What is GRADD?
The Green River Area Development District is an Economic Development District (EDD) operating under the United States Economic Development Administration (EDA). GRADD includes seven counties in Northwestern Kentucky – Daviess, Hancock, Henderson, McLean, Ohio, Union, and Webster – and includes portions of the Green River and the Ohio River. GRADD serves 27 cities within its seven counties.
GRADD wants to be a resilient region with strong broadband, sound infrastructure, innovative educational systems, and a skilled workforce to help our region become more competitive, industrially diverse, and prosperous to raise the quality of life for residents.
Executive Summary

SWOT Analysis
“Where are we now?”

**Strengths**
- Well-developed transportation network
- Multiple options for higher education
- Low energy costs
- Low cost of living

**Weaknesses**
- Retention of advanced degree holders
- Lack of jobs for advanced degree holders
- Not enough technically skilled workers
- Low entrepreneurship

**Opportunities**
- Tourism opportunities
- Infrastructure improvement
- Workforce development programs
- Development of new and innovative technology

**Threats**
- COVID-19
- Low industry diversity
- Decreasing state coal severance funds
- Adequate internet not available in all areas

Action Plan
“How do we move forward?”

**GOAL 1**
Create a diverse economy that is resilient to change.

- Objective 1: Foster entrepreneurial efforts.
- Objective 2: Encourage openness to diverse populations.

**GOAL 2**
Strengthen the workforce and increase labor resilience.

- Objective 1: Improve educational attainment.
- Objective 2: Increase career readiness.

**GOAL 3**
Encourage cooperation between counties.

- Objective 1: Increase regional communication.
- Objective 2: Collaborate to market the region.

**GOAL 4**
Improve internet infrastructure.

- Objective 1: Pursue upgrades to the ConnectGRADD network.
- Objective 2: Pursue alternative options, including KentuckyWired.

Evaluation Framework
“How are we progressing?”
“What can we do better?”

- Increase high school graduation rate to 95%
- Raise average ACT score above national average of 20.8
- Increase number of businesses owned by women and minorities by 7%
- Increase post-secondary attainment by 3%
- Lower unemployment below state level of 4.0%
- Raise per capita income to state average of $25,888
**SUMMARY BACKGROUND**

"What have we done so far?"

**WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT**

Manufacturing is the region’s largest industry with nearly 18,000 employees. Industry employers often struggle to fill open positions with employees who have the necessary technical skills and credentials. To increase the skilled workforce available to existing and potential new industries, the Green River region has made workforce development initiatives a top priority for economic growth and prosperity.

**The Kentucky Federation for Advanced Manufacturing Education (KY FAME)**

KY FAME was created as a partnership between regional manufacturers and community colleges to provide career-pathway, apprentice-style technical education programs. The two local chapters, GO FAME and HCC FAME, have implemented programs through Owensboro Community and Technical College (OCTC) and Henderson Community College (HCC). Both programs offer an Advanced Manufacturing Technician track, and GO FAME also offers a Computerized Manufacturing Machining track.

Students train in classes on two days of the week and work at a paired sponsor company for three days of the week. Upon graduation, students earn an associate degree and are on track to either enter the company as a full-time employee or to pursue an engineering or other bachelor-level degree. GO FAME has also created GO CAREERS, a business administration program at OCTC, to supplement the workforce for other growing industries in the region.

**Greater Owensboro Facilitating Equitable Manufacturing and Leadership Educational Solutions (GO FEMALES)**

GO FEMALES was developed by a collaborative partnership of local and state industry, workforce, and educational partners to provide technical training to underserved populations in the manufacturing workforce. By engaging non-traditional populations, GO FEMALES addresses the increasing need for skilled technicians and gender and socioeconomic disparities in career and wage advancement.

Owensboro Community and Technical College launched the first GO FEMALES cohort in 2019 in partnership with UniFirst Corporation. Twenty female incumbent workers from UniFirst were selected to participate in the cohort. UniFirst supports the GO FEMALES initiative by paying participants full-time wages and benefits throughout the program, while providing eight hours a week of educational leave to attend classes.

The Green River Workforce Development Board and the Kentucky Education and Workforce Development Cabinet, using Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act funds, provide GO FEMALES employees funds for training and required supplies. Funding is crucial to continue the efforts to advance women and other underserved populations in manufacturing.

The GO FEMALES program provides working adults unprecedented access to education by eliminating financial and accessibility barriers. Classes are held onsite and lab training equipment is set up near UniFirst’s actual production equipment. Offering instructional delivery at the worksite minimizes time away from production and maximizes worker participation and skill attainment. The GO FEMALES cohort completed their first semester with a 3.8 cumulative GPA, along with an exceptional retention rate of 95%.
Summary Background
“What have we done so far?”

Workforce Development

Kimberly Clark Incumbent Worker Training

Kimberly-Clark Corporation is undergoing a multi-million-dollar project to replace their current obsolete Distributive Control System with the newest technologies available. The company’s manufacturing plant in Daviess County employs 357 employees, many of which needed extensive training to become proficient with the new system.

With Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act funds, the Green River Workforce Development Board (GRWDB) assisted with the cost to provide training in the new technology to twenty-three employees through Owensboro Community and Technical College. This training program provided significant benefits both to the Kimberly-Clark Corporation and to the individual employees who participated. Kimberly-Clark was able to quickly and easily transition to the new system with employees who had the technical skills needed to operate it, and the employees who participated in the training gained transferrable skills that have made them more competitive and resilient to changes in the manufacturing industry.

Career EDGE

Career EDGE, a web-based platform to deliver virtual career services to jobseekers, was implemented by the Kentucky Education and Workforce Development Cabinet in April 2020. Career EDGE consists of eighteen interactive modules with built-in virtual coaching including a job interview simulator, resume and job application builder, guidance in developing a personal brand, and essential life skills curriculum to support career seekers in preparation for finding a job or advance in employment. This program helps job seekers to better prepare for job searching with remote access. During the pandemic, Career EDGE has built systems and implemented technologies to serve job seekers, employers, and staff 100% remotely.

National Dislocated Worker Grant

The unemployment rate in Kentucky skyrocketed during the summer of 2020, jumping from 4.2% in February to 16.6% in April as businesses began to feel the impact of social distancing and required closures. State and local workforce development leaders began developing programs to help workers impacted by the pandemic. The Kentucky Office of Employment and Training applied for and received a $6 million National Dislocated Worker grant through the U.S. Department of Labor. From this allocation, the GRWDB applied for and received $543,315 to develop a program to provide temporary jobs and career and training services to workers who have been displaced due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The GRWDB will utilize this funding to assist residents of Daviess, Hancock, Henderson, McLean, Ohio, Union, and Webster Counties who have been laid off, who are underemployed, or who are unemployed for other reasons as a result of COVID-19.

Kentucky Pandemic Labor Data

Kentucky Labor Force Data, March - August 2020

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<th>Civilian Labor Force</th>
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<td>May 2020: 2,029.3</td>
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<td>Jun 2020: 1,920.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aug 2020: 2,010.8</td>
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</table>

Kentucky Unemployment Rate, March - August 2020

Footnotes
(1) Number of persons, in thousands, seasonally adjusted.
[P] Preliminary
Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics
Expansion of the manufacturing industry requires extensive land and resources to attract companies to a location. According to the Kentucky Cabinet for Economic Development, there are 31 industrial sites, buildings, or vacant land tracts available in the GRADD region. Seventeen of these sites are shovel-ready and 3 are build-ready. Shovel-ready sites have some site prep work done, some utilities available, and some transportation available. Build-ready sites have extensive site prep work completed, utilities available, and preliminary sketches of potential buildings.

The two largest regional parks are Bluegrass Crossings Business Centre and 4 Star Industrial Park, both of which are build-ready parks. In addition to meeting the criteria required of a build-ready site, both parks are fiber-ready, meaning that fiber-optic service can be extended to any lot in the park. Bluegrass Crossings Business Centre has 1,134 acres and serves Daviess, Hancock, McLean, and Ohio Counties, as well as neighboring Muhlenberg County. 4 Star Industrial Park has 334.5 acres and serves Henderson, McLean, Union, and Webster Counties.

In 2020, National Grid Renewables purchased approximately 1,500 acres in Henderson and Webster County, including 427 acres in 4 Star Industrial Park. Through a 20-year Power Purchase Agreement with Big Rivers Electric Corporation, Henderson Municipal Power and Light will purchase 100% of the output of the solar power plant. The facility is expected to produce 117 million kilowatt-hours of solar energy per year starting in 2023 and will fulfill about 20% of HMP&L’s electricity demand.

### Available Sites and Buildings

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<th>Sites</th>
<th>Buildings</th>
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<td>Daviess</td>
<td>4701 Hwy 2830 East Industrial Site&lt;br&gt;MidAmerica Airpark&lt;br&gt;Owensboro-Daviess County Airport Site&lt;br&gt;Owensboro Riverport Rail Loop Site</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hancock</td>
<td>Skillman Bottoms&lt;br&gt;Hancock County Site 091-007&lt;br&gt;Lewisport Bozarth Property&lt;br&gt;Hawesville Site 091-006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henderson</td>
<td>City of Henderson Industrial Park&lt;br&gt;Henderson Ohio Drive Site&lt;br&gt;4 Star Industrial Park Sandy Lee Watkins Site&lt;br&gt;Henderson Bypass Rail Site&lt;br&gt;4 Star Industrial Park Building Pad&lt;br&gt;Henderson Site 101-025</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ohio</td>
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<tr>
<td>Union</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Webster</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Kentucky Cabinet for Economic Development

[Click for more information](www.ced.ky.gov/locating_expanding/Available_Sites_Buildings.aspx)
About Opportunity Zones

Seven Kentucky Opportunity Zones were established in the GRADD region by the U.S. Department of the Treasury and the Internal Revenue Service in 2018: one in Henderson, Union, and Webster Counties and two each in Daviess and Ohio Counties. The purpose of an Opportunity Zone is to encourage long-term private investment in low-income urban and rural communities by offering significant tax incentives to investors.

Investments in Opportunity Zones

Investments in Opportunity Zones are made through Qualified Opportunity Funds (QOFs). A QOF is an investment vehicle organized as a corporation or partnership for the purpose of investing at least 90% of its assets in Qualified Opportunity Zone property. Qualified Opportunity Zone property includes partnership interests in businesses that operate in a Qualified Opportunity Zone, stock ownership in businesses that conduct most or all operations within a Qualified Opportunity Zone, or business property (like real estate) located within a Qualified Opportunity Zone. Business property investments must either be new use for the qualified property or double the basis of the building(s) on the qualified property within 30 months).

**INVESTMENT INCENTIVES**

- **A temporary tax deferral for capital gains reinvested in a QOF.**
  - The deferred gain must be recognized on the earlier of the date on which the Opportunity Zone investment is sold or December 31, 2026.

- **A step-up in basis for capital gains reinvested in a QOF.**
  - The basis of the original investment is increased by 10% if the investment in the QOF is held by the taxpayer for at least 5 years.
  - If it is held for more than 7 years, the 10% becomes 15%.

- **A permanent exclusion from taxable income of capital gains from the sale or exchange of an investment in a QOF.**
  - The investment must be held for at least 10 years.
  - This exclusion applies to the gains accrued from an investment in a QOF, not the original gains.

- **Federal Opportunity Zone deferrals will also be exempt from Kentucky income tax.**
  - For Kentucky income tax purposes, Opportunity Zone gain deferrals are treated the same as for federal purposes.
Opportunity Zone Projects
GRADD has identified several projects within Opportunity Zones that will improve base infrastructure and further incentivize investments in those Opportunity Zones.

Job Corps Sanitary Sewer Project
**KIA Project Number SX21225035**
The project consists of the following rehabilitation efforts regarding the Earle C. Clements Job Corps sewer system located in the City of Morganfield:
- Rehabilitation of approximately 67,000 LF of 8-inch clay pipe using cured-in-place pipe trenchless rehabilitation methods;
- Replacement of 18,000 LF of 8-inch sewer; and
- Replacement of 310 brick manholes in the Job Corps collection system which were installed in the 1940s.

Providence Sanitary Sewer Upgrades
**KIA Project Number SX21233025**
This is the first phase of a multiphase project to be completed over several years. This portion of the project includes a Sanitary Sewer Evaluation Survey (SSES). The SSES will include:
- CCTV and light cleaning of approximately 32,000 LF of sewer line,
- heavy cleaning and root removal of approximately 8,000 LF of sewer line,
- smoke testing of 32,000 LF of sewer line,
- surveys of approximately 120 manholes,
- cleaning of 6 pump stations.
The construction portion of the project will include the following components:
- Rehabilitation of approximately 10,000 LF of 8" gravity sewer;
- Replacement of approximately 2,000 LF of 8" gravity sewer;
- Approximately 100 service reinstatements for customers within the project area;
- Rehabilitation of approximately 100 manholes;
- Replacement of approximately 30 manholes;
- Replacement of 8,200 LF of undersized gravity lines (existing 6" to be replaced with 8");
- 20 point repairs; and
- Rehabilitation of 2 pump stations.

Ravine Sewer Upgrade
This project involves the reconstruction and upgrade of the Ravine Interceptor sewer (3,348 LF) that conveys combined sewage in the north central portion of Owensboro’s combined sewer system. The condition of this line is unstable and there are structural issues with various sections of the pipe, including improper pipe sizing when originally installed.

The line runs in a diagonal path across several city blocks that did not contain original dedicated easements that would have had prohibited construction above the pipe. This in itself is problematic, and also creates potential damage to the structures if the line became compromised.

This project is designed to separate storm water and wastewater into separate pipes conveying storm water away and out of the combined sewer system that will in turn significantly reduce the storm water contribution to the combined sewer overflow.

At the downstream end of this project, the City of Owensboro is currently redeveloping multiple properties in the downtown area where storm and sanitary separation efforts have already been implemented. The timing of this project will be vital with the continuation of the redevelopment efforts. This project is the third phase involving up and down stream improvements and to complete storm/sanitary separation improvements within this watershed.
**Schools have adopted new methods of instruction in response to the pandemic.** Some school districts have elected to provide education fully by remote non-traditional instruction (NTI), and others have opted to use a hybrid schedule that divides students into groups who alternate between distance and in-person classes.

**Project Lead the Way** is a national nonprofit organization that develops STEM curricula for elementary, middle, and high school students and is designed to encourage students to pursue careers in STEM fields. Fifteen schools in GRADD have implemented the program.

In Daviess County, the Early College Academy allows students from two high schools to complete dual-credit courses at Owensboro Community and Technical College to earn an associate degree upon graduation from high school.

The Owensboro Innovation Academy (OIA) is an alternative school which accepts students from both the city and county school district and focuses on STEM fields. Students may choose to focus on computer science, engineering, or biomedicine courses and are also required to complete entrepreneurship courses, community service, and internships.

Henderson, Union, and Webster Counties have each created funding programs for high school students planning to attend community college. High school students who meet GPA and other requirements can receive funding to help cover costs not met by state and national federal aid.

In 2020, the Delta Regional Authority awarded approximately $245,000 to the Webster County Fiscal Court to purchase new training equipment for the Webster County Area Technology Center (ATC). The ATC provides both academic education and technical training to high school students in the area, in programs such as manufacturing, industrial maintenance, and computer-aided design (CAD). The grant will allow the ATC to purchase much needed updated equipment to ensure that graduates have the skills needed to operate the industry standard in machinery and technology.

The Henderson County School District has led the charge for COVID-19 transparency through the creation of a COVID-19 dashboard to inform the community about active cases in staff and students. The dashboard, which is completely anonymous, lists numbers of active cases by school or outside department, and breaks down those cases by staff, NTI student, and hybrid student cases. The website is updated as information is provided to the school. It can be accessed by visiting the school district’s home page at [https://www.henderson.kyschools.us/](https://www.henderson.kyschools.us/).
**THE STATE OF BROADBAND**

Potentially the most significant need for economic development in the region is better broadband internet access. According to U.S. News & World Report, Kentucky ranks 32nd in the nation for internet access, improved from last year’s rank of 35th. Because GRADD is primarily rural, there are many areas where internet access is inadequate or even completely unavailable. Even large companies sometimes struggle to get adequate internet service delivered. Internet service is a vital component to business, as well as everyday life. Inadequate broadband limits economic and educational opportunities and makes the region less attractive to people who use the internet to work remotely. One of GRADD’s primary goals is to identify and pursue projects to improve broadband access in the region.

**CONNECTGRADD**

ConnectGRADD is a partnership between GRADD and Watch Communications to provide high speed internet to rural areas in the region. ConnectGRADD currently provides service at download speeds of two megabits per second (Mbps) to 20 Mbps to over 12,000 rural households. The Federal Communications Commission has identified 25 Mbps as the benchmark for adequate service speed. The organization is working to improve service, but the process will not be quick. In 2020, Henderson County was awarded $339,320 from the Delta Regional Authority to upgrade three broadband communication stations to provide download speeds of 10 Mbps to 50 Mbps to currently unserved or underserved rural residents of Henderson County. The project will use three sites on the existing ConnectGRADD network where services are currently offered but speeds are limited. This project will bring an additional 7,121 businesses and households into ConnectGRADD’s coverage area.

**KENTUCKYWIRDED**

KentuckyWired is a state-funded project to construct over 3,000 miles of high-speed, high-capacity fiber optic cable in every Kentucky county. Beginning in 2015, the project was originally scheduled to be completed by late 2018, but has faced significant delays. Currently, the project is scheduled to be completed by the end of 2020. As of June 2020, fiber optic cable construction was 95% completed, with remaining portions in Western Kentucky in progress or pending contract. A major obstacle to expanding broadband capabilities in rural Kentucky is the large cost to install the necessary infrastructure in areas that would have few customers. The significant investment and low expected payoff discourage Internet Service Providers (ISPs) from locating in the area. The KentuckyWired project is a “middle-mile” initiative to provide the necessary infrastructure and encourage ISPs to connect to the network and bring faster, more reliable internet to rural areas.

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**FIBER CONSTRUCTION**

- **Completed (~95%)**
- **In Progress**
- **Pending Contract**
- **Nodes**

*Source: Federal Communications Commission, Mapping Broadband Health in America, Broadband Gaps in America*
Summary Background
“What have we done so far?”

Transportation

Infrastructure

GRADD’s transportation network has significantly improved over the years and continues to develop. Over the past ten years, the region has completed the I-69 designation of the Pennyrile Parkway from Henderson to I-24, the I-165 Spur designation of the Natcher Parkway from Owensboro to Bowling Green, the Wendell Ford Expressway (Bypass) designation as US 60 through Owensboro, and the US 60 Bypass extension in Owensboro.

Several GRADD counties are top state agricultural producers, and the manufacturing industry is the largest employer in the region, therefore the ability to transport goods quickly and efficiently is essential to the economy. The region is also located 60 miles from Pike County, IN which the U.S. Census Bureau determined is the median center of population in 2010. Because of its location, the region sees heavy traffic from distributors transporting goods.

Several important projects are currently in development or are scheduled to be in the near future. In 2019, legislation was passed to designate a portion of the Western Kentucky Parkway as an I-69 spur. The segment runs from the I-69/I-169 interchange near Nortonville in Hopkins County to the I-65 interchange near Beaver Dam in Ohio County. A study was initiated to identify and evaluate needed improvements to upgrade the road to interstate standards before it can be designated as I-569.

The FY 2020-2026 Kentucky Highway Plan includes projects to widen KY-54 in Daviess County from the US-60 Bypass to Jack Hinton Road to accommodate increased traffic due to significant rapid commercial development in the area during the past several years.

A bi-state plan to build a bridge connecting the Indiana and Kentucky I-69 segments has been prioritized by both states. The bridge would connect Henderson, KY to Evansville, IN and would increase interstate traffic in the GRADD area. The bridge would complete the Kentucky portion of I-69.

Two projects listed in the FY 2020-2026 Kentucky Highway Plan relate to the proposed I-69 bridge: the first is to construct the portion of the Ohio River Bridge Crossing Project from the Henderson Bypass (KY-425) to US-60; the second is to work with the Indiana Department of Transportation to develop a $1.1 billion Bi-State Package to create the bridge crossing over the Ohio River into Evansville, Indiana.

According to the American Society of Civil Engineers 2017 Infrastructure Report Card, only 8% of Kentucky’s roads are in poor condition. This figure ties Kentucky with Indiana and Tennessee for having the third best roads in the U.S. As of 2015, 8.3% of bridges in Kentucky were structurally deficient, but according to data from the 2015 National Bridge Inventory as compiled by the Washington Post, only 6.7% of bridges in GRADD counties were deficient. In 2019, Kentucky began to upgrade or replace structurally deficient bridges through the Bridging Kentucky program.

Henderson and Owensboro have riverports that are certified Foreign Trade Zones and have access to road and rail traffic. Having access to river transportation is a huge advantage, as barges are able to carry more cargo using less fuel than other methods of transportation. The ports are connected by the Ohio River to the Mississippi River System, which is one of the largest and most important trade networks in the U.S.

All GRADD counties except McLean and Webster have an airport located near industrial parks and sites for quick transportation of goods. CSX rail lines run through four counties and provide access to the two riverports. Smaller rail lines run through Ohio and Webster Counties.

Public Transportation

Door-to-door public transportation for people with disabilities is provided throughout all seven counties at low or no cost by the Green River Intra-Transit System (GRITS). Medicaid-eligible clients without vehicles are provided transportation to approved Medicaid appointments at no cost. Fee-per mile service is available to the general public for any purpose. Fixed-route public transportation is available in Owensboro and Henderson through the Owensboro Transit System (OTS) and the Henderson Area Rapid Transit (HART). OTS and HART do not operate on Sundays. Fixed-route public transportation isn’t available anywhere else in the region, limiting resources and opportunities for rural residents.
Summary Background
“What have we done so far?”

Infrastructure

Kentucky Infrastructure Authority WRIS Portal
GRADD has made improving water and sewer infrastructure a top priority. One of the largest obstacles to infrastructure projects is the large cost associated with major projects. The Kentucky Infrastructure Authority (KIA) works to develop water and sewer infrastructure throughout the state by helping communities secure the funding needed to complete projects. KIA works with the Area Development Districts to maintain the Water Resource Information System (WRIS), an online database of identified projects under the Safe Drinking Water Act and the Clean Water Act. The WRIS portal is critical in helping communities identify and prioritize their water and sewer needs and develop their projects and find funding assistance. The WRIS portal also contains mapping and general information about water and wastewater systems throughout the state, which can also be a helpful tool in identifying needs and developing projects.

Water Projects in the WRIS portal

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Sewer Projects in the WRIS portal

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GRADD Projects

Infrastructure projects in the GRADD region have been very successful. Some recently completed major infrastructure projects include the Friendly Village Subdivision Project in Daviess County, the Clay Waterline Replacement Project in Webster County, and the McLean County Regional Water Plant Project.

The Friendly Village Subdivision Project involved the abandonment of a failing package plant serving 69 single family homes in the Friendly Village Subdivision, as well as approximately 25 nearby mobile homes. The project replaced the package plant with a new pump station and force main to redirect wastewater to the Regional Water Resource Agency (RWRA) sewer collection system approximately five miles away.

The Clay Waterline Replacement Project replaced deteriorated cast-iron waterlines for several residential streets. The old waterlines were installed in the 1970s and could no longer carry proper volume and pressure; 68 households and 12 businesses were affected by this project.

This project and the Friendly Village Project are scheduled to be completed in late 2019.

The McLean County Regional Water Plant Project was a massive undertaking to consolidate several independent water systems in McLean County. The project included the construction of a new water treatment plant, the purchase of the existing plant in Calhoun, the construction of interconnects to Sacramento and Island, boring across the Green River between Island and Livermore, installation of one new pump station, and installation of five new master meters. The project received the 2018 H2O Award for Outstanding Drinking Water Project.

These projects are only a few of many recent important infrastructure improvements made possible in the GRADD region by federal and state funding sources including Community Development Block Grants and KIA loans and planning assistance.
**Housing & Community Development**

**Housing Priorities**
One of the most significant housing concerns throughout the region is a lack of moderately-priced single family homes for sale. Twenty-five percent of households are spending 30.0% or more of their monthly income on housing expenses. For households earning less than $20,000 annually, 74.7% are spending 30.0% or more of their income on housing expenses. Other priorities include expanding apartment availability near major employers and developing mid-range housing options in downtown areas for young professionals. Particularly in rural areas, walkability levels are low. Development of sidewalks from neighborhoods to destinations like grocery stores, schools, and retail shops is important to ensure that neighborhoods are safe and that residents are able to easily access important facilities.

**Recovery Kentucky**
Funding through the Recovery Kentucky CDBG program has enabled two housing and substance abuse recovery facilities to operate in the GRADD region. Owensboro Regional Recovery (ORR) is a men’s substance abuse recovery program in Owensboro and the Women’s Addiction Recovery Manor (WARM) is a women’s substance abuse recovery program in Henderson. ORR is one of ten men’s Recovery Kentucky centers in the state and WARM is one of eight women’s centers. These programs receive operational funding annually through CDBG’s Public Services program and help combat both homelessness and substance abuse in the Commonwealth.

Recovery Kentucky centers across the state, including ORR and WARM, have faced severe financial hardships due to COVID-19. Funding for educational, workforce training, and other programs for the residents of Recovery Kentucky Centers primarily comes from the Department of Corrections, who refers clients to the centers and subsidizes their participation in the Recovery Kentucky program. The Department of Corrections has drastically reduced the number of client referrals being made across the state due to delayed court sessions, reduced face-to-face contact between probationers and parolees and officers, quarantines to prevent new referrals from potentially spreading the virus to other clients or staff, and lowered capacities to adhere to social distancing requirements.

Several large community projects funded through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program began construction in 2020, including the construction of a new public library in Lewisport and the renovation of the Livermore Fire Station. Other important community development projects include park renovations, recreational trail development, police and firefighting equipment, and emergency communications technology. One of the most significant recent community projects is the Jeffreys Cliffs project in Hancock County. The Jeffreys Cliffs Conservancy and Recreation Area opened to the public in June 2020 after several years of development and collaboration between the Hancock County Fiscal Court, the Kentucky Heritage Land Conservation Board, and the Hancock County Heritage Commission. The area is a 230-acre sandstone plateau formation with nearly five miles of hiking trails and some of the largest rock shelters in Kentucky, including Morgan’s Cave.

The loss of income in combination with large unbudgeted expenses for PPE and cleaning and sanitizing equipment leave both ORR and WARM in dire need of financial assistance to prevent the elimination of programs that help some of the region’s most vulnerable people recover from substance abuse disorder.

**Community Development**
Community services are an important factor to quality of life. Community development projects enhance the services that a city or county can provide to residents. Leveraging existing funds with grant funding allows GRADD communities to develop quality recreational opportunities and enhanced public safety initiatives. With better facilities, communities are able to improve the quality of life of residents and retain and attract skilled workers who in turn will help the economy grow.
GRADD Agriculture

Agriculture remains an important part of Kentucky’s economy, including the Green River region. According to the 2017 Census of Agriculture (most recent data available), GRADD counties had 3,733 farms containing approximately 1,736 square miles of farmland. The market value of products sold by GRADD farms totaled over $872.5 million and net income of GRADD farms totaled nearly $323.8 million.

All GRADD counties except Hancock rank in the top 20 Kentucky counties for market value of agricultural products sold. Agricultural sales from Daviess, Henderson, McLean, Ohio, Union, and Webster Counties make up 14% of Kentucky’s total agriculture sales. Daviess and McLean Counties have the top overall agricultural sales in the Green River area and rank 5th and 6th in the state, respectively.

GRADD Counties in the Top 5 Kentucky Producers, By Product

SOYBEANS
- Daviess 1st: 5.6 million bushels
- Henderson 3rd: 4.6 million bushels
- Union 5th: 4.3 million bushels

BROILERS
- McLean 2nd: 29.3 million broilers
- Webster 4th: 23.0 million broilers
- Ohio 5th: 19.5 million broilers

CORN
- Union 2nd: 14.7 million bushels
- Daviess 3rd: 13.2 million bushels

TOBACCO
- Daviess 4th: 7.1 million pounds

Market Value of Agricultural Products Sold By GRADD County

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crop Type</th>
<th>Sales ($1,000)</th>
<th>Rank in State</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Soybeans</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daviess</td>
<td>119,690</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henderson</td>
<td>86,857</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McLean</td>
<td>56,751</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohio</td>
<td>37,715</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Union</td>
<td>100,706</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Webster</td>
<td>53,150</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Livestock, Poultry, & Products

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Product Type</th>
<th>Sales ($1,000)</th>
<th>Rank in State</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daviess</td>
<td>119,690</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henderson</td>
<td>86,857</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McLean</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Webster</td>
<td>53,150</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Product Type</th>
<th>Sales ($1,000)</th>
<th>Rank in State</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daviess</td>
<td>185,879</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henderson</td>
<td>115,957</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McLean</td>
<td>97,697</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohio</td>
<td>135,769</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Union</td>
<td>108,853</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Webster</td>
<td>141,882</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: United States Department of Agriculture, National Agricultural Statistics Service, 2017 Agricultural Census
In June 2020 would have been the 30th annual W.C. Handy Blues and Barbecue Festival, but the live festival was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Instead, festival organizers partnered with the Henderson Brewing Company and Tom’s Smokin’ Bar-B-Q to create Handy to Go, a virtual version of the festival. From June 17th to 19th, the Henderson Brewing Company offered six-packs of Handy Festbier beer, a popular W.C. Handy Festival brew, and other seasonal beers available to patrons for carryout. Tom’s Smokin’ Bar-B-Q, one of the food vendors traditionally at the festival, stationed a food truck outside of the brewery for patrons to pick up barbecue to go. Finally, packs of Festbier included a QR code that linked to a curated playlist on Spotify containing three hours of music from artists who had been scheduled to perform at the 2020 Handyfest.

Similarly, the ROMP festival in Owensboro cancelled in-person events, but hosted a five-day online celebration with photos and videos from past festivals dating back to the first ROMP held in 2004.

In 2016, the John James Audubon State Park in Henderson County acquired 649 acres of adjacent wetlands and doubled its size. The park offers numerous outdoor recreational activities to visitors, including birding, boating, camping, fishing, and trail exploration. While it is the only state park in GRADD, the region has many parks and trails available for public use. Deer Creek Lodge in Sebree draws in hundreds of hunters and fishermen from around the world.

Tourism & Culture

Summary Background
“What have we done so far?”

Environment

The Green River is one of the most important ecological features in the region, home to more than 150 species of fish and endangered mussels. The river is a popular recreational area, with visitors boating and camping nearby. The Kentucky Drag Boat Association annually hosts the Thunder on the Green on the Green River at Livermore. The Green River State Forest in Henderson County is also open to the public for hunting, fishing, and hiking. The Ohio River on the northern border of GRADD is also an option for recreational boating.

In 2016, the John James Audubon State Park in Henderson County acquired 649 acres of adjacent wetlands and doubled its size. The park offers numerous outdoor recreational activities to visitors, including birding, boating, camping, fishing, and trail exploration. While it is the only state park in GRADD, the region has many parks and trails available for public use. Deer Creek Lodge in Sebree draws in hundreds of hunters and fishermen from around the world.

Bluegrass, Blues, & BBQ

Tourism has the opportunity to become a much larger industry in the region because of its deep roots in bluegrass music. The Bill Monroe Museum opened in April 2018 in Rosine (Ohio County), Monroe’s birthplace. The museum is the only one in the world entirely dedicated to the Father of Bluegrass. The Rosine Barn Jamboree offers live bluegrass music and dancing weekly from March to December. The Bluegrass Music Hall of Fame and Museum opened in Owensboro in late 2018.

COVID-19 Impact

Annual county fairs and festivals of all sorts are popular events, drawing in crowds from throughout the Green River region and beyond. Three of the most popular festivals are the W.C. Handy Blues and Barbecue Festival in Henderson, the River of Music Party (ROMP) in Owensboro, and the International Bar-B-Q Festival in Owensboro, the “BBQ Capital of the World.” The coronavirus pandemic has forced the cancellation of live events, but some festivals were able to offer innovative virtual options in place of traditional festivities.

Livermore in McLean County, and Hartford in Ohio County, are working toward becoming Certified Kentucky Trail Towns. In addition, Owensboro has been designated as a Kentucky Bourbon Trail Town, featuring the O.Z. Tyler Distillery.
A region’s capacity for innovation is important to its economic growth and resilience. The StatsAmerica Innovation 2.0 Tool is an interactive online tool which assesses a region’s innovation inputs and outputs and assigns an index level to each county and economic development district based on how they compare to other regions. The Innovation 2.0 tool measures three innovation inputs (Human Capital and Knowledge Creation, Business Dynamics, and Business Profile) and two innovation outputs (Employment and Productivity and Economic Well-Being). Based on data from each of the other indexes, the tool also establishes an overall capacity for innovation (Headline Index). The data used to determine the rankings is from 2016 (Innovation 2.0 Tool’s most recent data).

**Innovation Inputs**

**Human Capital and Knowledge Index**
Includes factors that affect a region’s ability to engage in innovative activities (i.e., population growth of people aged 25-44, educational attainment, technology diffusion, and STEM education and occupations)

**Business Profile Index**
Includes factors that show a region’s local business conditions and the resources it has available to entrepreneurs and businesses (i.e., broadband connectivity, number of small and large businesses, proportion of high-tech firms to the national proportion, and statistics about proprietors)

**Business Dynamic Index**
Includes factors that measure a region’s competitiveness (i.e., entry/exit of businesses, formation of new businesses, and venture capital spending)

**Innovation Outputs**

**Employment and Productivity Index**
Includes factors that show economic growth, regional desirability, or direct outcomes of innovative activity (i.e., job growth to population growth ratio, industry performance, gross domestic product, and patents)

**Economic Well-Being Index**
Includes factors that measure a region’s standard of living as a result of innovative activity (i.e., per capita personal income growth, growth in wage/salary earnings per worker, income inequality, poverty rate, and unemployment rate)

**Headline Index**
Overall Capacity for Innovation

### GRADD Innovation Index

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Human Capital &amp; Knowledge Creation</th>
<th>Daviess</th>
<th>Hancock</th>
<th>Henderson</th>
<th>McLean</th>
<th>Ohio</th>
<th>Union</th>
<th>Webster</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very High</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
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<tr>
<td>Normal</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Low</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Summary Background**

“What have we done so far?”

**grADD innovation index**
An economic cluster is a concentration of related industries in a region. Clusters are an important factor in a regional economy. They promote healthy competition among companies and encourage productivity and innovation. A strong cluster has high employment specialization in a region (ranking in the top 25% of all regions by specialization - and meeting minimum criteria for employment and establishment). Strong clusters attract outside interest and investment and draw in skilled individuals. Having multiple strong clusters creates a diverse and more resilient economy. Data for regional clusters is available at clustermapping.us, a partnership between Harvard Business School and the U.S. Economic Development Administration. The data used in the tool is from 2017, the most recent year available.
Public & Private Partnerships

Partnerships between the public and private sectors are key to the creation and implementation of the region’s CEDS. Both the public and private sectors are responsible for creating and executing economic plans that help GRADD grow and become more resilient. Each partnership has its own goals and vision for the region. GRADD works with committees of partnerships to gather information about the regional economy’s needs and then uses that information to create a CEDS that addresses a wide variety of the region’s greatest needs.

- **ConnectGRADD Incorporated:** Partnership between Watch Communications and local governments to bring high-speed broadband to the GRADD area.
- **GRADD Board of Directors:** Establishes functional advisory committees as necessary to advise and conduct research to coordinate public and private actions.
- **GRADD CEDS Strategy Committee:** Works to prepare the annual CEDS by guiding the direction, identifying problems and strategies, and offering real-world perspectives on the economy.
- **GRADD Hazard Mitigation Council:** Maintains and updates GRADD’s seven-county Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan.
- **GRADD Regional Transportation Committee:** Provides a forum for elected officials and the public to work together in solving regional transportation problems.
- **GRADD Water Management Council:** Works in conjunction with city and county officials, public water suppliers, the Kentucky Infrastructure Authority, and the Kentucky Division of Water to devise the long-range GRADD Water Management Plan.
- **Greater Owensboro Economic Development Corporation:** Works to attract new employers, grow existing primary employers, market industrial sites, and assist businesses with retention and expansion.
- **Green River Area Council on Aging:** Identifies the needs of the elderly and plans to meet those needs through a system of in-home and community-based services.
- **Green River Economic Development Corporation:** Oversees GRADD’s loan fund pool and develops regional collaboration of economic development efforts.
- **Green River Housing Corporation:** Develops homeowner rehabilitation and homebuyer programs for low-to-moderate-income households. Constructs rentals for the senior population, and provides assistance to the near-homeless.
- **Green River Regional Health Council:** Works to improve the health and quality of life of residents through education, motivation, and evaluation.
- **Green River Regional Industrial Development Authority:** Works to recruit industry and manages the development of Bluegrass Crossings Business Centre, an industrial park co-sponsored by Daviess, Hancock, McLean, Ohio, and Muhlenberg Counties.
- **Green River Workforce Development Board:** Works in partnership with local elected officials to improve the region’s employment training system to strengthen the workforce.
- **Hancock County Industrial Foundation:** Works with state officials to develop incentive programs to attract and develop industry in Hancock County.
- **Henderson Chamber of Commerce:** Works to advance the business community of Henderson County.
- **Henderson Economic Development:** Committed to helping business succeed and grow in Northwest Kentucky, particularly in Henderson County.
- **Ohio County Economic Development Alliance:** Works to attract new business, assist in the retention and expansion of existing businesses, develop a competitive and productive workforce and foster entrepreneurship in Ohio County.
- **Union County First:** Works closely with the local business community, local schools, Henderson Community College, and GRADD to strengthen Union County’s workforce.
- **Webster County Economic Development Council & Webster County Industrial Development Authority:** Work together to promote industrial and economic growth in Webster County.
- **West Kentucky Coalition:** Works to provide a unified voice for regional pride, prosperity, and progress for the Western Kentucky region.
- **West Kentucky Regional Industry Development Authority:** An interlocal agreement among Henderson, McLean, Union, and Webster Counties established as a regional authority to oversee further development of Four Star Industrial Park.
A SWOT Analysis is an identification of competitive assets to a region, as well as factors that could hinder economic development. A SWOT Analysis is a helpful tool in determining what features a region has implemented or needs to implement to strengthen and grow their economy.

**Strengths** are a region’s competitive advantages, including things like a skilled workforce or strong broadband capabilities.

**Weaknesses** are a region’s competitive disadvantages, including things like low education or inadequate broadband.

**Opportunities** are factors that may help the region’s economy to progress, such as the potential for a new industry in the region.

**Threats** are factors that may cause the region’s economy to decline, such as a large employer considering leaving the region.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STRENGTHS</th>
<th>WEAKNESSES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Well-developed transportation network</td>
<td>Retention of advanced degree holders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple options for higher education</td>
<td>Lack of jobs for advanced degree holders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low energy costs</td>
<td>Not enough technically skilled workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low cost of living</td>
<td>Low entrepreneurship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>COVID-19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourism opportunities</td>
<td>Decreasing state coal severance funds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infrastructure improvement</td>
<td>Adequate internet not available in all areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workforce development programs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development of new and innovative technology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Vision

GRADD wants to be a resilient region with strong broadband, sound infrastructure, innovative educational systems, and a skilled workforce to help our region become more competitive, industrially diverse, and prosperous to raise the quality of life for residents.

The strategic direction looks at the region’s vision and sets broad goals that will help achieve the vision. Each goal has a set of measurable objectives to meet, which allow the gauging of progress toward achieving the goal. The action plan outlines specific steps to be taken to meet the objectives and ultimately the goals. The strategic direction and the action plan are based on analysis of the region’s background and SWOT.

**Goal 1** Create a diverse economy that is resilient to change.

**Goal 2** Strengthen the workforce and increase labor resilience.

**Goal 3** Encourage collaboration among counties.

**Goal 4** Improve broadband availability and quality.
GOAL 1

CREATE A DIVERSE ECONOMY THAT IS RESILIENT TO CHANGE

WHY IS THIS OUR GOAL?

GRADD’s economy relies heavily on manufacturing and it is important to make economic decisions to support the industry. However, the region must also work to diversify the economy to increase resiliency by encouraging new businesses and developing new industries. Quality of life and cultural factors are incredibly important to attracting and retaining entrepreneurs and highly skilled workers, especially young college graduates.

GRADD’s goal for diversification is to attract and retain these individuals by supporting entrepreneurship, encouraging industries that value college education and technical skills to expand and invest in the region, promoting diversity in the community to create a strong and unique culture, and raising the regional standard of living.

STRATEGY

Objective 1: Foster entrepreneurial efforts.
• Create and support business incubators that offer services and assistance to entrepreneurs.
• Encourage an entrepreneurial spirit among young people through programs like Junior Achievement.

Objective 2: Encourage openness to diverse populations.
• Develop county contingency plans for changing economic realities.
• Promote acceptance of different people and ideas through multicultural events.

METRICS
• 3% growth in biotech/IT jobs within 5 years
• 3% increase in minority population by 2030
• Creation or expansion of entrepreneur assistance programs within 5 years
• Lower unemployment rate
• Increased minority population
• Increased number of businesses owned by minorities and women
• Growth in technology-related industries

Small business in Hartford
GOAL 2

STRENGTHEN THE WORKFORCE & INCREASE LABOR RESILIENCE

Why is this our goal?

Workforce development is a key factor in making GRADD more resilient. The region needs more skilled individuals to attract more industries and businesses. By establishing and promoting programs that teach critical technical skills, the region will create a workforce that draws in manufacturing companies with positions that pay well; raising the overall quality of life for residents. These programs also ensure that workers are able to withstand the effects of economic change and layoffs, as they can transfer their knowledge from one job to another.

Education is also vital to creating a strong workforce. Early and K-12 education are important foundations for higher education or technical school. Graduates of higher education bring different and valuable skills and help diversify the economy.

Strategy

Objective 1: Improve educational attainment.
- Support early learning through programs like HeadStart & Early Learning Academies.
- Improve high school graduation rates through tutoring and remediation.
- Increase the number of students pursuing post-secondary degrees & technical certifications by promoting programs.

Objective 2: Increase career readiness.
- Encourage work-ready programs and increased training for workers.
- Continue to provide job retraining programs for displaced workers.

Metrics
- 95% high school graduation rate by 2025
- 3% increase in bachelor’s attainment within 5 years
- 5% increase in participation of technical programs within 5 years
- Lower unemployment in all counties to less than 5.5% within 5 years
- Increased kindergarten readiness
- Increased college and career readiness

KYFAME student
**GOAL 3**

**Encourage collaboration between counties**

**Strategy**

**Objective 1: Increase regional communication.**
- Increase representative participation in inter-county boards and committees.
- Encourage intercounty events/tourism.

**Objective 2: Collaborate to market the region.**
- Compile regional economic data including industrial sites to create a website/app & brochure as a marketing tool.
- Compile information on regional culture and quality of life to create a website/app & brochure as a marketing tool.

**Metrics**
- Creation of economic database within 2 years
- Creation of website/app & brochure within 2 years
- Increased tourism
- Economic growth distributed throughout counties
- Economic growth in the agricultural industry

---

**Why is this our goal?**

GRADD has two urban cities, Henderson and Owensboro, with populations over 25,000 and four other smaller cities with a population of over 2,500. The remaining 21 cities are more rural. Of the region's population, 53.35 percent live in rural areas and 46.65 percent live in urban areas. It is important for overall economic growth to benefit both urban and rural residents.

To bring about comprehensive growth, counties and cities must make collaboration and communication priorities. Cooperative efforts to market the region as a whole allows cities and counties to leverage nearby resources to attract new industries and investments. Additionally, county collaboration on events could expand the tourism industry by marketing each county's resources as a unique and attractive culture.

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Advertisement for the Bluegrass, Blue & Barbecue region of Kentucky, which includes all GRADD counties.
**Why is this our goal?**

Internet infrastructure is vital to a region’s capacity for growth. It impacts both economic factors and quality of life factors. GRADD has made huge strides in improving broadband services, but adequate internet and cell service is still not available in all areas of the community.

Without fast and reliable internet, local small businesses are unable to use online services and cannot compete with larger businesses with better connections. Lack of strong internet infrastructure makes it harder to market the region to new industries or investors. Residents may be unable to work remotely and may be forced to travel long distances for work or school.

**Strategy**

**Objective 1: Upgrade ConnectGRADD.**
- Monitor emerging technologies that could improve speed and service capabilities.
- Secure funding for the integration of these technologies into the network.

**Objective 2: Pursue alternative options.**
- Monitor progress of the KentuckyWired program statewide.
- Encourage private investment to offer alternative options for access.
- Encourage partnerships to speed up the process of bringing high-speed internet to the region.

**Metrics**
- 5% increase in ConnectGRADD subscribers within 5 years
- Have a vendor providing KentuckyWired service to all counties within 5 years
- Better broadband service in rural areas
- Increased online education participation
- Increased online business by local business owners
- Increase of locally-owned small businesses
The evaluation framework is a tool for gauging progress on the successful implementation of the CEDS. The performance measures and goals set by GRADD are indicators of growth and increased resilience and prosperity.

### Evaluation Framework

**“How are we doing, and how can we do better?”**

The evaluation framework is a tool for gauging progress on the successful implementation of the CEDS. The performance measures and goals set by GRADD are indicators of growth and increased resilience and prosperity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timeframe</th>
<th>Performance Measure</th>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Benchmark for Progress</th>
<th>Responsible Entity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Short</strong></td>
<td>Higher graduation rates</td>
<td>95% graduation rate</td>
<td>GRADD’s 2017 average graduation rate is 90.2%&lt;sup&gt;3&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>School districts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1-3 Years)</td>
<td>Higher average ACT score</td>
<td>ACT score raised above national average of 20.8</td>
<td>GRADD’s 2017 average composite score is 19.8&lt;sup&gt;7&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>School districts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mid</strong></td>
<td>More minority/ women owned businesses</td>
<td>7% increase in number of minority/women owned businesses</td>
<td>GRADD’s 2012 number of minority/women owned businesses is 4,521 (7% increase yields 4,838)&lt;sup&gt;3&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Economic development organizations, city and county governments, GRADD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3-5 Years)</td>
<td>Increased post-secondary attainment</td>
<td>3% increase in number of post-secondary degrees</td>
<td>GRADD’s 2017 number of residents with post-secondary degrees is 40,592 (3% increase yields 41,810)&lt;sup&gt;3&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>School districts, high school counselors, colleges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Long</strong></td>
<td>Lower unemployment rate</td>
<td>Unemployment rate decreased below the state rate</td>
<td>GRADD’s 2018 annual average unemployment rate is 4.2% compared to Kentucky’s of 4.0%&lt;sup&gt;3&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>GO FAME, Kyndle FAME, GRADD, economic development organizations, city and county governments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5+ Years)</td>
<td>Higher per-capita income</td>
<td>Per capita increased to meet or exceed state average</td>
<td>GRADD’s 2017 per capita income is $24,408 compared to Kentucky’s of $25,888&lt;sup&gt;3&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Workforce development organizations, colleges, industry leaders</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
COUNTY PRIORITIES
Judge Al Mattingly

- Upgrade the Audubon and Natcher Parkways to interstate standards.
- Expand broadband accessibility in the county and provide redundancy in fiber optics.
- Increase public awareness of drug abuse and strengthen treatment opportunities.
- Continue identification and development of industrial sites and parks.
- Promote regionalism among the GRADD counties, particularly in terms of solid waste coordination, animal shelters, prisons, and E911 call centers.

PEOPLE

99,937
Population

38.7
Median Age

HOUSING

$130,800
Median Home Value

EDUCATION

90.0%
High School Graduates Over Age 25

22.9%
Bachelor’s Degree Holders Over Age 25

ECONOMY

$27,462
Per Capita Income

$49,836
Median Household Income

16.1%
Individuals Below Poverty Line

5.4%
Unemployment
COUNTY PRIORITIES
Judge Johnny “Chic” Roberts

- Continue to expand the vocational and technical classes available at Owensboro Community and Technical College’s Hancock County Center.
- Extend broadband throughout the county.
- Construct a county wellness center.
- Establish childcare facilities for working families near major industrial sites.
- Extend waterlines to unserved areas and create a regional water system with interconnects between each utility system.
Judge Brad Schneider

**COUNTY PRIORITIES**

- Continue to effectively manage county finances to maintain the lowest tax rates possible while still maintaining core services and assisting with economic development opportunities.
- Strongly support efforts to help build the I-69 Ohio River bridge.
- Improve internet service in underserved parts of the county.
- Support and complement the Henderson Economic Development agency’s efforts in industrial recruitment/expansion and small business development.
- Assist and support local and regional efforts to restore our economy and help local citizens get back to work.
- Promote the services and programs at Henderson Community College and Henderson County High School’s Career and Technical Education program.
- Maintain and improve local infrastructure that supports our businesses and industries and improves the quality of life for residents.

---

**EDUCATION**

- **86.8%**
  - High School Graduates Over Age 25
- **17.9%**
  - Bachelor’s Degree Holders Over Age 25

**HOUSING**

- **$127,200**
  - Median Home Value

**ECONOMY**

- **$25,376**
  - Per Capita Income
- **$45,389**
  - Median Household Income
- **18.6%**
  - Individuals Below Poverty Line
- **4.7%**
  - Unemployment

**PEOPLE**

- **46,137**
  - Population
- **40.8**
  - Median Age
McLean County Statistics

COUNTY PRIORITIES
Judge Curtis Dame

- Assist the Cities of Livermore and Calhoun in the construction of new fire departments through state, federal, and local funding.
- Develop a plan and funding mechanism for a waterline extension to the new coal mine and for an interconnection between Calhoun and Sacramento Water District services.
- Expand cell and broadband accessibility, including extending service to the new coal mine.
- Seek funding to improve recreational development opportunities, especially at Myer Creek Park.
- Encourage new small businesses to open in vacant storefront lots.

PEOPLE
9,331
Population

41.3
Median Age

HOUSING
$98,500
Median Home Value

ECONOMY
$24,557
Per Capita Income
$50,445
Median Household Income

EDUCATION
87.2%
High School Graduates Over Age 25

12.0%
Bachelor’s Degree Holders Over Age 25

7.0%
Unemployment

16.9%
Individuals Below Poverty Line
COUNTY PRIORITIES
Judge David Johnston

• Construct a new county jail.
• Continue working to build a resilient and effective workforce and become a workforce-ready community.
• Develop recreational trails throughout the county, including water trails.
• Develop a five-year detailed road plan to improve and maintain the county’s infrastructure.

OHIO COUNTY STATISTICS

PEOPLE
24,071
Population

HOUSING
$91,300
Median Home Value

EDUCATION
82.1%
High School Graduates Over Age 25

$24,231
Per Capita Income

13.3%
Bachelor’s Degree Holders Over Age 25

$42,826
Median Household Income

9.1%
Individuals Below Poverty Line

40.6
Median Age

20.5%
Unemployment

4.6
Median Home Value

31
COUNTY PRIORITIES
Judge Adam O’Nan

- Complete the improvements to Heavy Haul Road on Highway 56 from US 130 past Morganfield to Shawneetown.
- Continue to develop and promote all industrial parks in Union County, particularly the Sturgis Airport site.
- Continue to find ways to improve the local parks, especially for sporting activities and tourism.
- Continue to provide health care for the underserved, including finding a provider to serve the needs of the full population for an urgent care clinic and finding a provider of dialysis services to locate in Union County.
COUNTY PRIORITIES  
Judge Stephen R. Henry

- Institute workforce development programs with KCTCS.
- Improve high-speed internet access.
- Develop and promote Sebree South Business Park.
- Develop and promote Webster County I-69 Industrial Park.
- Improve water and wastewater infrastructure throughout the entire county.

WEBSTER COUNTY STATISTICS

PEOPLE

13,155  
Population

41.1  
Median Age

EDUCATION

81.4%  
High School Graduates Over Age 25

9.8%  
Bachelor’s Degree Holders Over Age 25

HOUSING

$81,300  
Median Home Value

ECONOMY

$21,880  
Per Capita Income

$40,947  
Median Household Income

4.9%  
Unemployment

22.1%  
Individuals Below Poverty Line