

# Van Wert Area Strategic Plan 2019 - 2024



Van Wert Area Economic Development Corporation  
145 E Main Street Van Wert, OH 45891  
[www.vanwerted.com](http://www.vanwerted.com)

## Quality of Life

1. Improve and Increase Health Opportunities for the Community
  - a. Improve “walkability” throughout the city
  - b. Develop a Community Health Improvement Plan (Van Wert County Health Collaborative)
    - i. Work with other organization to help reduce drug use
    - ii.
2. Improve Recreation Facilities
  - a. Create or identify Increased revenues to support maintenance of existing parks
  - b. Consider creation of a Parks Master Plan
    - i. Investigate connection of bike trails across the county
  - c. Search for solutions to YM/YW capital improvement needs
3. Promote Placemaking Initiatives
  - a. Improve relevance and attendance at sponsored events throughout the year (Main Street, CVB)
  - b. Encourage the use of public art (Wassenberg)
  - c. Install Wayfinding messaging throughout the city
  - d. Create plan to continue beautification downtown.
4. Support social needs of community
5. Search for public transportation solution
6. Increase affordable child care options
7. Attract casual, affordable dining option

## Public Safety and Security

8. Improve Public Safety and Technology Capabilities
  - a. Improve effectiveness of West Central Ohio Crime Task Force to combat drug and human trafficking crimes
  - b. Create / update emergency Plan for governmental agencies and businesses
  - c. Assess network and system security
9. Consider alternative building permit and inspection process

## Infrastructure

10. Complete major projects
  - a. Develop a sidewalk improvement plan
    - i. Investigate feasibility and potential funding for underground utility lines in conjunction with sidewalk project
  - b. Follow up on proposed flood plain maps for Van Wert County, understand consequences and take necessary action steps
  - c. Encourage fiber to residential customers

- d. Complete road improvement on Bonnewitz
- e. Complete rail crossing repair on US 127 north of Towne Center
- f. Consider Land Use planning and review /revise city zoning map
- g. Complete airport runway extension to meet requirements of common corporate aircraft

## Economic Stability and Growth

### 11. Emphasize Growth and Development

- a. Seek and recruit high wage jobs
- b. Encourage development partnerships
- c. Encourage Capital investment from existing and prospective businesses and projects
- d. Attract Mega Site prospect(s)
- e. Attract new businesses with 50 – 200 employees.
- f. Support efforts to increase housing inventory
- g. Partner with the Business Development Corporation for development opportunities
- h. Work to improve workforce availability for existing and new businesses
  - i. Business Advisory Council
  - ii. Expansion of CEO program
  - iii. Business Tours for students
  - iv. Increase awareness and use of VanWertWorks

### 12. Pursue Revenue Enhancements

- a. Continue pursuit of grant opportunities
- b. Pursue federal and state governments for infrastructure funding assistance
- c. Continue to research guidelines and market the benefit of designated Opportunity Zones in Van Wert
- d. Identify and support eligible ED loan projects

### 13. Solicit feedback to improve our ability to attract millennials to return or relocate to our community.

## Community Appearance and Public Relations

### 14. Community Appearance and Public Relations

- a. Improve the Appearance and Attractiveness of the City
  - i. Encourage pride of ownership and personal responsibility of property maintenance
  - ii. Re-institute downtown building improvement program
  - iii. Reduce vacancies in downtown buildings
  - iv. Continue code enforcement efforts
- b. Expand Efforts to Reinvent Van Wert's Image

- i. Utilize Leadership class video
- ii. Continue reutilization of blighted properties in target areas
- c. Search solution to remove / revitalize blighted commercial properties

## Utilities & Conservation

### 15. Energy & Environment

- a. Search for solution to increase natural gas capacity
- b. Increase energy efficiency of city and villages
- c. Support addition of electric substation to increase capacity
- d. Emphasize and encourage recycling
- e. Assess water capacity and distribution system revitalization to insure future reliability

Possible additions:

Assess fire department boundary. Revise as necessary to improve service.

Provide guidance document to improve information to developer of life safety inspection (VWFD)

Document the building permit process, including contact information.

*\*ID items requiring funding & prioritize*

*Should we add discussion of potential efficiency and effectiveness gain by consolidating ED partners?*