

6 | Economic Development

6.1 Introduction

The economy of Painesville Township has changed dramatically in the past few decades. Much of the heavy manufacturing and chemical-based industry that drove the economic engine of the Township, as well as much of the region, is now gone. Today, Painesville Township is a predominantly residential community, with a small industrial tax base, and limited commercial development. Painesville Township's economic role will likely continue to change with new retail trends and technological impacts.

The Economic Development element identifies goals and objectives that will address the wellbeing of Painesville Township in a local and regional economic context. This element includes analysis of the local economy and the assessment of its strengths and weaknesses. Additional focal points include an assessment of current and future needs of the community.

The intent of the Economic Development element is to promote a sustainable economy that will increase employment and the local tax base, as well as expand the diversity and quality of retail services and districts. The intent of this analysis is to determine features that define the identity, character, and "sense of place" of Painesville Township.

6.2 Economic History of Painesville Township

The Cleveland area maintained its place in the industrial sector through the Great Depression, and was not severely affected. World War II became a catalyst for a wide upswing in employment, and an increase in the presence of heavy industry in Painesville Township. The area along the Lake Erie shoreline from the Fairport Harbor Village and Painesville Township border to Conneaut became industrialized with chemical manufacturers, and became known as the "Chemical Shore." In 1954, durable goods production, such as machinery, primary metals, and transportation, was at its peak. The 1960 Lake County Comprehensive Plan anticipated an industrial boom, designating large portions of land near the Lake Erie shoreline, I-90 and the Lakeland Freeway for future industrial development. In the 1960s, Lake County's leading industries included machinery, rubber, fabricated metals, and printing and publishing.

At its peak, 3,000 workers were employed at Diamond Alkali facilities in the Township. When it closed on December 31, 1976, 1,200 employees were negatively impacted. Many other heavy manufacturing operations shut down in the 1970s and 1980s, cutting the Township tax base and leaving brownfields behind. Many other factories closed in the following years, including Uniroyal Chemical, which ceased operations in June of 1999. A few heavy industrial operations, such as Lubrizol, continue to prosper to this day. However, industrial land uses no longer dominate the Township economy.

Beginning after WWII and up until the 1960's, Painesville Township began to function as a suburb to the City of Painesville. Small houses were built to accommodate returning veterans and growing baby boomer families. Township residents typically worked in downtown Painesville, or in one of the many factories or plants in the city or Township. As was the case with larger cities, new shopping plazas along Mentor Avenue in Painesville Township drew consumers away from downtown Painesville.

In 1961, Great Lakes Mall opened in the City of Mentor. During the same time period, other retailers were drawn to the Great Lakes Mall area and the U.S. Route 20 corridor in the city. Good accessibility and a convenient location, in a then-rapidly developing area, ensured that the U.S. Route 20 commercial corridor in Mentor would be a prime location for retailers. Unfortunately, retail development in Mentor played a role in the decline of the City of Painesville and Painesville Township as retail destinations.

With residential subdivisions spreading further east into Lake County, and small manufacturing operations building facilities along the Lakeland Freeway corridor (State Route 2), Painesville Township began to function not just as a suburb of Painesville city, but as a suburb of Cleveland.

6.3 Desired Types of Businesses

According to results of the 2015 resident survey, the top five most preferred businesses for Painesville Township include (in order from most preferred): sit down restaurants, small retail, agricultural businesses, research and development, and fast casual restaurants. The top five least preferred businesses for Painesville Township include (in order from least preferred): fast food, hotels, large retail, light industry and fast casual restaurants.

Written comments from residents emphasized the desire for a grocery store in the NE region of the Township. Additionally, residents would like more local businesses to become established throughout the Township. Some residents articulated the desire for the repurposing of vacant buildings to be occupied by small businesses.

6.4 Retail Leakage

Inventory of Retail Uses

Retail leakage is the difference between actual and potential retail sales in a community, or the amount of retail sales lost to other communities. A smaller quantity of retail floor space per Painesville Township resident, versus surrounding communities, is evidence of some retail leakage, although the exact amount cannot be determined without a detailed retail study.

The Lake County Office of Planning and Community Development has prepared an inventory of retail use in Painesville Township, as well as surrounding communities. This data will be updated upon completion of the Lake County Retail Trade Study Update, which will be finalized in 2016.

Table 6.1 Square Footage of Retail Space for Food and other Consumable Goods & Services: 2014 Painesville Township and Surrounding Communities								
	Supermarket /Grocery	Other food	Restaurant	Drug Store	Convenience Store	Personal Services	Total square feet	Square feet per resident
Painesville Township	168,983	0	64,739	20,900	7,200	12,044	273,866	16.23
Concord Township	0	0	31,015	0	5,920	3,300	40,235	2.21
Fairport Harbor Village	16,853	0	12,438	0	0	0	29,291	9.42
Grand River Village	0	0	19,931	0	4,160	0	24,091	65.29
City of Mentor	262,909	24,386	449,880	33,885	11,530	89,548	872,138	18.50
City of Painesville	12,752	16,534	88,765	40,933	23,584	20,854	203,422	10.37
Perry Township	0	0	27,269	0	3,600	13,766	44,635	4.98

Prior to the analysis of data, it must be noted that there is a category of retail use for shopping centers/strip malls. This category includes many different types of retail uses, including restaurants, drug stores, dry cleaners, hair salons, and any other type of retail use that may occupy a shopping center or strip mall. The retail uses contained within each shopping center/strip mall are not included in the square footages of other categories. For instance, the square footage for a restaurant contained within a strip mall will not be included in the square footage for the restaurant category.

The square footage of retail space for food and consumable goods and services has been estimated for Painesville Township and its surrounding communities. It is estimated that Painesville Township has 16.23 square feet per resident, not including shopping centers and strip malls (Table 6.1). There is approximately 168,983 square feet of supermarkets/grocery stores in Painesville Township, 64,739 square feet of restaurants, 20,900 square feet of drug stores, 7,200 square feet of convenience stores, and 12,044 square feet dedicated to personal services (Table 6.1). Examples of personal services include hair salons, nail salons, dry cleaners, and similar businesses. Of all surrounding communities, Painesville Township has the second highest quantity of square footage for these categories. The City of Mentor offers 872,138 square feet of retail space for food and other consumable goods and services, or 18.50 square feet per resident (Table 6.1).

Table 6.2						
Square Footage of Retail Space for Shopping Goods: 2014						
Painesville Township and Nearby Communities						
	Small Retail	Large Retail	Supercenter	Shopping Center/Strip Mall	Total square feet	Square feet per resident
Painesville Township	131,863	91,227	0	281,625	504,715	29.91
Concord Township	30,025	41,556	0	20,494	92,075	5.07
Fairport Harbor Village	14,475		0	0	14,475	4.66
Grand River Village	1,560	0	0	0	1,560	4.23
City of Mentor	359,146	1,526,824	593,318	872,509	3,351,797	71.11
City of Painesville	159,370	20,156	0	62,620	242,146	12.34
Perry Township	18,176	0	0	41,010	59,186	6.60

Data collection for shopping goods includes small retail (businesses <20,000 square feet) and large retail (businesses >20,000 square feet). Additional categories include supercenters and shopping centers/strip malls. As previously noted, shopping centers/strip malls may include a variety of retail uses, and square footages of each business within a shopping center/strip mall are not included individually for other categories.

Of all surrounding communities, Painesville Township has the second highest quantity of square feet per resident for retail space dedicated to shopping goods. Painesville Township has approximately 29.91 square feet per resident, while the City of Mentor offers approximately 71.11 square feet per resident (Table 6.2).

In Painesville Township, there is an estimated 131,863 square feet of retail space used for small retail, 91,227 square feet for large retail, and 281,625 square feet used for shopping centers/strip malls (Table 6.2).

Table 6.3 Square Footage of Retail Space for Automobile-Related Retail: 2014 Painesville Township and Nearby Communities									
	Auto sales (new & used)	Auto sales (used)	Other auto sales	Auto repair	Instant oil change	Gas station	Carwash	Total square feet	Square feet per resident
Painesville Township	73,001	11,658	0	16,929	2,220	2,160	5,716	111,684	6.62
Concord Township	0	0	0	3,380	0	10,758	0	14,138	0.78
Fairport Harbor Village	0	0	0	2,124	0	0	0	2,124	0.68
Grand River Village	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	0.00
City of Mentor	400,851	1,378	56,984	71,911	12,856	29,762	20,800	594,542	12.61
City of Painesville	0	0	0	28,227	0	3,136	4,482	35,845	1.83
Perry Township	0	9,023	0	1,800	0	5,844	1,830	18,497	2.06

Automobile-related retail uses include auto sales, auto repair, instant oil change, gas stations, and carwashes.

Of all surrounding communities, Painesville Township offers the second highest quantity of square footage dedicated to automobile-related retail, equating to 111,684 square feet of retail space, or 6.62 square feet per resident. The City of Mentor offers the highest quantity of automobile-related retail space, equating to 594,542 square feet, of 12.61 square feet per resident (Table 6.3).

Table 6.4 Square Footage of Office Space: 2014 Painesville Township and Nearby Communities		
	Total square feet	Square feet per resident
Painesville Township	148,388	8.79
Concord Township	130,964	7.20
Fairport Harbor Village	13,218	4.25
Grand River Village	38,654	104.75
City of Mentor	1,270,289	26.95
City of Painesville	569,366	29.03
Perry Township	14,543	1.62

Painesville Township offers approximately 148,388 square feet of office space, or 8.79 square feet per resident. In comparison to surrounding communities, the quantity of office space in Painesville Township is moderate. The City of Mentor offers 1,270,289 square feet of office space, or 26.95 square feet per resident and the City of Painesville offers 569,366 square feet of office space, or 29.03 square feet per resident. The large quantity of office space in the City of Painesville is due to the presence of many Lake County government offices. (Table 6.4)

Table 6.5 Square Footage of Retail Space for Indoor Recreation: 2014 Painesville Township and Nearby Communities				
	Social Hall/Banquet Facility	Enclosed Amusements	Total square feet	Square feet per resident
Painesville Township	5,810	61,968	67,778	4.02
Concord Township	2,400	0	2,400	0.13
Fairport Harbor Village	17,887	8,756	26,643	8.57
Grand River Village	0	0	0	0
City of Mentor	35,634	158,993	194,627	4.13
City of Painesville	43,003	0	43,003	2.19
Perry Township	0	0	0	0

In Painesville Township, there is 67,778 square feet of retail space for indoor recreation, or 4.02 square feet per resident. Such uses may include social halls/banquet facilities, movie theaters, bowling alleys, or family fun centers. Of all surrounding communities, the City of Mentor offers the largest quantity of space for these uses, equating to approximately 194, 627 square feet (Table 6.5).

Table 6.6 Square Footage of Retail Space for Miscellaneous Goods & Services: 2014 Painesville Township and Nearby Communities							
	Bank	Funeral home	Child Care	Animal hospital	Lodging	Total square feet	Square feet per resident
Painesville Township	37,942	0	0	3,283	8,807	50,032	2.97
Concord Township	9,384	0	21,814	10,500	29,554	71,252	3.92
Fairport Harbor Village	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Grand River Village	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
City of Mentor	138,423	33,495	35,980	2,049	273,582	483,529	10.26
City of Painesville	67,723	23,801	3,120	7,234	6,778	108,656	5.54
Perry Township	1,764	0	0	0	0	1,764	0.20

Retail uses in the miscellaneous category include banks, funeral homes, child care, animal hospitals and lodging. Painesville Township offers approximately 37,942 square feet of banks, 3,283 square feet for veterinary clinics, and 8,807 square feet for lodging (Table 6.6).

Retail in Painesville Township and Surrounding Communities

The City of Mentor, the largest city in Lake County and the sixth largest retail center in Ohio, is just west of Painesville Township. Retailers in Mentor that offer products not available in Painesville Township, or in a more attractive setting, draw shoppers from Painesville Township and the surrounding area.



As Mentor pulls in retail revenue from Painesville Township residents, conditions along the U.S. Route 20 (Mentor Avenue) retail strip in the Township could actually be pushing shoppers away. Most retail centers and buildings along U.S. Route 20 were built before 1980, potentially lacking aesthetic amenities found in newer developments in other communities.

On the east side of Painesville Township, light industrial uses and mechanical commercial uses line North Ridge Road (U.S. Route 20) just east of the Grand River. Retail space once occupied by a Giant Eagle supermarket in a shopping plaza on the northwest corner of the Bacon and U.S. Route 20 intersection



is now occupied by an antique market. There is no supermarket that serves the NE region of the Township, which is also the region with the greatest potential for development. The closest supermarket is an IGA store in Perry Township, about two miles (3 kilometers) east of the North Ridge/Bacon/Bowhall intersection. The Township will continue to promote the establishment of a grocery store for this region.

Major barriers to retail development in Painesville Township include:

City of Mentor: One of the largest retail centers in Ohio is adjacent to Painesville Township, and retail businesses tend to agglomerate, working together to capture a potentially large customer base.

Madison Township: The presence of a Wal-Mart Supercenter will attract other national retailers to Madison Township. As seen in Mentor, retail uses tend to agglomerate.

Lack of land: Most commercial zoned land along Mentor Avenue inside the Township is developed. It is recommended that rezoning be examined for some industrial land for more beneficial development.

Minimum parking requirements: Small, shallow commercial parcels along Mentor Avenue are difficult to develop or redevelop if a large number of parking spaces is required for a retail use. If the potential buildable area of a lot is relatively small, then development or redevelopment may be unfeasible.

Return on investment: Leasing and redeveloping a retail site, or retrofitting an existing obsolete shopping center, may not be as lucrative as building new on a greenfield beyond the Township.

A major commitment to make commercial districts in the Township attractive and unique must be made in order to create a retail environment that will not only curb retail leakage and draw customers from beyond the community, but also create a unique identity for the Township. Actions can include, but not be limited to:

Creating a pedestrian-oriented environment for Mentor Avenue. Amend the zoning resolution to require commercial buildings along Mentor Avenue to be placed on the sidewalk by the street, rather than placed behind a large parking lot. The commercial area of Mentor Avenue through the Township should be more than just an extension of the commercial strip from the City of Mentor. The U.S. Route 20 redevelopment program will help to achieve this goal.

Making small parcels more attractive for development and redevelopment. Reduce parking requirements for commercial uses on existing smaller parcels, and provide for a minimum building envelope that will make developing a small property economically feasible.

Beautifying commercial districts in the Township. Implement strict sign and architectural design regulations, including billboard restrictions. Implement a two to three year amortization period, allowing billboard and business owners to amortize and replace their older nonconforming signs. Prohibit fluorescent, garish, excessively dark, or excessively vivid or bright primary colors on building walls. Place public art installations at highly visible locations.

Re-evaluating minimum parking requirements. Lowering minimum parking space requirements may make outparcel development more feasible at older shopping centers. Land now occupied by unused and unmaintained parking lots have the potential for development and new retail uses. Parking lot reuse has occurred at the Great Lakes Mall and Shoregate Shopping Center.

Promoting a lively streetscape in the Lakeview Bluffs project. Amend the zoning resolution for retail and commercial uses that generate a high level of customer traffic throughout the day to occupy pedestrian-friendly areas.

6.5 Funding Economic Development

Retailers establish a business at a location because a market exists for a product or service they offer. Incentives are not required to lure a new retail business, and few government agencies in the United States offer direct incentives to retailers. However, they may fund general improvements such as streetscape beautification and new infrastructure, to create an environment that is more attractive to retail businesses. Tax Increment Financing (“TIF”) districts, where improvements are funded with bonds that are paid back from the revenue of increased property taxes directly resulting from those improvements, are also used to fund improvements that will attract retail development. A TIF district should be considered for the Mentor Avenue area and the proposed Lakeview Bluffs development, funding improvements such as landscaping, sidewalks, improved access management, and acquisition of underutilized and decrepit commercial properties.

Use of incentives and other government assistance, such as property acquisition through eminent domain, should not be directed at specific retail businesses. Such incentives amount to a local government subsidy of a retailer that will compete with established merchants, giving it an unfair advantage in the marketplace. Incentives should not be offered to national retailers that would probably be established in the community even if such a benefit were not offered. Incentives should also not be offered for retail projects that may hurt shopping districts in surrounding communities.

It is recommended that economic development funds be used to make an area more attractive to retail businesses through infrastructure or streetscape improvements, nonconforming sign removal, façade restoration in older pedestrian-oriented business districts, and the retrofitting of vacant or underperforming retail centers into pedestrian-oriented urban villages or upscale lifestyle centers.

If offered, industry recruitment and incentive efforts should be concentrated in the skilled manufacturing sector, particularly business sectors that are growing and have an established agglomeration in the area. For instance, aircraft parts, medical equipment and precision machinery may be suitable uses. These types of businesses, which usually offer high salaries to their workers, may be attracted to the region where there is an agglomeration of like manufacturers, and an available pool of skilled workers. Incentives for low-end and/or relocation-prone businesses, such as call centers, should be strongly discouraged.

Incentives should only be considered when a business offers jobs with an average salary at or above the median per-capita income, the business does not potentially harm the environment or quality of life for residents, outstanding architectural and site design is

recognized, and property owners would not be burdened with a tax increase or reduction in services, resulting from the incentive. Incentives used to lure industrial and professional employers from other communities in the region, with a zero-sum gain outcome for the area, is strongly discouraged. Luring employers from other communities in the region should only be considered when it would be impossible for them to expand at their existing location, and a new site in Painesville Township would allow the business to grow and increase their workforce.

Funding is available from various sources, including the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). HUD offers a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program for various projects, including economic development pursuits. This type of funding should be explored for the Township and applied to areas that exhibit the greatest need.

6.6 Light Industrial Development

Establishing additional light industry within Painesville Township may benefit the Township by providing additional jobs and an increased tax base. There are locations within the Township that may be appropriate for such businesses.

Light industrial and manufacturing operations are located throughout the Township, but the Blackbrook Road and Callendar Boulevard corridors are prime examples of small-scale manufacturing or industrial regions with small to medium size operations. Blackbrook Road runs parallel to SR 2, giving the businesses along the road excellent visibility.

The second location that light industrial has been developing is along Lake Shore Boulevard/Singer Road in NW section of Painesville Township by the Grand River Village. This area is served well by SR 44 which gives easy access to SR 2 and Interstate 90. There are also several heavy industries that exist in the area. Recently, a short line railroad was restarted to serve them.

6.7 Agritourism

Agritourism includes any agriculturally-based operation or activity that brings visitors to the location of the given activity. Examples of such operations or activities include, but are not limited to: wineries, nurseries, farm stands.

Communities within Lake County, such as Madison Township, are establishing businesses that fall under the category of agritourism. Such businesses may promote local business within Painesville Township, while allowing the community to maintain its rural character.

Ways in which this industry can be expanded upon should be discussed and plans should be implemented to promote such activities.

6.8 Utilizing Natural Resources

Painesville Township is bordered by Lake Erie, the Grand River and other valuable natural resources that may provide the foundation for economic development opportunities. It is recommended that the Township capitalize on these natural resources to encourage economic growth within the community. For instance, recreation-oriented businesses, such as kayak rentals and bait shops, should be encouraged to locate along appropriate areas of the Grand River and Lake Erie. Upon attracting such businesses, complementary businesses may also locate in Painesville Township.

6.9 Smart Growth and Economic Development

Recognizing the importance of economic development issues and their role in smart growth, the Local Government Commission developed a set of 14 principles specifically focused on economic development. The Ahwahnee Principles for Economic Development (Local Government Commission, 1991) promote the following:

1. Integrated approach
2. Vision and inclusion
3. Poverty reduction
4. Local focus
5. Industry clusters
6. Wired communities
7. Long-term investment
8. Human investment
9. Environmental responsibility
10. Corporate responsibility
11. Compact development
12. Livable communities
13. Distinctive communities
14. Regional collaboration

6.10 Goals & Objectives

ED-1 Smart growth principles will be part of the foundation for economic development in Painesville Township.

ED-1-01 Seek a long-term investment strategy that builds on local competitive advantages, protects the natural environment, increases social equity, and is capable of succeeding in the global marketplace.

- ED-1-02 Take part in a larger, regionally coordinated economic development planning strategy, which includes businesses, officials and residents from the Township and surrounding areas.
- ED-1-03 Support local efforts for the utilization of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding in economic development efforts.
- ED-1-04 Encourage businesses that draw on local advantages to serve local and national markets.
- ED-1-05 Evaluate publicly supported economic development programs, and incentives on their long-term benefits and impacts, rather than on short-term job or revenue increases.
- ED-1-06 Direct economic development investments towards non-polluting or green industries that maintain or improve, not harm, the environmental and public health of the Township.
- ED-1-07 Both locally-owned and out-of-town businesses should participate in the stewardship of the community, by respecting and protecting the built and natural environment, providing workers with good pay and benefits, and a good work environment, and promoting local culture.
- ED-1-08 Encourage “shop local” incentives and “veteran-owned” small businesses.

ED-2 Smaller-scale, high-quality commercial development will be encouraged to serve the needs of local residents and create a balanced tax base.

- ED-2-01 Encourage the establishment of a fully functioning grocery store in the northeast region of the Township.
- ED-2-02 Encourage the establishment of more sit-down restaurants in areas of the Township where they are scarce.
- ED-2-03 Encourage the redevelopment and/or retrofitting of underutilized, but otherwise ideally located shopping centers, into new village centers.
- ED-2-04 Consider the use of TIF zones to fund improvements to the Mentor Avenue/U.S. Route 20 commercial corridor that will increase property value and market desirability, such as utility line burial, identity and public art programs, access management improvements, sidewalks, sign removal, and landscaping improvements.

- ED-2-05 Work to make smaller parcels more attractive for development and redevelopment. Reduce parking requirements for commercial uses on existing smaller parcels, and provide for a minimum building envelope that will make developing a small property economically feasible.
- ED-2-06 Work to provide a wide range of goods and services to residents and businesses throughout the township by encouraging appropriate retail development in areas where demand warrants it, infrastructure supports it, and it will not hurt adjacent residential areas. Consider rezoning an appropriate site in the eastern end of the township for a new, high-quality supermarket.
- ED-2-07 Use financial incentives and government programs only to help revitalize existing but threatened retail districts, or pursue opportunities for development in new pedestrian-oriented urban villages.
- ED-3 Painesville Township will capitalize on its natural resources to foster economic growth within the community.**
- ED-3-01 Upon establishing recreational areas in the Township, encourage complementary businesses to locate in the Township.
- ED-3-02 Promote tourism to the Township by utilizing natural resources, such as Lake Erie and the Grand River.