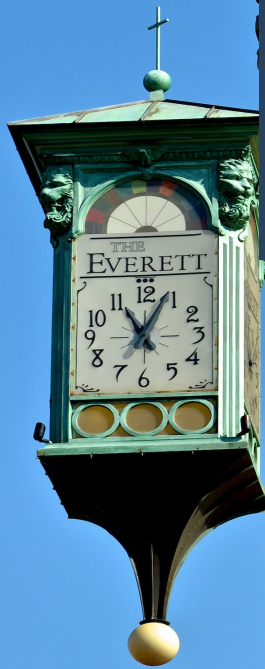




A NEW BEGINNING

for

OHIO



**GREATER OHIO POLICY CENTER
2018 POLICY PLATFORM**

A NEW BEGINNING ON THE HORIZON FOR OHIO

The past decade has seen considerable progress as job growth has remained steady and communities across the state have experienced promising comebacks. Yet, cities and towns across the Buckeye state continue to struggle to find sites for new businesses and employees, and many of Ohio's businesses are desperate to connect workers to job opportunities. Communities big and small are looking to enhance their quality of life for their citizens. These challenges threaten to obstruct the advancements that have been made across Ohio.

The mission of the Greater Ohio Policy Center is to champion revitalization and sustainable growth. We believe Ohio deserves robust, effective policies and practices that reinvigorate communities, strengthen regional cooperation, and preserve open spaces and farmland.

What follows are recommendations for Ohio's next statewide leaders and legislative policymakers for building on Ohio's recent success by recognizing potential, leveraging momentum, connecting people to places, and reviving our most important assets to ensure a Greater Ohio.

Pragmatic policies for a brighter future



INCREASE NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR JOB GROWTH AND RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT BY REDEVELOPING BROWNFIELDS



BETTER CONNECT WORKERS TO JOBS BY INNOVATING OHIO'S TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM



BOLSTER ECONOMIC COMPETITIVENESS BY ENSURING COMMUNITIES HAVE THE MEANS TO ENGINEER LONG-TERM PROSPERITY



ENSURE SAFE, AFFORDABLE WATER AND SEWER SERVICE FOR BUSINESSES AND RESIDENTS

Read the detailed policy platform at www.greaterohio.org/policyplatform

JOB GROWTH THROUGH BROWNFIELD REDEVELOPMENT

Brownfields are former industrial or commercial sites where future use is affected by environmental contamination. There are as many brownfields as there are fast food restaurants in Ohio, and these 9,000 sites are found in every county in the state.

Ohio has the potential to bring in millions of dollars in additional investment, job growth, and economic development through the remediation of brownfields. These blighted properties are unusable for development in their current condition and create barriers to economic growth.

It can cost \$15,000 to \$35,000 to remediate one brownfield acre. Current state programs often target specific site types or only offer loans, both of which can limit redevelopment possibilities.

Under a former brownfields program in Ohio—Clean Ohio—every \$1 invested by the state, generated at least \$4.67 in new economic activity.

An investment strategy that is flexible and complements existing state and federal programs will help to unlock this land for new industrial, commercial, mixed-use and residential opportunities.

Policy Recommendations

STREAMLINE OHIO EPA'S VOLUNTARY ACTION PROGRAM (VAP)

by providing options in addition to the covenant not to sue. Making regulatory reforms that provide legal assurances from the state to prospective landowners and real estate developers who did not contaminate a site under consideration.

ESTABLISH "CLEAN OHIO 2.0", a program for brownfield clean-up and revitalization and that is designed for long-term stability. With funding of \$25 million annually, this funding would complement and enhance current brownfield programs focused on industrial expansion.

Clean Ohio Success Story: Once known for its production of the Jeep Wrangler before closing in 2006, the Overland Industrial Park was redeveloped by the Toledo-Lucas County Port Authority through two Clean Ohio grants. In May 2016 Dana Corporation announced it will open a high-tech axle manufacturing plant on site, with approximately \$70 million of investment and creating 300 jobs by 2020.



Increase New Opportunities for Job Growth and Development by Redeveloping Brownfields

Unlock the ability to bring in millions of dollars in investment, job growth, and economic development through the remediation of brownfields—blighted industrial properties— that discourage investment and create barriers for communities throughout Ohio.



Learn more about brownfields at www.greaterohio.org/redeveloping-brownfields

CONNECT WORKERS THROUGH TRANSPORTATION INNOVATION

Transportation is a vital component to our state's economic engine. In order to meet market demand for 21st century transportation options, Ohio must prioritize and diversify its transportation network to better connect workers to jobs.

Many job centers are located on the edges of our metros, away from residential neighborhoods. Other job creators, like tech companies, expect a range of transportation choices for their employees. Additionally, parts of Ohio are aging and citizens wish to remain in their homes as long as possible. As an urban and rural state, Ohio requires a range of transportation options that connect workers to jobs and residents to services.

Ohio is an urban and rural state, requiring a range of transportation options that connect workers to jobs and residents to services. Public transit can serve as that vital link, but, currently, the small amount of state investment in Ohio's transit systems hinders efforts to expand or even provide transit service. To ensure Ohio's communities are as attractive as possible to businesses, and rural areas are as safe as possible, public transportation is an effective, cost-efficient, solution.

Transit is just one component of a fully invested, diverse transportation network. A statewide Active Transportation Policy, otherwise known as Complete Streets, would facilitate the safe and efficient movement of people, goods and services and would match appropriate context-sensitive design guidelines to rural, urban, and suburban roadways. Safe roads not only protect all roadway users, including drivers, but also save money by avoiding collision and injury costs.



Policy Recommendations

ESTABLISH A DEDICATED FUNDING SOURCE FOR PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION, derived from existing revenue sources, that annually provides \$30 million to ensure workers connect to jobs and Ohio's vulnerable populations have access to reliable transit options.

- 10 states dedicate funding for public transit from revenue from the state Rental Car Tax.
- 25 states, along with the District of Columbia, currently have a dedicated source of funding specifically set aside for public transportation.

ADOPT A STATEWIDE ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION POLICY that ensures the state's roadways can safely accommodate all types of users and is sensitive to local context, facilitating the safe and efficient movement of people, goods and services.

- 33 states currently have implemented an Active Transportation policy through agency policy or legislation.
- 19 Ohio cities or multi-county metropolitan planning organizations (MPO's) have adopted active transportation policies, resulting in a patch-work of policies around the state.



Learn more about transportation at www.greaterohio.org/transportation-innovation

CREATE PLACES WHERE PEOPLE WANT TO WORK AND LIVE

Legacy cities—older, industrial urban areas that have experienced significant population and job loss—were the engines of prosperity for decades, and they remain important contributors of new economic activity. Ohio’s 20 small and midsize cities constitute a third of the state’s population and generate nearly an equal amount of the state’s domestic product. Their impact on the state’s prosperity as a whole is sizeable—as are the struggles affecting them and the people who live there.

Ohio can assist local communities that are striving to reinvest through the creation of new initiatives and support for best practice innovations that bolster the state’s economic competitiveness.

Ohio’s small and mid-sized cities and their regions have struggled with decades of population loss and declines in their core manufacturing industries, just like their larger legacy city peers. The impact of the Great Recession further stalled recovery.

But Ohio’s communities are also home to beautiful architecture, low cost-of-living, and a strong sense of community.

As workers choose where they want to live before finding a job, and as more jobs can be done outside the office, Ohio’s communities offer something that few other states do. Investing in communities is investing in jobs and economic development.



Bolster Ohio’s Economic Competitiveness by Ensuring Communities have the tools they need to Engineer Long-Term Prosperity

Communities big and small provide Ohio with a unique quality of life that cannot be found anywhere else. Capitalize on these assets by investing in their success.

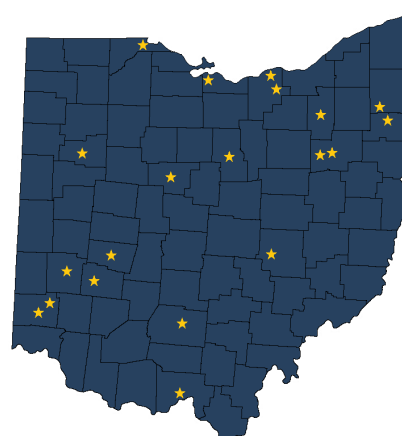
Policy Recommendations

EXPAND THE SCOPE OF JOBSOHIO to include support for activities to assist cities and towns competing for jobs and skilled workers to create places where people want to work, live, and recreate.

INCENTIVIZE PUBLIC-PRIVATE COLLABORATION with state investments in initiatives focused on local community and economic development.

Ohio’s Legacy Cities

Toledo | Sandusky | Lorain | Elyria
Akron | Canton | Massillon
Warren | Youngstown | Mansfield
Marion | Lima | Springfield
Xenia | Dayton | Hamilton
Middletown | Portsmouth
Chillicothe | Zanesville



Learn more about revitalization at www.greaterohio.org/legacy-city-regrowth

ENSURE SAFE AND COST-EFFECTIVE INFRASTRUCTURE FOR BUSINESSES AND RESIDENTS

Each day, Ohio families and businesses depend on complex networks of pipes, equipment, and treatment facilities to provide clean drinking water, control stormwater, and remove the health hazards created by human and industrial waste. Unfortunately, these networks are aging, and have trouble meeting 21st Century needs.

Providing water and sewer services is the responsibility of local government in Ohio. Thousands of independent systems operate in the state—some serve only a few hundred customers. To ensure high quality service and to create opportunities for significant cost savings, Ohio needs bold, new ways of managing and upgrading its water utilities.

Water and sewer utilities need to invest billions of dollars to modernize aging infrastructure. Ohio has some of the largest revolving loan programs in the nation, but grant funding is limited and hard to access. User charges have increased faster than the rate of inflation over the last 15 years, creating affordability concerns for low-income communities.



To turn our state's abundant supply of water, perhaps its greatest natural asset, into a comparative advantage, Ohio must equip our water and sewer systems with the best and most innovative financing options while also exploring the benefits of "green" approaches to storm water control.

Policy Recommendations

INCREASE FINANCIAL AND REGULATORY INCENTIVES FOR SHARED SERVICES AND REGIONAL COORDINATION OF SMALL DRINKING WATER SYSTEMS. Ohio has hundreds of small water systems that are under severe financial stress to meet regulatory requirements and upgrade facilities. Sharing facilities, personnel, or administrative functions can lower costs and ensure that appropriate management and technical personnel are in place.

PROVIDE THE OHIO EPA OR OHIO WATER DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY WITH ADDITIONAL STATE FUNDS to help keep affordability within acceptable bounds. Ohio can follow other states by using grant funding strategically to keep the affordability of capital projects within acceptable limits.

COUPLE ASSET MANAGEMENT PLANS WITH IMPROVED STATEWIDE DATA COLLECTION on key utility performance statistics. The state should take the lead in creating a reporting system that is publicly accessible and benchmarks financial, operational, and service activities.

Take On the Challenge of Improving Aging Infrastructure by Promoting Shared Resources and Partnerships to Improve Water and Sewer Services

With thousands of local governments providing water and sewer services, Ohio has a golden opportunity to promote partnerships to lower costs and improve services.



Learn more about place-making at www.greaterohio.org/infrastructure-modernization

ABOUT GREATER OHIO POLICY CENTER

The Greater Ohio Policy Center was incorporated as a 501(c)3 in 2007. GOPC is primarily foundation-funded; a small portion of its budget comes from private sector supporters and fee-for-service work.

GOPC has a bipartisan staff and board and proudly advances policy recommendations that are non-partisan and data-driven.

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TO CANDIDATES, YOUR CO-WORKERS,
AND FRIENDS ABOUT THESE ISSUES

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SPREAD THE WORD BY LIKING AND LINKING TO US
ONLINE AND SHARING OUR INFORMATION

JOIN

HELP SUPPORT OUR WORK BY MAKING A DONATION AT
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