

Portage County, Ohio



Portage County, conveniently located in Northeast Ohio's industrial, educational and recreational heartland, features a robust economy,

a rural small town environment and all the amenities of Northeast Ohio within a one-hour drive. Formed as part of the Connecticut Western Reserve, Portage County has a population of 152,061 and encompasses approximately 500 square miles.



Portage County was born of transportation and in the beginning was acknowledged for its strategic location, and it still is today. I-80 (Ohio Turnpike), with two interchanges, and I-76 bisect the county in an east-west direction. I-480 provides quick access to the Cleveland metro area and I-90. I-76 provides access to the major north-south routes of I-77 and I-71. While centrally located in the center of Northeast Ohio's manufacturing heartland, the county retains its rural environment. Portage County's gently rolling topography houses over 152,000 people. Major cities include Aurora, Kent, Ravenna and Streetsboro.

All major modes of transportation are easily assessable. The commercial airports of Akron-Canton, Cleveland Hopkins International and Youngstown are within a one-hour drive. Private aircraft have use of Portage County (3500 ft. runway) and Kent State University Airports. The Wheeling and Lake Erie Railway provides quick access to the nation's rail network.

Once noted for the high quality of its manufactured glass and the output of its more than 50 cheese plants, Portage County's growing business base now hosts a range of industry producing an array of products, from butter to toys, lamp bulbs, personal care products, lawn care and aircraft components.

Metalworking, Plastic & Rubber Products and Printing/Publishing lead the county's manufacturing sector.

New and expanding manufacturing and distribution firms invested approximately 840 million dollars in Portage County during the period 1992 - 2005. These investments added over 6,800 new jobs to Portage County's job base and retained over 5,100 existing jobs. New construction added over 8.5 million sq. ft. of new industrial space.

Portage County and local communities have an aggressive economic development policy. Fifteen Enterprise Zones within the county have produced over 130 enterprise zone agreements with new and expanding industries.

For more information and confidential assistance locating industrial sites, buildings and development resources, contact:

Portage County Office of Economic Development
Sy Thompson, Director
128 North Prospect Street
Ravenna, Ohio 44266
Phone: (330) 297-3470 Fax: (330) 297-3472
E-mail: pcoed@neo.rr.com
Web Site: www.portageworkforce.org/pcoed

POPULATION

152,061 (2000 Census)

GOVERNMENT

Portage County's government is administered by a three member board of commissioners. Political subdivisions include 5 cities, 7 villages and 18 townships

EDUCATION

12 Public school districts and 4 private schools
Maplewood Career Center

Kent State University

Hiram College

Northeast Ohio Universities College of Medicine

Boheckers Business College

The region is home to over 30 institutions of higher education.

BUSINESS IN PORTAGE

Portage County is home to over 2500 businesses. Nearly 400 are involved in manufacturing or distribution. Metalworking, Plastic & Rubber Products and Printing/Publishing lead the county's manufacturing sector.

Agri-business, with 719 farms average over \$33,000 each in annual sales. Major business employers include General Electric, The Step2 Company, Deluxe Business Systems, St Gobain Performance Plastics, Foundry Systems International, Parker-Hannifin, Land O'Lakes, The Press of Ohio, McMaster Carr Corporation, Automated Packaging, Davey Tree Expert Company, DaimlerChrysler Mopar Distribution Center, Commercial Turf Products, East Manufacturing, USA Instruments and L'Oreal USA.

TRANSPORTATION

Highways I-76, I-80, & I-480 with quick access to I-71, I-77, I-90 & I-271. Ohio Turnpike (I-80) exits 13 & 13a are located in Portage County.

U. S. 224 & U.S. 422

Ohio 5, 14, 43, 44, 59, 82, 88, 183, 225, 261, 282, 303, 305, 306, & 700.

Rail Service Wheeling and Lake Erie Railway provides freight rail connections to the nations rail system.

Air Services Cleveland Hopkins International Airport, Akron/Canton Regional Airport and the Youngstown/Warren Regional Airport, conveniently located within a one hour drive of Portage County, offer daily direct and connecting flights to U. S. and international destinations. Private aircraft have use of the Portage County and Kent State University Airports.

Water Ports low cost water transportation, via Lake Erie and the St. Lawrence Seaway is also within a one-hour drive of Portage County.

UTILITIES

Electric Power: Ohio Edison, a First Energy Co.

Natural Gas: Dominion/East Ohio Gas

Water and Sanitary Sewer: Provided by various political subdivisions and the Portage County Water Resources Department.

Telecommunications: SBC/Ameritech, AT&T, AllTel, GTE and United Telephone of Ohio.

WORKFORCE

Average Workforce as of 5/2005: 87,600

Average Unemployment as of 5/2005: 5.2%

Covered employment by industry as of 2002:

Manufacturing 24.0%

Wholesale/Retail 15.2%

Service 28.7%

*Government/Education 22.7%

Transportation/Utilities 2.1%

Construction 4.7%

Misc. 2%

Finance/Ins/Real Estate 2.3%

* Includes KSU, Hiram College and NEOUCOM.

TAX STRUCTURE

Local Real Property: Assessed at 35% of market value. Net effective millage for commercial/industrial property ranges from 38.82 to 74.60 per \$1000.

Local Tangible Personal Property: Assessed at 25% of true value. Gross millage ranges from 55.37 to 123.74 per \$1000.

Local Income Tax: 0 to 2%

Local Sales/Use Tax: 1.25%

State Taxes

Sales/Use Tax: 5.5%

Corporate Income Tax: 5.1%

Personal Income Tax: 7% - 7%

Unemployment Tax: 1% - 8%

RECREATION/SHOPPING

Major malls in nearby communities, several strip centers and 70 outlet stores within the county provide an abundance of shopping opportunities. Family recreation options include Geauga Lake/Wildwater Kingdom, 11 public golf courses, 3 state parks and a wide array of community parks and private campgrounds. Major league sports within a one-hour drive include the Cleveland Indians, Cleveland Cavaliers and the Cleveland Browns.

Revised: 7/2005