



MAHONING VALLEY MARKET PULSE™

Issue #14 • Week of June 8, 2026

FROM THE EDITOR: Regional oil production expands, Valley infrastructure capacity questioned. Columbiana County's horizontal wells set a quarterly oil-production record while the region debates whether its power, water, and sites can absorb what is being proposed. Hubbard City joined eight other Valley jurisdictions, enacting a 12-month data-center moratorium. Ohio's Joint Data Center Committee pressed tech-company witnesses, and a 382-acre Switch campus drew an overflow crowd across the state line in Beaver County. Downtown, Youngstown considered a \$130,000 study to find a survivable path for SOBE Thermal, which its receiver says cannot operate past fall without intervention. The Ohio Senate's capital budget directed more than \$3 million to Trumbull County projects.

All items sourced June 1–7 unless marked **[ONGOING]**. Capital Pipeline Tracker and Economic Indicators are cumulative reference tables updated weekly.

ON DECK — JUNE 8–14, 2026

- **Mon, June 8 — State Controlling Board** expected to consider a \$1.28M Roadwork Development Grant for the Route 62–Garland connector, unlocking WRPA's 32-acre former McGuffey Mall site. ([Business Journal Daily](#))
- **Mon, June 8 — Ohio Joint Data Center Committee hearing.** ([Statehouse News Bureau](#))
- **Tue, June 9 — Trumbull County Commissioners (10:30 AM); Ashtabula County Commissioners (AM, Jefferson).**
- **Wed, June 10 — Columbiana County Commissioners (9:00 AM, Lisbon).**
- **Thu, June 11 — Mahoning County Commissioners (10:00 AM, courthouse); Joint Data Center Committee hearing.**

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

- **Fri, June 26 — Graphite One Annual General Meeting.** Shareholder vote; Conneaut/Ashtabula project watch item.

LEAD STORY

- **Columbiana County Oil Output Sets a Quarterly Record.** Horizontal wells in Columbiana County's Utica/Point Pleasant formation produced **543,905 barrels of oil in the first quarter of 2026**, the county's largest single-quarter output on record, according to the Ohio Department of Natural Resources' Division of Oil and Gas Resources. The figure rose from 307,985 barrels in Q4 2025. County wells also produced 26.4 billion cubic feet of natural gas, up from 18.9 Bcf. By contrast, Mahoning County produced 16,979 barrels (from a single EOG well in Ellsworth Township) and Trumbull County reported zero oil for the quarter. The quarter is the leading edge of a documented statewide shift rather than an isolated number: Ohio's Utica produced a record 48 million barrels of oil in 2025, up roughly 39% year over year, concentrated in the northern tier — Columbiana and Mahoning — and driven largely by EOG Resources and Encino Energy, which EOG acquired in mid-2025. *Source: ODNR Division of Oil and Gas Resources, Q1 2026 production report ([Business Journal Daily / Dan O'Brien, June 1, 2026](#); [Marcellus Drilling News, June 2026](#)).*

STRATEGIC SIGNALS

- **1. SOBE Thermal at critical juncture.** Youngstown's public-utilities committee advanced a proposed \$130,000 contract with Akron firm Roetzel & Andress to assess SOBE Thermal's viability; full council gave it a first reading rather than emergency passage. The court-appointed receiver has said SOBE — which heats roughly 27–28 downtown buildings including City Hall — cannot pay for its three leased boilers past September or October without a rate increase, a new buyer, or state funding, citing a roughly \$90,000 monthly operating deficit. Mayor McDowell has warned that a sharply higher rate could trigger a customer “death spiral” and has contacted the governor's office. The proposed rate increase remains under review at PUCO, and state funding has been requested but not determined. *Sources: [WFMJ](#); [WYTV](#); [Business Journal Daily](#) (June 2–5, 2026).*
- **2. Data-center governance advances.** Hubbard City passed a 12-month moratorium by emergency measure (June 1), and Warren placed a permanent-ban ordinance on first reading. The Valley roster now spans nine enacted jurisdictions (see Capital Pipeline / roster below). Ohio's Joint Data Center Committee questioned Amazon, Google, Meta, and Microsoft on June 4 and meets again June 8 and 11; the Ohio Consumers' Counsel argued June 4 that ratepayers should not subsidize data-center energy demand — noting the Ohio Supreme Court previously overturned local fracking bans under state preemption, a legal risk hanging over every local moratorium. Across the line, Switch's 382-acre Big Beaver campus (former Pitt Race) drew an overflow, press-excluded town hall June 2. *Sources: [Tribune Chronicle](#) (June 3, 2026); [Statehouse News Bureau](#) (June 4, 2026); [New Castle News](#) (Big Beaver).*
- **3. The Bristolville 25 / Lordstown case in review at the Ohio Supreme Court.** A \$3.6 billion, 1.65 million-square-foot data center proposed on 133 acres in Lordstown and Jackson Township remains in active litigation: developer Bristolville 25 Developer LLC is seeking a writ of mandamus to force the village to process its application, the court has granted an alternative writ, and the matter is in the evidence phase with an oral-argument request pending. The case could set precedent for how far Ohio communities can go in blocking these projects.

WATCH

Infrastructure Readiness as the Deal Filter. Record oil output, data-center hearings, nine local moratoriums, the SOBE crisis, and a state grant vote on the Route 62 connector all indicate growth will follow places that can prove energy, utilities, sites, and public trust are ready before a project lands.

POWER, DATA & SITE READINESS

- **Hubbard City moratorium (12 months, emergency measure, June 1)** — follows the Project Milo NDA controversy. ([WFMJ](#); [Tribune Chronicle](#))
- **Joint Data Center Committee** — tech-giant testimony June 4; hearings June 8 & 11. ([Statehouse News Bureau](#))
- **Zuharis / Yellow Creek Township (Columbiana)** — “Project Astralus,” a 510-acre data center, on-site power plant, and water treatment facility near the Jefferson County line on State Route 7. A self-generating microgrid would supply power (no impact on local rates claimed) with Ohio River water treated via a Buckeye Water partnership. Company projects ~6,500 peak construction workers, ~400 permanent power-plant jobs, and 2,000–5,000 data-center jobs, targeting Q3 2027 operation; officials cite a >90% likelihood of proceeding. Roughly 100 residents attended a May 28 public meeting in Highlandtown. ([WKBN](#) / [Salem News](#), late May–June 2026)
- **Big Beaver / Switch (Beaver County, PA)** — 382-acre campus; overflow town hall June 2. ([New Castle News](#))
- **[ONGOING] Stargate / Lordstown; Keel / Sharon** (now at Mercer County Regional Planning Commission); Mercer County countywide ordinance.

For a closer look at the power, zoning, and economic considerations influencing data center projects in the Mahoning Valley, download our white paper: [The Data Center Dilemma →](#)

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT / SITE READINESS

- **Route 62–Garland connector** — State Controlling Board votes June 8 on a \$1.28M grant unlocking WRPA’s 32-acre former McGuffey Mall site (Anthony Trevena). ([Business Journal Daily](#))
- **SB 450 capital budget — Valley line items.** Senate passed June 3 (31-0). Trumbull County over \$3M: parks/trails/athletics \$1.47M; regional fire training center \$450K; Akron Children’s Warren expansion \$400K; Medici Museum of Art \$250K; Trumbull County Fairgrounds \$200K; Museum of Science Fiction & Fantasy Arts \$150K. Kent State Salem and East Liverpool \$450K each (Columbiana). YSU–Steubenville (Jefferson County, outside footprint). Not final until the House passes its version (HB 959) and the governor signs. ([Business Journal Daily](#), June 5, 2026; WOUB; Statehouse News Bureau)

INFRASTRUCTURE & UTILITIES

- **SOBE Thermal** — see Strategic Signal #1.
- **Mahoning County — Boardman roundabout** — commissioners awarded a \$7.4M contract to Shelly and Sands for a roundabout at Wildwood Drive and Glenwood Avenue, an intersection the county engineer ranks high for serious crashes. Work is expected to start this summer, with completion in 2027 (signal-pole production drives the timeline). ([WKBN](#))

EMPLOYER WATCH / WORKFORCE

- **Ultium Cells Lordstown** — callback now expected in August (~850 workers); June return missed. ([Business Journal Daily](#), May 29, 2026)
- **America Makes** — \$2M AI for Material Allowables (AIM 4AM) project-call winners announced (~June 4); MMX members meeting Aug 4–5 in Youngstown. ([Business Journal Daily](#), June 5, 2026)
- **YSU — Steubenville campus** secures ~\$3.5M via SB 450 for lab equipment and construction; first programs Fall 2026. Out-of-footprint (Jefferson County) but YSU is the anchor regional institution. ([WKBN](#),

[June 4, 2026](#))

- **Forward Lawrence** — CEO Chip Abramovic resigned June 4 after ~4 months, “to pursue other professional opportunities.” Leadership turnover at Lawrence County’s lead economic-development organization. ([Business Journal Daily](#), June 4, 2026)
- **MVMC** — \$250K Industry Sector Partnership grant (fifth year); funds support K-12 youth manufacturing outreach. ([Tribune Chronicle](#), June 3, 2026)
- **Graphite One** — Conneaut site secured; June 26 AGM; Sept. 29 federal mine-permit decision.
[ONGOING]

HOUSING & REAL ESTATE

- **Valley home sales** rose about 2% year over year in the latest monthly report (April data); Mahoning up, Trumbull down, Columbiana up. ([Business Journal Daily, June 2, 2026](#))
- **Zillow (reference)**: Youngstown-Warren-Boardman metro typical home value ~\$133,700; city of Youngstown ~\$51,800. (Zillow Research)
- **[ONGOING] Insight Hospital / Medical Properties Trust (Warren)** — limited reopening talks continue. (Tribune Chronicle)

ECONOMIC INDICATORS

Indicator	Current	Prior	Source
Trumbull unemployment	4.7% (Apr)	5.6% (Mar)	ODJFS
Mahoning unemployment	4.4% (Apr)	5.3% (Mar)	ODJFS
Columbiana unemployment	3.4% (Apr)	4.4% (Mar)	ODJFS
Ohio unemployment (SA)	3.9% (Apr)	4.1% (Mar)	ODJFS
U.S. unemployment	4.3% (May)	4.3% (Apr)	BLS
U.S. nonfarm payrolls	+172,000 (May)	—	BLS
PA statewide unemployment	4.2% (Apr)	4.2% (Mar)	BLS
Columbiana oil (Q1 2026)	543,905 bbl	307,985 (Q4)	ODNR
Fed Beige Book (4th Dist.)	Up slightly (May)	—	FRB Cleveland

Mercer & Lawrence (PA) county April figures not cleanly released — prior figures carried pending verification.

National context (WSJ consensus vs. actual): May jobs +172K (forecast 80K) and April job openings 7.6M (forecast 6.9M) both beat expectations, while Q1 GDP was revised to 1.6% (forecast 2.0%). Upcoming: May CPI June 10, PPI June 11 (BLS/BEA).

CAPITAL PIPELINE TRACKER

*Cumulative reference table updated weekly. Color key below. * = updated this issue. NEW = added this issue.*

Project	Invest.	Jobs	Status	County
SoftBank/Stargate — Lordstown	\$3B+	TBD	Site work continues; online '26-'27	Trumbull
* Ultium Cells — Lordstown	\$2.3B	~1,500 pk	Aug callback target; ~850 temp layoff; ~650 active	Trumbull
Graphite One — Conneaut	\$1.4B Ph1	150+	Q4 2027 target; FAST-41 decision Sept 29	Ashtabula
Kimberly-Clark — Warren Mfg	\$800M	~500	1.2M SF on 560 ac; room to grow	Trumbull
K-C Distribution Center	\$160M	65	Board decision pending	Trumbull

* Keel Data Center — Sharon	\$5B	134	Zoning approved w/ conditions; at Mercer Co. RPC; Oct '26 target	Mercer PA
ArcLight — Lordstown 161 ac	\$3.9M	TBD	Acquired; no plans disclosed	Trumbull
FirstEnergy Grid — Trumbull	\$24M	—	138-kV rebuild; part of \$36B Energize365	Trumbull
Warren Steel Site	\$15M loan	—	Foreclosure; 360 ac industrial	Trumbull
Bitdeer Data Center — Niles	TBD	TBD	180-day moratorium in effect (May 20)	Trumbull
Everest Aluminum — Warren	\$19.5–33M	70	Tax abatement approved; 90-day decision	Trumbull
Innovation Hub — A&D	\$62M	450 by '29	Reno start summer '26	Mahoning
Mercy Health — Champion ER	\$50M	75	Steel rising; Q4 '26	Trumbull
Vallourec — Premium Thread	\$48M	40	Commissioning Q1 '27	Mahoning
* EOG/Encino — Utica Drilling	\$6.5B	1,000s	3 rigs; top-tier priority; Columbiana Q1 record	Regional
McDonald Steel Site	\$3.25M	—	51.8 ac cleared; sale Jul–Oct '26	Trumbull
L2R Project Pipeline	\$860M+	685	2025: \$860M invested; \$62.7M payroll	Regional
Youngstown REDD Infill	\$2.5M	220 units	Awarded Mar 6	Mahoning
Warren Peninsula Project	\$851K	306 units	Awarded Mar 6	Trumbull
Mahoning Nat'l Bank Bldg	\$18.5M	71 units	Crane placed; reno active	Mahoning
Mahoning Co. Gov't Center	\$60M	400+	WRPA \$3.38M design + \$517K rep; demo bid; const. 2027	Mahoning
S.E.T. Sewer Interceptor Ph. 1	\$5.44M	—	Final cost approved; 35.5M gal overflow eliminated	Mahoning
Ashore/Concept-4 — Berlin Ctr	TBD	TBD	Precision machining; AS9100 path; defense	Mahoning
Brownfield — YMCA Ytown	\$1M	—	Transitional housing + youth dev; funded	Mahoning
Brownfield — Warren YMCA	\$635K	43+7 units	Mixed-use conversion; remediation funded	Trumbull
Brownfield — Van Huffel	\$300K	53 potential	Phase II assessment; mfg expansion	Trumbull
Brownfield — Miller Holzwarth	\$1M	—	Shovel-ready industrial; 2.8 ac; Salem	Columbiana
Dam Removals — Youngstown	\$6.125M	—	Council approved; const. mid-2027	Mahoning
YNG Aviation Ed Center	\$6.98M	—	Contract approved; EDA/FAA notice pending; ~14 mo.	Trumbull
East Liverpool Route 39	~\$40M	—	\$29.7M federal; \$7M local match needed; 2028	Columbiana
Castlo Industrial Park Road	\$537K	60	\$350K ODOT grant; Lindy Paving support	Mahoning
Pier 48 Equipment — Wellsville	\$573K	—	\$441K MARAD + \$133K ODOT grants	Columbiana
Niles Riverside Park	\$3.5M	—	Opened May 28, 2026	Trumbull
* SOBE Thermal — Dtnw YTown	TBD	—	Collapse risk Sept/Oct; PUCO rate request; \$130K study 1st reading	Mahoning
Trumbull Land Bank Housing	\$1M	10 homes	Welcome Home Rd 5; 5 purchase + 5 new	Trumbull
Columbiana Dtnw Programs	\$250K	—	Apps open Jun 1; 7 downtowns; forgivable loans	Columbiana
NEW Bristolville 25 — Lordstown	\$3.6B	120	Ohio Supreme Court mandamus; evidence phase	Trumbull
NEW Zuharis / Project Astralus	TBD	2,000–5,000	510 ac DC + power plant + water; Q3 2027 target	Columbiana
NEW SB 450 — Valley line items	\$3M+	—	Senate passed Jun 3; pending House (HB 959)	Multi
NEW Amazon Bazetta DC	\$30M	~120	169K SF; under construction, no opening date released	Trumbull

Green = construction Yellow = planning Blue = awarded Purple = renovation Red = paused/distressed * = updated NEW = added this issue

Data-Center Moratorium Roster (nine enacted; Warren permanent ban on first reading)

Jurisdiction	County	Duration	Adopted / Status
Lordstown Village	Trumbull	180d + ext.	Jan 2026; extension pending
Hubbard Township	Trumbull	12 months	Feb 10, 2026
Vienna Township	Trumbull	180 days	~Feb 13, 2026
Weathersfield Township	Trumbull	6 months	~late Apr 2026
Boardman Township	Mahoning	12 months	~late Apr 2026
Niles City	Trumbull	6 months	~May 20, 2026
Bazetta Township	Trumbull	180 days	~mid-May 2026
Hubbard City	Trumbull	12 months	June 1, 2026 (emergency)
Braceville Township	Trumbull	6 months	June 2, 2026
Warren City	Trumbull	Permanent ban	First reading — not yet enacted

Mahoning Valley Market Pulse™

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