

MAHONING VALLEY MARKET PULSE™

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FROM THE EDITOR

A Week of Strategic Investments

Both public and private investment advanced across the region this week. Youngstown moved forward with infrastructure needed to support future industrial development, while Ohio awarded additional funding to prepare redevelopment sites throughout the Valley. At the neighborhood level, new housing construction continued, and city officials explored ways to preserve a long-standing grocery store. In Mercer and Lawrence counties, Pennsylvania committed millions of dollars toward healthcare, manufacturing, downtown redevelopment and education projects.

Taken together, these stories illustrate how regional competitiveness is built. Manufacturing expansion depends on development-ready sites, healthcare systems require modern facilities, and neighborhoods benefit from reinvestment that strengthens housing choices and essential services. Public funding, paired with private investment and sound planning, helps position communities for long-term opportunity.

All items sourced July 13-19 unless otherwise dated. The Capital Pipeline Tracker, Economic Indicators and Data-Center Governance Tracker are cumulative reference sections updated weekly.

ON DECK

- **Tuesday, July 21** - Court proceedings involving Schwebel's Bakery continue.
- **Friday-Saturday, July 24-25** - Youngstown State University hosts the Summer Festival of the Arts.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

- **Monday, July 27** - Ultium Cells begins the first phase of employee callbacks at the Lordstown battery plant.
- **Monday, July 27** - The Mahoning County Transportation Improvement District holds its quarterly meeting.

LEAD STORY

Regional Investment Continues Across Multiple Fronts

The Mahoning Valley recorded progress across manufacturing, healthcare, industrial infrastructure, housing and redevelopment last week, with multiple projects advancing rather than a single announcement dominating the regional picture.

CCL Container confirmed a \$16.3 million expansion of its Hermitage manufacturing operation, while Pennsylvania awarded \$7.65 million through the Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program for projects in

Mercer and Lawrence counties. The package supports Sharon Regional Health System, manufacturing expansions, downtown rehabilitation and higher education.

In Ohio, Youngstown awarded a sewer contract to improve the Exal Court industrial area, the state directed demolition and site-revitalization funding to three Valley counties, YNDC began six West Side homes, and city officials considered assistance intended to preserve the Cornersburg Sparkle Market. Several of the week's developments represent important milestones rather than initial announcements, illustrating that regional investment is measured not only by new projects but also by steady progress toward completion.

Sources: [Commonwealth of Pennsylvania](#); [Business Journal Daily](#); [The Vindicator](#); [WFMJ](#)

STRATEGIC SIGNALS

CCL Container Announces \$16.3 Million Hermitage Expansion

CCL Container will install a new manufacturing line at its Hermitage facility, an investment expected to nearly double production capacity. The project will create 30 jobs over three years and retain 302 existing positions. Pennsylvania offered \$150,000 through the Pennsylvania First Program and \$10,000 for worker training.

Source: [Commonwealth of Pennsylvania](#)

Graphite One Advances Ohio Permitting Process

Ohio EPA determined Graphite One's air-permit application for its proposed Conneaut active-anode-materials facility is administratively complete and began technical review. The finding means the application contains enough information for detailed review; it is not permit approval. Subject to permitting, financing and other approvals, the company targets initial synthetic-anode-material production in late 2027.

Source: [Graphite One](#)

Pennsylvania Awards \$7.65 Million for Mercer and Lawrence County Projects

The regional RACP package includes \$3 million for Sharon Regional Health System, \$1.5 million for the former International Metals facility in Ellwood City, \$1 million for the Citizens Bank Building in Mercer, \$800,000 for Omega Logging's Hermitage redevelopment, \$750,000 for the AMG Titanium expansion, and \$300,000 each for Quality Bridge & Fabrication and Thiel College.

Source: [Business Journal Daily](#)

Valley Vehicle Sales Continue Modest Growth

Vehicle sales in Mahoning, Trumbull and Columbiana counties increased 1.6% during the first half of 2026 compared with the same period last year. Used-vehicle sales rose 5.3%, while new-vehicle sales were down by five units.

Source: [WKBN](#)

INFRASTRUCTURE & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Youngstown Advances Exal Court Site Readiness

Youngstown's Board of Control awarded a \$1.19 million contract for a sanitary sewer pump station serving 12 acres on Exal Court in the Salt Springs Road Business Park. The bid was below the \$1.7 million engineer's estimate, and work is expected to begin in August.

Top Property Holdings has expressed interest in the site and could develop as many as four 40,000-square-foot industrial buildings, with city officials estimating about 35 jobs per building. No development agreement is in

place; the infrastructure work would leave the property better prepared for another user if the current discussions do not produce a project.

Source: [The Vindicator](#)

State Awards Site-Revitalization Funding to Three Valley Counties

Mahoning, Trumbull and Columbiana counties will each receive \$230,000 through Ohio's Building Demolition and Site Revitalization Program. The grants can support removal of blighted structures and preparation of properties for reuse.

The combined \$690,000 award adds to the region's inventory of local redevelopment resources, particularly for sites where demolition and environmental conditions impede private investment.

Source: [WFMJ](#)

YNDC Breaks Ground on Six West Side Homes

Youngstown Neighborhood Development Corporation began construction of six single-family homes in the Rocky Ridge neighborhood using American Rescue Plan Act funding.

The homes will be offered for owner occupancy and qualify for 15-year residential property-tax abatements.

Source: [Business Journal Daily](#)

RESTAURANT & RETAIL BEAT

Youngstown Considers Assistance for Cornersburg Sparkle

Youngstown officials are considering a business-retention grant and temporary employee-income-tax reimbursement intended to help keep the Cornersburg Sparkle Market operating.

Council members requested additional financial information before acting, leaving the assistance package under review.

Source: [The Vindicator](#)

Zabel Purchases South Avenue Property for \$1 Million

Zabel Restaurant Equipment & Supplies purchased its South Avenue facility in Boardman for \$1 million, according to Mahoning County property records. The company opened its second showroom at the location last year.

Source: [Business Journal Daily](#)

Quaker Steak & Lube Closes Boardman Location

Quaker Steak & Lube permanently closed its Boardman restaurant, ending the chain's long presence at the Route 224 location and returning a prominent commercial property to the market.

Source: [The Vindicator](#)

EMPLOYER WATCH

Schwebel Sale Discussions End as Wind-Down Continues

Discussions with a potential buyer have ended, and Schwebel Baking Co. continues winding down operations. The company previously said 673 employees statewide, including 370 in Youngstown, would be permanently laid off.

A commercial lender separately sued for approximately \$3.76 million, while union litigation continues over benefits and contract obligations. The lender action is separate from the wind-down proceedings, and Schwebel had not filed for bankruptcy as of publication.

Source: [The Vindicator](#)

Ultium Cells Sets July 27 Callback Date

Ultium Cells will begin a phased return of temporarily laid-off hourly employees at its Lordstown-area battery plant July 27. Returning employees will complete onboarding, safety and job-specific training, with the callback phase expected to be complete by mid-August.

Source: [WKBN](#)

POWER, DATA & SITE READINESS

Hubbard Township Discloses Additional Data-Center Interest

Hubbard Township trustees disclosed preliminary developer interest involving approximately 75 acres while the township's 12-month moratorium remains in effect. Figures discussed publicly included a potential investment of about \$2 billion and demand of 100 to 300 megawatts, but no application has been filed and no project has been approved.

Trustees also referenced a possible \$10 million to \$30 million community payment. Those figures remain developer representations rather than negotiated or enforceable commitments.

Source: [WFMJ](#)

McDonald Develops Data-Center Guidelines

McDonald officials and residents are working toward local standards for potential data-center development. The village is focused on creating guidelines before evaluating any project, with utility demand, noise, taxation and community protections among the issues under discussion.

Source: [Tribune Chronicle](#)

Sharon Adopts Data-Center Zoning Guardrails

Sharon City Council approved zoning amendments directing data centers to appropriate industrial districts and establishing requirements related to water, electricity, noise and lighting. The action sets operating standards; it does not constitute approval of a new data-center project.

The existing Sharon project expansion is not legally subject to the amendments, although city officials said the developer agreed to follow them.

Source: [WFMJ](#)

HEALTHCARE

Sharon Regional Receives Additional \$3 Million

Pennsylvania awarded an additional \$3 million for Sharon Regional Health System, bringing state support for the modernization project to \$5 million. The \$11.9 million project includes boiler, HVAC, chilling-system, cardiac-catheterization-lab, patient-call and fire-panel upgrades.

Source: [Business Journal Daily](#)

YNG Aviation Education Center Moves Toward Construction

The Western Reserve Port Authority reported that a preconstruction meeting has been completed for the YNG Aviation Education Center and equipment was beginning to arrive at Youngstown-Warren Regional Airport. A ceremonial groundbreaking is planned for July 30.

Source: [Business Journal Daily](#)

LEGISLATIVE & POLICY WATCH

Ohio Defense and Space Commission Enacted

[HB 292](#) was signed July 7. The law establishes the Ohio Defense and Space Advisory Commission and a grant program intended to expand defense and aerospace industries. Appropriations took effect July 7; remaining provisions are scheduled to take effect Oct. 6.

Data-Center Framework Remains Pending

[HB 646](#) would create a Data Center Study Commission and address incentives, electric service, water use and other regulatory issues. A substitute version received Senate committee action June 10, and the measure remained pending at the publication cutoff.

Other bills being monitored: [SB 462](#), [SB 428](#), [SB 250](#), [HB 361](#), [HB 613](#), [HB 756](#), [HB 844](#), [HB 921](#).

ECONOMIC INDICATORS

Cleveland Fed Reports Modest Growth

The Federal Reserve's July Beige Book said Fourth District business activity increased modestly and manufacturing demand rose moderately. Retail demand remained soft amid higher fuel prices, while selling prices increased at a robust pace.

Source: [Federal Reserve Beige Book](#)

Indicator	Latest	Prior	Change	Signal
Mahoning County unemployment	3.8% May	4.4% Apr.	down 0.6 pts.	Improving
Trumbull County unemployment	4.1% May	4.6% Apr.	down 0.5 pts.	Improving
Columbiana County unemployment	3.1% May	3.4% Apr.	down 0.3 pts.	Improving
Ashtabula County unemployment	3.2% May	3.0% Apr.	up 0.2 pts.	Slight monthly uptick; below year-ago level
Lawrence County unemployment	4.0% May	3.9% Apr.	up 0.1 pts.	Slight monthly uptick
Mercer County unemployment	4.2% May	3.9% Apr.	up 0.3 pts.	Monthly increase; near year-ago level
Ohio unemployment	3.7% May	3.9% Apr.	down 0.2 pts.	Stable-to-improving
Pennsylvania unemployment	4.1% June	4.2% May	down 0.1 pts.	Below U.S. rate
U.S. unemployment	4.2% June	4.3% May	down 0.1 pts.	Payroll growth slowed
Ohio initial unemployment claims	5,632 week ended July 11	6,188 prior week	down 556	Weekly claims eased
Valley home sales	475 May sales	484 May 2025	down 2%	Slightly softer
30-year fixed mortgage rate	6.55% July 16	6.49% July 9	up 0.06 pts.	Affordability constraint remains

County unemployment values use the latest available BLS Local Area Unemployment Statistics. Mortgage data are from Freddie Mac; Ohio claims are from the U.S. Department of Labor.

DATA-CENTER GOVERNANCE TRACKER

This cumulative roster tracks moratoriums, zoning actions, policy development and project-review activity. A governance action is not a project approval. "Project approval" is used only when a specific development approval has been independently verified.

Jurisdiction	County	Current Status	Date / Update
Lordstown Village	Trumbull OH	MORATORIUM EXTENDED	Original moratorium approved in January; extension approved June 15, effective July 5.
Hubbard City	Trumbull OH	MORATORIUM IN EFFECT	Approved June 1; council committee formed July 6; petition and power-infrastructure issues remain under review.
Hubbard Township	Trumbull OH	MORATORIUM IN EFFECT — DEVELOPER INTEREST DISCLOSED	Approved Feb. 10; trustees disclosed preliminary interest in a separate 75-acre site during the week of July 13. No application or approval.
Boardman Township	Mahoning OH	MORATORIUM IN EFFECT	One-year moratorium approved in April; zoning commission studying impacts.
Niles City	Trumbull OH	MORATORIUM IN EFFECT	Approved May 20 for 180 days.
Weathersfield Township	Trumbull OH	MORATORIUM IN EFFECT	Six-month moratorium effective April 30.
Vienna Township	Trumbull OH	MORATORIUM IN EFFECT	Approved week of Feb. 16 for 180 days; reported Feb. 21.
Bazetta Township	Trumbull OH	MORATORIUM IN EFFECT	Approved May 12 for 180 days.
Braceville Township	Trumbull OH	MORATORIUM IN EFFECT	Approved June 2 for six months.
Cortland City	Trumbull OH	MORATORIUM IN EFFECT	Approved June 1 for one year.
Howland Township	Trumbull OH	MORATORIUM IN EFFECT	Approved June 10 for six months.
Warren City	Trumbull OH	BAN UNDER CONSIDERATION	Permanent ban proposal remains under review.
Girard City	Trumbull OH	MORATORIUM ADOPTED	City Council approved a 12-month moratorium July 13.
McDonald Village	Trumbull OH	PLANNING UNDERWAY — GUIDELINES IN DEVELOPMENT	Village officials and residents are developing local standards before considering any specific project.
Mahoning Township	Lawrence PA	ZONING CONTROLS ADOPTED — PROJECT REVIEW UNDERWAY	Local controls enacted; preliminary S.S. Penn / Powder Mill Works plan remains under review.
North Beaver Township	Lawrence PA	ZONING CONTROLS ADOPTED — PROJECT REVIEW UNDERWAY	Local controls enacted; preliminary S.S. Penn / Powder Mill Works plan remains under review.
New Beaver Borough	Lawrence PA	ZONING REVIEW UNDERWAY	Ordinance No. 2 of 2026 remained under local review at the publication cutoff.
Lawrence County Planning Commission	Lawrence PA	PROJECT REVIEW PENDING	North Beaver/Mahoning preliminary plan remains pending for a future commission review.
Hermitage City	Mercer PA	RESTRICTIONS APPROVED	Commissioners approved data-center restrictions; implementation details remain under review.
Sharon City	Mercer PA	ZONING STANDARDS ADOPTED	City Council approved data-center zoning amendments during the week of July 13; the action sets standards and is not a new project approval.
Pennsylvania statewide	PA	MUNICIPAL MORATORIUM OPTION UNDER CONSIDERATION	HB 2359 passed the House; Senate committee action advanced an 18-month municipal moratorium option.
Ohio statewide ballot issue	Ohio	2026 BALLOT DEADLINE MISSED	Signature threshold was not met for 2026; a 2027 effort remains possible.

CAPITAL PIPELINE TRACKER

Cumulative six-county project tracker. Existing rows carry forward unless a verified update supersedes them. An asterisk marks an existing row materially updated this issue; NEW marks a project added this issue.

Project	Investment	Jobs / Units	Status	County
SoftBank/Stargate - Lordstown	\$3B+	TBD	Site work continues; online 2026-27	Trumbull
* Ultium Cells - Lordstown	\$2.3B	~1,500 pk	Phased callbacks begin July 27 and are expected to conclude by mid-August; training precedes production.	Trumbull
* Graphite One - Conneaut	\$1.4B Ph1	150+	Ohio EPA air-permit application administratively complete; technical review underway; no permit approval.	Ashtabula
NEW CCL Container - Hermitage	\$16.3M	30 new / 302 retained	New production line will nearly double capacity; Pennsylvania offered \$160K in grants.	Mercer PA
NEW Sharon Regional modernization	\$11.9M	550+ existing employer	Additional \$3M RACP brings state support to \$5M for major building-system and clinical upgrades.	Mercer PA
NEW AMG Titanium - Neshannock	\$15.7M	50+	\$750K RACP supports 60,000-SF production expansion and 17,000-SF corporate headquarters.	Lawrence PA
Kimberly-Clark - Warren Mfg	\$800M	~500	Construction active; 1.2M SF on 560 acres	Trumbull
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	\$50M project; \$843K bridge	75 prior estimate	Construction active; 30,000 SF emergency, imaging and laboratory facility; bridge award supports 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	-	Preconstruction meeting completed; equipment arriving; ceremonial groundbreaking planned July 30.	Trumbull
* Youngstown river / sewer infrastructure	\$10.35M sewer + dam work	-	\$1.19M Exal Court pump-station contract awarded; August start expected; no development agreement.	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
Trumbull Energy Center	\$1.2B	-	953-MW Lordstown power plant completed / commercial operation	Trumbull
WRTA Bus Barn	\$6.5M	-	Groundbreaking; EV charging, electrical upgrades and solar	Mahoning
* Central Tower - Youngstown	\$21.66M	64 units	WRPA preliminary bond and sales-tax assistance approved; \$2M TMUD and \$4.25M historic credits in place.	Mahoning
YNDC Glenwood Cleanup	\$1M	-	EPA Brownfields grant supports assessment and cleanup	Mahoning
Columbiana Stormwater	\$664,596	-	June 18 FEMA award for storm-sewer upgrades	Columbiana
East Palestine Route 14 Industrial Park	\$2.4M EDA award	TBD	Federal award supports engineering and design for a new manufacturing-oriented industrial park	Columbiana

Legend: * existing tracker row materially updated this issue; NEW project added this issue. Shading: green = construction; yellow = planning; blue = awarded/funded; purple = renovation; red = paused/distressed.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Manufacturing expansion, industrial site preparation, healthcare investment, housing construction and business reinvestment moved forward this week, strengthening different parts of the region's economic foundation. While the announcements varied in size, collectively they demonstrate continued investment in assets that influence long-term competitiveness. The true measure of success will be whether these projects advance from funding and planning into completed facilities, sustained operations and lasting economic impact.

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