



Wyandot County, OH Business Retention and Expansion Program

A narrative based on local perceptions

Final Report – December 2017



Wyandot County, OH
Business Retention & Expansion Program
Final Report

December 2017

Prepared by:

Gregory Moon

Executive Director, Wyandot County Office of Economic Development

Executive Director, Wyandot County Regional Planning Commission

and

The Wyandot County Business Retention and Expansion Task Force

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Introduction

Since 2008 local public, business, and community leaders have made an effort to ensure the annual implementation of a Business Retention and Expansion (BR&E) program in Wyandot County. The retention of existing business has been and remains a primary goal of these leaders. Enhancing the ability of area businesses to profitably grow and expand is vital to sustaining and improving local economic viability.

Prior to 2008, a BR&E program was facilitated sporadically in Wyandot County, but the program became an annual occurrence and a staple for municipal, county, regional, and statewide economic development organizations across the United States. As stated in the 2006 Wyandot County BR&E Final Report, the best “barometers” of how well a community functions as a place to do business and a place to live and work are the state of existing businesses and the existing workforce. Research shows that in Ohio, an average net job growth of 70% comes from existing businesses, and that number increases to as high as 86% in rural areas.¹

Not only does the success of existing

businesses allow for a larger tax base, increased local spending, enhanced public services, and an overall better quality of life, but strong local businesses also play a major role in the attraction of new business to an area. Satisfied existing businesses can serve as a community's best ambassadors when recruiting new firms as well as being a source of leads when seeking new firms to recruit.²

In Wyandot County, formal BR&E programs were completed in 1996, 2006, and annually since 2008. After completion of the 2008 BR&E program, a group of public and business leaders realized that Wyandot County needed a local presence to address the issues as well as take advantage of the strengths reported by local businesses. Those discussions spurred a partnership with Ohio State University Extension, and that year a full-time Extension Educator was hired to run the local economic development effort. In 2009 the Wyandot County Office of Economic Development (WCOED), a 501(c)(6) nonprofit public / private partnership, was formed and led by the same OSU Extension Educator who served as its director. In turn the director carried out the responsibility of implementing the

¹ Kraybill, D. 1995. Retention and Expansion First. *Ohio's Challenge* 8(2):4-7 [Department of Agricultural, Environmental, and Development Economics, Ohio State University, Columbus, OH].

² Morse, G. 2004. *The Retention and Expansion of Existing Businesses*. CARDI-Cornell, Ithaca, NY.
http://www.cdtoolbox.net/economic_development/000195.html.

county's BR&E program.

The Wyandot County BR&E program was led by the Extension Educator/WCOED Executive Director from 2009 – 2014. Beginning in 2015, the WCOED Executive Director became a direct employee of Wyandot County and since the Wyandot County BR&E program has been wholly facilitated by the Wyandot County Office of Economic Development.

Program Goals

The overarching goals of the Wyandot County BR&E program continue to remain similar to those started in the initial 1996 BR&E program offering:

- **To formalize and implement a concerted effort that assists in the retention and expansion of existing businesses and the workforce**
- **To increase the competitiveness of local businesses**
- **To create a narration of the local economy**
- **To enhance local business climate and image for potential business**

Implementation

As was the practice in previous years, a combination of methods was used to collect data that supported the Wyandot County Business Retention and Expansion program. The Wyandot County Office of Economic Development Executive Director served as the local BR&E practitioner; developed the survey tool, scheduled retention calls, and conducted on-site visits. The BR&E questionnaire was made continuously available on the WCOED website and could be emailed or mailed to participating employers.

Since the Wyandot County BR&E program is conducted by leadership from the WCOED, the organization's executive committee and top-level members served as the local BR&E Task Force. This group of public and private sector leaders set the parameters for local businesses that would be targeted throughout the year. As in 2015, the task force determined that the top-15 employers (in terms of total employment) should be visited, and a remaining 15 employers would be visited based on need; for a total of at least 30 local businesses visited per year. In 2017 well over 30 local business visits were conducted by the WCOED Executive Director although less than this number of formal BR&E surveys were recorded as completed in this year's Final Report. The incomplete surveys we deemed unusable due to incomplete or inadequate

information collected during a BR&E visit.

The BR&E practitioner either directly called or emailed potential participants to schedule BR&E visits. Those identified to participate in the program were offered the option to take the annual BR&E questionnaire online prior to the visit, or to complete the questionnaire verbally during the visit.

Following a practice that has begun since 2013, the Wyandot County Commissioners joined the BR&E practitioner on a visit sporadically throughout the year, and other members of the WCOED were invited to join retention calls as well. The inclusion of the commissioners enhanced one of the primary facets of the BR&E program, which is to open direct lines of communication between local business, policy, and community leaders.

Program Benefits and Outcomes

Data from the local BR&E effort is also used to assess the economy and provide a detailed understanding to state-wide community leaders, public leaders, and economic developers. The data provides evidence-based information that these individuals and entities can use to develop

efforts to address areas seen as opportunities or threats on the wider state-level.

Locally, the 2017 Wyandot County BR&E program led to the identification of multiple potential and realized expansion projects by local employers. Those projects that were still in the planning phases better equip the economic development office to prepare and assist those organizations with any challenges these projects might face when moving forward. The advanced notice also allows the WCOED to help expedite requested assistance at the time these projects might be implemented.

Early identification of local expansion projects is a key advantage of the Wyandot County BR&E program as projects identified in previous years and during the 2017 program were successfully implemented. In total, 3 Wyandot County businesses moved forward with expansion projects in 2017 where the WCOED was able to directly provide assistance. These 3 projects resulted in the creation of 72 new full-time jobs, new annual payroll of \$3.3 million, new capital investment of \$36.9 million, and the retention of 907 existing jobs.

Wyandot County, OH Demographic Overview³

- In 2016, Wyandot County had an estimated population of [22,359](#). Since the year 2000, the population of Wyandot County has decreased by 2.4 percent ([22,908](#) in 2000).
- The median value of a home in Wyandot County was [\\$106,200](#). Of the total [9,144](#) housing units, [73.2%](#) were owner-occupied.
- Wyandot County's median age was [41.7](#). The U.S. median age was [37.7](#).
- The average county household size was [2.41 people](#). [53.0%](#) of households are occupied by a married couple of which [33.6%](#) have a child under 18 years. [14.0%](#) of households are occupied by single parents of which [58.2%](#) have a child under 18 years.
- In October 2017, the unemployment rate in Wyandot County was [3.2%](#), the state of Ohio was [4.5%](#), and the U.S. average was [3.9%](#) (not seasonally adjusted).
- Of the population, [90.4%](#) had a high school diploma or higher degree ([86.9%](#) across the U.S.), and [14.7%](#) had a bachelor's degree or higher ([30.3%](#) across the U.S.).
- The mean commute time for those living in Wyandot County was [22.3 minutes](#). The national average was [26.1 minutes](#).

	Wyandot County	Ohio	United States
Total population change since year 2000	-2.4%	2.0%	11.7%
Male population	49.6%	49.0%	49.2%
Female population	50.4%	51.0%	50.8%
Median age (years)	41.7	39.3	37.7
Total households	9,144	4,601,449	117,716,237
Average household size	2.41	2.45	2.64
Percent high school graduate or higher	90.4%	89.5%	86.9%
Percent bachelor's degree or higher	14.7%	26.7%	30.3%

³ Information obtained from the U.S. Census Bureau, 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates <http://factfinder2.census.gov> and Ohio Labor Market Information, Civilian Labor Force Estimates <http://ohiolmi.com/asp/laus/vbLAUS.htm>, which reflect the most current information on Wyandot County, OH.

Economy in Wyandot County, OH⁴

ECONOMY	Wyandot County	Ohio	United States
Civilian labor force (Oct. 2017)	12,600	5,774,000	160,465,000
Unemployment Rate (Oct. 2017)	3.2%	4.5%	3.9%
Mean travel time to work (minutes)	22.3	23.3	26.1
Median income (dollars)	27,431	26,537	27,419

POPULATION BY OCCUPATION	Wyandot County	Ohio	United States
Management, business, science, and arts occupations	25.2%	35.4%	37.0%
Service occupations	15.3%	17.5%	18.1%
Sales and office occupations	17.7%	23.7%	23.8%
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	11.8%	7.6%	8.9%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	30.0%	15.8%	12.2%

ESTIMATED HOUSEHOLDS BY HOUSEHOLD INCOME	Wyandot County	Ohio	United States
Less than \$10,000	5.2%	7.9%	7.0%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	5.6%	5.4%	5.1%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	11.8%	11.2%	10.2%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	10.7%	10.7%	9.9%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	16.2%	14.2%	13.2%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	21.9%	18.5%	17.8%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	14.3%	12.2%	12.2%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	10.2%	12.2%	13.5%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	1.8%	4.1%	5.4%
\$200,000 or more	2.3%	3.7%	5.7%
Median household income (dollars)	50,723	50,674	53,322

⁴ Information obtained from the U.S. Census Bureau, 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates <http://factfinder2.census.gov> and Ohio Labor Market Information, Civilian Labor Force Estimates <http://ohiolmi.com/asp/laus/vbLAUS.htm>, which reflect the most current information on Wyandot County, OH.

Cost of Living in Wyandot County, OH⁵

COST OF LIVING	Wyandot County	Ohio	United States
Overall	88	88	100
Grocery	102.6	99.2	100
Health	114	98	100
Housing	54	67	100
Utilities	92	99	100
Transportation	106	100	100
Miscellaneous	105	98	100

- Cost of living indices are based on a U.S. average of 100. If Wyandot County scored above the cost of living index in any category it would indicate that local residents experience a cost of living above that of the U.S. average. Likewise, a cost of living index less than 100 in a category would indicate a cost of living below the U.S. average. The same applies to the figures representing cost of living for the State of Ohio.
- Overall, the cost of living index for Wyandot County is 88.4. Comparatively, this is the same overall cost of living index for the State of Ohio.
- The Wyandot County, OH cost of living does exceed that of the national average in the areas of Grocery, Health, and Transportation, but is far less than the national average in Housing costs.
- The overall cost of living in Wyandot County is 11.6% below that of the U.S. average.

⁵ Information obtained from Sperling's Best Places <http://www.bestplaces.net/>, which reflects the most relevant cost of living data for Wyandot County, OH.

BR&E Survey Results

Participant Information

The 2017 Wyandot County Business Retention and Expansion program included the completion of surveys and retention calls beginning as early as January and as late as December. Survey data was formally gathered from 25 local businesses, of which the aggregated data is included in Appendix A. All of these participating employers were visited by the BR&E practitioner to discuss further the responses provided in the survey. A number of other businesses were visited by the BR&E practitioner throughout 2017 but survey data was not included in the aggregated responses due to an insufficient amount of data collected.

Those participants who did provide survey responses included a sampling of various types of businesses located in Wyandot County and represented a variety of other various aspects as well. Geographically, the vast majority (70%) of respondents were located in the City of Upper Sandusky, followed by 13% in the Village of Carey, and an even number from Wyandot County's other incorporated areas listed.

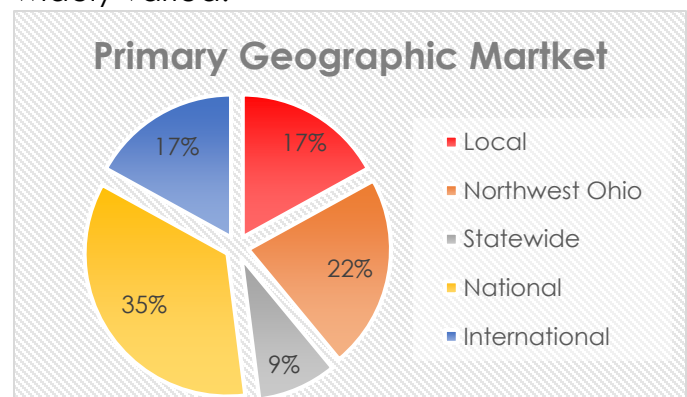
The age of local participating operations varied widely. 70% of participants had operated in Wyandot County for over 20

years, about 13% between 11–20 years, and the other 17% from 1–5 years. The primary industry sectors of respondents were as follows:

Industry Sector	Percent of Respondents
Manufacturing	47.83%
Agricultural/Forest/Mining	4.35%
Retail	8.7%
Construction	8.7%
Service	4.35%
Non-profit/Association	8.7%
Other	17%

In comparison, the primary type of space occupied by survey respondents included 64% that were located in an industrial/manufacturing facility, followed by 32% in an office space, and 5% in a retail setting. 96% of respondents indicated they owned the space their business occupied.

The scope of respondents' primary geographic market, or areas where their goods and services were sold or delivered, widely varied:



Varying industries and customer bases among local businesses help to enhance sustainability in the local economy, and provide stability when fluctuations may arise in certain business sectors.

Future Plans

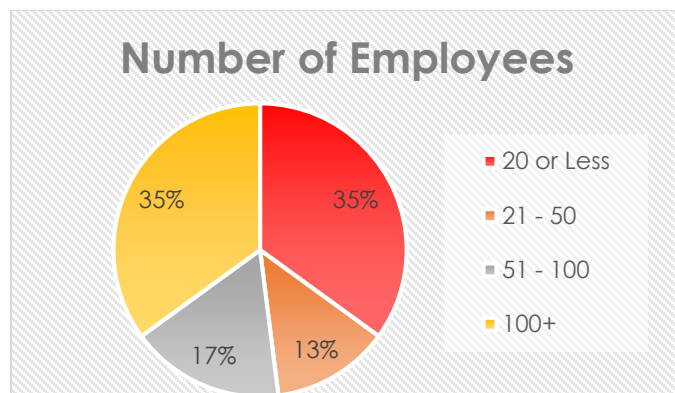
2017 BR&E data again showed overall profitable growth among participants was occurring as 70% reported plans for growth over the next 3 years, and 26% reported their business as stable. Only 4% of respondents reported a projected decline in business.

Of the respondents who did report their company was growing, 94% noted that an increase in employment level would take place as a result of that growth.

Similar to previous years' BR&E data collected, many (50%) of the businesses who indicated they were growing also reported they had plans to modernize, renovate, or expand their operation, or they had recently completed a related project.

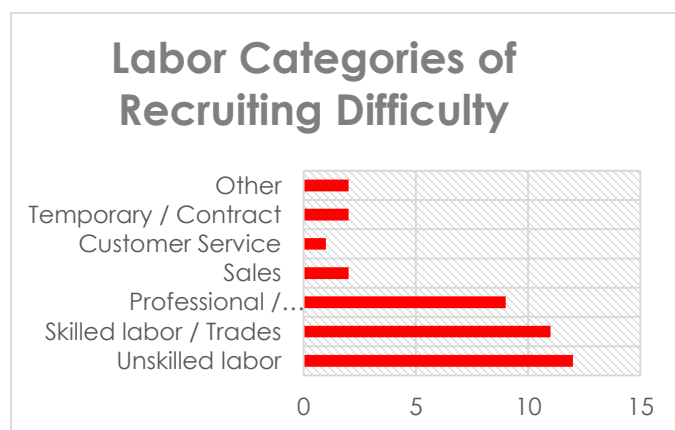
Labor Force & Training

In terms of participating employer size, the following graph shows the employee count distribution of survey respondents (assuming 2 part-time employees equal 1 full-time employee):



Over 43% of respondents said the average length of employment at their location was 10 years or more, 39% reported an average length of employment of 5-10 years, 9% as 1-5 years, and another 9% as less than 1 year.

As is the case nationwide, labor availability continues to be an area of difficulty for local employers. This year, almost 74% of respondents indicated they had difficulty recruiting employees locally. The following graph shows that unskilled as well as skilled labor positions continue to be the most difficult to recruit:



General competency skills (basic math, reading/writing, problem solving, etc.) and Customer service skills (interpersonal communications) were identified as the top skills seen lacking in potential employees interviewed by respondents. Computer skills were ranked as the second most needed followed by: Professional skills, Other Technical skills, and Equipment operation skills.

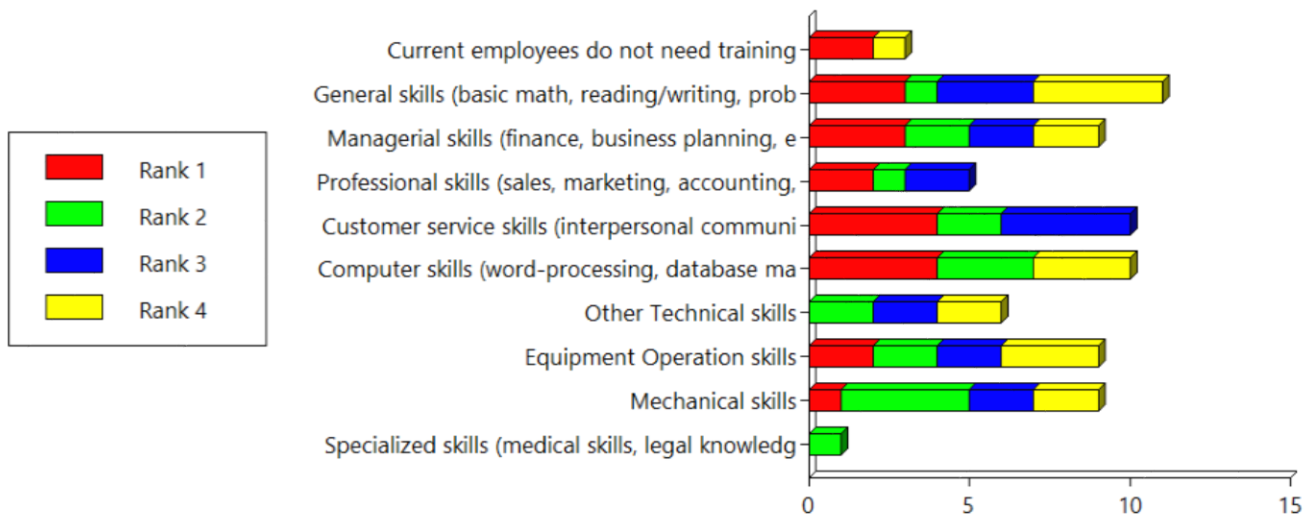
When asked what type of training is needed for respondents' current employees, the majority ranked General skills (basic math, reading/writing, and problem solving) as the most desired.

Customer service skills and computer skills were then ranked the highest as needed for local employers' current employees.

About 43% of all the respondents indicated a current relationship with a college, university, or vocational school to help find and/or train talent.

New questions were implemented in the 2016 BR&E survey to track the average starting salaries of workers. In 2017, \$12.24 per hour was the combined average starting wage reported when asked for the average starting salary of unskilled workers versus \$11.80 on the 2016 survey. \$20.58 per hour (versus \$18.43 in 2016) was the combined average starting salary for skilled workers.

Top four (4) areas in which your current employees need training?



View of Wyandot County

Business leaders in and around Wyandot County play a pivotal role in the overall attractiveness of the area to potential businesses looking at expansion. If existing businesses are performing well and have positive interaction with local public and private leadership, it is a good indicator of what potential businesses can expect if they were to locate operations close by. Suppliers and customers dependent on existing local businesses may also wish to be in closer proximity to that business if it is thriving and can offer cost advantages, which can lead to attraction of that outside industry as well. The BR&E program aims to identify characteristics of Wyandot County that can aid or hinder business growth as well as potential business attraction efforts in the immediate area.

When asked from a business perspective about their general opinion of Wyandot County as a place to do business; 39% responded it was excellent and 61% rated it as good. No businesses responded with the two available lesser rankings.

Participants were asked for their top 3 reasons for locating and keeping their business in Wyandot County. The top 3 responses were (in order): location, access to customers, and the safe local environment. The access that Wyandot County's location provides to local businesses continues to be a major

location factor for the county and remained a consistent strength. Location and access to customers have been ranked as two of the top three factors for the past five years of BR&E data.

Among services and amenities in Wyandot County that local businesses are most satisfied with; roads, highways and freeways; fire protection; and police protection tied as the top three. Roads, highways and freeways has consistently ranked as the top choice for the past four years. The 2, 4-lane freeways, 9 state routes, and 3 rail lines intersecting Wyandot County are heavily relied upon and make it attractive to area businesses.

On the opposite end, High speed internet access was ranked as the top local service or amenity that businesses were most dissatisfied with by a large margin.

Other questions asked to gauge overall challenges for local business due to zoning and other regulations yielded positive results. 18% reported that rules and regulations (zoning, permitting, etc.) had been a difficulty for their business. Much of these difficulties may have rested with state or federal level regulations as 100% of respondents noted that local public agencies were responsive to business needs when asked.

When asked for respondents' top 3 challenges doing business in Wyandot County, once again participants indicated

that recruiting or retaining employees was the top challenge. Expensive health insurance was rated as the second largest challenge to Wyandot County businesses.

Action Plan

A primary objective of any Business Retention & Expansion program, outside of creating a narrative of the strengths and weaknesses in a local economy, is to assist in crafting a course of action for local community, public, and business leaders as well as economic development professionals. This action plan should work to address concerns and build on the strengths identified in the collected BR&E data.

Changing negative trends in the local economy does not take place in the short-term, and therefore the action plan must also lay the groundwork for sustaining local economic prosperity.

The BR&E assessments done for Wyandot County in 1996, 2006, 2012 - 2016 and now in 2017 all expressed similarly trending data in many areas, which has been noted throughout this report. The data has maintained the importance of past action plan objectives, which were derived after the initial implementation of the Wyandot County BR&E program. The differentiating trends between data from year-to-year also highlight new areas that should be

targeted moving into the future. The changes in data derived over the past five-plus years has led to the creation of new objectives for this updated action plan as well:

Objective One: Enhance and encourage cooperation between business leaders, government leaders, and education leaders to further the goals and purposes of the BR&E initiative.

Collaboration and cooperation among local leaders remains the number one factor that can either enhance and/or limit the success and effectiveness of the BR&E program. This aspect becomes even more prevalent in a rural community such as Wyandot County. A gathering of resources and efforts from many individuals are necessary to disseminate and collect survey information as well as make company visits. Over the past three years the county commissioners and various WCOED board members took part in BR&E visits, which should remain a common practice in the future.

This year the WCOED again made a push to bring local educational partners into economic development planning, discussions, and leadership. The outlook for 2018 is that two or more local school districts will be joining the WCOED board membership, and will create a more holistic countywide economic development effort.

Objective Two: Improve the quality and quantity of the local workforce to satisfy the current and anticipated future needs of local businesses.

This objective was stated in the original Wyandot County BR&E study conducted in 1996, and current collected BR&E data makes this objective more relevant today than ever. As previously noted, workforce, and particularly the availability of needed workforce, remains to be one of the largest issues facing local employers. Although it is expressed year-after-year by Wyandot County employers, this issue is widespread. Organizations in many areas of Ohio and the nation face problems finding skilled and trained talent. Many labor market experts through examining available government data estimate as many as 25 million, or 47%, of all new job openings from 2010 to 2020 will fall into the 'middle-skills' range, which the U.S. is already seeing a shortage of qualified workers in.⁶

The WCOED must be one of the community leaders in garnering an adequate labor pool to support the ongoing growth of local businesses. This year the economic development organization facilitated the creation of a new workforce development and talent retention system called 'Community

Opportunity'. The system is designed to have the necessary workforce development community partners, including education, businesses, and program leaders, work through a uniform system that connects local talent with local opportunities.

Objective Three: Connect local business leaders to programs, services, and other resources available through local, State, and Federal agencies.

What could be argued as one of the primary benefits of a local Business Retention & Expansion program is the fact that it many times leads to the early identification of growth and expansion plans considered by local employers. In Wyandot County, the BR&E program has led to the identification of these potential projects and in many cases applicable resources were identified and successfully used to help make those projects a reality

The Wyandot County Office of Economic Development has knowledge of these resources and programs from which local businesses can benefit. Many forms of assistance are available and have been garnered to help remove roadblocks to local business expansion.

⁶ Kochan, T., Finegold, D., & Osterman, P. (2012). WHO CAN FIX THE "MIDDLE-SKILLS" GAP?. Harvard Business Review, 90(12), 81-90.

A strong BR&E program creates a direct outlet of communication to community and policy leaders, which results in a more business- and growth-friendly environment for local industry.

Objective Four: Connect the needs of local business to policymakers at the state and federal levels by participating in opportunities to relay collected informational from the local BR&E effort.

As previously stated, a local BR&E program serves as a direct line of communication between industry and local policy and decision makers. Although, that communication and the BR&E response data should not be limited to the local level. It is the responsibility of local BR&E practitioners to also relay this information to greater levels outside the local jurisdiction making the larger region and state more business-friendly wherever possible.

Much of the information collected in the Wyandot County BR&E program assesses opinions of working not only in the county, but within the state of Ohio. The concerns expressed by local companies should be directed to those individuals who can possibly have a positive effect on those issues from a more macro-level.

Summary

Data collected through the Wyandot County Business Retention & Expansion program continues to assist local economic development officials, community leaders, and stakeholders in planning future strategies that best aid local business growth.

The identification of rapidly growing local firms continues to provide local economic development officials with the ability to proactively assist with the growth of area businesses.

Three local expansion projects were implemented during 2017, which included heavy involvement and assistance from the Wyandot County Office of Economic Development. These projects were all originally discovered through the BR&E program.

As noted throughout this report, much of the data collected during the 2017 BR&E program mirrored that of previous years. Overall, the outlook on the local economy appears to remain positive. Businesses are making investments in many areas of their operations, generally increasing their market bases, and in many cases increasing local employment levels.

The geographic location, infrastructure, and access provided by Wyandot County continue to be identified as the top

decision-making factors for companies to both locate and remain in Wyandot County. Ensuring continued transportation access and other heightened public services continues to remain a large driver keeping existing businesses in the area.

While overall the local economic narrative continues to show many strengths, there are still ongoing concerns faced by local businesses that will help to guide ongoing efforts for local leaders. Again in 2017, the difficulty to recruit and retain both skilled and unskilled labor was seen as one of the greatest hardships for local firms. Although it is a local issue, the lack of needed labor is a problem plaguing firms across the country.

During the past years of the Wyandot County Office of Economic facilitating Wyandot County's BR&E program, while some collected indicators may change, the vast majority continue to remain the same. This raises the question of whether the method for data collection should be adjusted looking at the 2018 program year. As the speed of business continues to

move faster, only one visit or exchange with a local company may not be adequate to service their needs or to stay aware of the opportunities they may create.

In Wyandot County, local leaders must continue to find ways to combat the negative trends identified by the BR&E program, and build upon those items identified as most valued to the profitable growth of local industry. That may involve a new approach or variations to the BR&E program in future years.

A strong Business Retention & Expansion program is regarded by many to be a key offering of any local economic development organization. While changes may need to be made to keep the program functioning most effectively, there is no doubt that Wyandot County's BR&E program has proven to be highly effective in both providing a better understanding of the local economy as well as helping to sustain and enhance it.

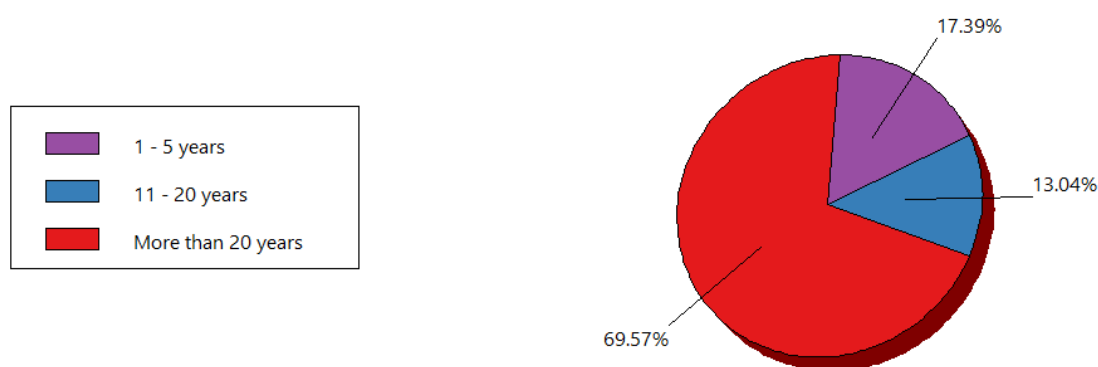
Appendix A: 2016 BR&E Survey Results

Survey Results

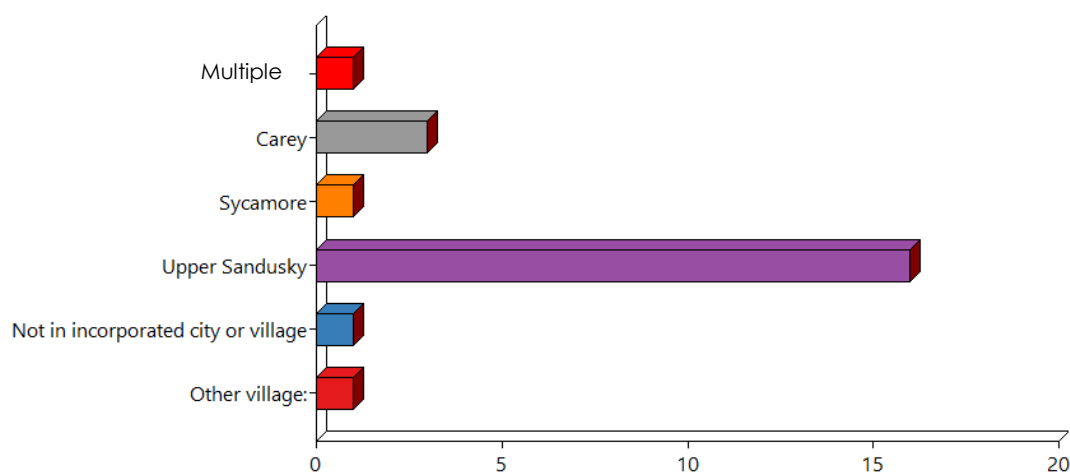
The following is a graphical depiction of the responses to each survey question. Additional comments provided by respondents, if any, are included after each graph.

Section - GENERAL INFORMATION

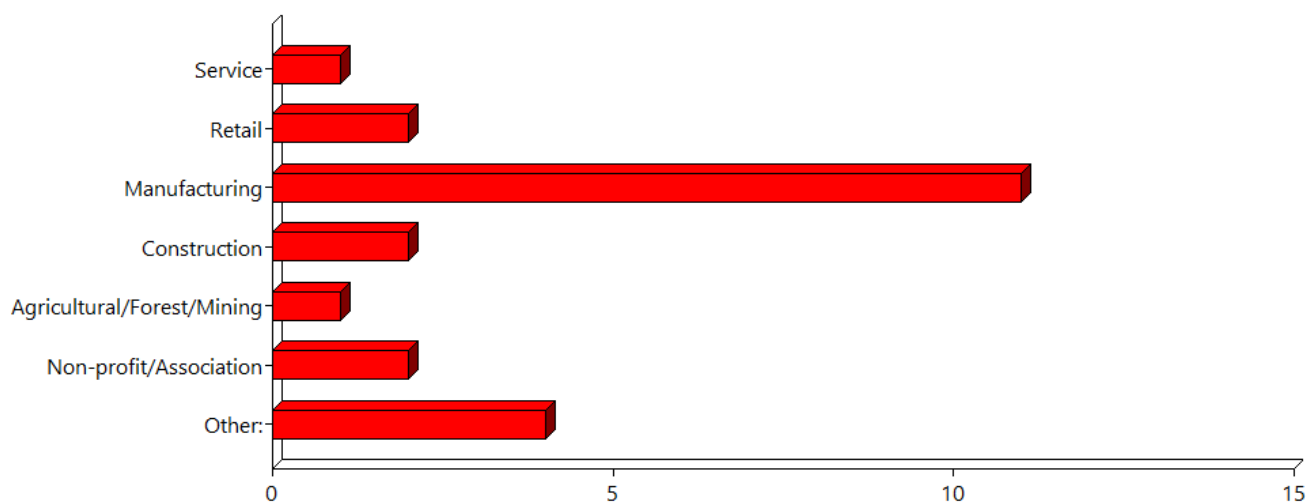
1. How long has your business been operating in Wyandot County?



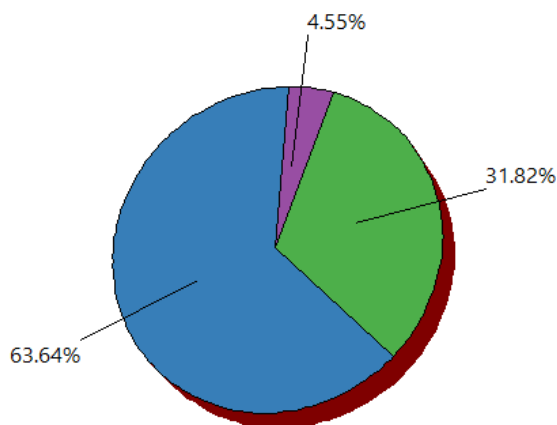
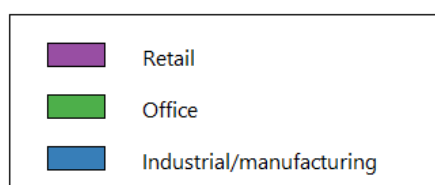
2. In which of the following areas is your business located?



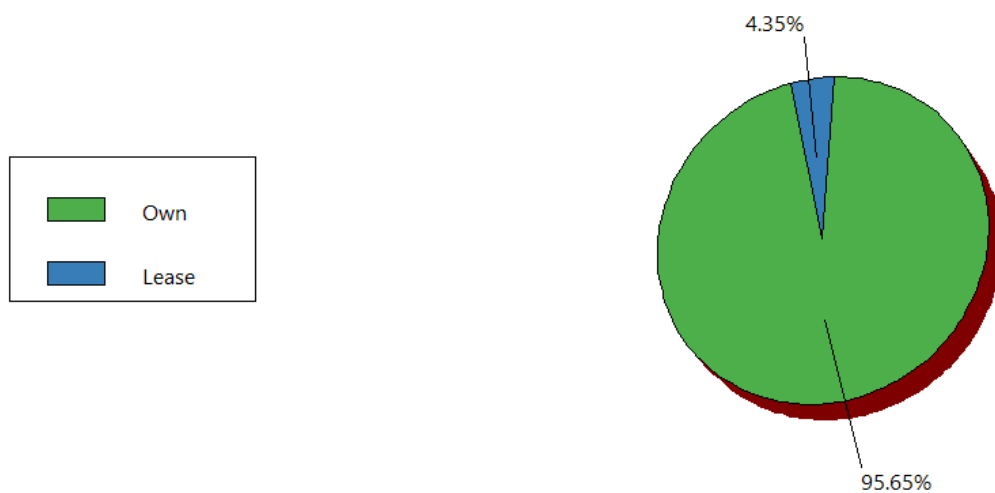
3. Please select the primary industry sector that best describes your business:



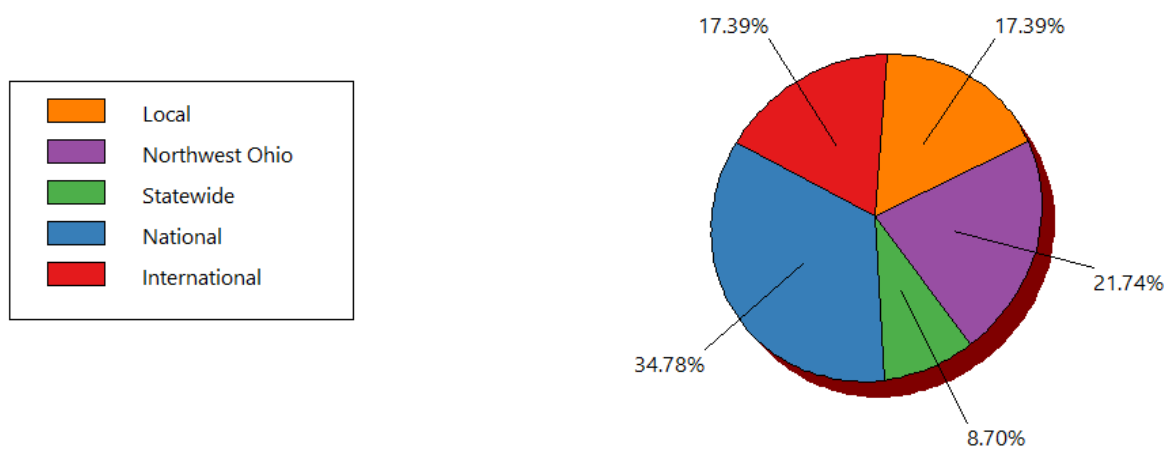
4. What is the primary type of space your business occupies?



5. Do you own or lease your space?

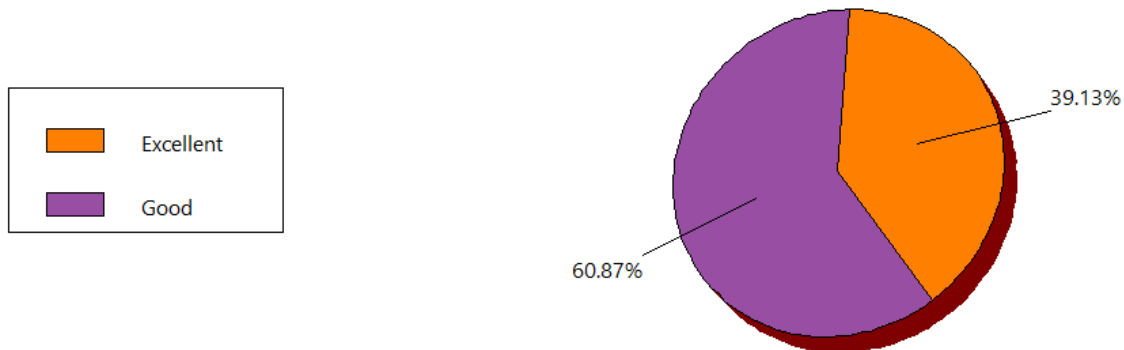


6. What is your company's primary geographic market?

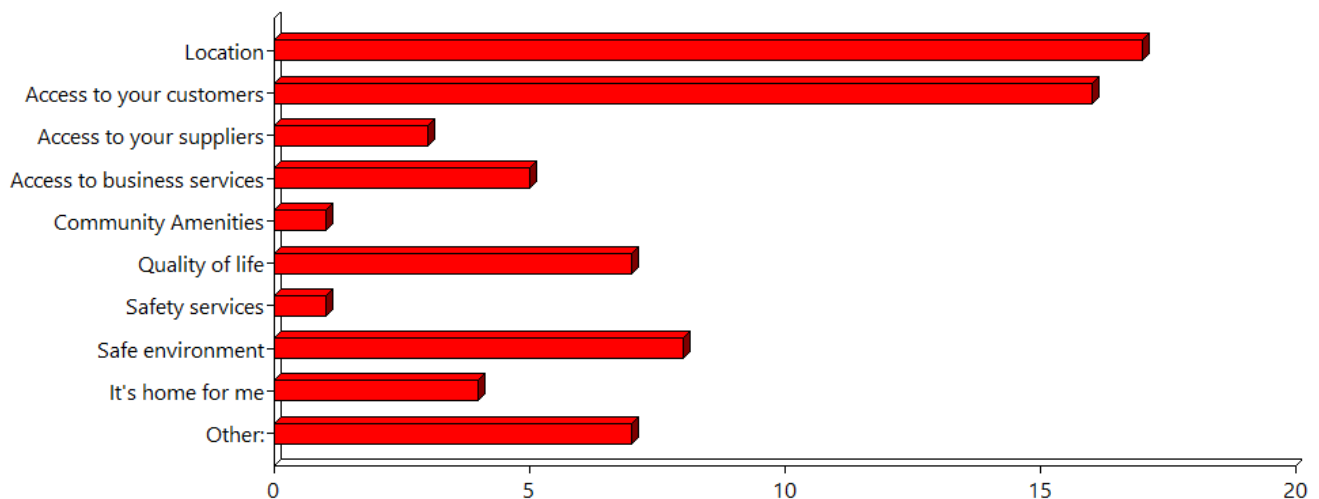


Section - BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

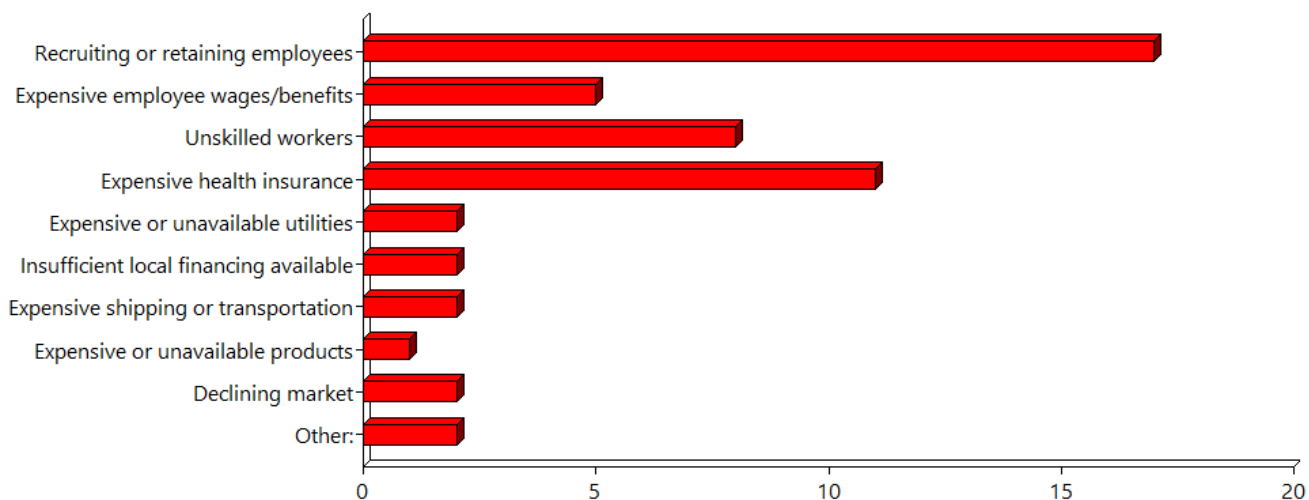
7. From your perspective as a businessperson, please rate the overall quality of life in Wyandot County.



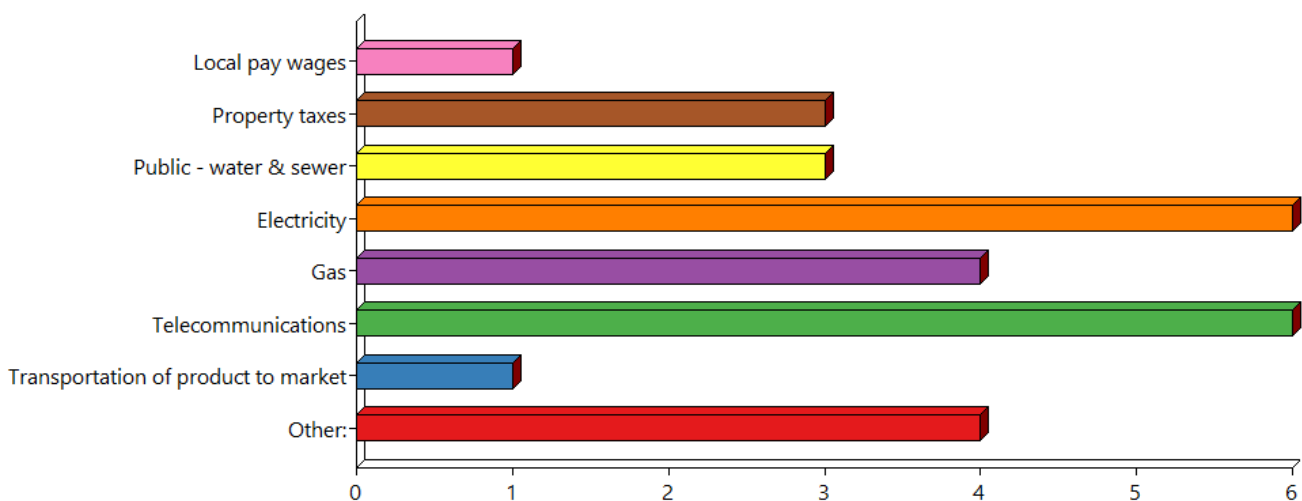
8. What are the top three (3) reasons you chose to locate and keep your business in Wyandot County?



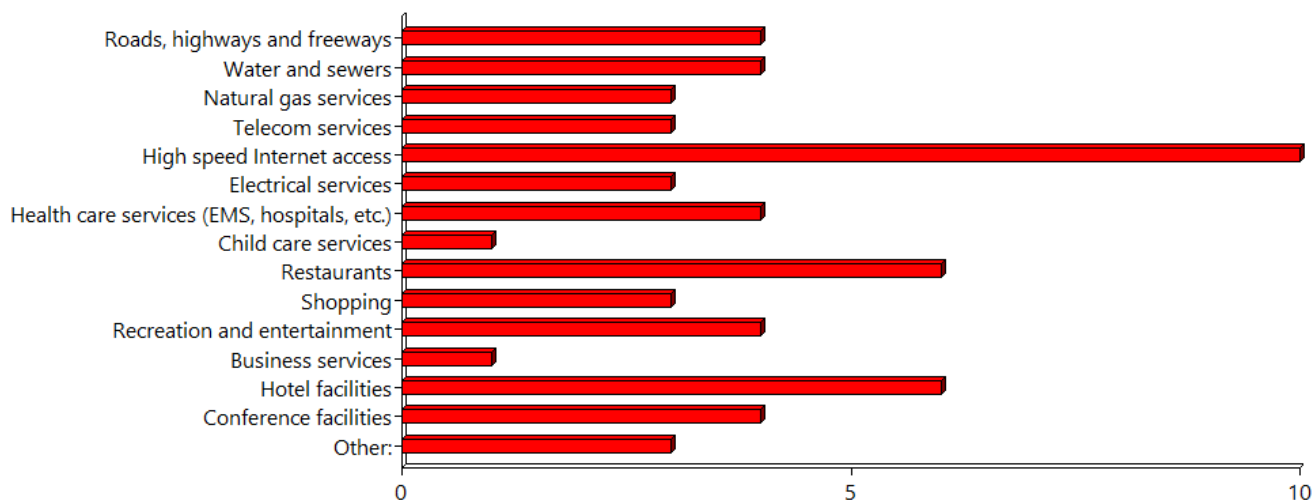
9. What are the top challenges you face as a business owner/operator in Wyandot County?



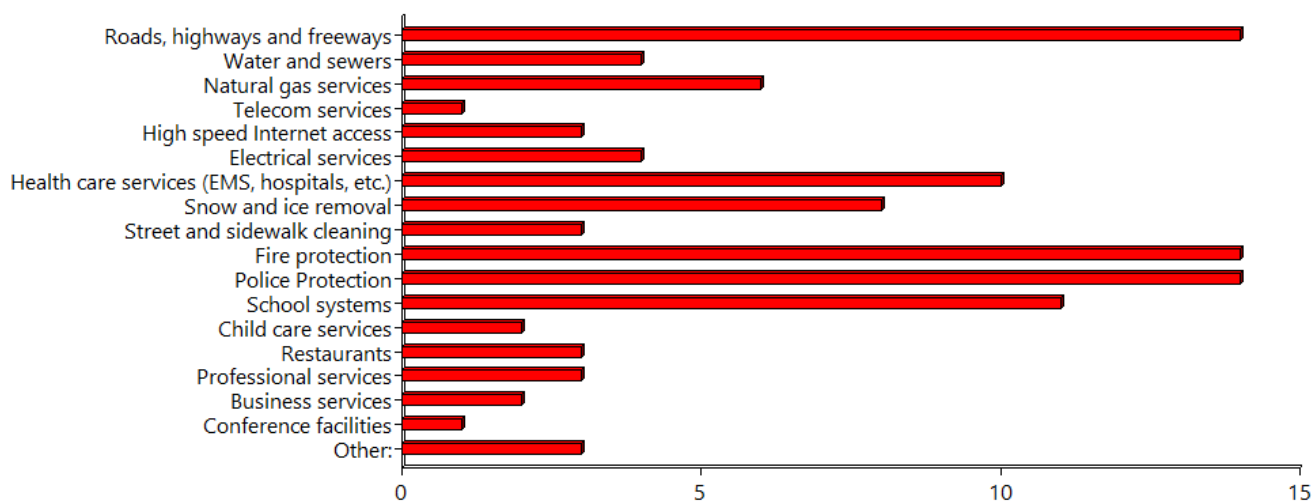
10. Please indicate the business costs in Wyandot County that you believe are more expensive than they ordinarily should be (if any):



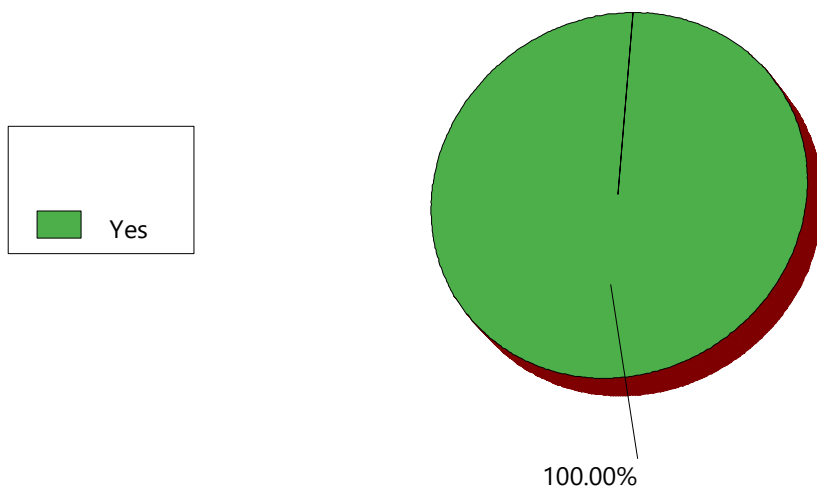
11. From your perspective as a businessperson, please select the SERVICES and AMENITIES in Wyandot County that you are DISSATISFIED with (if any):



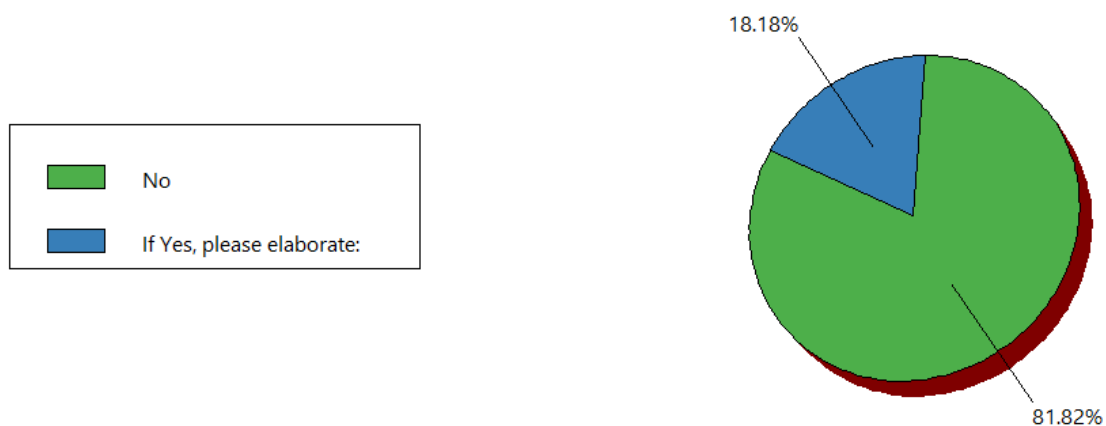
12. Please select the SERVICES and AMENITIES with which you are most SATISFIED.



13. Have local public agencies been responsive to your needs when asked?



14. Have any local rules and regulations (zoning, permitting, etc.) been a hindrance to your business operations or expansion efforts?

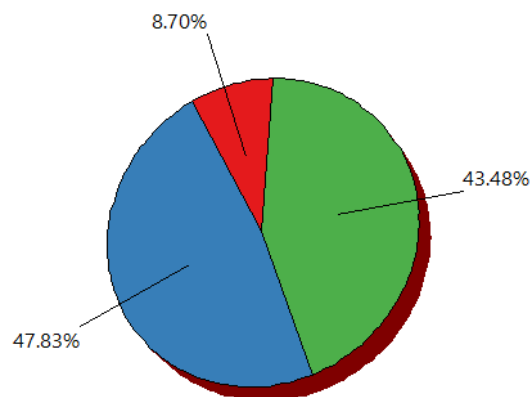
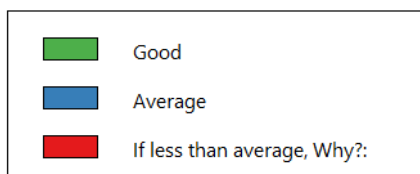


Section - LOCAL WORKFORCE

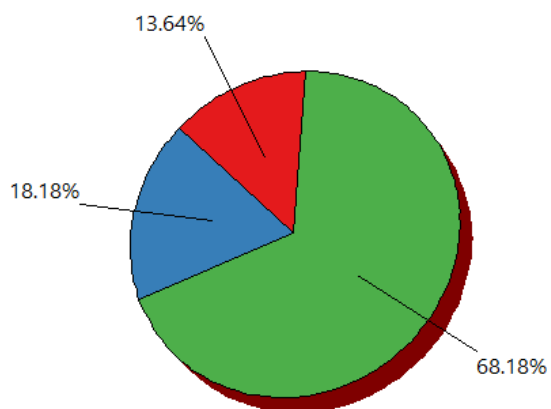
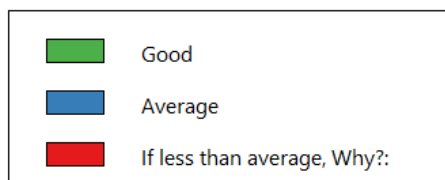
Instructions Provided To Respondents

Please rate the following aspects of the Hourly and Salaried labor force in Wyandot County:

15. How would you rate the local HOURLY labor force?



16. How would you rate the local SALARIED (staff and management) labor force?



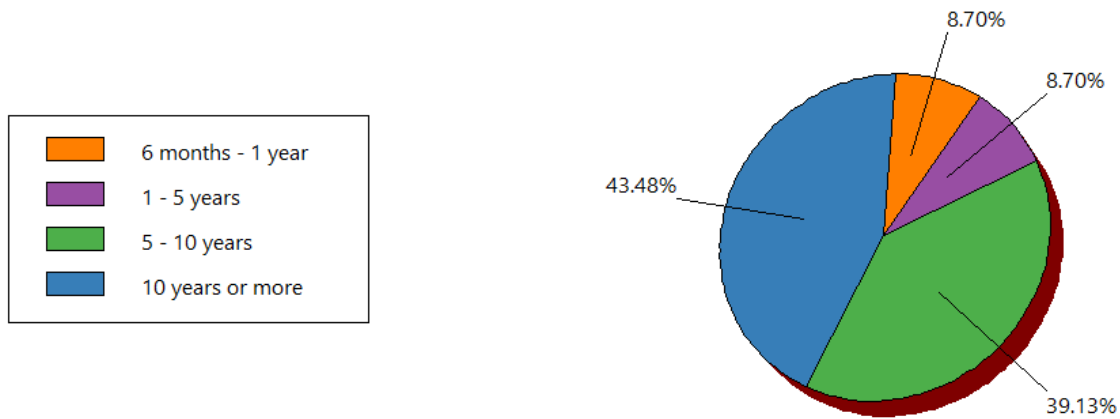
17. How many employees work at your Wyandot County business location? Please break out the number of part-time vs. full-time employees if applicable.

- 100 FT
- 15 FT, 5 PT
- 17 FT
- 19 FT; 1 PT
- 20 FTE; 15 PT
- 200+
- 236 FT; 67 PT
- 240 FT locally; 525+ company wide
- 310 FT
- 35 FT
- 4 FT
- 3 FT; 4 PT
- 40
- 450
- 5 FT; 5 PT
- 500
- 60 FT
- 65 FT
- 732
- 8 FT; 8 PT
- 13 FT; 8 PT
- 97
- 120 FT; 40 PT

18. If your total workforce has increased since 12 months ago, please indicate by what number:

- 1
- 10 FT; 5 PT
- 10-12
- 20
- 40
- 50
- Constant
- No increase (5 responses)
- Less than 5%
- 70

19. What is the average length of employment?



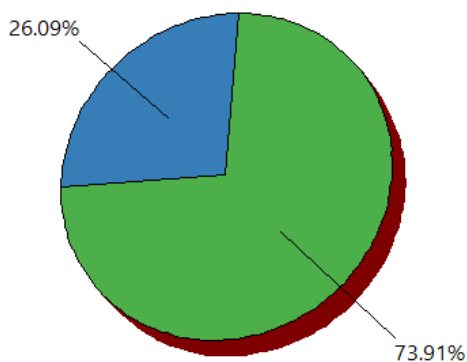
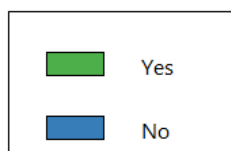
20. What is the average starting salary of your unskilled workers (general labor / entry-level positions)?

- \$10 to \$11
- \$10.75 hourly
- \$11.00 (2 responses)
- \$12-15/hr
- \$12.26 per hour
- \$13-15/hour
- \$13.00 (2 responses)
- \$13.05
- \$13.50
- \$14.00
- \$34,000
- \$9.00
- \$9.50/hour
- \$10.00
- \$10.50
- \$12.00
- \$12.95 per hour
- \$19.00/hour

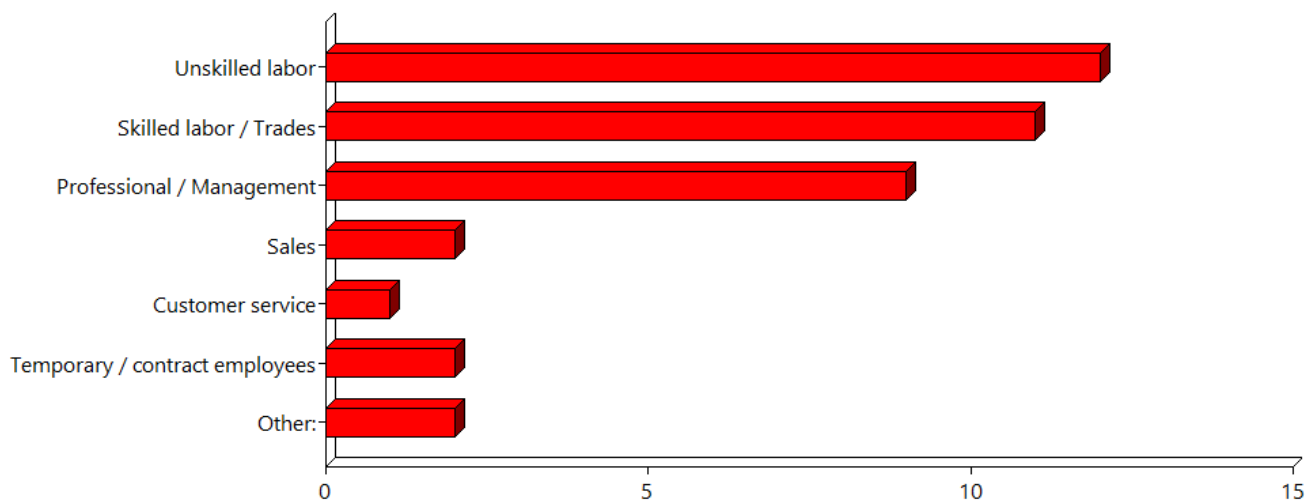
21. What is the average starting salary for your skilled workers (technical certification / degree required)?

- \$12.00
- \$17.00
- \$18-20/hour for skilled trades
- \$18.00 an hour
- \$21.25
- \$21.50
- \$22.27 per hour
- \$25.00
- \$26,000
- \$40,000 / yr.
- \$50,000 (2 responses)
- \$65,000 (2 responses)
- \$15.00
- \$20.00
- \$30,000
- \$35,000
- \$55,000

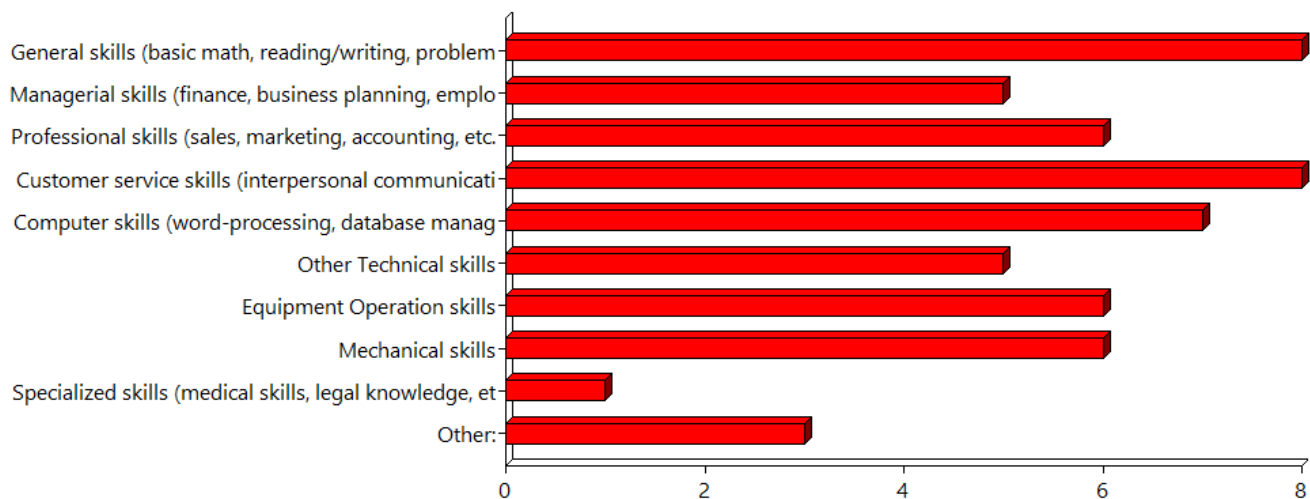
22. Does your business have difficulty recruiting employees?



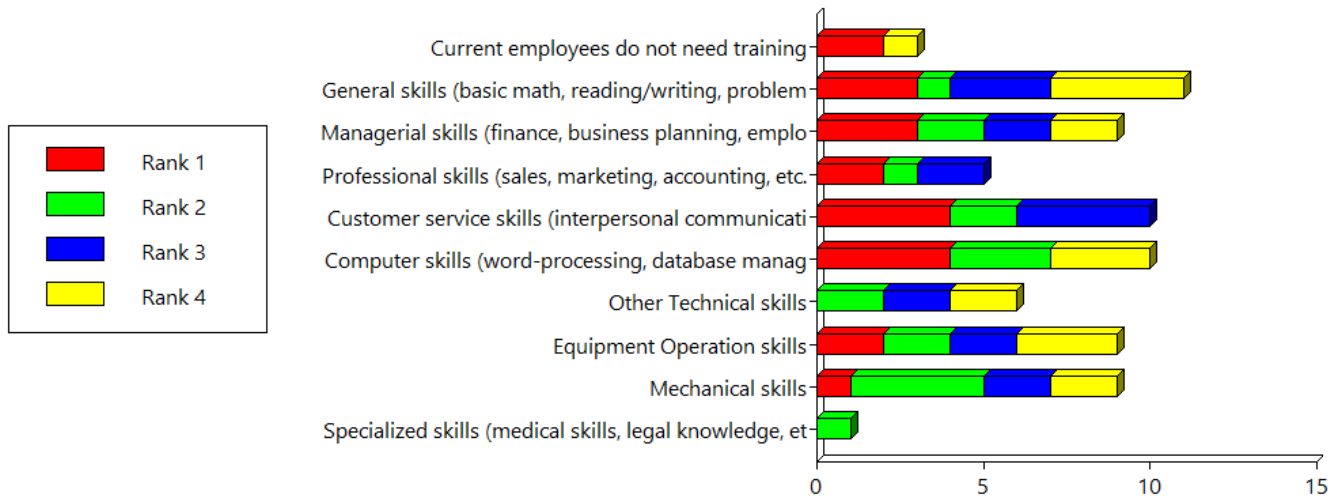
23. If so, with which types of labor categories are you experiencing recruiting problems?



24. Please select the skills your find are lacking in potential employees you have interviewed (select all that apply):



25. Please rank in order the top four (4) areas in which your CURRENT employees need training (most needed area first).



26. Does your company currently have any relationships with area colleges/universities/vocational schools, and if so, who?

- Bowling Green State University; Terra State CC, Sentinel Vocational School
- Ohio State University Marion, Linked-In Learning
- Marion Technical College; Brown/Mackie College; University of Findlay
- New apprenticeship program with Tri-Rivers
- No (6 responses)
- Not yet
- Ohio Northern – Engineering Coops; Terra Community College – Maintenance trade
- Univeristy of Findlay
- OSU; OSU Marion; Terra Tech; University of Findlay
- Owens CC and Tri-Rivers Tech
- Marion Tech
- Heidelberg; Nursing schools

27. Does your organization currently utilize a workplace wellness program and/or safety program that offers direct incentives to your employees or business? If so, please explain:

- In-house wellness program
- No (6 responses)
- No Wellness. Safety incentives are illegal per DOL 1-1 2017
- We have a safety incentive program that has a reward component to it.
- Yes
- Yes, a wellness program to promote overall wellness

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- Yes, health benefits program and numerous safety programs
- Yes, through our health insurance
- Yes, wellness and safety program
- Yes. We get discounts on health insurance by meeting bio results on annual checkups.
- Yes. We have a wellness coordinator and we utilize a point system whereby employees can earn points that can be used to purchase merchandise / gift cards. We also run special campaigns with additional incentives / perks.
- Yes...through our local Chamber of Commerce's Safety Council

28. How many new and replacement employees do you expect to hire in the next 5 years because of expansion, retirements, leaving, firing, etc.?

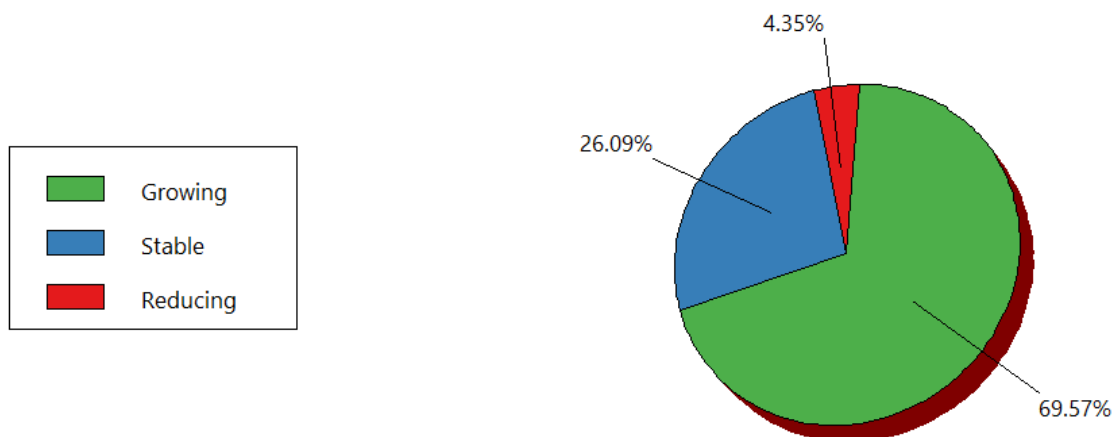
- 1
- 100+
- 20
- 20-30
- 25
- 25%
- 3
- 300
- 400
- 5
- 5-10
- 50
- 8
- 24-30

Section - FUTURE PLANS

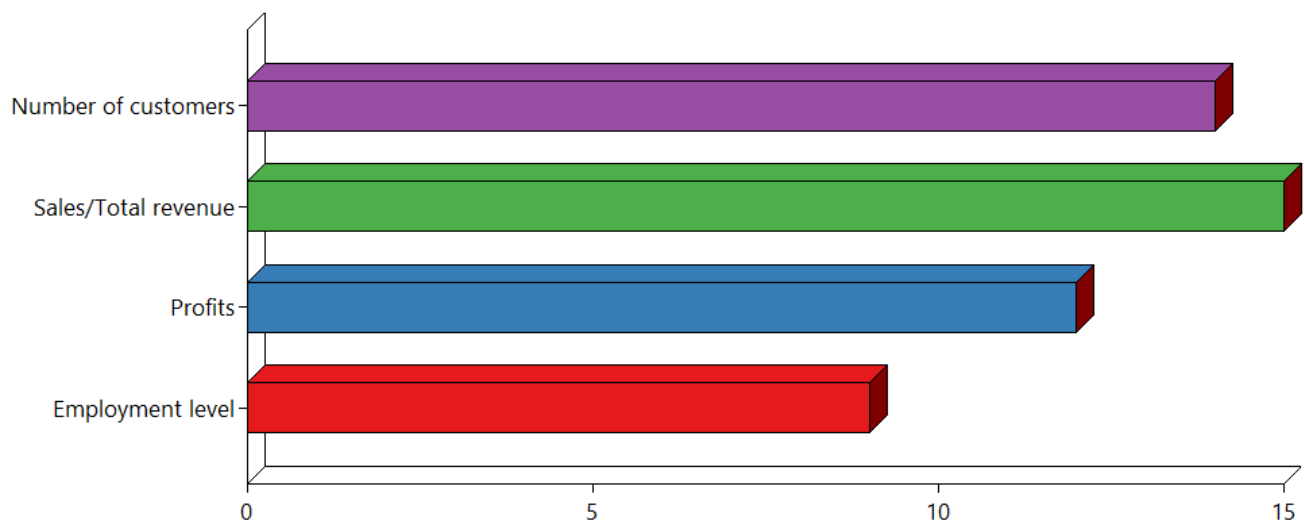
29. Do you work with any customers or suppliers that may be able to profitably operate in the immediate area? If so, please identify them:

- Always keeping our eyes open for new business
- Bridgestone, National Machine, Uni-Grip, Guardian, Diamond Door, Fastenal, Engineered Wire.
- Good restaurateurs (beyond pizza); entertainment areas; and manufacturing
- Local property owner for space to lease
- N/A (2 responses)
- No (2 responses)
- None known (2 responses)
- We do work with local service providers for everything possible.
- Yes (2 responses)

30. Does your company have plans for growth over the next 3 years?



31. If yes, which of the following will increase as a result?



32. If you expect any of these business factors to change over the next 3 years, what are the principal reasons for the changes?

- Affordable Senior housing availability
- Change for the better – Trump

2017 Final Report

- Changes in federal regulatory environment.
- Changing market conditions related to construction.
- Competitive pricing
- Expanding into new markets both geographically and by category type.
- High funding capacity. Now able to serve larger companies, and have a better marketing effort.
- Increased customer base
- New customers
- New customers and growing demand from current clientele
- No
- Proximity to customer would be main driver along with being able to obtain necessary manpower at facility
- Sales growth and improved operation methods, reduced COGS
- Type of product due to customer needs
- We continue to be proactive. We have steady growth and expect it to continue in the future.
- We plan to continue marketing and focus on sales.

33. If you have any plans to modernize, renovate, or expand your present building(s) or equipment in the near future; please describe the type of plans, time frame, and any constraints faced:

- Add some office space
- Currently expanding our satellite office
- Currently modernizing facility equipment to accommodate new customer program via new line layout and equipment
- Expect to renovate and open an adult day program
- None (5 responses)
- No disclosure at this time
- No local constraints preventing this
- Potential expansion of warehouse
- Rail service. Constraints in building code determination. Equipment automation.
- Several Maching upgrades and/or replacements
- Just completed a 15-month renovation project
- New manufacturing facility to open in 2018, and new line at an existing plant.
- We have recently added, and plan to add new machinery every year borth for greater efficiency and new capabilities.
- We will likely increase our electric subs due to a shift in production technologies.

34. If you are considering moving, closing, or selling this business; please describe where and when this would happen:

- N/A (3 responses)
- No plans (3 responses)
- No, not considering
- Not happening

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- Not planning on selling
- We are here to stay
- We are looking to sell our former Operations Building.
- Within the next five years due to retirement of experienced personnel.

35. Is there anything the Wyandot County Office of Economic Development could do to help your business remain profitable and continue growing in the Wyandot County community?

- Cheaper rail transloading option
- Continue to be informed of new businesses that are coming to the immediate area so we can get involved early in the process for financing or cash management needs.
- Continue to provide us with potential leads for employment opportunities for adults with developmental disabilities.
- Continuing support on various issues as they occur along with working with the local municipality to support us.
- Economic of scale for WC residents.
- Helping to get local facilities leased or sold
- Help with recruitment and especially retention of the able bodied workforce within Wyandot County.
- High school work program to bring in future employment. Higher education in Wyandot County.
- I believe if we had more restaurants we would have more weekend visits instead of individuals going to Findlay or Marion to eat and shop.
- Influx of population would certainly boost the need for the professional service industry.
- Just keep doing the fine job you're currently doing.
- Keep us aware of project happening in the area, and ways to partner for better recruitment and retention locally.
- New business growth and opportunities to help our businesses.
- None (4 responses)
- Try to attract new businesses to the area
- Work to develop the skilled trade competency of the general workforce.



Wyandot County Office of Economic Development

109 S. Sandusky Ave., Room 16

Upper Sandusky, OH 43351

Phone (419) 294-6404

Fax (419) 294-6415

Email gmoon@wcoed.com

URL www.wcoed.com

The Wyandot County Office of Economic Development is a 501(c)(6) non-profit organization.