



CORNERSTONE
REAL ESTATE ADVISORS

MAHONING VALLEY MARKET PULSE™

Issue #8 • Week of April 27, 2026

FROM THE EDITOR: Data center uncertainty remains in the Mahoning Valley: Niles rejected Bitdeer's annexation, Weathersfield says its zoning doesn't allow data centers, and a Niles moratorium hearing is scheduled May 20. Meanwhile, the Valley's housing market keeps tightening — Youngstown ranked #9 nationally among competitive small rental markets with zero new construction and 94.8% occupancy. The Valley has momentum — and how to structure that growth to best serve residents is now front and center.

All items sourced Apr 20-26 unless marked **[ONGOING]** for developing stories from prior weeks. Capital Pipeline Tracker and Economic Indicators are cumulative reference tables updated weekly.

ON DECK — APRIL 27 - MAY 3

- **Tue, Apr. 28 — Trumbull County Commissioners Workshop (10:30 AM):** Regular weekly session. [Trumbull County](#)
- **Tue, Apr. 28 — Ashtabula County Commissioners (AM):** Regular meeting, Jefferson. [Ashtabula County](#)
- **Tue, Apr. 28 — Mahoning County Commissioners (6:00 PM):** Green Township Community Building. Note: unusual evening location. [Mahoning County](#)
- **Wed, Apr. 29 — Columbiana County Commissioners (9:00 AM):** Regular meeting, downtown courthouse, Lisbon. [Morning Journal](#)
- **Mark your calendar — Wed, Apr. 29 — Lake to River Annual Meeting (11:30 AM-1:30 PM):** Eastwood Event Centre, Niles. Track for pipeline updates, JobsOhio alignment, and new metrics. [Lake to River](#)
- **Thu, May 1 — Burlington Grand Opening (8:45 AM):** 441 Boardman-Poland Rd. Ribbon cutting + \$5,000 donation to West Boulevard Elementary.
- **Advance notice — Wed, May 20 — Niles Data Center Moratorium Public Hearing (5:00 PM):** First structured public forum on data center development in the Valley.

POWER, DATA & SITE READINESS

- **Niles Rejects Bitdeer Annexation; Moratorium Hearing Set for May 20 (Apr 20).** The city announced "no further action" on the Whitetail Creek LLC (Bitdeer) annexation request, citing the absence of a formal petition, zoning plans, or utility application. A moratorium pausing all data center permitting will proceed, with a public hearing at 5:00 PM on May 20. City officials stated the decision "follows careful consideration and reflects the concerns and feedback expressed by residents of Niles as well as neighboring communities." [WFMJ](#) · [WKBN](#) · [Tribune Chronicle](#)
- **Weathersfield: Data Centers Not Permitted Under Current Zoning (Apr 20).** Trustees confirmed that the three Weathersfield parcels at 1047 Belmont Ave. are zoned Industrial B, and data centers are neither a permitted nor conditional use. Bitdeer's January operations update projected 300 MW commissioned by Q4 2028 at the site. [Tribune Chronicle](#) · [BJD](#)
- **Lordstown Files EPA Permit Appeal Over Trumbull Energy Center Discharge (Apr 22).** Village council approved an appeal of the wastewater discharge permit renewal for the Trumbull Energy Center gas-fired plant, while also advancing zoning discussions tied to data centers and related uses. [Tribune Chronicle](#)
- **[ONGOING] Lordstown Stargate: Site Work Visible.** Backhoes unearthing portions of the plant's parking lot along Hallock Young Road. Crews dismantling a solar array near the former paint facility. [BJD](#)
- **Policy context:** PA HB 2151 (model data-center ordinance) and HB 2150 (annual energy/water-use reporting) both passed the House. Federal "No Harm Data Center Act" filed. Ohio ballot petition to ban data centers active. See Legislative & Policy Watch below.

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 →](#)

INFRASTRUCTURE & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

- **Youngstown Approves \$40.3M EPA Sewer Loan (Apr 23).** Board of control signed a 30-year contract with the Ohio EPA Water Pollution Control Loan Fund at 3.48% interest; \$2.4M of the \$42.8M project cost will be forgiven. Funds cover phases 1-2 of the Mill Creek sewer interceptor, part of a 2014 federal consent decree. Final two phases (Lake Cohasset) at 30% design; bids expected late 2027. An 80-million-gallon wet weather facility is also planned. [Indicator](#)
- **Lordstown Route 45 Water Booster Station Out for Bid (\$620K).** Includes \$200,000 in ARP funds that must be obligated by fall. Village also referenced Lyntz Road resurfacing and a state Route 45 shoulder project. [Tribune Chronicle](#)
- **Chill Can Property Opened for Public Tours (Apr 25-26).** Youngstown opened the failed 21-acre industrial site to the public, framing it as a transparency and redevelopment reset after taking possession in 2025. The city is effectively reintroducing a high-profile distressed property to the market and the community. [Indicator](#) · [BJD](#)

EMPLOYER WATCH

- **Litco International Relocates Crating Manufacturing to Lordstown (Apr 22).** Moving from 14,000 SF in Vienna Township to 40,000 SF at Ohio Commerce Park, effective May 4. Company anticipates adding employees as the operation ramps up. [BJD](#)

- **McDonald Steel Site (51.8 Acres) Expected to Sell July–October 2026 (Apr 20).** Ohio EPA compliance inspection (Mar 10) disclosed the sale timeline. All buildings except the office have been demolished. Applied Partners LLC (NJ) paid \$3.25M in July 2024. Buyer undisclosed. This is the second major cleared industrial site in the pipeline alongside the 360-acre Warren Steel foreclosure. [Vindicator](#) · [Tribune Chronicle](#)
- **Former Phillips Manufacturing / Niles Sold for \$2.2M (Apr 24).** 10-acre property at 504 Walnut St. Buyer: 504 Walnut LLC, whose listed address matches Dinesol Plastics Inc. (custom injection molding). Transaction dated Apr 21. [BJD](#)

RETAIL & RESTAURANT BEAT

- **Burlington Grand Opening May 1 — Boardman.** 28,880 SF at 441 Boardman-Poland Road (former JoAnn Fabrics). 31st Ohio location. Part of a national strategy to open 110+ stores in 2026, with 45 leases acquired from the JoAnn bankruptcy. Ribbon cutting 8:45 AM; \$5,000 donation to West Boulevard Elementary via AdoptAClassroom.org. [WKBN](#) · [WFMJ](#)
- **[ONGOING] Presidential Square Fire: Seven Businesses Still Closed.** Investigation ongoing; no reopening dates set.

HOUSING & WORKFORCE

- **Youngstown Ranked #9 Most Competitive Small Rental Market (Apr 24).** RentCafe Rental Competitiveness Index score of 85.3 (national average 75.4). Zero new construction, 94.8% occupancy, 76.95% lease renewal rate (up 2.27 points), nine renters vying for every available unit (up from eight), and apartments rented within 48 days. Dayton (#15) is the only other Ohio market in the top 30. [RentCafe](#) · [BJD](#)
- **State Housing-Assistance Grants Hit the Region.** Columbiana County Community Action Agency received \$178,000 for 36 home repairs for homeowners at or below 50% AMI. Catholic Charities Housing Opportunities received \$42,755 to provide down-payment assistance and counseling for seven households across a six-county service area including Ashtabula, Columbiana, Mahoning, and Trumbull. [BJD](#)
- **March House Sales: Down 2% YoY, Mixed by County.** 364 sales vs. 371 a year earlier. Trumbull rose 3%; Columbiana fell 17.2%. New listings increased in all three counties. Dollar volume up in Mahoning and Trumbull, down in Columbiana. [BJD](#)
- **[ONGOING] \$3.35M in REDD Grants Advancing.** \$2.5M to Youngstown (220 infill units) and \$851K to Warren’s Peninsula Project (306 units). [BJD](#)

LEGISLATIVE & POLICY WATCH

- **PA House Passes Two Data Center Bills (Apr 14–15).** HB 2151 would develop a model local ordinance for data centers. HB 2150 would require annual energy and water-use reporting from data center operators. Both passed with bipartisan support. [WPSU](#)
- **SB 420: JobsOhio Transparency Bill Filed (Apr 22).** Sen. Sandra O’Brien (R-Lenox, Trumbull County) introduced legislation requiring JobsOhio to comply with Ohio’s open records and open meetings laws and mandating biennial performance audits by the state auditor. Referred to Senate Finance Committee. A companion House bill was introduced by Reps. Rader (D) and Pizzulli (R). [Tribune Chronicle](#)
- **[ONGOING] Federal “No Harm Data Center Act”** (Landsman) and **Ohio Data Center Ballot Ban** (petition active, 413K+ signatures needed by ~July) remain in play.

WATCH

Power is increasingly becoming a main site selection variable. Niles rejected, Weathersfield blocked on zoning. The Niles moratorium hearing May 20 will be the Valley’s first structured public forum on how to evaluate data center proposals.

ECONOMIC INDICATORS

Indicator	Value	Trend / Notes
YW MSA Ranking	#1 / #9	#1 hottest RE market (Cotality); #9 small rental market (RentCafe)
US Unemployment	4.4%	Feb '26; Ohio 4.2% (Feb). Next BLS release May 8
US Crude Oil	~\$105/bbl	Energy volatility remains a construction and consumer-cost watch
Mahoning Co. Unemp.	6.2%	Feb '26; ↓ from 6.5% Jan. In line with Feb '25 (6.5%). (Ohio LMI)
Trumbull Co. Unemp.	6.6%	Feb '26; ↓ from 7.0% Jan. Improved vs Feb '25 (6.8%). (Ohio LMI)
Columbiana Co. Unemp.	5.4%	Feb '26; ↓ from 5.5% Jan. Significantly improved vs Feb '25 (6.4%). (Ohio LMI)
Ashtabula Co. Unemp.	5.2%	Feb '26; ranked 35th statewide. (Ohio LMI)
L2R Region Annual	5.4%	2025 annual rate; 283,200 labor force (Ohio LMI)
March House Sales	364	↓ 2% YoY (371). Trumbull +3%, Columbiana ↓17.2%. New listings up. (BJD)

Data sources: Ohio LMI Feb 2026 LAUS (Apr 22). BLS Feb 2026 Employment Situation. Oil: CNBC Apr 25. Housing: BJD Mar 2026 sales data. Rankings: Cotality, RentCafe RCI.

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 visible; online '27	Trumbull
Kimberly-Clark — Warren Mfg	\$800M	491+	2,900 tons steel; hiring Apr '26	Trumbull
K-C Distribution Center	\$160M	65	Board Decision Pending	Trumbull
Keel Data Center — Sharon	\$1.5-1.7B	134	Zoning Variance Pending	Mercer PA
Graphite One — Weathersfield	\$1.4B	160-625	Design; const. late '26	Trumbull
ArcLight — Lordstown 161 ac	\$3.9M	TBD	Acquired; no plans disclosed	Trumbull
FirstEnergy Grid — Trumbull	\$24M	—	138-kV rebuild; done summer '26	Trumbull
Warren Steel Site	\$15M loan	—	Foreclosure; 360 ac industrial	Trumbull
* Bitdeer Data Center — Niles	TBD	TBD	Annexation rejected; moratorium 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	Regional
Ultium Cells (Lordstown)	\$2.3B	~900	Reduced Ops / Upgrades	Trumbull
NEW Litco International — Lordstown	TBD	TBD	40K SF; operational May 4	Trumbull
NEW McDonald Steel Site	\$3.25M	—	51.8 ac cleared; sale Jul-Oct '26	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 Sep-Dec '26	Mahoning
L2R Undisclosed Pipeline	\$3B+ (est.)	TBD	Multiple stages	Regional

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

Mahoning Valley Market Pulse™

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jemig@cornerstonemv.com · cornerstonemv.com
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