



DELAWARE
COUNTY *Ohio*

STRATEGIC GOAL SETTING RETREAT SUMMARY

DELAWARE COUNTY COMMUNITY
IMPROVEMENT CORPORATION



February
2026

Introduction

On Wednesday, January 28, the CIC Board of Directors and senior County administrators and Economic Development staff attended an afternoon retreat in the County Commission Offices. This retreat was facilitated by David Collinsworth, a partner with the Management Advisory Group, LLC., a local government consulting firm which also provides management, advisory, and consulting services to the County's Economic Development Office.

The Goal Setting process follows a reinvigoration of the CIC with the appointment of three Board members and a mission to augment what other economic development entities in Delaware County are currently doing. As part of the preparatory phase of the retreat, key economic development stakeholders in the County, along with County administrators and staff took part in interviews to understand the key forces and trends impacting Delaware County. The results of those conversations were aggregated and then presented at the beginning of the retreat to help participants in formulating desired goals going forward.

The participants were then invited to offer suggested goals for the CIC for the next several years and to prioritize which of those potential goals should be focused on. The last part of the exercise, upon identification of the top 5 goals, was the development of 2 – 3 action items for the CIC to follow-up on in order to advance attainment of each of the goals.

Following is a summation of these goals and strategies, as well as the preliminary interviews conducted prior to the retreat.

Initial Goal Identification

- Establish Fee Schedule, as well as policies and procedures, for land acquisitions
- Look for ways to leverage Airport
- Redevelop old MRDD facility at Orange & Rt. 23
- Establish process for acquiring and holding land
- Serve as convener of public and private partners to help further ED projects
- Examine opportunities to bring private equity (\$\$\$) into CIC projects including land donations
- Make a commitment to “site readiness” within the scope of CIC’s mission and authority
- Help promote strong workforce availability in deal-making
- Raise \$\$\$ to support the CIC’s work (sponsorships?)
- Consider use of grant funding
- Develop communications & outreach strategy for political subdivisions in the County

Prioritized Goals with Action Steps

- ▶ **Establish Fee Schedule as well as policies and procedures, for land acquisitions as well as all other transactions involving the CIC**
 - Benchmark other CIC's policies and procedures
 - Identify costs associated with CIC work

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- ▶ **Examine opportunities to bring private equity (\$\$\$) into CIC projects including land donations**
 - Obtain legal opinion on authority
 - Find out who is successfully doing
 - Solicit input from development community

- ▶ **Development Communications and Outreach Strategy**
 - Meet with Communication Office to develop strategies and concepts
 - Solicit input from County Economic Development Team
 - Produce materials & initiatives

- ▶ **Make Commitment to Site Readiness**
 - Identify standards of Job Ready Site
 - Work with Economic Development staff in collaborating with communities
 - Board briefing on recent inventory results

The following pages represent the results from the initial interviews that were preliminary to the January 28 retreat session. Note that the responses generally appear in order of frequency with a “+” indicating the response was offered by multiple respondents.

Significant Forces Impacting County (3-5 Years)

- Residential Growth & resulting demand on services & infrastructure (+)
- Tax Exhaustion (Tax Revolt, State Legis., Flight Risk) (+)
- Development Resistance & NIMBYism (+)
- Housing Affordability (+)
- Push for Job Creation/Diversification in County (+)
- Young County Demographically
- Demographic Shift » Political Change » Loss of Political Support for Dev.
- Retail Growth (need for diversification of tax base)
- Zoning Decision Timelines Too Long

Growth/Economic Development Challenges Facing County (3-5 Years)

- E.D. Environment (zoning codes, permitting processes, reaction time, reputation for development, uncoordinated, too many cooks in kitchen) (+)
- NIMBYism (lack of understanding of funding, data center pushback) (+)
- Land Availability/Property Assembly/Shovel Ready sites (services extended),
- Real Estate Values (+)
- Transportation & Traffic Issues/Costly Infrastructure Development/East-West Circulation
- Workforce Availability & Quality
- Energy Prices (ability to fuel future growth)
- Eastern County/Harlem Twp.
- Groundswell Against Property Tax

Top 3 Economic Development Opportunities (3-5 Years)

- Location/Quality of Life/Highly Desired (+)
- County's Fiscal Capacity & Services (Low Debt, Utilities, Transit, ED Dept.) (+)
- County as Hub for coordination & relationship builder (data sharing, bridge gaps) (+)
- Educated & Skilled Workforce/Wealth & Knowledge base of residents (+)
- Broadening the Tax Base
- Airport (underutilized)
- Base of commercial & industrial development (build off of)
- Sports Tourism & associated businesses
- Regional ED Partner (OneColumbus)

What Should CIC Do That Its Not?

- Identify & Acquire Land/Assist Co. w/Surplus Real Estate (Human Soc./Old MRDD site, Orange & 23) (+)
- Role Clarity & Mission (conflict w/ municipalities, CIC's?, Pickaway Co. model?) (+)
- Convener of groups (townships, municipalities, privates, Co. ED Office) (+)
- Board Structure (need more & more diverse membership) (+)
- Help get Berlin Business Park moving (revise zoning, purchase parcels?) (+)
- Promote what CIC does better
- Be tactically nimble

What Tools Does CIC Need?

- Establish Funding Strategy for CIC Ops (Fee Schedule from Land Sales, Δ from 501C6 to C3?) (+)
- Assist in Project Financing (w/DCFA and funds raising with private equity) (+)
- Beat Own Drum/Better Market Itself (+)
- Use of CIC to help execute County Strategic Plan
- Be a bridge of communications across political subdivisions in County

Role For CIC In Informaing County ED Policy?

- Communications & Marketing Arm , explaining tax diversification, increase social media presence (+)
- Convene diverse interests, use expertise of CIC Board/Staff (+)
- Buyer of strategic land (+)
- Provide County with options for creating development scenarios within the policy
- Create buy in for County ED strategy with local political subdivisions
- Be designated to respond to development inquiries (RFI's)
- Help to streamline inputs and decision-making within development process
- Perhaps help to identify sector-specific strategies that County and locals can tie into