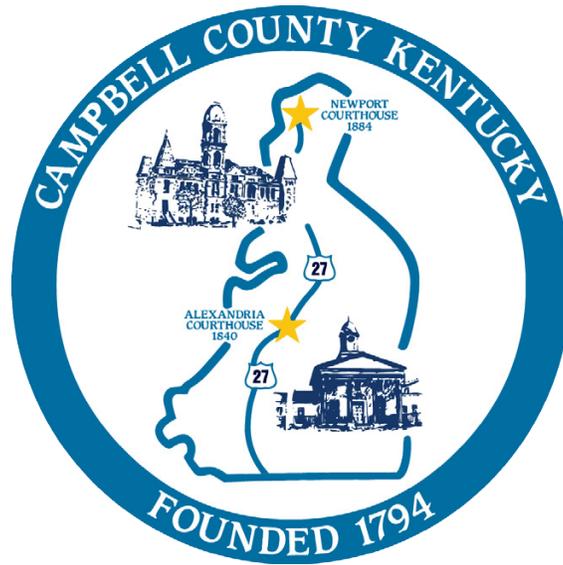


CAMPBELL COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OFFICE 2015 ANNUAL REPORT



OFFICE MISSION & PURPOSE



Seth Cutter

The **Campbell County Economic Development Office (CCEDO)** is a program of the County Fiscal Court, housed within the Office of the Judge/Executive. Created in 2015, this office exists to *create and sustain momentum for the attraction, retention, and creation of good-paying jobs in the county*, as well as to help maintain a high-quality community in which people and companies want to invest. An economic development officer, Seth Cutter, is the full-time position assigned to this work, which reports to the county administrator. This position also doubles as president of the Campbell County Economic Progress Authority, Inc., a non-profit corporation created by the Fiscal Court in 1982; the CCEPA collaborates with and provides guidance to this economic development work.

OVERVIEW OF WORK AREAS

Economic development is a broad area of work, and, in Campbell County, responsibility for these activities is shared between our 15 cities, the county, and numerous regional partners. The Northern Kentucky Tri-County Economic Development Corporation (Tri-ED) is the lead regional agency charged with economic development of primary industry companies in Boone, Campbell, and Kenton Counties, but the CCEDO exists to bolster those efforts and provide leadership in areas where Tri-ED does not cover, especially in support of secondary industry and in quality of life efforts.

The daily efforts of the CCEDO can be placed into one of the following groups.

- Work to retain and help businesses expand and grow here
- Attract new businesses to locate here and support development projects to grow residential and business tax bases
- Support entrepreneurship efforts, especially in partnership with NKU
- Be a reliable source of information; market the county's development sites
- Lead efforts to create a business-friendly brand
- Explore grant and funding opportunities for this work
- Leverage local and state incentive programs
- Build relationships and liaise with regional partners; support city staff in local economic development work
- Identify needs and promote investment in critical infrastructure areas
- Advocate for business-friendly policies and programs



MAJOR WORK IN 2015

The CCEDO became staffed in March 2015. Here are some highlights of the work and accomplishments of the office in the first 10 months.

- Assisted in securing and supporting study of Rumpke's site in Wilder for Duke Energy Site Readiness Program
- Worked with the City of Newport to attract a project with 36 jobs to the offices at Newport on the Levee
- Worked with a business in southern Campbell County to identify candidate sites for a third office location
- Negotiated and helped close on the sale of the CCEPA's one-acre Lot 1A in Claryville
- Helped facilitate movement on the sale of the remaining parcels of the old Trauth Dairy building in Newport
- Launched a monthly e-news series for the Fiscal Court
- Assisted regional partners in developing the NKY Startup Resource website directory
- Assisted and advised the City of Bellevue on creating a new tax increment finance district
- Maintained site inventories and started conducting county-wide land corridor reviews for the 2015/2016 Comprehensive Plan update

BUSINESS RETENTION & ATTRACTION

One of the most critical areas of work for the CCEDO is working with existing businesses to encourage their retention in the county and to choose to grow and expand here. We collaborate with Northern Kentucky Tri-ED, our municipal partners, and utility providers to address the needs of these businesses in achieving retention and expansion.

A key component of our business retention strategy is to regularly meet with our employers/businesses. In 2015, we led and/or participated in **30 formal visits or business check-in meetings**. Highlights are below.

Listed at right are Campbell County's largest employers in 2015, and, of note, our county relies on a state institution and a non-profit health system as top employers, so we also strive to make sure we are in touch with them and that their needs are supported.

In addition to striving to stay in touch with businesses outside of visits, a key outcome of these efforts is to connect businesses with local resources, like NKU's Small Business Development Center. Along with Tri-ED, we also look to ensure businesses are aware of any applicable local and state incentive programs.

KEY VISITS :: 2015

Below is a sampling of visits to/with businesses by the CCEDO.

- Around the Home & Farm
- Auveco
- Best Way Disposal
- Chambers Trucking
- Corporex
- Fastemp
- General Cable
- Heritage Bank
- Hillshire Brands/Tyson
- Jolly Properties
- KLH Engineers
- Kroger
- Newport on the Levee
- Republic Bank
- SHP
- Stockpilz
- Studio Vertu
- TutorGen

LARGEST EMPLOYERS*

1. Northern Kentucky University
2. St. Elizabeth Healthcare
3. Campbell County Board of Education
4. Hillshire Brands/Tyson
5. General Cable
6. Kroger
7. IPSCO Tubulars Kentucky, Inc.
8. Commonwealth of Kentucky
9. Fort Thomas Board of Education
10. Diocese of Covington Board of Education

LARGEST FOR-PROFIT EMPLOYERS*

1. Hillshire Brands/Tyson
2. General Cable
3. Kroger
4. IPSCO Tubulars Kentucky, Inc.
5. Castellini Company
6. Darling International (Griffin Industries)
7. Continental Silver Grove
8. Summit Medical Group
9. Walmart
10. PPD Global Central Labs

**Largest employers ranked by payroll tax withheld as of 15 April 2015*

ATTRACTION & INCENTIVES/TOOLS

While most job growth in a jurisdiction comes from the success of existing businesses, new business attraction is a principal focus of the CCEDO; it, however, is the long-term work where a few 'wins' may come only after many attempts. We have served as the local resource to Tri-ED and the NKY Chamber for a number of their leads and site inquiries in 2015.

The CCEDO also serves as the **tax increment finance** (TIF) administration for the county, in conjunction with the Occupational Tax and Finance Departments. We assist in making calculations for and advising the three cities in the county with such districts. The CCEDO also works with the Tax Department to market and administer the county's **jobs development program**, in which we have five (5) participants and is our main tool in attempting to leverage new job-related projects/investments.



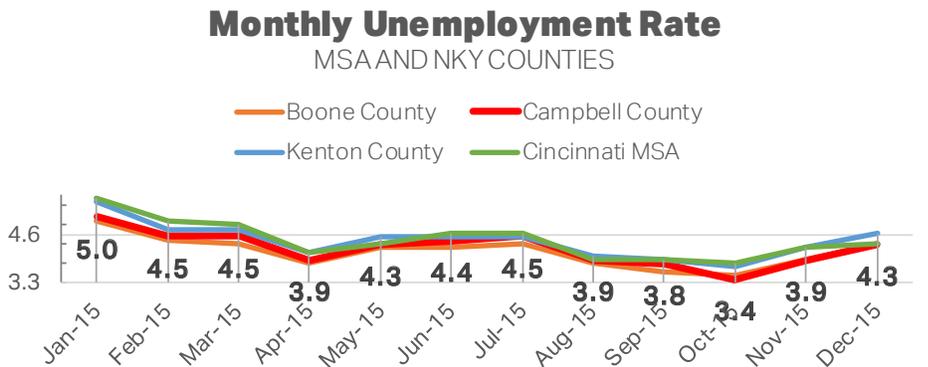
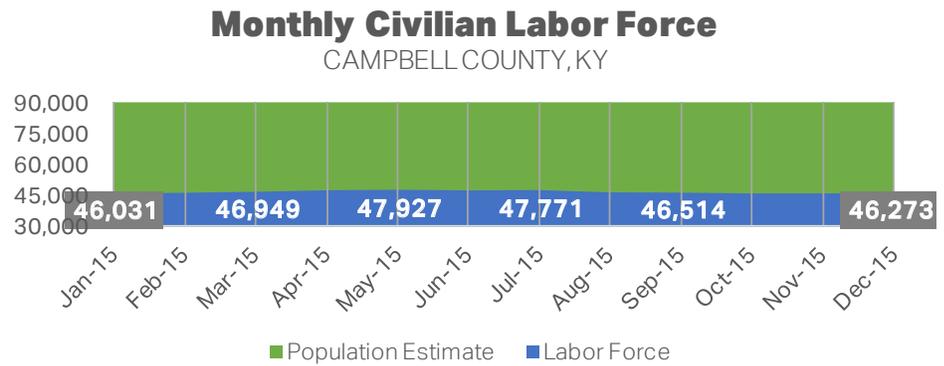
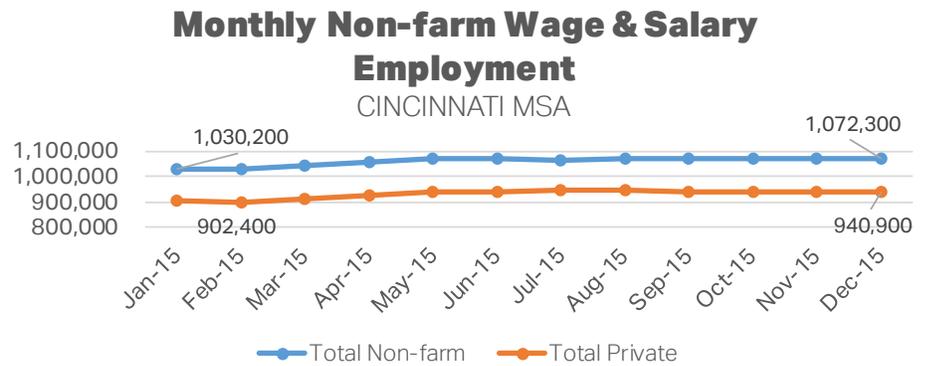
RESEARCH & INFORMATION

Another important function of the CCEDO is to prepare and present reports of the general economic health of the county to key stakeholders. In addition to presenting such reports to the Campbell Leadership Action Group and at the quarterly Mayors/Fiscal Court meetings, we meet regularly with developers and other parties interested in knowing more about economic conditions here.

The economic climate in the county, as well as the larger region, proved strong in 2015. Here are some key statistics from various sources.

- **\$459.8M in new capital investment** reported by Tri-ED for the three NKY counties (105% increase over 2014)
- **1,120 permits issued** by county P&Z by the end of 2015, a 36% increase over 2014
- About a **4% increase** in county payroll taxes collected in 2015 compared to 2014
- A **\$54,482 median household income** in Campbell County as of 2014

Also, the graphs at right show key economic statistics for all 12 months of 2015. Of note, Campbell County averaged the *lowest average unemployment rate of all three NKY counties in 2015* at 4.2%, ending December at just slightly higher than that rate. Our county also saw a 14% drop in that rate from January to December, while Boone County lowered its rate by 12%, Kenton County by about 15%, and the MSA by 22%. All in all, these data support the idea that the local economy in terms of business investment and job growth tracks well to national trends in continuing to gradually improve since the Great Recession.



MARKETING OVERVIEW

Marketing the county, including our available land sites, workforce strengths, assets, and other general positive news, is a component of economic development. The CCEDO is responsible for some Fiscal Court communications, including the e-newsletter series and alerts, Facebook publishing, and Fiscal Court submissions to the biannual *What's Happening* mailing. In addition, our office also publishes marketing materials related to incentive programs, sites for sale, etc. and distributes these externally.

Since beginning these duties in September 2015, **general e-newsletter subscriptions ended the year up 5%** and **Facebook likes increased by 8%**.

PARTNERSHIPS & COLLABORATION

DEVELOPMENTS

There are many large-scale development projects that have and are occurring across the county, which were already in progress in 2015 or which have not required direct support from the CCEDO. Here are just a few.

- Aqua at the Levee, *Newport*
- Hampton Inn, *Newport*
- Fourth Street School redevelopment, *Newport*
- Newport Pavilion, *Newport*
- 18 North Bldg., *Fort Thomas*
- Marianne Theater redevelopment, *Bellevue*
- NKU Health Innovations Center, *Highland Heights*
- Beacon Drive business corridor, *Wildier*
- Arcadia subdivision, *Alexandria*

PUBLIC RELATIONS

As part of branding the county as open for business and to share development momentum, the CCEDO engages local media outlets to spread the word. Here were a few placements in 2015.

- "Seth Cutter: 5 questions on economy and jobs;" *Campbell Community Recorder* 04/20/15
- "Campbell household income surpasses Kenton;" *River City News* 07/18/15
- "Fort Thomas and Campbell County rank in school tests;" *Campbell Community Recorder* 10/05/15
- "Small Business Saturday;" *Fort Thomas Matters* 11/24/15

Critical to the activity of economic development in our county is working with and engaging the many partner organizations who support job, business, and community growth. The CCEDO is in frequent communication and meets with the following.

- Campbell County's 15 cities
- Southbank Partners
- Catalytic Fund
- NKY Tri-ED
- REDI Cincinnati
- Utility providers: Duke Energy, Owen Electric, KYTC-6, SD1
- Education partners: NKU, Gateway

Our office is also a member of or is a resource to the following groups.

- Kentucky Association for



- Economic Development
- NKY Chamber (Transportation & Infrastructure Committee)
- Allies for Economic Growth
- UpTech Advisory Committee
- Farmland Work Group (Conservation District)
- Newport Business Association
- Fort Thomas Business Association
- American Heart Association HeartChase Leadership Team

As noted on page 3, the CCEDO also offers regular reports at events and has presented to groups such as the county Rotary Club. In 2015, we also assisted with events like the Backroads Farm Tour and the Beyond the Curb urban living tour. Finally, our office is in a unique position to bring various stakeholders together for high-impact projects, and we have now worked with the county P&Z to start such a conversation with our river cities concerning long-term planning for and study of the KY-8 corridor in our county.

CAMPBELL IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Energy and excitement continued to build in 2015 for long-awaited projects, and other Campbell County businesses and organizations brought welcome publicity to our community. Here is just a sampling of the press.

- Newport leaders bring four Red Bike stations to city ENQUIRER / MAR 2015
- Manhattan Harbour phase one is built and debuted ENQUIRER / JUL 2015
- NKU College of Business ranks high in Princeton list RECORDER / OCT 2015
- NKU starts on \$97M Health Innovations Center ENQUIRER / OCT 2015
- Riverfront Commons granted \$5.4M, keeps momentum WCPO / OCT 2015
- KY-9/AA expansion into Newport gets underway ENQUIRER / NOV 2015
- Nexigen sees national recognition for 2015 growth TRIBUNE / FEB 2016
- Two Campbell companies make Tri-ED '15 project list TRIBUNE / FEB 2016
- Cincy/NKY MSA ranks 4th for '15 new biz facilities LANE REPORT / MAR 2016

LOOKING AHEAD

In preparation for another year of working on all the various aspects of economic development, the CCEDO in January/February 2016 launched our first annual business check-in survey as an online tool to gauge the thoughts of the local business community and leadership. While a full report of the results will be released separately, here are some early takeaways from what we learned.

- Survey was sent to or invite was seen by approximately 600 and had **39 responses** (26 completed, 13 partial)
- Most respondents were **small businesses** with representation from 10 of 15 cities and unincorporated county
- Top **issues of concern** focused on available workforce, parking and transportation, and age or lack of utilities
- When asked if they would choose to locate in Campbell County again, **81%** were highly likely or likely to do so
- Location/proximity to Cincinnati and local leadership were listed as reasons **people like doing business here**
- Topography, limited land sites, and technology arose as **perceived threats** to continued business growth here
- Sixty-one percent (61%) rated their own company's **growth prospects** in 2016 as good or excellent

MAJOR GOALS FOR 2016

The CCEDO anticipates a busy year in 2016, and we are already seeing momentum for new development that we have begun working on, such as inquiries for sites in the west side of Newport given the KY-9/AA expansion, for instance. Here are five (5) key goals that will guide our county economic development efforts over the next 12-14 months.

1. Research, identify, propose, market, and otherwise support one **major development/redevelopment project**
2. Create and implement a comprehensive Campbell County-specific **business retention program**
3. Further develop a **Campbell County brand** (and associated, regular marketing items) that is business-friendly
4. Write and attempt to win at least one **grant or new funding opportunity** on behalf of the CCEPA
5. Research and propose one new **incentive program** for Fiscal Court that is anticipated to have tangible impact

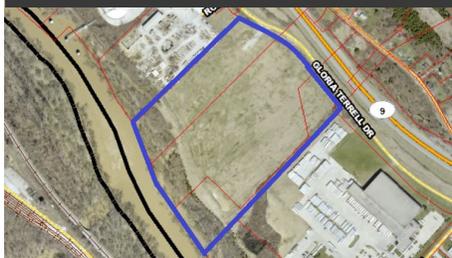
For the first goal, the following three sites are significant opportunities for Campbell County where we continue to work on development interest to attract new jobs and encourage economic benefit. We will also prioritize working on transportation as it relates to connecting people to jobs, as well as workforce development issues in general.

BEVERLY HILLS



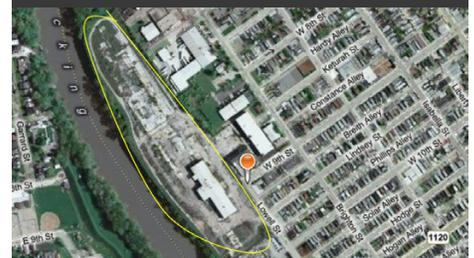
- This is a premier 80-acre land site in Southgate at the southeast corner of I-471 and US-27
- Zoned for professional office, the site owner is interested in selling, and we are helping the mayor work through ongoing citizen concerns about new development here

RUMPKE, WILDER



- This 26-acre site in Wilder is owned by Rumpke of Kentucky and nearly sold last year
- Zoned for industrial use, we are working with the city to address developer concerns about building on the fly ash fill here in order to encourage the siting of a jobs-producing facility

OLD NEWPORT STEEL



- On the far west side of Newport sits about 16 acres, which was home to the Newport Steel mill
- Working with the city and interested developers and businesses, we hope to capitalize on the KY-9/AA project in order to support Newport's vision for prime growth here

MAKING AN IMPACT

Because the customer of the CCEDO is largely an external one to the Fiscal Court, any report and highlights should be validated by those with whom we have worked most closely. Whether it is a business we have helped connect to a resource or site here or a regional partner or municipality that has come to rely on our services and expertise, here are just a few thoughts from direct stakeholders in 2015's work portfolio.



The David J. Joseph Company

STEVE LENNARTZ

LARGE BUSINESS

"Seth was very helpful as we looked for a new office location. [He] took time to assist us with finding a new location and working with Campbell County agencies. We felt a genuine interest in our business after our first meeting. Thanks again for your assistance."



Fort Thomas
Business Association
Connected & Growing

TRACY DAVIS

BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

"Seth Cutter is a great resource to the Fort Thomas Business Association. He provides a broader view of our economic landscape and keeps us abreast of future plans. The businesses appreciate him always letting them know what resources are available for the variety of topics that come up. The member businesses and the board find his insight, ideas, and feedback invaluable; his experience provides a very well-rounded, educated perspective."



STEVE ENZWEILER

SMALL BUSINESS

"Seth has been very helpful as we learn and journey through a transition process. Finding a new location and all the steps that are involved can be overwhelming. This is especially true for business owners that are heavily involved in the daily transaction of their business. I feel Seth's guidance on our decision process of finding a good location, understanding zoning, and providing ideas of topics to consider helped us tremendously."



GREG MEYERS

MUNICIPAL PARTNER

"Economic development is often associated to a marathon—not a sprint. The City of Highland Heights recognizes that the success of these efforts takes time and requires a lot of collaboration. This is why we are grateful for the work of the Campbell County Economic Development Office. Our relationship involves regular communication and coordination, and we are grateful for the expertise and assistance Seth's office has and will continue to provide us. In addition, we find reports provided at the Mayors/Fiscal Court meetings to be very interesting and informative."



SOUTHBANK

JACK MORELAND

REGIONAL PARTNER

"The cooperation between the CCEPA and Southbank is the best I have seen during my tenure. Seth has brought a new and exciting perspective to economic development in all of Campbell County, including the urban core. He appreciates that northern Campbell County relies on small business, retail, tech start-ups, and tourism to drive our economy. We are partnering on nearly every aspect of making Campbell County a vibrant place to live, work, and play."

For questions or additional information, contact
Seth Cutter

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