
- Strengthen regional coordination among cities, counties, and development entities.
- Use the Lake Erie West rebrand and establishment of an Economic Development District to promote regional assets.

Objective 5.2: Improve access to healthy food options

- Encourage a review of zoning and land use policies to encourage healthy food retail in residential and mixed-use areas.
- Improve mobility connections to grocery stores, farmers markets, and food pantries.
- Partner with local governments, community organizations, and health departments to identify food desserts and develop strategies for improved access
- Promote institutional procurement of locally sourced foods (schools, hospitals, universities)

Objective 5.2: Revitalize downtowns with arts, entertainment, and cultural venues

- Invest in arts, lighting, streetscaping, and facade improvements.
- Promote regional pop-up shops, festivals, and community events.
- Provide resources for improving and sustaining historic properties

Objective 5.3: Leverage environmental assets like parks, waterfronts, and natural areas for tourism and recreation.

- Continue to develop experiential, natural tourism experiences to leverage the region's natural assets including the riverfront, lakeshore, and globally rare ecosystems and events.
- Enhance the promotion and marketing of the region's natural assets and tourism destinations.

Objective 5.4: Expand access to health care and support services

- Continue to develop a network of services and facilities for senior citizens, people with disabilities, and veterans.
- Strengthen EMS services by identifying what causes delays and slow response times.
- Support providing additional funding resources for social service organizations for training and programs to foster better coordination of existing resources and identification of best practices.