



MAHONING VALLEY MARKET PULSE™

Issue #4 • Week of March 30, 2026

FROM THE EDITOR: Last week the Market Pulse™ called it. The “Just A Matter Of Time?” item on Culver’s is now a confirmed lead: the chain plans to open its first Mahoning Valley location in Boardman. Meanwhile, a \$1.2B Utica Shale acquisition signals deepening investor confidence in eastern Ohio’s energy play, Pine Avenue closes permanently to make way for Kimberly-Clark infrastructure, and Mercer County’s housing gap widens with 1,100 relocation applicants chasing fewer than 50 quality homes.

All items from the current publication week were sourced Mar 23–29 unless marked **[ONGOING]** for developing stories from prior weeks. Capital Pipeline Tracker and Economic Indicators are cumulative reference tables updated weekly.

ON DECK — MARCH 30 - APRIL 5

- **Tue, Mar. 31 — Trumbull County Commissioners Meeting (10:30 AM):** Regular session, county administration building 5th floor. Agenda likely to include K-C infrastructure updates, 2% wage increase discussion, and 911 center relocation costs. Public via Zoom (ID: 858 3408 4865). [Trumbull County](#)
- **Tue, Mar. 31 — Ashtabula County Commissioners Meeting (9:00 AM):** Regular session. [Ashtabula County](#)
- **Wed, Apr. 1 — Columbiana County Commissioners Meeting (9:00 AM):** Regular session. [Columbiana County](#)
- **Thu, Apr. 2 — Board of Mahoning County Commissioners Meeting (10:00 AM):** Regular session. [Mahoning County](#)
- **Mark your calendar: Regional Chamber Annual Meeting, April 16 (7:30–9:30 AM):** Waypoint 4180, Canfield. Spirit of the Valley Award to Eric Ryan (JAC Management), Spirit of the Chamber to Samuel Miller (Trumbull Industries), keynote by Valley Champion Jan Prisby Bryson. [Regional Chamber](#)

INFRASTRUCTURE & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

- **Pine Avenue Permanently Closed for K-C Access (Mar 27).** The section of Pine Avenue (Niles Warren River Road) between Buron Street and Deforest Road in Howland Township closed permanently Friday, clearing the corridor for Kimberly-Clark plant construction and truck access infrastructure. [WKBN](#)
- **Mahoning National Bank Building: Crane on Market Street (Mar 26).** Southbound Market Street in downtown Youngstown closed Wednesday for crane placement supporting the \$18.5M renovation of the 13-story building into 71 apartments and commercial space by 22 Market Street Ohio. [NewsBreak](#)
- **Regional Water Commission Proposed for Mahoning & Trumbull (Mar 26).** The Trumbull County Water Advisory Board met in Champion Township to discuss creating a regional commission involving Youngstown, Warren, and surrounding communities. Officials warned regionalization would bring added costs but could stabilize rates long-term. [WYTV](#) · [Tribune Chronicle](#)
- **Warren Opens 2027 CDBG Applications.** Organizations serving low- to moderate-income Warren residents can now apply for Community Development Block Grant funding supporting neighborhood revitalization, affordable housing, and economic opportunity. [Tribune Chronicle](#)
- **Ohio & PA Lawmakers Rush to Regulate Data Centers.** Ohio’s HB 646 (data center study commission) has advanced to the Senate, and legislators are weighing an override of the 100% sales tax exemption on data center equipment. In PA, Gov. Shapiro announced GRID standards requiring hyperscale facilities to bring their own power generation or pay full grid costs. Both moves are directly relevant to SoftBank/Stargate’s Lordstown AI hub and the ongoing Lordstown Village data center moratorium. [Farm and Dairy](#)
- **[ONGOING] K-C Plant On Schedule; Road Design Advancing.** The \$800M Kimberly-Clark manufacturing facility remains on pace for H1 2027 production. The \$17.2M road/bridge infrastructure project is progressing — Pine Avenue closure (above) is the first visible milestone. [BJD, Mar 10](#)
- **[ONGOING] EGCC Garage Demo Timeline Set.** Bid-opening targets July, demolition September through December — clearing the E. Federal Street footprint for the \$60M Mahoning County Government Center. [BJD, Mar 19](#)

ENERGY & UTICA SHALE

- **Infinity Natural Resources Announces \$1.2B Utica Acquisition (Mar 27).** The Morgantown, WV-based company will acquire 71,000 net acres in Guernsey, Belmont, and Harrison counties, plus 141 miles of gathering lines and 90 miles of water infrastructure. The deal signals deepening capital confidence in the Appalachian Basin’s oil and gas potential. [YourRadioPlace](#)
- **EOG Elevates Utica to “Top-Tier Priority” for 2026.** EOG Resources has drilled 16 wells across six pads in Ohio this year, with three rigs running factory-style development. The Utica now competes directly for capital with EOG’s Delaware Basin and Eagle Ford assets — a structural elevation that positions eastern Ohio as a scaled, permanent growth platform. [Oil Gas Leads](#)

- **[ONGOING] Strait of Hormuz Crisis Continues to Reshape Energy Economics.** Brent crude remains elevated; S&P 500 on track for a fifth straight losing week. Gas prices and macro uncertainty continue to weigh on CRE investment sentiment nationally, while boosting Utica economics locally. [BJD Investors Edge](#)

RETAIL & RESTAURANT BEAT

- **Culver's Confirmed for Boardman (Mar 25).** The Wisconsin-based chain plans to open its first Mahoning Valley location at the former Hot Dog Shoppe site on Route 224. Boardman Township Zoning Director TJ Kieran confirmed the company has met with the architectural committee; a formal application is expected soon. Nearest existing Culver's is in Canton. [WFMJ](#)
- **Golden Age Vintage Marketplace Opening Soon.** A new 4,000-square-foot small business retail incubator expanding from Sweet Memories Vintage Tees & Candy, offering vendor space for small businesses, artisans, antique dealers, and creative curators in the Youngstown area. [NewsBreak](#)

LEGISLATIVE & POLICY WATCH

- **Sen. Husted Appointed to Senate Appropriations Committee.** Ohio's junior senator became the first Ohioan in more than 15 years to serve on the powerful spending panel, replacing Sen. Mullin (OK). The appointment could strengthen the Valley's positioning for federal infrastructure, military, and economic development funding through YARS, EDA, and ARC channels. [Tribune Chronicle](#)
- **Southern Park Mall Taxes Delinquent Again (\$338K).** Kohan Retail Investment Group owes \$338,839 in unpaid property taxes as of March 23 — just three months after paying off \$1M+ in back taxes and penalties in December 2025. Mahoning County Treasurer Dan Yemma confirmed the balance. [NewsBreak](#)

WATCH

Mercer County housing gap widens: Penn Northwest's Make My Move program has attracted 1,100 applicants and 400,000 web visitors, but the county has fewer than 50 quality homes to offer. Hermitage has ~36 acres at LindenPointe ready for development, and Penn Northwest reports a developer is expected to break ground within six months. [BJD, Mar 27](#)

HOUSING & WORKFORCE

- **WFMJ Cover Story: Valley Housing Shortage (Mar 27).** This week's 21 News Cover Story examined the regional housing supply gap and strategies to address it, reinforcing the demand narrative driving REDD grants, Land Bank construction, and Chamber housing council initiatives. [WFMJ](#)
- **[ONGOING] \$3.35M in REDD Grants Awarded (Mar 6).** \$2.5M to Youngstown (220 infill units) and \$851K to Warren's Peninsula Project (306 units) continue to advance. [BJD](#)
- **[ONGOING] Land Bank Shifts from Demolition to Development.** 17 houses built in 2025, eight more nearing completion; Royal China brownfield remediation complete. [BJD, Mar 3](#)

ECONOMIC INDICATORS

Indicator	Value	Trend / Notes
Mahoning Co. Unemp.	4.5%	↓ from 4.7% (Oct '25); measured Nov 2025 (Ohio LMI)
Trumbull Co. Unemp.	4.8%	↓ from 5.1% (Oct '25); still above OH state avg (4.0%)
Columbiana Co. Unemp.	4.3%	↓ from 4.5% (Oct '25); Valley's lowest county rate
City of Youngstown	5.7%	↓ from 6.0% (Oct '25); measured Nov 2025
City of Warren	6.1%	↓ from 6.7% (Oct '25); measured Nov 2025
Regional Wage Trend	Rising	"More jobs than people" — WRPA Dir. Trevena (Q1 2026)
Ultium Cells Layoffs	1,334	Eff. Jan 5, 2026: 484 indef. / 850 temp; upgrades underway
YSU Spring Enrollment	11,804	↑ 2.2% vs. Spring 2025 (14th-day census, Jan 2026)
Starter Home Rank	#4 US	House Buyers of America 2026; avg sale \$162,557 (pub. Mar 18)

Data source: Ohio LMI (ohiolmi.com), Nov 2025 release. Jan 2026 county-level data delayed due to federal BLS staffing disruptions. Next release est. Apr 2026.

CAPITAL PIPELINE TRACKER

Cumulative reference table updated weekly. Color key below.

Project	Invest.	Jobs	Status	County
SoftBank/Stargate — Lordstown AI Hub	\$3B	TBD	Active Construction	Trumbull
Kimberly-Clark — Warren Mfg	\$800M	491+	On Sched; Pine Ave closed	Trumbull
K-C Distribution Center	\$160M	65	Board Decision Pending	Trumbull
Innovation Hub — A&D	\$62M	450 by '29	Reno Start Summer '26	Mahoning
Graphite One — Weathersfield	\$435M+	TBD	Permitting Phase	Trumbull
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	Regional
Ultium Cells (Lordstown)	\$2.3B	~900	Reduced Ops / Upgrades	Trumbull
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+	Demo Spring '26	Mahoning
EGCC Garage Demo	\$2.5-3.5M	—	Bids July '26	Mahoning
L2R Undisclosed Pipeline	\$3B+ (est.)	TBD	Multiple stages	Regional

Green = construction **Yellow** = planning **Blue** = awarded **Purple** = renovation **Red** = paused

Mahoning Valley Market Pulse™

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