



Press Release: For Immediate Release

Five Communities Chosen for Prepared Communities Program

Southeast Ohio: February 1, 2020 — Ohio Southeast Economic Development (OhioSE), in partnership with Bricker and Eckler LLP, today announced five communities in Southeast Ohio were selected to participate in the Prepared Communities Program: The Village of Greenfield in Highland County, the Village of Chauncey in Athens County, the Village of New Concord in Muskingum County, Jefferson County, and Noble County.

Facilitated by OhioSE and Bricker and Eckler LLP, the Prepared Communities Program recognizes the unique challenges faced within the Southeast Ohio region and that there is no blanket approach that will work across the region's diverse economic landscape. Through engaging with local communities, listening to their challenges, and providing resources and economic development tools, the program aims to prepare each community with a strategic plan that addresses their unique needs.

"Often, communities, large and small, don't have the resources to get started on an economic development strategy," said Katy Farber, Vice President of OhioSE. "The Prepared Communities Program is designed to be the catalyst for moving forward."

OhioSE recognized that a community strategy or a common vision is necessary in order to achieve economic development success. "With a vision that becomes an actionable plan, you have direction," said Farber. "We want to help counties and communities in this region create a vision and develop an actionable plan."

"We are beyond thrilled to receive this opportunity for guidance on economic development," said Amy Renner, Mayor of the Village of Chauncey in Athens County. "With the main trailhead to the Baileys Trail System being in Chauncey, we are moving into uncharted territory as we work to ensure that we are bringing about the change that we want to see. To receive real, actionable insight will be invaluable as we develop our plan for Chauncey's future."

Leaders in Noble County are looking forward to participating in this year's program. "With the support of Commissioner Brad Peoples and Caldwell Mayor Misty Wells attending the ED Now programs, Noble County was eligible to apply for the OhioSE Prepared Communities Program," said Community Development Educator Gwynn Stewart with Ohio State University Extension. "With several goals in mind, we want to fine tune our vision and strategies for economic development and look forward to gaining this valuable technical assistance and guidance from OhioSE and Bricker and Eckler."

The Prepared Communities program will provide each participating community with free technical assistance from the professional team at Bricker and Eckler LLP and OhioSE that will provide the framework for developing a workable plan for future economic development strategy.

Bricker & Eckler, LLP, a leading Midwestern law firm based in Columbus and with offices in Marietta and Barnesville, has partnered with OhioSE to provide technical expertise in local economic development finance and programming. “With a deep level of experience across many decades in Ohio’s state and local economic development efforts, Bricker is an ideal fit to pair with the selected five communities,” said Farber. Attorneys with Bricker will work alongside OhioSE’s own program experts to develop for each community a specific, laser-focused economic development plan for quick action in the next year or two.

“The Village of Greenfield is extremely thankful and excited to partner with OhioSE and Bricker & Eckler,” said Todd Wilkin, City Manager for the Village of Greenfield in Highland County. “The Village considers Bricker & Eckler to be the gold standard on economic development stimulation. The partnership with Bricker and Eckler and our well-established bond with OhioSE will be a relationship that could be the catalyst to our home.”

Leaders in Jefferson County see this opportunity as a path forward as the region begins to recover from the pandemic. “As our area ventures into 2021 and beyond, many of our residents see opportunity, and possibly a paradigm shift, in how business will be conducted post COVID-19,” said Robert Naylor, Executive Director for the Jefferson County Port Authority. “From the promotion of sustainable industries to a redefining of what people want from the communities where they live, economic development must adapt and respond to these changes. Coupling the identification of these opportunities with the implementation of a workable plan will enable Jefferson County to define its own trajectory to renewed economic growth and prosperity.”

Mayor Jennifer Lyle said she was delighted that the Village of New Concord was selected for the inaugural Prepared Communities Program. “This is a great opportunity for us to move forward with long-held goals,” she said. “We could not ask for a better economic development catalyst than the support and outstanding expertise of OhioSE and Bricker & Eckler. We are ready to roll up our sleeves and build a platform under our dreams.”

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JobsOhio is a private nonprofit economic development corporation designed to drive job creation and new capital investment in Ohio through business attraction, retention and expansion. The organization also works to seed talent production in its targeted industries and to attract talent to Ohio through [Find Your Ohio](#). JobsOhio works with six regional partners across Ohio: [Dayton Development Coalition](#), [Ohio Southeast Economic Development](#), [One Columbus](#), [REDI Cincinnati](#), [Regional Growth Partnership](#) and [Team NEO](#). Learn more at www.jobsohio.com. Follow us on [LinkedIn](#), [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).

Ohio Southeast Economic Development (OhioSE) is the JobsOhio Network Partner for southern, eastern, and southeastern Ohio, providing economic development work and resources in 25 rural counties; they are the newest and geographically the largest of the six regions across the state. OhioSE partners closely with regional development districts, local economic development offices, state agencies, and other entities to expand, retain, and attract businesses in the counties they serve. Learn more at OhioSE.com.