

Market Pulse™

Issue #17 • Week of June 29, 2026

From the Editor

Trumbull Energy Center's completion gives the Mahoning Valley a major new energy asset at a time when electricity capacity is increasingly central to industrial growth, AI infrastructure and data-center site selection. The project is a reminder that economic development depends on what happens with power, utilities, land-use rules, transportation systems and development-ready sites.

In parallel, WRTA's bus barn project, YNDC's brownfield funding and Central Tower's redevelopment path show that the region's growth story is being driven not only by major private investment, but by the public infrastructure, incentives and site-preparation work needed to support it.

On Deck

Tuesday, June 30: Trumbull County Commissioners public workshop.

Tuesday, June 30: Ashtabula County Commissioners work session and agenda session.

Tuesday, June 30: Regional Chamber Power Lunch at Anejo Mexican Restaurant and Cantina.

Wednesday, July 1: Trumbull County Commissioners regular meeting.

Thursday, July 2: Mercer County Commissioners meeting.

Friday, July 3 / Saturday, July 4: Independence Day holiday schedule impacts likely for local-government offices and meeting calendars.

Mark Your Calendar: America Makes MMX 2026, Aug. 4-5, Youngstown/Canfield.

Sources: [Trumbull County](#) • [Ashtabula County](#) • [Regional Chamber](#) • [Mercer County](#) • [America Makes](#)

Lead Story

\$1.2B Lordstown Power Plant Goes Live

A \$1.2 billion power plant is now operating in Lordstown, adding a major new energy asset to the Mahoning Valley as electricity capacity remains central to industrial growth, AI infrastructure and data-center siting. Project partners and regional leaders celebrated completion of the Trumbull Energy Center this week, marking the transition of the 953-megawatt combined-cycle facility from years of planning and construction into commercial operation.

The project is one of the Valley's most significant infrastructure gains of the year. Beyond its power-generation role, the facility brings a long-term economic-development signal: large-scale private capital is still finding its way into the region when the site, grid, permitting and local partnership pieces line up.

Sources: [WFMJ](#) • [BJD](#) • [Regional Chamber](#)

Strategic Signals

SOBE rate hike adds pressure for downtown steam-heat customers. Ohio regulators approved emergency rates for SOBE Thermal Energy Systems, meaning many downtown Youngstown customers who use steam heat could see much higher bills during peak seasons. The move helps keep the system running for now, but it also shows how older downtown utility systems can become costly and difficult to maintain.

Source: [Vindicator](#)

Data-center governance keeps spreading locally, even as the statewide ballot push misses 2026. Girard City Council advanced a one-year data-center moratorium, with final reading expected July 13, adding another Valley jurisdiction to the growing roster of communities pausing large-scale projects while they study zoning, power, water and land-use impacts. Separately, the statewide proposal to ban large data centers fell short of the signatures needed for the 2026 ballot and is now positioned as a 2027 effort.

Sources: [Vindicator \(Girard\)](#) · [Vindicator \(ballot issue\)](#)

WRTA's bus barn project adds a transit, fleet and grid-readiness signal. WRTA broke ground on a \$6.5 million bus barn project that includes charging infrastructure for battery-electric buses, electrical upgrades and solar panels intended to reduce grid impact. The project is part of the region's gradual shift toward cleaner fleet operations and more resilient workforce-mobility infrastructure.

Sources: [Vindicator](#) · [WRTA project page](#)

Infrastructure & Community Development

FEMA awarded Columbiana \$664,596 for stormwater upgrades in a June 18 award. The funding will help install new storm sewers in neighborhoods near East Park Avenue, Friend Street, Pittsburgh Street and Fairfield Avenue, supporting flood mitigation and protection for homes and businesses.

Source: [FEMA \(June 18 award\)](#)

YNDC received a \$1 million EPA Brownfields grant for assessment and cleanup work along the Greater Glenwood Avenue Commercial Corridor. The funding will help evaluate and remediate contaminated vacant properties, including former service-station sites, so land can be returned to development-ready use.

Sources: [WFMJ](#) · [WKBN](#)

Power, Data & Site Readiness

Trumbull Energy Center strengthens the Valley's power-infrastructure position as electricity demand becomes a bigger factor in industrial recruitment, AI infrastructure and data-center site selection. The 953-megawatt Lordstown facility adds large-scale generation capacity at a time when power availability is increasingly shaping where major users can locate and expand.

Sources: [WFMJ](#) · [BJD](#)

Girard advanced a one-year data-center moratorium, with final reading expected July 13. The move would put Girard alongside other Valley communities using temporary pauses to study zoning, utility, noise, water and land-use impacts before large-scale projects move forward.

Source: [Vindicator](#)

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](#).

Data-Center Governance Tracker

Jurisdiction	County	Term / Status	Date / Update
Lordstown Village	Trumbull OH	180 days + extension	Original moratorium approved January; extension approved June 15, effective July 5
Hubbard City	Trumbull OH	12 months	Approved June 1; New Albany lessons discussed June 20
Hubbard Township	Trumbull OH	12 months	Approved Feb. 10
Boardman Township	Mahoning OH	1 year	Approved at April township meeting; zoning commission studying impacts
Niles City	Trumbull OH	180 days	Approved May 20
Weathersfield Township	Trumbull OH	6 months	Effective April 30
Vienna Township	Trumbull OH	180 days	Approved week of Feb. 16; reported Feb. 21
Bazetta Township	Trumbull OH	180 days	Approved May 12
Braceville Township	Trumbull OH	6 months	Approved June 2, effective immediately
Cortland City	Trumbull OH	1 year	Approved June 1
Howland Township	Trumbull OH	6 months	Approved June 10
Warren City	Trumbull OH	Permanent ban proposed	In process / watch
Girard City	Trumbull OH	1-year moratorium proposed	Second reading June 2026; final reading expected July 13
Mahoning Township	Lawrence PA	Zoning ordinance	Enacted local zoning controls
North Beaver Township	Lawrence PA	Zoning ordinance	Enacted local zoning controls
Ohio statewide ballot issue	Ohio	Ballot proposal	2026 signature threshold missed; 2027 effort possible

Economic Development

Central Tower received a \$4.25 million state historic preservation tax credit for a planned \$21.7 million renovation of Youngstown's tallest building. The project would convert the 17-story downtown tower into a mixed-use building with 64 apartments on the upper floors and office space below.

Sources: [Vindicator](#) · [BJD](#)

A \$750,000 state capital-budget allocation will help advance the Youngstown Innovation Hub for Aerospace and Defense. The funding is expected to support early renovation work at the second Vindicator Printing Co. building, creating manufacturing-ready space for companies tied to defense, aerospace and advanced manufacturing.

Source: [BJD](#)

Retail & Restaurant Beat

DICK’S Sporting Goods celebrated the grand opening of its next-generation Eastwood Mall store June 26-28, relocating from its former 52,000-square-foot Great East Plaza building into a 72,000-square-foot anchor position inside the enclosed mall. The expanded format adds enhanced team-sports areas, a House of Cleats, more than 1,000 footwear styles and golf simulator technology, reinforcing Eastwood’s ongoing repositioning around larger-format, experiential retail.

Sources: [Tribune Chronicle](#)

Layne’s Chicken Fingers is coming to Boardman, filling the former Taco Bell location along Route 224. The Texas-based chicken-finger chain would make the location its first in the Mahoning Valley, adding another fast-casual entrant to the U.S. 224 corridor.

Source: [WFMJ](#)

Economic Indicators

Indicator	Latest	Prior	Change	Signal
Mahoning County unemployment	3.8% May	4.4% Apr.	↓ 0.6 pts.	Improving
Trumbull County unemployment	4.1% May	4.6% Apr.	↓ 0.5 pts.	Improving
Columbiana County unemployment	3.1% May	3.4% Apr.	↓ 0.3 pts.	Improving
Ashtabula County unemployment	3.0% Apr.	4.5% Mar.	↓ 1.5 pts.	Latest available county data
Lawrence County unemployment	4.0% Apr.	5.1% Mar.	↓ 1.1 pts.	Latest available county data
Mercer County unemployment	4.0% Apr.	4.6% Mar.	↓ 0.6 pts.	Latest available county data
Ohio unemployment	3.7% May	3.9% Apr.	↓ 0.2 pts.	Stable-to-improving
Pennsylvania unemployment	4.2% May	4.2% Apr.	Flat	Stable
U.S. unemployment	4.3% May	4.3% Apr.	Flat	Stable
Valley home sales	475 May sales	484 May 2025	↓ 2%	Slightly softer

Mortgage rates remain a key housing-cost pressure point. Beginning next issue, Market Pulse will track the weekly 30-year fixed mortgage-rate trend alongside unemployment, home sales and other regional indicators to better show how capital costs are affecting buyers, builders and redevelopment activity.

Sources: [BJD unemployment report](#) · [OhioLMI LAUS](#) · [Pennsylvania DLI](#) · [BLS/FRED county data](#) · [BJD home sales](#)

Capital Pipeline

Cumulative reference table updated weekly. NEW = added this issue.

Project	Invest.	Jobs	Status	County
SoftBank/Stargate - Lordstown	\$3B+	TBD	Site work continues; online 2026-27	Trumbull
Ultium Cells - Lordstown	\$2.3B	~1,500 pk	August callback target; income-tax impact now visible	Trumbull
Graphite One - Conneaut	\$1.4B	Ph1 150+	FAST-41 Sept. 29; AGM June 26	Ashtabula
Kimberly-Clark - Warren Mfg	\$800M	~500	Construction active; 1.2M SF on 560 acres	Trumbull

Project	Invest.	Jobs	Status	County
K-C Distribution Center	\$160M	65	Board decision pending	Trumbull
Keel Data Center - Sharon	\$5B	134	Zoning approved with conditions; Mercer Co. RPC review	Mercer PA
FirstEnergy Grid - Trumbull	\$24M	-	138-kV rebuild; Energize365 reliability work	Trumbull
Warren Steel Site	\$15M loan	-	Foreclosure; 360-acre industrial site	Trumbull
Everest Aluminum - Warren	\$19.5-33M	70	Tax abatement approved; site decision pending	Trumbull
Innovation Hub - A&D	\$62M	450 by 2029	State \$750K allocation supports first-phase renovations; summer 2026 start target	Mahoning
Mercy Health - Champion ER	\$30M ER + \$843K bridge	75 prior estimate	\$500K ODOT bridge award tied to ER access	Trumbull
Vallourec - Premium Thread	\$48M	40	Commissioning Q1 2027	Mahoning
EOG/Encino - Utica Drilling	\$6.5B	1,000s	Regional upstream priority	Regional
McDonald Steel Site	\$3.25M	-	51.8 acres cleared; sale window Jul-Oct 2026	Trumbull
Youngstown REDD Infill	\$2.5M	220 units	Awarded March 6	Mahoning
Warren Peninsula Project	\$851K	306 units	Awarded March 6	Trumbull
Mahoning National Bank Bldg	\$18.5M	71 units	Renovation active	Mahoning
Mahoning Co. Gov't Center	\$60M	400+	WRPA design / demolition path; construction 2027	Mahoning
Bristolville 25 / Lordstown	\$3.6B	120 projected	Lordstown moratorium extended 180 days effective July 5	Trumbull
Zuharis / Project Astralus	TBD	2,000-5,000	510-acre DC + power plant + water; Q3 2027 target	Columbiana
AMG Chrome - New Castle	\$15M	TBD	Opened; sole U.S. chrome-metal producer; 6,500-ton capacity	Lawrence PA
YNG Aviation Education Center	\$6.98M	-	Contract awarded; awaiting EDA / FAA notice to proceed	Trumbull
Youngstown river / sewer infrastructure	\$10.35M sewer + dam work	-	Sewer overflow work finalized; Anthony's appraisal tied to dam access	Mahoning
East Palestine Train Depot	\$889,545 contract	TBD	Renovation contract awarded; work expected early July	Columbiana
SB 450 Valley line items	Mult	-	Capital budget signed; local line items enacted	Mult
Amazon Bazetta DC	\$30M	~120	Under construction; opening date pending	Trumbull
NEW Trumbull Energy Center	\$1.2B	-	953-MW Lordstown power plant completed / commercial operation	Trumbull
NEW WRTA Bus Barn	\$6.5M	-	Groundbreaking; EV charging, electrical upgrades and solar	Mahoning
NEW Central Tower	\$21.7M	64 units	\$4.25M historic tax credit supports mixed-use conversion	Mahoning
NEW YNDC Glenwood Cleanup	\$1M	-	EPA Brownfields grant supports assessment and cleanup	Mahoning
NEW Columbiana Stormwater	\$664,596	-	June 18 FEMA award for storm-sewer upgrades	Columbiana

Green = construction / active Yellow = planning Blue = awarded / funded Purple = renovation Red = paused / distressed

Mahoning Valley Market Pulse™

Published weekly by Cornerstone Real Estate Advisors

jemig@cornerstonemv.com • cornerstonemv.com

MARKET INTELLIGENCE. | STRATEGIC INSIGHT. | REAL RESULTS.

[Subscribe a Colleague](#) • [Past Issues](#) • [Unsubscribe](#)