

Request for Proposal

Update to Economic Development Strategy

Union County – Marysville, Ohio

I. DATE ISSUED:

June 17, 2025

II. REQUESTED WORK:

The Union County, Ohio Community Improvement Corporation is seeking proposals from firms with experience in preparing an economic development strategy for Union County and Marysville, Ohio.

III. ISSUED BY:

Union County Community Improvement Corporation
227 East 5th Street
Marysville, Ohio 43040

IV. DUE DATE:

Proposals will be received until 4:00 p.m. on July 14, 2025

V. UNION COUNTY AND MARYSVILLE, OHIO:

Located in Central Ohio, Union County (County) and Marysville (City) are part of the growing Columbus Region. Marysville, the county seat, is located approximately 30 miles from Downtown Columbus and The Ohio State University. With a population of over 70,000, the County is the fastest growing in Ohio. The community is home to world-class corporations that contribute significant investments including Honda Motor Co., which encompasses Honda Development & Manufacturing of America (HDMA) and American Honda Motor (AHM); Honda Logistics; the Scotts Miracle-Gro Company; the Transportation Research Center; Nestle Research and Development Center; Continental; Parker Hannifin; Select Sires; and Amazon Data Systems.

The County includes 14 townships and 6 municipalities - Marysville, Dublin, Richwood, Plain City, Milford Center and Unionville Center. The County has seen significant growth in the southern section along US-33 between Marysville, Plain City and Dublin in the past 25 years. Growth in Plain City, Richwood, and along US-33 is important for the future success and quality of life in Union County.

The City and County collaborated with the City of Dublin to create the NW 33 Innovation Corridor Council of Governments (COG). Together they oversee a 35-mile stretch of US-33 known as the 33 Smart Mobility Corridor, which is within the Beta District. The Beta District also includes built environments such as Connected Marysville and Connected Dublin. These assets create a Connected Vehicle Environment (CVE) that has become a playground for automotive companies to test innovation and new technologies. The Beta District has become one of the

most advanced open testing corridors in the nation with over \$100M invested into the CVE and nearly 70 automotive companies (mostly research and manufacturing) calling it home.

Union County and Marysville are home to over 20 Japanese companies which employ over 8,000 people in the community. Marysville has a friendship (sister) city – Yorii-machi, Saitama Prefecture, Japan – in which we share a student exchange program. The relationship between and among the people of Japan is important to the community’s future.

Housing continues to be developed throughout the community, however, the median home price for a single family exceeds \$400K. Recently developed apartments (3,000 total) are the only “affordable” housing option for residents. There are currently over 6,000 jobs left unfilled within a 20-mile radius of Marysville.

With a strong corporate base, available jobs, and a growing population, Union County and Marysville are poised for prosperity for years to come.

VI. REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL OVERVIEW:

The Union County Community Improvement Corporation (CIC) is desirous to retain the services of a consulting firm to develop the Union County-Marysville Economic Development Strategy (EDS). The consultant shall refer to, and in some cases utilize the 2014 Union County Economic Development Strategy and the 2018 33 Smart Mobility Economic Development Strategy throughout the development of the EDS. Additionally, the consultant shall incorporate economic development strategies and plans from One Columbus and JobsOhio. During the process of the EDS development, the consultant will do the following, but not limited to:

- Research and data collection and analysis, including economic conditions, demographics and market trends, focused on situating Union County-Marysville within the Columbus Region, State of Ohio, USA, and throughout the world;
- Community outreach and engagement with City and area leadership and resources, including but not limited to local officials, business leaders, educational leaders, real estate professionals, developers, other community leaders, and the community at-large;
- Development of economic development strategies for discussion, review and refinement with CIC leadership and community partners and stakeholders; and,
- Development of concise and attainable implementation strategies, tools and communication plan.

VII. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:

The selected consulting firm shall create a strategy that is formulated around these areas of focus:

- A. Retain Business
- B. Attract Business
- C. Create Opportunities
- D. Improve Civic Infrastructure

In developing the EDS in these four areas of focus, the selected consultant at a minimum should incorporate and consider the following:

- Analysis of economic conditions, demographics, market trends including a SWOT analysis.
- Interviews and the surveying of community leadership and community members.
- Recommend opportunities/tools to address the following:
 - A. Core Economic Development
 - Target industries
 - Available sites
 - Development and redevelopment opportunities
 - Retention and attraction of businesses
 - Implementation of the Economic Development Incentive Policy (EDIP)
 - B. Sector Driven Economic Development
 - Growth of the automotive industry – manufacturing and research
 - Further development of the Beta District
 - Expand opportunities for existing and new companies to partner and develop new technologies with the public sector utilizing the CVE and Electric Vehicle Implementation Strategies
 - Promote entrepreneurship and start-ups
 - Plan to maximize the Automotive and Mobility Innovation Center (AMIC) as an incubator to grow emerging and new businesses. Develop AMIC as a center of automotive and technology for the region and Ohio
 - Develop a plan that focuses on the growth of small businesses
 - Growth of Uptown and Downtown areas
 - Growth of foreign direct investment (FDI)
 - C. Community Development
 - Strengthening ties to Japanese culture and companies
 - Infrastructure and utility plan for investment to support future growth
 - Improve talent and recruitment pipeline
 - Housing analysis and plan to attract and retain young professionals and families
 - Plan to improve workforce mobility
 - Develop communication strategy to better define the importance of growth and specific projects to the community
 - D. Economic Development Collaboration
 - Improve the collaboration between and among the public, private and academic institutions
 - Improve efforts and tools to increase the collaboration between and among Union County, Marysville, Dublin, Plain City, Richwood, the Beta District, and the growing areas of the county. Identify better structures that can capitalize on growth and the development of the community
 - Improve efforts to work regionally and statewide with One Columbus, JobsOhio and adjacent communities
- Provide a clear and communicative EDS outlining the process undertaken, discovery content revealed, and related outcome recommendations, strategies, tools, investments and process updates needed for a three-year, five-year, and 10 year strategy.

- Provide an EDS for wide distribution and use as a guiding document for future economic development strategy execution activities
- Develop an Implementation Plan including action steps, responsibility and timeline for completion
- Develop a strategy on how to communicate the EDS, growth in general, and need for tax incentives to the business leaders, community leaders and citizens.

VIII. BUDGET

The budget for this project is \$100,000.00.

IX. SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS ANDP PROCESS:

- Proposals for the Union County-Marysville Economic Development Strategy should be submitted no later than **Monday, July 14, 2025 @ 4:00 p.m.** EST via email to:

Eric S. Phillips, Executive Director
 Union County Community Improvement Corporation
 Email: ephillips@unioncounty.org

- Questions regarding this request for proposal should also be directed to Eric Phillips via email or by phone @ 937-642-6279.
- Proposals should include a cover letter and not more than 10 pages that are formatted to 8.5" x 11" letter sized paper and combined into a single PDF.
- Proposals should reference project team experience and previous strategic plans conducted.
- Proposals will be reviewed and evaluated by a selection committee that will make its determination on the following factors: (1) Project team and experience; (2) Understanding the project; (3) Approach and plan to develop the EDS; and, (4) Thoroughness and conciseness in developing the implementation strategy.
- CIC reserves the right to accept or reject any or all RFPs, delay the RFP process, and/or select one or more of the consultants submitting RFPs.

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