

# Ohio Rural Mobility Innovation Cluster

Economic Development Administration

FY 2021 American Rescue Plan Act  
Build Back Better Regional Challenge  
Notice of Funding Opportunity

Submitted by the Village of Johnstown, Ohio  
October 19, 2021

# Section 1

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## Project Narrative

### Coalition Members

Our coalition supporting the Ohio Rural Mobility Innovation Cluster (ORMIC) is comprised of seven rural Ohio communities spanning three counties and over 500 square miles, each with a population less than 50,000. All of the communities are rural in nature being spatially separated from large metropolitan regions. Our coalition includes the Village of Johnstown, City of Mount Vernon, City of Newark, City of Heath, Village of Granville, Village of Utica, and the Village of Sunbury. Each community within our coalition understands that transportation plays a vital role in the future sustainability of their town. The coalition members are served by three separate and distinct transit providers funded by the County Commissioners and through Federal Highway Administration.

Johnstown will serve as a lead institution and be responsible for the execution of the BBBRC grant. Each coalition community will assist in the execution of the grant by working with Johnstown to deliver the outcomes described in this program.

### Project Vision

**A Call to Action:** As the traditional transportation industry goes through a disruptive time, we believe there is significant opportunity to deploy today's and tomorrow's mobility options to provide a higher quality of life and economic opportunity for our community members. We believe there is significant opportunity to promote innovation during this disruptive time, adding meaningful jobs and economic development to make our region more sustainable and equitable.

**Our Vision:** The Ohio Rural Mobility

Innovation Cluster (ORMIC) will develop a regionally focused rural mobility ecosystem that connects our people to our region's employment centers, education, and essential services to foster innovation in the emerging mobility industry.

**Goals:** Our goals for the project are both ambitious and realistic, and were developed as a guide to continually focus the projects toward the outcomes that we are working to accomplish.

- A strong, capable, and skilled workforce to lead the region into a new economy.
- A stable, resilient, and robust regional economic base.
- A leading-edge, agile, and future-forward mobility innovation ecosystem.

**Objective:** The rural character of our region makes it prime for economic opportunity, but also presents challenges in linking people and commerce to the growth and opportunity needed to prosper. The approach to address the challenge is straightforward: focus on connectivity. This effort will connect our region's workforce to our region's employment centers; connect people to the education and skills needed to thrive in today's economy; connect people to the amenities our region offers to sustain a high quality of life (such as healthcare, parks, and childcare); and connect mobility innovators with an environment appropriate to spur innovation.

**Strategies:** The first strategy is the development of a regional mobility hub network that promotes seamless movement across transportation modes to bridge connectivity gaps and expand access to all of the region's population. Second, the creation of a mobility business incubator that fosters growth and innovation of the components, modes, and services associated with emerging mobility. Third, an integration

with the multimodal digital trip planning and optimization system (currently underway) to pair mobility users with available mobility services.

**Component 1 - Rural Connected Mobility System:** Our vision will develop one regional mobility hub and six local mobility hubs to create an interconnected, mobility network through various modes of transportation and technology. A mobility hub is a recognizable place that offers different and connected modes of transit as well as enhanced facilities and information features to attract and benefit the traveler.

A mobility hub is designed and organized to optimize access between modes, including human-powered, automated, and shared modes, as well as provide extra transport-related and digital services. Our mobility hubs will have four key characteristics:

1. Co-location of public and shared modes,
2. Space to support choice of modes outside of privately-owned automobiles,
3. An electronic kiosk and wayfinding system to plan trips within the wider network and provide travel information,
4. A public space and asset for the local community.

The regional mobility hub network will have a dramatic impact by elevating the current quality of life of those living and working in the region. Those impacts include but are not limited to:

1. **Smarter sustainable transport** for sustainable and equitable modes reducing the dominance of the private car and associated problems of congestion, carbon emissions, and air quality.
2. **Convenient multi-modal trips and improved accessibility** with the possibility of seamless connectivity between modes such as public transit, shared services, and

micromobility.

3. **Choice of modes** that provides travelers with a variety of options to access jobs, education, and quality of life amenities.
4. **Filling public transit gaps** that are common in rural areas by focusing on first mile/last mile connectivity to the intercity transport system.
5. **Improving safety and comfort** by offering a dedicated area for layover and mode transfer.
6. **Improved public realm** for the benefit of pedestrians, cyclists and business owners.
7. **Advancing “new mobility” benefits** such as shared, electrified, connected, and autonomous modes to be future-forward and capture the benefit of new mobility as it develops.

Our coalition of communities share a desire to redevelop legacy brownfield and promote shovel-ready sites that enhance each community, recognizing the need to redevelop these sites into productive, job creating facilities. Unfortunately, the high cost of remediation has stifled any impactful change. Our project will invest in upgraded water, sewer, and broadband infrastructure to ensure sustainability and viability of the property.

Each mobility hub will be located along a major US or state roadway. The roadway network we have identified carries a majority of vehicular traffic in each community, therefore maximizing the benefits of the mobility hub location, including efficient and reliable transportation options. In addition to our robust roadway network, our hubs will have access to the future passenger rail system as proposed in Amtrak’s Connects US intercity passenger rail solution. A proposed corridor between Cleveland, Columbus, and Cincinnati will serve the region and connect to the mobility hub system.

Active transportation is a key contributor to the health and well-being of our region. The region is directly connected to the Central Ohio Greenway system. This network of trails and paths includes over 230 miles of trails for everyone to explore parks, neighborhoods, rivers, and rural communities.

**Component 2 - Mobility Factory Innovation Center (MFIC):** Located in Johnstown is a redevelopment opportunity to re-purpose a 30 acre facility to create jobs, attract new cutting-edge advanced mobility industry companies, and help drive economic development in the region and state. This site has a 50,000 square foot building and eleven other structures which will be converted into high-tech laboratories and micro manufacturing facilities. This project will re-purpose existing facilities to become an epicenter of innovation for new mobility modes and technologies. The center will support entrepreneurs and start-ups in their effort to innovate and create businesses in the mobility industry.

This requires collaboration and support from both public and private organizations who recognize the critically important role this facility and staff will play in accomplishing these community-minded objectives.

The MFIC will help mobility entrepreneurs develop products and services by connecting them with talent, space, capital, concept testing, funding, and the resources needed to launch and commercialize their products. The MFIC will establish partnerships with other Ohio organizations who support innovation, entrepreneurship, and economic growth.

Organizations located at the MFIC will have access to internationally recognized air and ground mobility companies in Ohio. Automotive innovators rely on DriveOhio to bring partners to the table, while aviation innovators rely on FlyOhio to tap organizations

to support them during the design phase.

Ohio's robust infrastructure supports supply chains, test markets, and partners. Our coalition communities are eager to support smart vehicle initiatives that interconnect and facilitate the improvement of quality of life including jobs, education/ training, and essential services such as health care.

**Component 3:** Redevelopment of Arvin-Meritor (Heath) site including environmental investigation, brownfield remediation including water, sewer, broadband, and construction of a mobility hub.

**Component 4:** Redevelopment of the Lil Bear Shopping Center (Newark) site including environmental investigation, brownfield remediation including water, sewer, broadband and the construction of a mobility hub.

**Component 5:** Redevelopment of the downtown gas station (Sunbury) site including environmental investigation, brownfield remediation including water, sewer, broadband, and construction of a mobility hub.

**Component 6:** Extension of water, sewer and broadband infrastructure to the SR-16 Business Park (Granville) and construction of a mobility hub.

**Component 7:** Redevelopment of the former Siemens Energy (Mt. Vernon) site including environmental investigation, brownfield remediation including water, sewer, broadband and the construction of a mobility hub.

**Component 8:** Development of a manufacturing business park (Utica) site including environmental investigation, brownfield remediation including water, sewer, broadband, and construction of a mobility hub.

**Multi Modal Trip Planning & Trip Optimization Technology** - The Village of Johnstown has already begun developing new technology through a \$250,000 grant from the Licking County Area Transportation

Study to develop an open-source trip planning and trip optimization technology. Three use cases have been identified: non-emergency medical transportation, employment/labor, and secondary education. The technology will connect passengers and mobility providers, while also communicating the steps/resources needed to reach the destination. Senator Sherrod Brown's congressionally directed spending submission to the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on THUD for \$900,000 to fund the completion of the project is currently pending approval.

### **Economic Opportunity**

**COVID Impacts:** In 2019 (pre-COVID), unemployment in the project area was 3.8%, and labor force participation was 65%. Unemployment almost doubled to 6.5% in 2020, and remains at 5.2% today, with an estimated drop in labor force participation to 61%. Of those unemployed, 42% are from the transportation, warehousing, and manufacturing industries (compared to 16% nationwide).

**Economic Trends:** From 2015-2020, the project area experienced a 14.9% growth in employment, compared to 1.9% for the State of Ohio, and 6.7% nationwide. Population growth during the same period was 3.8% and estimated to continue at a 3.9% rate from 2020-2025. The jobs multiplier is over 3, and our target of 1,500 jobs from the MFIC can leverage an additional 3,000 jobs in the region.

**Accelerating Growth:** The project area is adjacent to the northeast Columbus metro region, which has been growing continuously over the past 30 years. Companies such as Abercrombie & Fitch, Bob Evans Restaurants, Justice Clothing, Big Lots, and Commercial Vehicle Group (vehicle component manufacturer) are headquartered in the area, along with recent construction and investments from the tech industry

including Google, Facebook, and Amazon. The Village of Johnstown and the western portion of Licking County are in the path of this growth, and the mobility hub project will better connect the rural areas to the expanding economic opportunity, and work to provide growing businesses with the skilled workforce necessary to thrive.

Understanding that growth is likely coming to the region, the introduction of the MFIC and the mobility hub system will be a key mobility asset that can attract and cluster growth, providing mobility options for our region's residents, and ensuring equitable and accessible access to the region's employment, education, and quality of life amenities needed for today's economy. Our target is for the mobility cluster to generate at least 1,500 job opportunities between the MFIC and our community brownfield redevelopment sites. We have outlined the populations that will benefit in Appendix IV. Due to the complexity and technical nature of the jobs being created in this emerging market, the annual GDP growth is difficult to quantify. However, during the execution of Phase I of this grant, we will be able to better understand the economic effects of job creation in this cluster.

This project is in line with the goals of the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission's (MORPC) newly adopted CEDS, with a focus on connectivity and transportation.

### **Accessibility of Matching Funds**

Partnering with technical training centers, local universities, local hospitals, and businesses that will be directly impacted by the benefits of our project, we will be able to secure up to 20% of our matching funds required for this project. Our matching funds will come from an in-kind contribution of properties within coalition communities for the construction of mobility hubs as well as seeking other funding sources from the Ohio Department

of Development, JobsOhio, private business entities and each coalition community. The Village of Johnstown as well as our coalition members have been successful in securing grant funds for large scale projects such as this. Johnstown alone has secured \$20 million in non-Village funds for various road projects park improvements and water and sewer infrastructure in the past ten years. We will work with philanthropic groups such as the Mary E Babcock Foundation, Knox Area Foundation and Licking County Foundation to supplement funds needed for our cluster.

### Barriers to Implementation

We recognize that implementation may be stalled or impeded by factors outside the control of the coalition. The one barrier to implementation will be lack of cooperation by private property owners. To mitigate this issue, the Johnstown Community Improvement Corporation (JCIC) will be ready to lead negotiations with property owners. The JCIC will assist in accepting property donation for use by 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization. Utilizing the Johnstown CIC we can insure the property is controlled by a not-for-profit entity and will be eligible for federal, state, and local redevelopment funds.

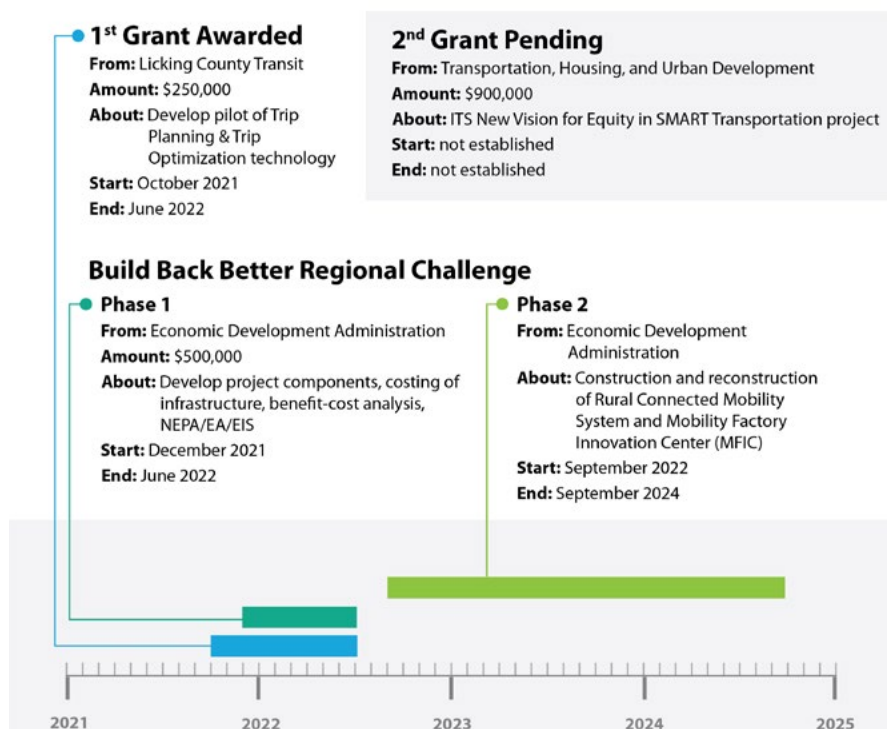
Another barrier to implementation is the local election cycle in Ohio that happens every two years. This may provide an opportunity for local elected officials to stop the progress of our project for reasons not yet known. In order to mitigate this risk we will continue to engage the community leaders to inform them of the project benefits that are expected to be achieved within the impacted communities.

Although we cannot determine the extent to which COVID-19 will impact our project, we are capable

in navigating the complex area in which we will keep our communities safe as well as our contractors, consultants, staff and visitors during phase one (PI) and phase two (PII) of the grant.

### Project Timeline

Our PI project timeline includes implementation of funding within 30 days of receipt of notice to proceed. We expect to utilize PI funding by the time the PII application is due, to ensure our project vision can be executed as envisioned today. We will use PI funding to inform our decision-making process as we prepared to submit for PII. Since PI money is not available for construction, we will be using the funds for professional services such as NEPA review, surveys, cost estimation, and other similar due diligence functions. Additionally we will use PI funds to develop designs for the mobility hub within each community. If awarded PII funding, work will begin approximately 60 days after notice of award. Construction and reconstruction is expected to take 36 months, well within the time frame as stated in the NOFO. It also gives flexibility for delays due to COVID-19 or other external factors outside of our control.





## Section 2 - Appendix 1

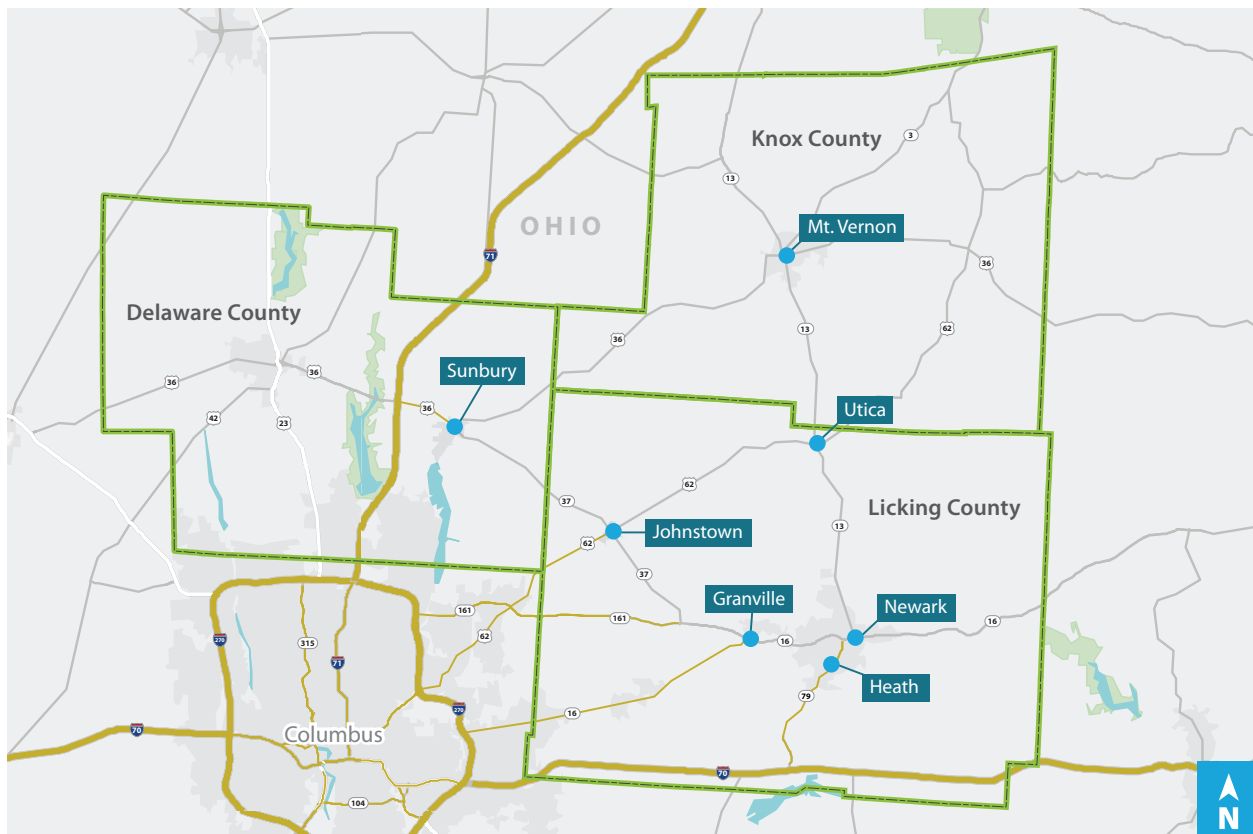
# Regional Assets

The regional growth cluster is diverse in assets, with each community offering a service, access to employers, medical facilities, job training opportunities, or amenities that provide a fulfilling quality of life. All of the assets listed in the following section work together in a network to serve and support community members. By leveraging the existing regional assets and coordinating efforts across counties there will be more impact for more individuals to access employers, healthcare, and education opportunities.

### Governments/Municipalities

#### Columbus Metro Region

The Ohio Rural Mobility Innovation Cluster (ORMIC) region is directly east and partly included in one of the nation's fastest-growing large metropolitan areas and the fastest in the Midwest, according to the latest population estimates released by the U.S. Census Bureau in 2020. Among the 51 metro areas that the bureau estimated to have more than 1 million people in 2020, Columbus ranked 17th in population growth since 2010.



## Ohio Rural Mobility Innovation Cluster Village of Johnstown, Component 1 & 2 Map



### Village of Johnstown

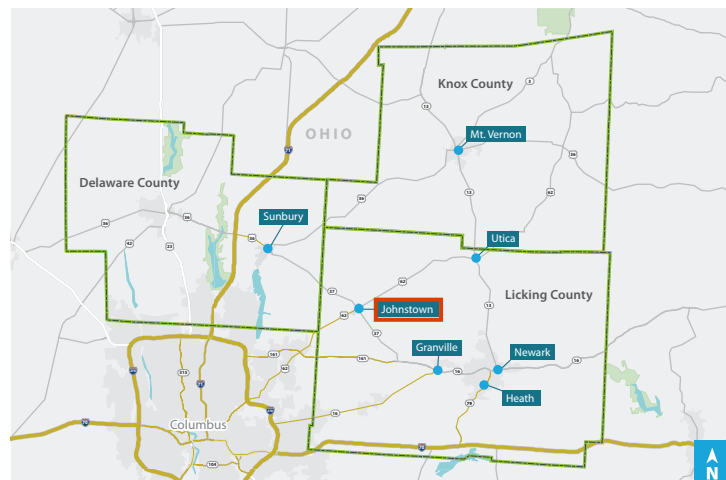
The Village of Johnstown has a population of 5,182 people. Johnstown is an innovation leader and centrally based in the region. The Village will support the creation of the Rural Connector Mobility Innovation Cluster by collaborating with private and public entities to create economic growth within the region.

The Village of Johnstown will focus on:

**Component 1:** Creation of a regional mobility hub including water, wastewater and broadband infrastructure

**Component 2:** Creation of the Mobility Factory Innovation Center (MFIC)

Johnstown has already begun initial stages of planning for the two components (shown next page).





Mobility Factory Innovation Center Site Rendering

**The Mobility Factory Innovation Center Concept** (shown above) was developed as a collaborative space for learning, building, and testing advanced mobility technologies, modes, services, and concepts. The concept uses the existing industrial buildings on-site, adaptively reused to support a variety of shared amenities such as classrooms, a shared maker space, and leasable business incubator space.

The site is connected by the “loop” test track that offers a dedicated area to test mobility concepts. A smaller loop is dedicated as a

future area to support electric vertical takeoff and landing (eVTOL) aircraft.

The adjacent Johnstown Mobility Hub (renderings shown opposite page) is a key opportunity to both test mobility concepts in a real-world environment and connect to the regional businesses and employment base.

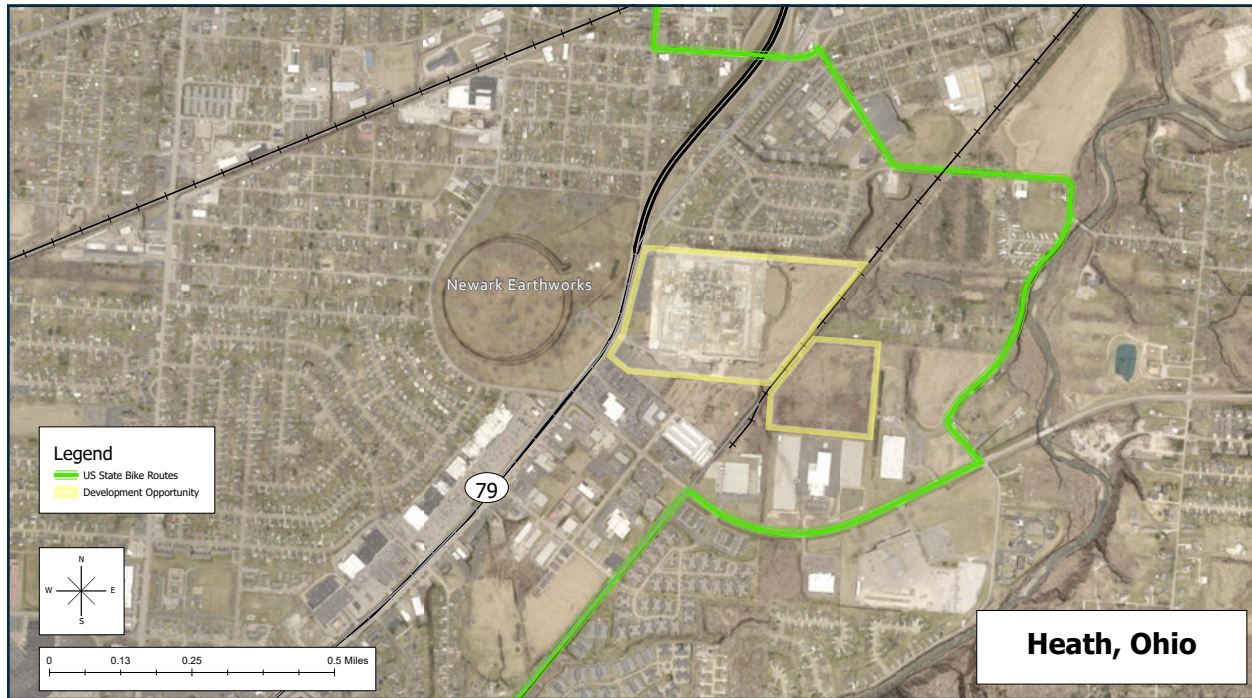


Mobility Hub Concept Rendering



Mobility Hub Concept Rendering

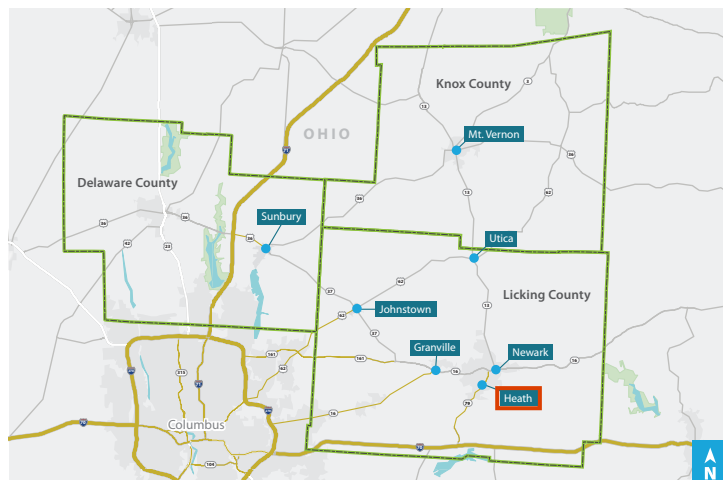
## Ohio Rural Mobility Innovation Cluster City of Heath, Component 3 Map



### City of Heath

The population of the City of Heath is 10,745 people. The main industry is related to Air Force Metrology. Local and county incentive programs combine with pro-business policies to make Heath an attractive home for large and small companies alike. A Community Reinvestment Area, an Enterprise Zone, and Foreign Trade Zone #138 are signatures of the community’s aggressive approach to economic development.

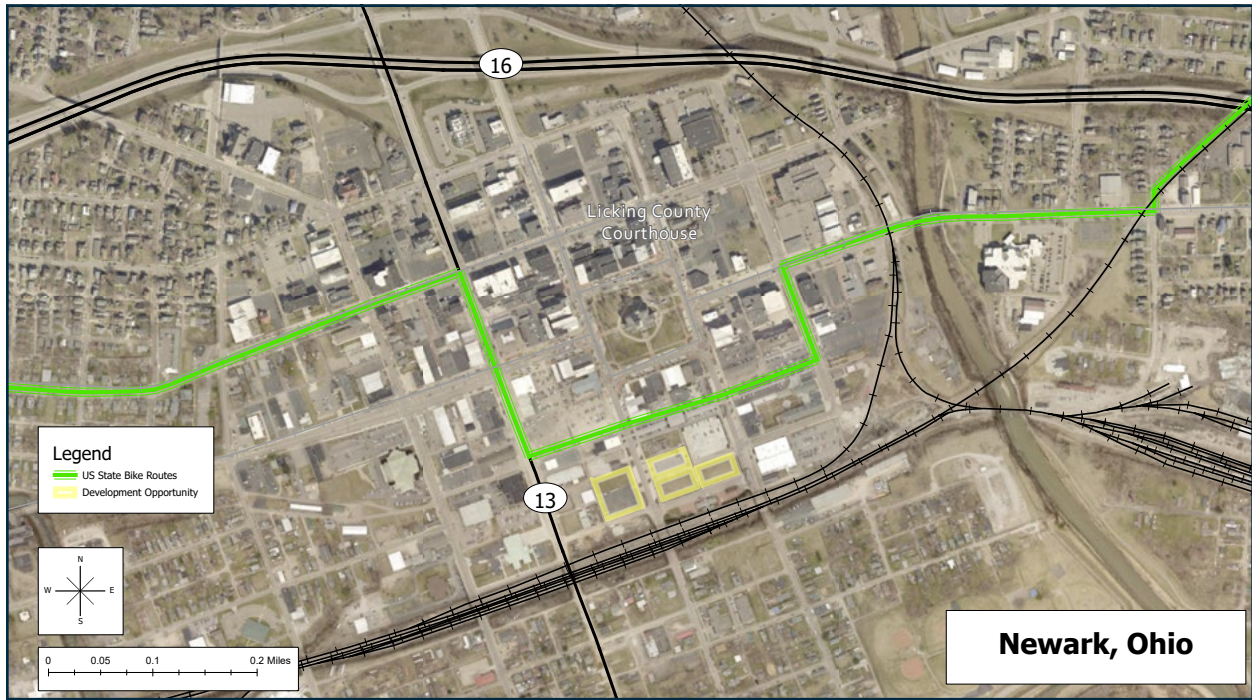
Directly across from the mobility hub site is the Newark Earthworks, one of the largest prehistoric circle earthworks in the country, and a key cultural asset for the region.



The City of Heath will focus on:

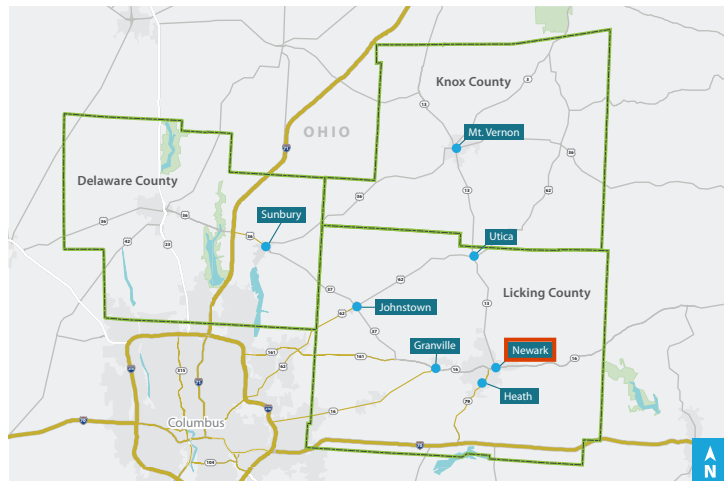
**Component 3:** Redevelopment of Arvin-Meritor site including environmental investigation, brownfield remediation including water, wastewater and broadband infrastructure and the construction of a local mobility hub.

## Ohio Rural Mobility Innovation Cluster City of Newark, Component 4 Map



### City of Newark

The population of Newark is 47,573 people and is the County seat of Licking County. In Newark, some of the main businesses include Holophane, Owens Corning Fiberglass, State Farm Insurance, and Park National Bank. Newark is focused on growth and created the Newark Development Partners (NDP)-a collaborative venture engaging the public and private sectors dedicated to incentivizing investments in Newark. They are committed to expanding the job opportunities and improving mobility and transportation as explained in their Vision 2028 plan.



The City of Newark will focus on:

**Component 4:** Redevelopment of the Lil Bear Shopping Center site including environmental investigation, brownfield remediation including water, sewer, broadband, and the construction of a local mobility hub.

## Ohio Rural Mobility Innovation Cluster Village of Sunbury, Component 5 Map

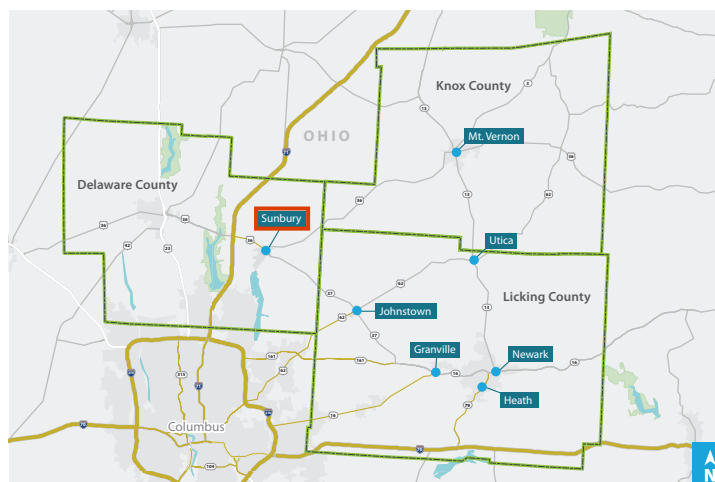


### Village of Sunbury

The Village of Sunbury has a population of 4,389 and is located within Delaware County. This county is expected to grow significantly in the coming years, however Sunbury being on the outskirts of the county is rural.

The Village of Sunbury will focus on:

**Component 5:** Redevelopment of the downtown gas station site including environmental investigation, brownfield remediation including water, sewer, broadband, and construction of a local mobility hub.



## Ohio Rural Mobility Innovation Cluster Village of Granville, Component 6 Map

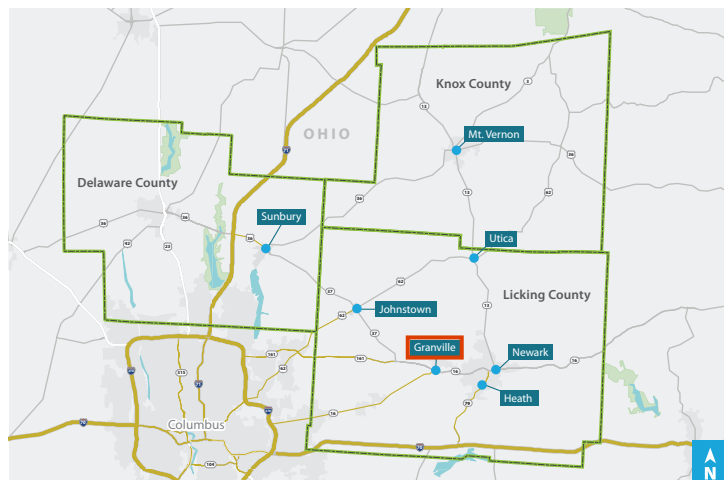


### Village of Granville

The population of Granville is 5,646 people. Granville is home to Denison University, a private liberal arts school. The Village has managed to retain their distinctive small town/rural character without the suburban sprawl so common throughout central Ohio. Village citizens have also worked cooperatively to adopt and update a comprehensive plan that will manage growth while preserving the historic and rural character of the Village and the surrounding Township.

The Village of Granville will focus on:

**Component 6:** Extension of water, wastewater, and broadband infrastructure to the SR-16 Business Park, and construction of a local mobility hub.



## Ohio Rural Mobility Innovation Cluster City of Mount Vernon, Component 7 Map

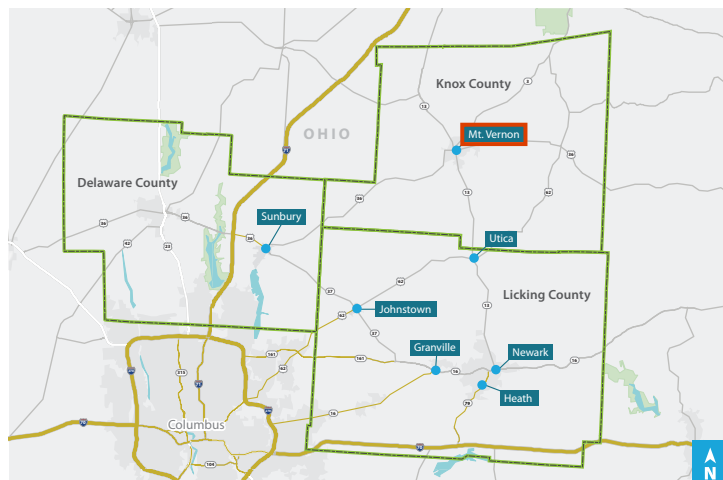


### City of Mount Vernon

The population of Mount Vernon is 16,667 people. Mount Vernon’s main industries are manufacturing, health care and social assistance, and education services. Mt. Vernon has historically found ways to invent, reuse, and re-purpose aging infrastructure. Their citizens work together as a community to take care of neighbors, friends, family, and visitors to the city.

The City of Mount Vernon will focus on:

**Component 7:** Redevelopment of the former Siemens Energy site including environmental investigation, brownfield remediation including water, wastewater, and broadband infrastructure and the construction of a local mobility hub.



## Ohio Rural Mobility Innovation Cluster Village of Utica, Component 8 Map



### Village of Utica

The population of Utica is 1,760 people. General headquarters (HQ) of the Velvet Ice Cream Company located south of the Village. Utica had the largest hand blown window glass factory in the U.S. due to natural occurring silica and natural gas.

The Village of Utica will focus on:

**Component 8:** Development of a manufacturing business park site including environmental investigation, brownfield remediation including water, wastewater and broadband infrastructure and the construction of a local mobility hub.



## Healthcare

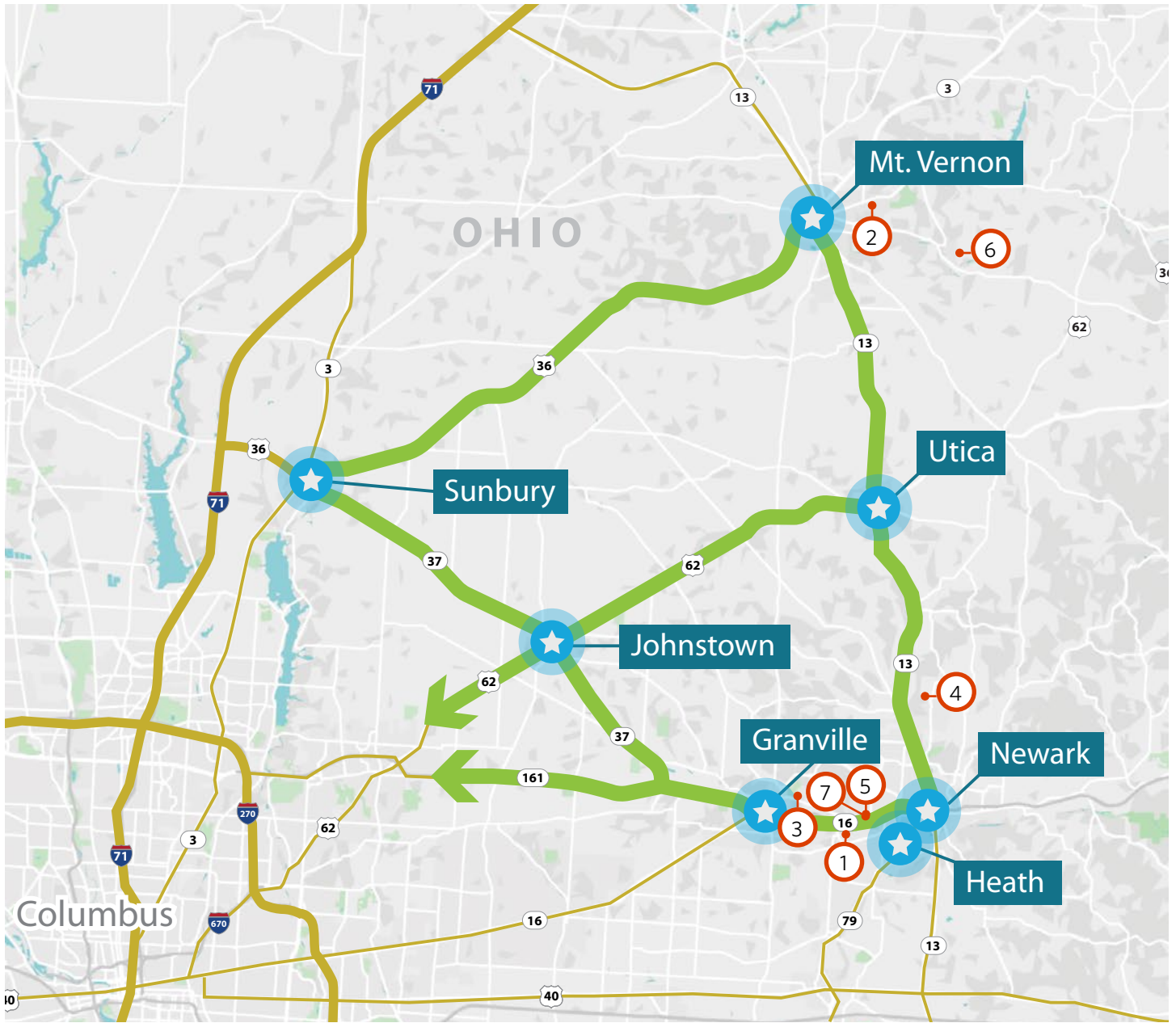
- 1. Licking Memorial Hospital** is in Newark, OH, and has 2,100 employees. The hospital has a strong desire to expand transportation services to more patients and increase health care for residents. To do this, they recently implemented their own transportation system by staffing cars to pick up and drop off patients. Although this approach was innovative, the hospital needs assistance to grow their service to provide transit to their growing constituents. As one of the last remaining independent hospitals in the region, Licking Memorial Hospital is an asset to the health and well-being of the community and mobility innovation.
- 2. Knox Community Hospital** is in Mt. Vernon, OH and has 1,028 employees. Just like all front-line workers, the Knox Community Hospital has been a source of information and care for all patients. The hospital collaborated with Knox Public Health to share consistent Covid-19 information.

## Education

- 3. Denison University** is a private liberal arts college located in Granville and established in 1831. This past year, 2,300 undergraduate students attended Denison University. 77% of students came from other states to attend Denison, suggesting an opportunity for the Village of Granville. Denison University will provide support in research and creating best practices for Human Use Approval when creating ORMIC.
- 4. Career and Technology Education Centers of Licking County (C-TEC)** is a public, post-secondary institution that provides short-term career-technical training to adult learners. Their goals include helping business and industry partners build a skilled workforce and providing training for adults to enter high-

wage, in-demand jobs. Training more than 3,500 students and employees each year, these values are central to both economic development and family self-sufficiency. In addition to workforce development and industry training programs, C-TEC provides free adult literacy (ASPIRE/GED) and English as a Second Language (ESOL) classes. Access to reliable transportation is a significant issue for many C-TEC students.

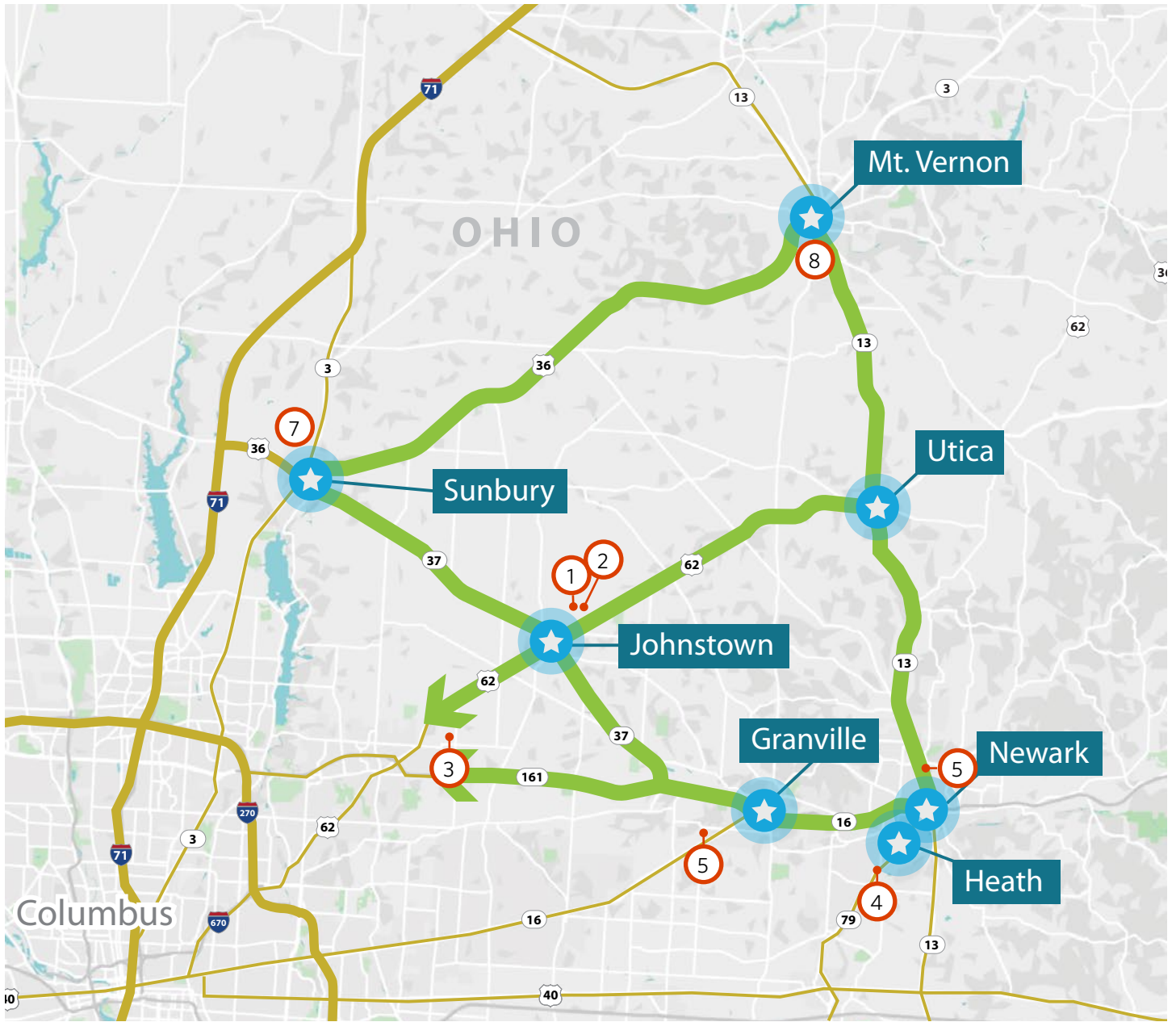
- 5. Central Ohio Technical College (COTC)** opened in 1971 in Newark. It was originally a campus of Ohio State University, but through community efforts became an independent institution. COTC has expanded to serve Coshocton and Knox counties. In the autumn semester of 2020, COTC enrolled a total headcount of 3,042 students.
- 6. Kenyon College** is a private liberal arts college in Gambier, which is just 10 minutes from Mount Vernon. Kenyon has 1,730 undergraduate students among the 1,000-acre campus. Students come from 48 states, with the top three being Ohio, California, and New York. Kenyon has an Office of Community Partnerships which allows the Kenyon community to connect with Knox County.
- 7. Ohio State University Newark (OSU Newark)** is a satellite campus of the Ohio State University located on a 200-acre campus in Newark. More than 2,800 students were enrolled at the university in 2020, where they can take classes in over 200 majors. Of the 88 Ohio counties, 71 are represented in the student body at OSU Newark. The campus is located 39 miles from the main campus of the Ohio State University, providing students with a small-campus feel and all the advantages of a large university.



**Regional Asset Location Map**

## Employers

- 1. Technical Rubber Company (TRC)** is headquartered in Johnstown and employs 155 people. TRC is the global tire & wheel authority that revolutionized the industry with the creation of cold vulcanization technology. That legacy of innovation continues today with TRC's commitment and partnership with the Village of Johnstown. TRC has been in Johnstown since 1939 and supports the economic growth of the community. TRC is prepared to support the growth of the mobility hubs through job opportunities.
- 2. Advanced Mobility Solutions (AMS)** is the newest member of the TRC family of brands. AMS , identifies, evaluates, and commercializes new leading edge mobility solutions which cut across all modes of mobility. AMS is working with both public sector organizations and private sector companies to help advance all forms of mobility to meet the increasing demand for connected, shared, autonomous, and electrified modes of transport. Advanced Mobility Solutions leverages their parent company TRC's 82-year history and expertise in tire service products domain and overall knowledge of the transportation industry as it continues to evolve as a major provider of best-of-breed mobility solutions.
- 3. Abercrombie & Fitch** is headquartered in New Albany with more than 2 million square feet of space for their distribution center. Positions include merchandise processors, power equipment operators, material handlers, and clericals.
- 4. The Boeing Company** is in Heath with a large military and aerospace presence, supporting jobs and economic opportunity in the community. They offer Boeing's Learning Together Program which offers continuing education for employees. Additionally, they are engaged with the community and provide a Junior Achievement program for high school students. At Boeing technicians repair, test and calibrate every type of military aircraft guidance and navigation system.
- 5. Shai-Hess Real Estate** was founded in 2003. Their team of agents focuses on office, industrial, retail, flex, multi-family residential, and land across the state of Ohio.
- 6. Owens Corning** has been operating a plant in Newark since 1880. Owens Corning specializes in, and is considered a "leader in roofing, insulation and fiberglass composites", as well as one of the major employers in Licking County, for 80 years. People in Newark have worked with family members working at Owens Corning from generation to generation.
- 7. Hitachi Astemo Research & Development** is in Sunbury. They develop and manufacture suspension systems for motorcycles, shock absorbers, power steering systems and powertrain pumps for automobiles in the United States.
- 8. Ariel** has been based out of Mount Vernon since 1966. Ariel Corporation is the world's largest manufacturer of separable reciprocating gas compressors utilized by the global energy industry. Ariel employs 561 people in Mount Vernon and is planning to develop a new production facility in Newark.



**Regional Asset Location Map**

## Organizations

- 1. DriveOhio & FlyOhio** is a blend of public and private infrastructure entities that coordinate with advanced mobility technology developers to create a smart transportation system.
- 2. Licking County Transit (LCT)** is the sole public transportation provider for Licking County and provides approximately 110,000 demand-response trips per year. They have a fleet of 38 light transit vehicles and vans which are all equipped with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) ramps or lifts. Based upon the recently completed Transit Development Plan (TDP), LCT recognized the overwhelming demand for the addition of both fixed and deviated route services.
- 3. GROW Licking County** serves as the community's lead economic development organization by enabling business to expand and grow in Licking County. The success of GROW Licking County is seen in the development of 6,000 new jobs and retention of 2,100 jobs.
- 4. Licking County Area Transportation Study (LCATS)** is the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Newark, OH urbanized area and is responsible for continuing cooperative and comprehensive multimodal transportation planning. They recently completed a Coordinated Planning effort that identified the lack of coordination among mobility providers and the need for more real-time information for the traveling public.
- 5. Knox Area Transit (KAT)** Transit provides accessible door-to-door transportation for the residents of Knox County.
- 6. Knox County Area Development Foundation** in Mt. Vernon, whose mission is to help create more jobs of high quality that keep residents financially secure, match good employers to job-ready

workers, and advance efforts to support livable communities throughout Knox County. In response to Covid-19, they are providing grant funding through their Business Disruption Grant (BDG) program to help community businesses. They also are supporting job creation through their ASPECT certification program designed to prepare individuals for careers in manufacturing by teaching necessary skills for the industry.

- 7. The Heath-Newark-Licking County Port Authority** was created in 1995 to take over ownership of the Newark Air Force Base upon closing. Today, it has a three-fold mission of management, development, and solutions for county-wide economic development efforts.

## Parks and Open Space

- 8. The Licking Park District** acquires, manages, preserves, and conserves natural areas within Licking County while protecting wildlife and local history in a manner that enriches communities and provides access to diverse parks, educational opportunities, and health and wellness activities. The District manages over 1,600 acres on thirteen sites across Licking County. They also maintain and co-manage 45 miles of paved multi-use trails.
- 9. Knox County Park District** conserves, manages, and maintains over 1,000 acres of land throughout the county including seven natural park areas, several access points along the beautiful Kokosing and Mohican State Scenic Rivers and numerous scenic hiking trails. In addition, there are several area bike trails, and the Park District offers free educational and recreational opportunities during the year.

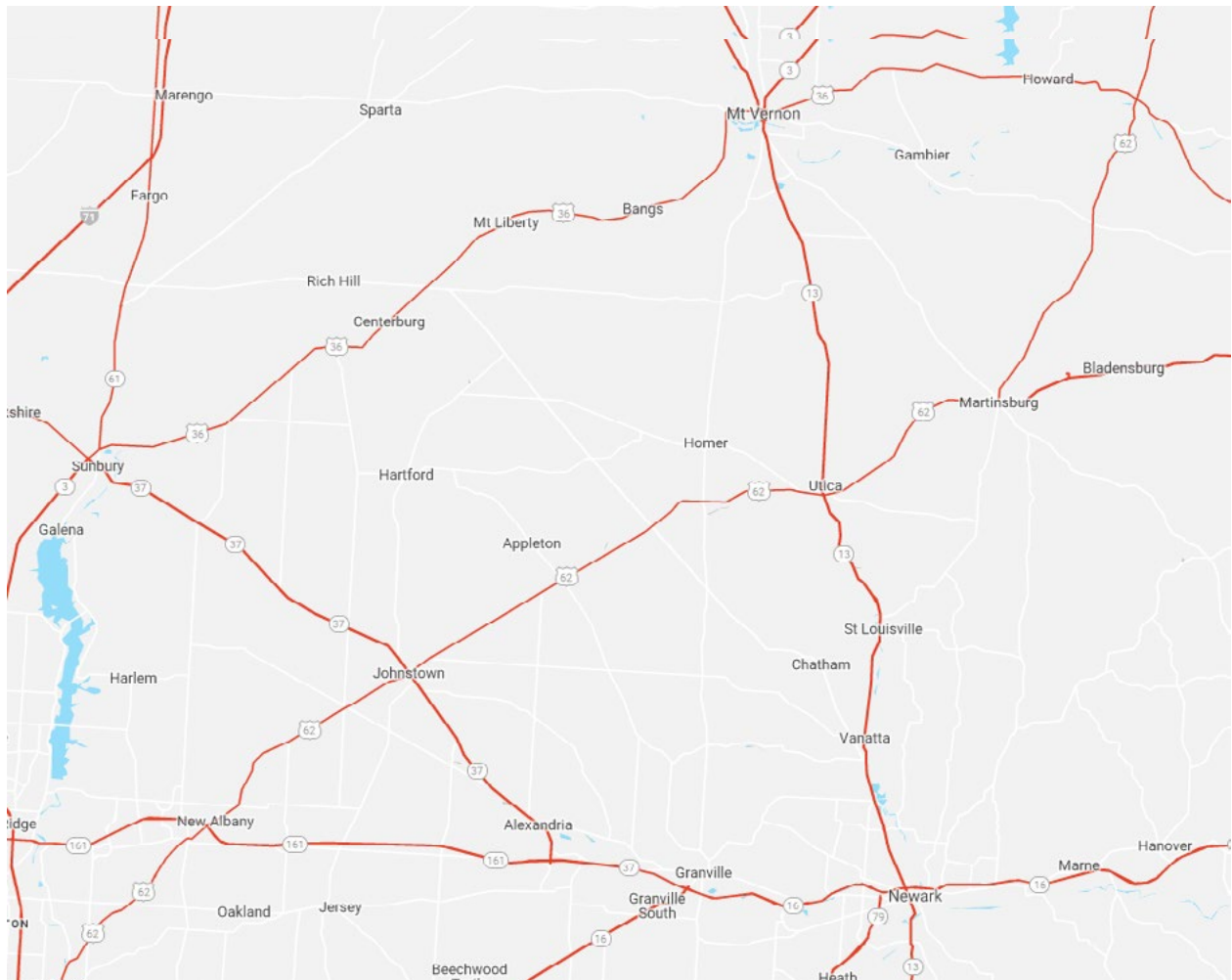
## Surface Transportation Network

There are six major thoroughfares within the ORMIL region, including US Highway (US) 62, US 36 and US 40, State Route (SR) 37, SR 13, SR 79, SR 161, SR 16 and Interstate 70 and Interstate 71. The distribution of these thoroughfares creates convenient travel in the region and several direct connections to Columbus to the west and rural Ohio to the north and east.

## Rail and Air Transportation Network

**John Glenn Columbus International Airport** is an international airport located 20 miles west of the region. It provides 148 non-stop flights to 31 airports via 9 airlines daily.

**Chicago to Columbus and Pittsburgh (CCP)** passenger rail route will re-establish passenger service along existing rail lines, currently owned and operated by freight railroad companies such as CSX and Norfolk Southern.



Regional Transportation Thoroughfare Map

## Section 2 - Appendix 2

# Industry Leadership

The Village of Johnstown proactively contacted Technical Rubber Company Inc. (TRC), an 82-year-old company which manufactures and sells tire & wheel service products all over the world along with industrial repair products and recycling equipment.

Both the Village of Johnstown and TRC share the vision of creating a mobility innovation cluster, and leveraging the cluster to address real-world rural mobility challenges.

Not only has TRC become part of the coalition, but they have also supported the vision with a financial contribution, pending future real-estate contribution, and the CEO personally invited peer business leaders in the region to align and support the initiative. TRC's request has garnered numerous letters of support from those business peers across the region (included).

Employers, especially employers in rural communities, are looking for ways to more effectively recruit and assist potential employees with their personal transportation challenges that are preventing them from being viable candidates for available jobs.

Several factors adding to this dynamic is:

- Providing reliable modes of transportation not reliant upon owning and maintaining a personal vehicle.
- Workforce preparedness, skills needed to be productive in a technology-driven world.
- Alternative mobility options and supporting infrastructure specific to rural communities.

- Economic models to attract providers of alternative mobility options for a dispersed potential workforce in rural communities.
- Specialized “Routes” that create operational efficiencies to support new mobility business models and support efficient travel times for the dispersed workforce to meet employer work schedules without major disruption to their personal lives.

An additional benefit to new modalities of rural mobility is the enhancement of the overall quality of life across the full spectrum of citizens. The ability to access essential human needs such as healthcare, childcare, and basic necessities such as groceries with these new mobility options is paramount. As we see younger people choosing not to own a car, new modalities of transportation in rural areas are increasingly important as we compete for talent. Alternative transportation options are a critical lifestyle option.

The symbiotic benefit is the overall economic impact on the region. The plan set forth, ensures the ability to provide a well-trained and available workforce, which will allow the region to retain numerous large employers who are struggling to fill open job requisitions. It will serve as an attractor for additional investment in the existing facilities operated by these organizations, as well as attract new businesses to locate in the region.

Industry engagement has already begun, and the coalition will continue to learn more about operations of those involved. Engagement for this task will include a high-level assessment and communication plan to set the course for the mobility hub development in PII. The coalition has already assembled several stakeholders for participation in this project as noted in the letters of support. An industry engagement plan will be created so

the innovative technology resulting from this deployment will be effective for the target populations to understand how to access and use the tools, and mobility hub services. One of the major challenges of training and education is reaching the appropriate people to participate in activities such as beta testing, surveys, and test deployment. The strategy is to work with local agencies to reach these populations and assist with the Industry Engagement Plan.

**Enabling Technologies:** We anticipate continued involvement with companies both inside and outside the region to promote development of advanced mobility technologies such as electrification, automation, and connected mobility technologies. These base technologies are anticipated to enable new modes, services, and business models for transportation, providing additional opportunity for innovation and industry growth.

 **Electric**

A vehicle or infrastructure that uses stored or transmitted electricity to power a vehicle instead of traditional internal combustion engines (ICE), usually by means of batteries.

 **Connected**

The ability to communicate information real-time between mobility modes, infrastructure, users, and any other component critical to the movement of people and goods.

 **Autonomous**

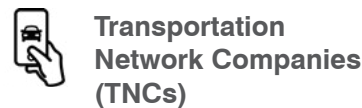
Vehicle automation for the purpose of transporting people and goods that can navigate and operate without assistance from a human driver or operator.

**New Mobility:** Enabling technologies are being applied to modes across the mobility spectrum, including the categories and modes identified below:

**Personal Mobility**



**Passenger Vehicles**



**Transit**



**Goods**



**Air**



## Section 2 - Appendix 3

# Sustainability

The ORMIC has formed a vision and consortium which demonstrates the ability to remain financially viable upon completion of all facets of the Mobility Ecosystem.

One of the main factors in the ORMIC mobility ecosystem is the ability to fill current job openings and develop mobility centric economic development. The rapid transition to new mobility technologies represents an opportunity to embrace new approaches to mobility, technologies, and create a realm of smart mobility jobs.

These new mobility centric companies will create new jobs that generate significant income tax, employer tax and corporate tax revenue. Additionally, the new workforce will live within the ORMIC geography and will also generate significant sales and property taxes.

With the formation of the regional and local mobility hubs, the corresponding mobility ecosystem network, and the development of the Mobility Factory Innovation Center numerous sources of recurring revenue will be generated. This approach will proactively transition the ORMIC region into a globally competitive location for next generation automotive cluster companies and corresponding research and development activities.

What follows are the recurring revenue streams from each of the ORMIC's mobility ecosystem components.

Main Mobility and Satellite Hub Revenue Sources:

- Charging Station Usage Fees
- Facility Access Fees
- Trip Planning & Wayfinding Kiosk Screen Advertising
- Static Display Advertising
- Mixed Use Space Leasing
- Sponsorships
- Storage Locker Fees
- Food & Retail Trucks
- Pop Up Markets
- Bike Storage
- Co-working Space leases
- Mobile Service Fees
- On-site Service Revenue
- Prototype Testing
- Autonomous Track Access
- User Interface Feedback & Testing
- Smart Parking
- Air Station
- Vertipad Access Fees
- Mobility Factory Innovation Center Revenue Sources:
  - Tenant Leases
  - Consulting Fees
  - Corporate Sponsors
  - Professional Services Sponsors
  - State Economic Development Grants
  - University Student Engagement & Training
  - Additional Real Estate Site Develop For Specific Tenant Requests
  - Technology Infrastructure Access
  - Vending & Food Service
  - Corporate Innovation Planning Sessions
  - Corporate Retreats
  - Leadership Development Series
  - Small Business Seminars
  - Open House Events
  - Industry Leadership Consulting
  - Next Generation Upskill Technician Training

The financial sustainability for the ORMIC Mobility Ecosystem is diverse by appealing to a wide range of interested stakeholders which creates stability in the recurring revenue model. The leading-edge innovation and development which will occur will be immensely attractive and demand high end fees for access and participation in a highly desirable ecosystem.

As additional mobility companies are launched it will also provide for access to early-stage investment in these companies from a ORMIC created investment fund that targets critical innovation initiatives.

## Section 2 - Appendix 4

### Equity

Both facets of this effort will serve the project area's underserved populations by providing economic opportunity and access to innovation through the Mobility Factory Innovation Center, and by enabling access to reinforce the project area's workforce needs. The goals for both components of the project are to:

- Connect our region's workforce to our region's employment centers,
- Connect people to the education and skills needed to thrive in today's economy,
- Connect people to the high quality of life and amenities that our region offers.

The potential to introduce innovative approaches to mobility is a key feature of this effort. These approaches will be continuously explored, potentially offering a better level of service and access employment, education, and quality of life amenities to the area's community members.

The importance of transit and accessibility is evident in Licking County's 2020 Transit Development Plan ([link](#)), which highlights the value of the county's transit service to vulnerable community members. The approach for ORMIC will build upon the outreach and engagement already performed in the development of the transit plan, and work to support the desired outcomes of the plan, while supporting better access to the education, employment, and quality of life amenities to the community's vulnerable populations.

Several key underserved populations were identified in the Licking County Transit Plan, which are described below, along with the potential barriers to each group and the potential opportunities to address challenges through this project.

#### Rural Adults

The 2010 US Census identifies 243,103 persons living within the project area, with approximately 58% of those individuals located inside urbanized areas or urbanized clusters, and approximately 41% (+/- 100,000 persons) of those individuals living within rural areas. For rural populations, access to education, employment, and quality of life amenities is often dependent upon a privately-owned vehicle. For the 41% of individuals in the study area, the establishment of the mobility hub network has the potential to offer accessibility options through enhanced transit connections, first mile/last mile access, and ridesharing options to provide better connections to the region. Establishing the network will mean rural residents are not solely dependent upon private vehicles, potentially expanding access to both workforce and employment opportunities.

#### Veterans

The Newark Veteran's Administration Clinic is the only VA clinic within the study area. Along with access to other healthcare amenities such as the Licking Memorial Hospital, our community's veterans deserve the same level of access to the region's quality of life amenities, employment, and education opportunities, regardless of whether they own a vehicle or not. The location of the mobility hub within Newark will expand access to both of the healthcare amenities for veterans, potentially providing access for veterans as far north as Mount Vernon (25 miles away). In addition, the network will provide access to the MFIC in Johnstown, the industrial cluster in New Albany, and the greater Columbus region.

## **People with Disabilities**

The 2015-2019 American Community Survey identified over 27,000 households (30%) in the study area that housed one or more persons with a disability. Given the project area's rural character, the lack of suitable transportation options may prohibit the region's disabled individuals from accessing the healthcare, education, and employment options both inside and outside the region. The mobility needs of the disabled population are more specific than others, which means a variety of mobility options, payment options, and accessibility options must be available. However, the potential expansion of the transit network and the variety of service models available with new mobility approaches could benefit disabled travelers. The need to access employment, education, and quality of life amenities is a need across disadvantaged populations, and the mobility hub network will support greater access to people throughout the county, without regard to a person's ability.

## **Older Adults**

2021 ESRI estimates indicate approximately 18% of the project area's population is aged 65 and older, accounting for approximately 47,000 individuals. Older adults may not have the digital infrastructure to access new mobility modes and may also require additional physical infrastructure or concierge services to allow access to transportation. The physical presence of a mobility hub will allow the project area's older adults to access transportation through interactive kiosks and provide greater access to the employment opportunities in the region.

## **Low Income**

The 2015-2019 ACS estimates 9,822 households (11%) fall below the poverty level, and almost half of those households are more than 50% below the poverty level. If reliant

upon a privately-owned vehicle, transportation costs for low-income individuals can be substantial. In addition to greater access to education and employment, quality of life becomes equally important. For example, the need to better connect families to childcare, the need to connect childcare workers to childcare centers is an often-overlooked component to economic development. Expanding this access may add additional people to the regional workforce, but also expand access to the education and skills training needed for a qualified workforce.

Of the survey participants in the Licking County Transit Plan, 72% had a household income less than \$25,000, and 85% had a household income less than \$50,000. Of respondents, 45% were using the service for work, 13% for school/job training, and 13% for healthcare, accounting for approximately 71% of trips as a whole. The use of transit today is in line with the goals of the mobility project and reinforces the need to expand transportation accessibility for the region's population.

The plan to continue supporting the region's underserved communities will involve continuously engaging with area stakeholders and agencies who are focused on serving these groups. Community groups such as the Licking County Job and Family Services, the Board of Developmental Disabilities, the United Way, and the Licking County Aging Program will all be key stakeholders, along with the businesses, employers, education providers, and transportation and planning agencies already active in the region.

## Section 3

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# Coalition Lead

The Village of Johnstown will be the lead institution during the implementation of the Build Back Better Regional Challenge. While the Village will be the lead it is anticipated a third-party consultant would be hired to manage the day-to-day tasks involved with implementing the grant proposal. The Village of Johnstown will adhere to Federal procurement processes, ensure credentials meet federal requirements (if any) and enter into a contractual agreement with the third-party consultant.

### **Coalition Lead**

**Village of Johnstown**

### **Coalition Partners**

**City of Heath**

**City of Newark**

**Village Sunbury**

**Village of Granville**

**City of Mount Vernon**

**Village of Utica**

## Section 4

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### Coalition Documentation

Each of the coalition members have reviewed this submission and given the opportunity to provide feedback. Each of these members has provided letters in support of the project.

This section contains letters of support from the following coalition partners:

**City of Heath**

**City of Newark**

**Village Sunbury**

**Village of Granville**

**City of Mount Vernon**

**Village of Utica**



# CITY OF HEATH

Mark D. Johns  
Mayor

Jay R. Morrow  
Auditor

David C. Morrison  
Director of Law

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1287 Hebron Road \* Heath, OH 43056 \* P: (740) 522-1420 \* F: (740) 522-6324 \* [www.heathohio.gov](http://www.heathohio.gov)

October 18, 2021

Ms. Alejandra Y. Castillo  
U.S. Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development  
U.S. Department of Commerce  
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW  
Suite 71014  
Washington, DC 20230  
RE: CITY OF HEATH PARTICIPATION IN BUILD BACK BETTER REGIONAL CHALLENGE

Dear Ms. Castillo,

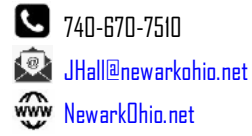
On behalf of the City of Heath, I strongly support the creation the Village of Johnstown's Build Back Better Regional Challenge application to create a Regional Rural Mobility Ecosystem (RRME) across multiple touchpoints of interconnectedness to provide greater access to essential services, enhanced economic development and overall better quality of life.

I believe this project will greatly enhance the ability of the under-privileged in our region, who have poor access to reliable transportation, a greater means of accessing our area's education institutions that support workforce education and skills training. After obtaining higher levels of skills and education, this project will also provide that same group of people with easier and more reliable transportation (now and in the future) to the manufacturing-based jobs of many employers in the City of Heath. At the same time, this project will benefit all people of our area by having a more environmentally-friendly means of transporting people, goods, and services throughout our region.

We strongly encourage the implementation of this project for the many reasons noted above. Should you have any questions, please contact me directly at 740-522-1420, ext. 207 or [mayor@heathohio.gov](mailto:mayor@heathohio.gov).

Respectfully,

Mark D. Johns  
Mayor – City of Heath



**JEFF HALL**  
MAYOR

October 15, 2021

Ms. Alejandra Y. Castillo  
U.S. Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development  
U.S. Department of Commerce  
1401 Constitution Avenue NW, Suite 71014  
Washington, DC 20230

RE: Newark, Ohio's Participation in Build Back Better Regional Challenge

Dear Ms. Castillo:

On behalf of the City of Newark, I strongly support the Village of Johnstown's Build Back Better Regional Challenge application to create a Regional Rural Mobility Ecosystem (RRME) across multiple touchpoints of interconnectedness to provide greater access to essential services, enhanced economic development and an overall better quality of life.

I believe this project can greatly improve the stability and growth of our City. The interconnectivity of the communities across our county and neighboring counties is essential to the growth of our workforce to lead job creation to foster resilience in our economy.

Newark is a city with history dating back more than two-hundred years. Much of the City's original growth was during the Industrial Revolutions and was heavy in manufacturing. Fast forward to today and we are challenged with once productive properties sitting idle due to the complications of brownfields and the associated environmental requirements. This project can help make possible the productive reuse of these properties, creating jobs based on today's technology standards while improving our environment.

We strongly encourage the implementation of this project. Should you have any questions, please contact me at JHall@newarkohio.net or 740-670-7510. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jeff Hall".

Jeff Hall, Mayor

# The Village of Sunbury

P.O. Box 508  
Sunbury, Oh 43074  
(740) 965-2684  
Fax (740) 965-9633

**STEVE PYLES**

ADMINISTRATOR

**JOSEPH ST. JOHN**

MAYOR

**KATHY BELCHER**

FISCAL OFFICER

October 18, 2021

Ms. Alejandra Y. Castillo  
U.S. Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development  
U.S. Department of Commerce  
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW  
Suite 71014  
Washington, DC 20230

RE: SUNBURY OHIO PARTICIPATION IN BUILD BACK BETTER REGIONAL CHALLENGE

Dear Ms. Castillo,

On behalf of the Village of Sunbury, I strongly support the creation the Village of Johnstown's Build Back Better Regional Challenge application to create a Regional Rural Mobility Ecosystem (RRME) across multiple touchpoints of interconnectedness to provide greater access to essential services, enhanced economic development and overall better quality of life.

I believe this project will enhance mobility options in a largely rural area that will facilitate the ability of residents to access economic opportunities and important services, including workforce development, available in the adjoining Columbus metropolitan region as well as those within the applicant's region.

Further, it will allow existing employers in Sunbury to access a wider region in terms of labor force, making their operations more resilient and sustainable.

The initiative will also allow Sunbury to invest in critical sanitary sewer infrastructure that will allow the full development of a new planned industrial district, address a current brownfield and open previously annexed ground to new commercial and related development. All of those areas enhance our ability to grow quality employment opportunities for the region.

We strongly encourage the implementation of this project for the many reasons noted above. Should you have any questions, please contact me directly at (740) 965-2684 x 229 or [spyles@sunburyohio.org](mailto:spyles@sunburyohio.org)

Respectfully,



Steve Pyles  
Sunbury Administrator  
Zoning Inspector

**VILLAGE OF  
GRANVILLE  
PLANNING DEPARTMENT**

October 18, 2021

Ms. Alejandra Y. Castillo  
U.S. Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development  
U.S. Department of Commerce  
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW, Suite 71014  
Washington, DC 20230

RE: Village of Granville Participation in Build Back Better Regional Challenge

Dear Assistant Secretary Castillo,

On behalf of the Village of Granville, Ohio, I strongly support the Village of Johnstown's Build Back Better Regional Challenge application to create a Regional Rural Mobility Ecosystem (RRME). Across multiple touchpoints of interconnectedness, this project will provide greater access to essential services, enhance economic development, and improve overall quality of life.

This region is primed for technology-based, environmentally sustainable development supported by expanded utilities and modern transportation infrastructure. A fully developed mobility ecosystem will contribute to the resilience of our rural areas by providing access to skilled, well-paying jobs in tech-based facilities and business incubators. The Granville community in particular will benefit through utility extensions and improvements, added broadband capacity, and brownfield redevelopment – all cornerstones to the success of the greater enterprise.

I am proud to stand behind our Johnstown partners and encourage your support to this important initiative. Should you have any questions, please contact me directly at [hartfield@granville.oh.us](mailto:hartfield@granville.oh.us).

Respectfully,



Melissa Hartfield  
Mayor, Village of Granville



**City of Mount Vernon**  
40 Public Square  
Mount Vernon, OH 43050

Phone 740-393-9517  
Fax 740-397-6595

**Matthew T. Starr**  
Mayor

**City Council**

**Bruce E. Hawkins**  
President

**Samantha Scoles**  
First Ward

**John Francis**  
Second Ward

**Tammy Woods**  
Third Ward

**Mike Hillier**  
Fourth Ward

**Amber Keener**  
At Large

**Janis Seavolt**  
At Large

**Julia Warga**  
At Large

**Administration**

**Matthew T. Starr**  
Mayor

**Richard S. Dzik**  
Safety Service Director

**P. Robert Broeren**  
Law Director

**John Thatcher**  
Judge

**David Stuller**  
Treasurer

**Terry L. Scott**  
Auditor

**Todd Hill**  
Clerk of Council

**Lindsay N. Hoar**  
Assistant Clerk of Council

Tuesday, October 19, 2021

Ms. Alejandra Y. Castillo  
U.S. Asst. Sec. of Commerce for Economic Development  
U.S. Department of Commerce  
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW  
Suite 71014  
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Ms. Castillo,

On behalf of the City of Mount Vernon, Ohio, I strongly support the creation of the Village of Johnstown's Build Back Better Regional Challenge application to create a Regional Rural Mobility Ecosystem (RRME) across multiple touchpoints of interconnectedness to provide greater access to essential services, enhanced economic development and overall better quality of life.

No community is an island, especially in this part of Central Ohio, and in today's economic climate. Rural areas have long been underserved, but since 2015 employment in this region has grown by nearly 15 percent, more than double the nationwide rate. I believe this project can do wonders to keep our momentum going by promoting technology-based workforce and economic development here in Mount Vernon. This is particularly important to us now as our City endeavors to attract tenants to its new Cooper Progress Park, a former manufacturing site.

We strongly encourage the implementation of this project for the reasons noted above. Should you have any questions, please contact me directly at 740-393-9517 or at [mtvmayor@mountvernonohio.org](mailto:mtvmayor@mountvernonohio.org).

Yours truly,

Matthew T. Starr  
Mayor, City of Mount Vernon



## VILLAGE OF UTICA

Village Offices

[villageofutica@yahoo.com](mailto:villageofutica@yahoo.com)  
villageofutica.com  
740-892-3433

39 Spring Street  
Utica, Ohio 43080  
740-892-2841

October 19, 2021

Ms. Alejandra Y. Castillo  
U.S. Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development  
U.S. Department of Commerce  
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW  
Suite 71014  
Washington, DC 20230

RE: Village of Utica PARTICIPATION IN BUILD BACK BETTER REGIONAL CHALLENGE

Dear Ms. Castillo,

On behalf of Village of Utica, I strongly support the creation the Village of Johnstown's Build Back Better Regional Challenge application to create a Regional Rural Mobility Ecosystem (RRME) across multiple touchpoints of interconnectedness to provide greater access to essential services, enhanced economic development and overall better quality of life.

I believe this project will help with economic development planning or implementation projects that encourage job creation, business expansion, technology and capital upgrades, and productivity growth in manufacturing, including efforts that contribute to the competitiveness and growth of domestic suppliers or to the domestic production of innovative, high-value products and production technologies.

We strongly encourage the implementation of this project for the many reasons noted above. Should you have any questions, please contact me directly at 740-892-2696 or [glenrichards.utica@gmail.com](mailto:glenrichards.utica@gmail.com).

Respectfully,

Glen Richards  
Village Administrator  
Village of Utica

## Section 5

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# Letters of Support

The following organizations have provided letters of support for the project, and will continue to be key stakeholders throughout the development and implementation of the project.

**Licking County Board of Commissioners**

**Knox County Board of Commissioners**

**Ohio State Senator Jay Hottinger**

**Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC)**

**GROW Licking County**

**The Ohio State University**

**Denison University**

**Career and Technical Education Centers of Licking County (CTEC)**

**Licking County Area Transportation Study (LCATS)**

**Licking County Transit Board**

**Licking County Job and Family Services**

**United Way of Licking County**

**Explore Licking County**

**Licking County Chamber of Commerce**

**Technical Rubber Company, Inc. (TRC)**

**AAA Club Alliance**

**New River Electrical Corporation**

**Park National Bank**

**Shai-Hess Commercial Real Estate Ltd.**



# LICKING COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Duane H. Flowers  
Rick Black  
Timothy E. Bubb

October 14, 2021

Ms. Alejandra Y. Castillo  
U.S. Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development  
U.S. Department of Commerce  
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW  
Suite 71014  
Washington, DC 20230

RE: BUILD BACK BETTER REGIONAL CHALLENGE

Dear Ms. Castillo,

On behalf of the Licking County Board of Commissioners, we strongly support the creation the Village of Johnstown's Build Back Better Regional Challenge application to create a Regional Rural Mobility Ecosystem (RRME) across multiple touchpoints of interconnectedness to provide greater access to essential services, enhanced economic development and overall better quality of life. We believe this project will benefit Licking County in the area of:

**Recovery & Resilience:** Economic development planning or implementation projects that build economic resilience to and long-term recovery from economic shocks, like those experienced by coal and power plant communities, or other communities impacted by the decline of an important industry or a natural disaster, that may benefit from economic diversification-focused resilience.

**Workforce Development:** Economic development planning or implementation projects that support workforce education and skills training activities directly connected to the hiring and skills needs of the business community and that result in well-paying, quality jobs (PDF).

**Technology-Based Economic Development:** Economic development planning or implementation projects that foster regional knowledge ecosystems that support entrepreneurs and startups, including the commercialization of new technologies, that are creating technology-driven businesses and high-skilled, well-paying jobs of the future.

**Exports & FDI:** Economic development planning or implementation projects that enhance or build community assets to support growth in US exports or increased foreign direct investment.

We strongly encourage the implementation of this project for the many reasons noted above. Should you have any questions, please contact our office at 740-670-5110.

Respectfully,

  
Duane H. Flowers      Rick Black      Timothy E. Bubb  
Commissioner      Commissioner      Commissioner



# Knox County Board of Commissioners

Teresa A. Bemiller

Thom Collier

Bill Pursel

County Administrator

Jason E. Booth

Administrative Assistant/Clerk

Penny Doyle

Fiscal Office Assistant

Robin Santo

October 18, 2021

Ms. Alejandra Y. Castillo  
U.S. Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development  
U.S. Department of Commerce  
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW., Suite 71014  
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Assistant Secretary Castillo,

I am writing in support of the Village of Johnstown, Ohio's *Build Back Better Regional Challenge* application to create a *Rural Connector Mobility Innovation Cluster*.

As a County Commissioner, I believe in public/private partnerships and am extremely interested in regional solutions to issues we face particularly around mobility. The Commissioners are currently working on a project that lends itself well to what is being proposed. We oversee our public transit system, Knox Area Transit (KAT). We have seen the need for KAT's services to increase in transporting individuals to medical appointments, jobs, school, and for normal daily activities. We have seen an increased need for out of county trips with residents which could lend itself well to connected and shared services within these three counties.

We are planning to construct a new KAT facility to meet customer and operational needs. We are looking to locate it adjacent to Cooper Progress Park, a former industrial campus owned by the County's Land Reutilization Corporation. It is being developed with the idea it will be a hub of agencies and companies where public transportation will play a role. We are also purchasing land on this campus to house our vehicles. The Knox County Area Development Foundation is leading both projects.

In keeping with the *Challenge's* goal of across to multiple touchpoints of interconnectedness by providing greater access to essential services, enhanced economic development and overall better quality of life, this program will integrate Licking, Delaware, and Knox Counties with local transit centers and businesses to deploy the *Rural Connector Mobility Innovation Cluster* with three fully-functional use cases: non-emergency medical transportation; employment and labor; and workforce training and secondary education.

We are looking at our transit project being funded through public/private partnerships. We would like to expand our transit offerings in villages to allow for expanded options for individuals needing transportation to jobs. This directly corresponds with our Area Development Foundation's commitment to workforce development.

Among other activities, funding will support water, sewer and broadband infrastructure, brownfield redevelopment, business incubators and technology-based facilities. I respectfully urge you to consider supporting the *Rural Connector Mobility Innovation Cluster Build Back Better Regional Challenge* submission by the Village of Johnstown, Ohio with the maximum \$500,000 grant available.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Teresa Bemiller".

Teresa Bemiller

Knox County Commissioner



**Jay Hottinger**

President Pro Tempore  
31st District

Senate Building  
1 Capitol Square  
Columbus, Ohio 43215  
Phone: (614) 466-5838  
Hottinger@ohiosenate.gov

Standing Committees

Financial Institutions and Technology  
- Vice Chair  
Rules & Reference - Vice Chair  
Finance  
Insurance  
Ways & Means

Boards and Commissions

Ohio Deferred Compensation Board  
Capitol Square Review & Advisory Board  
Joint Legislative Ethics Committee  
Legislative Service Commission  
Ohio Retirement Study Council

October 15, 2021

Ms. Alejandra Y. Castillo  
U.S. Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development  
U.S. Department of Commerce  
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW  
Suite 71014  
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Ms. Castillo,

As the State Senator for Ohio's 31<sup>st</sup> Senate district, I am writing in support of the Village of Johnstown's application for the Build Back Better Regional Challenge. This program presents an opportunity to expand Johnstown's mobility network with surrounding communities in order to provide greater access to essential services, enhanced economic development, and overall better quality of life.

If awarded, this funding will directly support Johnstown's vision of improving mobility in the region and it will ensure that citizens of the 31<sup>st</sup> district have access to reliable, safe, and convenient transportation to and from the workplace, school, and doctors' appointments. The first pillar of Johnstown's vision is to create the Mobility Factory Innovation Center- a facility that will become an epicenter of mobility solutions in the community by connecting like-minded and motivated entrepreneurs with one another. Johnstown currently has an open-source application in development to connect passengers with local mobility providers for three functional uses: non-emergency medical transportation, employment/labor, and secondary education. The Mobility Factory Innovation Center will assist entrepreneurs in achieving the next level of product and service development by connecting them with the talent, space, capital, and other resources needed to launch and commercialize their mobility solutions in the region.

The second pillar of Johnstown's vision is to build upon current partnerships with rural communities in the region in order to redevelop brownfields that have seen no recent activity. Redevelopment of these properties will include the construction of a connected mobility hub that will allow for multiple modes of transportation to convene at a site that has the potential to spur economic growth. Efficient transportation systems, especially those that include different forms of transportation, may help promote physical activity, encourage social interaction, and increase access to healthcare services and healthy food. In rural communities, long distances and unreliable (or nonexistent) public transportation amplify the difficulties that some face in getting from Point A to Point B. By connecting rural communities through existing transportation networks and local and regional mobility hubs, the movement of people and goods and services will drastically improve for areas previously underserved by the current network of transportation.

Thank you for the opportunity to express my support for the Village of Johnstown's application for the Build Back Better Challenge. I trust that you will give their application full and fair consideration. Please do not hesitate to contact my office if I may provide further information.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dr. Hottinger". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

State Senator Jay Hottinger  
President Pro Tempore  
31<sup>st</sup> District



MID-OHIO REGIONAL  
**MORPC**  
PLANNING COMMISSION

111 Liberty Street, Suite 100  
Columbus, Ohio 43215  
morpc.org

T. 614. 228.2663  
TTY. 1.800.750.0750  
info@morpc.org

October 15, 2021

Ms. Alejandra Y. Castillo  
U.S. Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development  
U.S. Department of Commerce  
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW  
Suite 71014  
Washington, DC 20230

Re: Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission Participation in Build Back Better Regional Challenge

Dear Ms. Castillo,

On behalf of the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC), this letter is to demonstrate support in the creation the Village of Johnstown's Build Back Better Regional Challenge application to create a Regional Rural Mobility Ecosystem (RRME) across multiple touchpoints of interconnectedness to provide greater access to essential services, enhanced economic development and overall better quality of life.

MORPC recognizes the need for improved transportation connectivity to support quality of life for our residents. Johnstown is increasingly becoming a major employment hub in Central Ohio, which is currently experiencing a regional lack of access to transportation. This work would allow for more a convenient, equitable, and affordable mobility network connecting Johnstown to Columbus and other surrounding communities to support our workforce and resiliency as a region.

We strongly encourage the implementation of this project for the many reasons noted above. Should you have any questions or need additional information about this request, please do not hesitate to contact me at 614-233-4101 or [wmurdock@morpc.org](mailto:wmurdock@morpc.org).

Kind Regards,

William Murdock, AICP  
Executive Director  
Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission



October 14, 2021

Ms. Alejandra Y. Castillo  
U.S. Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development  
U.S. Department of Commerce  
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW  
Suite 71014  
Washington, DC 20230

RE: VILLAGE OF JOHNSTOWN'S PARTICIPATION IN BUILD BACK BETTER REGIONAL CHALLENGE

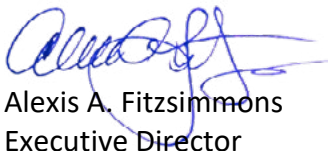
Dear Ms. Castillo,

On behalf of GROW Licking County, I strongly support the creation the Village of Johnstown's Build Back Better Regional Challenge application to create a Regional Rural Mobility Ecosystem (RRME) across multiple touchpoints of interconnectedness to provide greater access to essential services, enhanced economic development and overall better quality of life.

I believe this project will promote equity and increase access to community services for the underserved populations in Licking County. It will also support workforce development by removing transportation barriers and move us towards becoming a more sustainable community. This project will allow us to better adapt to regional population growth with the solutions and resiliency that new technologies provide.

We strongly encourage the implementation of this project for the many reasons noted above. Should you have any questions, please contact me directly at 740-334-7803 or [alexisf@growlickingcounty.org](mailto:alexisf@growlickingcounty.org).

Respectfully,



Alexis A. Fitzsimmons  
Executive Director

October 13, 2021

Ms. Alejandra Y. Castillo  
U.S. Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development  
U.S. Department of Commerce  
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW  
Suite 71014  
Washington, DC 20230

RE: THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY AT NEWARK'S PARTICIPATION IN THE BUILD  
BACK BETTER REGIONAL CHALLENGE

Dear Ms. Castillo,

On behalf of The Ohio State University at Newark, I strongly support the creation the Village of Johnstown's Build Back Better Regional Challenge application to create a Regional Rural Mobility Ecosystem (RRME) across multiple touchpoints of interconnectedness to provide greater access to essential services, enhanced economic development and overall better quality of life.

I believe that by improving public transportation, this project will make it easier for residents in central Ohio to get to Ohio State Newark to obtain education and skills that will increase their chances of entering or returning to the region's workforce. In so doing, the project will directly address the hiring needs of central Ohio's business community, attract more businesses to the area and provide well-paying, high-quality jobs, and enable more people to obtain those jobs.

I strongly encourage the implementation of this project for the many reasons noted above. Should you have any questions, please contact me directly at 740-366-9211 or macdonald.24@osu.edu.

Respectfully,



William L. MacDonald  
Dean/Director

# DENISON

October 15, 2021

Ms. Alejandra Y. Castillo  
U.S. Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development  
U.S. Department of Commerce  
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW  
Suite 71014  
Washington, DC 20230

RE: DENISON UNIVERSITY PARTICIPATION IN BUILD BACK BETTER REGIONAL CHALLENGE

Dear Ms. Castillo,

On behalf of Denison University, I strongly support the Village of Johnstown's Build Back Better Regional Challenge application to create a Regional Rural Mobility Ecosystem (RRME) across multiple touchpoints of interconnectedness, providing greater access to essential services, enhanced economic development and overall better quality of life.

I believe this project offers an innovative and collaborative approach to regional mobility, something that has been missing from the rural areas north and east of Central Ohio for decades. As proposed, the RRME has the potential to exponentially expand economic development across technologies that are environmentally sustainable, as well as contribute to workforce development by removing barriers for rural workers. In addition, a strategy that addresses equity—from housing to education and training to health care access—is vitally important to Denison University's core principles.

With vastly improved mobility, Denison students will benefit from the opportunity to expand the map in which they serve, gaining experiential learning in communities beyond their hometown of Granville and, in turn, providing their support to those communities through volunteerism, technical expertise, and more. We are happy to offer support in researching and creating best practices for Human Use Approval as the Rural Connector Mobility Innovation Cluster evolves.

We strongly encourage the implementation of this project for the many reasons noted above. Should you have any questions, please contact me directly at: 740-587-5034 or [bellanir@denison.edu](mailto:bellanir@denison.edu). Thank you for your kind consideration.

Respectfully,



**Raj Bellani, Ed.D**  
*Vice President & Chief of Staff*  
Office of the President



October 14, 2021

Ms. Alejandra Y. Castillo  
U.S. Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development  
U.S. Department of Commerce  
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW  
Suite 71014  
Washington, DC 20230

RE: C-TEC'S PARTICIPATION IN BUILD BACK BETTER REGIONAL CHALLENGE

Dear Ms. Castillo,

On behalf of C-TEC's Adult Education Center, I strongly support the creation the Village of Johnstown's Build Back Better Regional Challenge application to create a Regional Rural Mobility Ecosystem (RRME) across multiple touchpoints of interconnectedness to provide greater access to essential services, enhanced economic development and overall better quality of life.

I believe this project will benefit our adult students who lack access to public transportation to attend our career-technical education and workforce development programs. We regularly survey our student population, as well as learn during admissions, counseling and intervention sessions that transportation options is in the top tier of reasons for potential withdrawal from a training program, or the inability to enroll in one in the first place. Specifically, this project will assist underserved and rural communities gain equitable access to C-TEC's training opportunities in order to upskill or reskill to improved employment opportunities.

As a training partner, this project will also support workforce education and skill training by identifying new and leading-edge technology and training needs within the transportation industry. As Licking County's leading technical training provider, incorporating this technology into our training programs will ensure that our students are prepared as technicians in the field. In addition, it will assist in attraction of workforce talent to Licking County for this leading industry.

We strongly encourage the implementation of this project for the many reasons noted above. Should you have any questions, please contact me directly at 740.364.2251 or [lmassie@c-tec.edu](mailto:lmassie@c-tec.edu).

Respectfully,

*Lauren Massie*

Lauren Massie  
Adult Education Director  
C-TEC



## Licking County Area Transportation Study

20 South Second Street  
Newark, OH 43055

Chris W. Harkness, AICP  
Executive Director

Jim Lenner  
Johnstown Village Manager,  
599 S. Main St,  
Johnstown, OH 43031

10/18/2021

Regarding: LCATS support for the Build Back Better grant

Bailey,

The Licking County Area Transportation Study (LCATS) gladly supports the Village of Johnstown's in their application to the Build Back Better grant

The strategy for a regional mobility hub to increase access to work and reduce the dependency of single occupancy vehicles is what Metropolitan Planning Organizations are all about.

Once this multiphase project is completed it would reduce congestion, improve economic vitality and increase accessibility to jobs. All three of these are supported by our long range transportation plan.

For all the reasons mentioned above, LCATS gladly supports Johnstown's application to the Build Back Better Regional Challenge in support of a regional mobility hub.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Matthew R. Hill'.

Matthew R. Hill,  
LCATS, Technical Study Director  
20 S. Second St.  
Newark, Ohio 43055  
740-670-5191

*Licking County Transit Board*

745 East Main Street

Newark, Ohio 43055

October 19, 2021

Ms. Alejandra Y. Castillo  
U.S. Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development  
U.S. Department of Commerce  
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW  
Suite 71014  
Washington, DC 20230

RE: LCTB PARTICIPATION IN BUILD BACK BETTER REGIONAL CHALLENGE

Dear Ms. Castillo,

On behalf of Licking County Transit Board, I strongly support the creation the Village of Johnstown's Build Back Better Regional Challenge application to create a Regional Rural Mobility Ecosystem (RRME) across multiple touchpoints of interconnectedness to provide greater access to essential services, enhanced economic development and overall better quality of life.

I believe this project will help enable the local communities to engage in manufacturing and workforce development through enhanced transportation services in our region.

We strongly encourage the implementation of this project for the many reasons noted above. Should you have any questions, please contact me directly at 740-670-5188 or

[lhogue@lcounty.com](mailto:lhogue@lcounty.com)

Respectfully,

Larry Hogue  
Business Support Manager LCTB

October 14, 2021

Ms. Alejandra Y. Castillo  
U.S. Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development  
U.S. Department of Commerce  
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW  
Suite 71014  
Washington, DC 20230

**RE: Licking County Job & Family Services Participation  
in Build Back Better Regional Challenge**

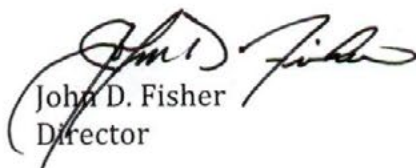
Dear Ms Castillo,

On behalf of Licking County Job & Family Services, I strongly support the creation of the Village of Johnstown's Build Back Better Regional Challenge application to create a Regional Rural Mobility Ecosystem (RRME) across multiple touchpoints of interconnectedness to provide greater access to essential services, enhanced economic development and overall better quality of life.

I believe this project will provide strategic investments by addressing the needs of an underserved community and population, support and enhance the local community's workforce development services, while maintaining and expanding our local manufacturing base. These strategic investments will create the foundation for Johnstown, Ohio to develop and implement a regional economic development cluster.

We strongly encourage the implementation of this project for the many reasons noted above. Should you have any questions, please contact me directly at 740.670.8855 or via email at [John.Fisher@jfs.ohio.gov](mailto:John.Fisher@jfs.ohio.gov).

Respectfully,

  
John D. Fisher  
Director

**John D. Fisher, Director**



United Way of Licking County

50 South Second Street  
PO Box 4490  
Newark, Ohio 43058-4490

Phone 740-345-6685

[www.unitedwaylc.org](http://www.unitedwaylc.org)



October 18, 2021

Ms. Alejandra Y. Castillo  
U.S. Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development  
U.S. Department of Commerce  
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW  
Suite 71014  
Washington, DC 20230

RE: JOHNSTOWN PARTICIPATION IN BUILD BACK BETTER REGIONAL CHALLENGE

Dear Ms. Castillo,

On behalf of United Way of Licking County, I strongly support the creation of the Village of Johnstown's Build Back Better Regional Challenge application, to create a Regional Rural Mobility Ecosystem across multiple touchpoints of interconnectedness to provide greater access to essential services, enhanced economic development and overall better quality of life.

From the United Way's perspective, transportation is vital for a healthy community! In our county's most recent needs assessment transportation was listed as one of the priority needs for our county. A transportation hub in Johnstown would allow for equitable opportunities in our region in regards to employment success and services necessary for the health and wellbeing of citizens, who need transportation not only to regular medical appointments but also who need access to educational opportunities and nutritious foods.

United Way strongly supports the implementation of this project to improve lives throughout Licking County. Should you have any questions, please contact me directly at 740-345-6685 or by email at [ddingus@unitedwaylc.org](mailto:ddingus@unitedwaylc.org)

Respectfully,

Deb Dingus  
Executive Director of United Way of Licking County



October 14, 2021

Ms. Alejandra Y. Castillo  
U.S. Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development  
U.S. Department of Commerce  
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW  
Suite 71014  
Washington, DC 20230

RE: Explore Licking County PARTICIPATION IN BUILD BACK BETTER REGIONAL CHALLENGE

Dear Ms. Castillo,

On behalf of Explore Licking County, I strongly support the creation of the Village of Johnstown's Build Back Better Regional Challenge application in order to create a Regional Rural Mobility Ecosystem (RRME) across multiple touch points of interconnectedness which will provide greater access to essential services, enhanced economic development and overall better quality of life.

I believe this project will thoughtfully help to build needed infrastructures in the village of Johnstown, which will blend nicely with their already solid foundation. From a tourism standpoint, Johnstown is well positioned regionally to not only continue, but build on an already robust visitor platform. The Villages close proximity to the Columbus drive market makes them the perfect day trip or long weekend location for those looking to escape the city and recharge in a quintessential mid-western town. It is well documented that visitors to Licking County and Johnstown are spending revenues that consistently are climbing upwards of half a billion dollars annually. Many of the amenities that the consumer is looking for, exist naturally in the Village, so it stands to reason that any further touch points created by the Build Back Better Challenge would only enhance the visitor experience and consistently lead to stronger economic impact for the Village.

We strongly encourage the implementation of this project for the many reasons noted above. Should you have any questions, please contact me directly at 740-345-8224 or [dan@explorelc.org](mailto:dan@explorelc.org).

Respectfully,

Dan Moder  
Executive Director





# LICKING COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Building Leaders. Growing Community.

October 14, 2021

Ms. Alejandra Y. Castillo  
U.S. Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development  
U.S. Department of Commerce  
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW  
Suite 71014  
Washington, DC 20230

RE: Licking County Chamber of Commerce participation in BUILD BACK BETTER REGIONAL CHALLENGE

Dear Ms. Castillo,

I am writing on behalf of the Licking County Chamber of Commerce and our 15-member board of directors in support of the Village of Johnstown's Build Back Better Regional Challenge application. This specific application is part of the Village's plan to create a Regional Rural Mobility Ecosystem (RRME). The RRME is responsive to the EDA's priorities of Workforce Development and Manufacturing, as it will enhance on-going local and regional initiatives in each of these areas, and more. The RRME will significantly enhance interconnectedness within Johnstown and throughout the Licking County community, providing citizens with greater access to job opportunities, essential services, educational opportunities, and will serve to improve access to an array of quality-of-life amenities for residents of Licking County. This, in turn, elevates opportunities for our community's employers.

I believe this project will expand workforce development training opportunities for our residents. It will also provide much-needed access to job opportunities in the manufacturing sector throughout our county. These benefits – a more highly-trained and mobile workforce – are essential to business retention and expansion. Additionally, the RRME will provide our organization and our community's economic development community improvement corporation – GROW Licking County – a significant advantage when it comes to securing new investment from manufacturers into Johnstown, and the county as a whole.

We strongly support the funding and implementation of this project for the many reasons noted above. Should you have any questions, please contact me directly at 740-345-9757 x. 5 or via email at [jmcdonald@lickingcountychamber.com](mailto:jmcdonald@lickingcountychamber.com).

Respectfully,

Jennifer McDonald,  
President & CEO

Daniel G. Layne  
Chairman & CEO



---

888-433-8352

06 October 2021

9711 Sportsman Club Road  
PO Box 486  
Johnstown, OH 43031 US

dlayne@trc4r.com  
www.trc4r.com

As a business leader I don't need to remind you that the world around us is changing at a breakneck pace. This requires business leaders to anticipate these changes and the implications they have on our respective organizations.

I am writing you to personally ask for your engagement and support of an initiative that is in direct response to changes occurring in Licking, Knox, and Delaware countries.

A public-private coalition comprised of the Cities and Villages of Johnstown, Newark, Heath, Granville, Mt. Vernon, Sunbury, and Utica along with Denison University, C-TEC, and AAA in collaboration with DriveOhio and FlyOhio have come together to forge and pursue a vision to transform the region. The vision is to embrace the changing landscape of mobility driven by connected, autonomous, shared, and electrified vehicles, thus creating new modalities of mobility. These new modalities will in turn enhance the quality of life for a broad spectrum of citizens and drives new economic development for the region.

Technical Rubber Company Inc. (TRC) has become an active private sector participant in this coalition, but we cannot do it alone, this is where you come in. As a cornerstone private sector company in this region, we need you to join us in this coalition. We ask you to do this with a letter of support and ask you or an appointed representative from your organization to participate in planning meetings and contribute not only their time and energy, but also investigate ways you can participate monetarily, as well as in-kind resources to the initiative, as TRC has.

I stand ready to further discuss this with you, add any additional insights, or attempt to answer your questions. Please feel free to contact my assistant Tammy Harmon at 740-966-8099 or tharmon@trc4r.com to schedule a call or meeting.

In closing, I thank you for your support as the adage "A rising tide raises all ships" comes to mind.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dan Layne".

Dan Layne



October 18, 2021

Jim Lenner  
Village Manager  
Village of Johnstown  
599 South Main Street  
Johnstown, Ohio 43031

RE: Johnstown Build Back Better Challenge

Dear Mr. Lenner:

AAA Club Alliance (AAA) is a company dedicated to consumer safety and advocacy on the roadways. As such we also have Approved Auto Repair Facilities across our footprint along with Company Owned Repair Facilities. It is important to AAA that the staff in these facilities has the most up to date training so that we can best inform and repair our AAA Member and customer vehicles. We also provide Roadside Assistance with Club Owned Fleet and outside Contractors. It is also important for this group to be trained in automotive as well.

We hereby fully support the Village of Johnstown in the development of their Innovation Center. There is a need for this facility within the State of Ohio and within our company. The individuals that have the skillsets offered through completion of courses taken will allow us to be more competitive and efficient and will positively impact economic development in the State of Ohio.

In support of this project, we agree to:

- Serve on the advisory board committee or board that advises and guides the future of the facility.
- Promote the programs to individuals who are in a career in the automotive industry and provide advanced automotive training.
- Aid in the development of training courses as it relates to new automotive technologies such as EV, AV, ADAS, and Hybrid vehicle repair.

Sincerely,

Bob Kazmierczak  
Director AAA Club Alliance AAR and CSN Central and GP Regions  
480 W, Dussel Dr.  
Suite 155  
Maumee, Ohio 43537



15 Cloverdale Place | PO Box 70  
Cloverdale, Virginia 24077  
P: (540) 966-1650 | F: (540) 966-1699  
newriverelectrical.com

October 18, 2021

Ms. Alejandra Y. Castillo  
U.S. Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development  
U.S. Department of Commerce  
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW  
Suite 71014  
Washington, DC 20230

RE: New River Electrical Corporation - PARTICIPATION IN BUILD BACK BETTER REGIONAL CHALLENGE

Dear Ms. Castillo,

I strongly support the creation the Village of Johnstown's Build Back Better Regional Challenge application to create a Regional Rural Mobility Ecosystem (RRME) across multiple touchpoints of interconnectedness to provide greater access to essential services, enhanced economic development and overall better quality of life.

As New River Electrical moves its northern operations to Johnstown, we are particularly excited to see the projects geared toward workforce development as well as economic resilience. These projects associated with the RRME will be a tremendous opportunity for local citizens to learn the skills necessary to join a modern qualified workforce.

New River Electrical is consistently challenged with finding qualified labor for our field operations and skilled support within our office in operations, technology, and administration. Projects like those proposed in RRME are just the shot in the arm we hope will spur the growth in Johnstown and for New River Electrical.

We strongly encourage the implementation of this project for the reasons noted above. Should you have any questions, please contact me directly at 614.891.9132 or ipoe@nrec.net.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Matthew I. Poe', is written over a white rectangular area.

Matthew I Poe  
Senior Vice President – Operations  
New River Electrical Corporation



October 19, 2021

Ms. Alejandro Y. Castillo  
U.S. Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development  
U.S. Department of Commerce  
1401 Constitution Avenue  
Suite 71014  
Washington D.C. 20230

## RE: Park National Bank Participation in Build Better Regional Challenge

Dear Ms. Castillo:

On behalf of Park National Bank, I strongly support the Village of Johnstown's Build Back Better Regional Challenge application to create a Regional Rural Mobility Ecosystem (RRME) across multiple touchpoints of interconnectedness to provide great access to essential services, enhanced economic development and overall better quality of life.

Our bank has supported our communities for more than 112 years. Our leaders have been unwavering in asserting that we have a duty and responsibility to do all we can to help our neighbors. Thriving communities offer broader and deeper opportunities for all people to flourish. Park National Bank is unified under our promise to Serve More. We are delighted with the possibilities that the RRME holds for our communities and the chance to Serve them More.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'David L. Trautman'.

David L. Trautman  
Chairman and Chief Executive Officer  
740-349-3927 Office  
[david.trautman@parknationalbank.com](mailto:david.trautman@parknationalbank.com)

SHAI-HESS COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE Ltd.

Commercial Real Estate Services

Joseph Park Shai III

October 14, 2021

Ms. Alejandra Y. Castillo  
U.S. Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development  
U.S. Department of Commerce  
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW., Suite 71014  
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Assistant Secretary Castillo,

I am writing in support of the Village of Granville, Ohio's *Build Back Better Regional Challenge* application to create a *Rural Connector Mobility Innovation Cluster* in Central Ohio. Leveraging a public-private coalition comprised of the cities, villages, and townships throughout Licking, Delaware, and Knox counties; along with Denison University, the Career and Technology Education Centers of Licking County (C-TEC), and the American Automobile Association, this transformational project will revolutionize regional transportation and improve access to essential services in the region.

This project will provide modern linkages between municipalities and townships with local transit centers and businesses to deploy the *Rural Connector Mobility Innovation Cluster*. The three fully-functional use cases of non-emergency medical transportation; employment and labor; and workforce training and secondary education are in keeping with the *Challenge's* goal of providing greater access to essential services, enhanced economic development, and overall better quality of life.

Shai-Hess Commercial Real Estate, LLC and our team of agents focus on office, industrial, retail, flex, multi-family, and land real estate needs across throughout the state. We are based in Granville and deeply rooted in Central Ohio and are attune to the growing needs of the region. In the Granville area where we are headquartered, funding will support water, sewer, and broadband infrastructure, brownfield redevelopment, business incubators, and technology-based facilities and are much needed in the area to support and promote economic development.

I proudly support the *Rural Connector Mobility Innovation Cluster Build Back Better Regional Challenge* submission by the Village of Granville, Ohio and urge you to consider supporting the initiative with the maximum \$500,000 grant available.

Respectfully,



J. Park Shai III  
Founder and Broker



4009 Columbus Rd. SW suite 333 • Granville, OH 43023 • (740) 587.7441 • FAX (740) 587.7334

PShai@Shaicommercial.com



## Section 6

# Budget Narrative

### Further concept development (\$50k)

Concept development will solidify the overall function of the mobility hub network and the mobility innovation space, providing an opportunity to further generate project support and confirm the goals and objectives of the program. This stage will include community engagement to communicate and solicit feedback on the concept. This step will allow the project team to further refine the concept prior to the development of project components.

A preliminary operations plan will be developed, which will outline the hierarchy of the parties involved, the roles and responsibilities of each, and the potential partnership structures to support the concept. In addition, this will include a preliminary concept of operations (ConOps) for the transportation service to allow for the estimation of fleet size and level of service that will be available to serve passengers. The ConOps will include fixed route transit service (inter-city), flexible route transit services, and shared micromobility (ebikes). In addition, each mode will be evaluated to better understand the potential applicability for each of the mobility hub sites, further informing the development of project components in the next stage.

### Development of project components (\$150k)

#### Mobility Hub Network and Mobility Innovation Incubator

Preliminary design of the mobility hub network will be completed for each site identified within Johnstown, Granville, Newark, Utica, Mount Vernon, and Sunbury.

Each mobility hub will include the digital and physical infrastructure needed to support both inter-city and first-mile/last-mile modes. This includes the roadway infrastructure, parking, curb space, public space, pedestrian amenities, overhead pedestrian shelter, and any additional amenities required. Furthermore, the design will include the infrastructure needed to support new-mobility modes such as electric vehicle chargers, overhead transit (pantograph) chargers, communications infrastructure, traveler information kiosks, and any upgraded signal infrastructure needed to provide access. The preliminary design phase is intended to define the program for each site, what types of improvements are necessary to meet the goals of the program, provide a basis for the design development stage, and a framework for estimating project costs.

#### *Planning, Landscape, and Urban Design:*

The initial design phase of the mobility innovation incubator and for each mobility hub will begin with the development of a program that is integrated appropriately into each site and each community, supports the goals of the rural mobility program, and supports access to travelers both locally and across the region. Each site will support pedestrian access, pedestrian comfort, and a variety of modes to enhance connectivity, effectively bridging the gap between modes and serving as a community asset to better connect travelers throughout a seamless mobility system. The preliminary design stage will identify what components are located where in the site and how they fit together into a cohesive concept. Project components at this stage include the location of modes, parking, pedestrian amenities, site circulation, landscaping, public space, and architecture. The preliminary planning, landscape and urban design phase will produce a plan for each site that the engineering team will use to begin preliminary engineering design.

*Engineering:* Preliminary engineering will begin with the plan developed for each mobility hub to design the infrastructure needed to support the concept which includes pavement, parking, curbs, power, communication, and utility coordination. Preliminary engineering is intended to identify the overall scope of effort for each mobility hub, provide the preliminary design needed to move each concept into schematic design, and provide a basis of infrastructure needed to estimate the construction cost of each site. For each site, a preliminary engineering design set will be created for use in subsequent phases and project costing.

*Architecture:* Preliminary architectural design for each mobility hub site will include vertical structures such as overhead canopies, ticketing space, and shared retail space. Preliminary programming and design for the Mobility Factory Innovation Center will be performed to identify the architectural requirements to support the innovation program. This is anticipated to include a preliminary evaluation of the existing structures, the potential program for each space, and an identification of the improvements necessary to modify the buildings for a new purpose.

### **Community Infrastructure**

Water and broadband are key infrastructure investments needed to support economic development in partner communities. This phase will identify where these investments will be made in partner communities to support economic development activities near each mobility hub. Preliminary engineering will be performed for each site to determine the potential scope and cost of each project.

### **Costing of infrastructure and soft costs (\$30k)**

Following the preliminary design for each mobility hub, the Mobility Factory Innovation Center, and the community infrastructure

projects, a cost estimate will be developed that includes infrastructure design and construction costs. This task will also include the potential costs of operation, including ongoing operation and maintenance of the Mobility Factory Innovation Center, each mobility hub, and the base inter-city services to connect the hubs.

### **Benefit Cost Analysis (\$45k)**

Quantifying the benefit for each Federal dollar spent in terms of increased employment and increased economic activity will be the focus of this effort. This will leverage historical economic trends and data from the Ohio Department of Development, Jobs Ohio, and county economic development departments to forecast the potential economic impact of the new mobility cluster and the increased connectivity and employment opportunities provided by the mobility hub network.

### **NEPA/EA/EIS (\$200k)**

Depending upon the specific site, the level of environmental review will be different. The budget identified to address NEPA requirements is intended to provide flexibility and respond to the specifics of each site. In some cases, a full EIS may be required, while others may require an environmental assessment. It is anticipated that all sites will undergo a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment as part of the environmental assessment or the draft EIS. Because each of the mobility hub sites will be located in under-utilized areas of historic downtowns, the potential condition of each site is unknown.

### **Development of grant submission materials (\$25k)**

The supporting materials from the Phase I grant funding will be compiled from the prior tasks. These materials will be developed to be clear and concise, providing grant reviewers a solid understanding of the project scope and its potential to positively affect the regional economic environment, the region's employers, and the region's people.

# Section 7

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## Forms

