

Northern Kentucky

MARKET REVIEW 2020

Vibrant Growth

Unique innovation, lively tourism,
savvy leaders, geographic advantages
attract jobs and new residents

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Ovation concert venue rendering

Ovation residential and retail rendering

Corporex offers a wide variety of real estate opportunities in Northern Kentucky: office space of 1,000 to 300,000 square feet; architecturally unique condominiums at The Ascent at Roebling's Bridge; 187 all-new luxury apartments at Madison Place with river views; 250 acres of land at CirclePort Business Park near the airport; and a 25-acre mixed-use development Ovation in Newport, featuring a \$40 million concert venue (currently under construction), and more than 900 residential units, restaurants, retail, hotels and offices.



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For over 54 years, the Corporex family of companies has developed, owned and operated institutional quality assets in markets throughout the United States. With a development portfolio of over 25 million square feet of Class A commercial, residential, and recreational real estate, the company remains one of the leading privately held, vertically-integrated owner/operators of commercial real estate in the nation. Headquartered in Covington, Kentucky, Corporex is proud to be part of the history and growth of Northern Kentucky.

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where's your favorite place to showcase your hometown pride?



1. Ark Encounter 2. General James Taylor Park 3. BB Riverboats
4. Old Kentucky Bourbon Bar 5. Purple Poulet 6. Boone County Distilling 7. Frida 602
8. Coppin's at Hotel Covington 9. Braxton Brewing Company 10. Roebling Bridge
11. Greyhound Tavern 12. Roebling Bridge 13. Newberry Bros. Coffee & Prohibition Bourbon Bar
14. Ark Encounter 15. Creation Museum 16. Newport Aquarium 17. Newport Aquarium
18. Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden 19. Smoke Justis 20. New Riff Distilling
21. Hofbrauhaus Newport 22. Madison Avenue, Covington 23. BB Riverboats
24. Florence Y'all Water Tower 25. Otto's 26. Carabello Coffee 27. Rabbit Hash General Store
28. Mainstrasse Village 29. Ark Encounter 30. The Gruff 31. Devou Park

#makeitNKY



Northern Kentucky

MARKET REVIEW 2020

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ON THE COVER: The brightly lit John A. Roebling Suspension Bridge is an iconic Northern Kentucky landmark. It connects Cincinnati with Covington, and when it opened to traffic on January 1, 1867, its 1,057-foot span made it the longest suspension bridge in the world. The record was broken in 1883 when Roebling's most famous project, the Brooklyn Bridge, opened.

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▲ **BEST OF ALL WORLDS** Northern Kentucky offers an unrivaled quality of life that blends urban, suburban and rural amenities to suit every lifestyle. NKY is the third-largest metropolitan area in Kentucky.

Northern Kentucky continues to grow and thrive

Thank you for picking up a copy of The Lane Report's *2020 Northern Kentucky Market Review*. We are delighted to share the stories that convey what the Northern Kentucky region has to offer as a superb quality of life for residents and visitors, as well as a robust and spirited business economy.

This year's major announcements across the entire region showcase a destination that continues to grow and become even more engaging and memorable. From the groundbreaking of a major music venue along the Newport riverfront in the Ovation development, to Churchill Downs' announcement of a major investment at Turfway Park, the complete renaissance of Newport on the Levee, and the new Amazon development in Boone County, Northern Kentucky will continue to thrive for a long time to come.

As meetNKY | Northern Kentucky Convention and Visitors Bureau wraps up its 45th year of promoting our unique three-county destination, our collaborations with the Northern Kentucky Chamber of Commerce, Northern Kentucky Tri-Ed, CVG International Airport, Corporex and all Northern Kentucky partners make this vibrant destination a memorable one to visit, live and invest.



Photo by Brian Douglas

We hope you enjoy this edition of *Market Review*. Feel free to reach out to us at meetNKY anytime, whether you are enjoying your first sip of southern hospitality or planning your next meeting, convention or event in Northern Kentucky.

Eric Summe, CDME
President & CEO, meetNKY



meetNKY | Northern Kentucky CVB
50 East RiverCenter Blvd., Suite 200
Covington, KY 41011

▲ **COLORFUL CREATIONS** BLINK, a four-day light and art show, extended from Cincinnati into about 10 blocks of northern Covington in October 2019, attracting thousands of visitors to Northern Kentucky.

CORPORATE SPONSORS





Dynamic destination

Northern Kentucky has it all – small-town charm and urban allure



◀ **B-LINE TIME** Old Kentucky Bourbon Bar in the charming, historic Mainstrasse Village in Covington is a stop on The B-Line, an experience centered around NKY's bourbon offerings. The bar has more than 600 bottles of bourbon and whiskey.

▼ **BOXES OF SMILES** Associates from Amazon's Hebron fulfillment centers presented a special holiday gift – 2,000 "Boxes of Smiles" – to Bethany House Services, a Northern Kentucky nonprofit organization that helps the homeless and at-risk families. The special delivery included winter essentials and festive gifts such as books, toys and electronics.



Photo by Leigh Taylor Photography



Photo by SOURCE Cincinnati

▲ **GOLDEN ARCHES** The Daniel Carter Beard Bridge, a twin-span, steel bowstring arch bridge crossing the Ohio River in Cincinnati, is known locally as the Big Mac Bridge because of its similarity to the McDonald's "Golden Arches" logo. It carries Interstate 471 between Cincinnati and Newport.



▲ **NEWLY RESTORED** Libby's Southern Comfort, in the heart of the Duveneck Square area of Covington, is one of Northern Kentucky's newest spots for southern cuisine and refreshing cocktails. The popular bar/eatery is located in the historic former home of Dixie Wholesale Grocery. Its restored atmosphere gives it a cool, modern-industrial vibe but with the comforts of home.



◀ **GOTHIC ARCHITECTURE** Northern Kentucky is an area steeped in Germanic culture, from the storybook look and feel of Covington's MainStrasse Village to the rich detail in the German stained-glass windows at the stunning St. Mary's Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption.



Photo courtesy of NKU



▲ **ART AND LIGHT** The BLINK Cincinnati festival provided opportunities to interact with the art installations.

◀ **THRIVING SUBURBAN CAMPUS** Northern Kentucky University in Highland Heights has more than 14,000 students and over 2,000 faculty and staff. Located just seven miles southeast of Cincinnati, NKU is one of the fastest-growing universities in Kentucky.



▲**FUN DISHES** Paul Wechman, the owner of Otto's Restaurant, sits with his family in front of the Covington Mainstrasse eatery. The restaurant serves American and southern-inspired fare.

◀**BASEBALL LEGACY** The Cincinnati Reds are recognized as first official professional baseball team. The first game was played in 1869, when the team was still called the Red Stockings. More than 1.8 million fans attended games at Great American Ball Park during the 2019 season.



Photo courtesy of City of Covington

◀**SUPPORTING EQUALITY**

Volunteers with Northern Kentucky Fairness painted two Covington crosswalks to look like the Rainbow Flag, commonly known as the gay pride flag.

▶**CONNECTED COMMUNITY**

Cincinnati Red Bike, a public transportation system with more than 500 bikes, has 12 stations in Northern Kentucky.



Photo courtesy of SOURCE Cincinnati



▲**OLD WORLD AMBIANCE** Cincinnati Music Hall in Over-the-Rhine, overlooking Washington Park, is home to the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, Cincinnati Pops Orchestra, Cincinnati Ballet and several other local performing arts organizations. It was built in 1878 and is considered one of the most acoustically perfect performance venues in the world.

◀**FIREWORKS FUN** For more than 40 years, regional tourists and residents have enjoyed a spectacular Labor Day weekend fireworks show at an end-of-summer event that draws hundreds of thousands of revelers. On both sides of the river, nearly a half-million people view the WEBN Fireworks show.



▲FRIENDLY COMPETITION About 60 people participated in the 5th Annual Badminton Brawl, hosted by Hub+Weber Architects, outside the firm's offices at Pike and Russell streets in downtown Covington. The architecture firm is located in the former Covington Station building.

▲ART INFUSION "Around the Corner," a mural installation by the Brooklyn-based collective known as FAILE, covers the rear walls of two buildings on the corner of 6th Street and Madison Avenue in Covington. During the BLINK festival, the murals take on new life in bright lights and colors.



▲PEDESTRIAN CROSSING Residents and visitors alike use the John A. Roebling Suspension Bridge to walk back and forth between Covington and Cincinnati.

▲STRIKING SKYLINE The Ascent at Roebling's Bridge in Covington is a notable fixture of the Northern Kentucky skyline. It was completed in 2008 and houses luxury residences.

▼LANDMARK VIEW The iconic John A. Roebling Suspension Bridge, which opened to traffic in January 1867, connects Covington and Cincinnati and was a prototype for the celebrated Brooklyn Bridge. The river crossing was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1975 and a National Historic Civil Engineering Landmark in 1983.

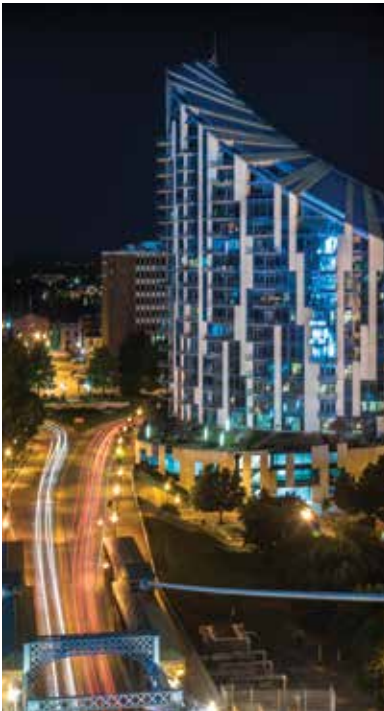


Photo courtesy of Source Cincinnati



PEOPLE & PLACES

►SPECTACULAR VIEWS

The Northern Kentucky/Greater Cincinnati riverfront is a major tourism draw and economic driver.

▼PEDESTRIAN CROSSING

A converted rail and motor vehicle structure, the popular "Purple People Bridge" offers spectacular pedestrian connectivity across the Ohio River between Newport and downtown Cincinnati. It is 2,670 feet long.



Photo courtesy of Newport Aquarium

▲MEET AND GREET Sharing the message of ocean conservation, mermaids make a yearly visit to Newport Aquarium, where they interact with guests and swim along the aquarium's 30-ft, 60,000-gallon "Coral Reef Tunnel." It's a tradition families look forward to every year, says Eric Rose, executive director of the aquarium.

◀OASIS OF ENTERTAINMENT Smale Riverfront Park is 45 acres of urban green space along the riverfront between Great American Ball Park and Paul Brown Stadium. It offers entertainment for all ages – from porch swings and river views to interactive fountains and a giant foot piano.



Photo courtesy of Regional Tourism Network

◀PHOTO OP To celebrate the team's 150th anniversary in 2019, the Cincinnati Reds placed sculpture benches featuring mascot Mr. Redlegs at two spots in Covington: at Devou Park (pictured) and Riverside Drive. Twenty-three other benches were placed throughout Cincinnati.

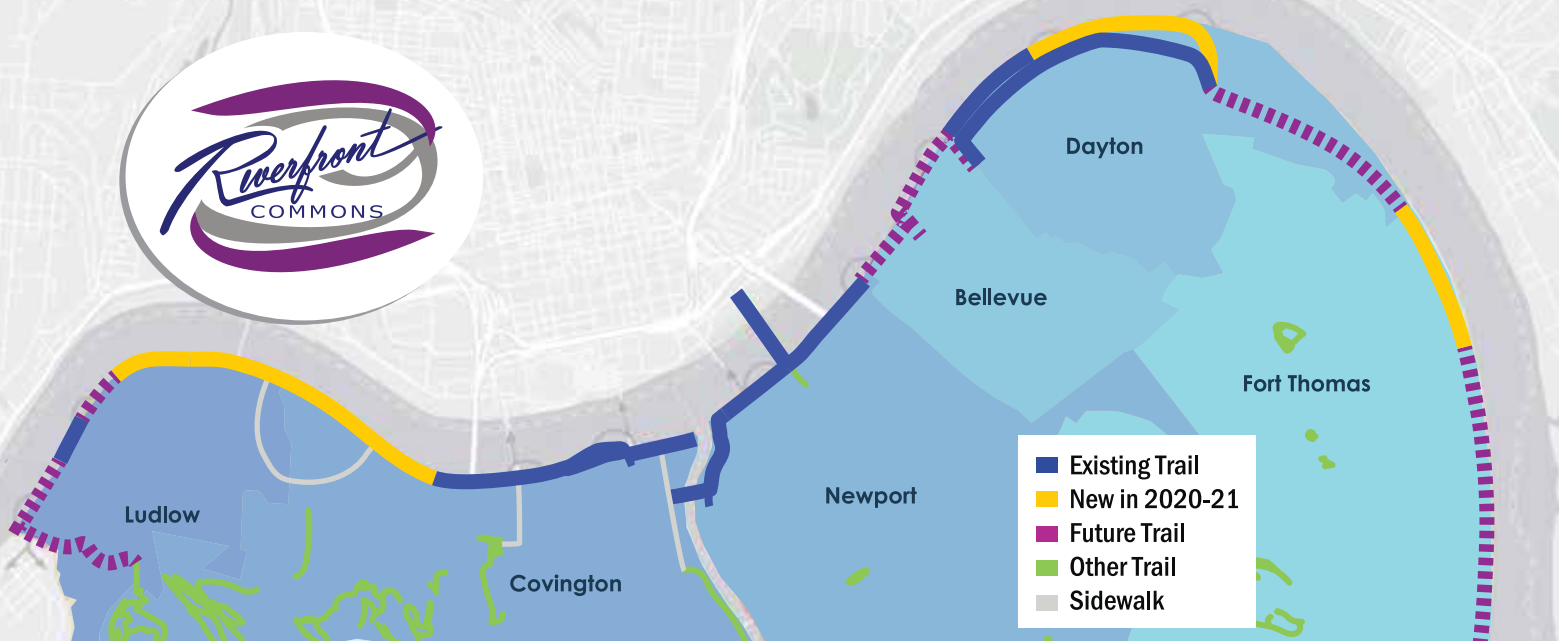
►VILLAGE VISTA Goebel Park in Covington's MainStrasse Village is best known for its iconic German-style Carroll Chimes Clock Tower; which displays a charming mechanical puppet show of the Pied Piper on the hour; April through December. The park also has a public pool and playground, picnic shelters, and a walking trail, among other amenities.

Photo courtesy of City of Covington



Photo courtesy of Regional Tourism Network





Envision / Transform / Realize.

At Southbank Partners, our primary mission is to improve the quality of life in Northern Kentucky, and one way we've done that is by building a walking, running, hiking, and biking trail system through our river cities along the picturesque Ohio River.

Riverfront Commons – nkyriverfrontcommons.com

Our signature project is Riverfront Commons, an uninterrupted trail system that runs for more than 11 miles through six river cities along the Southbank of the Ohio River. About one-half of that trail system is now complete, with new sections and features coming on line every year.

Purple People Bridge – purplepeoplebridge.com

We also own and operate the Purple People Bridge, the historic, pedestrian-only bridge that connects Northern Kentucky to Cincinnati. Every year, nearly a million people use the iconic bridge, which also hosts numerous events, parties, weddings, and fundraisers. Rental information can be found on our website.

The next time you visit Northern Kentucky, go take a hike – along Riverfront Commons and across the Purple People Bridge – to experience firsthand the charm and beauty of the Southbank of the Ohio River.



BELLEVUE

COVINGTON

DAYTON

FT THOMAS

LUDLOW

NEWPORT

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Experience unique Northern Kentucky

From bourbon to unconventional attractions and riverfront fun, amazing experiences await



Photo courtesy of ALIAS IMAGING

UNFORGETTABLE VIEWS Northern Kentucky and Cincinnati offer numerous outdoor activities within 15 minutes of downtown, including a sightseeing adventure along the river on a BB Riverboats cruise.

USS Nightmare: Built on a retired working steamboat, the USS Nightmare in Newport is 288 feet long and houses the river's most notorious spirits. Step aboard and step back in time to tour this one-of-a-kind haunted house and experience firsthand why the William S. Mitchell's crew called the old boat "the Death Dredge." Each Halloween season brings new twists to the haunted tour as fright seekers meander through the eerie rooms and corridors of the massive old boat.

Riverside Food Tours, Covington: Riverside Food Tours is a walking tour of MainStrasse Village, a 19th-century German neighborhood with unique shops and galleries, restaurants, pubs and entertainment venues.

Creation Museum and Answers in Genesis: A walk through the pages of the Bible... explore scripture's account of the beginning of all things in a state-of-the-art 70,000-s.f. museum designed by a former Universal Studios exhibit director. It also features the Screaming Raptor Zip Lines.

Ark Encounter: Located in Williamstown, the Ark Encounter features a full-size replica of Noah's Ark. Spanning 510 feet long, 85 feet wide, and 51 feet high, this modern engineering marvel amazes visitors young and old.

Donna Salyers' Fabulous Furs: In 1989, Donna Salyers started selling women's coats, jackets, apparel, accessories, home goods and footwear. Fabulous Furs in Covington sells faux furs and animal print products. Available in 46 countries, Fabulous Furs products have celebrity status and international appeal, appearing in *Sports Illustrated*, featured as one of Oprah's Favorite Things, showcased on Broadway and more.

Vent Haven Museum: The world's only museum dedicated to the art of ventriloquism, located in Fort Mitchell, features more than 500 figures from 20 countries.

Newport on the Levee: This entertainment complex on Northern Kentucky's riverfront offers an exceptional view of the Cincinnati skyline and

In Northern Kentucky (NKY), the South quite literally begins at our front door. In fact, when you hear "Welcome to NKY," that also means "Welcome to the South"... where life is easier and the real soul of hospitality begins. Find the Unbridled Spirit of Kentucky on display every day here – from the bourbon heritage of regional distilleries to thoroughbred horse racing, paddlewheel riverboats and chef-inspired farm-to-table dining.

Our unique style of South is what shines through ... and in NKY, the South is infused with a bit of German fusion and a whole lot of sass. Enjoy a plate of fried green tomatoes washed down with a fine, locally brewed Hefeweizen or discover NKY's notorious gangster-run past while watching the Cincinnati Reds play baseball on a bustling riverfront.

About meetNKY

For more than 40 years, the Northern Kentucky CVB (meetNKY) has provided outstanding meeting and convention services and comprehensive travel information for business and leisure visitors to the Cincinnati and NKY area. Learn more at meetNKY.com.

With so much to see and do in Northern Kentucky and the Cincinnati region – from stunning golf courses, professional sports and water and amusement parks, to world-renowned museums, historic sites and a vibrant performing arts scene – your hardest decision will be where to start first. There are some seriously unique experiences to take advantage of while in NKY. Here's a few:

World Peace Bell: The largest free-swinging bell in the world, weighing 66,000 pounds, the World Peace Bell in Newport was crafted to be rung on the first International Day of Peace in 2000.

Purple People Bridge: This Ohio River pedestrian-only bridge, one of only a few in the U.S., crosses from the south bank of Cincinnati to the north bank of Newport. Built in 1872, the bridge was beautifully restored, painted purple and reopened in 2003, providing breathtaking views of the Ohio riverfront year-round and serving as a popular venue for a wide variety of events.

BB Riverboats: You haven't experienced Cincinnati until you step aboard a BB Riverboats cruise. Serving the region for more than three decades, BB Riverboats specializes in lunch, sightseeing, and dinner cruises on the Ohio River.

features a wide variety of restaurants, shopping, seasonal festivals, lively pubs and clubs, live music and the Newport Aquarium, which showcases thousands of animals from around the world in a million gallons of water. Don't miss adjacent Hofbräuhaus Newport, the first Hofbräuhaus outside of Munich.

Roebling Suspension Bridge and murals: The beautiful John A. Roebling Suspension Bridge was built from 1856 to 1866 at a cost of \$1.8 million dollars to connect Cincinnati and Covington. It served as an engineering prototype for the Brooklyn Bridge and today is a beloved regional landmark. Held each June, RoeblingFest is a day-long celebration featuring foods from local restaurants, beverage booths, live music, an art show and sale, a variety of tours that include Riverside Drive architecture and statues, the Covington floodwall murals and the Daniel Carter Beard House.

Behringer-Crawford Museum: This family-friendly museum in Covington celebrates the unique arts, heritage and culture of Northern Kentucky.

Newport Gangster Tours: Before there was Las Vegas, there was Newport. Walk the streets where gangsters made their millions along "eight blocks of villainy" that at one time housed casinos, brothels and speakeasies. Guided public tours along with private/corporate tour events are available.

New Riff Distilling: A new riff on an old tradition, New Riff Distilling was founded in 2014 and crafts a range of whiskeys: bourbon, rye, malted rye and Kentucky wild gin. The Newport attraction offers immersion in the bourbon experience with their distillery and warehouse tours.

Across the river: Don't forget about the Cincinnati Zoo, Great American Ball Park and the Cincinnati Reds, the Cincinnati Bengals, Riverbend Music Center, Coney Island, Smale Riverfront Park, Cincinnati Museum Center at Union Terminal, Cincinnati Music Hall, National Underground Railroad Freedom Center and more. Use all four of the beautiful bridges to walk, run, scooter, ride or bike back and forth.

Sample our spirits – and food
Kentucky has a lot of nicknames, but probably one of the most popular is "Bourbon Country." In NKY, we're proud to be the edge of Bourbon Country, an Official Gateway to the Kentucky Bourbon Trail and home to some amazing history and distilling rebirth.

NKY is home to many distilleries, breweries, bars and restaurants that celebrate the spirits of Kentucky, and The B-Line, NKY's unique bourbon experience centered around five Kentucky Bourbon Trail Craft Tour Distilleries. Add six bourbon-centric bars and five amazing restaurants cultivating the freshest tastes in bourbon culinary delights, and you're on the The B-Line.

The region is also home to some epic bourbon events, including Kentucky's Edge, the Bacon, Bourbon and Brew Festival, and the NKY Bourbon Festival, just to name a few. If you're looking for more bourbon events, check out a bourbon-dedicated event calendar at findyoursippingpoint.com/b-there/.

We're proud of our brewing heritage, too. The region had 36 breweries producing more than 30 million gallons of beer in the 1800s. None of these breweries survived Prohibition, but the number of breweries in the NKY and Cincinnati region has more than tripled in the past five years.

Don't forget about wine! The Northern Kentucky Back Roads Wine Trail winds through beautiful NKY, only 30 minutes from downtown Cincinnati. It features six local wineries and offers a passport you can have stamped at each one.

NKY's culinary swagger is second to none. Our booming restaurant scene boasts everything from gourmet hot dogs and French pot ice cream to Bouillabaisse. Whether you are a first-time visitor looking for local faves or a bona fide Cincinnati region food fan sniffing out a delectable plate of something trendy, you're sure to find a

dish that buddies up to your taste buds like a BFF.

Conventions in NKY

We like to think of our destination as a greenhouse ... we grow meetings here.

Meeting in NKY will take your dollar further than in any other destination. Our riverfront convention center is hassle-free union-free and includes free carpeted exhibit space and free wireless internet.

Hotel taxes in NKY are lower than those in many Midwest and southern comparable cities. Compare Northern Kentucky's tax rate to Louisville's 16.07%, Cincinnati's 17.5% or Indianapolis' 17%, and you can see how 12.36% in NKY can save your attendees some serious cash.

The entire staff at meetNKY looks forward to showing you the inclusive services we provide that will make your planning experience a breeze and allow you to focus on making your event content nothing short of amazing.

We give you the keys for planning an awesome event and work with you to ensure your success. Whether hosting your attendees in our riverfront convention center, exciting arena or unique venues, you will be the focus of attention. Our 7,000-plus hotel rooms will ensure your attendees are well rested, and our convenient access around NKY and Cincinnati will make sure they have loads of fun. ●

▼**FUN FOR ALL** A premiere entertainment destination, Newport on the Levee includes everything from restaurants and bars to family attractions and access to the Purple People Bridge for an easy walk across the river to Cincinnati.

Photo by SOURCE Cincinnati





Photo by Ross Van Pelt

Vibrant growth

Unique innovation, lively tourism, savvy leaders, geographic advantages attract jobs and residents

BY LORIE HAILEY

QUAINT downtowns bustling with development. Prominent universities and a successful community college system. Historic neighborhoods and a booming residential real estate market. Global logistics expertise that is driving growth and bringing more high-paying jobs. Quick access to the best regional airport in North America. Four major league sports teams and successful high school sports programs that bring the community together. Innovative entrepreneurs and a supportive business community. Exciting riverfront development; multiple arts and culture venues. A cost of living that is 4.1% below the national average.

Northern Kentucky is one of the largest urban areas in Kentucky. It is a thriving manufacturing center; it's a leader in logistics, finance and technology. It has walkability, world-class restaurants, live music and a variety of craft breweries and bourbon distilleries. It also has an active suburban community with great schools and shopping destinations.

And it's all just across the river from downtown Cincinnati, "America's Queen City."

"We are part of the Cincinnati metro region, but at the same time, we are Kentucky," said Boone County Judge/Executive Gary Moore. "We market ourselves as part of Cincinnati, but with a Southern charm."

When a company is considering locating in Northern Kentucky and compares it to elsewhere, the region "fares very well," Moore said.

"We have major league sports ... pro soccer, pro baseball, pro football. We have an amazing arts and culture community. We can sell all of that as part of Northern Kentucky because we're just minutes away from those things. Yet we have lower taxes, we have a great workforce and a quality community to be able to market and sell. So we fare very well in those situations."

It's why Northern Kentucky is growing, he said. Nowhere else in Kentucky can offer that.

"Northern Kentucky is also a great place to invest because it has the

amenities of a large city, a great education system and workforce, arts and music venues, professional sports and housing affordability," said Paul Verst, chairman and CEO of Verst Logistics, headquartered in Walton. "It's a great place to raise a family."

Thomas Banta, managing director of Covington-based Corporex Companies and Corporex Realty & Investment, agreed.

"Northern Kentucky is an extraordinary place," Banta said. "It is a vibrant, fast-changing community featuring unique restaurants, historic architecture and thriving businesses."

Innovative community

NKY has attracted the attention of many large companies, but it also is bustling with entrepreneurs and small businesses that are inventing new products or services and helping existing business and industry leaders meet challenges in new ways. NKY has a robust entrepreneurial community that connects startups and small businesses with mentors, partners, resources and potential funders.

Led by Brit Fitzpatrick, Blue North KY is the entrepreneurship/innovation

◀**COLORFUL COVINGTON** The Covington waterfront provided a colorful backdrop for the John A. Roebling Suspension Bridge over the Ohio River during BLINK in 2019, one of the largest light, art and projection mapping events in the nation. It spanned more than 30 blocks in Cincinnati and crossed into Covington, turning the region into an outdoor art museum.

▶**A CHAMBER TRADITION** The Northern Kentucky Chamber of Commerce Annual Golf Outing at Summit Hills Country Club offers a chance for chamber members to network with clients and customers – and take fun photos. Photo courtesy of the NKY Chamber

arm of Northern Kentucky Tri-ED. Blue North serves as the connector and guide for NKY's entrepreneur network. Prior to joining the Tri-ED team, Fitzpatrick founded one of the first software-as-a-service mentoring startups and launched communities for underrepresented entrepreneurs in Tennessee. She also led the founding team at 1804 Entrepreneur Center in her hometown of Louisville.

Tri-ED was awarded \$2.3 million in state and federal grants to grow the NKY entrepreneurship ecosystem. Most recently, the agency was one of 44 awardees out of 183 applicants for a competitive Seed Fund Support Grant from the U.S. Economic Development Administration, "which will enable us to help close the capital gap for NKY startups through a seed-stage investment fund," Fitzpatrick said.

"Blue North is helping entrepreneurs navigate the ecosystem more easily

through a filterable database of regional resources and entrepreneurship-focused content, which we will host on our website, bluenorthky.com," she said. "We're actively launching in-house services and programs to serve entrepreneurs of all types, at all stages."

Blue North's goal is to conduct 300 meetings with entrepreneurs by June 30. These meetings consist of "wayfinding sessions," which are 30-minute meetings with Blue North's team designed to help entrepreneurs map out their business models and identify their top three pain points. Blue North then can help the entrepreneurs plug into resources

that can help solve the entrepreneurs' challenges, Fitzpatrick said. They also offer "weekly office hours" sessions, which are more in-depth for entrepreneurs who want help validating their business model and who want to know the best way to build the first version of their product or service.

"We also have a step-by-step process that helps prep these entrepreneurs for a more formal entrepreneurship program, apply for an accelerator, or pitch for early investment, if that's their goal," Fitzpatrick said.

There are also office hours sessions for branding and marketing, teaching entrepreneurs how to use technology in their businesses to scale sustainably, and creating pitch decks for those seeking outside capital. Blue North also hosts quarterly investor office hours with investors in its network who are based throughout the U.S.

"We're launching a number of events and programs in 2020 that will add value to the ecosystem, bring new innovation into our region's larger companies, and help attract new earlier-stage companies to the region," Fitzpatrick said.

In 2018, Tri-ED created the NKY Entrepreneurship Council (NKYEC) to take a new approach to economic development that collaborates with community partners to share goals and resources. It is a collaborative of private sector leaders who have been working in different aspects of entrepreneurship

◀**QUICK TRIP** Residents of Northern Kentucky and Cincinnati use TANK's Southbank Shuttle to go back and forth between the communities for sporting events and other attractions.



Photo courtesy of TANK

and innovation for many years. Later that year, Tri-ED, along with the Northern Kentucky University (NKU) Foundation and other partners, received a \$750,000 RISE grant from the KY Innovation Office to help establish an innovation hub in the region, focusing on informatics, health and logistics innovation. The hub will provide support for entrepreneurs and promote startup businesses.

NKU is leveraging expertise from its College of Informatics and the Institute of Health Innovation to support the council's focus areas.

"We are adopting and implementing best practices in innovation from entrepreneurial communities around the world, deploying the latest in digital and social technologies, and connecting entrepreneurs to resources specific to their business and personal needs," said NKYEC Chairman Normand Desmarais, the NKU Board of Regents' secretary and co-founder of TiER1 Performance Solutions.

The commonwealth is using Northern Kentucky's collaboration as an example of how regions should approach economic development through entrepreneurship.

"This is exactly the kind of collaboration we were aiming for when developing this new investment approach, and we know the results will show why this was the right approach to take," said Brian Mefford, executive director of the Office of Entrepreneurship at the Kentucky Cabinet for Economic Development.

The goal is to create 100 new tech-enabled small businesses in the next 10 years, Fitzpatrick said, and have an active Innovation District in Covington with innovation hubs throughout the region that provide on-ramps to the ecosystem.

"Northern Kentucky will be a premier hub for entrepreneurs, providing them with outsized connectivity to the resources and connections they need to thrive," Fitzpatrick said.

Creating a regional strategic plan will help them achieve sustainable growth, she said.

Multiple programs in Northern Kentucky serve entrepreneurs. Aviatra serves women entrepreneurs at all stages; NKU's INKUBATOR program helps student entrepreneurs build and grow companies; Square1 provides K-12 students with in-school programs and hosts an annual pitch contest. There are also several startup accelerators in the region, such as The Brandy and Flywheel. MORTAR, which serves entrepreneurs of color, is expanding to

Courtesy of North American Properties



▲ NEW LIFE AT THE LEVEE Cincinnati-based North American Properties is investing \$100 million to renovate and expand Newport on the Levee, a riverside entertainment complex that attracts 4.5 million visitors each year. The levee connects Newport to Cincinnati via the Purple People Bridge.

New developments transforming the region

A new mixed-used development, a \$40 million music venue and a 230-foot SkyWheel are among the projects slated for downtown Newport. The mixed-used development includes a hotel, office building, retail space and parking garage, and has been approved for the World Peace Bell site in Newport's central business district.

In addition to the World Peace Bell development, a \$40 million music venue is being built on the Newport riverfront by Covington-based Corporex.

The music venue at Ovation is expected to draw more than 180 events and up to 400,000 guests each year. The Venue Plaza will be linked to future phases of the Ovation development via a pedestrian walkway over the recently opened Route 9 extension. The pedestrian bridge will be linked to restaurants, nightlife and other entertainment spots within the Ovation development.

Newport city commissioners last year approved a memorandum of understanding with the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet for the construction of a pair of elevated pedestrian walkways that will connect Riverfront Commons to the Taylor-Southgate Bridge, which spans the Ohio River and links downtown Newport to downtown Cincinnati. Riverfront Commons is an 11.5-mile walking/biking path that runs along the Ohio River and links all of Northern Kentucky's river cities: Ludlow, Covington, Newport, Bellevue, Dayton and Fort Thomas. The pedestrian bridges will connect on the east and west sides of the Taylor-Southgate Bridge.

Cincinnati-based North American Partners, which purchased Newport on the Levee in 2018, is planning to invest \$100 million to renovate and expand the 360,000-s.f. mixed-use, riverside development. Turner Construction, which also recently renovated Cincinnati's iconic Union Terminal, will lead the construction project.

Newport on the Levee boasts 4.5 million visitors each year. It features a variety of retail, creative office, dining, lodging and entertainment options, including the Newport Aquarium and a 20-screen IMAX theatre, along with the adjacent Starwood Aloft hotel and Aqua on the Levee luxury apartments.

Churchill Downs in October 2019 acquired Turfway Park in Florence and announced plans to demolish the existing grandstand to construct a racing and gaming venue in Northern Kentucky that would host both live and historical racing and serve as a year-round training facility.

The first phase of the proposed New Latonia facility, which is projected to create nearly 400 direct full- and part-time jobs, represents an investment of up to \$150 million and would include a historical racing machine facility featuring up to 1,500 machines, a clubhouse, food and beverage venues, a synthetic racetrack, an inner dirt track and stabling facilities. The second phase of the proposed project could include a hotel, with an incremental investment of up to \$50 million. The exact location of the proposed facility has not been disclosed.

Braxton Brewing opened a new taproom and brewery in Fort Mitchell in late 2019. It features 20 taps as well as a 20,000-s.f. storage facility for housing bourbon and other types of barrels for aging beer. The Covington-based company currently operates The Taproom and The Rooftop in Covington and Braxton Labs in Bellevue.

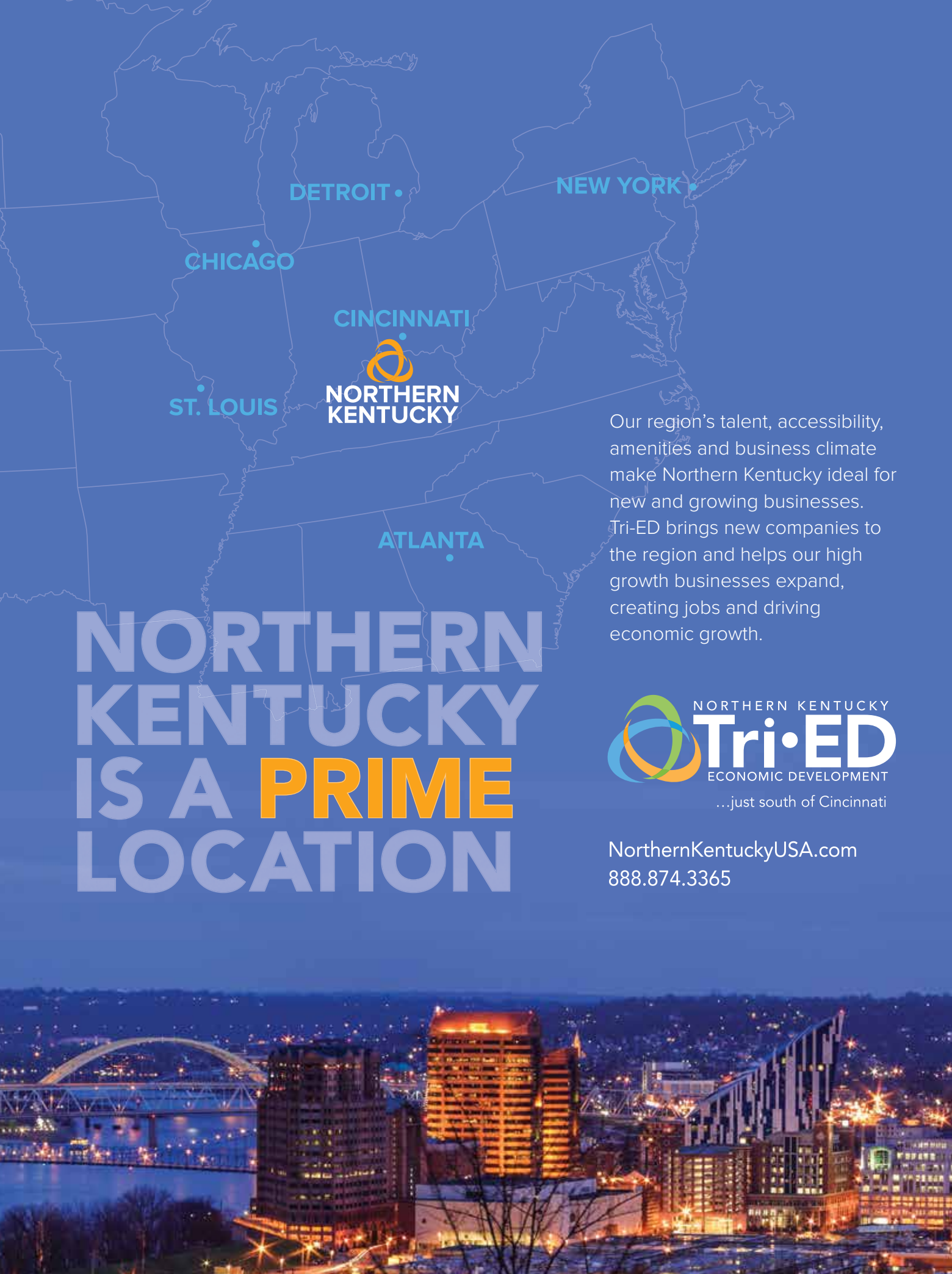
Covington this year, and the region will have two new accelerator programs for pre-Series A supply chain and health innovation companies.

Blue North is gearing up to launch the CO.STARTERS, a nine-week program that has been adopted in 100 communities across the globe and helped more than 3,000 small-business owners get their ideas off the ground. The program will provide small-business owners, creators and

entrepreneurs in Gallatin, Owen, Carroll and Grant counties who have business ideas the "playbook" they need to build a sustainable business around them.

NKY's geographic location is a big asset that entrepreneurs can use to their advantage. But hard work is the true backbone of the innovation community's success.

"Northern Kentucky is a place where ideas go to work. It has a 'roll-up-your-



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◀ **CROSSING THE RIVER** Pedestrians use the John A. Roebling Suspension Bridge to cross the Ohio River for events on both sides. A prototype for the Brooklyn Bridge, the Roebling has been an iconic landmark along the city skyline since it opened in 1867. The region's bridges are a vital part of the community.

health department, the NKY Chamber of Commerce, the Transit Authority of Northern Kentucky (TANK) and Northern Kentucky Tri-ED, the region's economic development corporation.

"It's just the way we do things and it works so well," Moore said. "I encourage other communities regularly to try to do the same. Kentucky has way too many counties, and we need to pool our resources to be able to accomplish things."

Tri-ED President Lee Crume said he was skeptical of all of the talk about collaboration when he first came to Northern Kentucky, but he quickly saw firsthand that collaboration and partnerships drive regional growth.

"It's incredible how well the three county judge/executives collaborate, how well they set an agenda for our community and how they give each other space to pursue the projects that are important in their communities. They set an amazing tone," Crume said.

Leaders of the three counties have a good understanding of their individual markets and assets, and they do not try to poach from one another, said Tom West, City of Covington economic development director. Above all, they work to attract or keep jobs in Northern Kentucky.

Local business professionals also work together to help those less fortunate and provide opportunities to move the community toward progress. Horizon

sleeves and get it done' culture, which lends itself to successfully navigating the inevitable obstacles that come with starting and growing a business," Fitzpatrick said.

Learn more at bluenorthky.com.

Unity and philanthropy strengthen community

Northern Kentucky is comprised of three counties – Boone, Campbell and Kenton – and 35 cities. It has a host of elected officials and agencies who have a habit of working together on things like tourism, health care, transportation and economic development for the region. That kind of collaboration is unique, and it is another reason Northern Kentucky has seen significant growth in recent years, Moore said.

"We are known for breaking down those county and city barriers and working collectively as one region," he said. "By uniting and working together, we can accomplish so much more."

Northern Kentucky is business-

friendly and offers a long list of resources for companies of all sizes, Banta said.

"The drive to encourage business innovation and business startups is evident by the array of unique and effective programs offered for both entrepreneurs and investors," he said. "These economic dynamos work together to listen, identify and help to devise solutions to help maximize success."

Among the agencies that the three counties jointly operate or support are the Northern Kentucky Convention and Visitor's Bureau (meetNKY), the



▶ **BOURBON & BEAUTY** The historic Tousey House Tavern is one of the stops on The B-Line, a bourbon experience centered around three official Kentucky Bourbon Trail Craft Tour Distilleries, five bourbon-centric bars and four restaurants cultivating the freshest tastes in bourbon culinary delights. Located in beautiful Burlington, Tousey House is the perfect spot to enjoy Kentucky bourbon with friends.

Community Funds, a community foundation that builds philanthropy in the tri-county area and helps the “less hopeful” population, was founded by four lifelong Kentuckians:

Bill Butler (chairman, Corporex Companies); Chuck Scheper (chairman, Bexion Pharmaceuticals); Bob Zapp (retired CEO, former Bank of Kentucky); and Will Ziegler (founding partner, Ziegler & Schneider PSC).

“United in its shared commitment to increase philanthropy for Northern Kentucky believes that Northern Kentucky leaders are best positioned to understand and address the interests, needs and opportunities within Northern Kentucky,” said Nancy Grayson, president of Horizon.

With a long-term goal of improving quality of life, Horizon operates a variety of initiatives to build a broad, inclusive community of philanthropy in NKY.

“We have an Emergency Needs Fund developed by our volunteer-based Horizon Community Accelerator that provides funds for bus passes, ID cards and birth certificates for our neighbors facing homelessness,” Grayson said. “We also have two giving circles that encourage emerging philanthropists who are ready for a

deeper dive into giving back to Northern Kentucky.”

Horizon operates traditional grants through its Community Impact Fund and Donor Advised Funds. It has partnerships with local nonprofits to establish funds that directly support them, such as Redwood, the Boone County Animal Shelter, St. Elizabeth’s Cancer Care Center and Northern Kentucky University.

Since its inception, Horizon has granted out more than \$4.5 million.

“Giving can truly happen at any level, and we have already watched smaller gifts make a big impact,” Grayson said. “Thousands of dollars have been raised for our Emergency Needs Fund, and many of those gifts were less than \$50. In fact, 45% of donations since our inception in 2017 have been \$100 or less. Also, it doesn’t always have to be about money. There are endless opportunities to get involved with nonprofits that work in our own backyard, and we gratefully serve as a conduit between Northern Kentuckians and these nonprofits.”

Another organization working to effect positive change is the Northern Kentucky Regional Alliance, an organization comprised of regional leaders committed to uniting and mobilizing leadership around initiatives that produce tangible

results for Northern Kentucky in the areas of health, education, job growth and community vibrancy.

Together with commercial real estate developer Corporex Companies and the Catalytic Development Funding Corp. of Northern Kentucky, NKY Regional Alliance is working to build a signature facility to house the community’s growth organizations, called 1NKY. The building, slated to be constructed near the Covington riverfront along Greenup Street, will house Northern Kentucky’s economic development and community growth organizations in one place. 1NKY will be located near the landmark Ascent building, from which it appears to borrow some of its aesthetics. Planning is still in its early stages.

The Regional Alliance also led the effort to open 1NKY Frankfort, a 3,000-s.f. facility near the Kentucky State Capitol in Frankfort. It serves as the headquarters for the Northern Kentucky region, and offers a branded location where sponsoring organizations and businesses can convene, strategize and provide collective impact – and provide a unified voice on important issues. 1NKY Frankfort will provide a way for the region to speak collectively in the capital.

Read more about 1NKY on page 24. ●



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the
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region

Unique events, spectacular attractions

Distinctive events – and bourbon – attracting record numbers of visitors



Photo by SOURCE Cincinnati

◀BOURBON DESTINATION New Riff Distilling, founded in 2014 in Newport, is a top tourist attraction in Northern Kentucky. The family-owned distillery, which is “putting a new riff on an old tradition: Kentucky bourbon,” is a top tourist attraction in the region, known for its modern design, three-story copper still, rooftop deck and spaces for events.

By the numbers

12,000	Number of employees in the NKY tourism/hospitality industry
1,500	Hotel rooms located around the NKY Convention Center
3,000	Hotel rooms near CVG Airport and BB&T Arena
\$2.07B	Economic impact of NKY tourism in 2018
7.5%	Increase in demand for NKY hotels

BY KATHIE STAMPS

VIBRANT, unique, unconventional. Those are just a few words visitors have used to describe the Northern Kentucky region, where you can enter the Kentucky Bourbon Trail, try on faux fur at Donna Salyers’ Fabulous Furs, have fun at Newport on the Levee and walk along the Purple People Bridge to Cincinnati, encounter a replica of Noah’s ark, or see a river crossing that was the prototype for the celebrated Brooklyn Bridge. And that’s just the tip of the iceberg.

The south “literally begins at our front door, where small-town warmth and hospitality go hand-in-hand with big-city amenities and attractions,” claims the Northern Kentucky Convention and Visitors’ Bureau (meetNKY). Although the two communities collaborate on many things, for many years, NKY has been establishing itself as much more than just the community across the river from

Cincinnati. And tourism is playing a huge role in that endeavor.

In 2005, meetNKY and the Cincinnati Convention and Visitors Bureau (Cincinnati USA) combined forces and resources to form a third marketing organization, the Cincinnati USA Regional Tourism Network, or RTN, to promote arts and cultural events and attractions to the leisure tourist.

Marketing both sides of the Ohio River has benefited both: the tourists who walk and drive across the John

A. Roebling Suspension Bridge from Covington to Cincinnati and vice versa, and the tourism attractions, restaurants and retailers who serve them. The Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky International Airport in Hebron, is known by its aviation initials CVG for Covington, but it is referred to as “the Cincinnati airport” by locals and tourists alike and is yet another regional connection for Kentucky and Ohio.

Tourism for the Northern Kentucky side alone had a \$2.071 billion economic impact in 2018. The “Northern Kentucky River Region” is one of the nine state

►LIGHT AT NIGHT The John A. Roebling Suspension Bridge, named for the civil engineer who designed it, has been an iconic landmark along the city skyline for nearly a century and a half. From the Covington riverfront, the brightly lit bridge and view of Cincinnati is breathtaking.



Photo by Regional Tourism Network/Ross Van Pelt



Photo courtesy of meetNKY



▲ **SEA AND EXPLORE** The Newport Aquarium at Newport on the Levee has thousands of animals from around the world in a million gallons of water. It attracts approximately 700,000 guests annually.

◀ **CIRCUS MEETS BEER** Bircus Brewing in Ludlow is described as a place where the “surreal world of circus meets the love of beer.” At Bircus, performers juggle clubs, breathe fire, hula hoop, walk on kegs and amaze on the trapeze and with their aerial silks.

regions described by the Kentucky Department of Tourism. Kentucky has had an overall tourism growth of 21% since 2013, according to the Department of Tourism. Statewide, 71.6 million visitors in 2018 spent \$7.6 billion, resulting in a total economic impact of more than \$11.2 billion (up from \$10.9 billion the year before), generating more than 94,500 jobs and \$787 million in state and local taxes. The economic impact study was conducted by the Department of Tourism’s new research partner, Tourism Economics, based in Wayne, Pa., and is used by many other state tourism departments.

“The edge of bourbon country continues to thrive,” said Julie Kirkpatrick, vice president of sales and marketing for meetNKY. “We are seeing new visitors making Northern Kentucky their first stop for bourbon.”

Northern Kentucky is an official gateway to the Kentucky Bourbon Trail, a road-trip-style experience established by the Kentucky Distillers’ Association.

A new bourbon experience in Northern Kentucky, developed by meetNKY, is a program called The B-Line (online at findyoursippingpoint.com). It launched on Memorial Day 2018 and now has 16 participating businesses, all locally owned: five restaurants, six bars and five Kentucky Bourbon Trail Craft Tour distilleries, including New Riff Distilling in Newport, Old Pogue Distillery in Maysville, Neeley Family Distillery in Sparta, Second Sights Spirits in Ludlow, Coppin’s at Hotel Covington, and Rich’s Proper Food & Drink in Covington.

New Riff Distilling, founded in 2014 in Newport, produces bourbon, rye and gin. In the spring of 2019 the company won five “double gold” medals at the 2019

San Francisco World Spirits Competition, earning the top vote by each judge from over 3,000 worldwide entries. New Riff is a top tourist attraction in Northern Kentucky, known for its modern design, a three-story copper still, rooftop deck and spaces for conferences and events.

Last fall, meetNKY partnered with the tourism commissions of Bardstown and Frankfort for “Come Find Bourbon” (comefindbourbon.com), a marketing initiative spotlighting an easy-to-do bourbon experience of 21 distilleries throughout all three bourbon destinations.

“We’re known for being spirited. We are a spirited destination,” Kirkpatrick said. “There’s more Northern Kentucky pride rolling around than I’ve seen in a long, long time. It’s pretty exciting.”

Braxton Brewing Co. opened in 2015 and now has several locations, including The Taproom on 7th Street in Covington, featuring a new 5,000-s.f. rooftop bar that opened in July 2019; Braxton Labs, a brewery and taproom in Bellevue, Ky., with 40 original beers on tap; and Braxton Barrel House in Fort Mitchell, which opened in September to make barrel-aged beer like a stout they’ve named Dark Charge Cognac Ex-Bourbon. Braxton also has a hard seltzer called Vive, sold at Kroger, in grapefruit, lime, mango and dragonfruit flavors.



◀ **FAITH-BASED FUN** The Creation Museum in Petersburg is a state-of-the-art 75,000-s.f. museum that brings to life the Biblical interpretation of creation. Exhibits include live animals and a stargazer’s planetarium. It attracts thousands of visitors each year.

Northern Kentucky and Greater Cincinnati also have dozens of wineries, including 12 Mile Creek Winery (formerly known as Alice N Johns Winery) in Campbell County's California, Ky., Rose Hill winery and vineyards in Butler, Ky., and the Skeleton Root, a winery and event space in Cincinnati's Over-the-Rhine neighborhood.

Expansion plans for the 20-year-old Northern Kentucky Convention Center in Covington are in a holding pattern, but that hasn't stopped convention bookings. Sales contracts exceeded meetNKY's projections for 2019, coming in at 116% of the expected pace for room nights. The nearby IRS Center, a large building and adjacent parking lots across 23 acres of land, closed in September. Government officials, business leaders and meetNKY staff are working with consultants and conducting feasibility studies to see how best to develop the property, including proposals for an expansion of the convention center.

Annual conventions for the Kentucky League of Cities and the Kentucky Travel Industry Association are among the events held at the convention center, and business has been booked through 2025.

"We're way out in front," said Eric Summe, president and CEO of meetNKY. "We're happy to say we have a lot of interest in our center and in our destinations."

The faith-based attractions designed by Northern Kentucky-based Answers in Genesis (AiG) bring in visitors from around the world. The Creation Museum in Petersburg, Ky., opened in 2007. A \$3 million upgrade in 2019 involved a 4D theater and new exhibits and videos, funded entirely by donations from supporters. A \$2.2 million upgraded planetarium is under construction. AiG also operates the Ark

Encounter in Williamstown, Ky., featuring a 510-foot-long Noah's ark.

Since its opening in 2016, the Ark Encounter has hosted as many as 9,000 guests in a single day. Recent enhancements include a new 2,500-seat auditorium, a new family play area designed to accommodate children of all abilities, and a larger zoo that now has kangaroos, emus, lemurs, sloths and other animals. Because of the expansions at both the Creation Museum and Ark Encounter, visitors were wanting to spend more time at both locations, so AiG created a special "Explore More" bonus pass for guests to use on their second day at either attraction.

Hotel occupancy in NKY hit a record high in 2018 from group tours and families coming to the area for these faith-based attractions and for travelers experiencing bourbon tours. The national average for hotel occupancy is 66.2%; Northern Kentucky's demand was 72.8%. Four new hotels with a total of 370 rooms opened in Florence in 2019: Holiday Inn Express & Suites Cincinnati Airport (90 rooms), Staybridge Suites Florence (91), Fairfield Inn and Suites Cincinnati Airport (92) and Tru by Hilton Cincinnati Airport (97). Two more hotels are in the works in Florence.

Hotel Covington, a \$22 million hotel located inside a historic downtown building, is expanding. Late last year, the City of Covington and investment firms The Salyers Group and vR Group announced plans to renovate and reimagine the former YMCA building and Gateway Bookstore located at the corner of Madison Avenue and Pike Street to expand Hotel Covington and create a mixed-use development that will include 60 VIP and presidential suites

Photo by SOURCE Cincinnati/Phil Armstrong



▲ RIVERFRONT REPLICA Rising above the concrete slopes of Cincinnati's Public Landing at Sawyer Point is a three-story, 60-ton, exact replica of the original red paddle wheel from the American Queen riverboat. It is positioned about 40 feet off the ground, above a series of 24 metal smokestacks that showcase the importance of steam in the early days of riverboat travel and the role that riverboats played in the early history of Cincinnati.

at the hotel, along with office space and "bourbon distillery experience."

"Demand for Northern Kentucky hotels showcases the strength of our destination's offerings as part of a vibrant region," said meetNKY Board Chair Tim Bray, director of communications for the Kentucky Speedway.

Across the Ohio River, Cincinnati attractions continue to thrive, including the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center, Contemporary Arts Center, Krohn Conservatory and the Cincinnati Museum Center within Union Terminal. The Cincinnati Art Museum, which opened in 1886, had record attendance for the 2019 fiscal year of 346,000 visitors, thanks in part to one of the more popular exhibits in recent memory, "No Spectators: The Art of Burning Man" that featured iconic effigies standing three stories high. Other museum attractions for the year included Paris 1900: City of Entertainment, Collecting Calligraphy: Arts of the Islamic World, and Kimono: Refashioning Contemporary Style.

Fiona, a hippopotamus born prematurely and weighing only 29 pounds in early 2017 at Cincinnati Zoo

Photo courtesy of meetNKY



◀ BOURBON COUNTRY Prohibition Bourbon Bar at Newberry Bros. Coffee in Newport is one of 16 stops along The B-Line. Northern Kentucky is an official gateway to the Kentucky Bourbon Trail.

& Botanical Garden, took the world by storm with viral videos and daily updates of her development. Three years later she continues to be a draw for tourists. In November 2019, Cece the giraffe gave birth to a six-foot-tall calf at the zoo.

From land to sea, the Newport Aquarium in Newport, Ky., has fishes large and small, plus alligators and turtles. The aquarium celebrated 20 years at Newport on the Levee in 2019 and is investing \$1 million in a new exhibit for the spring of 2020 called “Shipwreck: Realm of the Eels” with a sunken ship theme across five different zones.

In late 2018, North American Properties acquired Newport on the Levee. The Cincinnati-based development company is working with Reztark Design Studio and Turner Construction to renovate the 380,000-s.f. retail and entertainment center along the south bank of the Ohio River near the Purple People Bridge. Look for more restaurants, walkways, outdoor venues and attractions to join existing tenants like the 20-screen AMC movie theater. Newport on the Levee opened in 2001 and has four levels of garage parking. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers approved the permit for construction of the 230-foot SkyWheel, a riverfront observation wheel.

Riverfront Commons is an 11.5-mile walkway along the Ohio River, starting in the eastern part of the region in Dayton, Ky., and moving west into Ludlow, Ky. The city of Covington has begun renovating Riverfront Commons by the Roebling Bridge that connects Covington to Cincinnati, to construct a meeting area and amphitheater for music. “We’re very excited about this,” Summe said. “Visitors, particularly international visitors, are interested in the wayfinding walking aspect. Our heritage is our river.”

Ovation, a mixed-use development in Newport, hopes to attract hundreds of thousands of visitors to the riverfront each year. Construction of the first phase of the project, a \$40 million, 38,000-s.f. concert venue, began in 2019.

ATTRACTIONS

Ark Encounter

Williamstown

BB Riverboats

Newport

Big Bone Lick State Park

Union

Blue Licks Battlefield State Park

Carlisle

Photo by Mackenzie Frank



▲ **OUTDOOR ART** BLINK, a four-day light and art show, extended from Cincinnati into about 10 blocks of northern Covington in October 2019. The event uses projected lighting, immersive art, murals and music to showcase unique buildings and public spaces, turning the region into a massive outdoor art museum. More than 20 installations were featured in Covington, including the Hannaford Building, shown here, which was animated with architectural projection mapping.

2020 Festivals

February

- Big Cheese Festival, Fairfield, Ohio
- Bockfest, Bockfest Hall in Cincinnati
- Cincinnati Auto Expo, Duke Energy Convention Center
- Cincinnati Home & Garden Show, Duke Energy Convention Center
- Mardi Gras for Homeless Children, Northern Kentucky Convention Center

March

- Cincinnati International Wine Festival, Duke Energy Convention Center
- Cincy Winter Beerfest, Duke Energy Convention Center
- NKY International Festival, Northern Kentucky Convention Center

May

- Derby Day Festival, Williamstown
- MainStrasse Village Maifest, Covington
- Summerfair Cincinnati, Coney Island
- Taste of Cincinnati, downtown Cincinnati
- Universal Energy Expo, Northern Kentucky Convention Center

June

- Bunbury Music Festival, Sawyer Point Park
- Italianfest, Newport

July

- Cincinnati Music Festival, Paul Brown Stadium
- Cincy Blues Fest, Sawyer Point Park
- Glier's Goettafest, Newport on the Levee
- Sun Valley Bluegrass Festival, Alexandria

August

- Festival on the Lake, Alexandria
- Great Inland Seafood Festival, Newport

September

- Burlington Fall Antique Show, Burlington
- Cincinnati Riverfest and Fireworks, Sawyer Point
- Cincy Comic Expo, Duke Energy Convention Center
- Farmers' Feast, Pendleton County
- Oktoberfest, Covington
- Oktoberfest Zinzinnati, downtown Cincinnati

October

- Kentucky's Edge Bourbon Conference & Festival, Covington and Newport
- Kentucky Wool Festival, Falmouth
- Salt Festival, Big Bone Lick State Park

November

- Winterfair, Northern Kentucky Convention Center

Braxton Brewing Company

Covington

Donna Salyers' Fabulous Furs

Covington

Elk Creek Vineyards

Owenton

Kentucky Speedway

Sparta

MainStrasse Village

Covington

New Riff Distilling

Newport

Newport Aquarium

Newport

Newport on the Levee

Newport

Northern Kentucky Back Roads Wine Trail

Camp Springs

Purple People Bridge

Newport

Riverside Food Tours

Covington

World Peace Bell

Newport ●

A spirit of community

NKY rich with arts, food and cultural events that bring people together



◀POPULAR DESTINATION The historic MainStrasse Village in Covington, a 19th century German neighborhood, is Northern Kentucky's inviting home of Oktoberfest and Maifest. It features unique shops and galleries, a variety of restaurants, beer and bourbon pubs and entertainment options.

have become destinations in and of themselves.

"The experience element is critical," Antus said. "It is the most important thing for any destination."

Part art and part science, chefs and culinary artisans are appreciated by residents and tourists alike. Riverside Food Tours and Cincinnati Food Tours guide patrons through specific experiences surrounding regional dining options at MainStrasse Village in Covington and Findlay Market in Cincinnati's Over-the-Rhine community, respectively.

MainStrasse Village in Covington celebrates Oktoberfest every September, attracting foodies from the neighborhood and from out of town to locally owned restaurants like Frida, Otto's and the farm-to-table Bouquet Restaurant, and then to the Old Kentucky Bourbon Bar and a jazz café called Dee Felice. There's Tousey House Tavern in Burlington, Ky.; Trotta's Steak & Seafood and the bistro Purple Poulet in Dayton, Ky.; Pompilio's Italian Restaurant in Newport; and Schneider's Sweet Shop in Bellevue, Ky., a candy store and chocolate factory that celebrated its 80th anniversary in 2019.

The Madison Theater is a music venue in Covington. It's down the block from

BY KATHIE STAMPS

In-person experiences are trending in all art forms.

Apps and ads and social platforms are great ways to find out what's happening right now, right here. Finding a concert, art exhibit, dance performance or literary reading has never been easier, along with where to eat before or after, and arts organizations are flourishing because of the popularity of real-life experiences.

Being tied to a device 24/7 has its drawbacks, of course, one being the hospitality and travel industry calls "permanxiety," or permanent anxiety, related to the fear of missing out and the preoccupation with needing to know what's going on in the world at all times.

"Arts and culture are the perfect antidote to permanxiety," said Linda Antus, president and CEO of Cincinnati

USA Regional Tourism Network. "Our culinary and cultural tourism is moving higher on the charts for our destination demand drivers as the reasons people want to come here."

Throughout Northern Kentucky, locally owned restaurants and food-centered events are more popular than ever. Take craft bourbon distilleries and breweries, for example. They are small enough to offer tours and tastings that

Photo courtesy of Regional Tourism Network



►UNDER THE SEA The Shining Seas mural, a collaboration between Artworks Cincinnati and Newport Aquarium, celebrates the diverse wildlife of the sea and commemorated Newport Aquarium's 15th anniversary.

► **HERE'S YOUR SIGN** The Greater Cincinnati region boasts plentiful opportunities for tourism staples like zoos, aquariums and restaurants – and also interesting oddities like the American Sign Museum in Cincinnati, shown here. The experience includes quirky exhibits and historical pieces to take visitors through American sign history, beginning with the fancy goldleaf glass signs of the early 1900s.

Riverside Korean, one of several ethnic restaurants in the city with authentic cuisine. A new brewery on historic York Street in Newport is Wooden Cask, specializing in craft beer. The York Street Cafe in Newport has a cozy, homey feel with food downstairs and entertainment upstairs. And more concerts take place at the Southgate House Revival in Newport. In Florence, Walt's Hitching Post is an equine-themed restaurant and tavern, and Miyoshi is an authentic Japanese restaurant, one of several that opened because of the now-defunct Toyota plant.

Building, rebuilding, remodeling and connecting are all happening within the arts and culture scene of Northern Kentucky. In Newport, a \$40 million concert venue is underway, thanks to a partnership between Corporex Companies in Covington and Los Angeles-based AEG Presents/PromoWest. The 38,000-s.f. concert space, Venue Plaza, is Phase I of the \$1 billion Ovation development, a 25-acre mixed-use project located on the riverfront side of Newport at the Ohio and Licking Rivers. Construction began in July 2019 for the concert space, which will hold up to 2,700 concertgoers inside and up to 7,000 outside.

Horizon Community Funds of Northern Kentucky launched "The 410," a new giving circle in late 2019. The inaugural grant recipient is Southbank Partners' upcoming mural project commemorating the 225th anniversary of the city of Newport in 2020. The 410



grant will help repurpose a structural wall into a wall of murals in downtown Newport, adjacent to the east campus of New Riff Distilling.

ArtsWave, the nonprofit promoter and fundraiser of the arts serving the Northern Kentucky and Greater Cincinnati region, is the largest organization of its kind in the country. From its 2019 Community Campaign, ArtsWave awarded just over \$10 million in grants to 120 arts organizations throughout the region. ArtsWave's Blueprint for Collective Action is a 10-year strategy designed to create a more vibrant economy and a connected community through the arts sector.

In October 2019, ArtsWave was a sponsor of BLINK, a four-day festival produced by The Agar, ArtWorks, Brave Berlin, the Carol Ann and Ralph V Haile, Jr./U.S. Bank Foundation and the Cincinnati USA Regional Chamber. The festival featured sculptures made from lights and murals projected onto buildings.

An estimated one million people saw the inaugural BLINK festival in 2017 throughout 20 blocks. The 2019 event spanned 30 blocks, and ArtsWave offered guided walking tours from

Covington across the Roebling Bridge into Cincinnati's Findlay Market.

"The BLINK event was absolutely transformational," Antus said. "Not only did it look lovely, but it was one of those things that brings community together. You looked into each other's eyes and you saw a neighborhood in a different way, literally in a different light."

Bringing people together and creating a spirit of community, arts events large and small are important experiences.

MUSEUMS & GALLERIES

American Sign Museum

Cincinnati

Behringer-Crawford Museum

Covington

Campbell County Log Cabin Museum

The Carnegie

Covington

Cincinnati Museum Center

Union Terminal

Creation Museum

Petersburg

Dinsmore Homestead

Burlington

Fine Arts Center

Highland Heights

James A. Ramage Civil War Museum

Fort Wright

National Underground Railroad Freedom Center

Cincinnati

Railway Museum of Greater Cincinnati

Covington

Taft Museum of Art

Cincinnati

Vent Haven Museum

Fort Mitchell ●



◄ **HANDS-ON LEARNING** The Duke Energy Children's Museum in Cincinnati offers hands-on fun for children of all ages in eight educational and themed play areas, including two specifically designed for preschool-aged kids.

Continual quest for progress

Leaders working to address challenges: establishing identity, developing political clout



ONE VOICE Northern Kentucky Regional Alliance Board members, sponsors and community members watched Gov. Andy Beshear's inaugural parade from outside INKY Frankfort, a new facility that opened in January to facilitate business in the NKY region. INKY Frankfort will help the Regional Alliance and partners in its mission to transform Northern Kentucky by uniting and mobilizing community leaders around initiatives that produce tangible, measurable results.

NORTHERN KENTUCKY TRI-COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORP. (TRI-ED)

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Northern Kentucky Tri-ED is the primary economic development company for Boone, Campbell and Kenton counties, providing marketing, business retention and expansion, and entrepreneurship services for the region. Tri-ED markets and promotes Northern Kentucky on a national and international basis as a desirable location for new or expanding businesses.

Lee Crume,
President
& CEO,
Northern
Kentucky
Tri-ED

BY GREG PAETH

BASED on a long list of nuts and bolts metrics and far less objective anecdotal evidence, it would seem that Northern Kentucky – as a region – should be thrilled with its position as one of the most vital and vibrant areas of the state.

But the eight-county region that's thrived for generations as a critical component of the largest metropolitan area that reaches into the commonwealth is far from content with the status quo.

The Northern Kentucky Regional Alliance, working with some 20 companies and institutions that have played huge roles in Northern Kentucky's growth and prosperity, has announced two

highly tangible brick-and-mortar projects that are designed to address intangible problems that go back generations.

The two-year-old Alliance purchased a home in Frankfort that has been christened "INKY" and transformed into a kind of headquarters for Northern Kentuckians who want to drive home the message to lawmakers that the region can speak with one voice and a single purpose on many critical issues.

Karen Finan, president and CEO of the alliance, said her organization is leading the INKY campaign in an effort to develop "aligned growth strategies" and share some services so that the combined organizations can have a greater impact in the region.

The building in Frankfort "... offers a branded location where sponsoring organizations and businesses can convene, strategize, advocate and provide collective impact," Finan said.

Jack Moreland, president of Southbank Partners in Newport, an economic development agency that works in six river cities and supports the "INKY" effort, provided some historical perspective.

"The area is divided into three different counties, and because of that it means that the powers that be in Frankfort have a difficult time knowing where the final authority is," Moreland said.

"Does the power lie with the county judges?" asked Moreland, referring to the

top elected officials in the three largest counties: Boone, Campbell and Kenton, which have a combined population of about 398,000. "Or does it lie with the mayors of the larger cities? Exactly where does the power base lie so they (in Frankfort) can get some sort of definitive answer (on regional priorities)?"

"This is something that the region has recognized for a long time and there's going to be a renewed emphasis on that," said Brent Cooper, president and CEO of the Northern Kentucky Chamber of Commerce, commenting on the long-held perception that the region lacks political clout in the state capital.

"We want to spread the word around the state and around the region that Northern Kentucky matters," added Cooper, whose 1,500-member-plus organization is one of the leading supporters of INKY.

The second tangible project is an office building proposed for Covington that would become headquarters for a number of "growth organizations" that focus on development in the region. Besides Southbank and at least part of the chamber staff, the building might become the home base for the Catalytic Development Fund

REDI CINCINNATI

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The Regional Economic Development Initiative (REDI) Cincinnati is the first point of contact for companies locating or growing in the 16-county region at the heart of Southwest Ohio, Northern Kentucky and Southeast Indiana. It is supported by top business leaders and community partners, and staffed by a team of economic development experts who are passionate about where they live.



Kimm
Lauterbach,
President
and CEO

of Northern Kentucky, the alliance and the Northern Kentucky Tri-County Economic Development Corp.

Finan, who made a presentation to the Covington City Commission in the fall, declined to say which organizations might move in because no agreements have been signed and the building, at this point, is merely under discussion.

Like Finan, Cooper stressed the importance of unity in the region.

"When we really act as one Northern Kentucky, we really can have an impact on the state," said Cooper. He pointed to the 2019 election results and the chamber's get-out-the-vote campaign as ample evidence about how the region can deliver at the polls. A number of analysts at the local, state and national levels said former Gov. Matt Bevin's inability to retain his strong support in Northern Kentucky might have been the primary reason why he lost to Andy Beshear.

"We want our political influence to be as strong as our economic impact in the state," said Kristin Baldwin, vice president of public affairs and communications for the chamber. As if they had said this sentence a thousand times before, Cooper and Baldwin, who were interviewed together, said in unison: "We feel like we're often overlooked."

Chamber board chair Dan Cahill had stressed the importance of the region speaking with one voice during his keynote address at the organization's annual dinner in September.

Nearly everyone who was interviewed for this story stressed the importance of the Cincinnati-Northern Kentucky International Airport (CVG), where fares have dropped as dramatically as the number of direct flights has risen.

Baldwin said companies that used to send one person to the region on business could now afford to send two or three because ticket prices have decreased. Cooper said he knows firsthand that ticket prices are about half what he used to pay when Delta dominated the airport.

Another long-standing intangible problem for the region revolves around its image and identity, and how it defines itself.

As part of the Cincinnati metropolitan area, the question sometimes becomes whether it's more North than South and whether its primary loyalties might be to Cincinnati rather than the commonwealth.

Lexington is known for horse farms and bourbon and Louisville is home to the Kentucky Derby and also has ironclad links to distilling, said Eric Summe, president and CEO of the Northern Kentucky Convention and Visitors Bureau.

Why we love NKY life



Tom West,
economic development director,
Covington

"What I really love about Covington is that throughout our urban renaissance, so far, we have been able to hang on to our authenticity, edginess and our quirky imperfections. When you walk down a sidewalk in downtown or Latonia, you can see and feel our socio-economic, racial and other forms of diversity. Our urban grit and flaws that are on display signal loud and clear this place is real, the people are real, the challenges are real, and most importantly, the opportunities here are real, too."



Gary W. Moore,
Boone County Judge/
Executive

"I love our beautiful state and here's why Northern Kentucky tops off the commonwealth. The northern counties have beautiful rural areas that offer scenic Ohio River vistas, old growth forests and quality parks. No other part of Kentucky is home to professional sports of baseball, football and soccer; Broadway series arts and one of the top zoos in the U.S. are also minutes away, and we are home to the fastest growing international airport in the country. But most of all it is our amazing people who make our community a place to call home."



Diane Whalen,
Mayor of Florence

"There is a unique charm to living in Northern Kentucky. We are small-town enough to be closely connected to each other, and big-city enough to provide every employment, shopping and dining experience you could want. While people come and people go from our communities, they continue to call Northern Kentucky 'Home Sweet Home,' y'all."

"In 2013 we did a rebranding (when)... our slogan was, 'The southern side of Cincinnati,' and we felt that if your branding is that you were next to something else, maybe we ought to take another look at it," Summe recalled.

Summe acknowledged that



Joe Meyer,
Mayor of Covington

"I love living and working in Covington because – even as the City is constantly changing – it never loses its authenticity. Covington is crackling with an energy that entices people and businesses to move here, and – once here – they fall in love with our historical buildings, the walkability of our downtown, the friendliness of our people, and all the great places to eat and drink."



Kerry Byrne,
president,
Total Quality Logistics



Rachel Grubbs DesRochers,
CEO/Chief Gratitude Officer at Grateful Grammys

"This region provides us with access to top talent. With many large corporations in the Tri-State, along with multiple colleges and universities, a large part of our success has been driven by top recruits from this area."

"I am extremely grateful to be building my businesses in Northern Kentucky. It's given me opportunities that I couldn't have imagined over the last seven years of building here. The people who feel like family, the community who believes in me, and the opportunity to share stories and space means everything to me."



Nancy Grayson,
president,
Horizon Community Funds

"Northern Kentucky is home for me and my family. Northern Kentucky is urban, suburban, rural – a little bit of everything, sprinkled generously with our uncommon charm. I'm so proud of who we are, and our future together as a region."

developing a memorable phrase that describes Northern Kentucky was challenging.

"We tried to come up with a hook that represented our region and we couldn't come up with one," said Summe, who rattled off a long list of attractions in

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Nancy
Grayson,
President

Horizon Community Funds of Northern Kentucky is a community foundation that builds philanthropy in Boone, Campbell and Kenton counties. It serves as a charitable concierge to its Northern Kentucky neighbors, whether they give personally, as a family, or as a business. Horizon's goal is to build the resource base for Northern Kentucky needs such as social services, urban revitalization, education, health and wellness, the arts and more – now, and into the future.

the area, including professional sports, museums in Cincinnati, historical sites, significant architecture, first-rate restaurants and bars, and the region's relatively recent status as part of the Kentucky Bourbon Trail Craft Tour, where five distilleries throw open their doors for an offshoot of the state's popular Bourbon Trail Tour.

A fairly new attraction is what the tourism bureau promotes as being on "The Edge" of bourbon country, where five distillers and a number of bourbon-centric bars hope to attract travelers who might be headed south for the Bourbon Trail.

The first Edge conference and two-day festival were held in October.

While being directly across the Ohio River from Cincinnati may be an impediment to establishing a distinct identity for Northern Kentucky, the location also has numerous advantages.

"We are part of the Cincinnati experience and we would be foolish to not leverage that," said Cooper. He said he'd be perfectly happy if visitors stayed at the Hotel Covington, had a beer at the nearby Braxton

Courtesy of Northern Kentucky Regional Alliance



Brewery or a glass of bourbon at the New Riff Distillery in Newport, and then walked over the Roebling Suspension Bridge in Covington to see a Reds or Bengals game "or a world-class art museum or a Broadway show. We are leveraging that we are in close proximity to that – we're not ignoring it."

"I think we should probably celebrate that as much as we can because there are a lot of great things going on just across the river and I think we complement those and we want to be seen as equal partners," Moreland said.

Summe and Pat Frew, executive director of the Covington Business Council, both pointed out that one of the next major projects in the region will be the redevelopment of the Internal Revenue Department service center property in Covington.

"To see 23 acres of riverfront property in some form of development down the road creates almost to me an ultimate quality of place (opportunity), depending on how it's developed," said Summe, whose agency covets one corner of the property so that the Northern Kentucky Convention Center can expand.

Frew pointed out that the site has plenty of potential for a variety of reasons, including its proximity to downtown Cincinnati.

▲FOCUSED ON DEVELOPMENT An office building has been proposed for Covington that would become headquarters for a number of "growth organizations" that focus on development in the region. The proposed rendering for the INKY headquarters building, by Phoenix Architecture and Corporex, depicts it as located adjacent to The Ascent at Roebling's Bridge and the RiverCenter Towers. The participating agencies are still discussing the development and nothing is final, said Karen Finan, president and CEO of the Northern Kentucky Regional Alliance.

"Northern Kentucky's role as a vibrant part of the Greater Cincinnati region is important to the way outsiders view us nationally," said Frew, whose organization has about 400 members. "Cities that possess walkable communities rise to the top of the list for potential residents and businesses. To have the Covington riverfront within a 10-minute walk of the Banks (on Cincinnati's riverfront) ... is significant."

Other regions of the state or parts of the country might find it difficult to shed any tears of sympathy for Northern Kentucky. It's part of a three-state metro economy with Ohio and Indiana that ranked 29th in the country when it recorded a gross domestic product of more than \$138 billion in 2017, the last year for which the U.S. Commerce Department has data. Just under \$20 billion – about a tenth of the state's GDP – was produced in Northern Kentucky.

In addition to the 398,000 people in the three largest counties, there are about 90,000 people in the other five Northern Kentucky counties. That total adds up to about 11% of the state's population. ●

◀UNITING THE REGION Roger Peterman, a partner in the Dinsmore law firm in Covington, is shown at the 2019 Northern Kentucky Chamber Dinner, which celebrated the chamber's 50th anniversary by honoring the accomplishments of individuals and the business community and highlighting strides made by the chamber throughout the past 50 years. Regional unity was a theme throughout the evening.



Steve Thomas photo

Horizon

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Working together for a better NKY

Local organizations advocate for businesses and needs of community

THE Northern Kentucky region is known for its collaborative spirit. Several local agencies work together to support the growth and health of the community and its businesses, and to promote it as a place that is ripe for investment.

Here's a look at a few of them.

NKY Tri-ED

northernkentuckyusa.com

Since its founding in 1987, Northern Kentucky Tri-County Economic Development Corp. (Tri-ED) has led the successful relocation or expansion efforts for 670 business projects, representing more than 67,000 primary industry jobs created with a capital investment of more than \$8.4 billion.

Tri-ED markets and promotes Northern Kentucky on a national and international basis as a desirable location for new or expanding businesses, and assists existing local companies to expand operations and grow their customer bases.

In April 2019, Lee Crume was hired as president and CEO, tasked with transforming the organization during a period of substantial growth and development of jobs in NKY. Several other new staff members were added to assist in that mission.

NKY Chamber of Commerce

nkychamber.com

The Northern Kentucky Chamber of Commerce is a leading business organization and a nationally accredited five-star chamber. It serves all business types and sizes. Its mission is to promote and support the development of strong businesses and a vibrant economy in the Northern Kentucky region, through leadership and advocacy, resulting in a better quality of life for all.

From helping solve human resources issues and navigating bureaucracies to connecting businesses to potential customers, the NKY Chamber helps its members grow and market their businesses. It also is helping the region address both the current and future demand for workforce talent through local initiatives such as GROW NKY.

Led by Brent Cooper, president and CEO, the Chamber has 1,400 members across the region. It advocates for its members and the needs of the area, including infrastructure improvements



and workforce development. The chamber exists "to be the voice of the business community," it says.

NKADD

nkadd.org

The Northern Kentucky Area Development District (NKADD) is a collaboration of local leaders and staff educating and empowering communities by implementing quality services through specific areas of expertise in aging, community development, human services, and workforce development. It serves 62 local governments and eight Kentucky counties – Boone, Campbell, Carroll, Gallatin, Grant, Kenton, Owen and Pendleton.

Southbank Partners

southbankpartners.com

Southbank Partners is a community and economic development organization that coordinates activity with the cities that lie along Northern Kentucky's bank of the Ohio River. Its purpose is to help the cities through promoting and coordinating development activities, fostering teamwork and collaboration, and providing a unified voice for the partner cities in advocating common positions to state and federal governments, as well as to other communities.

Recognizable accomplishments of Southbank Partners include the creation of the Southbank Shuttle, the Purple People Bridge and Developers Day. The Southbank Shuttle is a bus that runs every 15 minutes and connects the cities of Covington, Newport, Bellevue and Cincinnati. This transit system was originally conceived, owned and operated by Southbank, but as

▲CONNECTING CITIES Riverfront Commons is an 11.5-mile walking and biking path that runs along the Ohio River from the city of Ludlow on the west to the city of Fort Thomas on the east. It will seamlessly connect over the Purple People Bridge to trails in Cincinnati, to the Licking River Greenway in Northern Kentucky, and to Devou Park in Covington.

it grew in popularity, it was taken over by the Transit Authority of Northern Kentucky (TANK) and became part of the regional transit network. It is now one of the most heavily utilized routes in the system.

The Purple People Bridge was also conceived and developed by Southbank. The L&N Bridge between Newport and Cincinnati was being considered for demolition. The leaders of Southbank saw an opportunity to create a pedestrian link between Kentucky and Ohio, which is now an extremely popular and heavily used pedestrian connection that is an important part of Newport's urban core.

Among its ongoing projects is Riverfront Commons, an 11.5-mile walking, running and biking trail along the Ohio River that will link Northern Kentucky's river cities: Ludlow, Covington, Newport, Bellevue, Dayton and Fort Thomas.

REDI Cincinnati

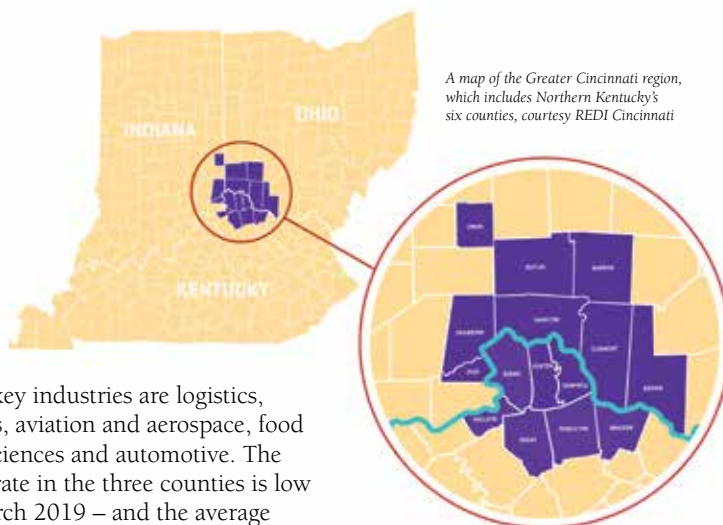
redicincinnati.com

The Regional Economic Development Initiative (REDI) Cincinnati is the first point of contact for companies locating or growing in the 16-county region at the heart of Southwest Ohio, Northern Kentucky and Southeast Indiana. It is supported by top business leaders and community partners and staffed by a team of economic development experts who are passionate about where they live. ●

Northern Kentucky by the Numbers

NORTHERN Kentucky – part of the 15-county Greater Cincinnati region – has a growing population and an expanding workforce. The Greater Cincinnati region has a labor pool of more than 1.3 million people and a labor force participation rate and size (civilian population 16 years and over) that is significantly higher than the rest of Kentucky and the United States. The three counties that comprise Northern Kentucky – Boone, Campbell and Kenton – have a labor force of nearly 210,000 people.

Northern Kentucky is just a one-day drive (or 90-minute flight) from 60 percent of the U.S. population. It is the nexus where three interstate highways meet, including I-75.



A map of the Greater Cincinnati region, which includes Northern Kentucky's six counties, courtesy REDI Cincinnati

398,000	Population (Boone, Campbell & Kenton)
37	Median age of residents
39.47	Percentage of residents with a college degree
\$69,921	Median household income
69.73	Percentage of homeowners
\$163,951	Median home value

The region's key industries are logistics, financial services, aviation and aerospace, food and flavor, life sciences and automotive. The unemployment rate in the three counties is low – 3.1% as of March 2019 – and the average worker earned annual wages of \$49,048 as of the fourth quarter of 2018. Fifty-five percent of the jobs in Northern Kentucky are considered “white collar.” Over the next year, employment in the region is projected to expand by 1,504 jobs.

Northern Kentucky's demographics paint a picture of a thriving, growing and impactful region that is poised to continue to attract attention from business and industry leaders in the coming years.

County Populations

	2000	2019*	2040*
Boone	85,991	136,757	224,687
Campbell	88,616	92,732	88,012
Gallatin	7,870	8,813	9,863
Grant	22,384	24,786	30,090
Kenton	151,464	168,511	177,963
Pendleton	14,390	14,122	15,118
Clermont (OH)	177,977	204,214	216,190
Hamilton (OH)	845,303	813,822	786,090
Totals	1,393,995	1,463,757	1,548,013

* Estimated

Source: Kentucky State Data Center, Ohio Development Services Agency

Largest Employers

EMPLOYER	NO. OF EMPLOYEES
Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky International Airport	13,678
St. Elizabeth Healthcare	8,557
Fidelity Investments	3,870
Kroger Co.	3,690
Amazon.com	3,301
Boone County Schools	3,400
Citi	2,490
Northern Kentucky University	1,984
Kenton County Schools	1,700
Castellini Group of Cos.	1,550
Mubea NA	1,450
Robert Bosch Automotive Steering	1,000
Duro Hilex Poly LLC	848
Campbell County Schools	715
Mazak Corp	676
Frisch's Restaurants	675
U.S. Postal Service	650
Schwan's Global Supply Chain Inc.	600
Tyson Foods	566
Corporex Cos. LLC	483
Zumbiel Packaging	400
Perfetti Van Melle USA Inc.	360
Verst Logistics	312
Gateway Community and Technical College	311

Source: Northern Kentucky Tri-ED

Top Occupations

OCCUPATION	PERCENT
Office and administrative	13.22%
Production workers	12.22%
Sales	11.05%
Executive, managers and administrators	8.54%
Food preparation and service	6.86%

Industry Sectors with Highest Average Wages

INDUSTRY	WAGES PER WORKER
Management of companies and enterprises	\$128,172
Utilities	\$86,886
Finance and insurance	\$78,845

Industry Sectors with Most Workers

INDUSTRY	NO. OF WORKERS
Transportation and warehousing	22,828
Health care and social assistance	22,022
Manufacturing	21,529

Industry Sectors with the Best Job Growth

Transportation and warehousing
Manufacturing
Health care and social assistance

Renewed interest in the region

Amazon Prime Air hub and opportunities it creates, housing shortage driving new projects



BY LORIE HAILEY

A housing shortage and an influx of economic development projects have led to a significant rise in construction projects in Northern Kentucky.

From the construction of the Amazon Prime Air hub and a large spec building at the Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky International Airport (CVG) to several riverfront projects, a collection of mixed-use developments and multiple residential projects, builders and contractors in Northern Kentucky are staying busy.

In 2019, 844 new residential construction permits – single and multi-family homes – were issued (as of the beginning of December), up 13% over 2017, when there were 744. Permits for residential remodeling increased 95% from 2017 to 2019, from 1,284 to 2,514.

New commercial/industrial capital investments in Boone, Kenton and

Campbell counties topped \$323 million in 2019, a 205% increase over 2017, according to data from the Builders Industry Association of Northern Kentucky (BIANKY).

The \$1.5 billion Amazon Prime Air hub, under construction and set to open in 2021, is driving some of that growth, encouraging other companies to invest in the region, said Brian Miller, executive vice president of BIANKY. Some properties that have been vacant for years are being developed “because of the Amazon project and the surge of activity with logistics centers,” he said.

“What’s going on right now is nothing short of amazing,” said Dan Ruh, executive vice president and Cincinnati market leader for Cincinnati-based design/build firm Al. Neyer. “I am a fifth-generation Kenton County resident and am so excited to finally be actively developing in NKY. Northern Kentucky

▲SPEC BUILDING Paul Hemmer Co. is currently constructing a 139,600-s.f. speculative distribution facility near CVG for CA Ventures, an international real estate investment management company headquartered in Chicago. The \$9.7 million project features 32-foot clear heights, LED lighting with motion sensors, 14 loading docks (expandable to 31), a 125-foot truck court and 146 car parking spaces.

is unlike other areas in the region because of several factors – density in the population, proximity to the airport, and a strong national investment in the area.”

Amazon’s investment has attracted businesses to the region to take advantage of anticipated opportunities, agreed Paul Hemmer Jr., president of Paul Hemmer Co. in Fort Mitchell, a construction leader in the region since 1921.

Hemmer is currently constructing a 139,600-s.f. speculative distribution facility near CVG for CA Ventures, an international real estate investment management company headquartered in Chicago. The design/build company completed construction in December 2019 of another building at the airport, an expanded GE On-Wing Support facility that will be used for GE Aircraft engine repair services.

Al. Neyer also is in on the action. The company is constructing a 1.1 million-s.f. speculative distribution center on 59 acres at the corner of Burlington Pike and



Kenton County Police Department photo

◀NEW AND OLD The new Kenton County Administration Building opened in the fall of 2019. The \$29 million project included renovating the former Bavarian Brewery, a 1911-era building that had been largely unoccupied in recent years, and adding a new, adjacent facility.

LUCKETT & FARLEY

737 S. Third St.
Louisville, KY 40202
(502) 585-4181
lucett-farley.com

President and CEO Aric Andrew has infused his passion for design excellence and innovative thinking into Lockett & Farley, the oldest continuously operating architectural firm in the country.

As an architect, Andrew himself has over a quarter-century of architectural and project management experience. A graduate of the University of Kentucky College of Architecture (now College of Design), where he received several design awards, Andrew has led the firm's transformation with a new, unique "studio" model and renovated new headquarters.

Its studio approach integrates architecture, engineering and interior design in six different industries – health and wellness, industrial, corporate commercial and hospitality, higher education, government and distilled spirits.



Aric Andrew,
AIA, LEED
AP, President
and Chief
Executive
Officer

Aero Parkway, adjacent to the Amazon Prime Air hub. The building, called Aero Commerce Center, will be more than 24 acres under roof when completed. It is scheduled to be completed in third quarter of 2020.

Also being built at the airport is a 50,400-s.f. multi-tenant facility that will be anchored by FedEx, which bases two aircraft out of CVG. Construction of the facility, being developed by Aeroterm, is nearly complete.

A \$19 million aircraft maintenance facility, FEAM Aero, also is currently under construction at CVG. And Meyer Tool, an aerospace and industrial gas

▼ **COMMERCE CENTER** Al. Neyer has built three buildings at the Erlanger Commerce Center, near the Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky International Airport (CVG). The first building is occupied by Perfetti Van Melle and Novalex (Duro-Bag). Coca-Cola Consolidated occupies the second building; the third is a speculative building available for lease.

turbine engine manufacturer, recently purchased and renovated an 83,000-s.f. property near CVG. The Cincinnati-based company invested \$16 million and is creating about 100 new jobs there.

"The new site will be located 13 miles from our headquarters and around the corner from our Northern Kentucky facility," said Beau Easton, one of the owners of Meyer Tool. "We have also been the beneficiaries of an excellent workforce talent pool in the area. Northern Kentucky has become a hub for manufacturing with an emphasis on automotive and aerospace manufacturing, and we're thrilled to be part of this thriving community."

Hemmer has been the go-to builder for several companies opening warehouse and distribution centers or manufacturing facilities at or near the airport – including Robert Bosch Automotive Steering, Wayfair, Bonfiglioli USA and others – and throughout the Greater Cincinnati region. The company is currently renovating and expanding Mazak's North American headquarters and expanding Perfetti Van Melle's facility, both in Florence.

In recent years, Hemmer has seen the most growth in logistics and distribution construction, followed by manufacturing and suburban office and medical building construction. Companies choose Hemmer because of its strong building systems knowledge, Paul Hemmer said.

"We think of buildings in terms of their life cycle. Buildings need to be designed for flexibility because their initial use will change," he said.

Commercial construction projects of all kinds are underway across the region.

The new Kenton County Administration Building, at 303 Court St., opened in the fall of 2019. The \$29 million project included a renovation of the former Bavarian Brewery, a 1911-era building that had been largely unoccupied in recent years, and the



Paul Hemmer Co. photo
Perfetti Van Melle USA chose the Paul Hemmer Co. to renovate and expand its manufacturing facility in Florence. Perfetti Van Melle makes Airheads candy and other confections.

Nearly a century of building in Northern Kentucky

PAUL Hemmer Co. is a construction, building and real estate services firm with a history in Northern Kentucky and Cincinnati dating to 1921. Nearly 100 years later, Hemmer is recognized as one of the region's premier providers of construction services.

For more than 50 years, Hemmer has specialized in design-build construction. Hemmer's unique knowledge and experience enables it to provide the earliest commitment of guaranteed cost and delivery for its industrial and commercial customers. All construction projects come with inherent risks, so nothing takes the place of experience, said Paul Hemmer Jr., president of Paul Hemmer Co.

In its design/build program, Hemmer focuses its efforts on building value by design. Every project is viewed as more than just a one-time endeavor; the company president said.

Hemmer knows that each project represents both a substantial and long-term investment for its customers.

"Hemmer understands that decisions made early in the process will have the greatest impact on value for the life of the building," Paul Hemmer said. "In addition, we know that our success is tied to an ability to lead a team of professionals that includes architects and engineers, as well as subcontractors and suppliers."

Hemmer has an excellent reputation in the subcontractor community and has established strong relationships with the best subcontractors in the region.

Finally, Hemmer credits its success to a professional staff with an established culture of teamwork and service, where an emphasis is placed on good communication, as well as a commitment to quality and competitive pricing, Paul Hemmer said.

"Nearly 100 years after its founding, Hemmer enjoys an excellent reputation and track record for success," he said. "Our goal is to become your building partner."



Al. Neyer photo

construction of an adjoining new facility. The words Kenton County and Kentucky are displayed prominently on the county building and are lit at night.

Al. Neyer recently completed the third phase of its Erlanger Commerce Center, a 575,000-s.f. speculative building. The first phase was two buildings that offered 1.6 million s.f. of state-of-the-art distribution space at the intersection of Interstates 75 and 275. The completed Phase I features a 779,720-s.f. building split between tenants Duro Bag and Perfetti Van Melle; Phase II was a 301,000-s.f. Phase II building for Coca-Cola Bottling Company Consolidated.

Just south of Erlanger Commerce Center, Al. Neyer is building a three-story, 100,000-s.f. office building for Atlas Air Worldwide's operation center.

Turner Construction is leading a huge renovation and expansion project at Newport on the Levee. Cincinnati-based North American Partners, which purchased Newport on the Levee in 2018, plans to invest \$100 million in the 360,000-s.f. mixed-use, riverside development.

Local leaders planning for continued growth

The attention Amazon is bringing to Northern Kentucky has led local leaders to take stock of the available land and make plans to sustain that growth. That includes tackling zoning issues and making sure the infrastructure is in place to support large commercial developments, BIANKY's Miller said.

"The size of these projects coming in the last year or two is pretty massive," he said. "And it probably eclipses what is going on around most of the U.S."

Boone County's zoned commercial and heavy industrial land is "getting gobbled up right now," Miller said. "Anything

Paul Hemmer Co. photo



around the airport is getting picked over, large parcels have gone, small parcels are coming on."

The next available land in Boone County is in Walton, which for years was considered too far away for companies to locate, he said. That has changed.

"Now, outside companies are looking at Walton and things are starting to get bid there. But once that goes, we're pretty much out with the exception of some remnants in Kenton County," Miller said.

Kenton County leaders, however, are working to put thousands of acres on a future land-use map, he said, to try to get an adequate amount of industrial land in Kenton County that can supply the region for a few years. The planning commission has not yet released any land-use maps, but it likely will make them public in early 2020 and give the community an opportunity to provide input, Miller said.

It is important to make sure Kenton County is poised to take advantage of the development boom, so those developers don't "go right down the interstate" and invest elsewhere, he said.

"Hopefully ... we are able to bring about 3,000 acres of industrial land to market," he said.

Currently, commercial and industrial land use accounts for less than 6% of the land area in Kenton County, according to Direction 2030, a research report by the Kenton County Planning Commission.

Economic activity spurs residential development

Economic development means more jobs, and that means more residents who need homes in Northern Kentucky. New residential projects are popping up all over the region to meet the demand, from riverfront high-rises to single-family home subdivisions. Much of the

▲HQ EXPANSION Paul Hemmer Co. is doing multiple renovation and building additions to Mazak's North American manufacturing headquarters in Florence.

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Paul Hemmer Company is a construction management, building services and real estate development firm that builds Value by Design. With a history in Greater Cincinnati dating to 1921, Hemmer specializes in design/build construction, which enables it to provide the earliest commitment of cost and delivery for its industrial, medical, commercial and retail clients.

residential development has been the remodeling and repurposing of existing buildings, according to data from BIANKY.

More than 2,500 permits for residential remodeling were issued in Boone, Kenton and Campbell counties in 2019, a 96% increase over 2017.

The number of permits for single-family homes has not changed much over the past three years; in 2019, there were 795; in 2018 and 2017, there were 715 and 682, respectively. There were 49 permits for multi-family homes in 2019, down 87% from 2018, when 92 multi-family home permits were issued. There were 62 permits in 2017.

By far, most new home construction was completed in Boone County. In 2019, both Boone and Campbell counties had over 1,000 remodeling permits issued, 1,126 and 1,040 respectively. Campbell County's projects had the most value, though, coming in at \$22.7 million versus Boone's \$14.5 million. ●

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Jack Moreland, President, Southbank Partners

Southbank Partners is a community- and economic development organization that promotes and coordinates development activities, fosters teamwork and collaboration, and provides a unified voice for the Northern Kentucky Ohio River cities of Bellevue, Covington, Dayton, Ludlow, Newport, Silver Grove and Fort Thomas. Its accomplishments include the Southbank Shuttle, the Purple People Bridge, and Riverfront Commons, an 11.5-mile walking/biking trail along the river currently under development. For more information visit southbankpartners.com.

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Creating livable communities

Commercial, residential real estate projects aim to make region attractive to newcomers



Courtesy of Corporex

BY LORIE HAILEY

FROM riverfront developments and speculative buildings to residential complexes and neighborhoods, there's a ton of action in Northern Kentucky's real estate market.

The Northern Kentucky and Greater Cincinnati area is a "hidden jewel," said Tom Banta, managing director of the Corporex Companies and Corporex Realty & Investment in Covington. Cost of living in NKY is 12% below national average and housing prices are 30% below national average, he said.

"The area supports the fastest-growing economy in the Midwest and ranks in the top five in the nation as one of the best areas for economic development," Banta said.

The quality of life in NKY is second to none, he said, citing the region's strategic location, the presence of worldwide business and industry leaders, sought-after international events, a renowned arts and culture scene, multiple sports franchises, world-class universities and a "global influence that impacts every neighborhood and business."

The region's abundant skilled workforce also attracts big-name investors, Banta said.

Corporex is a real estate investment company with strong roots in Northern Kentucky. It has been investing in the community for more than 53 years and is responsible for some iconic developments, including RiverCenter Towers and The Ascent at Roebling's Bridge in Covington.

One of Corporex's most recent projects is Madison Place Apartments, a 13-story, 187-unit high-rise community situated in one of the most sought-after neighborhoods on the riverfront. The units, which offer enchanting views of the Cincinnati skyline, are in the "pre-leasing" phase.

The company also is developing the long-awaited Ovation project, a major mixed-use development on the river in Newport that, once completed,

▲UNDER CONSTRUCTION Ovation, a planned \$1 billion mixed-use project by Corporex, when finished will be a massive mixed-use complex on Newport's waterfront. The first phase, currently under construction, is an indoor/outdoor concert venue and parking garage.

will attract hundreds of thousands of visitors to the region, adding to an already remarkable quality of life that potential investors seek. The project has been in the planning stages for more than 10 years, thanks to a few roadblocks, including a major recession, but construction on the first phase – a concert venue – kicked off in July 2019.

Corporex partnered with AEG Presents/Promo West on the \$40 million, 38,000-s.f. concert venue, which will host more than 180 events each year. Its groundbreaking design will accommodate indoor audiences up to 2,700 and will have an outdoor capacity for summer shows of up to 7,000 attendees. With its unique sweeping roof design, the concert venue will sit atop a 550-car structured parking garage.

"This facility is expected to attract over 350,000 to 400,000 fans annually to this intimate music setting," Banta said.

The concert venue will be linked to future phases of the Ovation development via a pedestrian walkway over the recently opened Route 9 extension, Banta said.

"The pedestrian bridge will be linked to the restaurants, night life and other entertainment spots that will make up the main pedestrian streets dubbed Broadway



Courtesy of Corporex

▲HIGH RISE Corporex is leasing Madison Place Apartments, a 13-story, 187-unit high-rise community situated on one of the most sought-after neighborhoods on the riverfront.



▲ **VILLAGE VITALITY** RiverHaus, a new high-end residential and commercial development project built by Flaherty & Collins Properties in Covington's MainStrasse neighborhood, is the first new construction project in Kentucky to use an Energy Project Assessment District to finance energy-efficient construction.

and Main Streets within the mixed-use Ovation development," he said.

Later this year, construction is scheduled to begin on a 1,400-space parking structure podium that will serve as the base for 834 housing units and 91,000 s.f. of street level retail and amenity space. Once completed, Ovation will have 942 residential units, three hotels, 1 million s.f. of office space, 380,000 s.f. of entertainment and retail space and 2,700 structured parking spaces.

"The site is one of the most phenomenal opportunity development

areas in the entire Midwest," Banta said. "At the confluence of two rivers, the property has breathtaking panoramic views of the Cincinnati skyline, architecturally renowned bridges, the cascading hills of Kentucky and all the amenities the riverfront offers. It is a short walk or water taxi ride to the Central Business District, Great American Ballpark, Bengals Stadium and US Bank Arena."

Ovation isn't the only NKY mixed-use development in the works.

Construction is set to begin in the spring of 2020 on the first phase of a project by World Peace Bell Hospitality that includes a hotel, office building, retail space and parking garage on the World Peace Bell site in Newport's central business district. The hotel and parking garage are being built first.

"This project will be the missing link connecting Newport on the Levee to Monmouth Street and the central business district," said Newport City Manager Tom Fromme. "It's another piece of the puzzle for downtown development and part of the rapid and remarkable transformation for our heavily-trafficked downtown corridor."

Plans for the Peace Bell site – which is bordered by Monmouth, York, Fourth and Fifth streets – call for a 144-room hotel, a 49,000-s.f. mixed-use building that will include retail and office space and a 350-space, above-ground parking garage. The hotel will face Fourth Street; the retail and office building will front Monmouth Street.

The World Peace Bell will remain on the site, but the Southbank Partners building will be demolished and the

Corporex: Philanthropy vital to community well-being

FOR 54 years, William "Bill" Butler, chairman of Corporex Companies LLC, built the company into one of the leading privately held owner/operators of commercial real estate in the country.

Corporex controls more than \$1 billion of real estate investments located in 20 major markets in the United States. The company has developed several major projects in Northern Kentucky, including RiverCenter Towers and The Ascent at Roebling's Bridge, the iconic blue and white residential building with a sloped spiral roof that offers a stunning view of the Ohio River and the Cincinnati skyline.

In the summer of 2019, Butler stepped down from the role of CEO and began concentrating on the company's philanthropic efforts, a crucial part of Corporex's company culture.

"This community work is the source of my energy these days. Throughout our corporate career, we held to a standard that we would not wait to give back, but rather we would give along the way, both financially and of ourselves, with personal time devoted to the community," Butler said. "Now, I am more free to give both time and money."

Corporex has donated significant resources to strengthen the community through its corporate giving program and The Butler Foundation, established in 1979 to directly help low-income and disadvantaged people in Northern Kentucky. The Butler Foundation has helped struggling families by providing operating support, program funding and scholarship dollars to more than 70 local charities.

Corporex and The Butler Foundation helped launch and expand Life Learning Center, which prepares at-risk adults for productive employment and life success. Corporex originated and was a principal funder of The Catalytic Development Funding Corp. of Northern Kentucky.

In 2017, Butler also helped launch Horizon Community Funds, a public charity that unites resources to improve the quality of life for all people in Northern Kentucky and to "move the community forward," he said.

Butler sits on the boards of Horizon Community Funds, United Way of Greater Cincinnati, Lindner Center of HOPE, Dan Beard Council of the Boy Scouts of America and The Butler Foundation. He is also a member of the Northern Kentucky Regional Alliance, a community organization that seeks to unite and mobilize community leaders to help the region grow.

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Bill Butler,
Chairman
and Founder,
Corporex
Companies
LLC

► **CURB APPEAL** Unique and historic residential real estate opportunities in the urban core of Boone, Kenton and Campbell counties include Newport's Mansion Hill, North Covington's extravagant historic architecture, and the picturesque Fairfield Avenue in Bellevue.

organization will likely move into the new development.

In Covington, city leaders are working to transform the 23-acre former IRS site into a mixed-use development that includes a levee park, a community plaza for festivals, and a mixture of buildings containing offices, retail shops and places to live.

The city hired Cooper Carry, the Atlanta-based global architecture and design firm, to create a conceptual master plan for the site while simultaneously helping the city gain control from the federal government. The firm helped the city gather community input on the project.

The conceptual plan has not yet been adopted but is being used as a guide as the city moves forward.

The IRS site became available when it closed its doors in September 2019 after 52 years of operation.

"It's a huge opportunity for Covington," said Tom West, the city's economic development director. "We've tried to focus on creating a livable community, because if we're going to attract jobs, we need to have neighborhoods that people want to live in. So we've had kind of what I call a corner-store focus. I always ask, 'Why should someone have to get in their car and drive three miles to get a loaf of bread?'"

Home sales dollar volume up in 2019

Residential real estate had a big year, too.

A record number of homes were sold in 2018 – 6,816 homes. While it's likely 2019 won't surpass that number, the dollar volume – \$1.37 billion – was up 3.59% as of November 2019, according to the Northern Kentucky Association of Realtors (NKAR). The average home price was \$206,533, an increase of 6.38% over 2018. In May 2019, the average listing price of Northern Kentucky homes for sale rose to \$344,131, the highest ever recorded here.

During the past two years, NKAR saw a shift in the local market. Inventory shortages began to happen in certain desired areas and "as sellers had a relatively easy time selling their home, they often found it difficult to find the



perfect home to move up to," NKAR said in its December 2019 press release. "We saw many homes in the price point of \$100,000 to \$250,000 getting multiple offers in the first few days on the market. So much competition for homes to buy saw sale prices explode in comparison to just a few years ago."

In May 2019, the average listing price of Northern Kentucky homes for sale rose to \$344,131, the highest ever recorded. June 2017 saw average listing prices at \$285,672, the highest to that date in NKY.

"An average price increase of \$58,459 is quite hard to sustain, especially for first-time buyers," NKAR said.

A number of factors are driving in the increase in home prices. In new construction, increased labor and materials costs, and fees associated with federal regulations, are driving up costs, said Brian Miller, executive vice president of the Building Industry Association of Kentucky (BIANKY).

"The first-time home buyer is pretty much priced out," Miller said.

There is a lot of activity in home renovation and remodeling. In 2019, residential remodeling permits increased by 44%, and those permit values increased by \$11.3 million, according to BIANKY data.

"Remodeling is off the charts," Miller said.

Boone County had the most remodeling projects in 2019, but Campbell County's projects had a higher value. (Boone County also had more new home construction – single family and multi-family dwellings – in 2019 than the other two counties.)

One residential development that is attracting attention is a plan to convert the hilltop property of the former Newport Baptist Convalescent Home into 45 luxury condominiums. The four-story building, located at 120 Main St., faces downtown Cincinnati and offers magnificent, panoramic views of the Cincinnati skyline.

Each condominium unit will have a patio or deck. A model home is already open.

"The views up there are staggering," Fromme said.

In Covington's MainStrasse Village, RiverHaus was completed in 2019. The \$50 million, high-end residential and commercial development has 190 apartments, retail space and a parking garage.

RiverHaus is just one of a number of notable residential developments across the tri-county region. ●

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Logistics powerhouse

Optimal location, innovative workforce help NKY become a leader in burgeoning industry

BY LORIE HAILEY

FROM eCommerce to warehousing and transporting goods, Northern Kentucky has become a logistics powerhouse, thanks to its geographical advantage, an educated and innovative workforce, and collaboration among its economic development leaders.

Northern Kentucky is optimally positioned for ease of market access. The region is within 600 miles of 65% of the U.S. population – that's a one-day drive or 90-minute flight. It's also within 600 miles of five commercial airports, 19 interstate highways and parkways, two major air freight shipping hubs (UPS and DHL), 2,800 miles of mainline rail and 1,100 miles of commercial waterways with seven public riverports.

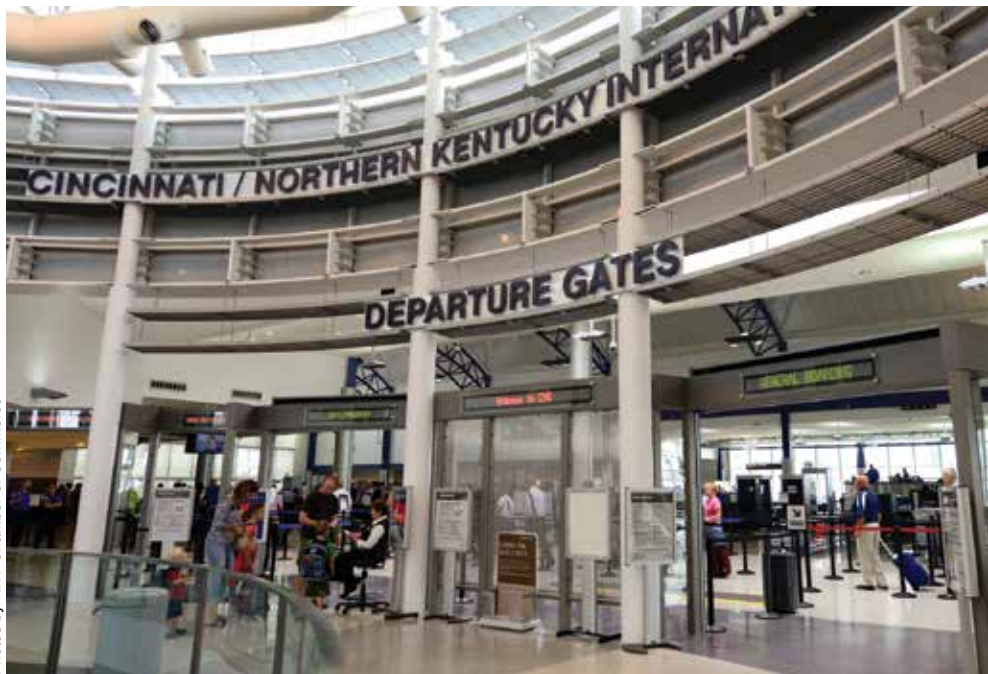
One of the region's greatest logistics assets is the Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky International Airport (CVG) in Hebron. The airport is a catalyst for much of the region's economic development, says Boone County Judge/Executive Gary Moore, attracting numerous companies to invest in Northern Kentucky. And in recent years, parts of CVG's thousands of acres of land has been leased to major firms who want to take advantage of the region's logistics expertise.

In 2017, online retail giant Amazon announced a plan to build a \$1.5 billion shipping hub to serve its fleet of Prime Air planes at CVG, creating 2,700 new jobs. Now under construction, the hub is a "once-in-a-generation project" for the region, representing the largest capital investment in the past 30 years, according to Campbell County Judge/Executive Steve Penderly.

Amazon is leasing more than 1,100 acres of CVG's land to build more than 3 million s.f. of buildings for its hub, which ultimately will support a fleet of more than 100 Prime Air cargo planes. During construction,

Atlas Air expanding to help meet Amazon demand

Amazon contractor Atlas Air is expanding, adding 600 jobs over the next 10 years. The company is leasing a new facility near CVG. Atlas, which employs 318 people at its facilities in Northern Kentucky, provides outsourced aircraft and aviation operations for customers around the globe.



Photos by NKY Chamber of Commerce

the company is using existing facilities to operate 18 aircraft based at CVG for a total of 36 daily flights.

"Our new Amazon Air hub, opening in 2021, is part of our continued investment in Prime to ensure we have the capacity required for continued outstanding service for our customers," said Sarah Rhoads, director of Amazon Air. "We're proud to call Kentucky home for our air hub."

When Amazon announced its plans, CVG was already one of the fastest-growing cargo airports in the United States – and the eighth-largest in North America. (Now, the airport is the seventh largest.) But the Amazon investment helped solidify CVG – and the Commonwealth of Kentucky – as one of the top logistics centers in the world.

Amazon joins several other logistics companies doing business at or near CVG. Germany-headquartered DHL has its North American hub there, its second largest in the world and one of three global "super hubs" from which DHL Express serves 220 countries. Online furniture and home goods retailer Wayfair operates a 900,000-s.f. fulfillment center on a 52-acre site near CVG. Bosch Automotive has a warehouse and distribution center there, too. Other non-aeronautical companies operating at CVG include GE Aviation and logistics provider DB Schenker.

Companies like Wayfair "can set up a facility here and within a day they can access

▲SETTING RECORDS CVG has been serving commercial passengers since 1947 – almost 9 million passengers in 2018. It set local passenger records in 16 of the last 17 months (through September 2019 reported), establishing a new all-time record for local passengers in June 2019, 426,246. It has 175 peak-day flights to more than 50 nonstop destinations – and the lowest airfares in the region.

several million people from Toronto all the way down to Atlanta," said Lee Crume, Tri-ED president and CEO. "You just have this tremendous logistical reach by being physically present in Northern Kentucky. When you look at these companies like DHL and Amazon, especially Amazon, what you realize is that we have this really unique asset in CVG."

In 2016, CVG launched new land development initiatives that attracted major employers, increased the airport's revenue and have benefitted the community. Since then, CVG has partnered with companies to develop more than 300 acres of property, said Candace McGraw, chief executive officer of CVG.

"The geographic position of CVG is a highly desirable and strategic location for land developers," McGraw said in 2016 when two long-term leases were approved. "These projects create win/win/win opportunities for the airport, the community and developers. The airport receives new revenue streams, which lowers the cost

► **HUGE INVESTMENT** Kentucky's location is one of the reasons why the online retailing behemoth Amazon has about a dozen sites in the state and began construction in 2019 on its \$1.5 billion Prime Air cargo hub at Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky International Airport – one of the largest economic development projects in Kentucky history. Amazon founder Jeff Bezos made a surprise guest appearance at the 2019 groundbreaking for the hub.

CVG by the numbers

- CVG has a **\$4.4 billion** impact on the local economy. It hopes to grow that number to **\$5.5 billion** by 2021, according to CVG's strategic plan.
- More than **31,000** direct and indirect jobs are generated by CVG operations.
- CVG moved more than **1.2 million** tons of cargo in 2018.
- Its operating budget for 2019 was **\$120 million**.
- The airport has **66** options for food/beverage, retail and services in its terminal.

of operations for airlines and tenants, the community sees job growth and economic development, and developers have access to over 75% of the U.S. population within 600 miles of the airport."

CVG has been serving commercial passengers since 1947, with almost 9 million passengers in 2018. It has 175 peak-day flights to 53 nonstop airport destinations, including direct international service to Paris, Toronto, Cancun, Cozumel, Montego Bay and others. It also has the lowest airfares in the region.

The airport set local passenger records in 16 of the last 17 months (through September 2019 reported), establishing a new all-time record for local passengers in June 2019 (426,246). For five years in a row, CVG has experienced local passenger growth every month.

"We have had tremendous growth in our passenger and cargo operations over the last five years, with CVG becoming one of the fastest growing airports in the United States for the last three years," McGraw said. "Local passenger growth has increased 56% between 2015 to



2018 while air fares have decreased 32% during the same period."

CVG is keeping with the demand by continuing to invest in infrastructure improvements, such as its new rental car facility and customer service building, set to open in late 2021. The airport's Master Plan sets forth a robust facility and capital plan that looks toward improvements through 2050, including terminal enhancements, airfield infrastructure investments and additional development opportunities, McGraw said.

"Projects under consideration include updating ticketing processing and passenger facilitation, adding an additional concessions hub and moving international passenger screening to the Main Terminal area," she said.

'The Silicon Valley of Logistics'

Northern Kentucky is home to more than 100 logistics companies. Thirty-nine percent of those are third-party logistics companies; 24% are distribution; 23% are fulfillment; and 14% are eCommerce. Site Selection magazine named Northern Kentucky as the fifth-most competitive location in North America for transportation and logistics.

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Candace McGraw, CEO, Cincinnati Northern Kentucky International Airport

CVG is embracing what's next as an essential part of the region's overall growth and success, serving more nonstop destinations than any airport in the Tri-State. CVG is one of the fastest-growing airports in the U.S. in both passenger and cargo traffic, and is one of three global super hubs for DHL and future home to Amazon Air Hub.

In addition to Amazon, DHL and Wayfair, some of the major employers include: Groupon Fulfillment Center; UPS Supply Chain Solutions; FedEx Ground Package System; Schwan's Global Supply Chain; Total Quality Logistics; Levi Strauss & Co.; and Verst Logistics.

Family-owned Verst Logistics in Walton, Ky., has become a logistics powerhouse. The third-party logistics company, founded in 1966 by William G. Verst, offers fully integrated transportation, warehousing, product fulfillment, contract packaging and eCommerce services for a wide range of consumer goods manufacturers in the food and beverage, alcohol and spirits, health and beauty, and automotive industries.

Each of William Verst's seven children has worked in some capacity at the company, and in 1992, his son Paul took the

◀ **AN ECONOMIC FORCE** The Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky International Airport (CVG) is the seventh-largest cargo hub in the United States. It also has more flights, and lower-cost flights, than Dayton, Columbus, Indianapolis, Lexington and Louisville. CVG is one of the region's greatest assets, according to local economic development leaders.



helm as president and CEO. Since that time, Verst Logistics has grown from a \$18 million company with 100 employees in two states to a \$230 million company with 1,900 employees in five states, said Paul Verst, who now serves as chairman and CEO.

In addition to order fulfillment and warehousing, Verst operates its own transportation fleet, offers transportation management services and has a real estate division. The company operates from 23 different buildings.

Verst is a “one-stop shop” for logistics and supply chain services, and all of its divisions have experienced tremendous growth in recent years, Paul Verst said.

“Since 2016, our sales have grown about 60%,” he said.

In 2018, Verst opened a 396,000-s.f. eCommerce order fulfillment center in Hebron near CVG, creating about 140 new jobs. The facility uses fulfillment distribution network planning technology and specialized robotics called Lotus Robots that assist employees. Within six months, the building was 75% full.

The location of the fulfillment center, in what Verst calls the “foremost logistics corridor in the Midwest,” allows the company to distribute products for its clients to 80% of the U.S. population within 24 to 48 hours.

That logistical advantage is one of the reasons Verst and other logistics companies choose Northern Kentucky as their home and are finding much success there.

Major logistics companies like DHL, Wayfair, UPS and Amazon Prime have invested in Northern Kentucky because of its strategic location along Interstate 75 and quick access to CVG, which has more direct flights than any of its nearby competitors. The region is within a two-day drive of 90% of the U.S. population.

The location makes it desirable, said Kerry Byrne, president of Total Quality Logistics (TQL), but it is not the only reason NKY has become a logistics and transportation hub.

“This region also provides us with access to top talent,” he said. “With many large corporations in the Tri-State (area), along with multiple colleges and universities, a large part of our success has been driven by top recruits from this area.”

TQL has offices in Erlanger, Lexington and Louisville, and is headquartered in Cincinnati. It has 150 employees in Northern Kentucky and more than 1,800 in the Greater Cincinnati region, Byrne said. The second-largest freight brokerage firm in North America, TQL coordinated more than 1.6 million shipments last year for customers in the U.S., Canada and Mexico.

TQL is undergoing a major expansion at its headquarters in Cincinnati. It will house its new IT innovation center and accommodate 600 new employees.

New jobs, expanded facilities

Logistics companies continue to invest in Northern Kentucky. In late 2019, Coca-Cola Bottling Co. Consolidated opened a \$30 million, 300,000-s.f. sales and distribution facility in Erlanger, creating more than 430 full-time jobs. In March 2019, Control4, a global provider of smart home solutions, announced plans to open a fulfillment center near CVG.

In 2018, just nine months after opening a 674,000-s.f. distribution center in Florence, Kroger announced an additional investment of \$18 million to expand, purchase new equipment, upgrade technology and add 250 full-time jobs to support its eCommerce and digital services. Schwan's Co. has added new jobs in recent years, and BM2 Freight Services in 2018 opened a new location in metro Chicago near O'Hare Airport, the first office located outside its Cold Spring headquarters.

Cold Chain Integrity, a third-party logistics company that provides cold storage and transportation services for the food, flavoring and pharmaceutical industries, invested \$20 million to build a new 115,000-s.f. ultra-low-temperature public refrigerated facility at its existing warehousing and distribution campus in Erlanger, creating 50 new jobs. The high-rise, high-density warehouse serves existing large-scale customers and offers public storage for local small-business owners and nonprofit organizations.

In early 2019, Florence-based Legion Logistics acquired Qontinuity Enterprises, a third-party logistics brokerage based in Dandridge, Tenn. Legion specializes in servicing federal and state government transportation contracts as well as the automotive and building products industries.



Photo by Verst

▲ONE-STOP SHOP Verst Logistics, a large third-party logistics company headquartered in Walton, offers fully integrated transportation, warehousing, product fulfillment, contract packaging, and eCommerce services for a wide range of consumer goods manufacturers. Verst has experienced tremendous growth in the past four years. It opened a 396,000-s.f. eCommerce order fulfillment center near CVG in 2018. By November of 2019, the facility was 75% full.

There are nearly 80,000 logistics workers in the Greater Cincinnati area. The largest logistics employers are Amazon, Cengage Learning, Castellini Group of Companies, DHL, FedEx Ground Package System, Groupon Fulfillment Center, Levi Strauss & Co., LOreal, Radial, Schwan's Global Supply Chain, Total Quality Logistics, UPS Supply Chain Solutions, Verst Logistics and Wayfair.

To help meet the industry demand for more skilled workers in the area's burgeoning logistics sector, Northern Kentucky University in Highland Heights partnered with Rockwell Automation and CBT Co. to open a mechatronics lab in 2019. It provides a real industrial automation environment for students to assemble, program and operate integrated manufacturing systems, preparing them for jobs in automation, control, instrumentation design and robotics areas.

“Companies like Amazon, FedEx and DHL are investing here to build hubs and distribution centers, and they will continue to expand. Engineers are needed to design and build the control systems for these centers, and technologists to run them,” said Michael Schutte, Rockwell Automation account manager.

Roads, waterways and rails

Northern Kentucky is located on the north-south I-75 corridor connecting

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► **MODERN APPROACH** Transit Authority of Northern Kentucky (TANK), which began providing transit services in 1972, has a regional mobile ticketing platform that allows customers to buy their bus fare directly through their mobile device. The app also allows passengers to purchase regional transit passes that work on TANK in Northern Kentucky as well as the other transit systems operating in the Northern Kentucky/ Greater Cincinnati metropolitan area.

Michigan to Florida. Two Class 1 railroads, CSX and Norfolk Southern, cross the region; and the Ports of Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky is the busiest inland river port in the United States, according to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Navigation Data Center.

The Ports of Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky includes 226.5 miles of commercially navigable waterways of the Ohio River and Licking River in Kentucky. The ports support more than 129 active docks and terminals, moving an estimated 48 million tons of cargo annually.

More than 82,000 people are employed in transportation and material moving occupations in the Cincinnati metropolitan statistical area (MSA), of which Northern Kentucky is a part. Their average wage is \$48,600, according to information provided by Tri-ED.

Local leaders are working to make improvements to the region's roadways, hoping to ease traffic flow challenges. Topping the list is relieving the load on the aging Brent Spence Bridge, which carries north-south traffic for Interstates 71 and 75 across the Ohio River. When it was built in 1963, the bridge carried 80,000 vehicles a day. Now, more than 170,000 vehicles cross it daily. It is known for traffic jams and crashes.

Northern Kentucky leaders already have worked with state and federal officials to establish an east-west corridor to bypass some of the traffic on the overworked bridge to other available bridges. Northern Kentucky's roads received a major shot in the arm in June 2018 in the form of a \$67.5 million INFRA grant awarded to the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (KYTC) for I-71/I-75 interchange improvements in Boone County. The total future estimated cost of the project is \$150.9 million, according to a KYTC press release. In addition to the INFRA grant, a combination of traditional state and federal funds, as well as local Boone County Fiscal Court funds and private funds, will pay for the remainder of the project.

The region is served by three intermodal terminals and three train classification yards, including Norfolk-



Southern, CSX and RailAmerica, which process over 100 trains per day.

CSX operates about 60 trains per day through the area. Norfolk-Southern has direct service to 22 states and Ontario, with an average of 35 to 40 trains per day through the Northern Kentucky region. RailAmerica operates two short-line railroads in the region: Indiana and Ohio Railroad and Central Railroad of Indiana.

Public transportation for nearly 50 years

Transit Authority of Northern Kentucky (TANK) has been providing transit services in the region since 1972. It serves 35 cities in Boone, Campbell and Kenton counties, with 11,000 daily riders. It had 3.2 million bus riders in 2018 and revenues of \$23.2 million.

To stay relevant and effective, TANK has had to continually adjust to the transportation needs of the community, said Andrew C. Aiello, general manager.

In 2019, TANK launched a system redesign study to help ensure that its system remains efficient and effective. Officials are examining how people want to use a combination of transit and "shared ride" services to help workers who need transportation to and from their jobs. More than 1,400 people responded in fall 2019 to TANK's request for feedback about the future of the bus system.

"As population and employment patterns change, TANK needs to adjust the bus system so that the community's investment is maximized," Aiello said.

When the redesign is completed, TANK will be a more sustainable transit system with better access to the region's largest employment centers, he said.

TANK modernized service in fall 2019 by adding a regional mobile ticketing

platform. Using the internationally known app "Transit," TANK customers can now buy bus fare through their mobile devices. The app allows passengers to purchase regional transit passes for seamless travel with TANK in Northern Kentucky and the other transit systems in the Northern Kentucky/ Greater Cincinnati metropolitan area.

"Possibly the best part of the new mobile ticketing app is the functionality to also plan your transit trip and track the bus in real time," Aiello said.

TANK plays an important role in helping Northern Kentucky host signature events. TANK provided enhanced public transportation services during BLINK, a light-based art festival held in October 2019 that welcomed more than 1 million people to downtown Covington and Cincinnati. Using its Southbank Shuttle, TANK provided approximately 20,000 transit trips to and from BLINK.

LOGISTICS COMPANIES

Amazon and Amazon Prime Air
Hebron

Aries Global Logistics
Crestview Hills

B & B Transportation Inc.
Burlington

Bluegrass Diesel Specialists, Inc.
Burlington

BM2 Freight Services
Walton

Carlisle & Bray
Covington

CEVA Logistics
Hebron

Complete Forklift Repair
Corinth

DACHSER Transport of America, Inc.
Burlington

DHL Express (USA) Inc.
Erlanger

DHL Global Forwarding

Hebron

FedEx Ground

Independence

Fisher Scientific

Florence

FITS Enterprises**FITS Trailer Leasing, LLC**

Walton

Inland Marine Service

Hebron

Kuehne + Nagel, Inc.

Erlanger

LeanCor LLC

Florence

Legion Logistics LLC

Florence

McLane Foodservice Distribution

Hebron

Merchants Cold Storage LLC

Walton

NNR Global Logistics USA, Inc.

Erlanger

Panalpina Inc.

Erlanger

PEI – Dynamic Supply Chain Solutions, LLC

Florence

Pilot Freight Services

Erlanger

R.L. Swearer Co., Inc.

Erlanger

Safe Ship Northern Kentucky

Fort Thomas

Sandvik Americas Distribution Center

Hebron

SEKO Logistics Cincinnati

Florence

Southern Air

Florence

Stett Transportation, Inc.

Fort Mitchell

Team Worldwide CVG

Erlanger

Total Quality Logistics

Erlanger

Two Men and a Truck Northern Kentucky

Erlanger

UPS Freight

Cincinnati

UPS Supply Chain Solutions

Hebron

Verst Logistics

Walton

Vista Packaging & Logistics

Hebron

VR Transportation, Inc.

Hebron

*This is not a comprehensive list.**Information provided by Northern Kentucky Chamber of Commerce.***TRANSPORTATION COMPANIES****AAA Florence Taxi Service**

Florence

At Your Service Taxi

Newport

TRANSIT AUTHORITY OF NORTHERN KENTUCKY

3375 Madison Pike
Fort Wright, KY 41017
(859) 331-8265
tankbus.org



Andrew Aiello, General Manager, Transit Authority of Northern Kentucky

Transit Authority of Northern Kentucky is the public transportation provider for Boone, Kenton, and Campbell Counties. TANK routes connect people to jobs, helping the companies in our region meet their workforce needs. TANK strives to meet the transportation needs of the entire community, providing nearly 3.5 million work, school and other lifeline trips per year. It's TANK's mission to provide safe, reliable, customer-oriented transportation for the people of our community, and TANK will continue to be committed to providing transportation services that address the current and future needs of the community.

Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky International Airport (CVG)

Hebron

Red Bike**Cincinnati & Northern Kentucky TANK (Transit Authority of Northern Kentucky)**

Fort Wright ●

TANK
TRANSIT AUTHORITY OF NORTHERN KENTUCKY

TANK operates more than 130 buses in 35 cities within Kenton, Campbell and Boone Counties. Now, there is a new app that makes it easier and more convenient than ever to get around the region and where you need to be. Transit with EZFare is free to download, and provides many benefits, including:

- Ability to plan trips, pay fare and track your bus from your smartphone
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- Buy fare on your phone and store them for future use
- No need to use paper tickets, have exact change or find a fare machine

Visit www.tankbus.org or call (859) 331-TANK to learn more.

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Big investments, better care

Partnerships help St. Elizabeth expand its footprint in NKY, assist more patients

BY GREG PAETH

St. Elizabeth Healthcare and Sun Behavioral Health opened the doors for their 197-bed behavioral health hospital in Erlanger early in 2018.

Last September, St. Elizabeth, the University of Kentucky College of Medicine and Northern Kentucky University cut the ribbon in Highland Heights for UK's second four-year regional campus in the state and welcomed an inaugural class of 35 medical students.

If everything goes as planned, the dominant health care provider in Northern Kentucky will open a \$140 million cancer center in August, an event that will make St. Elizabeth a major player in the business of cancer care in highly competitive Greater Cincinnati and beyond.

These three projects represent some of the most significant steps forward for St. Elizabeth, which is expected to have revenues of more than \$1 billion for 2019 and ranks among the top four or five hospital systems in Greater Cincinnati, the 29th largest metropolitan market in the country with a population of more than 2.1 million.

St. Elizabeth has 120 locations, including hospitals, five emergency rooms, clinics and doctors' offices in Kentucky, Ohio and Indiana and treated upwards of 315,000 patients over a one-year period, the hospital said.

Based on an analysis by *U.S. News and World Report*, St. Elizabeth is doing far more than just rolling out a seemingly endless array of new programs that produce impressive numbers.



The well-respected magazine that has examined hospital care for 30 years ranked St. Elizabeth second-best in the state when it assessed how the hospital performed in 16 specialties.

"Being number two to UK is nothing to be ashamed of and not too long ago we were number one. We have gone back and forth with UK a couple of times," said Garren Colvin, president and CEO of the healthcare system. Colvin was referring to the University of Kentucky Albert B. Chandler Hospital in Lexington, which *U.S. News and World Report* named the number one hospital in 2019.

Cincinnati's Christ Hospital, one of St. Elizabeth's biggest competitors in the region, was the top-ranked hospital in

▲ RAISING AWARENESS In 2018 during Lung Cancer Awareness Month, St. Elizabeth Healthcare thoracic surgeon Dr. Royce Calhoun narrated a complex lung cancer surgery he previously performed, live on Facebook.

Cincinnati and number seven in Ohio, the magazine reported.

With the opening of the cancer center less than a year away, Colvin made it clear that St. Elizabeth has made cancer care one of its top priorities.

"August is when we will occupy the new building, but we started our new program long before we will open the doors," Colvin said. "We have already implemented a CT lung screening program and we just surpassed our 10,000th lung CT screen, which is probably one of the top three programs in the country when you look at volume."

"Unfortunately, we're in Kentucky, a hot spot for lung cancer. But what we have seen is a significant reduction in stage 3 and 4 cancers and a significant increase in stage 1 and 2," said Colvin, pointing out that the stage 1 and 2 cancers usually can be cured while the more advanced cancers often resist treatment.

◀ UNDER CONSTRUCTION St. Elizabeth Healthcare's \$140 million cancer center, shown in this rendering, is under construction in Edgewood.



Courtesy of St. Elizabeth



Advanced cancer surgery, without the surgery.

Nothing says “I’m right here” more than doing everything you can for those you truly care about. At St. Elizabeth, part of doing everything we can for our patients includes advanced cancer treatment like the Edge Radiosurgery System. The Edge provides noninvasive radiation treatment that precisely targets cancerous tumors to avoid surgery. It’s just one way we say “I’m right here” when it comes to treating cancer. So, with everything from genetic cancer testing to highly targeted treatments, look no farther than St. Elizabeth.

To learn more, visit stelizabeth.com/EDGE.



St. Elizabeth reaches notable lung cancer screening milestone

IN November, St. Elizabeth Healthcare performed its 10,000th lung screening, a significant and rare milestone only held by a handful of other systems in the country. The system's estimated rolling 12-month completion rate for eligible patients is over 25%, exceeding the national average of less than 5%, based on 2016 data presented at the 2018 American Society for Clinical Oncology (ASCO) Annual Meeting.

Kentucky ranks worst in the country for lung cancer diagnosis and death rates, according to 2018 data from the North American Association of Central Cancer Registries reported by the American Cancer Society. Based on the most recent rates published for the current American Joint Committee on Cancer (AJCC) staging system, when lung cancer is diagnosed and treated early (Stage I), the five-year survival rate can exceed 90%. This is all the more important since Kentucky is consistently one of the top two states in smoking rates, according to 2018 CDC data.

"That's why we have stepped up to solve a problem that's right here," shared Dr. Doug Flora, executive medical director of oncology services at St. Elizabeth. "We want our patients, their families and the community to do more than recognize Lung Cancer Awareness Month in November – let's get more area residents screened and save lives."

The lung screening is a low-dose CT scan that has now identified about 100 lung cancers under Stage 3. Early detection offers more options, namely allowing St. Elizabeth surgeons and their teams to remove the tumors and often spare lung cancer patients the need for chemotherapy. For patients who are not surgical candidates, the radiation oncology team also has excellent means to eradicate the cancer.

"By finding these tumors at an earlier Stage 1 or 2, we are seeing a 'stage migration' shift. Pinpointing tumors at lower stages significantly increases chances of survival," said Dr. Michael Gieske, medical director of lung cancer screening at St. Elizabeth. "The screenings are already extending and saving lives."

St. Elizabeth has recruited and developed a large multidisciplinary team to combat lung cancer, led by highly qualified lung cancer surgeons, radiologists, pulmonologists, primary care physicians, nurse navigators and medical and radiation oncologists. Under their direction, a comprehensive lung cancer screening program was built that is among the country's most robust and successful. Early on, St. Elizabeth obtained and continues to maintain certifications as a Screening Center of Excellence and a Diagnostic Imaging Center of Excellence.



The American Cancer Society estimated that 26,400 Kentuckians would be diagnosed with lung cancer this year and that 10,580 would die from the disease.

Colvin also made it clear that St. Elizabeth is enthusiastic about the medical students who are in their first year at the Highland Heights campus.

"What's amazing is the level of talent we were able to attract in this first class," Colvin said. "They will complete their first two years of book work and the third and fourth year will be their clinicals and those will take place in our system. We're excited to be part of it."

The next step will be developing residency programs so that at least some of the graduates might be convinced to practice medicine in Northern Kentucky, Colvin said.

The hospital system also has entered the battle against opioid abuse in at least three different ways.

The Sun Behavioral Health Hospital, for which St. Elizabeth is a partner, treats patients with mental health issues as well as addictions that may be linked to personality disorders.

The hospital also teamed up in September with 22 other hospitals in the state to file a lawsuit against the manufacturers, distributors and retailers of opioid-based drugs.

"I can tell you the why (for filing the suit)," Colvin said. "When we started tracking the millions and millions of dollars that we have spent on this issue . . . we felt we needed to figure out if we could be a part of the lawsuit in order to get funds to help people who were addicted recover. It's really a volume issue. The volume of people addicted far outweighs the amount of services that we can provide, and so we felt that if the manufacturers were interested in settling we wanted to be in the forefront of any settlement."

▲TREATING THE REGION St. Elizabeth Healthcare Edgewood in suburban Kenton County is home to the largest of the chain's individual hospitals, with 510 beds and a staff of more than 3,600 people. In 2018, the healthcare system treated approximately 315,000 patients at about 120 hospitals, clinics and offices in Kentucky, Ohio and Indiana.

For 2017, the law firm that represents St. Elizabeth said that 1,566 people died of opioid overdoses in the state while 782 were killed in auto accidents.

Yet another opioid abuse program is in place at NKU, where staff members are working with two grants that total \$1.8 million for programs that are scheduled to run through 2022. One grant covers the costs for substance use disorder prevention, treatment and recovery assistance in Owen County, according to Valerie Gray Hardcastle, St. Elizabeth Healthcare Executive Director of the Institute for Health Innovation at NKU.

The other grant enables the institute to develop online training for substance use disorder Peer Support Specialists, allowing the program to thrive in rural areas, Hardcastle said.

"For 2020, we are also hoping to launch a new initiative which will better integrate law enforcement and the justice system from our rural counties of Northern Kentucky into the substance use disorder treatment and recovery continuum," she said.

Although there's no question that St. Elizabeth is the dominant healthcare provider in Northern Kentucky, it's difficult to determine how many people receive care at satellites of Cincinnati hospitals that are scattered throughout Northern Kentucky.

The well-respected Christ Hospital has a family care office in Fort Mitchell and a sprawling outpatient center in Fort Wright. ●



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Robust economic expansion

Region's banks growing to keep up with demand created by economic development in NKY

BY GREG PAETH

YOU don't have to be Sherlock Holmes to find a bank in the Northern Kentucky-Cincinnati metropolitan market, where 62 financial institutions have some 700 offices with nearly \$139 billion on deposit in a region that includes seven counties in Northern Kentucky, Cincinnati and its Ohio suburbs, and a slender slice of southeast Indiana.

The abundance of financial services in the state's largest metropolitan area dovetails perfectly with a region that has an economy that's among the fastest-growing in the Midwest, according to the most recent report from the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis. The bureau said metropolitan Cincinnati's 2.4 percent growth rate was fourth-best in a five-state region based on data that was scrutinized for 2017.

As might be expected in a region where financial services competition is fierce, some players in the region are huge.

JPMorgan Chase has 34 of its nearly 5,000 offices in the metro area and reports worldwide assets of \$2.8 trillion, a figure that includes roughly \$2.5 billion in Cincinnati-Northern Kentucky, where Chase ranks sixth in deposits and has slightly less than a two percent share of the market, according to the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC).

As a whole, two banks with long histories in Cincinnati – U.S. Bank (52.5 percent) and Fifth Third (26.5 percent) – rank first and second for market share in a region that is home to nearly 2.2 million people and ranks 29th in the country by population.

But the major multi-state players that rank one through nine in the FDIC data may be paying far more attention to 10th-place Heritage Bank in 2020.

Heritage, which is headquartered in Erlanger and emphasizes its locally owned and carefully nurtured “community bank” image, made two major announcements late last year that signal it isn't satisfied with 10th place.

In October, Heritage announced that Rob Braun, the well-known former news anchor for the CBS-TV affiliate in Cincinnati, had signed on as the bank's corporate spokesman. Less than a month



later, Heritage said it had purchased the naming rights for what had been U.S. Bank Arena in downtown Cincinnati, a 17,000-seat sports and concert venue that overlooks the Ohio River.

The arena was rechristened the Heritage Bank Center.

“With Rob and the arena, there's a pretty good tie in and we're not that well known on the Cincinnati side of the (Ohio) river,” said interim president Lee Scheben. “We think this will put us in a position to grow our market as one of the last independent banks in the region.”

Scheben said Heritage recorded substantial growth in 2015 after the locally owned Bank of Kentucky was acquired by BB&T, which has its headquarters in Winston-Salem, N.C. (Just four years later, BB&T and Sun Trust Banks of Atlanta have merged and operate as Truist Financial, the sixth-largest bank in the U.S.)

Heritage, with two offices north of the river and 17 offices in Northern Kentucky, emphasizes its “community bank” status.

“We're not going after the \$20 million, \$30 million and \$40 million deals. We've got a nice niche in the market,” Scheben said. “We're not changing what we do just because we put up a banner on a big building.”

▲BANKING BONANZA While customers can still expect hometown service, clients and banking centers in Northern Kentucky also benefit from a next-door location to one of the nation's largest metropolises.

“It's just the start of our push to increase our profile throughout our home region,” added Allison Dubbs, senior vice president for marketing.

WesBanco, which ranks 15th by market share, also has made it clear that it is a serious competitor in the region and elsewhere in the state.

WesBanco, which waded into Cincinnati in 2005 with the acquisition of Cincinnati's Winton Savings and Loan, has more than a dozen offices in the region after the purchase and rebranding early in 2019 of Frankfort-based United Bank and Capital Trust, which had acquired Citizens Bank of Northern Kentucky just two years earlier.

The West Virginia-based bank's expansion in the metropolitan area mirrors its growth elsewhere in Kentucky, where it first began to do business in September of 2016, according to Louis A. Fender, senior vice president and market manager for southwest Ohio.

“We closed the Farmers Capital/United Bank agreement and during the span of two years we went from having no

► **INVESTED IN THE REGION** Heritage Bank, headquartered in Erlanger, ranks No. 10 in the region by market share and had deposits of about \$806 million. The bank recently purchased the naming rights to the former U.S. Bank Arena in Cincinnati, renaming it Heritage Bank Center.

HERITAGE BANK

1818 Florence Pike
(Home Office)
Burlington, KY 41005
(859) 586-9200
heritagebank-ky.com



Chris Caddell,
Chairman,
Heritage Bank

Heritage Bank was founded to ensure the people of this region have access to a bank fully committed to the communities where they are building their lives and livelihoods. In an age of rampant consolidation, acquisition and automation, Heritage Bank wanted a better bank for their family and friends, so they built it.



presence in the state to being top ten in deposit market share,” Fender said.

Fender and Mark Tranbarger, city president for Northern Kentucky, both said an expanding economy, a wealth of new jobs and what is expected to be population growth to fill those jobs create more demand for consumer and commercial financial services.

Market-leading U.S. Bank, the fifth-largest bank in the country, also pays plenty of attention to technology as more and more of its customers make it clear that avoiding bank teller lines is a high priority.

“We have to stay a step ahead on the digital side because we want our

customers to bank when, where and how they want to bank,” said John Fickle, consumer and business banking market leader for Cincinnati.

That technology includes a small business loan portal that can greenlight a loan inside of a few hours and other online tools that greatly reduce the amount



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Mark Sams,
Market
Executive

Civista Bank offers a uniquely local commitment to relationship banking combined with over 135 years of experience and strength. A commitment built on knowing you personally, making local decisions, and delivering the services to meet your daily and future financial needs with ease. The Civista team of personal, business, mortgage, wealth management and private banking professionals provides trusted financial solutions tailored to each client. With over \$2.2 billion in assets and 38 offices across Ohio, Southeastern Indiana and Northern Kentucky, Civista is distinctively sized to serve a broad range of small business commercial clients and their employees and families.

calls “universal bank employees” will be “more consultative” and work at desks and “stations” where there’s no barrier between employees and customers.

Civista Bank, headquartered in Sandusky, Ohio, operates 38 locations throughout Northern, Central and Southwestern Ohio, along with locations in two Indiana counties. The \$2.1 billion organization moved into Kentucky in 2018, when Civista acquired United Community Bancorp, which had a loan production office in Fort Mitchell.

Civista celebrated its 135th anniversary in early 2019. When it opened its doors in 1884, the financial institution had four employees. It now has more than 400.

“Over the past 135 years, Civista has continued to grow and transform itself into a premier financial services company while maintaining its commitment to relationship-banking and making a difference in all the communities we serve,” said Dennis G. Shaffer, CEO and president.

Digital transformation is a critical and ongoing initiative in the banking industry, said Mark Sams, Civista’s market executive for the Greater Cincinnati region.

“Civista Bank is continually evolving to meet the needs of our communities

and improving the financial lives of our customers,” he said.

Central Bank market president Jim Uebel said the last five years in Northern Kentucky have been “phenomenal and we’ve grown the balance sheet many times over.” The Lexington-based bank entered the market in 2005 and opened its fourth office in the region in explosively growing Union in Boone County early in 2019.

He said the bank is searching for the right location in Campbell County now that it has a firm toehold in Kenton and Boone counties.

There’s no big mystery about financial services growth in the region, Uebel said.

“With the growth of Amazon and DHL and other companies ... there are opportunities because there’s a need for multi-family and single-family homes, commercial office space and more industrial space. I think things are just starting as we try to find enough homes (for people filling newly created jobs),” he said.

Tom Saelinger sounded equally optimistic about how job growth will fuel the expansion of Republic Bank, the Louisville-based institution that debuted in Northern Kentucky in 2006.

of time it takes to get decisions on home equity or mortgage loans, Fickle said.

In February, U.S. Bank, based in Minneapolis but founded in Cincinnati in 1863, will open what Fickle describes as “the bank of the future” at 406 Buttermilk Pike in Fort Mitchell, an upscale suburb just south of Covington. There will be no teller line in the new office, and what he

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Kevin Garrett
Commercial Banking
859.320.1253



David Stringer
Commercial Banking
859.320.1251



Mark Sams
Commercial Banking
812.496.0704

300 Buttermilk Pike, Suite 103
Fort Mitchell, KY 41017
800.604.9368



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Republic has three offices south of the river and a fourth in Cincinnati that opened in 2016. It opened a second Ohio location in the Cincinnati suburb of West Chester in early 2020.

"Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky are a key market for the bank and we're continuing to invest in the region with brick and mortar as well as talented bankers. There are a lot of good-paying jobs and people are moving into the area for new opportunities with companies like Amazon and DHL. There are also additional jobs with supporting companies," Saelinger said. "There's just a natural growth and economic expansion with a lot of momentum right now on both sides of the river."

The financial services sector in Northern Kentucky is flush with banks, credit unions, advisors and investment specialists to ensure the earning, flow and investment of dollars is done wisely.

Here are some of the financial advisors and banking institutions in the Northern Kentucky and Greater Cincinnati region:

Allied Financial Solutions
Florence

AlphaMark Advisors
Fort Wright

Altus Wealth Management, LLC
Fort Mitchell

Apprisen
Florence

Aviatrix Accelerators
Covington

Baird Private Wealth Management
Fort Mitchell, Cincinnati

Bannockburn Global Forex, LLC
Cincinnati

Bartlett Wealth Management
Cincinnati

BB&T
Crestview Hills

Bottom Line Services
Fort Mitchell

The Catalytic Development Funding Corp.
Covington

Central Bank
Florence

Chase
Cincinnati

Citi
Florence

Citizens Deposit Bank
Fort Wright

Citizens Federal Savings & Loan Association
Covington

Civista Bank
Fort Mitchell

Commonwealth Bank & Trust Co.
Florence

CENTRAL BANK & TRUST CO.

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Florence, KY 41042
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centralbank.com



Jim Uebel,
Market
President,
Central Bank

With more than 73 years of service to Kentuckians, Central Bank is one of Kentucky's leading community banks. It provides banking, investment, insurance, mortgage and wealth management services for both personal and business needs. Central Bank is honored to be one of Kentucky's Best Places to Work and the Official Bank of UK Athletics. Visit one of its convenient locations in Florence, Fort Mitchell, Crestview Hills or Union.

Cove Federal Credit Union
Edgewood

Eagle Financial Services Inc.
Multiple locations

Edward Jones
Edgewood, Erlanger

Envoy Mortgage Ltd.
Crestview Hills

FFR Wealth Team
Covington

Fidelity Investments
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FINANCIAL SERVICES

Fifth Third Bank

Multiple branches

First Financial Bank

Multiple locations

Focus On Success

Fort Mitchell

Forcht Bank

Covington, Cincinnati

Fourth Street Performance Partners, Inc.

Covington

FTJ Fund Choice LLC

Hebron

Guardian Savings Bank

Multiple branches

Heritage Bank

Multiple branches

Huntington National Bank

Florence

Kemba Financial Credit Union

Florence

Kentucky Federal, A Division of Cincinnati Federal

Covington

Kentucky Land Title Agency Inc.

Fort Mitchell

L & N Federal Credit Union

Erlanger, Fort Mitchell, Fort Wright

Legacy Financial Advisors

Covington

MCF Advisors

Covington

MCM CPA & Advisors

Cincinnati

Merrill Lynch

Fort Mitchell

Morris & Bressler PSC

Florence

Northern Kentucky Educators' Federal Credit Union

Highland Heights

Odyssey Financial Advisors – Ameriprise Financial Services Inc.

Edgewood

OMEGA Processing Solutions LLC

Fort Thomas

Option Financial LLC

Fort Mitchell

PNC Bank

Cincinnati

Polaris Home Funding Corp.

Cold Spring

Primerica

Fort Wright

Principled Wealth Advisors LLC

Covington

Prosperity Financial Group

Fort Mitchell

Renaissance Investment Management

Covington

Republic Bank

Covington

Rippe Financial Group

Covington

Stock Yards Bank & Trust Company

Cincinnati, OH

Stockton Mortgage Corp.

Florence



▲ TRANSFORMATION The BB&T building in Covington was transformed by color and pattern when BLINK Cincinnati returned for its second year in 2019. The light festival spanned 30 city blocks across two cities and featured more than 100 art installations. BB&T and Sun Trust Banks of Atlanta recently merged to operate as Truist Financial.

U.S. Bank

Multiple locations

Union Home Mortgage Corp.

Fort Mitchell

Victory Community Bank

Fort Mitchell

Wells Fargo Advisors, LLC

Fort Mitchell

WesBanco

Multiple locations

Wurz Financial Services

Covington ●

*Information provided by Northern Kentucky Chamber of Commerce.
Not a comprehensive list.*



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People matter.



Frontline back-office skills

Strong professional services sector supports growth of region's key industries

BY LORIE HAILEY

FROM accounting and IT services to brand marketing and waste disposal and more, Northern Kentucky is stocked with business and professional services talent to help meet the needs of the region's key industries – advanced logistics, eCommerce and manufacturing, among others.

A strong professional services sector is crucial to the local economy and plays a large role in recruiting companies to Northern Kentucky, said Lee Crume, president and CEO of Northern Kentucky Tri-ED, the region's economic development corporation.

"Professional services are incredibly important and Northern Kentucky has a strong presence of IT consulting, accounting and legal firms in the region," Crume said. "These services are especially important when our economic development team is working with foreign companies – they want to know that they can find trusted and experienced advisors locally."

The professional services sector has seen steady growth in recent years, and it has been identified as one of several optimal business clusters for the region by local economic development leaders. Service firms provide back-office support,



such as human resources and payroll services; accounting services and financial software; managed IT and cybersecurity needs; financial advisory expertise; and national marketing and brand development skill.

Business and professional services is one of the optimal business targets identified in Covington's economic development strategy. The plan, developed by consulting firm Garner Economics of Atlanta, said "All Things Office" and new-collar jobs are optimal targets for Covington's recruiting efforts. Those companies include business and administrative services; creative design and services; software publishers; IT and computer systems design; data processing and hosting; internet publishing and web portals; financial, insurance and health care technology and related customer service; architectural and engineering services; and logistics consulting.

Both small and large CPA firms provide services in Northern Kentucky, from family-owned companies to firms with footprints in multiple states.

MCM CPAs & Advisors, one of the largest CPA firms in Kentucky, also serves the Greater Cincinnati region. It has 65 staff members in its Cincinnati office (also serving clients in Northern Kentucky),

▲SUPPORT SERVICES The Northern Kentucky/Greater Cincinnati region is rife with business and professional services firms that help meet the needs of the region's key industries.

including 35 CPAs, providing specialized tax, audit and advisory services to a broad range of clients and industries.

"Many of our clients in the area have international business needs or are in the hospitality, real estate or construction industries," said Brad Smith, MCM managing partner. "Northern Kentucky is a great region for growing a business with its talented workforce, real estate opportunities and international airport."

MCM's clients are from all over the U.S. and world. The firm offers expertise in audit and assurance services, tax planning, business valuation, litigation support, fraud examination, business startup and consulting for non-profit, public and privately held organizations, and individuals. It has six offices in Kentucky, Ohio and Indiana, and expects to expand its regional footprint.

"We want to be problem solvers who come up with solutions and help clients navigate the opportunities and challenges that keep them up at night," Smith said.

The firm offers a more individualized and holistic approach to solving those challenges, he said.

MCM CPAS & ADVISORS

201 East Fifth Street
Suite 2100
Cincinnati, OH 45202
(513) 579-1717
mcmcpa.com



Brad Smith,
Managing
Partner,
MCM CPAs
& Advisors

MCM is a regional accounting firm that exists to help both its clients and team succeed. It provides a wide range of services and expertise in audit, tax and business advisory that go beyond traditional accounting services to help our clients thrive. MCM helps privately and publicly held businesses and individuals across the region, and throughout the country, identify opportunities and anticipate challenges, from all angles. Our clients receive personalized attention and local access from national-level talent.

MCM is regularly recognized as one of the United States' top 100 CPA firms, as ranked annually by Accounting Today and Inside Public Accounting (IPA). Its offices are located Cincinnati, OH; Louisville and Lexington, KY; and Indianapolis and Jeffersonville, IN.

► **INVESTED IN THE COMMUNITY** C-Forward, an IT consulting company with its headquarters in downtown Covington, recently had a large mural painted on its building to raise awareness for the Read Ready Covington initiative, an early literacy program that aims to increase the percentage of children both who enter kindergarten prepared to do the work and who are reading on grade level by the end of the third grade.

MCM had many changes and much growth in 2019. Smith was named managing partner and the former managing partner assumed the role of executive chairman. The firm also adopted a new brand identity and launched a new website.

“We wanted a more up-to-date identity that communicated our history, core values and the new energy that will drive us forward in our mission to help both our team and clients succeed,” Smith said.

BKD CPAs & Advisors is another firm that serves the region, providing tax accounting and audit solutions to clients in construction, real estate, financial services, health care, manufacturing, not-for-profit, hospitality and insurance industries. BKD staff members are involved in the Greater Cincinnati community, volunteering with community service organizations and serving on numerous boards and committees.

CPA and business advisory firm VonLehman & Co. was founded in 1946. It has offices in Fort Wright as well as Cincinnati and Indianapolis. In addition to accounting and audit services, VonLehman offers strategic business advice to several sectors that drive the regional economy, including manufacturing and distribution, construction and real estate, nonprofits, health care, and professional services.

KENTUCKY EMPLOYERS' MUTUAL INSURANCE (KEMI)

250 W. Main St., Suite 900,
Lexington, KY 40507-1724
(859) 425-7800
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Kentucky Employers' Mutual Insurance (KEMI) is the largest provider of workers' compensation insurance in Kentucky, providing coverage to more than 23,000 policyholders in all 120 counties of the state.

We provide exceptional underwriting, safety education and claims services to our policyholders. This, combined with our competitive pricing, responsible financial management and a focus on innovation, makes KEMI the provider of choice for Kentucky businesses. We are proud to have earned and maintained an “excellent” rating by A.M. Best.



Jon Stewart,
President/CEO

Photo courtesy of C-Forward



Some of the other local accounting firms include: Van Gorder, Walker & Co. in Erlanger; Thomas Lonnemann CPA in Florence; Anneken, Huey & Moser in Highland Heights; Bressler & Co. in Covington; Munninghoff, Lange & Co. in Covington; and others.

Mailing, information technology and more

From mailing to IT needs and more, there's a service firm for that in Northern Kentucky.

Located in Florence since 1992, DataMark Mailing Services is a full-service mailing house that specializes in direct mail marketing, mailing lists, fulfillment and data processing, among other services. Across the river in Cincinnati, Addressed for Success is a full-service printing and direct mail company serving the region since 1995. Newport-based Steinhäuser, a fourth-generation family business that is now 100% woman-owned, is a printer of custom labels for consumer packaged goods.

If sustainability is your goal, Close the Loop in Hebron helps companies enhance corporate social responsibility programs. It designs and manages highly efficient ink and toner take-back, recovery, and reuse programs, and helps companies find ways to minimize waste.

Best Way Disposal in Burlington specializes in the collection and transportation of commercial, industrial, construction and demolition waste. It has updated its fleet to fully automated trucks for commercial and residential collection, which reduced its total number of trucks on the road and lowered emissions.

Informatics is a burgeoning sector in Northern Kentucky, and the region is rich in information technology services firms to meet those needs.

C-Forward based in Covington provides IT consulting services to small and midsize businesses.

The company is active in the community, sponsoring events and investing in the region's growth.

C-Forward recently sponsored two huge Northern Kentucky tourism events, Kentucky's Edge and BLINK.

“There is so much excitement and momentum in Northern Kentucky right now,” said Brian Ruschman, president of C-Forward. “We are proud to be a part of it all.”

Another technology services provider in the region is Vivitec in Fort Mitchell. Vivitec began in 2015, and its team specializes in cybersecurity services and completely managed IT. Its entire approach is to be easy to work with, earn trust, deliver business value, minimize issues, and secure information and assets.

Titan Tech, a Cincinnati-based firm, started in 2006 with a mission to help individuals and small businesses make the most of their technology investments. It designs custom-built, cost-effective and comprehensive IT solutions.

Red Hawk Technologies in Newport has grown 450% since it was established in May 2008. Its 12 employees have experience working at the intersection of marketing and technology. The company specializes in workflow automation, sales enablement and system integration. It also serves as the outsourced innovation team for several client IT and marketing teams.

Some of the other IT-related providers in Northern Kentucky include: ISOCNET in Florence; EMERGE IT Solutions in Erlanger; Prolocity in Covington; 3z.net in Covington; Systems Insight Inc. of Covington; Nexigen of Newport; and CMIT Solutions of Florence.

Northern Kentucky companies also benefit from the proximity to large professional services agencies located across the river in Cincinnati, Tri-ED's Crume said.

“With the Kroger and Procter & Gamble headquarters across the river, we have a strong community of consumer branding, analytics and consulting services that are attractive to many of the companies in Northern Kentucky,” he said. ●



Lower rates. Other States.

We're (safely) cutting rates for several industries and making it easier to work with clients who have operations outside of Kentucky through our Other States Program.

Here are just some of the industry classes with notable rate decreases:

- Automobile Service or Repair
- Building Material Dealers
- Commercial Construction
- Electricians
- Furniture Stores
- Hospitals
- Hotels
- HVAC
- Machine Shops
- Manufacturing
- Millwrights
- Municipalities
- Plumbers
- Property Management
- Restaurants
- ...and many more.

To receive a quote or learn more about our Other States Program, visit our website at www.kemi.com or call our Underwriting team at 859-425-7800.

Growing legal hub

BGD merging; firms growing because of increased economic development



LEGAL HUB The modern Kenton County Justice Center in Covington houses Circuit, District and Family Court operations as well as the Circuit/District Clerk's office and many other related functions of the court systems.

execute on these growth aspirations, we will continue to analyze the best way to serve Northern Kentucky, including the potential for re-establishing a separate office in the area," Arnett said.

"I congratulate them (Dentons) on coming to an arrangement with such a fine firm," said Dinsmore chairman and managing partner George H. Vincent, whose Cincinnati-based firm was established in 1908.

While Dentons said it is in the process of building a national law firm, Dinsmore already describes itself as such, with 650 attorneys in 25 cities who are licensed to practice in 32 states and the District of Columbia. Some 240 of those attorneys work in the Cincinnati and Covington offices. Dinsmore also has offices in Frankfort, Lexington and Louisville.

"The Dentons question is interesting, and the jury is out on the long-term impact of BGD's acquisition," said J. Stephen Smith, president of the Kentucky Bar Association and an attorney at Cincinnati-based Graydon Law, where he is the firm's market leader for Northern Kentucky.

"There is one view that Dentons' entry into our market poses an existential threat to traditional Kentucky firms, and another that might view the move as acknowledgement that our market is growing very quickly. The reality is likely somewhere in the middle," Smith said in an email. "Kentucky law firms were already competing with BGD lawyers, and a new name on the door does not change that concept. If activity in Kentucky is attracting the Dentons of the world to put down roots here, that is a good thing. It says good things about the commonwealth."

Based on what Smith and other attorneys had to say about the legal services business in the metropolitan area during the last year, Dentons is moving into a region where there's plenty of business — and attorneys.

The Cincinnati Bar Association said there are about 7,000 lawyers in a seven-county area that includes Boone, Campbell

BY GREG PAETH

WHETHER you've bought a ticket or not, Kentucky will have a front row seat in 2020 for round one of a high-stakes battle that may reshape how law is practiced in the United States.

Metropolitan Cincinnati, which includes Northern Kentucky, and Louisville and Lexington all have at least one thing in common: high-profile offices for Bingham Greenebaum Doll (BGD), the well-established and influential law firm that announced in October that it would become part of Dentons, a global law firm that has just under 10,000 lawyers on its staff.

That's right, 10,000 lawyers, and about 1,100 of them will be in the United States once BGD and its 200 lawyers and about 150 more from Pittsburgh's Cohen and Grigsby merge into Dentons early this year, in what is described as the first step toward creating an international law firm.

There's nothing modest about Dentons' ambitions.

Dentons, whose roots are in London in 1742, has announced that its effort to build a coast-to-coast firm has been labeled "Golden Spike," a reference

to the golden spike that was used to symbolize the completion of the country's transcontinental railroad in 1869.

Bradley C. Arnett, managing partner for BGD in the Cincinnati metro area, was predictably enthusiastic.

"At launch, the combined Dentons firm will have offices in 33 U.S. markets, including nine of the 10 largest markets and 14 of the top 20," Arnett said in an email. "Its headcount of nearly 1,100 lawyers will make it the 10th largest law firm in the U.S. Clients will have access to the experience and talents of more than 10,000 lawyers in 181 locations and 73 countries across the globe."

"In the Cincinnati, Louisville, Lexington and Indianapolis markets (as well as in Evansville and Jasper, Indiana), we will be known as Dentons Bingham Greenebaum," he explained. "Importantly, the rate structure for our clients will remain intact, as we will have local autonomy of client rates and relationships."

Growing the Cincinnati office, where BGD has five lawyers, is a top priority, he said.

"Our current goal is to grow to 40 to 50 lawyers here as fast as we can. We believe that we can achieve that target number within three to five years. As we

and Kenton counties in Kentucky. Those three counties have nearly 1,350 practicing attorneys, Smith said.

Attorney Scott Guenther of Adams, Stepner, Woltermann and Dusing reported “significant growth in the areas of general business counsel, governmental practice, and general business and defense litigation.”

“We expanded our representation of cities and school districts by adding new governmental clients throughout the commonwealth,” he said.

“Our region has enjoyed a sustained period of general economic growth, which has spurred growth for our clients and many other local businesses. When a business is in a growth mode, that naturally leads to increased legal needs to facilitate that growth,” said Guenther, a member of the management committee for the downtown Covington firm with a 100-year history and 17 attorneys on staff.

Graydon Law has seen growth in the number of attorneys, the quantity of work, and increasing demands in newer areas, Smith said.

“Our corporate, executive benefits, real estate, employment, and banking lawyers are all historically busy. We have seen significant growth in cybersecurity, trade/compliance, intellectual property, and hemp-related fields also,” said Smith, whose firm has five offices in the region, including one in Fort Mitchell that dates to 1989.

The Northern Kentucky economy is strong well in advance of the 2021 completion of the Amazon Prime Air Hub near the Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky International Airport, Smith said. Construction began in May on the \$1.5 billion project that is expected to create 2,000 jobs inside a 2.6 million-square-foot package sorting facility.

“Most believe, and I agree, that the ‘Amazon’ effect is just beginning. We don’t know the total number of direct Amazon employees, but the ancillary or feeder businesses are also going to explode,” he said. “Each ancillary business has needs, and all employees have needs from time to time. The legal landscape in Northern Kentucky is growing fast and a deep knowledge of the local market will be vital for companies relocating or expanding here.”

After adding seven lawyers in the last year, Graydon has 83 attorneys in the region and 13 are based in Fort Mitchell.

Dinsmore’s Vincent said 2019 proved to be a good year for his firm.

“The firm experienced growth in both

headcount and revenue. We experienced growth across all areas of the firm,” he said in an email. “As the region grows, the demand for legal services naturally grows with it. Economic development is critical to growth in the demand for legal services.”

Yet another firm that wasn’t born yesterday enjoyed substantial growth last year in its offices in Cincinnati, Crestview Hills and Louisville, according to Robert Hoffer, managing partner for Dressman Benzinger Lavelle (DBL), the largest Northern Kentucky-based firm with 44 lawyers.

“Economic growth generally means additional opportunities for our clients and they may need our help to address zoning issues, regulations and transactional advice,” Hoffer said. “With the development in Northern Kentucky with Amazon and the urban core, we think we’re in a good spot. What we’ve seen with the revitalization in Covington and Newport is that we think clients can partner with us to work through issues that they have not faced before.”

DBL also made some national news when it filed suit earlier in the year against opioid manufacturers on behalf of 23 hospitals in the state, including St. Elizabeth Medical Center, which is a DBL client.

“But we have all sizes of clients – St. Elizabeth’s all the way down to a mom and pop plumbing shop that might have 10 employees,” Hoffer said.

Some of the legal firms located in the region include:

Adams, Stepner, Woltermann & Dusing PLLC

Covington

Barron Peck Bennie & Schlemmer

Newport

Bingham Greenebaum Doll LLP

Covington

Bonar, Bucher & Ranking PSC

Covington

Bramel & Ackley PSC

Fort Wright

Calfee, Halter & Griswold LLP

Cincinnati

Cetrulo, Mowery & Hicks

Edgewood

Cors & Bassett LLC

Cincinnati

Dinsmore LLP

Covington

Dressman Benzinger LaVelle PSC

Crestview Hills

Fessler, Schneider & Grimme LLP

Fort Thomas

Freund, Freeze & Arnold

Fort Mitchell

Frost Brown Todd LLC

Florence

Garvey Shearer Nordstrom PSC

Fort Mitchell

Gerner & Kearns Co. LPA

Florence

Graydon Law

Fort Mitchell

Greta Hoffman & Associates

Florence

John D. Christopher Jr., Attorney at Law

Alexandria

Katz Teller

Cincinnati

Keating Muething & Klekamp PLL

Cincinnati

Kenton County Attorney

Covington

Legal Shield/ID Shield

Florence

LegalShield

Union

Nielson & Sherry PSC

Newport

Novakov & Associates PLLC

Florence

O’Hara Taylor Sloan & Cassidy

Crestview Hills

Porter Wright

Cincinnati

Raines Dusing & Sutton PLLC

Florence

Reimer Law

Newport

Reminger Co. LPA

Fort Mitchell

Richardson and Vogt PLLC

Covington

Smith Law

Covington

Rolfes Henry

Cincinnati

Stites & Harbison PLLC

Covington

Strauss Troy Co. LPA

Covington

Taft LLP

Covington

The Sanders Law Firm PSC

Covington

Thompson Hine LLP

Cincinnati

Wallace Boggs PLLC

Fort Mitchell

Weltman, Weinberg & Reis Co. LPA

Cincinnati

William E. Hesch Law Firm LLC

Cincinnati

Wolnitzek & Rowekamp, PSC

Covington

Wood & Lamping LLP

Cincinnati

Wood, Herron & Evans

Cincinnati

Ziegler & Schneider PSC

Covington ●

*Information provided by Northern Kentucky Chamber of Commerce.
This is not a comprehensive list.*

Industrious collaboration

New is the byword for education and workforce in Northern Kentucky



◀EXPLORATION AND LEARNING The new Health Innovation Center at Northern Kentucky University, which includes the St. Elizabeth Healthcare Simulation Center, is one of the largest and most comprehensive health professions buildings in the country. Using technology and thoughtfully designed space, the center simulates real-life health care situations such as interviewing a patient, reading an X-ray, or administering an injection. It features seven simulation rooms, including an operating room and intensive care unit.

“The Health Innovation Center transforms how we educate and train the next generation of health care professionals with an interdisciplinary approach to addressing our population health challenges,” said NKU President Ashish Vaidya. “I see it as the nexus of talent, innovation and community development.”

The \$105 million project is home to NKU’s College of Health Professions and the Institute for Health Innovation. The Kentucky General Assembly allocated \$97 million toward construction, and St. Elizabeth Healthcare invested another \$8 million to add and equip the Simulation Center.

The St. Elizabeth Healthcare Simulation Center features seven simulation rooms, including an operating room and intensive care unit. Students can simulate real-life health care situations like interviewing a patient, reading an X-ray, or administering an injection in a safe environment. Advanced patient mannequins can present a wide range of symptoms for diagnosis.

“St. Elizabeth Healthcare is proud to partner with NKU on the Health Innovation Center’s Simulation Lab,” said Garren Colvin, St. Elizabeth Healthcare president and CEO. “One of the most exciting aspects of the Health Innovation Center is the new, cross-functional educational experience for students that will undoubtedly produce outstanding healthcare leaders and providers of the future.”

New president, new facilities for Thomas More

At Thomas More College, where President Joseph L. Chillo was installed September 25, 2019, two new facilities were opened: the Center for Health Sciences and the Performing Arts Laboratory.

The Center for Health Sciences, supported by a \$1 million gift from St. Elizabeth Healthcare, is the new home of the college’s traditional four-year nursing

BY DEBRA GIBSON ISAACS

CHOOSING which highlight of Northern Kentucky’s education sector to explain first is a conundrum.

Should we discuss the collaborative Grow NKY initiative or perhaps the new Health Innovation Center (HIC) and the St. Elizabeth Healthcare Simulation Center at Northern Kentucky University? It could be the new university president and new programs at Thomas More College. Then there’s IGNITE, the latest industry/education alliance in Northern Kentucky.

In Northern Kentucky, there is much to discuss when it comes to education and workforce development.

Collaboration is foundation of Grow NKY

Grow NKY is a good example. Some 60 partners joined forces with the Northern Kentucky Chamber of Commerce on this workforce/education effort.

Grow NKY is built on five focus areas: kindergarten readiness; college and career readiness; adult career readiness and lifelong learning; talent retention and attraction; and employer policy and practice.

“The first three deal with the talent supply,” said Leisa Mulcahy, managing director/vice president of Workforce for the Northern Kentucky Chamber of Commerce, “and the fourth deals with talent and attracting people to the region. The final is a variety of resources for area employers.”

Grow NKY has also identified six primary industries it hopes to grow and attract: information technology; financial services; construction; advanced manufacturing; health sciences; and advanced logistics.

“Grow NKY is connecting business with students,” Mulcahy said. “It starts in kindergarten with some interesting projects and continues through middle school job awareness and high school shadowing into creating apprenticeships.

“We are working toward the right things with the right people at the table. Industry informs every ounce of what we do, and it is really comprehensive.”

Learning with real-world simulation at NKU

Nearby at Northern Kentucky University, the new HIC, which includes the St. Elizabeth Healthcare Simulation Center – is one of the largest and most comprehensive health professions buildings in the country.

St. Elizabeth photos

► **BIG YEAR** Thomas More College installed a new president, Joseph L. Chillo, and opened two new facilities in 2019: the Center for Health Sciences and the Performing Arts Laboratory.

and accelerated RN to BSN programs, as well as the exercise science and athletic training programs. Launched in 2014, the athletic training program includes a bachelor's degree and the only master's degree of its kind in the area.

The Performing Arts Laboratory provides additional space for the Marching Saints, Villa Players, dance team, choir and other Thomas More performing arts programs.

"I am so excited for this building," said Randy Webb, Thomas More director of bands. "This facility, which will be utilized by more than 200 students this year, gives us a dedicated space – something we haven't had prior to the Performing Arts Lab."

The new STEM Outreach Center, an \$875,000 expansion to the Biology Field Station, also opened in 2019. It brings more options that create more results – more students will have access to Thomas More's STEM outreach programs, more professional development opportunities for K-12 teachers that promote inquiry-based teaching, and more scientific literacy for visitors.

▼ **TOP COLLEGE** Northern Kentucky University in Highland Heights has for the last 11 years earned a spot on Forbes' list of America's Top Colleges. The university has more than 14,000 students served by over 2,000 faculty and staff. There are more than 200 student organizations on campus.



Photo courtesy of Thomas More

"The opening of the new K-12 STEM Outreach Center demonstrates our commitment to student learning at all levels," said Chris Lorentz, Ph.D., director of the Biology Field Station. "The building is the quintessential space to implement innovative, hands-on lessons in the STEM fields. By providing a dedicated space for grade schools and high schools, we are enhancing our existing programs, expanding our offerings; and through the IT capabilities, extending our reach to schools. The STEM outreach programs have received national recognition and are currently filled to capacity."

"At Thomas More, we're taking a holistic approach to education, preparing our students for not only their first job, but their next five jobs," said President Chillo. "It's our goal to position our students so they are empowered to develop ideas and concepts of tomorrow."

Preparing high schoolers for workforce gaps

IGNITE Institute is the latest industry/education alliance in Northern Kentucky. Industry leaders developed a cross-disciplinary curriculum for high school students to address specific gaps in the regional workforce and give students the chance to interact with local business leaders.

Brought to life in a facility Toyota donated for public use, IGNITE focuses on project-based learning in science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics. Admission is not based on GPA but rather on a student's desire to learn specific high-demand skills. This program has 900 students.

"IGNITE is designed to give kids work-based learning experiences," said Bill Hogan, director of innovation for Boone County Schools and director of strategic partnerships for IGNITE. "Before they graduate from high school, they will have a pretty good idea of what the job entails and if that job is their passion."

"Maybe they find out a certain job is not their passion, that they don't want to do this the rest of their life. That information is just as valuable. They don't get trapped in a job they don't like." ●



Photo courtesy of Northern Kentucky University

Building on a strong heritage

Manufacturers continue to invest in strategically located region with talented workforce pipeline

BY LORIE HAILEY

WITH a strong machine tool history and its geographic advantage, Northern Kentucky has become a hub for modern advanced manufacturing facilities that serve many industries.

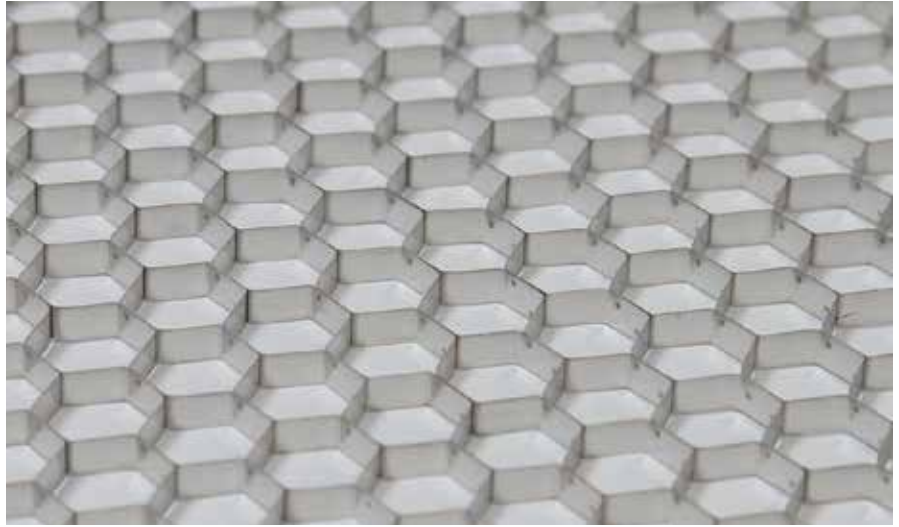
Boone, Campbell and Kenton counties are home to well over 200 manufacturers, and even more in the counties adjacent to the tri-county region, according to 2019 data from the Kentucky Cabinet for Economic Development.

Of the three counties, Boone is the manufacturing hub. Nearly 15% of jobs in Boone County – 13,363 – are at a manufacturing facility, according to KCED data. In Campbell County, 6.75% is manufacturing; it's 8.1% in Kenton County. Since 2016, two new manufacturing locations have opened in Boone County and 13 have expanded, investing more than \$196 million and creating 621 new jobs.

Kenton County has had one new manufacturing plant and 16 expansions since 2016, an investment of \$116.3 million that created 534 new jobs. Campbell County has had two manufacturing expansions, an investment of \$1.2 million and an additional 13 jobs.

Mubea is the area's largest manufacturer, employing more than 1,300, producing heavy-duty products for lightweight construction. The next largest is Robert Bosch Automotive Steering, which makes steering gears for the car and light truck market; and assembles steering columns, hydraulic steering gears, electric steering gears, and power steering pumps for the auto industry. It has about 1,200 workers.

Northern Kentucky has a proven advantage in automotive manufacturing and a strong core of a strong core of supporting industries including metal fabrication; chemicals, plastics, and composites



manufacturing; and distribution and logistics.

"Because of Northern Kentucky's geographic location and transportation advantages, these machine tool manufacturers strategically serve many automotive and aerospace companies in the Midwest and Southeast and even overseas customers," said Lee Crume, president and CEO of Northern Kentucky Tri-ED.

More than 40 automotive companies are already located in Northern Kentucky, including major employers like Bosch, Mubea, Balluff, Meritor Heavy Vehicle Systems and Celanese.

Since January 2018, there have been 34 major manufacturing announcements in the tri-county region, a reported capital investment of more than \$191 million – an additional 1,405 jobs. Some of the largest of those announcements included Jabil Inc.'s December 2018 investment of \$13.5 million at its Florence facility, where it manufactures racks and servers for data centers, creating 253 new jobs. Meyer Tool announced an investment of \$16 million in March of 2019, creating 100

▲AUTO AND AEROSPACE Northern Kentucky is known for a thriving automotive and aerospace manufacturing sector; including Indy Honeycomb. Its structural honeycomb products are used in aerospace shuttle applications and missile fins, as well as for aircraft.

new jobs at its precision aircraft parts facility in Erlanger.

Optical products distributor ABB Optical Group announced a \$15 million plan in June 2019 to open a manufacturing facility in Erlanger, creating 200 new jobs.

Many powerhouse American and international manufacturers have chosen to locate in Northern Kentucky, and many more have logistics and distribution centers there, including Perfetti Van Melle, Mazak Corp., Safran Landing Systems, L'Oreal USA, Tyson/Hillshire Foods, The Schwan Food Co., Evenflo Feeding, Architectural Aluminum Products, Road ID, Amazon, Bosch, Citi, DHL, Mubea, Cabot Corp., Indy Honeycomb and WILD Flavors.

Other interesting items "made" in Northern Kentucky include:



◀FRUITY FLAVORS Global candy maker Perfetti van Melle, which has its American headquarters in Erlanger, manufactures Airheads and Mentos candies. It opened a new warehouse and distribution center in 2019 at the Erlanger Commerce Center. It will ship nearly 13 million cases of product to customers in more than 1,000 locations each year.

New and expanding manufacturing firms in 2019

CITY	COMPANY NAME	TYPE	INVESTMENT	JOBS
Erlanger	ABB Optical Group	New	\$14.9 million	200
Hebron	Armor USA	Expanding	\$3.3 million	36
Walton	Best Sanitizers	Expanding	\$5.3 million	36
Covington	Braxton Brewing Co.	Expanding	\$5 million	—
Walton	Kustom Blending	Expanding	\$200,000	4
Independence	LSI Images	Expanding	\$573,000	22
Erlanger	LSI Metal Fabrication	Expanding	\$1 million	30
Florence	Mazak Corp.	Expanding	\$8.5 million	—
Erlanger	Meyer Tool Co.	Expanding	\$15.9 million	100
Erlanger	Post Glover Resistors	Expanding	\$4.6 million	15

Schwan's frozen pizzas; hair and skin care products by L'Oreal; Airheads candy; bourbon products; playing cards; Lit'l Smokies (cocktail weenies); airplane parts; menu boards; chocolate and specialty candies; AR-15 rifles; and more.

Here is a sampling of manufacturers in the tri-county area:

A.O. Smith Co.

Water heaters, boilers and storage tanks
Florence

Active Radiator

Truck and industrial radiators
Dayton

ALM Media

Magazine & book publisher
Erlanger

Anderson Manufacturing

AR-15 rifles
Hebron

Aquionics Inc.

UV, water, air and surface purification systems
Erlanger

AquiSense Technologies

LED devices
Erlanger

ATech Training Inc.

Automotive technology training devices
Walton

Balluff

Industrial networking, object detection
Florence

Beckman Coulter

Diagnostic tests/equipment
Florence

Beverly International Nutrition

Sports nutrition manufacturer
Cold Spring

Blue Grass Quality Meats

Deli meats
Erlanger

Bonfiglioli USA

Speed changer, industrial high-speed drive & gear manufacturing, USA headquarters
Hebron

Boone County Distilling Co.

Bourbon, rye, and other whiskey specialties
Independence

Braxton Brewing

Craft beer
Covington

Carl Zeiss Vision Inc.

Optical lab
Hebron

Clarion Corp. of America

Car audio, multimedia, information products
Walton

Club Chef

Processors of fresh cut produce
Covington

Crescent Paper Tube Co.

Paper tubes, paperboard products, cores, caps
Florence

DURO Bag a Novolex Brand

Paper bags for fast food
Walton

Emerson's Bakery

Baked goods
Florence

Ethos Labs

Drug tests
Newport

Evenflo Feeding

Infant equipment, baby care and juvenile products
West Chester

Fabritec International

Professional dry cleaning detergents, wet cleaning soaps and spotting chemicals
Florence

Flint Group

Printing inks
Erlanger

Fortress Interlocks

Safety access and control systems
Erlanger

Fuji Autotech USA

Automotive seat components
Walton

GES

Trade show exhibits and store fixtures
Hebron

Givaudan Flavors

Fragrance and flavor
Florence

Glier's Meats

German breakfast sausage
Covington

GorillaMaker

3D Printing
Florence

Graham Packaging

Plastic bottles
Florence

Grandpa Brands Co.

Personal care products
Erlanger

Greif

Rigid industrial packaging, steel drums
Florence

Griffin Industries

Animal rendering services
Cold Spring

Hahn Automation

Industrial equipment and technology
Hebron

Halperns' Steak & Seafood

High quality portion control beef products
Walton

HDT Global

Military air conditioning, heaters, decontamination units
Florence

Hennegan Co.

Offset printing
Florence

Hydra-Tone Chemicals

Specialty chemicals, detergents, lubricants
Hebron

International Mold Steel

Steel for plastic & rubber molds
Florence

International Paper

Printing plant, packaging materials
Walton

Iofina Chemical

Select halogen specialty chemicals, iodine
Covington

Jack's Glass

Home and auto glass solutions
Elsmere

Jewel-Craft

Jewelry
Erlanger

J-Fab LLC

Florence



▲SHAMPOO AND MORE L'Oreal USA manufactures skin care and hair care products at its plant in Florence, including Garnier Fructis. The company also operates a distribution center in Walton.

Johnson Controls – Power Solutions

Lead acid batteries
Florence

Kellogg Snacks

Keebler products
Florence

Kona Ice

Premium tropical shaved ice
Florence

Lingo Manufacturing Co.

Custom permanent point-of-purchase displays
Florence

Linkology

Security systems for parking garages
Newport

L'Oreal USA-Florence Manufacturing

Hair care products
Florence

LSI

Menu boards
Florence

Lyons Magnus

Flavorings and juices
Walton

Mazak Corp.

CNC turning centers, vertical machining centers,
horizontal machining centers, Multi-Tasking machines,
5-axis machines
Florence

Meggitt Polymers & Composites

Composite engine and aerostructure components
Erlanger

Meyer Tool

Precision aircraft parts
Erlanger

Mila International

Surgical devices for pets
Florence

Mubea

Lightweight construction specialist providing heavy duty
spring components and related products
Florence

Mubea Precision Springs

Transmission springs and hose clamps
Florence

National Band & Tag Co.

Poultry leg and wing bands, bands used for wildlife,
ID tags
Newport

New Riff Distilling

Craft distillery
Newport

Newly Weds Foods

Cracker and bread crumbs, batter mixes
Erlanger

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Nor-Com Inc.

Communications systems and A/V integrator
Hebron

North American Stainless L.P.

Steel
Ghent

Novolex

Paper products
Florence

Pepsico

Snacks, foods and beverages
Erlanger

Perfetti van Melle

Airheads candy
Erlanger

P L Marketing

Kroger corporate branding products
Newport

PG LifeLink

Isolated power system design and manufacturer
Erlanger

Purestream Inc.

Sewage treatment equipment
Walton

R & R Design & Manufacturing

Conveyor & automation systems
Florence

Road ID

Road ID Bracelets
Fort Mitchell

Robert Bosch Automotive

Steering columns
Florence

Ronan Engineering Co.

Measuring equipment, radiation gauges and measuring
instruments
Florence

Safran Landing Systems

Carbon brakes for airplanes
Walton

Schwan's Global Supply Chain

Frozen pizzas
Florence

Sherwood Midwest

Bedding, mattresses
Walton

Skilcraft

Surgical products, surgical device production, contract
medical device manufacturing
Burlington

SpecTape Inc.

Pressure-sensitive tape
Erlanger

Sterling Ventures

Limestone mine, crushed stone
Verona

Stewart Iron Works

Ornamental iron fencing and gates
Erlanger

▲**EXPANSION** Mazak Corp. in 2019 announced an investment of \$8.5 million to expand its manufacturing facility and American headquarters in Florence. Mazak has been manufacturing advanced HYBRID Multi-Tasking, 5-axis, turning and milling machines since 1974 at its plant in Florence.

Studio Vertu

Italian marble products
Newport

TeeSpring

Custom tee shirts
Hebron

Total Display Solutions

Re-manufactures LCD panels for computer video
displays and television LCD panes
Erlanger

Toyota Boshoku America

Automotive interior systems
Erlanger

Tressa

Professional hair products
Erlanger

Trophy Awards Manufacturing

Awards, crystal awards, acrylic awards, trophies,
plaques, corporate awards, gifts, promotional items
Wilder

Tyson/Hillshire Brands

Meat, primarily cocktail weenies
Alexandria

United Dairy Farmers

Ice cream

US Playing Card Co.

Playing cards
Erlanger

ViaCord

Umbilical cord preservation
Hebron

The Waddington Group

High-quality plastic, disposable cups, plates, cutlery,
serving ware
Covington

White Castle Distributing

Burger processing
Covington

Wild Flavors

Flavor technology
Erlanger

Wolf Steel USA

High-end fireplaces, grills, HVAC
Crittenden

Zenith Motors

Electric shuttle and cargo vans
Wilder

ZF Boge Elastmetall

Transmissions, steering systems, axles
Hebron ●



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Perfectly positioned

Hundreds of companies headquartered and invested in Northern Kentucky region



PER capita, the Northern Kentucky, including Greater Cincinnati, region is home to more Fortune 500 headquarters than New York, Chicago or Los Angeles. The Greater Cincinnati Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) – including seven Northern Kentucky counties – is home to nine regulars on the list on the north side of the Ohio River. Five additional members in Kentucky account for \$10 billion in annual revenues.

The largest public employer in the MSA is The Kroger Co., which has 21,263 employees, according to data from REDI Cincinnati. Kroger is headquartered in Cincinnati and has distribution facilities in Northern Kentucky, in addition to its retail stores. The Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky International Airport (CVG),

▼**FLAVORING THE WORLD** WILD Flavors and Specialty Ingredients supplies the food and beverage industry in North America. The 200,000-s.f. state-of-the-art facility was the first fully odor-controlled manufacturing site in the industry. It has 14 manufacturing facilities and 16 subsidiaries in countries across the globe.

located in Hebron, is the third-largest employer in the MSA, with 12,682 employees. (It's the largest employer in Northern Kentucky). St. Elizabeth Healthcare in Northern Kentucky, with more than 8,400 employees, also is among the top employers in the region, as is Fidelity Investments in Covington, with more than 4,400 employees, and Boone County Schools, with 3,301. (A list of the top employers in Northern Kentucky is on page 12.)

The region has a labor shed of more than 1.1 million people and nearly 190,000 professional workers. The top professional occupations in the MSA include accounting and finance, computer and IT, human resources, purchasing and procurement, and media (marketing, public relations and design). With a competitive business climate and infrastructure and deep talent pools, the region is perfectly positioned to support its key industries – automotive and aerospace manufacturing, financial services, food and flavor, life sciences and logistics technology.

▲**WORLDWIDE PRESENCE** Balluff Inc. is represented worldwide in more than 60 countries or regions and has its North American headquarters in Florence. The branch was established in 1985 and is both a production site and a sales location.

Northern Kentucky offers a competitive business climate built on low tax burdens, competitive incentive packages and below-average utility costs. The Cincinnati MSA was named the #1 most cost-friendly business location among large U.S. cities in the Tax Foundation/KPMG Location Matters Report, 2016. The region is centrally located where the north meets the south and the Midwest meets the Southeast.

Some of the big-name companies headquartered in the region include: Macy's, United Dairy Farmers, GE Aviation, AK Steel, E.W. Scripps Co., Philips Edison & Co., Rumpke, Mitsubishi, Chiquita Brands International, Sunny Delight Beverages, Drees Co., Messer Construction, CNG Financial Corp. and Cintas.

Businesses headquartered in Northern Kentucky/ Greater Cincinnati region

- Advertiser Printers
- AGI (Architectural Group International)
- Angstrom Technologies
- Aristech Surfaces
- Ariva Distribution
- Ashland
- Atkins & Pearce
- Auto Vehicle Parts
- Balluff
- Best Sanitizers
- Blair Technology Group
- BlueStar Inc
- Blum-Novotest Inc
- Bob Sumerel Tire Co.
- BOGE Rubber & Plastics USA



Courtesy of Wild Flavors



◀ **ANTICIPATING GROWTH** LeanCor Supply Chain Group in December 2019 announced plans to relocate its headquarters to a larger office building in Florence. The company is investing \$4.4 million in the project and plans to create 53 new jobs.

▼ **LOCOMOTIVE DISTRIBUTOR** Post Glover Resistors, a producer of power resistors, is expanding its facility by 30,600 s.f. to support growth tied to existing large-scale customer contracts. The company offers high- and low-resistance grounding products for equipment and personnel protection, dynamic braking resistors, motor/crane control resistors and harmonic filter resistors for electrical noise dampening. The company employs more than 100 people at its Boone County plant.

- Bowlin Group,
- Car-Part.com
- Castellini Co.
- Celanese
- Centennial
- C-Forward Information Technologies
- Charles Seligman Distributing Co.
- Cincinnati Ventilating Co
- Club Chef
- Columbia Sussex Corp
- CompMed
- Corken Steel Products Co. – Florence HVAC
- Crosset Co.
- CTS Packaging
- D M R Interactive
- Darling Ingredients – formerly Griffin Industries
- Diversified Structural Composites
- Divisions Inc.
- Dixie Chili
- Donna Salyers' Fabulous Furs
- Dorning Supply Co.
- DURO Bag Manufacturing Co.
- Eagle Manufacturing Co
- EagleBurgmann KE
- Elovations Services
- Engineered Building Systems
- Executive Transportation Service
- F.N. Sheppard & Co.
- Fabritec International Corp.
- Galerie
- Gateway Conveyor & Design
- General Cable Corp.
- (a Prysmian Group company)



- Getronics
- Greif
- Grove Transportation
- Hanser Music Group
- Harper Oil Products
- HBC-radiomatic
- Health Warehouse.com
- Hennegan Co
- Holland Roofing
- Horan
- Hosea Project Movers
- I. B. Goodman Manufacturing Co.
- ICON Marketing Communications
- Iofina Chemical
- ITT Koni America
- Kanefusa USA Corp
- Kentucky Naturals
- Kipster
- Kona Ice
- Krauss-Maffei Corp
- KRC Machine Tool Services
- LeanCor
- Linamar
- Load Banks Direct,
- Lohmann Technologies Corp.
- Mauer USA
- Maxim Crane Works
- Mazak Corp.
- Meggitt
- Mila International
- Newforms
- OMSO North America
- Payroll Partners
- Penske Logistics
- Perfetti Van Melle USA
- Plymouth Steel Corp.
- Post Glover Resistors
- Precision Metal Works, Bartell Global
- Project Operation Goodbar
- Promevo

- R.I.W. Ornamental Metal
- Reis Concrete Products
- Rem-Brands
- Remke Markets
- Robert Bosch Automotive Steering
- RoundTower
- RR Donnelley – Nielsen Plantsen Co.
- RWI Transportation
- Signature Hardware
- St. Elizabeth
- Stagnaro Distributing
- Starrag USA
- Steinert US
- Stewart Iron Works Co.
- Studio Vertu
- SWECO
- Tente Casters Inc
- The C.W. Zumbiel Co.
- The Dream Junction Ink
- The Think Shop
- The United States Playing Card Co.
- Thelen Associates
- Toyota Boshoku America
- Transfreight,
- Trivaco
- Union Springs,
- Verst Group Logistics Inc. – Walton
- Vivitec
- VonLehman & Co.
- Waltz Business Solutions
- Welding Alloys USA
- Westside Pallet
- Wild Flavors
- Willis Music Co.
- Wiseway Supply
- ZoomEssence
- Zumbiel Packaging ●



▲ **STEEL FABRICATION** Skilcraft Sheet Metal Inc. is a manufacturer of precision aerospace sheet metal. The company has been located in Burlington since 1965.

Source: Northern Kentucky Tri-ED and Northern Kentucky Chamber of Commerce. This list may not be exhaustive.

Plentiful, progressive business inputs

Northern Kentucky's electric, gas, water and digital pipelines are ample, sustainable and affordable

BY RUSS BROWN

NORTHERN Kentucky's two major electrical energy suppliers, Owen Electric and Duke Energy, continue to be at the forefront of the movement to clean, renewable energy, with a couple of new or expanding programs.

Fifteen of Kentucky's Touchstone Energy Cooperatives, of which Owen Electric is a member, offer a renewable energy program called Envirowatts. Touchstone represents a nationwide alliance of member-owned electric co-ops that deliver power and energy solutions to more than 700 local electric cooperatives across 46 states.

Customers can choose which envirowatts renewable energy sources they prefer to support: solar, wind, biomass and hydro. The voluntary program lets customers purchase renewable energy in \$2.75 portions, with no maximum. Owen describes purchasing Envirowatts as an investment in the future of renewable energy in Kentucky by helping to reduce carbon dioxide emissions.

For example, according to EPA estimates, under current market prices a \$2.75 portion of solar generates 1,170 pounds of carbon dioxide offset. That's equivalent to preventing emissions from the consumption of 59.7 gallons of gasoline or annual greenhouse gas emissions from 1,264 miles/year driven by an average passenger vehicle. Wind, hydro and biomass offset much more.

Owen, which was founded in 1937, provides power to 61,000 homes and businesses in nine counties. It sources most of its power from landfill gas plants, and it is involved in the solar energy market with East Kentucky Power Cooperative (EKPC).

Duke Energy, meanwhile, aims to reduce carbon emission by at least 50% by 2030 and to achieve net-zero carbon emission by 2050, a plan that it says requires investments in research and technology.

The company's 2017 goal to reduce carbon by 40% by 2030 was one of the industry's most ambitious at the time. Since then, sustained low natural gas prices and declining costs for renewables and storage have allowed Duke to accelerate that goal.



"We are making a cleaner energy future a reality for our customers and communities," said Lynn Good, Duke chairman, president and CEO. "A diverse mix of renewables, nuclear, natural gas, hydro and energy efficiency are all part of this vision."

Natural gas very plentiful

Also on the energy front, most Northern Kentucky residents continue to get good news when it comes to natural gas prices. Those prices have been stable or have descended over the past 10 years, and it doesn't look like anything will change in the near future.

"There hasn't been a whole lot of fluctuation in the natural gas market. If anything, there's been a slow downward trend," said Andrew Melnykovich, public information officer for the Kentucky Public Service Commission. "There hasn't been a dramatic fluctuation since we saw the beginning of much higher production in the domestic market due to new drilling techniques. There is more than an

▲COAL FIRED East Bend Station is a 648-megawatt, single turbine plant located near Rabbit Hash in Boone County, Ky. It is operated by Duke Energy, which provides electric service to approximately 142,900 customers in Boone, Campbell, Grant, Kenton and Pendleton counties. Duke plans to modernize its electric system and power plants that serve NKY and invest in new programs that aim to increase value for customers and communities.

ample supply, which, if you look at all the forecasts, should keep natural gas prices both stable and fairly low."

However, electric customers won't get off quite so easily. Duke, which serves approximately 140,000 customers in Northern Kentucky, filed a request in September for the Kentucky PSC to conduct a public review of the company's rates "due to investments leading to safer, more reliable and secure energy for customers and communities." The case is pending.

Duke has asked the commission for permission to increase base rates by about

\$45.6 million, or an average of about 12.5%. If the proposal is approved, a residential customer who uses an average of 1,000 kilowatt hours of electricity each month would pay about \$112.08, an increase of \$15.62.

"We're making strategic, data-driven investments to improve reliability and protect our system against cyber and physical threats," said Amy Spiller, president of Duke Energy Ohio/Kentucky. "Our work is paying off for customers by reducing the frequency and length of outages, and delivering more choices and control when it comes to their energy use."

Even with a rate increase, Northern Kentucky residents would still be below the average national electricity rate of about \$130 per 1,000 kilowatt hours because the majority of Duke's power is still generated by coal-fired plants that are economically efficient.

"Duke Energy has certainly signaled its intention to move away from fossil fuels," Melnykovich said.

Another Northern Kentucky utility that is heavily invested in clean energy is Bavarian Water Services in Walton. Bavarian joined forces in 2003 with EKPC to become the first landfill in Kentucky to convert its landfill gas into electricity.

Bavarian redirects detrimental methane gas from entering the atmosphere, instead sending it to be electric power fuel. In 2016, EKPC's power plant at Bavarian expanded and has become a leader for the entire Southeastern U.S., generating enough to power 27,000 homes.

"Northern Kentucky has been a leader in so many areas, now we are the leader in something that will benefit both energy consumers and the environment," said Gary Moore, Boone County Judge/Executive.

Doug Bramer, business development manager for Bavarian, says the company strategy is to remain aggressive in repurposing waste.

"We are currently seeking even more efficient options for the landfill gas to further reduce emissions," he said.

Modern and efficient infrastructure

On a different front, the nonprofit Northern Kentucky Water District was granted a rate increase for 2020 to pay for replacing aging water pipes, pumps and treatment plants with modern and more efficient infrastructure.

The residential customer fee will go from \$16.40 to \$18.50 per month in 2020 and water consumption costs from \$4.53 per 100 cubic feet to \$4.77. The typical

customer will see an increase of \$3.84 a month by 2020 compared to 2018 costs.

The district serves 83,000 customers in Campbell and Kenton counties, along with portions of Boone, Grant and Pendleton counties, in a 312-square mile area that includes 1,296 miles of main and three water treatment plants. Another major provider in the area is the Boone County Water District, which serves 26,000.

Melnykovich says those two utilities run smoothly in the eyes of the Kentucky Public Service Commission.

"In that part of the state we haven't seen some of the issues we've seen in Eastern Kentucky in terms of both operations and financial stability," he said. "Those are two of the largest water districts in the state and (the Ky. PSC) has no particular concerns with respect to either one."

In the communications realm, Northern Kentucky is one of the country's most wired communities due to its ultra-modern and ultra-important business infrastructure. It is a major node on the national digital "backbone" for ultra-high-speed internet and is ringed with fiber optics. Cincinnati Bell and Spectrum are two of the 20-plus communications providers in the region, resulting in healthy competition and good service. ●

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A big win for everyone

High school sports, pro teams and outdoor recreation draw crowds in NKY



◀SCHOOL SPIRIT In a region with several major sports teams and events, high school sports still generate a lot of excitement – and crowds – in Northern Kentucky. A large crowd at Rupp Arena in Lexington watched as the Campbell County boys' basketball team defeated fellow Northern Kentucky team Walton-Verona Independent in the second round of the 2019 Whitaker Bank/KHSAA Boys' Sweet Sixteen state basketball tournament.

more than 6,000 fans at BB&T Arena on the Northern Kentucky University campus. The KHSAA Girls' Sweet Sixteen basketball tournament has also been held there, and several schools in the area host various KHSAA events, with facilities for baseball, softball, soccer and volleyball in addition to basketball. The Northern Kentucky Convention Center in Covington hosts cheer and dance competitions.

High school athletics are well-supported by local businesses, Bacigalupo said. As examples, he mentioned Skyline Chili and Penn Station. Skyline promotes a Crosstown Showdown Day in multiple sports, allowing fans to redeem their tickets for a menu item. And Penn Station presents an Athlete of the Month award that features buy one, get one free for any student at that particular school.

Bacigalupo said the health of high school athletics in the region is due in large part to the influence of the late Stan Steidel, a legendary figure in Northern Kentucky athletics who passed away on Nov. 4 in an auto accident at age 78.

At the time of this death, he was the athletic director at Holmes High School and had been AD and coached football and basketball at Dayton High, his alma mater. The basketball court in the Dayton gym is named for him.

BY RUSS BROWN

WITH such a wide variety of options in sports and recreation available in Northern Kentucky, sometimes the contributions of high schools in the area might get overlooked, but they play a significant role, providing numerous opportunities for both athletic competition and spectators.

At the heart of athletics in the region is the Northern Kentucky Athletic Conference (NKAC), whose members number 25 high schools and serve over 24,000 students. The member schools cover the entire spectrum, from the very small – 254, Bishop Brossart, Alexandria – to the very large, including Ryle in Union (1,871), Newport (1,790), Bellevue (1,633) and Dayton (1,524).

Fortunately, Northern Kentucky schools seem to be bucking the national trend of falling attendance at and interest in high school athletics.

“The role of high school athletics is huge in molding future generations, and Northern Kentucky in particular has a

strong sense of community among all the schools,” said Tony Bacigalupo, athletics director at Covington Catholic High and president of the NKAC. “Northern Kentucky folks take a lot of pride in whatever schools they’re involved with.

“You look around the country and attendance is down, but for us here, students enjoy being together, cheering at games. It’s still kind of the thing to do and it’s special to see that. It’s a fun atmosphere. Even where there’s rivalries, there’s mutual respect. And facilities all over the region have really improved.”

The 2019 Kentucky High School Athletic Association’s (KHSAA) 9th Region boys’ basketball tournament final drew

HHP-Kentucky Speedway photo



►BUCKLE UP Kentucky Speedway in Sparta can accommodate 107,000 NASCAR fans. The 1.5-mile tri-oval speedway has hosted ARCA, NASCAR and Indy Racing League racing since it opened in 2000.

▶ TAKE ME OUT TO THE BALLGAME

Situated directly on the Ohio River, Great American Ball Park makes Cincinnati Reds games easy to reach by car or foot for fans all around the region. The ballpark officially opened for the 2003 season, making 2020 its 18th big-league season. It has a seating capacity of 42,271, and many of those fans flock to Northern Kentucky for food and drink before and after games.

Bacigalupo said Steidel spent his life trying to improve opportunities for students in athletics. He was executive secretary of the NKAC for over 25 years and served 16 years on the KHSAA Board of Control.

One of his lasting legacies was founding the All “A” Classic for the smaller schools in Kentucky in 1980, giving students a chance for a state tournament atmosphere and awards. Many Northern Kentucky teams have been competitive at both the All “A” and the overall state levels. The event has grown to provide scholarship money and awards championships in numerous sports and academic endeavors.

High school athletics in Northern Kentucky have thrived despite the plethora of other ways for sports and outdoor enthusiasts to spend their free time. Here is a look at some of them:

Hoop dreams: NKU has 17 NCAA Division I teams. Its men’s and women’s basketball teams compete in the Horizon League and play their home games in 10,000-seat BB&T Arena.

Bet the ponies: Thoroughbred racetrack Turfway Park has a bright future, thanks to its recent purchase by Churchill Downs Inc., which already has made an impact with the doubling of purses for Turfway’s 16-day holiday meet in December, averaging \$204,812 a day.

Turfway’s spring/winter meet runs from Jan. 1 through March 28 and construction of its new facility is scheduled to begin in the spring of 2020.

“It’s been an exciting whirlwind of activity around here since the acquisition,” said Turfway Park general manager Daniel “Chip” Bach. “Churchill Downs acted immediately not only to significantly improve our racing product but also to implement improvements to our resident horsemen and our players. Those groups, as well as our employees, have been very patient. It’s immensely satisfying to see their patience rewarded.”

Start your engines: For fans of racing of the four-wheel instead of four-legged kind, Northern Kentucky offers the NASCAR Kentucky Speedway in Sparta and the Florence Speedway in Union.

The biggest weekend of the season



Leigh Taylor/meetNKY photo

at the Kentucky Speedway is July 9-11, headlined by the Quaker State 400 in the Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series, with the Alsco 300 and the Buckle Up In Your Truck 225 are also being run.

Florence Speedway is a half-mile, clay oval that was built in the 1950s and has been operated by the King family since 1984. Since then, it has become one of the premier Dirt Late Model tracks in the state. It hosts such events as the North/South 100, Ralph Latham Memorial and the Spring 50. The track generally operates on Saturdays from March to October with a regular racing program for Late Models, Modifieds, Crate Late Models, Sport Mods and Hornets.

Batter up: Baseball fans have the nearby Cincinnati Reds, of course, along with the Florence Freedom in the Frontier League, a professional independent league with teams in the Northeast, Midwest and in Eastern Canada. The Frontier was formed in 1993 and is the oldest current independent league in the country.

Rollergirls: If you want something a little different, there’s the Black-n-Bluegrass Rollergirls, with home bouts at BB&T Arena (see black-n-bluegrass.com for schedule). BBRG completed its first full season in 2008 and now fields two competitive teams in leagues throughout the Midwest. BBRG also supports its local community through volunteer activities and charitable fundraising.

Hit the green: For golfers, there are four municipal courses in Florence, plus another 48 within 20 miles, including 12 public, 17 municipal and 19 private courses. The oldest course in the area is the Ryland Lakes Country Club, which opened in 1893. The longest course is Triple Crown Country Club, which is 7,108 yards. Traditions Golf Club is rated the best course near Florence, and

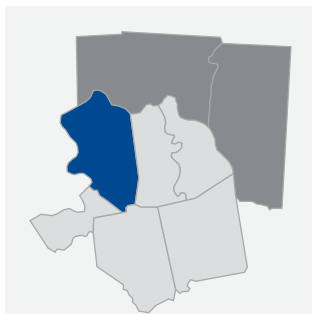
Triple Crown, Lassing Pointe Golf Course and Aston Oaks Golf Club have all won various awards.

Ramble on the riverfront: For other outdoor recreation, work continues on the 11.5-mile Riverfront Commons Trail, an uninterrupted walking, running and hiking trail that will connect all of Northern Kentucky’s six riverfront cities – Ludlow, Covington, Newport, Bellevue, Dayton and Fort Thomas – when completed. Ecosystem restoration, riverside stabilization, economic development and recreation are among the benefits of the development.

Outdoor adventure: The Covington Parks and Recreation Department offers a variety of aquatics, athletics and recreation activities, as well as supporting a growing parks system that includes the 803-acre Devou Park, whose centerpiece is the Ludlow Connector Trail that will eventually connect with the Riverfront Commons Trail.

Big Bone Lick State Park in Union has trails that run through woodlands, grasslands, woody savanna, the salt-sulfur springs, and a bison viewing area. Boone County Cliffs State Nature Preserve, with 74 acres of old-growth forest and cliff formations, has 14 miles of trails. And Boone County Parks and Recreation provides nearly two dozen parks that feature fishing, golf, disc golf, horseshoes and bocce ball.

Pro sports scene: Besides the many activities offered in Northern Kentucky, the region gets an economic boost from pro sports across the Ohio River in Cincinnati. Fans attending Reds or Cincinnati Bengals games can stay in Newport or Covington, or they can park and simply walk across the John A. Roebling Suspension Bridge. Cincinnati is also the home for FC Cincinnati of the United Soccer League and the Cyclones pro hockey team. ●



Estimated 2020 population:
131,533

Households: 46,095

Median household income:
\$72,731

County seat: Burlington; Florence
Mayor Diane E. Whalen, florence-ky.gov

Judge/Executive: Gary W. Moore,
boonecountyky.org

Chamber of Commerce:
Northern Kentucky Chamber of
Commerce, nkychamber.com

Economic Development

Authority: Northern Kentucky
Tri-County Economic
Development Corporation
(Tri-ED),
northernkentuckyusa.com

Manufacturing growth continues

NAMED for famed and innovative frontiersman Daniel Boone in the late 1700s, Boone County is the northernmost county in Kentucky and is bordered by the Ohio River on its north and west sides. Residents and community leaders have an appreciation for history and open arms for history-making businesses.

Announced in November 2019, Post Glover Resistors Inc. will invest nearly \$4.63 million in expanding its facility in Erlanger, Ky., creating up to 15 full-time jobs. The advanced manufacturing company was founded in 1892, when it was a distributor for the railroad industry. Today the company produces power industry resistors, including dynamic braking resistors and harmonic filter resistors for electrical noise dampening, and high- and low-resistance grounding products for equipment and personnel protection.

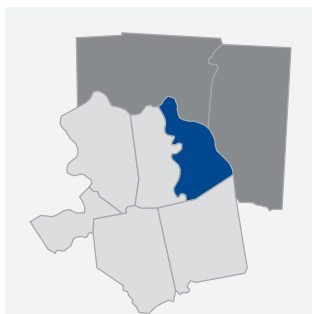
Cincinnati-based Meyer Tool Inc., a high-tech manufacturer that serves the aerospace and gas turbine engine industries, will invest \$15.9 million to acquire and renovate an 83,000-s.f. property just outside Erlanger and create 100 jobs. Headquartered in Miami, FEAM Aero broke ground on a new hangar in fall 2018 at the Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky International Airport in Hebron, Ky. The 103,000-s.f. hangar is expected to be completed later in 2020 and create 100 jobs with its \$19 million investment.

Churchill Downs of Louisville acquired Turfway Park in Florence, Ky., from Jack Ohio for \$46 million in October 2019 and will spend another \$100 million to raze the existing grandstand and build a new Turfway Park Racing & Gaming facility for both live Thoroughbred racing and wagering via historical racing machines. Construction is expected to start in the spring of 2020 and take a little over a year.



▲AN ICON This "Florence Y'all" water tower, built in 1974 and visible from Interstate 75, is a local landmark.

CAMPBELL COUNTY



Estimated 2020 population:
93,152

Households: 35,870

Median household income:
\$57,208

County seats: Alexandria, Mayor
Andy Schabell, alexandriaky.org;
and Newport, Mayor Jerry Peluso,
newportky.gov

Judge/Executive: Steve Pendery,
campbellcountyky.org

Chamber of Commerce:
Northern Kentucky Chamber of
Commerce, nkychamber.com

Economic Development

Authority: Campbell County
Economic Development Office,
campbellcountyky.org; and
Northern Kentucky Tri-ED,
northernkentuckyusa.com

Exciting place to live, work and play

THE rolling hills of Campbell County are alive with green space and waterways as well as room for businesses to grow. With the opening of the KY 9 connector road through Newport in late 2018, the AA Highway now goes from Newport to Maysville and beyond, making it easier for travelers to go from Northern Kentucky to downtown Cincinnati and vice versa. New Riff Distilling, on Distillery Way along the AA, has continued to grow since its opening in 2014. The Newport on the Levee complex is under new ownership with expansion plans, and the \$1 billion Ovation multiuse project is underway, so bourbon, attractions and entertainment are increasing the overall tourism impact in Campbell County.

Newport-based CompMed, a medical billing services company founded in 1993, invested \$1.11 million in 2019 to expand the facility by 2,000 s.f. and create 150 additional full-time jobs. The Hillshire Brands Company in Alexandria, Ky., acquired by Tyson Foods in 2014, completed a \$50 million expansion of operations in 2019 that began in the summer of 2017 and included a new wastewater treatment facility and warehouse cold storage addition.



▲FUN FOR ALL AGES The Newport Aquarium at Newport on the Levee has 70 exhibits and 14 galleries, including five seamless acrylic tunnels totaling over 200 feet in length.

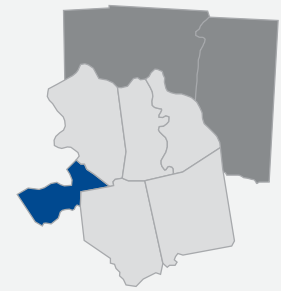
Big things happening in Kentucky's smallest county



▲A BIG DRAW Professional sports fans in Northern Kentucky never want for entertainment, which includes Kentucky Speedway in Sparta. The 1.5-mile tri-oval speedway has hosted ARCA, NASCAR and Indy Racing League racing since it opened in 2000. Kurt Busch, above, won the Quaker State 400 race there in 2019, besting his brother Kyle.

A new airport broke ground in Sparta in October 2019. Scheduled to be the 58th general aviation airport in the state, this will be the first local airport in Gallatin County to serve the area of I-71 from Louisville to Cincinnati. After the land is cleared and graded, a runway will be constructed and lighting and striping will be installed, all of which could take up to two years. Then hangars will be built, with the expectation of housing up to 50 large airplanes and corporate aircraft.

ALONG the banks of the Ohio River in the northwestern portion of Northern Kentucky, Gallatin County has been known to use the phrase "Little, but in the middle of it all," in honor of its proximity to and location between Cincinnati, Lexington and Louisville. At 99 square miles, Gallatin County is the smallest county in Kentucky in area, yet thousands of the nation's NASCAR fans attend races at Kentucky Speedway in Sparta, Ky., every year. In July 2019, Kurt Busch beat his younger brother, Kyle Busch, by 0.076 of a second to win the Quaker State 400, an annual race presented by Walmart. The 2020 NASCAR Gander Outdoors Truck Series will take place on Thursday, July 9 at the Kentucky Speedway, with the NASCAR Xfinity on July 10 and the NASCAR Cup Series on July 11.



Estimated 2020 population: 8,832

Households: 3,007

Median household income: \$50,250

County seat: Warsaw, Mayor Charlie French, cityofwarsawky.org

Judge/Executive: Ryan Morris, gallatincountyky.gov

Chamber of Commerce: Gallatin County Chamber of Commerce, gallatincountykychamber.org

Economic Development Authority: Kentucky I-71 Economic Development Alliance (KEIDA), ky71connected.com

Ark attraction brings thousands to quiet town



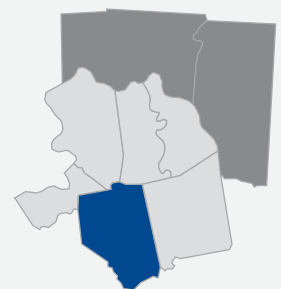
▲A FLOOD OF VISITORS Noah's Ark at the Ark Encounter attracts thousands of visitors annually to Williamstown. The Ark Encounter showcases the biblical narrative of the great flood in Genesis by displaying a life-sized replica of Noah's Ark that spans 510 feet long, 85 feet wide and 51 feet high and also features outdoor attractions like zip lines, restaurants and a zoo.

of all abilities that has a tower with slides, a climbing hill, a rainbow maze and other fun features. The Ararat Ridge Zoo behind the 510-foot long Noah's ark is now double in size.

Grant County residents and their guests have other tourist attractions, including public lakes in Corinth, Crittenden, Dry Ridge and Williamstown. During the Memorial Day weekend in 2019, Patriots Landing opened at the Dry Ridge Outlet Center. The military museum showcases historical military displays and products crafted by veterans. It is operated by Operation Honor, a nonprofit organization based in Owenton, Ky., that works with veterans who craft burial flag cases by hand.

GRANT County is the southernmost county within Northern Kentucky. It was established in 1820 and named for Col. John Grant, a frontiersman and nephew of Daniel Boone. With its easy access by I-75 and U.S. 25 and by rail, Grant County has brought in millions of visitors in the past three years, thanks to the Ark Encounter in Williamstown.

In 2019, the attraction added a 2,500-seat auditorium with a 70-foot long LED screen on the stage for presentations and performances, and a new family play area designed for children



Estimated 2020 population: 25,121

Households: 8,637

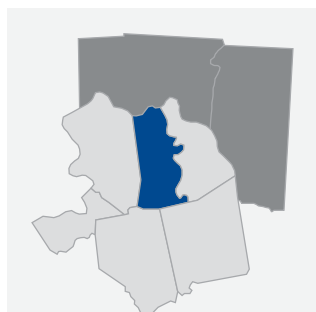
Median household income: \$43,881

County seat: Williamstown, Mayor Rick Skinner, wtownky.org

Judge/Executive: Chuck Dills, grantcountyky.gov

Chamber of Commerce: Grant County Chamber of Commerce and Economic Development, grantcommerce.com

Economic Development Authority: Grant County Chamber of Commerce and Economic Development, grantcommerce.com



Estimated 2020 population:
166,051

Households: 62,929

Median household income:
\$58,674

County seats: Covington, Mayor Joe Meyer, covingtonky.gov and Independence, Mayor Chris Reinersman, cityofindependence.org

Judge/Executive: Kris Knochelmann, kentoncounty.org

Chamber of Commerce:
Northern Kentucky Chamber of Commerce, nkychamber.com

Economic Development

Authority: Northern Kentucky Tri-County Economic Development Corporation (Tri-ED), northernkentuckyusa.com

Waterfront enterprises, bustling economy

FORMED in 1840 and named in honor of pioneer Simon Kenton, Kenton County is the third most populous county in Kentucky, behind Jefferson (Louisville) and Fayette (Lexington). The city of Covington is directly across the Ohio River from Cincinnati over the picturesque John A. Roebling Suspension Bridge built in 1866. Roebling, a German engineer, would go on to build the Brooklyn Bridge in New York City.

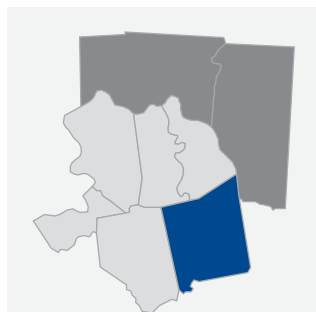
As of October 2019, Kenton County Government Center has a new location. Formerly the Bavarian Brewery, the 4.5-acre property is housing two dozen governmental agencies and offices, including the county attorney, county clerk, PVA, treasury and business services, technology services, and planning and development services.

In the spring of 2019 Perfetti Van Melle moved its warehouse and distribution center from Hebron to Commerce Center in Erlanger, making it closer to the confection company's existing manufacturing facility in Erlanger. Globally headquartered in Italy and the Netherlands with U.S. operations solely in Kenton County, Perfetti Van Melle markets Airheads, Mentos and other confectionery and chewing gum products. The new distribution center in Erlanger will be shipping nearly 13 million cases of product each year to 1,100 locations.

STEAM education comprises science, technology, engineering, arts and math curricula. Ignite Institute, a STEAM center for high school students, opened at the Roebling Innovation Center in Erlanger, Ky., just in time for the 2019-20 school year. Formerly the Erlanger Engineering Laboratory Building, the Kenton County facility was donated to Boone County Schools by Toyota, which operated an engineering facility in Erlanger from the summer of 2007 until 2014 when it announced the closing of the Northern Kentucky plant.

The 11.5-mile outdoor trail named Riverfront Commons will connect six Northern Kentucky river cities to one another: two in Kenton County (Covington and Ludlow) and four in Campbell County (Bellevue, Dayton, Fort Thomas and Newport). The 2.7-mile section in Covington has an anticipated completion date of October 2020 and will include a 1,350-seat amphitheater and a river launch for kayaks and canoes, among other features of the \$6.54 million project.

PENDLETON COUNTY



Estimated 2020 population:
14,529

Households: 5,236

Median household income:
\$49,706

County seat: Falmouth, Mayor Ron Stinson, cityoffalmouth.com

Judge/Executive: David Fields, pendletoncountyky.gov

Chamber of Commerce:
Pendleton County Chamber of Commerce, thependletonchamber.com

Economic Development

Authority: Pendleton County Industrial Authority, pendletoncountyky.gov

Outdoor adventures abound

IF you can drive through Boston, Concord, Knoxville and Portland within a matter of minutes, you're halfway between Cincinnati and Lexington in Pendleton County, Ky. These and other townships, along with the cities of Falmouth and Butler, make up a county rich in nature, agriculture, outdoor activities and local businesses across 280 square miles. Kincaid Lake State Park offers 850 acres of boating, fishing, swimming, camping, hiking and miniature golf for outdoor enthusiasts.

The Kentucky Wool Festival has been held in Falmouth every October since 1983, as thousands of people gather to celebrate the rural heritage of the area. The event has grown to include plenty of live entertainment, food vendors, artisans and, of course, sheep-shearing demonstrations.

In 2016 Pendleton County Tourism created the Ewenique Art Walk, now an annual event in downtown Falmouth every September to celebrate the role of agriculture in the arts. Rose Hill Farm Winery in Butler, Ky., owned by fifth-generation farmers, grows its own blackberries and Concord grapes in a four-acre vineyard. Rose Hill produces blackberry, blueberry, apple and strawberry wines.



▲NATURAL BEAUTY Pedal boating on Kincaid Lake is just one of the many outdoor activities visitors and residents alike enjoy in picturesque Pendleton County.

Thriving metropolis with business and culture



▲ACROSS THE RIVER Northern Kentuckians enjoy amenities not only in their own towns but also in iconic venues just across the river, such as the Cincinnati SkyStar Wheel.

imaginable, from aerospace and automotive to biohealth and health care, advanced manufacturing and IT to food and beverage, and everything in between.

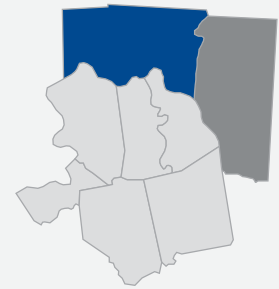
Data released by the Bureau of Economic Analysis in May 2019 showed that the Cincinnati region had the lowest cost of living of all large metropolitan areas in the United States.

Last summer, the Bond Hill office of Bon Secours Mercy Health announced intentions to create \$50 million in new payroll with 500 new jobs, contributing to the \$3 billion business sector of biohealth in Cincinnati. Bon Secours Mercy Health is one of the top 20 health systems in the country. The health management software company AssureCare is expanding its Cincinnati headquarters by adding \$10 million in new payroll with 100 jobs.

Belcan, a global company headquartered in Cincinnati, acquired London-based Lagoni Engineering in September 2019 and now adds cybersecurity to its offerings. Belcan supplies engineering and IT services to the government and aerospace sectors, among others.

ESTABLISHED in 1790, Hamilton County was named for – wait for it – Alexander Hamilton, a founding father and the nation's first secretary of the treasury under George Washington. The hit musical “Hamilton” sold out every performance in 2019 at the Aronoff Center for the Arts. The Cincinnati Arts Association is planning a return of the musical for its 2020-21 season.

REDI is one of the top economic development organizations in the United States, according to Site Selection magazine, and it serves 16 counties in Southwest Ohio, Northern Kentucky and Southeast Indiana. REDI helps regional companies grow and other companies locate to the area in any industry



Estimated 2020 population:
816,684

Households: 338,267

Median household income:
\$52,389

County seat: Cincinnati, Mayor John Cranley, cincinnati-oh.gov

County Commissioners:
Denise Driehaus, Stephanie Summerow Dumas, Todd Portune, hamiltoncountyohio.gov

Chamber of Commerce:
Cincinnati USA Regional Chamber, cincinnati-chamber.com

Economic Development Authority: Regional Economic Development Initiative (REDI), redicincinnati.com

CLERMONT COUNTY, OHIO

Slower pace with easy access to urban amenities



▲OHIO TRADITION There's plenty of fun to be had at Coney Island, located along the banks of the Ohio River in Clermont County. It has delighted visitors of all ages with its dozens of attractions for nearly 150 years.

TQL is the second-largest freight brokerage company in North America.

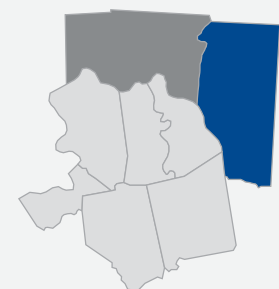
A \$2 million interventional radiology suite is underway at Mercy Health Clermont Hospital in Batavia, to construct a new 900-s.f. center that will expand patient services and provide new equipment for the doctors who use image-guided procedures to diagnose and treat diseases.

In late October, Satco Inc., a manufacturer of air cargo equipment headquartered in El Segundo, Calif., announced a \$7.5 million investment for a maintenance and assembly operation in Miami Township. The facility will be close to the CVG airport in Northern Kentucky, the fastest-growing cargo airport in the United States.

Clermont County is also home to Coney Island Cincinnati. Approximately two dozen amusement park rides were closed last fall, but look for a Coney Island rebranding in 2020 focused on more water-based activities.

ESTABLISHED in 1800, Clermont County consists of 14 townships, seven villages and two cities throughout 460 square miles along the Ohio River on the east side of Cincinnati. UC Clermont College is one of two regional campus colleges of the University of Cincinnati. Located in Batavia Township on 91 wooded acres in the middle of Clermont County, UC Clermont is 22 miles east of the main campus in Cincinnati.

On the outskirts of Cincinnati in Union Township, locally based Total Quality Logistics is expanding. TQL is constructing a second building on its campus, an approximate \$20 million investment, and creating 600 new jobs over the next five years, most of which will be in IT and sales. With 57 locations in 26 states,



Estimated 2020 population:
205,466

Households: 76,143

Median household income:
\$64,183

County seat: Batavia Village, Mayor John Q. Thebout, bataviavillage.org

County Commissioners: David Painter, Edwin Humphrey, Claire Corcoran, bcc, clermontcountyohio.gov

Chamber of Commerce:
Clermont Chamber of Commerce, clermontchamber.com

Economic Development Authority: Clermont County CIC, clermontcountyohio.biz



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- Continued land development focus
- Strategic workforce development



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