



Accelerating Economic Growth

LAKE DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY



LAKE COUNTY EXECUTIVE AIRPORT



Accelerating Economic Growth: A Strategic Plan for Success



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DEAR LAKE COUNTY STAKEHOLDERS,

The Strategic Plan for the Lake Development Authority has been carefully crafted in collaboration with our Board, Staff, and Lake County Commissioners. The Strategic Plan is a focused blueprint designed to drive economic growth and position Lake County, Ohio, as a premier location across our state and region. Its core purpose is to accelerate economic growth across Lake County, Ohio. This plan sets a strategic direction for the coming years, focusing on four critical areas: Economic Development, Executive Airport Development, Coastal Development, and Organizational Development, including Strategic Partnerships and Government Relations.

Each focus area contains specific goals aligned with the mission, vision, and values of the Lake Development Authority—to make Lake County a premier destination to live, work, and raise a family. Our vision is to create a business-friendly environment that fosters sustainable economic success and community well-being.

This plan is designed to drive a strong, resilient economy and promote Lake County as an ideal location for business and investment. It is intended to support the ambitions of our cities, villages, and townships in enhancing livability, recreation, capital investment, and job creation.

In each focus area, detailed action plans are in development to ensure we achieve our goals. These initiatives are being pursued in close collaboration with our local governments and strategic partners.

We welcome and encourage your involvement in this journey. If you are interested in participating or contributing, please reach out.



Art Lindrose, Chairman



Patrick T. Mohorcic, Executive Director



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*Blue indicates 2025 Goal



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Lake Development Authority's Strategic Plan is a comprehensive roadmap aimed at accelerating economic growth and positioning Lake County, Ohio, as a premier destination for businesses, residents, and visitors. Developed in collaboration with the Board, staff, and County Commissioners, the plan outlines a focused vision across four core areas:

1. **Economic Development:** Establishing Lake Development Authority as a "one-stop shop" for businesses by fostering collaboration, advancing key projects, and implementing a countywide development strategy. Goals include leveraging Lake Development Authority's resources to support land use, attract emerging industries, and promote redevelopment initiatives.
2. **Executive Airport Development:** Transforming the Lake County Executive Airport into a regional aviation hub through infrastructure improvements, monetization strategies, and community engagement. Initiatives include completing a state-of-the-art terminal, expanding facilities, and developing aviation education programs.
3. **Coastal Development:** Enhancing Lake Erie and riverfront areas by supporting sustainable development, boosting recreational opportunities, and protecting natural resources. Key projects include advancing the Fairport Harbor Research and Recreation Center, the Eastlake Power Plant Site, and implementing a robust dredging strategy.
4. **Organizational Development:** Strengthening internal capacity and external partnerships to ensure effective implementation. This involves optimizing the organizational structure, expanding staffing capabilities, and fostering government and private sector collaborations.

The plan is supported by actionable strategies such as monetizing assets, securing state and federal funding, and creating innovative financing tools. These efforts aim to foster job creation, drive capital investment, and enhance Lake County's quality of life.

With a commitment to economic resilience and community well-being, this strategic plan charts a path to sustainable growth, ensuring Lake County thrives as a vibrant place to live, work, and invest.



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MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES

Lake Development Authority

Background

The Lake Development Authority (LDA) was established in February 2007 as a Port Authority under Ohio law, empowering us to drive economic growth and create employment opportunities in Lake County. As a Port Authority, we have unique development powers that enable us to acquire, lease, and enhance property, as well as issue taxable and tax-exempt bonds. Our tax-exempt status allows us to provide cost-effective development services, benefiting a diverse range of stakeholders including entrepreneurs, corporations, nonprofits, institutions, and communities.

Mission

Accelerate economic growth in Lake County.

Vision

Raise the tide of economic development and community prosperity in Lake County, Ohio.

Values

Our work is guided by a commitment to delivering tailored guidance and resources across financing, partnerships, spaces, transportation, and community, fostering economic progress throughout Lake County.





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Advantages of Working with the Lake Development Authority

As the economic development arm of the Lake County Board of Commissioners, the Lake Development Authority (LDA) is a streamlined resource for local business growth. We simplify the complexities of expansion by offering a single point of contact across critical areas of support:

- **Financing** – As an Ohio Port Authority, we facilitate economic development by supporting capital investments within Lake County.
- **Partnerships** – We serve as a central hub to connect businesses with the programs and incentives offered by municipal, county, and state governments.
- **Spaces** – Working closely with municipal and regional partners, we create new real estate opportunities to promote private investment and enhance access to Lake Erie.
- **Transportation** – We operate the Lake County Executive Airport, a key asset for both business and recreational travel. We also support lakefront commerce through Fairport Harbor, our deep-water maritime port, which handles over 1.5 million tons of freight annually, including both domestic and foreign traffic.
- **Community** – Our work is rooted in a holistic, community-first approach, ensuring that economic growth benefits the people and places of Lake County.

The Lake Development Authority remains committed to expanding economic opportunities in Lake County, fostering a strong foundation for growth and development.





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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

Goal #1: Position Lake County Development Authority as a “One-Stop Shop” for Economic Development

Objective: Become the preferred partner for cities, villages, townships, and businesses by offering comprehensive economic development services and fostering collaborative relationships across Lake County.

1. **Strategically organize the Development Authority to deliver exceptional economic development support through collaboration with finance, development, and land-use organizations.**
 - **Action Items:**
 - Actively market the Development Authority’s services to municipalities, aligning with their development priorities and projects.
 - Finalize a partnership with the Lake County Workforce Development Board (2025).
 - Explore land use opportunities with the Lake County Land Bank to address economic development, brownfield, and housing challenges (2025).
 - Pursue alignment with all economic development agencies in Lake County to optimize local, state, and federal resources (2026).
2. **Develop a countywide Economic Development Plan focusing on land use, business retention, expansion, and attraction to maximize job creation and retention.**
 - **Action Items:**
 - Provide technical assistance for communities without full-time economic development professionals in areas like CDBG applications, utility planning, and site development (2025).
 - Collaborate with County Planning to create a countywide Land Use Map to outline current and potential future land use (2025).
 - Develop a targeted industry list matched to available land for specific uses (2026).
 - Identify emerging markets for future investment in Lake County (2027).
 - Implement a targeted retail development and redevelopment strategy to support community revitalization (2027).
 - Develop an agricultural business strategy that includes viticulture to strengthen Lake County’s agricultural economy (2027)



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Goal #2: Advance Key Development Projects with Municipal and Business Collaboration

Objective: Drive economic growth and enhance Lake County's development landscape by successfully advancing priority projects through strong partnerships with local communities and businesses.

1. Partner with the City of Mentor on key projects like the Mentor Innovation Center and Uptown Mentor Retail Development (2025).

○ **Action Items:**

- Execute Ground Lease and Sublease with Uptown Mentor.
- Oversee the ARPA process to ensure funds are allocated and utilized appropriately.
- Finalize capital lease financing plan for Mentor Innovation Site.

2. Finalize and initiate the development of the Fairport Harbor Research and Recreation Center.

○ **Action Items:**

- Obtain permit approval for breakwater (2025-2026).
- Identify funding for Phase II and secure necessary permits (2025).
- Conduct a market feasibility study of development projects in the area (2025).
- Begin bidding and construction of Phase I (2027).



3. Complete the ABB property development in partnership with the City of Wickliffe and Premier Development.

○ **Action Items:**

- Identify brownfield funding to demolish the existing office building on Euclid Avenue (2025).
- Develop a financing plan using the capital lease bond program for industrial development of the site (2026).



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Goal #3: Establish a Comprehensive Industrial Land Development Strategy

Objective: Secure and prepare industrial land for development to drive regional job creation and address Lake County's industrial growth needs.

1. **Identify below-market industrial land for purchase and redevelopment by the Development Authority.**
 - **Action Items:**
 - Use the County Planning land use map to identify available industrial land in Lake County (2025).
 - Collaborate with the real estate community to identify industrial sites across the county (2025-2026).
 - Develop a funding strategy for purchasing and redeveloping industrial properties, including market feasibility studies, infrastructure planning, and financial assessments (2026).
2. **Develop a Buy, Sell, and Lease Building Strategy to support business growth and job creation in Lake County.**
 - **Action Items:**
 - Evaluate opportunities to buy, sell, or lease properties, particularly those with brownfield potential, to foster business expansion and job creation through redevelopment funds (2026).





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Goal #4: Create a Robust Financing Plan Leveraging Port Authority Powers under Ohio Revised Code (ORC) 4582

Objective: Establish diverse financing tools to support development projects in Lake County, maximizing local and federal resources for economic growth.

1. **Evaluate the feasibility of establishing a Development Bond Fund to support county projects.**
 - **Action Items:**
 - [Engage a municipal advisor experienced in creating bond funds \(2025\).](#)
 - Conduct a benchmarking study on financing strategies used by other Port Authorities and development organizations (2026).
2. **Explore additional financing programs through Small Business Administration (SBA) resources.**
 - **Action Items:**
 - [Collaborate with MEACO and other SBA lenders to form countywide partnerships \(2025\).](#)
 - Develop a marketing plan to promote SBA resources to businesses, banks, and other economic development partners (2026).





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LAKE COUNTY EXECUTIVE AIRPORT

Goal #1: Fully Develop LNN as an Executive Airport

Objective: Serve citizens, businesses, and transient pilots effectively, enhancing the airport's role as a regional aviation hub.

1. Complete the Executive Airport Terminal (Target: 2025)

○ **Action Items:**

- Finalize architectural and design plans.
- Secure necessary permits and approvals.
- Execute phased construction schedule with weekly, monthly, and quarterly progress reviews.

2. Initiate Planning and Funding for a Parallel Taxiway (2025)

○ **Action Items:**

- Conduct feasibility study and initial design.
- Identify funding sources, including federal/state grants and private investment.
- Develop timeline for phased implementation.

3. Plan for Additional T-Hangars with Funding Options (2026)

○ **Action Items:**

- Conduct market analysis to assess demand and potential pricing structure.
- Research and outline funding models, including private and public options.
- Finalize preliminary designs and timelines.



4. Resource Development Plan “Monetize the Airport” (2026)

○ **Action Items:**

- Identify monetizable assets, such as leasing opportunities, advertising, and special events.
- Create a revenue generation roadmap and assign targets for each initiative.
- Regularly assess and adjust monetization strategies to align with market demand.



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5. Peer Airport Comparison Study (2026)

- Action Items:
 - Select 3–5 comparable airports for a benchmarking study.
 - Analyze and document successful initiatives, funding structures, and development challenges at peer airports.
 - Use insights to inform strategic opportunities and identify potential challenges.

Goal #2: Develop a Detailed Plan for Land Surrounding the Airport

Objective: Maximize the 8 acres and remaining developable land for aviation expansion.

1. Feasibility Study and Funding Options Aviation use of the 8 acres on the North End of the Airfield (2026)

- Action Items:
 - Secure Kennedy Parkway Extension
 - Perform a feasibility study considering demand, best aviation use, and location.
 - Develop a financial plan with funding sources, including possible private-public partnerships.

2. Investigate Feasibility of Long-Range Adjacent Land Acquisition Program (2026-2027)

- Action Items:
 - Conduct a land-use and zoning analysis to identify high-priority areas for potential expansion.
 - Develop acquisition strategies, including budget projections and potential funding sources.

3. Develop a Wetlands Remediation Plan (2025)

- Action Items:
 - Conduct environmental assessments to determine the extent of wetlands and regulatory requirements.
 - Work with environmental consultants to design a remediation plan.
 - Secure necessary permits and funding, targeting completion milestones.

Goal #3: Develop an Area Resident Relations Plan

Objective: Build positive relationships with local residents and address their concerns.

1. Create a Resident Engagement and Communication Plan (2025)

- Action Items:
 - Create an Airport Stakeholder Committee that meets quarterly
 - Establish regular communication channels, such as newsletters, town halls, or dedicated website updates.
 - Design a feedback mechanism to capture and address residents' concerns promptly.
 - Schedule community engagement events to foster transparency and build trust.



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2. Establish Environmental Management Initiatives (2027)

○ **Action Items:**

- Develop a comprehensive plan for electric vehicle (EV) charging stations, accommodating both automobiles and jets to support sustainable transportation.
- Collaborate with the FAA to identify and secure funding opportunities for environmentally focused projects.

Goal #4: Expand Flight School and Aviation-Related Training

Objective: Serve Lake County and surrounding areas by enhancing local aviation education.

1. Expand Flight School Offerings (2026)

○ **Action Items:**

- Assess demand for various aviation programs, including commercial pilot, maintenance, and ground crew training.
- Partner with local educational institutions to expand curriculum offerings and attract more students.
- Establish scholarship or financial aid options to increase accessibility with the Lake County Workforce Board
- Maximize the new Terminal Building space for the Flight Schools.

2. Explore Additional Aviation Training Programs (2027)

○ **Action Items:**

- Develop partnerships with corporate aviation or technical schools to provide job-ready skills.
- Investigate opportunities for offering training in emerging areas, such as drone piloting or aviation technology.
- Secure necessary certifications and approvals for expanded course offerings.



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STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN FOR COASTAL DEVELOPMENT

Vision

To enhance Lake County's coastal and riverfront areas by fostering sustainable development, expanding recreational opportunities, and driving economic growth while preserving natural resources.





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Goal 1: Develop a Comprehensive Coastal & River Development Plan

Objective

Collaborate with Lake Erie coastal communities and those bordering the Grand and Chagrin Rivers to create an integrated plan that leverages current projects and programs to boost business, recreation, and economic activity.

Strategic Actions

1. Advance Key Projects

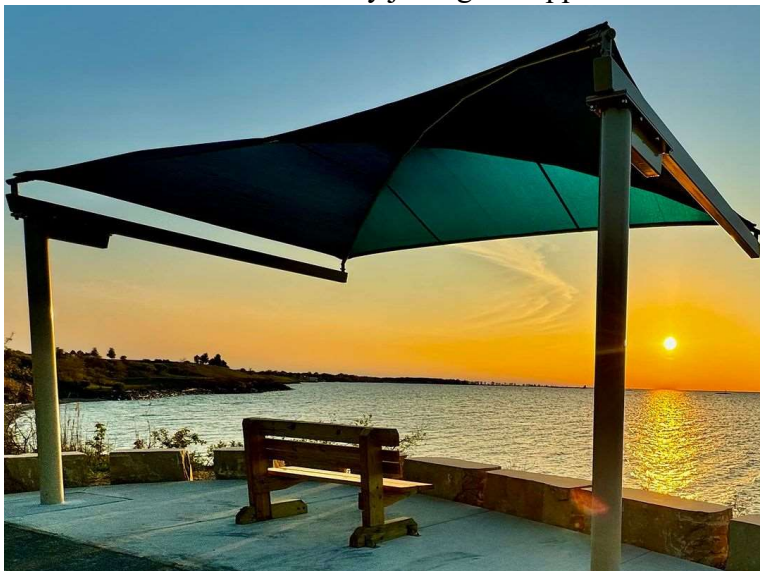
- **Fairport Harbor Research and Recreation Center (2025-2027):** Finalize and implement the development plan to create a regional hub for research, recreation, and tourism.
- **Mentor Harbor Yacht Club Enhancements (2025):** Execute the enhancement plan to modernize facilities and increase recreational usage.
- **Eastlake Power Plant Redevelopment (2025):** Partner with site owners to finalize and implement coastal improvements.

2. Conduct Feasibility Studies and Regional Planning (2026).

- **Coastal Feasibility Study:** In collaboration with Lake Metroparks and Tour Lake County, assess opportunities for lodging, dining, and entertainment along Lake Erie and the rivers.
- **Coastal Hub Development:** Develop a regional approach that aligns priorities for Lake County and surrounding counties.

3. Strengthen Strategic Partnerships (2025)

- Work closely with Lake Metroparks and ODNR to expand public access, bike paths, and trails along the coast and rivers.
- Identify joint grant opportunities to enhance recreational infrastructure.



4. Balance Development and Conservation (2026)

- Establish a policy framework ensuring a harmonious relationship between economic development and environmental stewardship.

5. Marketing and Promotion (2026)

- Collaborate with strategic partners to market Lake County's lakefront and riverfront attractions to boost tourism and economic engagement.



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Goal 2: Develop a Comprehensive Dredging Strategy

Objective:

Establish a robust, economically viable dredging approach for Lake Erie and the rivers, leveraging partnerships with the Army Corps of Engineers, Kurtz Bros., and private dredging companies.

Strategic Actions

1. **Plan for Effective Dredging (2025)**
 - Develop a long-term dredging plan in collaboration with the Army Corps of Engineers to maintain navigability and support coastal infrastructure.
2. **Monetize Dredging Operations (2026)**
 - Create a business plan to generate revenue from dredging activities for Lake Erie, the rivers, and other sites.
3. **Marketing Dredging Capabilities (2027)**
 - Promote Lake County's advanced dredging services to attract regional and private-sector clients.





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RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

Goal #1: Develop a Comprehensive Resource Development Plan

Objective: Establish a strategic approach to generate additional revenue for the Lake Development Authority (LDA).

Strategies and Action Items:

1. Create an inventory of potential revenue sources (2025)

- Conduct a survey of other port authorities to identify viable revenue streams.
- Evaluate which sources align with LDA's mission and operational capacity.
- Develop a detailed plan, prioritizing revenue sources by feasibility and impact.
- Set specific revenue goals and timelines for each category.

Goal #2: Monetize the Lake County Executive Airport (LCEA)

Objective: Generate revenue through signage, sponsorships, strategic marketing partnerships, and airport-related developments.

Strategies and Action Items:

1. Maximize net revenue from physical developments (2026).

- Explore opportunities such as T-hangars, industrial and commercial developments, Fixed Base Operator (FBO) services, and other new ventures.

2. Develop a marketing and advertising plan (2025-2026).

- Identify LCEA's primary customer segments (e.g., corporate clients, flight schools, recreational users) and pinpoint areas for revenue growth.
- Designate specific areas within the airport for marketing and advertising.
- Build a target list of companies and organizations for sponsorship and advertising opportunities, including a tailored strategic approach for each.
- Create a cost structure for advertising and strategic marketing partnerships.
- Ensure compliance with FAA regulations for all marketing and advertising initiatives.

Goal #3: Maximize Revenue from Federal and State Grants and Programs

Objective: Leverage all available Federal and State programs to benefit Lake County.

Strategies and Action Items:

1. Develop a comprehensive inventory of applicable grants and programs (2025).

- Focus on key areas such as workforce development, coastal development, airport improvements, and economic development.

2. Prioritize and strategize funding requests (2026)

- Align requests with high-impact areas and community priorities.

3. Cultivate relationships at all levels of government to support funding efforts (2025)



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Goal #4: Increase Support from Public and Private Foundations

Objective: Expand financial support from foundations to enhance Lake County's development initiatives.

Strategies and Action Items:

- 1. Compile a detailed list of potential foundation partners (2025).**
 - Identify foundations with a history of supporting similar development projects.
- 2. Develop tailored strategies for each foundation (2026)**
 - Build relationships to secure funding for current and future initiatives.
- 3. Set and monitor annual funding goals.**

Goal #5: Create a Bond Fund and Other Financing Tools

Objective: Establish innovative financing mechanisms to support economic development and sustain LDA operations.

Strategies and Action Items:

- 1. Develop a suite of funding tools, including a Development Bond Fund (2027).**
 - Enable business development and infrastructure growth.
- 2. Promote financing programs through targeted marketing efforts (2027)**
 - Engage businesses and communities to maximize utilization.

Goal #6: Launch an Earned Income and Alternative Revenue Program

Objective: Establish sustainable income streams to support economic, coastal, and airport development.

Strategies and Action Items:

- 1. Identify potential alternative revenue sources (2027)**
 - Consider options such as hosting special events, providing consulting services, and establishing membership programs with strategic partners.
- 2. Evaluate and execute revenue programs annually (2027)**
 - Prioritize initiatives based on impact and alignment with LDA's strategic objectives.



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STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS AND GOVERNMENT

Goal 1: Strengthen relationships with local, state, and federal governments to advance economic development, coastal development, and airport development initiatives.

Objective: Build and sustain robust connections across all levels of government to position Lake County as an ideal place to live, work, and do business.

Action Items:

- Compile a comprehensive list of local, state, and federal elected officials, including their staff members.
- Develop a strategic framework with clear responsibilities to foster relationships at each level of government.
- Identify government agencies and programs that support economic development, and craft tailored strategies to engage with each.

Goal 2: Cultivate strategic partnerships to enhance economic development efforts.

Objective: Maintain and establish meaningful partnerships that contribute to a strong, effective, and sustainable economic development program.

Action Items:

- Assess current strategic partnerships to evaluate their ongoing alignment and contributions to Lake County's development goals.
- Identify potential new partners and outline targeted strategies to engage them.
- Conduct an annual review of all partnerships to measure their value and impact on development efforts.





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STRUCTURE AND STAFFING FOR LAKE DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Goal #1: Establish the Most Effective and Efficient Organizational Structure (2026)

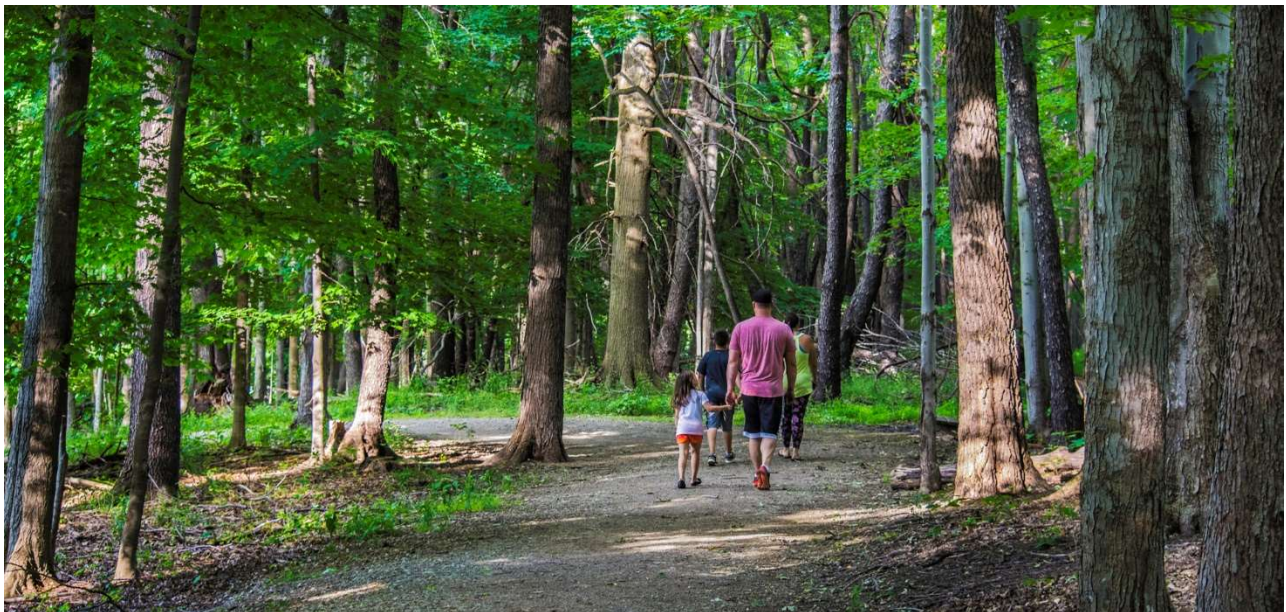
Objective: Design a structure that positions the LDA as a leading economic development organization in Ohio.

- **Action Items:**
 - Conduct a comprehensive review of the current LDA structure to optimize its approach to economic development across Lake County.
 - Identify and incorporate strategic partnerships and programs that strengthen the county's economic development efforts.

Goal #2: Build a Strong and Capable Team to Implement the Strategic Plan (2027)

Objective: Develop a staffing framework that ensures successful execution of the LDA's strategic initiatives.

- **Action Items:**
 - Assess current staffing levels and identify gaps or opportunities for new and replacement positions, focusing on key areas such as finance, marketing, grant compliance, and airport expansion.
 - Develop a sustainable funding strategy to support staffing needs.
 - Establish a compensation review process to ensure competitive and equitable pay structures for LDA staff.
 - Forecast staffing requirements over the next 3-5 years to align with strategic plan priorities and anticipated growth.





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Lake Development Authority Board of Directors

Arthur Lindrose – Chairman

John Uhran – Vice Chairman

John N. Rampe - Secretary

Nathan Hicks

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