



# WILLIAMS COUNTY 2030:

*A PUBLIC-HEALTH FOCUSED,  
10-YEAR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY*



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.



**BGSU** | CENTER FOR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT  
BOWLING GREEN STATE UNIVERSITY



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**Background:** As part of the RUC University Center program, the CRD at BGSU and the BGSU Department of Public and Allied Health partnered with the Williams County Public Health Department to develop a health equity focused community development strategy. The decision to take on this project was inspired by community level health inequities revealed in Williams County's 2019 Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA). The BGSU team worked with the Williams County Public Health Department to develop a strategic planning process that would help identify the Social Determinants of Health (SDoH) that the community should prioritize and develop a community action plan around these priorities. A 10-year time frame was set as the benchmark for the aspirations and goals set out by the community strategy committee, though many of the action steps included in the strategy are aimed at a shorter 3–5-year timeline.

**The Process:** The strategy building process for Williams County included four phases. The first phase, or groundwork phase, was designed to gather pertinent data and reports from all sectors to create a strong foundational understanding of conditions, problems, resources, needs in the community. This phase included a SWOT analysis and a demographic and economic scan to review the community's vital signs. The second phase of the strategy was a values assessment and community-level visioning exercise with the community steering committee. The third phase of the strategic process comprised of a public engagement effort including stakeholder interviews and surveys. From this engagement data a set of community-level priorities was established to the focus the community action plan. Community task forces were established around each of these priority areas to set out area specific goals, objectives, and action steps.

**Community Priorities:**

- Workforce Development & Workforce Supports
- Housing
- Substance Abuse & Addiction
- Mental Health
- Community Quality & Quality of Life







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# PLANNING TEAM

## COMMUNITY PROJECT MANAGEMENT TEAM

- James D. Watkins MPH, RS, Health Commissioner, Williams County Health District
- Victoria Smith, MPH CHES, Director of Health Education and Preparedness, Williams County Health District
- Christopher Kannel, President, Kannel-Superior Insurance Agency

## COMMUNITY STEERING COMMITTEE:

Lewis Hilker, Trey Johnson, Christopher Kannel, Fred Lord, Bill Martin, DanMcGee, Dennis Miller, Ryan Miller, Tyson Moss, Melissa Renee, Megan Riley, Christie Roan, Jason Rockey, Todd Roth, Carrie Schlade, Jerry Stollings, Sally Taylor, Chad Tinkel, Kirk Vashaw, Chasity Yoder, James Watkins, and Victoria Smith

## TASK FORCE LEADERS:

- Todd J. Roth- Workforce Development & Workforce Supports
- Christopher Kannel- Housing
- Chasity Yoder- Substance Abuse & Addiction
- Melissa Renee -Mental Health
- Emily Ebaugh- Community Quality & Quality of Life

## BGSU TEAM

- Nichole Fifer, PhD MPA Assistant Director, Center for Regional Development (CRD)
- Phil Welch, PhD MCHES Associate Professor, Public and Allied Health
- Lauren Maziarz, PhD MSN Assistant Professor, Public and Allied Health
- Justin Rex, PhD Associate Professor Political Science, Research Fellow at CRD
- Ben Hooper, Economic Recovery Coordinator, Center for Regional Development (CRD)
- BGSU School of Public and Allied Health Graduate Students: Noor Altarouti, Jenna Burget, Hasna Alabkary
- BGSU Master of Public Administration Graduate Students: Daniel Schlingman



# INTRODUCTION



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.



Williams County Health District



As part of the RUC University Center program, the CRD at BGSU and the BGSU Department of Public and Allied Health partnered with the Williams County Public Health Department to develop a health equity focused community revitalization strategy.

In August of 2019, the health commissioner from Williams County invited a research team from BGSU to join a group of stakeholders from across Williams County to discuss undertaking a strategic planning process. This decision was inspired by community level health inequities revealed in Williams County's 2019 Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA).

Based on this initial meeting the BGSU team worked with the Williams County Public Health Department to develop a strategic planning process that would help identify the Social Determinants of Health (SDoH) that the community should prioritize and develop a community action plan around these priorities.

A 10-year time frame was set as the benchmark for the aspirations and goals set out by the community strategy committee, though many of the action steps included in the strategy are aimed at a shorter 3–5-year timeline. This document provides a succinct account of that planning process and outlines the priorities and action plans that were produced.



# PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT

## Short-term Objectives

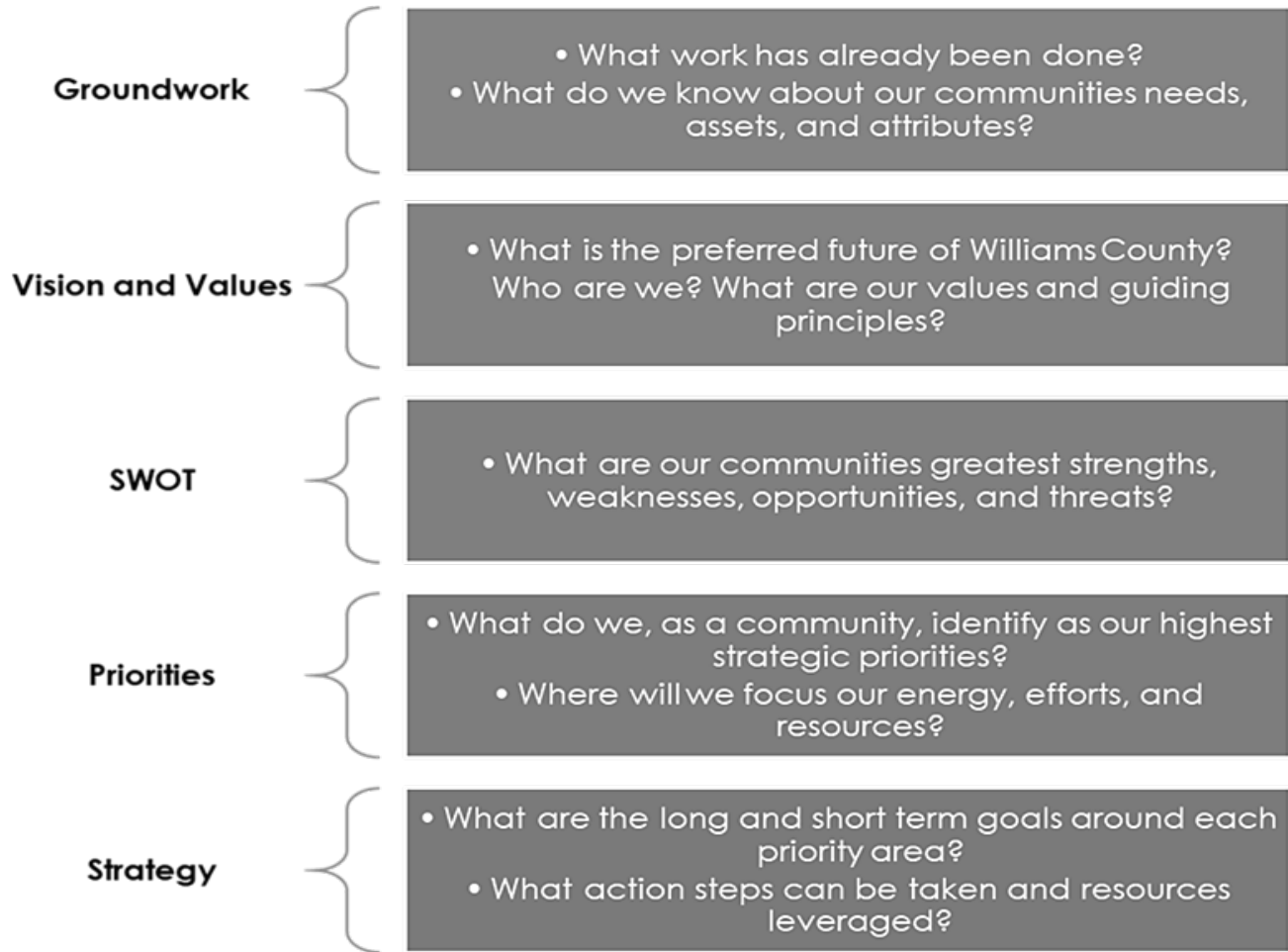
- Strategic planning documents and compiled data to support funding requests, grant writing, and development plans.
- Engagement of the whole community in decision making processes and change initiatives and establishing collaborative agenda.
- Establishing strategic and goal-oriented action plans around establish priorities.

## Long -term Objectives

- Moving toward a concerted and coordinated county-wide approach to addressing shared problems including health equity concerns.
- Moving toward a concerted and coordinated, county-wide approach to development.
- Increasing synergy and partnership opportunities across the county.



# STRATEGY BUILDING PROCESS





# DEMOGRAPHIC & ECONOMIC SCAN

A strong community strategy must be grounded in a clear and comprehensive understanding of the current conditions in the community.

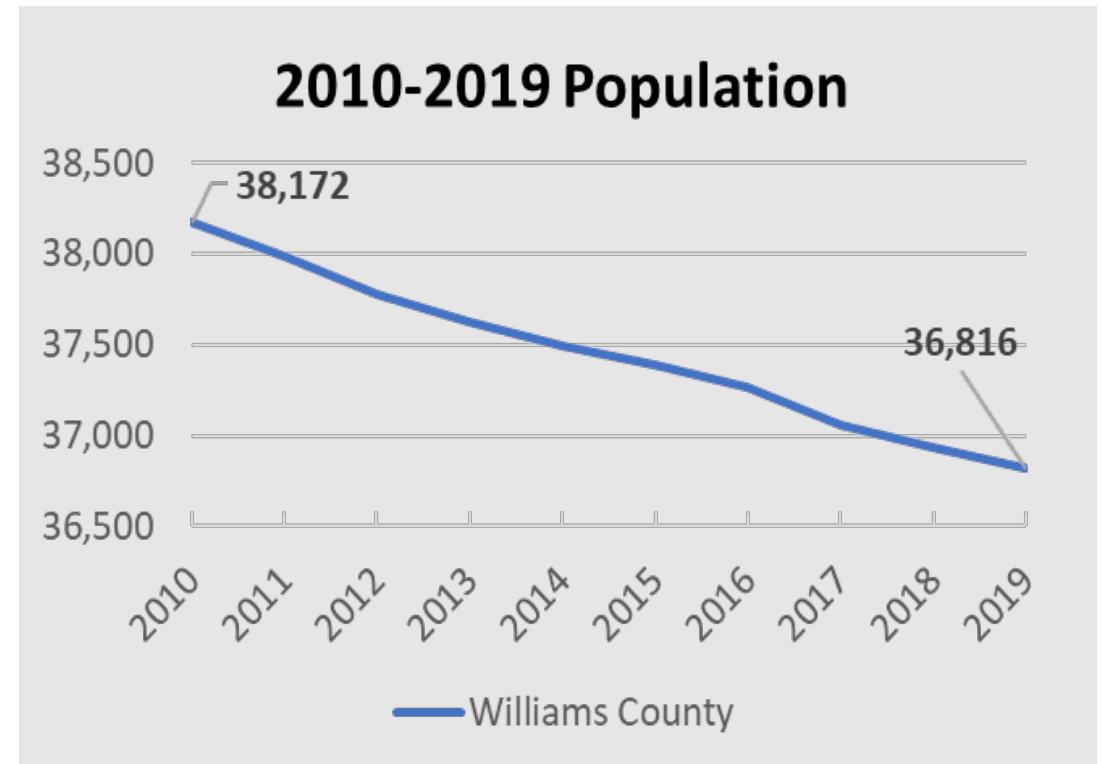
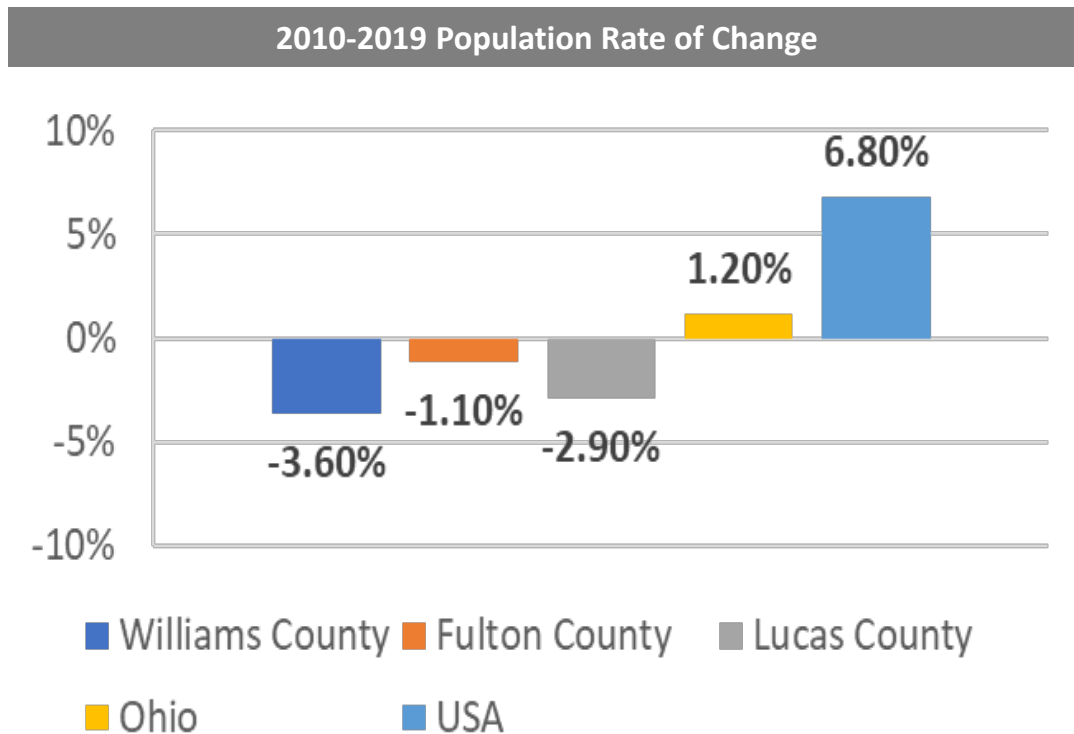
To provide this understanding BGSU CRD compiled a demographic and economic scan for Williams County. This scan includes population and demographic data, information on population changes, housing, income, and education data. Also included in the scan are the communities' largest industries and employers as well as data on access to transportation, and broadband internet access- two important barriers to employment in rural communities.

These pieces, provide a solid information foundation on key economic and demographic descriptors and a broad view of the current conditions and assets of the community. This foundational information is used to inform and support community stakeholders and the Strategy Steering Committee as they work through the SWOT analysis, priority setting, and planning processes.





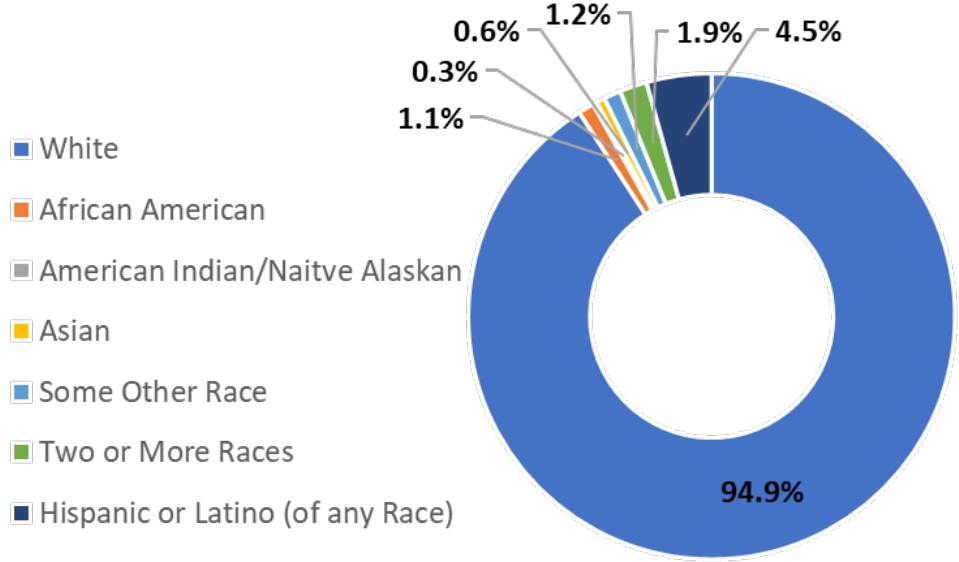
# WILLIAMS COUNTY POPULATION CHANGE



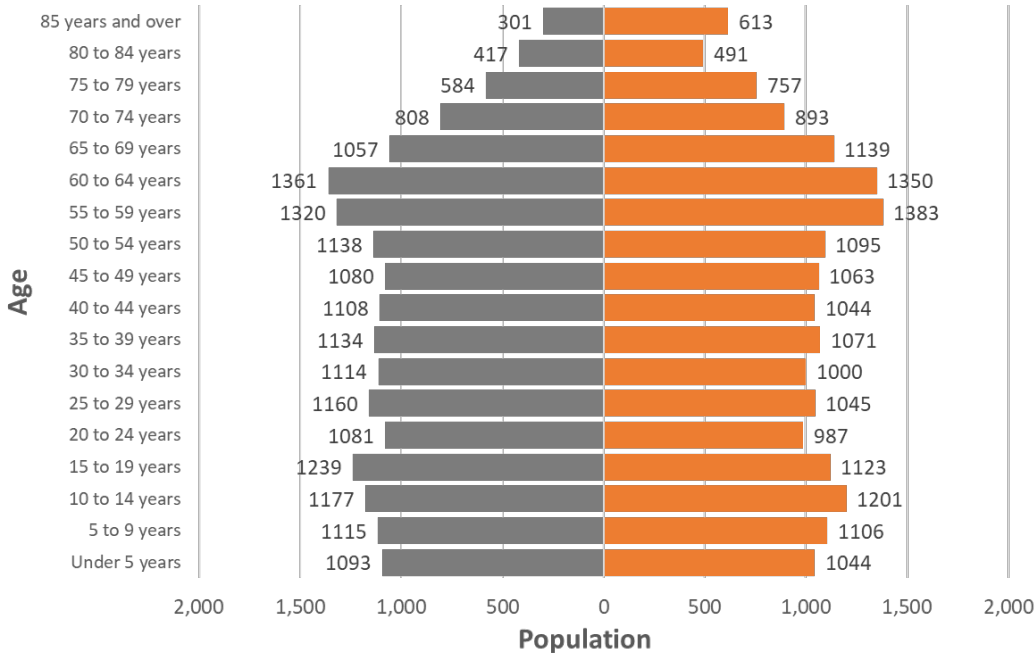
Source: JobsEQ; ACS 2015-2019

# WILLIAMS COUNTY POPULATION DEMOGRAPHICS

**Total Population by Race**



**Williams County Population by Age and Gender**



Source: JobsEQ; ACS 2015-2019



# WILLIAMS COUNTY INCOME DATA (2015-2019)



## Economic Data Williams County / Ohio

Median Household Income  
\$53,183 / \$56,602

Per Capita Income  
\$27,124 / \$31,552

Labor Force Participation Rate  
62.9% / 63.2%

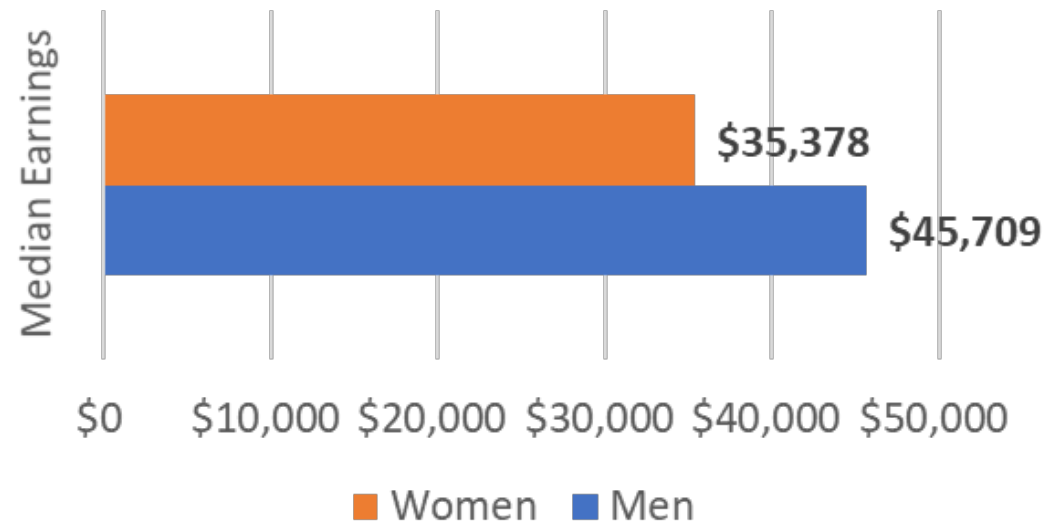
Prime Age Labor Force Part. Rate (25-54)  
82.4% / 82.7%

Net Commuters  
23% / 33.9%

% Who Work From Home  
\$662 / \$919

% with Healthcare Coverage  
2.8% / 4.2%

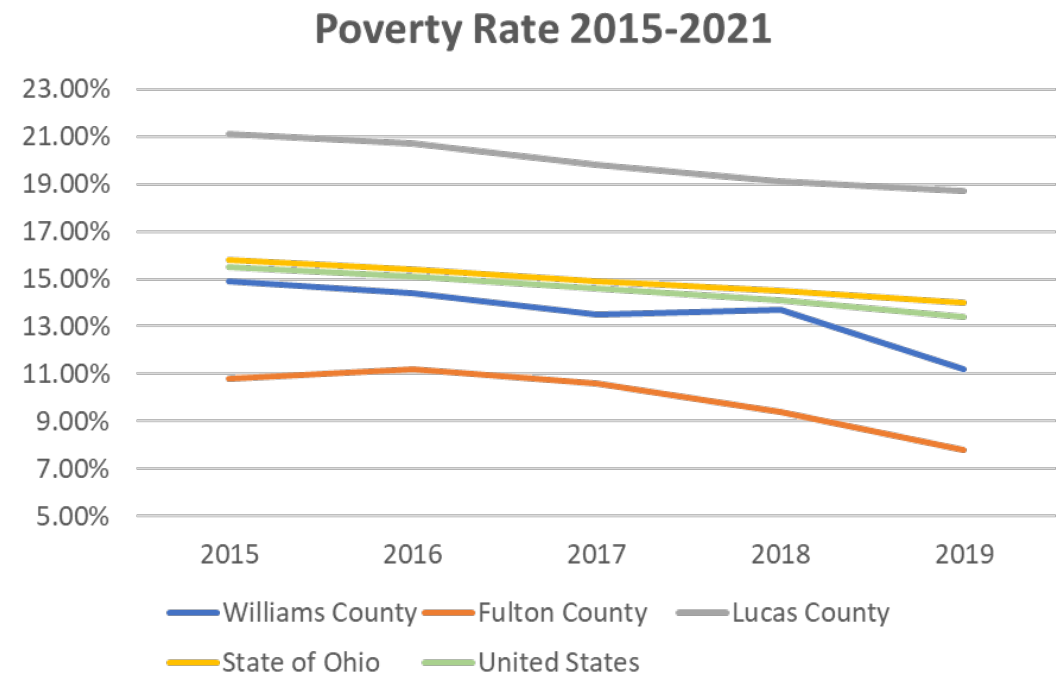
## Average Earnings by Gender



Source: JobsEQ; ACS 2015-2019, US Census Business Builder

# WILLIAMS COUNTY POVERTY RATE (2015-2019)

	Williams County	Ohio
Median Age	41.4	39.4
Foreign Born	1.2%	4.6%
Poverty Level	11.2%	14%
Households Receiving Food Stamps	11.5%	13.1%



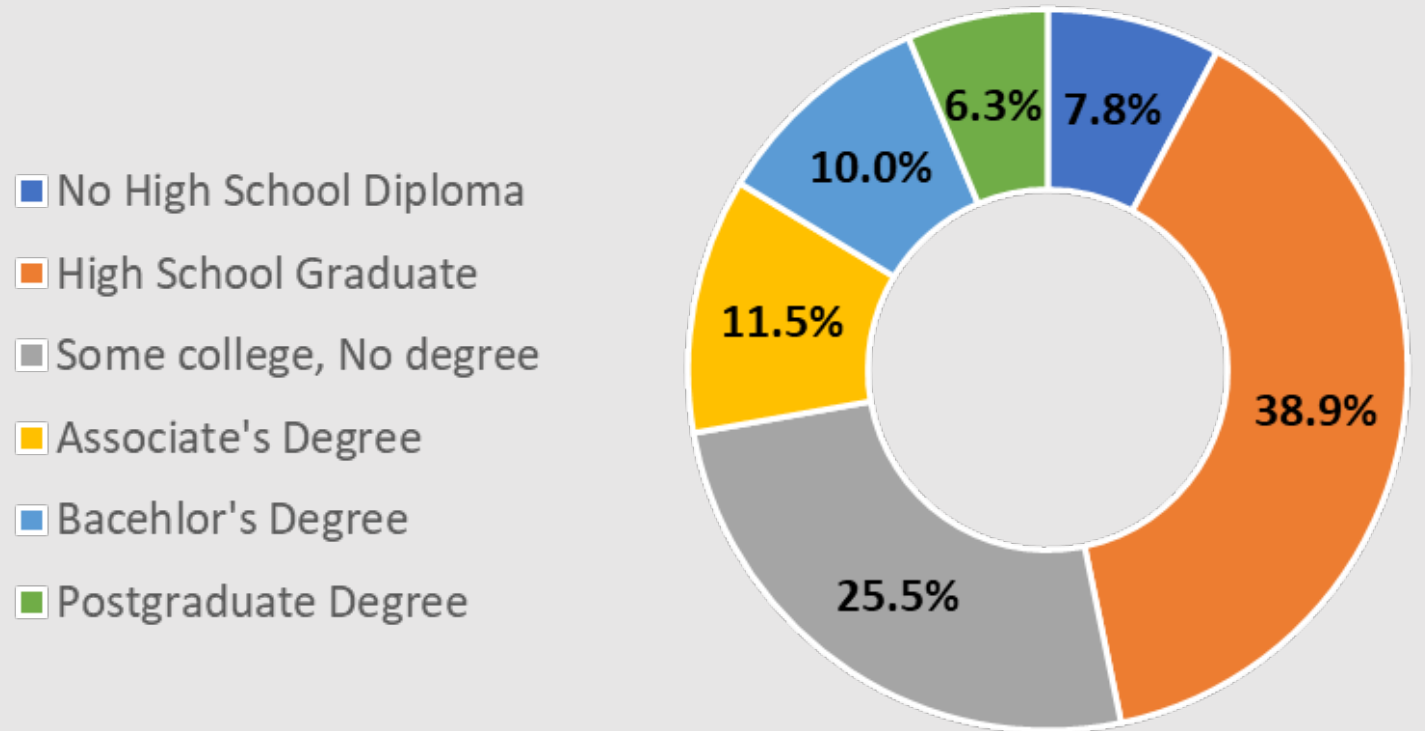
Source: JobsEQ; ACS 2015-2019



# WILLIAMS COUNTY EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

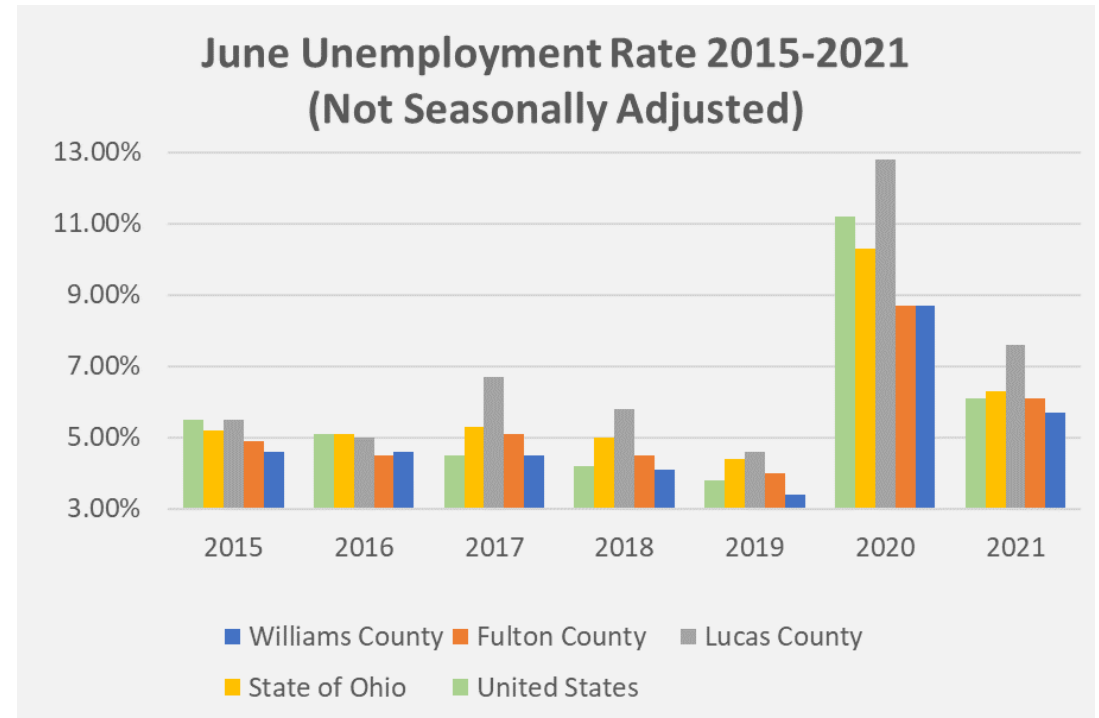
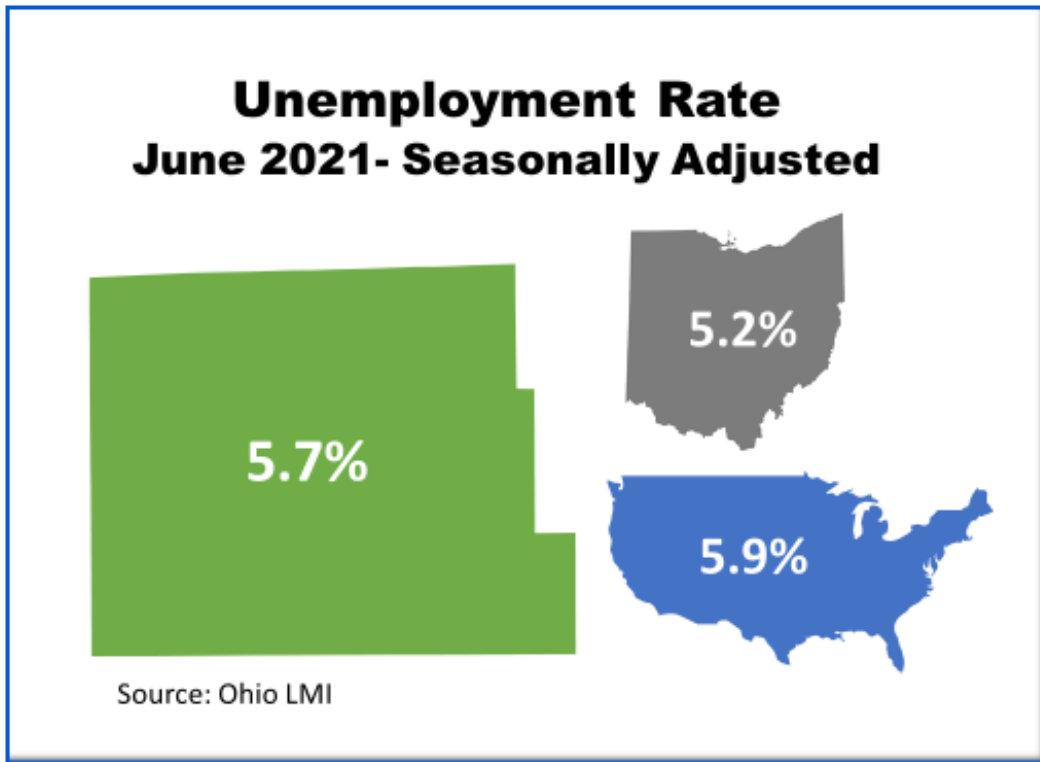
by Population %  
(2015-2019)

## Educational Attainment



Source: JobsEQ; ACS 2015-2019

# WILLIAMS COUNTY UNEMPLOYMENT RATE (2015-2019)





# EMPLOYMENT RATE OF CHANGE BY INDUSTRY

## EMPLOYMENT CHANGE BY INDUSTRY (2017-2021) CURRENT ANNUAL WAGES

Industry Classification	2017 Employment	2021 Employment	% Change	2021 Average Annual Wages
Manufacturing	6,830	6,073	-11.08%	\$51,650
Retail Trade	2,260	2,473	9.42%	\$33,838
Health Care and Social Assistance	2,037	1,930	-5.25%	\$48,045
Educational Services	1,053	982	-6.74%	\$43,173
Accommodation and Food Services	1,054	918	-12.90%	\$15,453
Other Services (except Public Administration)	835	736	-11.86%	\$22,096
Wholesale Trade	629	703	11.76%	\$54,235
Construction	641	644	0.47%	\$52,629
Transportation and Warehousing	609	595	-2.30%	\$49,003
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	575	564	-1.91%	\$37,610
Public Administration	577	557	-3.47%	\$43,133
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	671	383	-42.92%	\$28,512
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	225	296	31.56%	\$44,540
Finance and Insurance	260	247	-5.00%	\$53,866
Information	148	114	-22.97%	\$36,411
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	109	101	-7.34%	\$34,274
Utilities	161	89	-44.72%	\$69,059
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	78	42	-46.15%	\$20,214
Management of Companies and Enterprises	29	19	-34.48%	\$132,507
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	24	15	-37.50%	\$78,712

Source: JobsEQ Q1 2021



# WILLIAMS COUNTY HOUSING DATA

Source: (ACS 2015-2019)



## Housing Data Williams County / Ohio

Median Home Value  
\$105,400 / \$145,700

Total Housing Units  
16,644 / 5,202,304

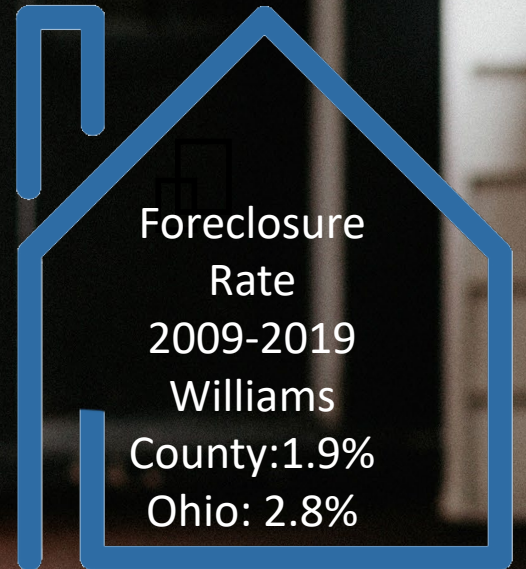
Homeowner Vacancy Rate  
0.2% / 1.4%

Rental Vacancy Rate  
7.5% / 5.3%

Renter Occupied Units  
23% / 33.9%

Avg. Monthly Home Ownership Cost  
\$662 / \$919

% of Homes with Broadband Subscription  
81.2% / 82%



Foreclosure  
Rate  
2009-2019  
Williams  
County: 1.9%  
Ohio: 2.8%

Source: Ohio Supreme Court



# CORE VALUES AND COMMUNITY CHARACTER

The community steering committee was asked to engage in a multi-step visioning process. This process started by gathering perspectives on the community's core values and perceptions about the community's character through an electronic survey and a follow-up focus group session.

## **Williams County is .....**

- A warm and welcoming community.
- A small and close-knit community.
- A clean and safe community for individuals and families.
- A place where good work-life balance is attainable- live, learn, work, and play.
- A place where healthy lifestyles - accessible healthy opportunities are supported.
- A place where we enjoy a high standard of living and a low cost of living.
- A place where community growth and development are welcome.
- A place where collaboration is essential for community development.
- A place where we offer quality education and training opportunities for all ages.

## **The core values/principles of Williams County are.....**

- Family oriented
- Community-oriented
- Care for our neighbors
- Opportunities for all
- Good quality of life
- Healthy community
- Value education (high quality schools)
- Strive for improvement
- Value personal success/hard work
- Financially stable community







Building from the core community values and characteristics identified in the first step of the visioning process, the strategy group developed some aspiration statements about the desired future of the community.

Those statements narrowed to identify a set of five broadly accepted visions for the community.

## VISIONING FOR THE FUTURE

- Williams County is .....
- A community with a growth mindset, that is committed to continual improvement.
- A community where opportunities are enhanced, and all can achieve their potential.
- A community in which diversity is embraced.
- A community that maintains a small-town culture while adding additional jobs, services, housing, and opportunities.
- A community that invests in quality of life, and attractiveness, where young people want to lay roots and build futures.





# STRATEGY MISSION

Taking these visions for the future into consideration, the mission of the Williams 2030, 10-year Community Revitalization Strategy is to ....

- Improve quality of life for all residents.
- Make Williams County a place where people want to live, learn, work, and play.
- Provide a safe environment.
- Support healthy lifestyles and access to healthy opportunities.
- Support community growth through collaboration.



# PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

To ensure a successful, neutral process with a wide range of input from a diverse set of stakeholders, the Center for Regional Development (CRD) and Department of Public and Allied Health at Bowling Green State University (BGSU), along with the Williams County Strategy Steering Committee set out a robust public engagement effort to direct this community strategy. This effort includes a SWOT analysis, stakeholder interviews, and stakeholder surveys.



SWOT



INTERVIEWS



SURVEYS



The first piece of the community engagement effort was a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis conducted with a broad group of community stakeholders including members from the strategy steering committee as well as other community leaders from local government, social service agencies, education, healthcare, and law enforcement institutions, as well as industry. This group of more than 20 individuals provided perspective on the community's current conditions including strengths, weaknesses, and challenges, as well as the needs, threats and opportunities that were emerging and on the horizon.



## Strengths

- Strong employer base
- Low cost of living
- Small town feel
- Cohesive community
- Engaged police department
- Active religious community
- Broad political engagement
- Land bank/ community garden

## Weakness

- Housing deficiency
- Workforce issues
- High cost of development
- Escalating cost of childcare
- Low wages
- Lack of capital investment

## Opportunities

- Solutions oriented community
- Interest in collaboration across the county
- Potential for greater development in the villages
- Economic distribution across the county

## Threats

- Juvenile court caseload/detention rates
- Drugs
- Talent flight/brain-drain
- Community fragmentation
- Loss of manufacturing/ payroll jobs

# INTERVIEWS AND SURVEYS

The strategy steering committee was asked to identify important community actors and organizations that were not represented in the group so that these voices could be included in the strategy building process through focus groups and targeted interviews. They identified the following list:

- Political/ Municipal Leaders from County Villages
- County Commissioners
- School Leadership
- Residents
- Real Estate/ Housing Sector
- Transportation sector
- Sheriff
- Religious Institutions

A list of representatives from these sectors was compiled as these individuals and organizations were contacted by the BGSU team to solicit participation in focus groups, and later interviews. In total interviews were conducted with personnel from 15 different organizations and agencies across the county from July -September of 2020. In addition to these individuals, interviews were also solicited from community members at large. In total 18 additional interviews were conducted with a variety of residents from across the county.

## Interview and Survey Questions:

**Community Quality:** What do you like best about living in your community? What do you like least, or what would you change if you had the ability?

**Public Health:** What are the biggest health concerns in your community? (If no mention of mental health: What changes need to occur in Williams County to improve mental health?)

**Housing:** If you had to pinpoint 1 or 2 distinct housing concerns in your community, what would they be?

**Employment:** What do you think about the quality and availability of jobs in your community?

**Workforce Development:** What do you think about the availability of job and career training/ advancement opportunities here?

**Transportation:** Do you think transportation is a concern in your community?

**Community Needs:** Based on everything we discussed, what do you see as the most important issue the community needs to address?

# INTERVIEW AND SURVEY DATA: EMPLOYMENT AND WORKFORCE



## Employment

- High job availability
- Low availability of qualified workers
- Skilled labor deficiency
- Low quality/ low wages

## Workforce Development

- Low availability of training programs/ apprenticeship
- Employer training- spotty
- Community College provides good options
- Defiance College
- Four County Vocational



# INTERVIEW AND SURVEY DATA: HOUSING AND TRANSPORTATION



## Housing

- Lack of low-income options
- Housing affordability
- Quality of housing
- Lack of middle-range options
- Not attractive for new population

## Transportation

- Transportation is a concern for many
- No public transit/ taxi
- Car-reliant community
- Elderly and Disabled transit
- Community not walkable access to necessities

# INTERVIEW AND SURVEY DATA: COMMUNITY QUALITY AND COMMUNITY NEEDS



## Community Quality

- Small community
- Great for raising kids
- Great Schools
- Parks/Recreational opportunities

## Community Needs

- Address Drugs
- Entertainment/ Restaurants
- Access to shopping
- Jobs quality/ Availability
- Transportation



# INTERVIEW AND SURVEY DATA: PUBLIC HEALTH AND MENTAL HEALTH



## Public Health

- Obesity
- Nutrition and Exercise Education
- Recreational and exercise access
- Adequate healthcare resources
- Walkability /bike paths
- Pesticides/ chemicals
- Covid-19
- Drug –use

## Mental Health

- Mental health resources lacking
- Mental health access for youth
- Growing concern with Covid-19
- Suicide rates
- Connected to drug epidemic



# DATA SUMMARY:

## 3 FOCUS POINTS FOR STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

# 01

### INVEST

#### • INVEST IN COMMUNITY ATTRACTIVENESS: FOR BUSINESS AND POPULATION

- Making Williams County a great place to visit, do business, learn, and live.
- Determine what infrastructure is essential to supporting growth for *all purposes*?
- Addressing housing is an essential factor for growth.
- Think broadly about community amenities and assets.

# 02

### FOCUS

#### • FOCUS ON RETAINING AND SUPPORTING WORKFORCE

- Focus on workforce supports to increase retention: such as training, transportation, childcare options.
- Focus on retaining talent and youth: develop proactive and localized approaches to job placement and attraction.

# 03

### RECOGNIZE

#### • RECOGNIZE AND APPROACH HEALTH AS A COMMUNITY ASSET

- Health problems are impacting economic vitality, and economic decline is impacting population health in the County.
- Substance abuse and underemployment are mutually reinforcing issues.
- Mental health resources are needed to support public health and workforce.

# COMMUNITY PRIORITIES

The top five priorities for the community action plan were selected based on the interviews, survey results, and SWOT analysis. These were determined to be the most important areas of focus for the community action plan to advance the mission of the strategy and work toward the vision statements produced earlier in the process.

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Mental Health & Wellbeing

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Substance Abuse & Addiction

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Workforce Development & Supports

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Housing

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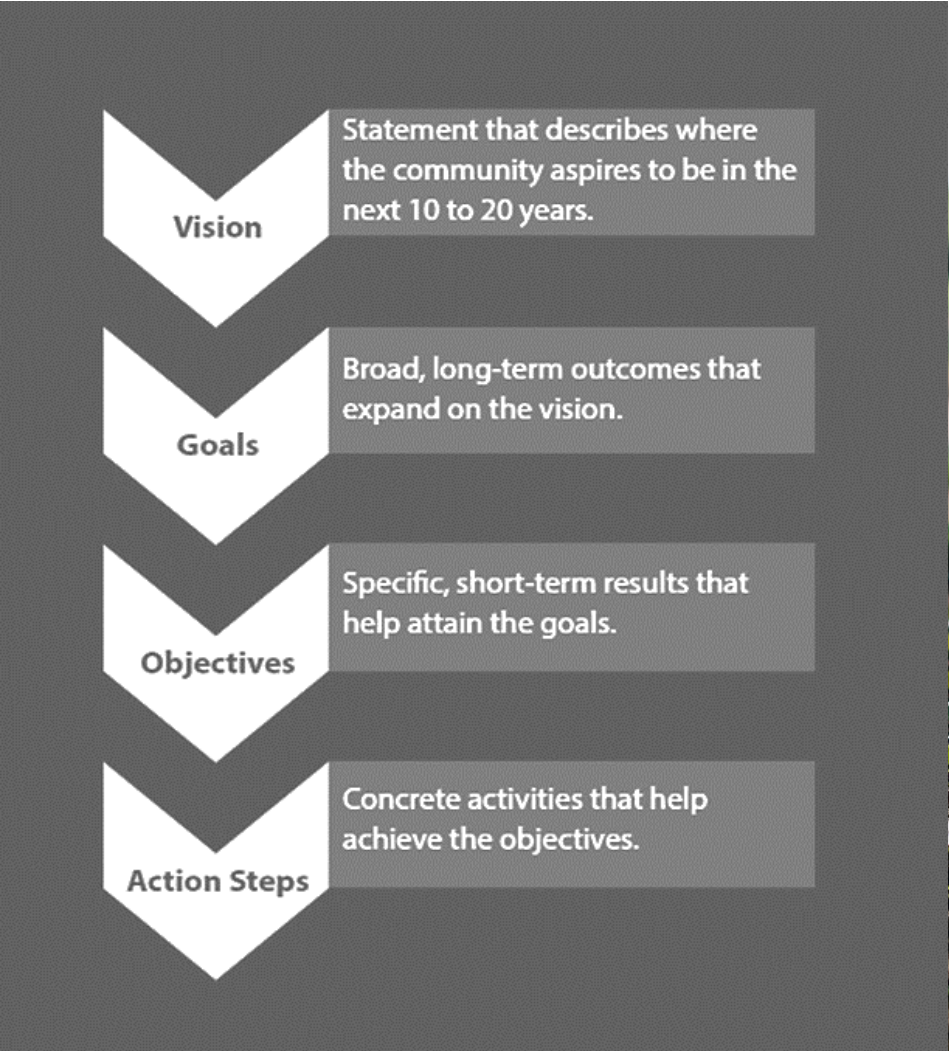
Community Quality & Quality of Life

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# COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN



The last piece of the strategy process is putting together a community action plan to address each of the priority areas. The action plan sets out a series of goals and objectives for each priority that aligns with the community vision and strategy mission laid out in the previous sections. Under these goals a series of action steps are identified. The action plans for each priority area were drafted by a task force assembled by the strategy steering committee. The membership of each task force was designed to include community leaders and representatives from across the county who are actively working in each of the priority areas and intimately familiar with the work that is currently being done and the efforts that have been made to address these issues in the past.



# MENTAL HEALTH

## Objective 1: Transportation

- Support transportation to & from appointments, jobs, social activities, shopping.

## Objective 2: Information Sharing

- Centralized Information/Communication around mental health services and programs. Untangle who does what/who to contact.

## Objective 3: Advocacy

- Engage in advocacy aimed at easing the stigma of mental health issues in a rural community.

## Objective 4: Increase Capacity to Serve

- Hire for mental health positions within the County. Attract more mental health professionals to work in Williams County.

## Objective 5: Transitional Care

- Provide mental health supports through all stages in life, youth to adult, through employers, etc. Ensure housing and other essential supports for persons in transition.

## Goals: 5–10 Year Outcomes

- Creation of inpatient care unit/or rooms in CHWC Bryan/Montpelier for mental health as a possible full-time care treatment center or at least a waiting center where the person can be safe from harm while care is arranged. New staffing /employment needed.*
- Look to the Henry County Transportation Network as a model for WMS Co.*
- Physical resource/communication/support center where residents or anyone can call or come in for information on mental health and support with the ability to expand in its services.*
- Courts – Have Mental Health First Aid or a Certified Peer Specialist assist with supporting cases involving mental health issues.*

# WILLIAMS COUNTY 2030: MENTAL HEALTH ACTION PLAN

## Objective 1: Transportation

Support transportation to & from appointments, jobs, social activities, shopping.

## Objective 2: Information Sharing

Centralized Information/Communication around mental health services and programs. Untangle who does what/who to contact.

## Objective 3: Advocacy

Engage in advocacy aimed at easing the stigma of mental health issues in a rural community.

## Objective 4: Increase Capacity to Serve

Hire for mental health positions within the County. Attract more mental health professionals to work in Williams County.

## Objective 5: Transitional Care

Provide mental health supports through all stages in life, youth to adult, through employers, etc. Ensure housing and other essential supports for persons in transition.

### ACTION STEPS

1. Look to the Henry County Transportation Network as a model for WMS Co.
  2. Look to the current transportation in WMS Co & see if the possibility of adding additional riders with mental illness is possible through waivers.
  3. Find churches that will work together/network as a “call center of drivers”. The churches can work out a system of volunteer drivers to assist with those in need of transportation.
  4. Expand on services such as Uber in the area.
1. Combine the 2019 WMS Co Resource Guide & the resource guides compiled by BJ Horner into one document to be distributed at local events, support groups, housed on local websites etc.
  2. Create a physical resource/communication/support center where residents or anyone can call or come in for information on mental health and support with the ability to expand in its services.
1. Educate/support/awareness in nursing homes, senior centers, assisted living (programs).
  2. Educate/support/awareness by being visual to the community – become involved in parades, be seen at local events, be available to the public. Use handouts/pamphlets, fridge magnets, etc.
  3. Educate/support/awareness throughout communities through leadership, speaking at council meetings & other local meetings, law enforcement, emergency responders, hosting meetings, support groups.
  4. Educate/support/awareness in nursing homes, senior centers, assisted living (programs).
  5. Educate/support/awareness in schools (programs).
1. Connect & Communicate & Promote WEDCO & Ohio Means Job with OOD and PIC and the like to work together on assisting those with mental illness in finding the appropriate work and letting the public know that they do so.
  2. Educate employers on hiring persons with mental illnesses.
  3. Hiring professionals – look to tele-med, art therapist, music therapist. Look to the community to hire and train in Mental Health First Aid or a Certified Peer Specialist to assist in gaps and waiting lists (schools).
1. Provide support through youth training programs expanded and promoted through OMJ.
  2. New home development, housing promoted & involved more in assisting with housing at any age or transition.
  3. Look to the current transportation in Williams County and see if the possibility of adding additional riders with mental illness is possible through waivers. Looking at the Dept. of Aging, K&P, Filling Home, NOCAC, Community Health Professionals, etc. Maybe the rider fits a requirement of age/disability etc. for billing and the mental illness is secondary.
  4. Provide mentors/support to those in life changing situations to better cope.
  5. Identify persons in need of assistance and supports through the courts – Have Mental Health First Aid or a Certified Peer Specialist assist with supporting cases involving mental health issues.

# SUBSTANCE ABUSE

## Objective 1: Decrease Vaping

- Decrease vaping (nicotine and marijuana) and reduce alcohol use across youth in the county.

## Objective 2: Build Collaboration

- Build collaboration across siloed partners working in the substance abuse and addiction space.

## Objective 3: Recovery Services

- Develop better recovery services- facilities and programs- particularly for women.

## Objective 4: Wrap- around Services

- Improve wrap-around and coordination services for families struggling with addiction – housing, legal assistance, job access, etc.

## Goals: 5–10 Year Outcomes

- Significantly reduced alcohol and drug use among youth.*
- Improve community level coordination to address substance abuse and addiction across the county and across populations.*
- Create coordinated system responses to need – recovery services, transportation, housing, employment, mental health support services.*

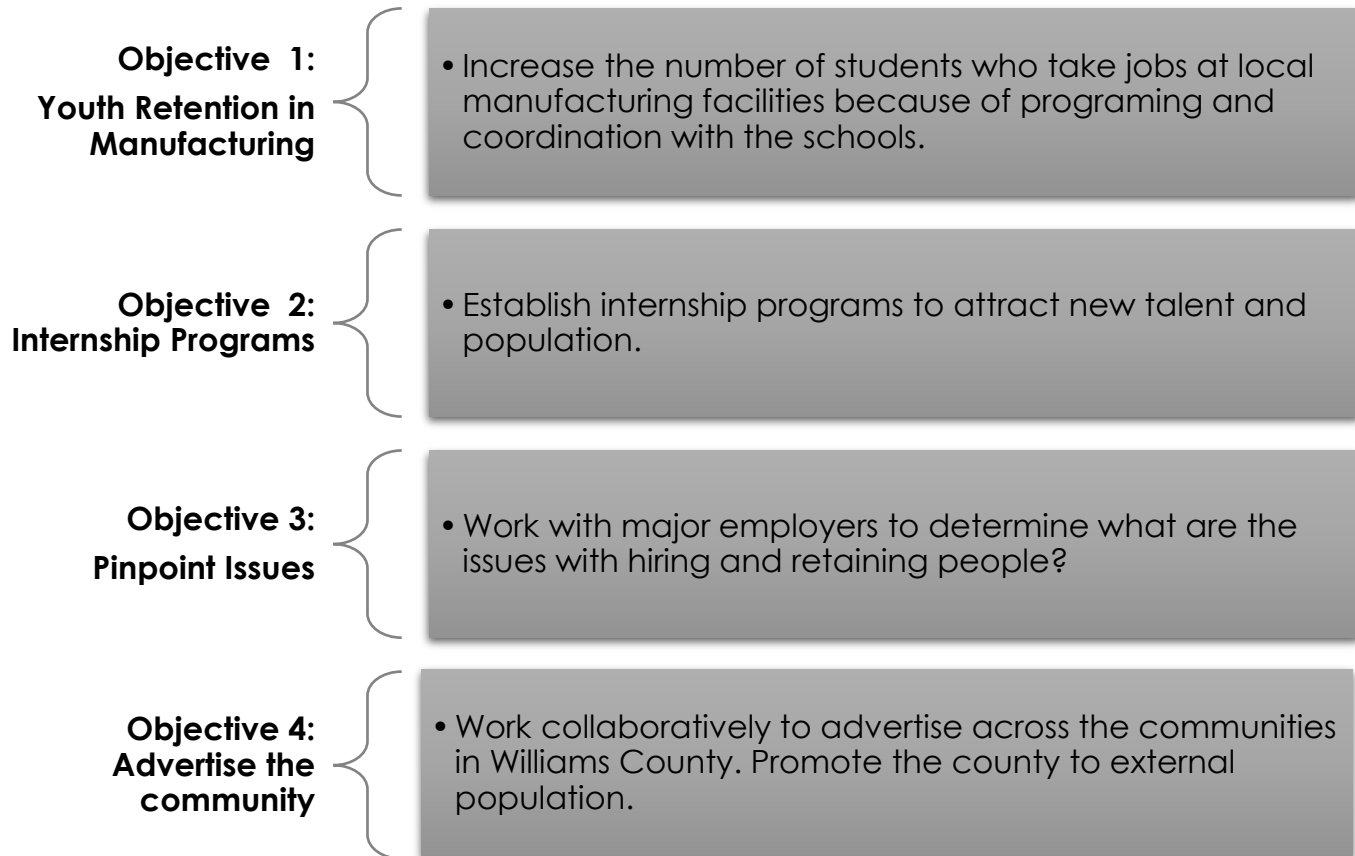




# WILLIAMS COUNTY 2030: SUBSTANCE ABUSE ACTION PLAN

Objective 1: Decrease Vaping	ACTION STEPS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Expand programming from k-5 to also include parallel programming for 5-12 grades.</li> <li>2. Increase funding around fundraising efforts for this programming.</li> <li>3. Provide parent education around vaping – health impacts, etc.</li> <li>4. Increase stakeholders and participants through outreach campaigns.</li> <li>5. Increase enforcement/ penalty for selling vapes to underage youth in the community (ordinance).</li> </ol>
<p>Decrease vaping (nicotine and marijuana) and reduce alcohol use across youth in the county.</p>		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Support and Expand the work and participants of the ECHO Coalition.</li> <li>2. Create a Substance Abuse work group that meets regularly and shares in formation—Similar in design to the Suicide Prevention Work Group.</li> <li>3. Increase funding around coordinated programs and collaborative services.</li> </ol>
Objective 2: Build Collaboration		<p>Build collaboration across siloed partners working in the substance abuse and addiction space.</p>
Objective 3: Recovery Services		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Capital planning is in progress (through the state) to create a space for recovery services for women- ensure follow through and support of this effort.</li> <li>2. Assess the need and explore feasibility of family housing for parents in recovery.</li> <li>3. Focus on transitional living spaces.</li> <li>4. Increase programmatic offerings--some programming is already offered (Renewed Mind).</li> </ol>
Objective 4: Wrap-around Services	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Funding for wrap around services is currently limited and services are siloed—i.e., one must have conviction via drug court, etc.</li> <li>2. Find alternative funding and services for those outside of the drug court system.</li> <li>3. Increase coordination and communication between program and care providers working with impacted families.</li> <li>4. Focus on processes for addressing housing and transportation needs- community models and best practices.</li> <li>5. Help with fees and barriers to transportation- which hinders employment and subsequent fulfillment of other needs.</li> </ol>	
<p>Improve wrap-around and coordination services for families struggling with addiction – housing, legal assistance, job access, etc.</p>		

# WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT & SUPPORTS



## **Goals: 5–10 Year Outcomes**

- Stop population decline in the community.*
- Attract and retain people/ talent from outside the community.*
- Increase youth retention to expand and maintain workforce.*

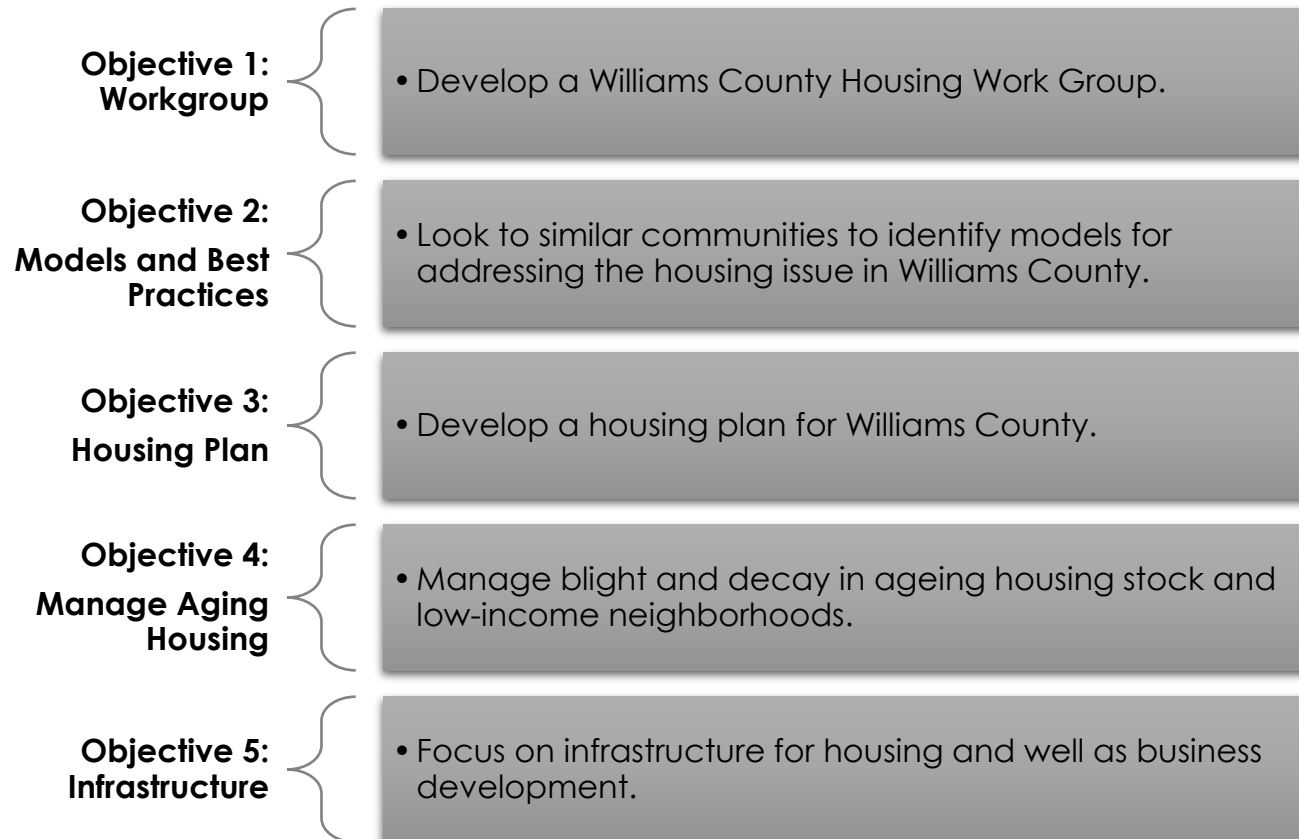




# WILLIAMS COUNTY 2030: WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACTION PLAN

<p><b>Objective 1: Youth Retention in Manufacturing</b></p>	<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">ACTION STEPS</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Tracking of number of manufacturers participating in school programs.</li> <li>2. Tracking number of students participating in manufacturer internships, training, and job placement programs.</li> <li>3. Perform systematic evaluation of recruitment and retention method – identify methods that work/ best practices.</li> <li>4. Get feedback from Industry leaders on youth programs, and school initiatives.</li> </ol>
<p>Increase the number of students who take jobs at local manufacturing facilities because of programing and coordination with the schools.</p>		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. TBD</li> </ol>
<p><b>Objective 2: Internship Programs</b></p>		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Conduct a survey of HR personnel at employers across the county to identify the core issues for hiring and retaining workers.</li> <li>2. Identify opportunities to work across the County to address identified issues.</li> </ol>
<p>Establish internship programs to attract new talent and population.</p>		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Work with schools to create community promotional materials to attract folks to the county. Montpelier is already doing this, maybe a county wide effort would be more effective. Learn from the efforts Montpelier has already made.</li> <li>2. Research promotional campaigns in similar communities – look for models and best practices.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Objective 3: Pinpoint Issues</b></p>		
<p>Work with major employers to determine what are the issues with hiring and retaining people.</p>		
<p><b>Objective 4: Advertise the community</b></p>		
<p>Work collaboratively to advertise across the communities in Williams County. Promote the county to external population.</p>		

# HOUSING



## **Goals: 5–10 Year Outcomes**

- A. *Reduce blight and decay in ageing housing stock and low-income neighborhoods.*
- B. *Systematically address housing maintenance for low-income families and enforce building codes.*
- C. *Attract affordable development/new moderate priced housing.*
- D. *Increase available housing stock to support needed labor supply and ensure safe and affordable housing for community members.*
- E. *Develop better tools and capacities to approach housing and development needs across the County in a collaborate fashion.*

# WILLIAMS COUNTY 2030: HOUSING ACTION PLAN

Objective 1: Workgroup	ACTION STEPS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Put together a longer-term task force or working group with representative from offices, agencies, and Businesses across Williams County.</li> <li>Serve as advocates for housing policies, programs, and development projects.</li> <li>Ensure that housing is part of all critical development discussions in the County.</li> <li>Group should include a broad base of the community and include those of lesser income to bring the reality of the situation, industry who depends on stable employees should also be part of the group.</li> </ol>
Develop a Williams County Housing Work Group.		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct a review of what has worked in other Midwest rural communities should inform direction of any housing discussion.</li> <li>Look for innovative solutions and non-traditional development strategies.</li> <li>Develop a list of best practices and informational needs for plan development.</li> <li>Identify incentive programs for low and moderate priced home development.</li> </ol>
Objective 2: Models and Best Practices		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review and update County level housing study.</li> <li>Assess housing needs and demand.</li> <li>Develop a housing plan that can be used to guide development and advocate for housing programs, grants, and other resources.</li> <li>Review and update the plan on a periodic basis to adjust to community conditions and changing needs.</li> </ol>
Look to similar communities to identify models for addressing the housing issue in Williams County.		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a community-wide strategy for better managing the aging housing stock in various parts of the county.</li> <li>Develop effective policies to assist in housing maintenance for low-income families.</li> <li>Find effective ways to uphold and enforce building codes and ensure landlord accountability.</li> </ol>
Objective 3: Housing Plan		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess Community infrastructure needs for both business and housing.</li> <li>Develop County-wide infrastructure plans to support development of housing.</li> <li>Include infrastructure needs in housing plan.</li> </ol>
Develop a housing plan for Williams County.		
Objective 4: Manage Aging Housing		
Manage blight and decay in ageing housing stock and low-income neighborhoods.		
Objective 5: Infrastructure		
Focus on infrastructure for housing and business development.		



# COMMUNITY ATTRACTIVENESS/ QUALITY OF LIFE

## Objective 1: Informational Hub

- Create an information hub detailing available opportunities in Williams County including, but not limited to recreational/outdoor spaces, art events/studios, and musical presentations/performances.

## Objective 2: Promote Farming Heritage

- Create new and promote existing healthy nutritional opportunities for people to become aware of and take advantage of our rural/farming heritage.

## Objective 3: Highlight Neighborhood Gems

- Hosting or sponsoring community “park parties” to highlight neighborhood gems that may be underutilized.

## Goals: 5–10 Year Outcomes

- A. Increase awareness of events and activities in Williams County- target internal and external audiences.*
- B. Better utilize and advertise existing community amenities, parks, and natural spaces.*
- C. Embrace and promote local heritage and traditions as attraction features.*



# WILLIAMS COUNTY 2030: COMMUNITY ATTRACTIVENESS/ QUALITY OF LIFE ACTION PLAN

## Objective 1: Informational Hub

Create an information hub detailing available opportunities in Williams County including, but not limited to recreational/outdoor spaces, art events/studios, and musical presentations/performances.

### ACTION STEPS

1. Research existing information hubs such as Fulton County’s Visitors’ Bureau.
2. Establish a physical location where people can go to find information about quality of life - perhaps partnering with existing groups dedicated to community development/improvement, for example a visitors’ bureau.
3. Research sources and raise funding to support start-up and ongoing costs to establish and maintain currency of information.

## Objective 2: Promote Farming Heritage

Create new and promote existing healthy nutritional opportunities for people to become aware of and take advantage of our rural/farming heritage.

1. Promote the Farmers’ Market[s] currently in existence.
2. Generate excitement for local healthy food opportunities by hosting a Farm-to Table event such as a breakfast/lunch or day long information Fair/Festival enlisting stakeholders such as the OSU Extension office, Williams County Fair Board and Foundation, 4-H groups, County Commodity Producers (Beef, pork, dairy), and the Williams County Community Gardening Association.
3. Work with local partners such as local schools, Williams County Health Department, County Senior Centers and schools to inform and promote healthy eating.
4. Consider delivery of fresh food to underserved areas such as Bryan’s NE neighborhood and subsidized housing communities in the county through a Food Truck or bus.

## Objective 3: Highlight Neighborhood Gems

Hosting or sponsoring community “park parties” to highlight neighborhood gems that may be underutilized.

1. Partner with successful community festivals or replace waning festivals that may have outlived their popularity with “Park Parties” in neighborhood parks featuring art/music/food displays/opportunities. (Mattie Marsh/Hitt Park/Roseland in Bryan; Storrer or Main Street Parks in Montpelier, for example)



