

CLERMONT  
COUNTY OHIO

# Economic Development



## Introduction & Purpose

The Economic Development element of the Comprehensive Plan describes the existing economic conditions and trends within the county. This chapter analyzes the data to help identify the county's future goals relating to future development patterns.

Over 10,000 businesses are located in Clermont County, ranging in size from sole proprietorships to major corporations spread over a multitude of industries including manufacturing, retail and wholesale, construction, IT and finance, as well as service-based and healthcare.

Clermont County's economy continues to rebound from what was widely described as the Great Recession. Existing companies continue to grow stronger and new companies are locating their operations throughout the county.

One such success story is the redevelopment of the former Ford Motor Company transmission plant in Batavia Township. The 1.8 million square foot facility on 230 acres closed in August 2008 and was purchased by Industrial Realty Group (IRG) in April 2010. In three years' time since IRG purchased the complex, the facility is 75% occupied or under option.

Approximately 500 jobs will be created or retained by the companies that now call the IRG facility home. The largest employer at the facility is Huhtamaki, Inc., a Finnish company that manufactures products for the food service industry. The company purchased nearly one million square feet in 2013 and has committed to creating 237 jobs. In addition to Huhtamaki, Inc., other entities located at the facility include UC East – a regional campus of the University of Cincinnati, Altimet/Global Scrap Management and Engineered Mobile Solutions. Over 300,000 square feet are still available for development.

Economic development activities are managed by the Department of Community and Economic Development (CED). One of the primary functions of this department is to work with companies seeking to make a new investment in Clermont County to purchase or lease an existing facility or construct a new one. CED helps companies identify and obtain the assistance they need to grow. Having the economic development and planning staff in the same department provides the opportunity for close working relationships to help guide the future development of the county.



More Information: <http://www.clermontcountyohio.biz/>

## Economic Geography

Located east of downtown Cincinnati, Clermont County's population is 198,217 and comprises part of 2.2 million residents in the Cincinnati metro area. With its own labor force of nearly 110,000 people, Clermont County is positioned well in the greater Cincinnati area, whose labor force is approximately 1.5 million.

Clermont County is one of fifteen counties that make up the Cincinnati USA region. Our region outranks New York City, Boston, Chicago and Los Angeles in the number of Fortune 500 headquarters per million residents. Ten Fortune 500 companies have their headquarters in the region, including Procter & Gamble, Macy's, Kroger, Fifth Third Bancorp, Omnicare and AK Steel.

Forty-four percent (44%) of all U.S. manufacturing and forty-three percent (43%) of the U.S. population are located within a 600 mile radius of Cincinnati. According to the Business Facilities 2012 Metro Ranking Report, Cincinnati is ranked 9th in the nation for economic growth potential and 6th among the top 10 manufacturing cities. Clermont County's convenient access to Interstates 71 and 75 via the I-275 beltway, in combination with available

land, excess utility capacity (sewer & water) and transportation infrastructure improvements, provides the opportunity for the county to take advantage of the economic growth potential of Cincinnati.

Business and leisure travelers are a direct 30 minute drive from the Greater Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky International Airport (CVG) via I-275. The airport provides non-stop service to nearly 40 destinations via eight different airline carriers.

Clermont County residents have access to 20 universities, colleges and vocational school districts within an hour's drive. Clermont County is home to two University of Cincinnati regional campuses – UC East and Clermont College. These two campuses provide students with the ability to obtain associate or bachelor level degrees in several areas of study or they can choose to obtain a certificate in a multitude of programs. Additionally, UC East provides manufacturers with the opportunity for customized training in the Advanced Manufacturing Laboratory. Milacron, a global leader in plastic extrusion machinery, took advantage of this program and has completed three training programs and has a fourth class planned.



More Information: <http://www.clermontcountyohio.biz/>

## Commuting Patterns / Travel Time

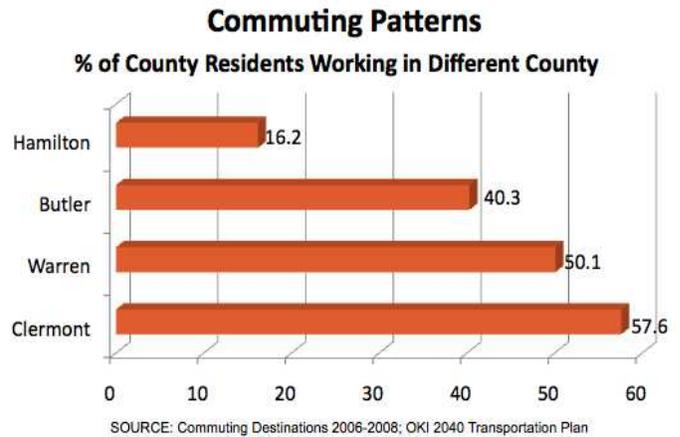
When compared to Butler, Hamilton and Warren counties in southwest Ohio, Clermont County has the highest percentage of residents commuting to another county for work. This has a negative effect on the overall quality of life for those residents who are spending more time sitting in traffic instead of doing other activities.

Additionally, long commutes have a negative impact on county economic activity because residents are spending more disposable income outside the county at venues that are closer to their places of employment (i.e., errands at lunch, dinner on the way home, etc.).

Another negative impact of commuting is more of our residents' income is spent on fuel and car repairs rather than on goods and other personal services (i.e., department stores, salons, restaurants, movie theaters, etc.). Taxes are another layer of impact of commuting - taxes are being paid to other communities where the residents work (i.e. Blue Ash, Cincinnati, Mason, etc.), which means less disposable income available to spend in Clermont County. Less disposable income being spent in our community could lead to fewer businesses which means residents would carry more of the tax burden for public services (i.e., schools, fire, police, senior services, etc.) through higher real estate taxes.

Travel Time To Work	Number	Percent
Workers 16 years and over	89,899	100.0%
Less than 15 minutes	17,884	19.9%
15 to 29 minutes	29,825	33.2%
30 to 44 minutes	28,234	31.4%
45 to 59 minutes	9,116	10.1%
60 minutes or more	4,840	5.4%
<b>Mean travel time</b>	<b>27.8 minutes</b>	

Travel Time to Work: <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/>



Commuting Patterns: Community Destinations  
2006 OKI 2040 Plan



More Information: <http://www.clermontcountyohio.biz/>

## Employment Trends

There are nearly 55,000 jobs in Clermont County. The majority of those jobs (17%) are in the Retail Trade industry. Government is the next largest at 14%, followed by Accommodations & Food Services at 11%. The Manufacturing sector has approximately 5,500 employees or 10% of total employment. The top five employment sectors are rounded out by Healthcare & Social Assistance making up another 10% of total employment. Compare these industries to the greater Cincinnati region's top five sectors of Healthcare & Social Assistance (14%), Government (12%), Manufacturing (11%), Retail Trade (11%) and Accommodations & Food Services (9%) whose jobs in all sectors total nearly one million.

Two of Clermont County's top three industries are low skill / low wage employment opportunities, compared to the Cincinnati region's top three industries, which are all higher skill /higher wage jobs.

**Fastest Growing Occupations 2012 - 2017 - Clermont County**

Description	2012 Jobs	2017 Jobs	Change	2012 Avg. Hourly Wage
Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations	6,405	7,288	883	\$9.26
Office and Administrative Support Occupations	8,788	9,447	659	\$14.71
Sales and Related Occupations	7,041	7,673	632	\$15.13
Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	3,436	3,918	482	\$14.77
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	2,340	2,787	447	\$28.92
Healthcare Support Occupations	1,617	1,903	286	\$11.36
Personal Care and Service Occupations	1,316	1,516	200	\$10.43
Business and Financial Operations Occupations	2,278	2,466	188	\$28.29
Production Occupations	3,900	4,063	163	\$16.95
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations	1,709	1,824	115	\$11.24

Source: Economic Modeling Specialists, Inc. 2013-Q2 QCEW Data Set



More Information: <http://www.clermontcountyohio.biz/>

## Major County Employers

There are over 10,000 businesses located in Clermont County. These companies range in size from one employee to over 1,000 employees. This section will examine Clermont County's largest private employers and what industry sectors they represent.

Government employment will not be addressed, because those jobs cover a multitude of entities including County, Township, City, Village, School Districts, Safety Services, etc. As mentioned in the previous section, government is Clermont County's second largest employment industry, but is made up of various units.

Clermont County's largest and fastest growing employers are professional service businesses. American Modern Insurance Group (AMIG) and Total Quality Logistics have invested nearly \$45 million in new headquarters facilities and are Clermont County's two largest employers with over 1,000 employees each.

The ever growing Information Technology (IT) industry has a special niche in Miami Township, Clermont County. The strength of the workforce's knowledge base is demonstrated by the presence of Siemens PLM and Tata Consultancy Services' North American Delivery Center. These two companies combined employ over 1,000 computer programmers and software engineers in Clermont County.

Another strong sector for Clermont County's largest private employers is advanced manufacturing and specifically the defense industry. L-3 Fuzing & Ordnance is the county's largest manufacturer. Other defense industry manufacturers include MilAir and Engineered Mobile Solutions, which have both doubled their workforce in recent years. The county's rich manufacturing tradition is best exemplified by Milacron Plastics Machinery, a plastics machinery OEM, whose founding organization began in 1884.

In addition to the current largest employers, there are other companies that are on a path to become substantial employers in Clermont County. As previously mentioned, Huhtamaki, Inc. has committed to creating 237 jobs within four years at their new facility in Batavia Township. Bioformix, a Miami Township company that is developing adhesives, coating and sealants is expected to create 120 jobs in the next 5 years. Cincinnati Children's Hospital & Medical Center recently announced the purchase of approximately 25 acres in Union Township for future development of one of their facilities.



*More Information: <http://www.clermontcountyohio.biz/>*

## Business Assistance

The Department of Community & Economic Development (CED) works closely with local communities and the JobsOhio network to help navigate existing and new companies through a wide array of business assistance programs. The department also works closely with the Small Business Development Center housed at the Clermont Chamber of Commerce to assist entrepreneurs in starting, sustaining and growing their business.

CED also manages the Clermont County CIC, Inc., a community improvement corporation. Established in 2003, the Clermont County CIC was created to aid the county in many aspects of the overall economic development strategy, but its current efforts are focused on facilitating industrial and office park development which will lead to new real property investment and job growth. This focus will result in development of “shovel ready” industrial and office sites, a critical component in attracting new business investment to Clermont County.

In addition to the CIC, the Board of County Commissioners created the Clermont County Port Authority in 2012 to aid economic development initiatives by adding tools to remain competitive with our neighboring communities. The most utilized function of the county port authority is the ability to provide an exemption from local and state sales tax on construction materials purchased in Ohio for a commercial or industrial project. This function can provide a significant cost savings to a company.



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## Tourism in Clermont County

While tourism isn't necessarily considered economic development in the traditional sense, it does bring outside dollars into our community to help it grow. Visitor spending and employment figures are essential factors to consider when evaluating the importance of travel and tourism to Clermont County's economy.

In 2011, Clermont County's tourism industry contributed more than \$69,000 in local taxes. Additionally, the industry generated nearly \$540 million in sales for local businesses and sustained more than 6,553 local jobs.

Clermont County has several historic, recreational and retail attractions that bring visitors here. Some of the more popular venues include:

**Cincinnati Nature Center** – the Center has preserved 1,600 acres of Clermont County's natural beauty and is considered one of the USA's best nature education centers.

**East Fork State Park** – one of Ohio's largest parks

and features a public beach, boating, hiking and equestrian trails. Harsha Lake at East Fork State Park has a world class rowing facility that has hosted Olympic trials and national collegiate tournaments.

**Eastgate Mall** – with over 90 stores and nearly one million square feet, Eastgate Mall is Clermont County's largest retail center. Major anchor tenants include Dillards, Sears, JC Penney and Kohl's department stores. In addition to Eastgate Mall, Clermont County offers an assortment of shopping and dining choices in its main retail corridor known as Eastgate.

**Jungle Jim's International Market** – one of Clermont County's newest attractions, the 215,000 square foot retail store boasts a collection of unique food stands and interactive displays. Over 150,000 food and specialty items are available for purchase.

**Clermont County Golf Courses** - Clermont County offers amateur golfers ten public courses, in addition to another 100 regional ones.



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**Little Miami Scenic Trail** – the longest single trail in the Miami Valley trail network, it offers more than 50 miles of paved trails ideal for walking, running and biking. Nearly 13 miles of the trail run through Miami Township connecting the cities of Loveland and Milford.

**Stonelick State Park** – this nearly 1,100 acre park offers a quiet retreat for visitors. Tucked away in the rolling highlands of Clermont County, the still waters of the lake and stately woodlands provide the setting for a host of outdoor recreational activities.

**Tri-State War Bird Museum** – a historic aviation museum, dedicated to remembering those who fought for our freedom and honoring those who made the ultimate sacrifice protecting our country, features 20,000 square feet of preservation and

commemoration exhibits. The museum maintains a fleet of authentic, working historical aircraft.

**U.S. Grant's Birthplace** – located on one of Ohio's scenic byways (U.S. 52 – Grant Memorial Highway) is the birthplace of Ulysses S. Grant, Union General and 18th President of the United States. The home is on the National Register of Historic Places and includes historic memorabilia and period furnishings.

**Underground Railroad Freedom Trail** – the Clermont County Ohio Freedom Trail is a self-guided tour that highlights thirty-three Underground Railroad and Abolitionist sites throughout the county's scenic rolling hills and along the Ohio River. The Freedom Trail features nineteen sites included in the Network to Freedom program of the National Park Service.



More Information: <http://www.clermontcountyohio.biz/>

## Goals & Objectives

For Clermont County, economic and community development are closely linked and vital in creating the environment for long term sustainable growth. At its heart, economic development is about building healthy economies in order to have healthy communities.

### **Key economic development goals include:**

- Increased Tax Base – revenue provided by economic development supports, maintains, and improves community infrastructure such as roads, schools, parks, libraries and public safety services.
- Job Development – economic development provides better wages, benefits and opportunities for career advancement.
- Business Retention and Expansion – businesses that see a favorable business environment and feel appreciated by the community are more likely to locate, stay, expand and contribute to growing the economy.

### **Key economic development objectives include:**

1. Aggressively pursue new business investment by establishing a leading edge competitive and comprehensive county-wide economic development program.
2. Integrate involvement of the key partners and business community in the county's economic development efforts.
3. Build a collaborative approach to creating a stronger business climate with the multiple public agencies and utilities that have a responsibility for the infrastructure in the community.
4. Increase alliance building and improve communication and coordination with business stakeholders and local, state and federal agencies.



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