Northern Kentucky’s transformation creates new paths for prosperity, growth and opportunity

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Elevating our region, to 30,000 feet and beyond.

CVG has had a record-breaking year. Bringing more jobs and flights to our community is just the start.

Visit cvgairport.com to see how we are embracing what’s next.
Accessibility, talent and financial resources, broad amenities and a low cost of living make Northern Kentucky an ideal place to start and grow a business.
Thank you for picking up a copy of The Lane Report’s 2019 Northern Kentucky Market Review. We are happy to share what the Northern Kentucky region has to offer businesses who have located here or those considering locating across our region.

This year offers an opportunity to “bridge” connections and enhance collaborations that will create positive outcomes-based solutions for our business community. Our new Growing Regional Outcomes through Workforce (GROW) NKY initiative is one example of the region’s commitment to work together.

Our region has seen 96 months (!) of year-over-year economic growth. We continue to experience a strong business climate with more than 2,500 new direct jobs and over $250 million in new capital investments during the past year. In addition, Kentucky jumped 10 spots in our overall state business tax climate, according to the Tax Foundation, due to recent public policy changes made at the federal and state level.

All of this points to continued success in Northern Kentucky, and we see a strong future ahead of us, as we continue to invest in infrastructure needs across our region and address workforce issues head on.

The Northern Kentucky Chamber and Tri-ED recently celebrated milestone anniversaries; 50th and 30th, respectively. While our organizations have much to celebrate regarding our work to create a thriving region and economy, we must continue to look ahead to ensure the next years are just as successful.

Enjoy this Market Review and please feel free to reach out to us at Tri-ED or the NKY Chamber of Commerce.

Brent Cooper
President & CEO, NKY Chamber

Karen Finan
Interim President & CEO, Northern Kentucky Tri-ED

Northern Kentucky: A Bridge to OPPORTUNITY

In 2018, Northern Kentucky Tri-ED found that Boone, Kenton and Campbell counties had a civilian labor force of 203,658 with a participation rate of 68.7 percent. Of individuals ages 25 to 64 in the Northern Kentucky region (Boone/Kenton/Campbell), 32.4 percent have a bachelor’s degree or higher, which compares with 31.8 percent in the nation.
Because it’s not just networking, it’s a network.

As a member of the Northern Kentucky Chamber of Commerce you are included in a network of over 17,000 business owners, professionals, legislators, and non-profit leaders throughout the entire state of Kentucky.

Join today at NKYChamber.com
Connecting people to their community.

Horizon Community Funds maximizes your charitable giving to impact Northern Kentucky communities and nonprofits, now and in the future.

www.horizonfunds.org
Unified Assets, Distinguished Features

Northern Kentucky’s unique ability to combine life, work and play creates an authentic and cultured experience.

Above: The Newport Aquarium at Newport on the Levee has hundreds of exhibits that attract approximately 700,000 guests annually. The state-of-the-art facility was named the No. 1 aquarium in the 2012 Readers’ Choice Travel Awards from 10Best.com; the Best Rainy Day Outing in 2006 in Cincinnati Family Magazine; and the Best Aquarium in the Midwest in the Zagat Survey’s U.S. Family Travel Guide in 2004.

Left: In June 2018 the Public Arts Network of Northern Kentucky created the NKY Picnic Table Project on the Purple People Bridge to connect the communities of Northern Kentucky and allow them to tell their stories through public art. The tables were later distributed throughout local communities.
Above: Northern Kentucky's waterfront, also known as the Southbank, plays host to dozens of festivals including Goettafest and events throughout the year, partly due to the easy pedestrian access for residents on both sides of the river.

Above: Cincinnati Red Bike offers a fun, affordable and healthy way to travel around Northern Kentucky in an easy-to-use bike share system.

Right: 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. The region also is home to professional football, baseball and soccer.

Above: Newport on the Levee attracts hundreds of thousands of visitors a year since it combines stunning waterfront vistas with views of downtown Cincinnati with great restaurants and bars, family attractions, entertainment, hotels, access to walking trails and so much more – all in one easy-to-access stop.
Above: Renaissance Covington works hard to transform public spaces, create community and promote economic sustainability through events like Shop Small Saturday.

Left: Northern Kentucky’s German heritage is highlighted at the annual Glier’s Goettafest. The four-day celebration along Newport’s riverfront every summer features lots of goetta — a German dish that is often compared to breakfast sausage — live music and cloggers, and games like Goetta Slide and Goetta Ring Toss.

Above: Northern Kentucky is making a huge name for itself in the bourbon scene, and in 2018 locals launched The B-Line, a collective of local distilleries, unique bourbon bars, and restaurants. In 2017 Northern Kentucky was named an Official Gateway to the Kentucky Bourbon Trail®.

Right: 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. The Catalytic Development Funding Corp. of Northern Kentucky helps accelerate the region’s urban renaissance through targeted investments in catalytic real estate development and redevelopment projects in urban neighborhoods, including previously neglected or undervalued historic properties.

Above: Newport-based New Riff Distilling is one of the leading new event spaces in Northern Kentucky.

Left: Quality of Place is a major asset for business and political leaders when attracting talent to the region. Pedestrian access is one enticing feature.
Above: Noah’s Ark at the Ark Encounter attracts hundreds of 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.

Left: Silverlake, a health club and family center located in Erlanger, added 55,000 s.f. in a $9 million expansion. The facility offers youth programs including sports, preschool, afterschool care, summer camps and group exercise. And the Silverlake WaterPark is the largest member-only waterpark in Northern Kentucky.

Above: The World Peace Bell in downtown Newport is the world’s largest free-swinging bell. It is 12 feet in diameter, 12 feet high and weighs 66,000 pounds; the clapper alone weighs 6,878 pounds. Its yoke is an additional 16,512 pounds. When powered up and swung into a ring, its resonant, awe-inspiring striking continues for several minutes.

Left: Old Kentucky Bourbon Bar is on The B-Line and is in the charming historic Mainstrasse Village in Covington. It serves as one of many examples of Northern Kentucky’s growing influence in the bourbon world.
Above: Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption on Madison Avenue in Covington provides a jaw-dropping look at Gothic Revival architecture that’s normally reserved for cities in Europe.

Right: The wildly popular Flying Pig Marathon takes tens of thousands of runners every spring from Cincinnati to Newport and Covington and back.

Above: 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. 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.

Below: The Big Bone Lick State Park features exciting fossils and artifacts, including a 1,000-pound mastodon skull. In 2002, the National Park Service designated Big Bone Lick State Park as an official Lewis and Clark Heritage Trail Site. The park was also listed in 1972 on the National Register of Historic Places and listed as a National Natural Landmark in February 2009.

Above: For more than 40 years, regional tourists and residents have enjoyed a spectacular fireworks show at an end-of-summer event that draws hundreds of thousands of revelers. Western & Southern/WEBN Fireworks is a booming, end-of-summer blowout that concludes with one of the largest fireworks displays in the Midwest. On both sides of the river, nearly a half-million people view the show.

Right: In spring 2018 Pedal Wagon expanded to Covington from Cincinnati where it was launched six years ago. The 15-person pedal-powered cart offers tours around the city and a “rolling celebration.”

Amanda Davidson photo

Rick Lohre photo

Western & Southern/WEBN Fireworks

Pedal Wagon
where’s your favorite place to showcase your hometown pride?


#makeitNKY
In 1987, Northern Kentucky Tri-ED was created as a nonprofit corporation to build a world-class economy through the expansion and creation of industry. Many have worked together to achieve this goal, and since Tri-ED’s founding, it’s been behind the successful relocation and expansion efforts for over 700 business projects, creating more than 70,000 jobs and realizing capital investments topping $9 billion. Now, Northern Kentucky Tri-ED is ranked among the top 15 economic development organizations in the nation, having been awarded a 2018 Mac Conway Award for Excellence in Economic Development – something that more than 5,000 organizations compete for every year.

The current business climate in Northern Kentucky is strong. The region has had eight years of consistent growth and expects 2019 to be another strong year. Throughout this publication, you will find numerous examples of recent economic development wins, regional announcements, and initiatives underway in Northern Kentucky that will spur growth. More and more, companies are finding that Boone, Campbell and Kenton counties – and Northern Kentucky in general – is a great place to do business, raise a family, and experience all the region has to offer.

A new approach to economic development for 2019

Traditionally, Tri-ED has focused on attracting and retaining primary industries with higher employee levels. Industries such as automotive, aviation, logistics, life sciences, food and flavoring, manufacturing and financial services are still greatly important to the vitality of the Northern KY region, but the business climate and mix of companies and industries is changing. Entrepreneurs and start-ups are becoming more prevalent and our region recognizes that for continued economic success, we must take a different approach to economic development.

This idea led Tri-ED to create the Northern Kentucky Entrepreneurship Council (NKYEC), a collaboration of private sector leaders and academic institutions that work with entrepreneurs and innovators in various capacities. The goal of the NKYEC is to establish an innovation cluster in Northern Kentucky focused on informatics, health innovation and supply chain and logistics – all current centers of excellence in the region. To help achieve this goal, Tri-ED was awarded a $750,000 grant from KY Innovation’s RISE Program, which will be matched with local dollars for even greater impact. This is just one of the many efforts Tri-ED has undertaken to re-shape economic development and improve the overall growth of the region.

Workforce collaboration efforts

Tri-ED also realizes that with continued growth comes the need for skilled and experienced workforce. The need for engineers, aircraft maintenance technicians and experienced logistics and supply chain professionals, especially, is greater than ever but like many communities nationwide the talent pipeline needs reinforcement. To fill the gaps in workforce, Tri-ED is working closely with the NKY Chamber and its comprehensive strategy, GROW NKY, inclusive of other workforce partners like the Northern Kentucky Area Development District and KY Career Center, Northern Kentucky University, and Northern Kentucky University, and...
Within a two-day drive of 90 percent of the U.S. population

### Why Northern KY?

Since Tri-ED's founding we have seen incredible growth in Northern KY, which is now home to industry leading companies like Amazon, Prime Air, Prysmian Group (formerly General Cable), Bosch, CTI Clinical Trials & Consulting, Mazak, Mubea, Perfetti Van Melle, L’Oréal, WILD Flavors, Castellini Group and more. These companies make Northern Kentucky their home for a reason: a great business climate, robust supply chain and incredible quality of place.

While some might consider 'quality of place' to be the latest buzzword in economic development, we take it to heart. Our entire region works together to make sure we have not just a great business climate but also excellent community programs and support, a wide variety of housing options, high performing schools and universities, and a vibrant urban core.

The region has become a national hub for logistics: We can reach 50 percent of the United States population within one day, and 90 percent within a two days drive. And we are just minutes from the Greater Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky International Airport (CVG), the fastest growing cargo airport in the country. The speed with which companies can reach their customers is an attractive benefit to companies located here.

Our region has been rated No. 1 as a cost-friendly business location among large U.S. cities and is in the top 10 for most favorable tax conditions. The average cost of living in Northern Kentucky is 12 percent below the national average, and housing prices are 25 percent below, making our northernmost counties a great bargain compared to similarly-sized metropolitan areas.

— Karen Finan, Interim President/CEO, Tri-ED

making our northernmost counties a great bargain compared to similarly-sized metropolitan areas.

For these reasons, among others, Northern Kentucky truly is a bridge to opportunity for the businesses that locate here and for the individuals and families that call Northern Kentucky home.

We encourage you to learn more about us! Give Tri-ED a call at (859) 344-0040, or toll-free at (888) 874-3365. We welcome the opportunity to take you on a tour of our region and see first-hand all the great things Northern Kentucky has to offer for your business.

Follow us on LinkedIn (Northern Kentucky Tri-ED) and Twitter (@NKYTriED) NorthernKentuckyUSA.com to learn more.
What is Northern Kentucky?
A unique, growing, cultural, cooperative, impactful, authentic region

BY BRENT COOPER, PRESIDENT & CEO

WHAT is Northern Kentucky?
That’s one of the many questions I’ve asked myself as I reflect on my first year of leading the NKY Chamber as President & CEO.

What’s the best way to describe our region?
Are we one of the largest urban areas in Kentucky, offering walkability, world-class restaurants, and a variety of new craft breweries and bourbon distilleries? Are we a suburban community offering some of the best schools and shopping destinations such as Florence’s Mall Road, Bellevue’s Historic Fairfield Avenue, and Crestview Hills Town Center? Are we a thriving manufacturing center boasting international businesses like Mubea and Mazak? Are we a leader in finance and tech, touting Citi, Fidelity, and NKU’s College of Informatics?

The truth is, we are all of these things … and more.

Our Northern Kentucky region includes the nine northernmost counties in the state of Kentucky, with nearly a half a million people. No matter your personal or business priorities, our region brings a lot to the table.

Our region is a powerhouse. Our economy has seen 96 straight months of year-over-year growth, as of the fourth quarter of 2018. The unemployment rate is around 3.2 percent – the lowest it’s been in decades.

Northern Kentucky’s labor force participation rate is at 67 percent. That’s three points above the national average of 64 percent, and far above the Kentucky state average of 56 percent.

The success of our region makes it clear that we have a great place to do business.

Tourism is one of our hidden success stories, with hotel demand in Northern Kentucky at four times the national average. It surprises people to hear that while we’re 10 percent of Kentucky’s population, we represent 20 percent of the commonwealth’s tourism. With offerings like the Newport Aquarium (one of the top 10 aquariums in the country), Kentucky Speedway, Ark Encounter, Florence Freedom baseball team, and Hofbrauhaus, our region has a lot to offer. When you add the Greater Cincinnati region to our portfolio, NKY visitors can experience amenities that rival any place in the country.

Much of Northern Kentucky’s success is due to the Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky International Airport (CVG).

Not only is CVG the largest airport in the state of Kentucky, we believe it’s the best in the region. Northern Kentucky boasts more flights, and lower cost flights, than Dayton, Columbus, Indianapolis, Lexington and Louisville. It is a huge driver of our economy.

It has also helped turn us into a logistics and distribution leader. Behind expansions of DHL and Amazon, CVG is now ranked eighth in North America in cargo. Half of all flights out of CVG are cargo flights.
We also have a growing health sciences sector, led by St. Elizabeth Healthcare. With the new addition of the Health Innovation Center at Northern Kentucky University, and successful startups like Bexion Pharmaceuticals, our region is becoming a leader in health care advances.

**Successes don’t come without challenge**

For every worker that we’re adding, regions like Nashville, Tenn., and Austin, Texas, are adding 10. We must figure out a way to better tell our story. We have a compelling proposition to those looking to relocate: high quality of life and low cost of living. Sharing what we have to offer is key if we are to continue to grow our workforce.

The need for transportation solutions also remains a top priority. Despite our success, we have a number of projects, including the Brent Spence Bridge Corridor, that continue to keep us from growing like we could or should.

It’s important to note that while transportation challenges impact our larger employers for sure, it’s small businesses that are impacted the most. Out of the 8,600 businesses in our region, 93 percent of them are 49 employees or less. When employees of a small business are late to work due to traffic, or stuck on their way to a service call, that’s lost productivity and a real impact to the bottom line that as a matter of percentage, dwarfs that of larger organizations.

And while the NKY region offers a variety of top-rated schools, we need to continue to improve education, at all levels, and ensure all our citizens have equal opportunities for long term success.

With that thought in mind, the NKY Chamber, in partnership with a variety of workforce partners, led the charge to create the new GROW NKY initiative (Growing Regional Outcomes through Workforce), which focuses on strengthening the region’s competitive workforce through five key pillars – Kindergarten Readiness; College & Career Readiness; Adult Career Readiness & Life Long Learning; Talent Retention & Attraction; and Employer Policies & Practices.

Each workforce pillar boasts a number of goals, but one I’m particularly fond of is the goal of dramatically increasing the number of experiential learning offerings, including internships and apprenticeships. We know that when students obtain work experience while attending school, they get better grades, are more likely to graduate, and most importantly, are more likely to be hired after graduation.

Another top priority is increasing the number of children who are ready for kindergarten. If we don’t invest more in quality childcare and pre-school, we’re never going to have the community we desire. Right now, only 54 percent of our kids are coming in ready for kindergarten. Our goal is to increase this to 85 percent over the coming years, because we know if kids come prepared for kindergarten, they’ll be more likely to read on grade level by the third grade, and more likely to have success in life. No matter the arena, improving our workforce is the NKY Chamber’s top objective.

All of this work supports our mission to promote business growth and improve the economy. That’s why we’re here. If we do it right, it should result in a better quality of life for all.

That’s the ‘why’ behind the NKY Chamber. The ‘how’ is by leading, connecting, and advocating.

“Lead, connect, advocate,” is a phrase we use regularly at the NKY Chamber. Whether it’s leading an important community conversation, connecting members at networking events, or advocating on behalf of our members in Washington, D.C., Frankfort or at the local fiscal court – we are working hard every day on behalf of the NKY business community.

We’ve been doing that since 1969. As we begin our 50th Anniversary year, we are looking forward to leading, connecting and advocating on behalf of our members over the next 50 years.
NKADD in 2018
Working together for Northern Kentucky

Serving 62 local governments in Kentucky’s eight northern counties, the Northern Kentucky Area Development District provides services in three areas: Human Services and Case Management, Public Administration and Community Development, and Workforce Development.

NKADD Board Officers:
Lewis Diaz, Chair; Mayor Rick Skinner, Vice-Chair; Judge-Executive Kris Knochelmann, 2nd Vice-Chair; Judge-Executive Casey Ellis, Treasurer

Available positions through Job Orders increased by 50%

$510,947 INVESTED in Workforce preparation through Training

110% increase in new Job Openings posted

$1.3+ MILLION GRANT FUNDING SECURED

7,447 Aging and Disability Resource Center calls received, connecting seniors and disabled individuals to needed services

2,302 Employer-reported Job Placements

515 employers participated in 359 onsite hiring events and conducted more than 4,690 interviews

57,254 meals provided for seniors through home-delivered meals and congregate meals in local Senior Centers

$22.50 Average wage for workers receiving Workforce Training

$237,800 REVOLVING LOAN FUNDS CIRCULATED

29 Public food pantries supported through federal programs
Northern Kentucky by the Numbers

Northern Kentucky – part of the Greater Cincinnati region – has a growing population as well as a growing workforce. With a labor shed of more than 1.1 million people, it also has a labor force participation rate and size (civilian population 16 years and over) that is significantly higher than the rest of Kentucky, and the U.S. (68.7% compared with 59.2% and 63.3%, respectively), according to Northern Kentucky Tri-ED. Northern Kentucky’s demographics paint a picture of a thriving, growing and impactful region. The region’s key industries are aviation and aerospace, automotive, advanced manufacturing, biohealth, food and flavoring, information technology and advanced logistics.

### County Populations

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<th>County</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2019*</th>
<th>2040*</th>
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<td>85,991</td>
<td>136,757</td>
<td>224,687</td>
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<td>Campbell</td>
<td>88,616</td>
<td>92,732</td>
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<td>Gallatin</td>
<td>7,870</td>
<td>8,813</td>
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<td>Grant</td>
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<td>Kenton</td>
<td>151,464</td>
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<td>Pendleton</td>
<td>14,390</td>
<td>14,122</td>
<td>15,118</td>
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<td>Clermont (OH)</td>
<td>177,977</td>
<td>204,214</td>
<td>216,190</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hamilton (OH)</td>
<td>845,303</td>
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<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,393,995</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,463,757</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,548,013</strong></td>
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*Estimated

Source: Kentucky State Data Center, Ohio Development Services Agency

### Age Distribution

![Age Distribution Chart](courtesy_REDI_Cincinnati)

### Labor Force Status

- **Total Employees by Major SIC**

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<thead>
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<th>Shared Industrial Classification</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<td>Unclassified</td>
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Source: REDI Cincinnati. Figures include Northern Kentucky, Southwest Ohio and Southeast Indiana.
Transforming together
Northern Kentucky is busy building vital bridges to a vibrant future

BY ABBY LAUB

THE Northern Kentucky region might already have 10 actual bridges, but it’s busy building many more as it continually transforms itself into an even better place to live, work and play. Bridges to a better future

– through education, infrastructure, innovation, entrepreneurship, and a better quality of place that beckons everyone to stay a while – or forever.

“Northern Kentucky is a true community ready for change,” said Karen Finan, interim president and CEO of Northern Kentucky Tri-ED. “It’s willing to face its challenges and embrace its attributes. We work together to accelerate growth – in the corporate sector; of community leaders – knowing it’s in our best interest to identify and implement transformative, regional initiatives.”

Construction – real or abstract – to achieve transformation requires unified purpose, talent, enthusiasm, vision, long-term planning and money. Now, more than ever, there are regional leaders, citizens and business leaders linking together to build more “bridges,” and one place they’re gathering and giving their money is with Horizon Community Funds.

Founded in 2017 and led by President Nancy Grayson, HCF raised a cool $18 million in just one year; uniting resources with the purpose of raising the quality of life for all people in Northern Kentucky.

“We’re choosing not to focus on a particular content area,” Grayson said. “From the outset we said we’d help break the cycle of poverty, support the arts, and more.”

Now, HCF is focusing on a broader spectrum, including the opioid crisis, workforce development and worker pipeline, affordable housing, healthcare and overall public health.

“Our goal at the outset was $50 million in five years, but we think we’re going to get there in more like three to four years now,” Grayson said. “We’ve been growing our funds and spreading our mission … This is the first time we’ve ever had this togetherness (in the region). There is this fierce pride that we have. People who live work or play here, they

Northern Kentucky’s iconic bridges are symbolic — like the historic John A. Roebling Suspension Bridge — of the region’s meteoric rise to new heights. The year 2018 proved to be extremely fruitful for the area’s businesses, leaders and residents, but they’re just getting warmed up.
further.”

“It’s focusing on innovation, acceleration, logistics & distribution, I.T., finance and construction. “We have one of the fastest growing counties in the state of Kentucky in Boone County. Also, folks in Cincinnati are often surprised to hear that the fastest growing county in the Cincinnati MSA can be found in Northern Kentucky!”

The swelling numbers require, among other things, growing the workforce. This is an issue that’s not necessarily unique to the region, but the way that Northern Kentucky leaders are handling it is special. “I’m excited to see businesses in all of these sectors taking a more creative and collaborative approach to addressing their workforce needs,” he said. “They aren’t just paying people more, they are also looking at a range of benefits that can help attract and retain talent. Things like tuition reimbursement, transportation, and childcare for their employees.”

Making a workplace attractive is one thing, but getting workers there or making existing workers more qualified is another. That’s where an all new initiative is coming into place.

Bridges to Education
“Were taking a unique regionally collaborative approach to addressing

Creating a prepared, engaged and excited workforce is one of the region’s top priorities. With unemployment figures among the lowest in the nation, concerted efforts through entities like KY FAME and NaviGo will ensure that a new generation of workers is ready to take Northern Kentucky into the future.

HCF collaborates with private sector donors and partners, but also with the Northern Kentucky Regional Alliance, the Northern Kentucky Chamber,Tri-ED, Catalytic Fund, and United Way of Greater Cincinnati-Northern Kentucky. They see Horizon as an “endowment for Northern Kentucky,” Grayson said. “It’s focusing on innovation, acceleration, leveraging resources and making dollars go further.”

The excitement is palpable at the NKY Chamber, where President & CEO Brent Cooper is settling into his second year at the helm of the 250-member strong organization. “By any measure, we had an amazing first year. Membership increased, attendance at our events also went up, and we recently had one of the largest annual dinners in a decade with over 1,100 people celebrating the kick off to our 50th anniversary year,” Cooper noted. “Most importantly, our advocacy efforts and our regional involvement have been focused on improving our economy. This year we were able to boast the lowest unemployment rate and highest worker participation rate in the commonwealth.”

The chamber and its members are helping build more bridges in the private sector. Sometimes the evidence shows in the form of new announcements, new hires or simply anecdotal proof that things are humming along nicely.

“We’ve seen a record number of ribbon cuttings and business expansions this year across our region,” Cooper said, adding that the region’s top growth areas continue to be healthcare, advanced manufacturing, logistics & distribution, I.T., finance and construction. “We have one of the fastest growing counties in the state of Kentucky in Boone County. Also, folks in Cincinnati are often surprised to hear that the fastest growing county in the Cincinnati MSA can be found in Northern Kentucky!”

The swelling numbers require, among other things, growing the workforce. This is an issue that’s not necessarily unique to the region, but the way that Northern Kentucky leaders are handling it is special. “I’m excited to see businesses in all of these sectors taking a more creative and collaborative approach to addressing their workforce needs,” he said. “They aren’t just paying people more, they are also looking at a range of benefits that can help attract and retain talent. Things like tuition reimbursement, transportation, and childcare for their employees.”

Making a workplace attractive is one thing, but getting workers there or making existing workers or students more qualified is another. That’s where an all new initiative is coming into place.

Bridges to Education
“We’re taking a unique regionally collaborative approach to addressing

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workforce issues by looking at the entire spectrum of workforce development,” Cooper said. “Our new Growing Regional Outcomes through Workforce (GROW NKY) initiative that launched earlier this year, looks at early childhood education, K-12 years, adult learning, business policies and practices, and talent attraction and retention. Just improving one of those areas, without addressing the others, doesn’t get us where we want to go. We’re bringing partners throughout the region to the NKY Chamber to work together on all of these issues.”

He said ultimately the region needs a dramatic increase in workforce readiness and more students getting real, hands-on experience. That falls under one of Grow NKY’s five pillars, College and Career Readiness, and is where Tim Hanner’s NaviGo College and Career Prep (a division of Covington-based Children, Inc.) comes into play.

Hanner, the founder and senior director of NaviGo, developed a curriculum to help students find their “interests and passions or talents and then help them connect to what that means beyond high school,” he said.

NaviGo works with the private sector, Northern Kentucky Cooperative for Educational Services, mentors and educators to help all high school students but especially those ones who “are just doing school” and are not engaged, Hanner said.

The approach proves that workforce development is not just a formulaic event that forgoes the innate passions and talents of each student or the traits of each school; it’s more about engagement. NaviGo helps train educators to engage with students and therefore unlock their potential and help them face their future more effectively.

“When you really drill down and go beneath it and talk to the kids, it’s really about helping every student figure out who they are and what makes them tick, what they’re passionate about,” Hanner said.

“That only happens if it’s intentional. We’re training folks on how to engage in more project-based learning and opening doors and having business in schools in more ways beyond just participating in a career day. I think we’re scratching the surface of where we’ll be two to three years from now.”

Another big part of the push to better prepare high schoolers is the Ignite Institute at Roebling Innovation Center. The all-new public high school in Erlanger is situated on Toyota’s former Quality & Production Engineering Laboratory facility and will open in August 2019. The company donated the facility to the school, which will focus on project-based learning in science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics, with real industry-case methodology, honing passion and direction for careers.

Another new development comes from Bill Butler of Covington-based Corporex. Butler, who in 2005 helped start the Covington-based Life Learning Center, is getting even more hands on with his time and his wallet – lending support to the seven school districts along the Southbank through a grant that brings the NaviGo program to high school kids. The Butler Foundation grant allows teachers and staff to receive coaching and learn skills to better engage with students

“We’re looking to bring every high school in Northern Kentucky to have a seat at the table along with businesses and industry and along with higher education, but then drilling it down to workforce sector.”

—Tim Hanner, Founder and Director, NaviGo College and Career Prep

NaviGo takes a collaborative approach to education and is big on mentoring and engagement. It aims to inspire students and utilize their unique strengths and talents while using practices not typically seen in a traditional classroom setting.

Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky — practically a stone’s throw across the Ohio River — could not complement each other better, offering residents both urban and small-town amenities and a limitless variety of attractions and culture.
and help them stay on track to college or trade school once they graduate. And business is brought in like never before.

“We’re looking to bring every high school in Northern Kentucky to have a seat at the table along with businesses and industry and along with higher education, but then drilling it down by workforce sector,” Hanmer said.

“Especially in the top five areas of needs. And we’ve identified healthcare, IT, logistics, supply chain, construction and skilled trade, and advanced manufacturing as the high need areas. The end result we want out of this is to provide more opportunities for youth while they’re in high school so they can discover, get their hands on, do more job shadowing experiences, more exploratory experience, partnering with businesses and agencies, more apprenticeships, and working to define what apprenticeships mean for us in Northern Kentucky.”

The end results mean higher success rates, but also more meaningful connections.

**Unemployment ‘basically at zero’**
The Northern Kentucky Chamber hopes such educational practices will also help keep talent in the region. NKY Chamber Vice President of Public Affairs and Communications Kristin Baldwin hopes businesses and community leaders can help carry the torch once students are ready to go.

“NKU does a great job of graduating 3,000 students annually, but what are we doing to keep them here?” she asked.

“Now we’re carrying the torch, so what does that look like? We’ve been working on many initiatives; for example NKU, University of Kentucky and St. Elizabeth Healthcare have all come together to do a combined doctorate program to get more physicians in the area after St. Elizabeth Healthcare and NKU. Cintrifuse in Cincinnati is a fast-growing innovation hub that is bringing new high tech jobs, attracting more talent, invigorating the entire region and connecting ‘dreamers and disruptors.’

“We have a terrific ecosystem of new business startups and entrepreneurs. The efforts of many groups including the NKY Innovation network, Aviatra Accelerators, Cintrifuse, and NKU’s Small Business Development Center (SBDC), just to name a few,” said Brent Cooper, president and CEO of the NKY Chamber. “The new jobs and investments from startups in Northern Kentucky has been profound, and impacts the entire state.”

Northern Kentucky also has a major presence in the research and life sciences sector. Covington-based CTI Clinical Trial and Consulting Services moved its offices to the south bank from Blue Ash, Ohio, in 2016 and in May 2018 it announced it will collaborate with DiscGenics on the execution of a first-in-human trial of IDCT for degenerative disc disease (DDD). DiscGenics is a regenerative medicine company focused on developing cell therapies that alleviate pain and restore function in patients with degenerative diseases of the spine. CTI, an expert in regenerative medicine and in the development of life-changing therapies in critically ill patients, has been a part of several dozen First-In-Human trials over the past few years.

CTI is less than a mile from Bexion Pharmaceuticals, a biopharmaceutical company developing innovative cures for cancer.

**Giving innovation an accelerated leg up**
Northern Kentucky’s business scene is chock full of steadfast companies who inject millions into the local economy. But the region also is rapidly gaining fame as an ideal startup atmosphere.

At the tail end of 2018, the NKY Entrepreneurship Council (NKYEC), which is operated by the Northern Kentucky Tri-County Economic Development Corp., received a $750,000 grant to emphasize entrepreneurship and innovation in Northern Kentucky’s economic development. KY Innovation’s RISE program awarded the new funds, and the NKYEC plans to match the grant with local dollars to drive greater results for the region.

The NKYEC hopes to establish an innovation cluster in Northern Kentucky, which includes Boone, Campbell and Kenton counties. The focus will be on informatics, health innovation and logistics innovation— centers of excellence in the region. Northern Kentucky University (NKU) will leverage its expertise from the College of Informatics and the Institute of Health Innovation to support the councils focus areas. Once established, the innovation cluster will serve as a resource for the entire state and the broader region.

“We are thrilled that Northern Kentucky has brought so many great partners to the table to develop a strong, entrepreneurship-based innovation cluster focused on informatics, health innovation and logistics innovation,” said Brian Mefford, executive director of the Office of Entrepreneurship at the Kentucky Cabinet for Economic Development. “This is exactly the kind of collaboration we were aiming for when developing this new investment approach.”

Northern Kentucky has already proven that it is ripe for a further injection into the innovation space. Entities like UpTech and Kentucky Innovation Network in Covington’s “Innovation Alley” already work with startups, sometimes coupling up with organizations like St. Elizabeth Healthcare and NKU. Cintrifuse in Cincinnati is a fast-growing innovation hub that is bringing new high tech jobs, attracting more talent, invigorating the entire region and connecting ‘dreamers and disruptors.’

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**Top quality of place**
Part of attracting talent is not about jobs, but about the livability and quality of place in Northern Kentucky.

With a vibrant international airport, a scenic landscape and rivers, unlimited food and drink experiences, ability to get around quickly, diverse living options, and a sense of small-town living next door to a world class urban landscape make Northern Kentucky a place people want to be.

“A unique problem to us is that people don’t know we are here,” said
Cooper, adding that the chamber is being very intentional about recruiting young professionals. “We offer a terrific place to live with a high quality of life and low cost of living. We need more people to come and see for themselves what we have to offer. That is why we continue to champion and promote tourism in Northern Kentucky, as well as the entire state. For example, did you know we are 10 percent of the state’s population, but represent 20 percent of the state’s tourism?”

Part of the tourism and livability appeal is the “cool factor” of Northern Kentucky, which New Riff Distilling owner and founder Ken Lewis likes to tout. “Newport, Campbell County and Northern Kentucky are most definitely on the rise,” Lewis said, adding that the uptick in bourbon production has become a major tourism draw but also a quality of life addition – giving people new places to convene and experience new things. “Being a stop on the Kentucky Craft Bourbon Trail adds to the quality of life on our side of the Ohio River and brings a uniqueness to our area.”

The Kentucky Bourbon Trail also dubbed Northern Kentucky as the official northern entrance to the trail, and the region even has its own take on it with the “B-Line.”

“We bring some of that hard-to-quantify quality of life and uniqueness that adds to the pride and the economic growth of the whole region,” Lewis said. “It’s not just the dollars from tourism but pride in our community and what we are accomplishing together.”

Attractions such as the B-Line are just one of many reasons that REDI Cincinnati President & CEO Kim Lauterbach likes to talk about Northern Kentucky. “Northern Kentucky has small-town feel with charm, creativity, and connectivity,” she said.

REDI Cincinnati represents a 15-county portion of Southwest Ohio, Northern Kentucky and Southeast Indiana. “This region is blessed for a host of reasons,” Lauterbach said. “We are geographically blessed. You can get almost anywhere that you’d want to do business within a one-day drive or a 90-minute flight. That makes it easy for us to sell proximity to customers, and to supply chains. In addition, we have a low cost of living. Other places offer great location, but they’re more expensive. We’re around 15 percent more affordable than the national average and have almost a 30 percent lower cost of living than the coasts. But we provide a great community experience, and Northern Kentucky is a large part of that experience.”

German heritage and unique architecture are hallmarks of Covington’s hippest mixed use area at MainStrasse Village. It includes homes, apartments, small retail shops, a wide range of restaurants and bars, and even two city parks – all anchored by the iconic Carroll Chimes Bell Tower, commonly known to the locals as “The Clock Tower.”

“With the ‘B-Line’ our region’s collective approach including distilleries, bars and restaurants focused on Bourbon, we are driving tourism to Northern Kentucky and marketing the area as a transportation hub to begin or end out of state tourists visit to Kentucky,” Lewis said, adding that he loves that Northern Kentucky has “such a positive, ‘can-do’, ‘make it happen’, collective approach to continue driving this region forward from government, business, and tourism leaders.”

He thinks bourbon can continue to drive forward the push to attract more people.
She added that she loves the way Cincinnati and the whole region embraces new people and ideas and “collectively roll up our sleeves and get to work.”

**Bridges – actual ones – together**

Rolling up their sleeves together is something regional leaders – on both sides of the river – embrace.

“As much as we have to celebrate, there are challenges,” noted Cooper. “We need ongoing infrastructure improvements like roads, water, sewer, etc. We need to address health issues that are impacting our workforce like the opioid epidemic and our high smoking rate.”

The elephant in the room for infrastructure projects is the aging Brent Spence Bridge that carries north-south traffic for interstates 71 and 75 across the Ohio River. Local 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. According to a KYTC press release the total future estimated cost of the project is $150.9 million. 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.

“We worked for years to get it,” said Baldwin, adding that it will focus primarily on roads and logistics.

While this project will help alleviate congestion around the bridge, Baldwin and others anticipate that money to fix the Brent Spence Bridge will also come from a combination of public and private sources.

“When we talked about the bridge 10 years ago, we just expected the feds to pay for it all, but that’s not happening,” Baldwin said. “Now it’s partnerships with federal, state, local and private money.”

And air transportation has been a huge success for Northern Kentucky. Finan touted the Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky International Airport (CVG) as a prime example of what can happen when leaders put their collective heads together for the good of the region; the result being lower airfare, increased traffic with both people and cargo, and huge increases in activity from Amazon Prime and DHL.

In August 2018 CVG announced it also received $7.1 million in Airport Improvement Program grants. The program funds airport infrastructure projects such as runways, taxiways, airport signage, airport lighting and airport markings.

Transportation and logistics are one of the many reasons that companies continue to invest. A huge example came in June 2018 as Coca-Cola Bottling Co. Consolidated announced a $30 million investment in Erlanger. Coca-Cola plans to create 430 full-time jobs for a new 300,000-s.f. sales and distribution facility expected to be open in late summer 2019.

And just one month later – only nine months after its opening – Cincinnati-based Kroger announced it would invest nearly $18 million and add 250 jobs at its distribution center in Florence. The facility will support Kroger’s e-commerce and digital services.

“We have many success stories we can point to, transportation being a good example,” Finan said. “Our future must envision NKY unity and centralization. It’s time to move forward for the next 30 years; to compete on a national and international basis on all fronts. A regional approach to workforce, education, economic development and health are key to NKY’s transformation.”

Continued transformation will be highly visible soon as Corporex in 2018 announced it plans to move forward with its highly anticipated Ovation complex on Newport’s waterfront. The announcement came after FC Cincinnati announced plans to develop a stadium in Cincinnati’s West End. Originally the Ovation site in Newport was identified as one of three potential stadium sites. Even with the stadium now going on the north side of the river, Northern Kentucky businesses are amped about adding yet another professional sports team literally within sight of the Southbank urban core.

Ovation is an innovative, transformational project from Butler, who is already known for two others like it in Covington at RiverCenter and The Ascent. Ovation, though, will be even bigger. It represents Northern Kentucky’s impressive push into the future.
‘A small town that feels like a city’
Northern Kentucky boasts hot cultural attractions with easy living

BY ABBY LAUB

CHOOSING a great place to live isn’t as simple as finding a great job. These days, the place itself needs to impress arguably more so than a job, and Northern Kentucky does just that. It’s a region that has something for everyone, and it’s an important part of a Greater Cincinnati region whose cost of living is 12 percent below the national average.

“We truly have something for everyone, whether your stay is a day or a lifetime,” said Jack Moreland, president of Southbank Partners.

Southbank Partners Inc. is a Newport-based community and economic development organization that coordinates activity with the string of cities along Northern Kentucky’s bank of the Ohio River. It promotes and coordinates development activities, fosters teamwork and collaboration, and provides a unified voice for the partner cities in advocating common positions to state and federal governments, and other communities.

“The Northern Kentucky urban core is alive, well and working at a breakneck speed toward a renaissance that is already bringing young professionals, empty nesters and those who just love to be close to the action, back to downtown,” Moreland said. “We are renovating existing housing stock, building new modern apartments, lofts and condos, and providing leisure time amenities all in the spirit of establishing a place where everyone loves their lifestyle.”

The varied waterfront has a host of attractions to suit families, professionals and seniors alike, and a new coming attraction is a huge Ferris wheel to wow guests with spectacular views of Cincinnati, the river and the rolling hills around the region.

First announced in 2015, the SkyWheel project calls for a 240-foot-tall leisure attraction to be placed at Newport on the Levee on the Ohio River waterfront.

“Newport on the Levee is ideal for SkyWheel because it is a great combination of a social gathering place offering all types of entertainment for all age levels with restaurants, theater, aquarium, music and events,” said Matthew Stack, managing director of Koch Development Co. Stack oversees all aspects of the operations and development of the SkyWheel.

“The best part of SkyWheel,” Stacks said, “is that it is accessible to all ages and demographics. I would expect that with our project there will be other new investment at Newport on the Levee from North American Properties and others to further enhance the entertainment offerings in the area.”

On the wheel, riders will be able to see many other of the region’s attractions, while feeling they are atop a feather in the cap of a region on the rise. Northern Kentucky is all walkable and affordable. It also happens to be just across the river from multiple professional sports teams, yet more arts and
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.

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.
cultural attractions, and ample world-class dining opportunities. And unlike most other large urban areas it is all within easy reach – even by foot or bike. In fact, two popular walking bridges – the Purple People Bridge and the John A. Roebling Suspension Bridge – offer unparalleled pedestrian access to residents and visitors.

“With walkable and bike-able neighborhoods, Southern hospitality, plenty of non-franchise restaurants and shops, and other safe, well-lighted venues, both locals and visitors alike will find an atmosphere in Northern Kentucky that begs them to come stay,” Moreland said.

Who better to talk about the quality of place in Northern Kentucky than the people who live here? Here’s what they have to say.

**Tess Burns**, a Northern Kentucky native and co-owner of Commonwealth Bistro and a brand designer.

**What she loves about NKY:** “Its rolling hills, small town feel and friendliness.”

**Where she takes out-of-town guests:**

> “There are so many options! I really tailor it to the individual, but we always hit our local spots during a stroll in Ludlow with stops at Folks School Coffee Parlor, Haters Dry Goods, Second Sight Spirits and now Bircus Brewing Company. MainStrasse, Rhinegeist and the Southgate House Revival are almost sure stops outside of Ludlow.”

**Education:** North Dakota State University for general studies.

**Where she takes out-of-town guests:**

> “We always go to Covington or OTR (Over The Rhine) for good beers and delicious food!”

**Education:** Syracuse University, then Kendall College in Chicago for a culinary degree.

**Gordon Henry**, Northern Kentucky native, is president of ReNewport and property manager at Cornerstone Renter Equity.

**What he loves about NKY:** “It love multiple things about the area. The proximity to a big city but the small town charm that I can still enjoy, the walkability, the ability and space to impact change across a multitude of causes. The pride that comes with being from our individual cities in NKY. The residents and friendliness of it all.”

**Where he takes out-of-town guests:**

> “Old Kentucky Bourbon Bar, the museums in Cincinnati, Great American Ball Park, Wunderbar, Wooden Cask Brewery, Washington Park, as many coffee shops as possible. I’m biased towards Carabello Coffee and Trailhead Coffee.”

**Education:** Went to NKU for higher education, took a break to join AmeriCorps, now pondering a return to college.

**Jim Guthrie**, lives in Newport “via Cincinnati via Lexington via Los Angeles” and is principal at Hub + Weber Architects.

**What he loves about NKY:** “Diversity – it has everything and everyone. Its authenticity.”

**Where he takes out-of-town guests:**

> “Hotel Covington … but pick a bar or restaurant, you can’t go wrong.”

**Education:** Bachelor’s in architecture from DAAP at University of Cincinnati.

**Where he takes out-of-town guests:**

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**Education:** Bachelor’s in architecture from DAAP at University of Cincinnati.
Karen Etling, is a Northern Kentucky transplant from Munster, Ind., and is the executive director at Baker Hunt Art and Cultural Center.

What she loves about NKY: “I love Northern Kentucky’s rebirth. All the wonderful restaurants and stores that have sprung up, the great new living spaces and bars, and the upbeat personality that goes along with it all.”

Where she takes out-of-town guests: “Brunch somewhere in NKY, a distillery tour, Big Bone Lick for a hike, tour of a horse farm.”

Education: B.S. in finance from Indiana University and MBA in human resources from Xavier University.

Karen Etling moved to the region from Indiana and now devotes her time to care for one of Northern Kentucky’s most unique properties at Baker Hunt.

Mandy and Aaron Lehman moved to Northern Kentucky from Morehead, Ky., and Milford, Ohio, respectively. Mandy is a designer, photographer and creative at MANMAN (themanmans.com), and Aaron is an autism specialist at Cooper High School.

What they love about NKY: “Its humble, approachable vibe and that it’s close to the river and downtown Cincinnati,” says Mandy.

Where they take out-of-town guests: “Manhattan Harbor, coffee at Avenue Brew, lunch at Bellevue Bistro, movie in Newport, drinks at Darkness Brewery … we’ll also take them to OTR and other random places too, of course!” Mandy added.

Education: Mandy has a BFA from NKU, and Aaron has a master’s in special education from Xavier.

Shwetha Pai moved to Northern Kentucky from New York City and serves as CEO of OrgAnalytix. Her office, pictured here, is located in Covington’s Innovation Alley.

Shwetha T. Pai moved to Northern Kentucky from New York City and serves as CEO and co-founder of OrgAnalytix.

What she loves about NKY: “The friendly, welcoming people.”

Where she takes out-of-town guests: “To FC Cincinnati games and for bourbon tastings.”

Education: MBA from Columbia Business School and BSBA from Boston University.

Mandy and Aaron Lehman can often be found crossing over the river and back by foot with their Boston Terrier, Luna.

Vivek Mehta moved to Northern Kentucky from Austin, Texas. He is the CEO and co-founder of Weeve, a company that helps businesses reduce turnover by giving them a better way to understand and act on employee feedback.

What he loves about NKY: “There’s a vibrant and growing scene for start-ups and small businesses, lots of great shops and restaurants within walking distance, but most importantly – everyone is kind and welcoming. Midwestern hospitality is real!”

Where he takes out-of-town guests: To one (or several!) of the great bourbon bars.

Education: Bachelors in Communication Studies from the University of Texas at Austin.

Cincinnati Red Bike has 12 stations in Northern Kentucky.

Getting around made fun

Cincinnati-based Red Bike has 440 bikes with 37 stations – 12 of which are based in Northern Kentucky. Executive Director Jason Barron said the bikes make upwards of 100,000 trips per year and are about the most versatile mode of transportation in the region.

“Red Bike is huge for quality of life,” he said. “It allows people to get around in a different way than they’re used to getting around, and it adds to the transportation mix of the community, to the health of the population and the environment. And it improves the number of smiles in the community.”

Barron said the program has been incredibly popular, and people frequently use them to get across the river for work or leisure.

Northern Kentucky is a crucial part of the Red Bike network, and I’d say one of the most common rides that’s taken is across the bridges to enjoy both sides of the river,” he added.

Vivek Mehta moved to Northern Kentucky from Austin to co-found his startup called Weeve. He loves walking along the Covington murals shown here.

Vivek Mehta
By Russ Brown

Major advances in education are taking place throughout Northern Kentucky, and more are on the horizon, a boom fueled in large part by innovative programs that provide support for more established educational entities.

Initiatives partnering educators and private industry at all levels are part of a quest to meet the challenge of improving Northern Kentucky’s workforce – in size and skill – and boosting high school and college graduation rates.

Northern Kentucky’s low unemployment numbers, 3.2 percent compared to 4.1 percent statewide, has spurred area leaders to create systems ensuring the educational system works with local employers to give students long-term career awareness and experiential learning opportunities.

That’s because the area expects 7,309 job openings, annually, according to the Northern Kentucky Local Workforce Area Occupational Outlook report from the Kentucky Center for Education and Workforce Statistics.

Among the newest programs addressing workforce needs is the Ignite Institute at Roebling Innovation Center, a partnership with Boone County Schools, due to open for the 2019-2020 school year on a 22-acre Erlanger site that Toyota donated.

The tuition-free grades 9-12 Institute will operate Ignite Institute that will impart industry-case methodology.

The new hands-on, experiential learning in science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics (STEAM) with real learning in science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics.

The planned Ignite Institute at Roebling Innovation Center is a partnership with Boone County Schools and will utilize collaborative project-based learning in science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics.

Another NaviGo initiative is in partnership with Bill Butler of Covington-based developer Corporex. Butler's
SULLIVAN IS DOING THE UNHEARD OF, PASSING OUR SAVINGS ON TO YOU WITH A TUITION REDUCTION!

CLASSES START EVERY January, March, June & September.

Recent merger cost savings have allowed us to reduce our tuition.

For more information about program successes in graduation rates, placement rates and occupations, please visit: sullivan.edu/programsuccess.
philanthropic efforts focus intensely on education, and he’s particularly interested in underprivileged urban core schools in Boone, Kenton and Campbell counties.

Money from Corporex and others “allows free coaching and training for the teachers and staff in those seven schools,” Hanmer said. And it supports a NaviGo summer program to help graduating students bridge into further education.

“It’s a national phenomenon in our country that students in urban core and rural disadvantaged schools are graduating high school and being

accepted into college, but in many cases only 25 to 30 percent make it to that day,” Hanmer said. “They melt away the summer after graduation for a variety of reasons.

“We have developed a program that starts during their senior year in our schools where we already have coaching. It’s just a matter of adding to the relationships and staying with them through their summer bridge and into that first year. Data shows that if they can make it back to the second semester of their freshman year, their odds (of graduation) greatly improve.”

Yet another workforce strengthening new strategic initiative is GROW NKY (Growing Regional Outcomes through Workforce). GROW NKY is a comprehensive, holistic workforce development/talent strategy to leverage the community’s assets to grow, attract and retain a globally competitive workforce. Led by the NKY Chamber in conjunction with workforce partners, GROW NKY opened an office in Fort Mitchell in summer 2018.

“What if every employer in Northern Kentucky had an apprentice, co-op or intern?” said Brent Cooper, president/CEO of the Northern Kentucky Chamber. “We know statistically kids who gain that kind of experience during high school get better grades, are more likely to graduate and are more likely to be hired after high school. That is just one of the outcomes we hope to ‘GROW’ through this effort.”

A formidable workforce

According to Northern Kentucky Tri-ED, the region has a labor shed of more than 1.1 million people, and the labor force participation rate and size (civilian population 16 years and over) is significantly higher than the rest of Kentucky and the U.S.; 68.7 percent compared with 59.2 percent and 63.3 percent, respectively.

Northern Kentucky has a talent pipeline with 174,000-plus new graduates every year within 100 miles of the region, and 33 percent of those aged 25-64 have a bachelor’s degree or higher.

Kentucky is a right-to-work state, and local businesses work closely with all of the region’s colleges and universities to create custom training programs for students and current workers to ensure their skills fit the unique needs of their companies.

Also, Boone, Campbell, Carroll, Gallatin, Grant, Kenton, Owen and Pendleton counties are part of the Northern Kentucky chapter of KY FAME. KY FAME (The Kentucky Federation for Advanced Manufacturing Education) is a company-sponsored partnership of regional employers who share that goal, offering specific on-the-job training.

KY FAME partners with industry to move students into careers with optimal preparation.

Abundant education opportunities

With Northern Kentucky University in Highland Heights, the region’s high school graduates don’t have to leave to acquire a first-rate college education regardless of their career path. NKU has an enrollment of 14,500-plus and for nine consecutive years has made Forbes magazine’s list of America’s Top Colleges.

In fall 2018, the university opened its $105 million, groundbreaking Health Innovation Center.

“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. I see it as the nexus of talent, innovation and community development,” NKU President Ashish Vaidya said. “A project of this scope doesn’t happen with one institution. It takes everyone making a commitment to improve education and health outcomes in the region. We are incredibly grateful for the commitment from our state legislature, St. Elizabeth Healthcare, local leaders and other community partners.”

Meanwhile, to better meet students’ needs at every stage of life, the school launched a suite of 11 accelerated online bachelor’s degrees.

The region is one of the top logistics centers in the nation and was selected in 2017 for the first Amazon Prime Air hub. Thus, NKUs Global Supply Chain Management degree program could be key to the region’s prolonged success. Degree recipients will develop a core skill set highly sought after by employers – resource allocation, negotiation skills, transportation planning, production management, and strategic planning.

NKU also has an innovative College of Informatics, to give students tools to make information meaningful and useful.

Gateway Community & Technical College also offers a wide range of opportunities in workforce education and readiness, featuring associate degrees, diplomas and certificates. Gateway’s adult education program, Skills U, recently opened an additional Kenton County location to provide free GED preparation and a variety of other free services.

Louisville-based Sullivan University recently undertook a new approach to serving its Northern Kentucky footprint, announcing it would close its brick-and-mortar location in Fort Mitchell to focus solely on its virtual classroom offerings.

In Crestview Hills, Thomas More University – which recently gained university status – is a small liberal arts institution that U.S. News and World Report consistently ranks one of the best regional universities in the South. It also has been ranked No. 1 for return on investment in Kentucky four years in a row by PayScale.com.
Nationally praised health provider
New collaborations and facilities support better quality care and access

BY GREG PAETH

RACING its roots to 1861, St. Elizabeth Healthcare built its first hospital after a $2,000 fundraising effort by a widow named Henrietta Cleveland. The healthcare system has come a long way, and in 2018 opened an advanced $105 million Health Innovation Center in conjunction with Northern Kentucky University.

State-of-the-art technology and learning facilities – featuring the St. Elizabeth Healthcare Simulation Center – make the HIC one of the largest and most comprehensive health professions buildings in the country. Yet it’s just one element of St. Elizabeth’s massive regional presence, including five emergency rooms in Northern Kentucky.

In 2018 St. Elizabeth treated some 315,000 patients at about 120 hospitals, clinics and offices in Kentucky, Ohio and Indiana. The healthcare conglomerate’s officials give much credit for its success to good relationships.

“A key theme for this year – and other health care systems are feeling the same – is partnerships and collaboration are certainly a key theme to try to solve some of the big issues that we’re all wrestling with,” said Sarah Giolando, senior vice president and chief strategy officer for St. Elizabeth.

St. Elizabeth’s impressive numbers, which make it predominant across Northern Kentucky, contribute to the Cincinnati Metropolitan area’s overall high marks for healthcare.

No. 1 in the nation
Northern Kentucky is part of the Cincinnati Metropolitan area, the 29th largest in the country with about 2.2 million people, and a highly competitive multibillion-dollar healthcare landscape.

Healthgrades, an online site that helps people find doctors and hospitals, said in its 2019 National Health Index that Greater Cincinnati ranked No. 1 in the country for cities of more than 1 million in an evaluation of access to care, the overall health of the population, hospital quality and the number of well regarded medical specialists who practice in the region.

Quality care doesn’t come on the cheap, and the health sector is a large part of what keeps the region’s economy moving at full steam.

St. Elizabeth had “net patient revenues” of $957.4 million, fifth most in the region, and a net profit of $115 million, third in the region, for 2016.

In 2018 St. Elizabeth treated approximately 315,000 patients at about 120 hospitals, clinics and offices in Kentucky, Ohio and Indiana. It is planning a $140 million cancer center, pictured above, in Edgewood.

Health care that serves everyone

- There are more than 15 health care systems and specialty care centers in Northern Kentucky
- St. Elizabeth is part of the Mayo Clinic Care Network and just earned a spot in the Markey Cancer Center Affiliate Network
- Cincinnati Children’s Hospital was named No. 2 on U.S. News and World Report’s 2018-2019 Best Children’s Hospitals list
- University of Cincinnati Medical Center boasts one of the nation’s premier teaching hospitals and receives high ranks in adult specialties.

St. Elizabeth Healthcare began a partnership with Northern Kentucky University to develop state-of-the-art technology and learning facilities at the $105 million Health Innovation Center.
address the shortage of doctors in the said the important partnership to partners announced in 2017. Giolando Elizabeth backing and participation, the School will come to NKU with St. regional campuses for the UK Medical collaboration with UK; one of three new It was St. Elizabeth's second big Improved cancer care clinical trials offered only at NCI centers. to new drugs, treatment options and in Cincinnati. local affiliates, including Christ Hospital in Cincinnati. Markey network patients have access to new drugs, treatment options and clinical trials offered only at NCI centers.

Collaborative care
Less than two weeks after opening the new hospital, St. Elizabeth announced it joined the Markey Cancer Center Affiliate Network at the University of Kentucky. Markey in nearby Lexington is the only National Cancer Institute-designated facility in the state and one of 70 in the country. It has more than 20 local affiliates, including Christ Hospital in Cincinnati. Markey network patients have access to new drugs, treatment options and clinical trials offered only at NCI centers.

Improved cancer care
It was St. Elizabeth's second big collaboration with UK; one of three new regional campuses for the UK Medical School will come to NKU with St. Elizabeth backing and participation, the partners announced in 2017. Giolando said the important partnership to address the shortage of doctors in the commonwealth took several major steps in 2018.

"It's becoming very real," she said. "The first students have been accepted. They'll start in August of 2019 (with their) first two years on the NKU campus and next two years on our Edgewood (hospital) campus."

The hospital in August 2018 again demonstrated its commitment to improve cancer care in a state that has the country's highest death rate from the disease when St. Elizabeth broke ground for a $140 million cancer center in Edgewood.

"We're really excited not just to build the building, but to bring together a new way of cancer care that really, truly puts the patient in the center and brings multidisciplinary physicians around that patient to create one care plan, one path for the patient so it's clear how they're going to fight this terrible disease," Giolando said.

Heart disease also attracts plenty of attention at St. Elizabeth, where the hospital became the seventh health care system in the nation to receive accreditation from the American Heart Association for its heart and vascular program. Giolando said St. Elizabeth is the only AHA accredited hospital in Kentucky and in Greater Cincinnati.

On consecutive days in mid-October, some of St. Elizabeth's top officials were at NKU for a building dedication and a groundbreaking.

Two years after breaking ground, the 197-bed SUN Behavioral Health, part of St. Elizabeth Healthcare, celebrated its grand opening in February 2018. The hospital gives Northern Kentucky a new resource in its efforts to provide treatment services for those struggling with mental health issues and substance use disorders.

St. Elizabeth was recognized for an $8 million donation to the university to fund the Healthcare Simulation Center in the $105 million Health Innovation Center on the Highland Heights campus. The next day the hospital and five partners broke ground for a 70,000-s.f. building for St. Elizabeth Physicians on Nunn Drive, the primary road that leads to NKU. In addition to the university and the city, other partners are OrthoCincy, Campbell County and Fairmount Properties.

Outside of the region, St. Elizabeth has taken a major role in Balanced Health Kentucky, where CEO and President Garren Colvin is one of six hospital officials who are trying to address a state Medicaid budget shortfall of $200 to $300 million. Without that money, healthcare coverage for 500,000 Kentuckians will end, Balanced Health said.

In one more illustration about the importance of partnerships, the Northern Kentucky Health Department, the Northern Kentucky Chamber of Commerce and St. Elizabeth worked together to host a visit by U.S. Surgeon General Jerome Adams, who focused on the nation's opioid crisis and the importance of having quick access to naloxone to treat people who have overdosed.
These three words have the power to calm, comfort, and support, because they mean someone who truly cares is looking out for you. And at St. Elizabeth, we take this idea to heart because your care is very personal to us. That’s why we’re committed to being right here for you, with everything from genetic testing to highly targeted treatments.
Advantages that pay big
Location gives Northern Kentucky unparalleled edge in moving goods

BY GREG PAETH

WHEN it comes to logistics – moving things efficiently from one place to another – you can’t teach location, which provides Northern Kentucky with a huge advantage over other parts of the United States.

Northern Kentucky has spectacular advantages like highways, airports, water, railroads, proximity to major population centers, and the availability of workers that give it the ability to deliver materials or finished products better than anyone in the U.S.

Northern Kentucky Tri-ED, the economic development agency for Boone, Campbell and Kenton counties, says that more than 100 logistics companies are located in a region that it has labeled “The Silicon Valley of Logistics.” Tri-ED touts the some 80,000 people working in transportation/logistics occupations in the Cincinnati metropolitan area and that the region is within a one-day drive or a 90-minute flight of two-thirds of the U.S. population.

Kentucky's location is one of the reasons why the online retailing behemoth Amazon has about a dozen sites in the state, more than 15,000 employees, and intends to begin work in 2019 on a $1.5 billion Prime Air cargo hub expected to create 2,700 jobs once it’s up and running at capacity.

When it was announced in January 2017, the hub was the largest single project ever announced for the Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky International Airport (CVG) and one of the largest economic development projects in Kentucky history.

But Amazon is far from the only shipping giant to discover Northern Kentucky’s appeal.

CVG also is home to the DHL Americas Hub, one of three worldwide hubs for the German company, which handles shipments for North and South America through the airport. During the fall, the Leipzig-based shipper reported it had spent about $340 million on buildings and equipment at CVG since 2009.

Those investments paid off.

The 50-year-old, family-owned, Walton, Ky.-operated Verst Logistics earned Top 100 accolades by Inbound Logistics Magazine. President Paul Verst said the company hit revenues of about $210 million in 2018, proving the region’s logistics scene is hot and growing hotter.

Kentucky’s location is one of the reasons why the online retailing behemoth Amazon has about a dozen sites in the state and intends to begin work in 2019 on a $1.5 billion Prime Air cargo hub at Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky International Airport – one of the largest economic development projects in Kentucky history.
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Amazon is operating currently at the airport in DHL facilities during the day, with DHL unloading and loading its planes at night. DHL in 2018 leased 68,000 s.f. of office space in the CVG Centre for operational support teams and training “certified international specialists.”

Growth by Amazon and DHL, McGraw said, were major factors in the airport’s 27 percent increase in cargo tonnage in 2017, the largest percentage increase in the country. At the end of 2017 the airport ranked as eighth-largest cargo airport in North America and number 34 in the world. The airport handled 1.2 million tons of cargo in 2018, an increase of 19.6 percent over 2017 and a new tonnage record.

Karen Finan, interim president/CEO of Tri-ED, made it clear that a long list of other companies are playing major roles in logistics in the region. There’s also been a quick turnaround on real estate that is needed by logistics companies, she said.

Coca-Cola Bottling Co. decided to locate a sales, distribution and warehouse facility in Erlanger because of the region’s central location and logistics expertise, Finan said. Coke plans to invest $30 million in a 300,000-s.f. building on a 32-acre site where more than 430 full-time jobs will be created.

Verst Logistics is one of dozens of logistical firms with a substantial presence in Northern Kentucky. Verst began more than 50 years ago as a trucking company in Walton and hit revenues of about $210 million in 2018 from four divisions: trucking, order fulfillment, packaging and warehousing.

“The biggest thing for us in 2018 was starting a dot.com fulfillment center, and we’re building a business strategy around that,” said Paul Verst, whose father Bill founded the business in 1966.

E-commerce sales have grown more than 400 percent recently, Verst said, and his company is now handling orders for eight companies from elsewhere in the U.S. and other countries.

Verst’s e-commerce facility, the Amazon and DHL operations at the airport, a Kroger distribution center and a $150 million expansion of a FedEx facility were cited by state officials when talking about traffic growth in Boone County. To cope with increased traffic by truckers and drivers going to and from work, the county, state and federal government announced in August they would spend nearly $151 million on improvements to I-71/75 and the Richwood Road and Mt. Zion Road interchanges. The state projects the FedEx expansion alone will add 4,600 truck trips per day to existing traffic on Mt. Zion Road.

Cincinnati-based Kroger, which has annual revenues of $122 billion, opened a nearly 700,000-s.f. distribution center on Mt. Zion Road in October 2017. Kroger describes the facility as a “replenishment center” for other distribution centers in the eastern U.S. In July 2018 the company announced it will recruit approximately 900 new positions as the company completes the latest $108 million expansion of its Americas Hub at the Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky Airport.
announced that it would invest another $18 million in the facility to support its e-commerce and digital services.

Late in September, BM2 Freight Services, a 10-year-old transportation company that had been located in Cold Spring in Campbell County, said it had outgrown its office space and would move its 35 employees to the high rise RiverCenter on the riverfront in Covington and eventually add employees.

Another vital element of the Northern Kentucky logistics economy is barge traffic on the Ohio and Licking rivers inside of the Ports of Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky, which ranks as the largest inland port in the country when measured by the amount of cargo – nearly 45 million tons – it handled in 2015. The port's ranking shot up in 2015 after the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers expanded port boundaries that year from 26 miles to about 226 miles along the Ohio and Licking rivers.

A variety of industries in the region depend on the bulk shipping, almost 60 million tons annually, that comes down the river, which includes coal and petroleum products as well as grain and construction materials. The region boasts companies like C&B Marine to aid in marine services like tow ing, crane services, flat rental and fleeting. And clients can track products easily, thanks to the Central Ohio River Information System or CORIS. A partnership between CORBA and the Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Council of Governments, CORIS is a long-awaited asset inventory and mapping system for the public.

Interstate access, including to Interstate 75 which spans from Michigan to Florida, is a major draw for logistics providers.
CINCINNATI/Northern Kentucky International Airport (CVG) CEO Candace McGraw said 2018 went “exceedingly well” for the booming transport facility, for freight clients and for passengers who have direct international flights to Paris, Toronto, Cancun and Cozumel, Mexico, and Montego Bay and Freeport, Jamaica.

“All the numbers that are supposed to be up are up, and all the numbers that are supposed to be down – like airfares – are down,” McGraw said.

There’s plenty to cheer about at one of the most critically important economic drivers in Northern Kentucky and Greater Cincinnati. Even before recent major announcements, CVG’s direct and indirect impact was at least $4.4 billion, according to researchers at Northern Kentucky University and the University of Cincinnati who released the most recent economic impact study on the airport in early 2017 based on 2015 data.

“So 2017 for us was a record year in passenger growth and cargo growth,” McGraw said. “We were the fastest growing airport in North America for both passengers and cargo in 2017, and that momentum carried through into 2018; our numbers are record-breaking numbers. I don’t know if we will be at the top (in North America again) for passenger and cargo growth, but year to date we’re still up about 15 percent over last year for passenger growth and our cargo growth is up about 24 and a half percent.”

In 2018, CVG served 8.9 million passengers, welcoming 1.1 million more passengers over 2017, and representing a 13 percent year-over-year increase. CVG handled 1.2 million tons of cargo, an increase of 19.6 percent over 2017 and a new annual tonnage record. It also added 13 new flight options in 2018.

Lower airfares are driving passenger traffic, and the DHL package freight hub and the explosive growth of Amazon at the airport plumped up cargo figures.

The most recent quarterly report from the U.S. Department of Transportation also contained good news for passengers at an airport that formerly had some of the highest airfares in the country. The report for the second quarter of 2018 pinpointed average fares at $314, a decrease of 43 percent – $240 per ticket – from four years ago, McGraw said.

That average fare is lower than those in Louisville, Lexington, Indianapolis, Columbus and Dayton, according to CVG and the transportation department.

And those lower fares did not go unnoticed in Greater Cincinnati. During the three-month period through July 2018, CVG set a record with 1.2 million passenger trips originating at the airport – topping the prior record of 1 million for the same period in 2000.

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Passenger and cargo growth numbers are about four times the national averages in both categories.

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Passenger and packages mean jobs

Growth has translated into more jobs at the airport for people who either work there or for companies located near CVG. The airport itself has about 470 employees, a number that is stable, but the number of “badged” employees working inside the secured perimeter is about 14,300, an increase of 800 compared to the previous year, CVG spokeswoman Mindy Kershner said.

“We have completed development deals over the last two years that we anticipate to bring 1,700 new jobs; this is in addition to all of the development that has already been approved by our board,” McGraw said.

McGraw put a positive spin on CVG’s brief 2018 relationship with WOW, the Iceland-based low-cost carrier that ended service to Cincinnati, Cleveland and St. Louis late in the year.

“It was wildly successful here. All of those flights had about a 90 percent load factor, and I think they (WOW) grew bigger and faster than they anticipated and they’re retrenching a bit and looking at their business model,” McGraw said.

“I think it shows that we have room and capacity for additional international service from CVG.”
While traffic is up, up, up at the airport, officials continue to work on getting the right solution for improving the I-71/75 Ohio River crossing at the Brent Spence Bridge. The busy north-south bridge handles its designed capacity and then some, but initial estimates to expand this key linkage between the Cincinnati and Covington downtowns clock in at around $2.6 billion. The overriding question remains how to pay for the project, Kentucky Gov. Matt Bevin said in an October 2018 visit. Until then, eight other bridges continue to provide crossings for vehicles, pedestrians and rail.

One important recent road project is the 1.4-mile rebuild of KY 9 through Newport between the Taylor Southgate Bridge and 12th Street – the new road ties smoothly into an existing four-lane road providing quick access to I-275 and a portion of KY 9 known as the AA (Alexandria-Ashland) Highway. First proposed decades ago, the $51 million project opened to traffic in mid-October. Besides providing easier access to downtown Cincinnati over the Taylor-Southgate Bridge, the new configuration puts motorists minutes away from downtown Newport, its burgeoning riverfront and the Fourth Street bridge that leads to downtown Covington. “It will be exciting to see how this new corridor will open new opportunities for the city and for the Northern Kentucky region,” said Nancy Wood, a spokeswoman for District 6 of the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet.

**More ways to get around**

Transit Authority of Northern Kentucky (TANK) had about 3.4 million bus rider trips for 2017, and revenues of $22.8 million, according to spokeswoman Gina Douthat. TANK serves 35 cities in Boone, Campbell and Kenton counties, with 11,000 people riding its buses daily, including the popular Southbank Shuttle.

In late 2018, the bus system announced a new partnership with Adsposure to advertise on its high-visibility vehicles and shelters. TANK will keep 52 percent of the revenue, with Adsposure guaranteeing at least $2.2 million over the seven-year contract. The TANK system will soon add hybrid-electric buses via a $41 million federal grant announced in October 2018 for the Greater Cincinnati region.

Bus system 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, Douthat said.

For the more adventurous, there were other ways to cruise the region. A Cincinnati-based Red Bike rental operation launched in the fall of 2014. It has 12 Northern Kentucky stations in Covington, Newport and Bellevue. At least two electric scooter companies – Bird and Lime – are competing for shares of the market in which riders navigate the region on devices that go about 15 miles per hour.

And should you happen to be looking for an opportunity to exercise while enjoying a beer, try the Pedal Wagon, which looks like a bar on wheels. Parties of as many as 15 people can provide pedal power for two-hour bar/restaurant hopping routes around downtown streets. It recently expanded into Covington.

### Transportation assets

- Northern Kentucky is the No. 1 region for the U.S. population servable within a one-day drive, according to Tri-ED officials – 50% of the population in 1 day, and 90% within 2 days.
- 64% of the U.S. population can be reached within an 8- to 10-hour drive.
- Located on the north-south I-75 corridor connecting Michigan to Florida.
- CVG has 180 peak-day flights to 61 non-stop destinations.
- Nonstop service to 39 of the top 40 U.S. markets.
- Average commute times in Greater Cincinnati are only 22 minutes.
Northern Kentucky and Greater Cincinnati’s real estate landscape is most notable for its affordability compared to the rest of the urban U.S. market. In fact, housing prices in the region are 25 percent lower than the national average. But beyond the prices, it’s the region’s character that truly shines. People want to buy homes there and move their businesses there.

“To me it’s simple; the people are so welcoming here,” said Tom Banta, managing director, of Corporex Companies LLC and Corporex Realty & Investment LLC. “They have a sense of community, and they have an openness and friendliness. It’s a warm and welcoming place to live.”

It’s also a place people can afford, with the median home price at only $145,400. Median rent for a two-bedroom apartment is $821. The only major cities lower than this are Cleveland and Pittsburgh.

Banta and Corporex Chairman/CEO Bill Butler – a major influencer in the region’s business and philanthropic community – understand people want to move their homes and businesses to Northern Kentucky because of the lower prices and friendly attitudes, which is why the 53-year-old company responsible for RiverCenter and Ascent in Covington, among other things, is moving forward with a major new mixed-use project, Ovation, which will sit at the confluence of the Ohio and Licking rivers.

The project was originally planned more than 10 years ago and met many roadblocks, including a major recession. Simply put, Banta said, the project is bigger than anything else Corporex has ever done in the region, and it will have an even bigger impact on the real estate scene for years to come.

“To do things that are cutting edge, pioneering, whatever term you want to use, the risks are greater for those kinds of projects, and frankly if you didn’t have a guy like Bill Butler who had a personal commitment to the community and to that, and if you’re simply looking at the project from a purely economic standpoint, you probably wouldn’t take the additional risk,” Banta said. “But because his heart’s in the community and he knows the project and it’s so important to Newport and Northern Kentucky, he’s willing to do those things that other people wouldn’t necessarily do.”

Like Ascent and RiverCenter, both visual landmarks, the previously existing real estate landscape was not necessarily inviting to such big projects. Some had doubted that the proposed Ascent could obtain high-dollar residents for the prestigious living experience on the south side of the Ohio River. But it was a smashing hit.

“We learned a lesson that people would pay for signature architecture. So sometimes the rewards justify it, but
other times you just have to write it off as the risk is justified as a community commitment,” Banta said.

With Ovation, he added, “we’ve found that the community – smaller communities like Northern Kentucky – they rally around it and gain inspiration sometimes around the structures. Structures have the ability to do that, some of those examples being the projects we did in Covington.”

These types of structures, and Ovation to come, have allowed Northern Kentucky to shed its image as “little brother” to Cincinnati and the rest of the world, he said.

Compelling architecture and real estate development also have the ability to attract talented workers and entrepreneurs to the region. Northern Kentucky offers urban living but also benefits from having rural and scenic areas just several minutes away from the urban core. Northern Kentucky realtors can sell a big city environment, eclectic urban core shops, comfortable suburban neighborhoods and scenic rural vistas practically in one breath.

The “naturally gifted” region and these efforts from the public private sector are paying off in the real estate world. In July 2018, the Northern Kentucky Association of Realtors (NKAR) and the Northern Kentucky Multiple Listing Service (NKMLS) reported June 2018 broke the record books by recording the highest average price ($201,874) and the highest median price ($175,000), tracked by NKMLS since 2000. These average and median price increases during the first six months of 2018 are evidence that lower than normal inventory, fast-moving buyers and multiple offers are boosting home sale prices. “Starter home” range ($100,001-$200,000 in price) had the most activity, the report showed.

And in August, NKAR and NKMLS reported that NKY homes sold at a brisk pace in July, up by nearly 6 percent over July 2017. Average days on market dropped to the lowest number (34) since tracking began in 2005.

Northern Kentucky need not fear prices outpacing the middle class, Banta said. “We tend to be a little more self-controlling here,” he said. “We have an advantage here in Northern Kentucky and Cincinnati; we never have the big booms followed by the big busts. It tends to be a much more stable, slow, steady growth kind of community with a diverse economy.”

He noted, too, that people are focused on building on the “charm that exists here” with its historic row housing and unique communities.

“I will say when you look at something like Ovation, having people like Bill who are willing to be patient and do quality as opposed to just taking the quick route has paid off,” Banta said. Corporex “could have slapped a four-story apartment building right on the river and it would have been successful. But was it the best thing to do for the community? No.”

This community-focused risk taking mentality has paid off for Corporex and others. A major example came in 2017 when CTI Clinical Trial and Consulting Services opened its $36.4 million headquarters in RiverCenter. CTI moved from across the river from nearby Blue Ash, Ohio. Also, Bexion Pharmaceuticals (developer of cancer treatments) is just up the street in Covington.

For residents trying to invest in real estate or improve existing structures in the urban core, the Catalytic Development Funding Corp. of Northern Kentucky is a private sector, not for profit organization providing financing assistance and related services for developers of quality residential and commercial real estate projects in Northern Kentucky’s urban cities of Ludlow, Covington, Newport, Bellevue and Dayton (target area cities). Redeveloping these urban areas is key for the continued growth of the region.

Significantly, 23 prime acres of real estate in downtown Covington look to be coming up for grabs in the near future. The sprawling Internal Revenue Service building property – a stone’s throw from RiverCenter and the convention center – announced in 2016 that it will close.

More developments are coming online, nearly completed, or in the works, including new apartments in Covington’s popular MainStrasse Village, Madison Flats and Duveneck Square in Covington, Gateway at Manhattan Harbour in Dayton and more.
E-commerce fuels a ‘robust’ sector
Northern Kentucky’s prowess as a logistics center is driving new construction

BY ABBY LAUB

WITH big projects such as the Amazon Prime hub and others surrounding Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky International Airport (CVG), increased need for new multiuse options on the riverfront and an uptick in roadwork, construction companies in Northern Kentucky are busy and looking for ways to constantly innovate and improve.

“E-commerce has really continued to drive our business,” said Paul Hemmer, president of Fort Mitchell-based design-build construction company Hemmer. “It’s also driving it through our developer partners, whom we’ve been able to grow our business around. With increased activity, every company is always challenged with people and systems, and because of our success we’ve been able to attract great people. We always continue to try to improve our systems to make the whole experience more predictable and successful for everyone.”

Another category keeping construction companies busy is suburban medical offices, since more physicians are developing specialty groups.

Hemmer said logistics-based projects are what will likely drive future growth for construction firms, especially with traditional retail going through “tremendous changes.”

“Amazon chose CVG for its Prime Air hub, and they’ve tied up 800-plus acres, so I believe that’s going to make this region even more attractive,” Hemmer said, adding that new land needs to be made available for new projects to continue coming online. “The construction can’t keep up, and land positions are difficult. The land that’s available is the land that was passed over years ago … and then add to it the ‘entitlement’ process has gotten to be much more restrictive and time consuming.”

On the plus side, the entitlement issues like storm water and sanitation systems, though more difficult, are providing more quality control, improved capacity and sophistication, Hemmer said.

And growth is still a great thing. Continually adding workforce and speeding up land development will be key to keeping the dollars flowing, he said.

“The building business is robust so everyone in this industry, I would expect, Thanks in part to tourist attractions like the Ark Encounter, Grant County is experiencing great growth through increased visitors. Officials broke ground in 2017 on a 79-suite Comfort Suites hotel that opened late 2018. It’s part of a planned $30 million project in Dry Ridge that will include more hotels and restaurants.
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“We have a really strong position, both in terms of capacity and a backlog.”

Hemmer’s firm and others in the region, he said, benefit from great people. And with Hemmer, which has been in the business for nearly 100 years, it’s also about pride and passion.

“Every time we’ve had a down cycle we’ve re-engineered our business, and each time we come out a better, stronger and leaner company,” he said. “What differentiates Hemmer is our knowledge, skill set, people and value, we can create.”

**National accolades**

The Northern Kentucky region is flush with industry knowledge. National recognition came recently to Brian Miller, executive vice president of the Building Industry Association (BIA) of Northern Kentucky.

Miller received the Gary Komarow Executive Officer of the Year Award from the Executive Officers Council of the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) at its Association Management Conference in Los Angeles. And in September 2018 he was announced as secretary of the NAHB Executive Officers Council.

Founded by 16 residential contractors in Covington in 1955, BIA of Northern Kentucky has grown to become the nation’s 10th largest chapter of the NAHB. The organization’s jurisdiction covers 12 counties including Boone, Bracken, Campbell, Carroll, Fleming, Gallatin, Grant, Kenton, Mason, Owen, Pendleton and Robertson with a combined company membership of nearly 900 builders.

All those operations need employees, which is why firms like EGC Construction collaborate with education and workforce development officials to keep adding skilled tradespeople in fields such as masonry, carpentry and concrete to the labor force.

“Our general contracting and design build experience is based on a foundation of collaboration and trust with our specialists and consultants that consistently optimizes project results with a fully integrated team,” said EGC Vice President Greg Fox. “We leverage in-house skilled craft and specialty contractors.”

New projects are on the horizon for Northern Kentucky. Recently completed was the state-of-the-art $105 million Northern Kentucky University Health Innovation Center. The Health Innovation Center is the first new academic construction on NKU’s campus since Griffin Hall, modernistic home to the College of Informatics, opened in October 2011.

Meanwhile, officials broke ground in 2017 on the Kenton County Administration Building, which will occupy a former Bavarian Brewery site in Covington. The $22 million building is scheduled to open in January 2019. Also in Covington is a new $40 million apartment complex in MainStrasse Village called RiverHaus. In February 2018 in Erlanger, two years to the day after ground was broken, the 149,000-s.f. SUN Behavioral Health hospital opened its doors.

At CVG, Amazon’s $1.5 billion international Prime Air hub continues to spur new construction all around. For example, in June 2018 Coca-Cola Bottling Co. Consolidated announced it will create more than 430 full-time jobs as part of a $30 million investment to build a sales and distribution facility in Erlanger.

The massive 35-acre Ovation project developers in Covington are addressing a parking shortage in the popular dining, shopping and housing district of MainStrasse Village. A 100-car parking garage is open to the public as part of the RiverHaus Apartments development project. Once completed, the RiverHaus development will host 190 luxury apartments, retail space, and another 200 parking spots for residents in addition to the 100 now open to the public.
looms large on the horizon as top regional developer Corporex moves forward with its waterfront plan in Newport. Ovation is a mixed-use development, reflecting up to 5 million s.f. of income-producing structures, including residential, retail, office, lodging, theater, conference center, marina and structured parking. Additionally, the development program includes parks, public plazas, recreational amenities, trails and riverfront improvements that will complement the structures and create a sense of community. Already, public road improvements surrounding the project are paving the way for a smoother Ovation installation.

In the meantime, home builders are working hard to keep up with a hot residential estate market. The Northern Kentucky Association of Realtors (NKAR) and the Northern Kentucky Multiple Listing Service (NKMLS) reported in August 2018 that homes in the region are selling faster than ever before.

In terms of commercial investment, Miller cited BIANKY statistics that show Boone County is leading the way in total investment with more than $300 million in 2018, up from just over $200 million in 2017. By comparison Kenton County had close to $125 million in 2018.

In December 2018 Transitions Inc. celebrated the grand opening of its 180-bed Residential Treatment Center in Erlanger. The mission of Transitions is to help individuals transition from the pain of addiction to the gratitude of recovery, and construction was completed by Newport based EGC Construction. On hand for the celebration were officers from St. Elizabeth Healthcare, NKY Chamber, elected officials, and more.
Formidable figures
Flush with banks, hundreds of billions of dollars flow in and out of Northern Kentucky

Major players from near and far are all jostling for a share of the active Northern Kentucky financial services scene, which is part of the largest banking market serving the commonwealth and one of the largest in the nation. National players such as Cincinnati-based Fifth Third Bank combine to put deposits at more than $112 billion. At the end of June 2018, the most recent report available, the FDIC reported there were 64 banks in the metropolitan area, and that Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky’s deposits are more than four times larger than Louisville, where there was about $27 billion in 40 banks in the metro area. Northern Kentucky is directly across the river from Cincinnati, pictured above.

March 2018 and now has three Northern Kentucky offices, one in the Cincinnati suburb of Norwood and a total of 45 locations in five states.

“The Norwood office has been better than expected and we now have a full team over there,” said Tom Saelinger, market president for Northern Kentucky and Cincinnati for Republic, which entered the market in 2006 with a branch in Fort Wright. “For the third quarter we were up about 20 percent in both loans and deposits, so it’s been a really good year.”

Republic is contemplating additional offices in suburban Cincinnati and in northern Campbell County or Newport, Saelinger said.

Deeply invested in the region
The largest bank based in Northern Kentucky – Heritage, with headquarters in Erlanger – ranks No. 12 in the region by market share and had deposits of about $670 million, according to the FDIC.

Its memorable slogan – “We have our roots where others have their branches” – drives home the point that Heritage is homegrown and deeply invested in the region, a poster child example of a “community bank.” In mid-2018 the bank posted a “Declaration of Independence” news release stating: “We … do hereby declare our deep and ongoing commitment to remaining an independently owned and operated community bank.”

Republic, Heritage and Central Bank & Trust, headquartered in Lexington, all stress they are community banks with strong ties to the cities and counties where they are located and usually staffed with people who have intimate knowledge of the markets as well as the people who keep the wheels turning.
Central Bank, with assets of more than $2.5 billion, also seems convinced there's room for community banks to grow in the region.

According to Jim Uebel, market president for Northern Kentucky for Central Bank, the Northern Kentucky market opened up for community banks after then-dominant Bank of Kentucky, based in Crestview Hills, was acquired in 2015 by Branch Bank & Trust (BB&T), which is headquarters in Winston-Salem, N.C. “That market disruption left a huge void in the region and the last few years have been tremendous for us,” Uebel said.

Central Bank in 2014 had a small share of the market and about $52 million in deposits. Now Central’s market share has doubled to near 1 percent, and deposits have tripled to $153 million, the FDIC reported.

While acknowledging that more people are banking online, Uebel said Central is building a fourth branch in the region in Union, a booming city in Boone County, which is one of the fastest growing counties in the state.

Increasing its physical presence gives his staff the chance to meet people face-to-face and provide personal service that isn’t available from the banking behemoths, according to Uebel.

Lexington’s Forcht Bank also is making substantial investments in Northern Kentucky and Cincinnati.

At the end of October, Forcht acquired Watch Hill Bank, which has two Cincinnati locations. Forcht has an office in downtown Covington as well as a second Northern Kentucky location in Burlington. Forcht now has 24 offices and assets of about $1.2 billion.

Meanwhile, Cove Federal Credit Union, founded in 1978 by St. Elizabeth Hospital employees, has seen tremendous growth, with assets rising from $10 million to more than $55 million.

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.
## FINANCIAL SERVICES

**CENTRAL BANK & TRUST CO.**
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**Coppage Wealth Management**
Florence

**Cove Federal Credit Union**
Edgewood

**Eagle Financial Services Inc.**
Edgewood

**Edward Jones**
Edgewood, Erlanger

**Envoy Mortgage Ltd.**
Crestview Hills

**Fidelity Investments**
Covington

**Fifth Third Bank**
Florence

**Focus On Success**
Fort Mitchell

**Forcht Bank**
Covington

**Fourth Street Performance Partners, Inc.**
Covington

**FTJ Fund Choice LLC**
Hebron

**Guardian Savings Bank**
Multiple branches

**Heritage Bank**
Multiple branches

**Hilliard Lyons**
Fort Mitchell

**Huntington National Bank**
Florence

**Kemba Financial Credit Union**
Florence

**Kentucky Federal, A Division of Cincinnati Federal**
Covington

**Kentucky Land Title Agency Inc.**
Erlanger, Ft. Wright

**Legacy Financial**
Covington

**MCF Advisors**
Covington

**MCM CPA & Advisors**
Cincinnati

**Merrill Lynch**
Fort Mitchell

**Morris & Bressler PSC**
Florence

**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 Corporation**
Cold Spring

**Primerica**
Fort Wright

**Principled Wealth Advisors LLC**
Covington

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Fort Mitchell
Renaissance Investment Management
Covington
Republic Bank
Covington
Stock Yards Bank & Trust Company
Cincinnati, OH
Stockton Mortgage Corp.
Florence
U.S. Bank
Covington

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

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Lytle Thomas,
President/CEO,
Heritage Bank

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Experience
true community banking
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"Heritage Bank has thrived for 28 years now as a locally owned and operated community bank. Our independence has given us the freedom over the years to serve our community to the very best of our ability without obstacles or bureaucracy, we may be growing, but we’re not going anywhere anytime soon and our values, without a doubt, are not changing."

Chris Caddell
Heritage Bank, Chairman

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Fort Mitchell
WesBanco
Newport
Wurz Financial Services
Covington

Heritage Bank is the largest Northern Kentucky bank that is based there; with headquarters in Erlanger, it ranks No. 12 in the region by market share and had deposits of about $670 million.
Legal talent backs economic growth
Northern Kentucky’s growing businesses get personal service with big-time experience

BY GREG PAETH

AWYERS in the region who practice in business categories are seeing demand for their services increase in parallel with an economy growing quicker than Amazon Prime’s express package delivery.

“Northern Kentucky continues to fuel economic expansion with recent key wins,” said Bradley C. Arnett, a partner with Bingham Greenebaum Doll who works in the firm’s office in Cincinnati, one of six BGD has in Kentucky, Indiana and Ohio.

“The firm continues to view its Cincinnati office as an important growth platform, with Northern Kentucky playing a key part in that strategy,” Arnett said. “Northern Kentucky’s employment growth and wage growth have been strong since the last recession, outpacing Ohio on both measures.”

As evidence of Northern Kentucky’s economic health, Arnett mentioned six recent business announcements: a $19 million FEAM Aero hangar at the Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky International Airport; Amazon’s $1.5 billion investment to put its first Prime Air hub at the airport; Coca-Cola’s sales and distribution facility in Erlanger; Kroger’s supermarket distribution center in Florence; Maxim Crane Works in Wilder; and a Blue Grass Metals Expansion in Boone County.

The only thing holding back growth for law firms in the region at this point is the competition for qualified attorneys in those expanding business practice areas – corporate transactions such as mergers and acquisitions and capital raising activities, regulatory compliance, and data privacy and cybersecurity, Arnett said.

The Salmon P. Chase College of Law at Northern Kentucky University provides both part-time (day and evening) and full-time programs of study that lead to a juris doctor (J.D.) degree, as well as joint degrees in JD/Master of Business Administration, JD/Master of Health Informatics, and JD/Master of Business Informatics.

‘Furiously busy’
One of BGD’s competitors for legal talent in the region is Graydon Law, which traces its history to 1871. Known for many years as Graydon, Head & Ritchey, it opened a Northern Kentucky office in 1989.

“We really want to hire people who have a little bit of experience in corporate law, in tax law, in commercial real estate transactions,” said J. Stephen Smith, whose firm has 80 lawyers, including about a dozen in the Fort Mitchell office.

“Business is moving. Our real estate people are furiously busy. Our tax people are furiously busy. Our corporate transaction people are busy and getting busier,” said Smith, whose firm is defending 80 lawsuits, including about a dozen in the Fort Mitchell office.

“There is a really healthy environment for general corporate acquisitions, corporate growth, international transactions, general corporate work … When the economy’s healthy, businesses invest, businesses buy buildings, they get bigger, they hire more people, they need more structure, more legal advice,” said Smith. “Corporations are demanding that our firm reflects their values.”

Northern Kentucky Bar Association President Carey K. Steffen, managing attorney for real estate and litigation for Gerner & Kearns, said the economy in the tri-state area is supporting the growth of the law firm in general.
This is more than a computer.

It’s a mobile office. A bridge across time and space that brings us face to face with colleagues or clients. An aggregator of reports and results, analysis, ideas and information. Whether you have a virtual office or dozens of locations, Bingham Greenebaum Doll can effectively guide your company through every step of growth, from start-up and planning through expansion, acquisition and beyond. Because BGD is more than a law firm. We’re a business partner. A repository of counsel and experience. And a constant source of business guidance for over a century. Just call 502.589.4200 or visit BGDlegal.com to get us on your side.
Gerner & Kearns has offices in Kentucky, Ohio and Indiana, but like Arnett and Smith, Steffen said it’s difficult to say whether the state line means much to a client.

“In this area, it is very common for attorneys to be licensed in both Kentucky and Ohio,” she said, “and more recently, I am noticing more attorneys who are becoming licensed in additional states as well, myself as an example.” Steffen took the Indiana bar in 2016.

Smith agrees that it can be both tricky and beneficial to practice law on the border.

“Northern Kentucky has always been a little weird because we’ve got Cincinnati across the river – and Cincinnati draws a lot of water – bigger buildings, law firms with more people,” he said. “Within this region, you have every court that exists in the United States with the exception of the Supreme Court. It’s kind of a dense zone.”

Jim Dressman, managing partner of Dressman Benzinger LaVelle, said his firm, which has deep roots in Northern Kentucky and offices in Crestview Hills, Louisville and Cincinnati, has hired six associates and added two attorneys who had been partners elsewhere in the last 18 months. With those additions, DBL now has about 45 lawyers on staff.

“Increased demand has been across the board, with a particular increase in demand for legal services in litigation, intra-family owned business disputes, negotiating and enforcing employment agreements and non-competition provisions, and in regulatory compliance investigation and enforcement activity,” Dressman said.

“DBL Law has always had a significant practice representing banks and borrowers, and parties in mergers and acquisitions,” he said. “The hot economy has provided plenty of work for that practice group, as well.”

Staying on top of a hot economy is business as usual for firms like Cincinnati-based Keating Muething & Klekamp PLLC, which prides itself on having a entrepreneurial, proactive and strategic mindset. According to its website, KMK attorneys “integrate themselves into our clients’ businesses – strategizing from their point of view in order to develop sophisticated, high-value solutions that are efficient, effective, and economical.”

No matter the legal needs, the attorneys of Northern Kentucky and Greater Cincinnati have all of the tools to keep the economy thriving.
Building with brains, brawn and location
Northern Kentucky’s robust manufacturers supply key global industries like aerospace, food

BY ABBY LAUB

MANUFACTURERS and site selectors look for low cost of doing business, favorable laws and regulations, a solid base of existing manufacturers, talented workforce, proprietary knowledge, prime location and logistics – in some cases shipping overseas overnight – and other factors when determining where to produce their goods. Northern Kentucky checks all the boxes, and then some.

Many powerhouse American and international manufacturers have chosen to locate in Northern Kentucky, and many more have logistics and distribution centers 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.

In 2017 and 2018 alone, the Kentucky Cabinet for Economic Development reported another $500 million in new manufacturing investments.

And the firms already in Northern Kentucky have long-term staying power, such as Blue Grass Metals Inc. In March 2018, the 25-year-old wire forms supplier to the automotive industry expanded its Boone County operation with an investment of more than $4 million and 15 new jobs.

And L’Oreal in April 2017 announced it would build the largest commercial solar array in Kentucky at its Florence-based manufacturing plant.

Mubea is the area’s largest manufacturer, employing more than 1,300, producing heavy-duty products for lightweight construction. CEO of Mubea North America Doug Cain says the company’s success is a “direct result of the hard work of our committed Northern Kentucky and tri-state employees combined with the strong and enthusiastic efforts of the entire business support network.”

Safran Landing Systems contributes heavily to the state’s large and growing aerospace prowess. According to the Cabinet for Economic Development, Kentucky’s aerospace exports increased 183 percent the past five years, and the state has seen a 63 percent employee increase in the private aerospace products and parts manufacturing industry since 2002.

Overall the state has a manufacturing workforce of 250,000, including more than 18,500 industry-specific workers.

Northern Kentucky’s automotive sector makes a massive contribution to making the state the nation’s number three vehicle builder – Kentucky is the top producer of cars, light trucks and SUVs per capita. Statewide, the sector employs nearly 95,000 people at more than 500 companies. In 2017, auto-related exports totaled $5.5 billion.

The Northern Kentucky Chamber of Commerce understands what these numbers mean for the region and the state. Its Northern Kentucky International Trade Association hosted a seminar on Japan’s influence on the Kentucky auto industry. NKITA helps members achieve international trade goals through connections with global business resources and high-impact technical programming in the region.

Meanwhile, care is taken also with industrial waste processes in Northern Kentucky. River Metals Recycle in summer 2018 celebrated its Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program (SHARP) certification for excellence in workplace safety. River Metals provides scrap-generating businesses a cost-effective way to market their recyclable resources.

Another priority is keeping the crucial manufacturing workforce pipeline flowing, a big job that’s done in large part thanks to the training efforts of the decade-old Kentucky Federation for Advanced Manufacturing Education (KY FAME). KY FAME has a Northern Kentucky chapter that includes Boone, Campbell, Carroll, Gallatin, Grant, Kenton, Owen and Pendleton counties. KY FAME is a partnership of regional manufacturers whose purpose is to implement career pathway, apprenticeship-style educational programs that will create a pipeline of highly skilled workers. Member companies include Bosch, Mubea, Linamar, Safran, HAHN Automation, L’Oreal, Zotefoams, Steinkamp Molding, Nucor, Skilcraft, Diversified Composites, Kraus Maffeii, Steinert US and Perfetti Van Melle.

Northern Kentucky is known for its automotive, food and aerospace manufacturing prowess, to name a few. According to REDI Cincinnati, there are 172,833 manufacturing industry workers within the Northern Kentucky/Cincinnati region. Manufacturers love the region because its low cost of doing business, access to world-class logistics and proximity to national and global markets.
A O Smith Corp.
Porcelain enamel coatings for appliances, water heaters and boilers
Florence

Abrapower Inc.
Abrasive coated foam Florence

Active Radiator
Track and industrial radiators Dayton

Advanced Insulation Concepts Inc.
Cooler and freezer insulating panels and doors Florence

ALM Media
Magazine & book publisher Erlanger

Alpha Inc.
Manufacture and distribute plastic packaging for the beverage, personal care, and home care industry Florence

Analytical Solutions And Providers (ASAP)
Laboratory equipment to the forensic, chemical and petrochemical markets Covington

Ancra International LLC
Cargo restraint strapping and other cargo containment equipment Erlanger

Anderson Manufacturing
AR-15 Rifles Hebron

Aengstrom Technologies
Electro optical UV detectors Florence

Aquionics Inc.
UV, water, air and surface purification systems Erlanger

AquIsense Technologies
LED devices Erlanger

Architectural Products Inc
Coping, gravel stop, gutter, downspout, fascia systems Hebron

Aristech Surfaces LLC
Impact acrylic, general purpose acrylic, ABS composite sheet Florence

Armour USA Inc.
Thermal transfer printer ribbons Hebron

ATech Training Inc.
Automotive technology training devices Walton

Atkins & Pearce, Inc.
Braced technical textiles Covington

Avure Technologies
High pressure food processing Erlanger

Baker Stamping
Tubular stamp and multi-slice parts Wilder

Balluff
Industrial networking object detection Florence

BAWAC Inc.
Sub-contract, short run assembly, packaging, labeling and assembly labor Florence

BBS Tech
Small diameter braided products Erlanger

Beam Dental
Manufacture and ship smart toothbrushes Erlanger

Beckman Coulter
Diagnostic test equipment Florence

Bellevue Sand & Gravel Inc.
Sand and gravel Petersburg

Benda-Lutz Corporation
Blitz® bonded metallic powder coatings, Blitz® aluminum pigments Independence

Best Sanitizers
Hand sanitizer Walton

Beverly International Nutrition, Inc.
Nutrition sports manufacturer Cold Spring

Blue Grass Metals Inc.
Wire forms and metal stampings Independence

Blue Grass Quality Meats
Deli meats Erlanger

BOGE Rubber & Plastics USA LLC
Rubber and metal bushings, engine mounts and plastics Hebron

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

Boone County Distilling Co.
Bourbon, rye, and other whiskey specialties Independence

Boone Ready Mix Inc.
Ready-mixed concrete Burlington

Braxton Brewing
Craft beer Covington

BWF America Inc.
Dust collector bags, liquid filter cloths, spare collector parts Hebron

Carl Zeiss Vision Inc.
Optical lab Hebron

Celanse
Advanced polymer technology to produce high-performance plastic materials Florence

Cincinnati Ventilating Co. Inc.
Sheet metal fabricating Florence

Clarion Corp. of America
Car audio, multimedia, information products Walton

Clopay Plastic Products Company
Specialty films, extrusion coatings, custom-printing, engineered laminations Augusta

Continental Building Products
Wallboard and joint compound materials Silver Grove

Safran Landing Systems is the world’s leading commercial and military aircraft wheel and brake components maker. The global powerhouse recently underwent a $100 million expansion in Walton.

Corken Steel Products Company
Sheet metal for heating, AC and roofing Florence

Corrosion Resistant Reinforcing
Fabricate stainless rebar Walton

Crane Composites Inc.
Fiberglass reinforced plastic panels Florence

Crescent Paper Tube Co.
Paper tubes, paperboard products, cores, caps Florence

Cummins Filtration
Filtration, coolant and fuel additive technology Walton

Desma USA, Inc.
Teuling, rubber injection molds and injection molding machines Hebron

Diversified Structural Composites
Pultruded composite products, carbon fiber equipment Erlanger

Dixie Dew Products Co.
Ice cream toppings Erlanger

DURO Bag a Novolex Brand
Paper bags Walton

Emerson
Printed materials Florence

Emerson’s Bakery
Baked goods Florence

Ernst Concrete
Ready-mixed concrete Walton

ESCO Corporation
Construction attachments, mining, and conveyor products Covington

ESTIC America Inc.
Fastening tools for auto assembly lines Erlanger

Ethos Labs
Drug tests Newport

Evenflo Feeding, Inc.
Infant equipment, baby care and juvenile products West Chester

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

Fields Welding, Inc.
Structural steel fabrication, metal fabrication Fort Wright

Fischer Special Manufacturing
Automatic screw machine products, produce specialty fasteners and inserts for the automotive industry Cold Spring

Fives Machining Systems Inc.
Machining and assembly systems, aerospace and automotive production equipment Hebron

Flint Group
Printing inks Erlanger

Flottweg Separation Technology Inc
Decanter centrifuges, separators, belt presses Independence

Wolf Steel USA Inc. in Crittenden produces high end grills, fireplaces and HVAC systems. Its international grill line, Napoleon Grills, operates more than 1 million s.f. of manufacturing space with more than 1,000 employees between Crittenden and Barrie, Ontario in Canada.
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.

Forge Lumber
Roof and floor trusses
Erlanger

Fortress Interlocks Inc.
Safety access and control systems
Erlanger

Fuji Autotech USA LLC
Automotive seat components
Walton

Galerie Candy & Gifts
Chocolate and specialty candy
Hebron

GameMaster
Louisville Slugger Instructional items and pitching machines
Erlanger

Gates Corporation
Belts, hose, hydraulics
Hebron

General Cable, a Company of the Prysmian Group
Copper, aluminum and fiber optic wire and cable for energy, industrial, specialty and communications markets
Highland Heights

GES Inc.
Trade show exhibits and store fixtures
Hebron

Givaudan Flavors
Fragrance and flavor
Florence

Glier’s Meats, Inc.
German breakfast sausage
Covington

GorillaMaker
3D Printing
Florence

Graham Packaging
Plastic bottles
Florence

Grandpa Brands Co.
Personal care products
Erlanger

Greif Inc.
Rigid industrial packaging, steel drums
Florence

Griffin Industries
Animal rendering services
Cold Spring

Interplastic Corporation
Polyester resins used to make windmill blades
Covington

Iofina Chemical, Inc.
Select halogen specialty chemicals, iodine
Covington

J.A.C.C., Inc.
Custom machine safety guarding
Alexandria

Jack’s Glass, Inc.
Home and auto glass solutions
Bsmere

Jackson Tool & Mold LLC
Tool and mold, CNC machining, machine parts
Hebron

Jero Inc.
Sub ends, butt weld pipe fittings
Florence

J-Fab LLC
Florence

Johnson Controls, Inc.
– Power Solutions
Lead acid batteries
Florence

Kellogg Snacks
Keebler products
Florence

Kiswel Welding Products
Welding filler manufacturer
Florence

KOI Precast Concrete Inc.
Precast concrete products
Burlington

Kona Ice
Premium tropical shaved ice
Florence

Krauss-Maffei
Plastic fabrication
Florence

KRC Machine Tool Services
Fanuc and Siemens CNC retrofitting
Independence

Kustom Blending LLC
Blended resins and solutions for graphic arts
Walton

Lally Pipe & Tube
Structural & limited service steel pipe
Covington

Liberty Plastics Molding Corp Inc.
Plastic injection molds, molding & prototypes
Bellevue

Linamar
Automotive parts and components
Bsmere

Lingo Manufacturing Co.
Custom permanent paint-of-purchase displays
Florence

Linkology
Security systems for parking garages
Newport

LOGOMAT Automation Systems Inc.
LOGOMAT Palet transfer systems
Hebron

Lohmann Corporation
Specially adhesive tapes, precision die-cuts
Hebron

L’Oreal USA–Florence Manufacturing
Hair care products
Florence

LSI
Menu boards
Florence

Lyons Magnus
Flavorings and juices
Walton

MACH III Clutch Inc
Clutches and brakes, combination air set clutch/spring set brakes and mechanical friction torque limiters
Walton

Magini Industries Inc.
Corrosion resistant coatings
Independence

Mauer USA
Injection molded caps and closures for personal care products
Hebron

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

Meggitt Polymers & Composites
Composite engine and aerostucture components
Erlanger

Meritor Automotive, Inc.
Axle, brake and suspension solutions
Florence

Meyer Tool Inc.
Precision aircraft parts
Erlanger

Metal Solutions Design & Fabrication LLC
DOT certified metal containers for nuclear waste & other hazardous products
Dayton

Mila International Inc.
Surgical devices for pets
Florence

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

Mubea Precision Springs Inc.
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 LLC
Craft distillery
Newport

Newly Weds Foods Inc.
Cracker and bread crumbs, batter mixes
Erlanger

With its parent company located in Paris, France, L’Oreal USA has a multi-million manufacturing operation in Florence where it made waves last year by announcing it would build the state’s largest commercial solar array. The 586,000 s.f. plant, where haircare products are made for the Garnier, L’Oreal Paris, Matrix, and Redken brands, is the company’s largest manufacturing site in the U.S. and its largest worldwide by tonnage of products produced.
With almost a cult-like following, Glier’s Meats popular goetta is a German breakfast sausage that has been produced in Covington since 1946. Part of the company’s success is due to its very tasty product, but also its creation of a local culture around the product, including a full-blown festival called Glier’s Goettafest.

Nor-Com Inc.  
Communications systems and A/V integrator  
Hebron

North American Stainless L.P.  
Steel  
Ghent

Novalex  
Paper products  
Florence

Nucor Steel Gallatin  
Hot band coils  
Ghent

Obara Corporation USA  
Resistance welding equipment  
Erlanger

Pammaro Global Graphics  
Cylinder bases for printing and converting industries  
Walton

Paul Michels & Sons Inc.  
Asphalt paving compounds  
Hebron

PepsiCo  
Snacks, foods and beverages  
Erlanger

Perfetti van Melle  
Airheads candy  
Erlanger

P L Marketing Inc.  
Koger corporate branding  
Newport

PG LifeLink  
Isolated power system design and manufacturer  
Erlanger

Post Glover  
Power resisters  
Erlanger

Pratt Target Container Inc.  
Corrugated “point of purchase” displays  
Walton

Prestress Services Industries LLC  
Precast & prestressed concrete products  
Florence

Purestream Inc.  
Sewage treatment equipment  
Walton

R & R Design & Manufacturing  
Converter & automation systems  
Florence

R.A. Jones & Co.  
Packaging machinery  
Covington

Reis Concrete Products Inc  
Ready-mixed concrete & precast septic tank hauling  
Alexandria

River Metals Recycling LLC  
Scrap recycling  
Fort Mitchell

Road ID  
Road ID Brochets  
Fort Mitchell

Robert Bosch Automotive  
Steering columns  
Florence

Romi Machine Tools Ltd.  
Industrial lathes, machine tools  
Erlanger

Ronan Engineering Co.  
Measuring equipment, radiation gauges and measuring instruments  
Florence

Rotek Inc.  
Roller bearings, slewing rings–large diameter  
Florence

Round Paper Packages Inc.  
Fiber cans, tubes and converted paper products  
Erlanger

Safran Landing Systems  
Carbon brakes for airplanes  
Walton

F.N. Sheppard & Co., Inc.  
Specialty belting  
Erlanger

Sherwood Midwest LLC  
Bedding, mattresses  
Walton

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

A.O. Smith Co.  
Water heaters, boilers and storage tanks  
Florence

Smyrna Ready Mix  
Ready-mixed concrete  
Wilder

Southern Graphic Systems  
Packaging artwork production  
Florence

SpecTape Inc.  
Pressure sensitive tape  
Erlanger

Starrag USA Inc.  
Machine tools for milling, turning, boring and grinding  
Hebron

Steinert US  
Dry magnetic drum separator and sensor sorting solutions  
Wilton

Steinhauser Inc.  
Packaging, pressure sensitive labels  
Newport

Steinkamp Molding L.P.  
3-D rubber/metal & plastic injection molds, blow molds, foam molds  
Erlanger

Sterling Cut Glass  
Contracts with the PGA Tour  
Erlanger

Sterling Ventures LLC  
Limestone mine, crushed stone  
Verona

Stewart Iron Works  
Ornamental iron fencing and gates  
Erlanger

Studio Vertu  
Italian marble products  
Newport

Summit Fire Apparatus Inc.  
Custom metal, aluminum and steel fabricating; welding and fire truck bodies  
Edgewood

SWECO  
Customized industrial separation equipment  
Florence

Target Marketing Inc.  
Publish foldout & map booklets  
Florence

TeaSpring Inc.  
Custom tea shirts  
Hebron

Tento  
Casters for hospital beds  
Hebron

Thompson Enamel Inc.  
Powdered glass colors  
Bellevue

TMK IPSCO Tubulars  
Steel pipes for oil and gas industry  
Wilder

TOPAS Advanced Polymers, Inc.  
World’s leading maker of cyclic olefin copolymer  
Florence

Total Display Solutions LLC  
Re-manufactures LCD panels for computer video displays and television LCD panels  
Erlanger

Toyota Boshoku America  
Automotive interior systems  
Erlanger

Trivaco  
Specialty valves, actuators, actuation controls  
Hebron

Tressa Inc.  
Professional hair products  
Erlanger

Trophy Awards Manufacturing Inc.  
Awards, crystal awards, acrylic awards, trophies, plaques, corporate awards, gifts, promotional items  
Wilder

Tyson/Hillshire Brands  
Meat, primarily cocktail weenies  
Alexandria

Paul Tuemler L.P. Gas Inc.  
Propane gas service  
Wilton

The Schwan Food Company  
Red Baron Pizza  
Florence

US Playing Card Company  
Playing cards  
Erlanger

Valcom Enterprises Inc.  
Custom commercial interior and exterior metal, and drywall partitions  
Wilder

ViaGord  
Umbilical cord preservation  
Hebron

W B Jones Spring Co. Inc.  
Compression, extension and torsion springs  
Wilder

W J Baker Co.  
Metal stampings and tubular spacers  
Wilder

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

Wagstaff  
Capital equipment for molten aluminum industry  
Hebron

Wild Flavors  
Flavor technology  
Erlanger

Wildler Hot Mix Asphalt Plant  
Hot mix asphalt paving mixture, construction services  
Wilder

Willow Ridge Plastics, Inc.  
Oxobiodegradable additives for plastics  
Erlanger

Wolf Steel USA Inc.  
High end fireplaces, grills, HVAC  
Crittenden

Zenith Motors  
Electric shuttle and cargo vans  
Wilder

ZF Boge Elastmetall  
Transmissions, steering systems, axles  
Hebron

Zotofoams, Inc.  
Cross-linked block foams, world leader  
Walton

The C.W. Zumbiel Company  
Packaging  
Hebron

With almost 600 people work for Tyson/Hillshire Foods in Alexandria, where the brand produces some of its most popular products like Lit’l Smokies.

Source: Northern Kentucky Tri-ED and Northern Kentucky Chamber of Commerce. This list may not be exhaustive.
Invested in neighborhood, lower costs
Regional utilities providers push energy innovation, sustainability and user involvement

BY RUSS BROWN

Kentucky is shifting to clean, renewable energy sources, and Northern Kentucky is at the forefront of that movement, thanks to efforts by Duke Energy Kentucky and Owen Electric, the major electrical energy suppliers in the region.

Andrew Melnykovych, public information officer for the Kentucky Public Service Commission, says the numerous changes and updates taking place are noticeable for the commission, and “utilities are deploying more technology – or want to – so all of that has to be reviewed before we let them make those investments.”

Kentucky is below the national average for overall electrical rates, Melnykovych said, because the majority of its power is still generated by coal-fired plants that are economically efficient. As for natural gas, a PSC news release in November 2018 noted Kentucky residents who heat their homes with gas will see even lower prices this winter than they did a year ago.

Natural gas prices have fallen, on average, 13 percent from a year ago and are 64 percent below their level 10 years ago.

Duke Energy is expanding its natural gas infrastructure and recently built three solar power facilities in Kenton and Grant counties as part of its strategy to add more renewable power. The solar sites now generate enough power for 1,500 Northern Kentucky homes.

“Today, coal is still the primary fuel source in the region,” said Chuck Sessions, vice president of government affairs for Duke. “But I believe this will slowly change as customers want lower-carbon options. We’re investing in a cleaner generation like renewables and natural gas. We’re leading the industry toward a safe, secure and responsible energy future, and we’re proud to have the Northern Kentucky region be a central piece of that legacy.”

Duke is investing also to improve security, enhance reliability, reduce outages and provide customers with more information, Sessions said.

With 7.6 million customers in six states, Duke – headquartered in Charlotte, N.C. – is one of the largest energy holding companies in the U.S. It has 890,000 natural gas and electric customers in Ohio and Kentucky.

Duke Energy is also active in community environmental initiatives with its Urban Revitalization program, which in 2018 awarded $276,600 to 16 projects across Northern Kentucky and Cincinnati to aid in clean water, clean air and conversation. They included grants to Thomas More University in Crestview Hills for water quality research and East Row Garden Club in Newport for its tree revitalization program. Since its launch in 2011, the Urban Revitalization program has issued $2.2 million in grants to 65 projects.

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

Bavarian Waste Services in Walton has worked with EKPC to create the state’s biggest landfill energy producer in terms of megawatts generated, enough to power 2,700 homes. Bavarian provides dumpster rentals, waste hauling and disposal services to the Northern Kentucky and Greater Cincinnati area.

A fifth-generation family-owned and operated company, Bavarian joined forces with EKPC in 2003 to become the first landfill in Kentucky to convert its landfill gas into electricity.

Bavarian has recycling programs for customers involving wood, ferrous metal and asphalt shingles. According to Doug Bramer, business development manager for Bavarian, the company strategy is to remain aggressive repurposing waste.

“We remain dedicated and are currently seeking even more efficient options for the landfill gas to further reduce the emissions,” Bramer said.

The non-profit Northern Kentucky Water District provides water to 300,000 customers in Campbell and Kenton counties, along with portions of Boone, Grant and Pendleton counties.

Its 312-square-mile service area includes 1,296 miles of main. The utility operates three water treatment plants.

Utilities providers like Cincinnati Bell and Spectrum, are two of the 20-plus communications providers in the Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky region.

The variety of services offers healthy competition and excellent service.

The region is a major node on the national ultra high-speed internet backbone and is ringed with fiber optics, the infrastructure that enables this region to be one of the world’s most wired communities.

Bavarian Waste
Walton – bavarianwaste.com
Duke Energy
Cincinnati
Rumpke Of Kentucky
Butler
Sanitation District No.1
Fort Wright
Owen Electric Cooperative, Inc.
Owenton
Best Way Disposal
Burlington
Northern Kentucky Water District
Erlanger
Stand Energy Corp.
Cincinnati
Smartwatt Energy Inc
West Chester, OH

Information provided by Northern Kentucky Chamber of Commerce
Diverse market, diverse services
Northern Kentucky’s back-end operators keep the economy growing

BY ABBY LAUB

BUSINESS services needs are different for every field, and for entrepreneurs and innovators in Northern Kentucky this can be as innovative as streamlining advanced technology or as (seemingly) simple as handling sanitation in a sustainable manner.

For a region chock full of world-class manufacturers, builders, job creators and logistical providers, responsible waste disposal may not be as glamorous as streamlining technology on the cloud, but it’s arguably more important when a region growing at lightning speeds needs to do so responsibly.

Enter Bavarian Waste, a fifth-generation family-owned and operated waste management company, based in Walton, Ky. “Of all the services offered by Bavarian, the most significant benefit to the Northern Kentucky region is the responsible disposal of waste at our Subtitle D Contained Landfill located just south of Florence off Interstate 75,” said Bavarian’s General Manager Dominic Brueggemann. “The close proximity of our landfill to the source of waste generation lowers the operating cost of all waste collectors who utilize our landfill and ultimately benefits the entire community.”

Brueggemann said the company employs modern technology combined with honest business practices to offer the best value for our customers. Bavarian uses state-of-the-art GPS technology in landfill operations, renewable energy created from the collection of landfill gas, and onsite wellfield management.

“Our efforts to operate an efficient business are further substantiated by the fact that we were the first landfill in Kentucky to produce energy from waste,” he said, adding that “a large portion of our clientele are associated with the expansive development in the residential housing market.”

Meanwhile, the housing, manufacturing, health care, food and beverage, tourism and other sectors also rely on local business services providers like Covington-based Prolocity for its cloud solutions. Prolocity, which also has a Cincinnati office, is a national Salesforce partner.

Another technologically advanced solutions supplier is Covington-based C-Forward, which provides companies in Northern Kentucky and elsewhere managed services, IT services and cyber security.

C-Forward President Brian Rusciman said the firm attacks cyber security with tried and true anti-virus software, anti-malware, precautions at the firewall level and utilizes new tactics with training clients’ staff to be more aware of spamming and targeted phishing efforts.

With an office in Covington and eight others around the nation, TiER1 Performance works with major clients around the nation including Cincinnati-based Procter & Gamble and Kroger to help corporations improve overall performance.

For some, simply getting a business off the ground is the objective. For UpTech, located in Covington’s “Innovation Alley,” good ideas can take flight. UpTech is an accelerator for data-driven informatics startups and is a partner in the Kentucky Innovation Network. Kentucky Innovation Network’s Northern Kentucky office has been leading the way for startups and small businesses since 2001 and is one of 12 operations across the state.

UpTech also has support from Northern Kentucky University’s informatics program as well as many industry giants like St. Elizabeth Healthcare.

Innovation Alley was officially designated by the Covington Board of Commissioners in 2016 and is located on Sixth Street and Pike streets. The buildings have been rehabilitated and repurposed to house startups, tech companies, and incubators, such as bioLOGIC, Bexion Pharmaceuticals and UpTech.

Bexion was founded in 2006 and is developing innovative cures for cancer.

Less than a mile away in Covington’s RiverCenter is CTI Clinical Trial & Consulting. In 2017 CTI moved to Covington from Blue Ash, Ohio. CTI’s specialty is growing and advancing the products of its pharmaceutical and biotech partners for approvals by the FDA or other regulators.

CTI moved across the river from Ohio for many reasons, one of which is RiverCenter’s accommodating atmosphere. Company officials cite great amenities for employees, including restaurants in walkable distance, some even in the building.

Food is big business, and that’s why one Covington caterer is helping others get into the game. The Delish Dish — run by chef Mavis Linnemann-Clark in Covington — was named the 2018...
Kentucky Woman Owned Small Business of the Year by the U.S. Small Business Administration in April 2018.

Linnemann-Clark opened The Delish Dish in 2012 and in 2017 created Kickstart Kitchen. It’s an incubator kitchen in Covington to help launch or grow food manufacturers and entrepreneurs by providing commercial kitchen space, storage and business planning services.

“We currently have 10 tenants and several who have graduated from the kitchen and moved on their own restaurants or kitchen spaces,” said Linnemann-Clark. “We’re so proud when our tenant companies are able to incubate out. We collaborate with local nonprofits such as the NKU Small Business Development Center and SCORE Cincinnati to provide our tenants with complimentary business planning and mentoring services.”

Commercial kitchen space is very limited in most cities, so Kickstart Kitchen has been “awesome for those who need to launch or grow their businesses here in Northern Kentucky,” she said.

The success of Delish Dish gives Kickstart Kitchen clients a firsthand glimpse into what it takes to run a successful food business.

Northern Kentucky is known for businesses that focus on detail and client experiences. A prime example is Crestview Hills-based Waltz Business Solutions. The 125-year-old company began as a typewriter repair center and now helps clients in everything from “document creation to document destruction.”

Based in Fort Thomas, the award-winning KLH Engineers is responsible for many major projects around the United States for clients like The Home Depot, Under Armour, St. Elizabeth Healthcare, Nike and Newport on the Levee.

Another longtime business is Fort Wright-based VonLehman CPA & Advisory Firm. Since 1946 it has deftly guided businesses, nonprofits and governmental entities through ever-changing terrain. In nearby Fort Mitchell is another CPA firm, Clark Schaeffer Hackett, a top 100 CPA and advisory firm with more than 400 shareholders and staff and seven offices throughout Ohio and Kentucky.

Moody Nolan brings its international architecture expertise close to home in Cincinnati and Covington. And in Covington, Hub+Weber Architects is a full service architecture and interiors firm.

No matter the business, Northern Kentucky’s service providers are guaranteed to have hands on attention.

A Family-Owned and Operated Waste Management Company

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Five Generations Strong

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- Rolloff Dumpster Rentals
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www.bavarianwaste.com

Subtitle D Landfill
Boasting the Largest Landfill-Gas-To-Energy Plant in the State of Kentucky

At Bavarian “Disposal is Never a Waste”
PER capita, the Northern Kentucky, including Greater Cincinnati, region is home to more Fortune 500 headquarters than New York, Chicago or Los Angeles. The metro area including seven Northern Kentucky counties is home to nine regulars on the list on the north side of the Ohio River. Five additional near or sometimes members in Kentucky account for $10 billion in annual revenues.

Regardless of the numbers they achieve or what list they’re on, headquarters in Northern Kentucky are also known for their commitment to bettering their local communities, and have staying power over many generations.

An example is the company that produces goetta, a well-loved German breakfast sausage that is wildly popular in the region. Glier’s Meats has operated in Covington since 1946 and is a testament to Northern Kentucky’s economic vitality, Germanic roots and passion for all things local.

Other corporate giants who are deeply invested in the local community include Covington-based developer Corporex and CTI Clinical Trial & Consulting. These and many more innovative companies not only choose to run their businesses in Northern Kentucky but are passionate about improving the quality of life for their employees and other residents, alike. They are launching charitable foundations and attracting great new talent by showing off the region and offering competitive salaries.

In spring 2018, Gov. Matt Bevin joined local officials and executives from Maxim Crane Works LP, the nation’s largest crane rental and lifting services provider, to open a $4.71 million office that consolidates the company’s operations into Kentucky and is creating 100 full-time jobs.

Maxim has operated in Kentucky for 80 years, and Bevin called the newest investment a “further commitment to the commonwealth.” The new 17,000-s.f. office brings Maxim’s operations and leadership functions together in Campbell County, where the company has maintained a regional headquarters since 1937. Maxim bases about 400 cranes in Wilder for quick deployment to customers across the eastern United States.

Many of Northern Kentucky’s other headquarters are based in the logistics, manufacturing and food sectors thanks to its location in the heart of the Eastern U.S., including proximity to a top international airport that Amazon Prime Air chose for its first hub.

Indy Honeycomb is based in Covington and creates innovative honeycomb products used in important products like aircraft engines and power generation turbines.

The Mazak Corp. in Florence is the global leader in the manufacturing of advanced technology machine-tool solutions including Multi-Tasking, HYBRID Multi-Tasking, 5-axis, milling, turning, CNC controls and automation.

And Kenton County is the producer of Airheads, the candy produced by Perfetti Van Melle. The Netherlands-based confectioner has its U.S. headquarters in Erlanger.

The region’s headquarters are sprinkled throughout rural and suburban areas as well as downtown Cincinnati and just across the river on the Southbank.

Road ID, a company that creates identification products to help first responders identify people in case of an emergency, recently relocated its headquarters to a renovated historic building in Covington thanks to economic development incentives. Boosting preservation of Northern Kentucky’s urban core, the new office is in a renovated building near the Duvencak Square development.

Road ID Owner Edward Wimmer said his company was drawn to the “energy and excitement that is alive in Covington.” Road ID invested $2 million in renovations to repair and restore the historic downtown property equating to a total investment of $4 million.

Located in Highland Heights, General Cable has been an industry leader and innovator for 170 years. It is one of the largest wire and cable manufacturers in the world.
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Source: Northern Kentucky Tri-ED and Northern Kentucky Chamber of Commerce. This list may not be exhaustive.
IF you need any evidence that a collaborative mindset in the attractions, tourism and conventions landscape is working, let the numbers do the talking.

Travel and tourism in Northern Kentucky generated $3.334 billion of the entire commonwealth’s $15 billion in economic impact in 2017, according to Kentucky’s Department of Tourism. A separate report, commissioned by meetNKY, Cincinnati USA Convention and Visitors Bureau, and the Cincinnati USA Regional Tourism Network, showed that 26.6 million visitors spent an eye-popping $5.3 billion in the 15-county Northern Kentucky and Cincinnati region, supporting 80,000 jobs and generating $1.2 billion in tax revenue.

Attraction-goers in each county and those coming to the broader area from 50 to 500 miles in any direction travel freely back and forth across the Ohio River with their tourism dollars. Eric Summe, president and CEO of meetNKY, is pleased with the continued upward trend in tourism.

“These results reflect our dedication to collaborating on promoting this unique place where North and South converge,” he said, “where bourbon and beer connect, and our merging of Midwest ingenuity and Southern hospitality.”

In August 2018, in concert with the Northern Kentucky Convention Center, meetNKY began a market analysis of the expansion of the 20-year-old facility on Covington’s riverfront just several miles from the Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky International Airport.

“We are beginning to study what the market forecast is, for what we do in terms of conventions,” Summe said. meetNKY signed a consultant, CSL International of Minneapolis, to look at the current performance of groups and conventions at the convention center, and what the emerging market segments might be.

“One of the segments is faith-based,” Summe said. “It goes back to last year with the success of the Creation Museum and Ark Encounter. They generated a key interest in faith groups.”

Located in Petersburg, west of the Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky International Airport, the Creation Museum has welcomed 3.6 million guests since opening in 2007. Attendance has nearly doubled since its sister experience, a 510-foot-long ark on 800 acres, opened off I-75 in Williamstown in 2016. The Creation Museum and Ark Encounter are operated by Answers in Genesis.

By summer of 2019, the Ark Encounter is adding a new multipurpose facility with a 2,500-seat auditorium and 36,000-s.f. basement with classrooms, a new children’s play area, and the Ararat Ridge Zoo will double in size. More than 90 percent of visitors to both faith-based attractions come from outside Kentucky, Ohio and Indiana.

**Studying how best to expand**

Hotel supply is another aspect of the feasibility study for CSL (Conventions, Sports and Leisure) International. More than 1,400 area hotel rooms are under
construction or in development to meet the demand of the growing number of visitors.

The size of the Northern Kentucky Convention Center in downtown Covington is another factor in whether large groups choose the area for conventions and meetings. Built in 1998, the 204,000-s.f. convention center opened the following year and has hosted 2,500 events generating $1 billion in economic impact. In late 2018, the state-owned facility was the venue for the Ohio Designer Craftsmen’s Winterfair and the Council of State Governments’ national conference.

The Learning Center at the convention center opened March 31, creating a state-of-the-art 400-seat auditorium in a portion of existing space.

“It’s been a very good facility, but there is a need to look at what we need the center to be, to be competitive,” Summe said. “The destination market is a very competitive business.”

After the market study with CSL, there will be a funding study and then a design phase, all of which are expected to be complete by first quarter 2019.

In preparation for expanding the convention center, local county governments implemented a 1 percent local lodging tax rate increase earmarked for a development fund. It was approved unanimously in 2017 by the three fiscal courts in Boone, Campbell and Kenton counties, with the increase expected to generate $1.2 million to $1.5 million annually toward the capital plan for expansion of the convention center. Even with the lodging tax at 12.36 percent, Northern Kentucky’s tax is significantly lower than Cincinnati’s 17.5 percent.

Many new attractions are already online in Northern Kentucky, and more are on the way.

“The SkyWheel is still on track,” Summe said of the giant Ferris wheel proposed to be located at Newport on the Levee, between Newport Aquarium and Mitchell’s Fish Market. “The City of Newport has advised us they will begin work in the construction season of 2019.”

Catering to the Kentucky bourbon audience, The B-Line project spearheaded by meetNKY was almost a year in
development — “from the first idea that we needed to add a splash more Kentucky into Northern Kentucky,” said Julie Kirkpatrick, vice president of sales and marketing for meetNKY. Patrons download a Line Guide from findyoursippingpoint.com and collect stamps in their guide when they visit participating distilleries, bars and/or restaurants.

“The B-Line celebrates the bourbon heritage we have in our region, especially since this was the port from which most of the bourbon made its journey ‘down the river’ before Prohibition. It is also a celebration of the true B-Line or Bourbon Line, which is the Ohio River,” Kirkpatrick said. “Once a visitor crosses the river (south), they have arrived into the state where 95 percent of the country’s bourbon is made and they can enjoy a first sip of Kentucky bourbon and a warm welcome to the commonwealth.”

A B-Line advisory committee has representatives from the three Kentucky Bourbon Trail craft distilleries (Boone County Distilling, New Riff and Old Pogue Distillery), as well as from B-Line bars, restaurants and local hotels.

“We plan to leverage the idea that beer and bourbon are natural connection points where our river connects the North and South,” said Linda Antus, president/CEO Cincinnati USA Regional Tourism Network. Formed in 2005 by the CVBs from Northern Kentucky and Cincinnati, RTN is a destination marketing organization promoting leisure tourism.

She is pleased, Antus said, to have so many tourism attractions in the region to promote plus tours to undertake on foot and driving, even by water with BB Riverboats, that help people see everything.

“Tours are so important to cultural tourism,” she said. “They let you see first-hand what you’re famous for. Tours and sightseeing have realized a wonderful resurgence here.”

Visitors and event/conference travelers will likely run out of time well before running out of things to do when visiting the region.

**ATTRACTIONS**

Ark Encounter
Williamstown

BB Riverboats
Newport

Behringer-Crawford Museum
Covington

Big Bone Lick State Park
Union

Blue Licks Battlefield State Park
Carlisle

Braxton Brewing Co.
Covington

The Carnegie
Covington

Creation Museum
Petersburg

Devou Park
Covington

Donna Salyers’ Fabulous Furs
Covington

Wolfrahaus Newport
Newport

Kentucky Speedway
Sparta

MainStrasse Village
Covington

New Riff Distilling
Newport

Newport Aquarium
Newport

Newport Gangster Tour
Newport

Newport on the Levee
Newport

Northern Kentucky Back Roads Wine Trail
Camp Springs

Purple People Bridge
Newport

Riverside Food Tours
Covington

Roebling Murals, Covington
Covington

St. Mary’s Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption
Covington

Turfway Park
Florence

Vent Haven Museum
Fort Mitchell

Walt’s Hitching Post
Fort Mitchell

World Peace Bell
Newport

Since 1979, the family-owned BB Riverboats have guided passengers on scenic tours and excursions through the region on its fleet of riverboats, including the flagship Belle of Cincinnati. The company docks its fleet at Newport’s Riverboat Row.
`Destination 360`  
Region actively building engaging experiences for all levels of arts enthusiasts

BY KATHIE STAMPS

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 Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption.

One of the most awe-inspiring works of art in all of Northern Kentucky is the gothic architecture of the church itself. Construction of St. Mary's Cathedral in Kenton County began in 1894 and included the gradual installation of 82 stained-glass windows crafted by a company in Munich, Germany, and installed over a period of a dozen years, ending just after WWI.

Promoting the basilica and the rest of the region’s arts and culture scene brings great food and art, interesting history, and illustrious and passionate people.

In the 1920s, the Cincinnati Institute of Fine Arts, a nonprofit now known as ArtsWave, began promoting the arts on both sides of the Ohio River, in Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky. A recent partnership between ArtsWave and Cincinnati USA Regional Tourism Network (RTN) involved a three-year, $1.2 million cultural tourism marketing campaign.

The promotion of arts and culture under the umbrella of tourism has succeeded in bringing in $116 million in new revenues for the region, according to Smith Travel Research and Tourism Economics, a division of Oxford Economics. While the peak travel season for leisure tourists is May through August, ArtsWave marketing efforts have focused on the “shoulder travel” season of September through December by targeting travelers within 500 miles of Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky to visit and take part in cultural arts experiences in the fall.

“In the past several years we’ve watched our arts and culture sector (of tourism) have a demand growth of three percent,” said Linda Antus, president and CEO of RTN.

Holiday-based exhibits and performances at galleries, theaters and other arts venues are a big draw for tourists to the area in November and December. In other months of the year, organizations come up with ways to refresh people’s appreciation for artistic and cultural talent in the area. The Kentucky Department of Tourism announced a culinary tourism initiative...
in May called Better in the Bluegrass along the newly created Kentucky State Parks Culinary Trail. It highlights local recipes and ingredients, and the signature meal for the Northern Kentucky River Region featured an entrée of goetta – a meat and grain sausage of German origins – along with tomato pie, potato cakes and transparent pie, served at Blue Licks Battlefield State Park in Carlisle.

**Easier to see the region**

Eric Summe, president/CEO of meetNKY, cites new modes of transportation such as electric scooters and bikes for rent, and the new GEST golf cart service, as changing the landscape to make it easier for people to experience cultural destinations.

“IT all adds up to river cities transforming, becoming urban-centric,” Summe said.

GEST is an acronym for “green easy safe transportation.” The Cincinnati-based business provides free rides in golf carts for residents and tourists in downtown Cincinnati, Covington and Newport. Local business advertising on the carts funds operations.

Established in 2003, Renaissance Covington is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit focused on revitalizing the urban core of Covington by embracing local culture, historic preservation, independent businesses and creativity. The city is a certified Creative District by the Kentucky Arts Council and is accredited with both the Kentucky and National Main Street Programs. Renaissance Covington won a 2017 Great America Main Street award.

Because creativity and technology often work hand in hand, Renaissance Covington partnered with Cincinnati Bell in summer 2018 to bring downtown Covington free public wi-fi to encourage walkability while helping community members and shopkeepers to stay connected.

Renaissance Covington’s flagship program is the Covington Farmers Market, featuring vendors of local goods and foods, live music and local beer and spirits. The market goes year-round in 2019.

Local artists and crafters hold an outdoor Covington Night Bazaar on Shop Small Saturday (Thanksgiving weekend), and Renaissance Covington launched a monthly Pike Street Stroll in 2018 for outdoor arts gallery showing and shopping.

And of course access to more arts is as easy as hopping across the river to places like Aronoff Center for the Arts. The Cincinnati Arts Association’s 2018-19 season includes such Broadway hits

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**2019 Festivals**

**February**
- Big Cheese Festival, Fairfield, Ohio
- Cincinnati Home & Garden Show, Duke Energy Convention Center
- Cincy Beerfest, Duke Energy Convention Center

**March**
- Bockfest, Bockfest Hall in Cincinnati
- Cincinnati International Wine Festival, Duke Energy Convention Center
- Mardi Gras for Homeless Children, Northern Kentucky Convention Center
- Universal Energy Expo, Northern Kentucky Convention Center

**April**
- Bunbury Music Festival, Sawyer Point
- NKY International Festival, Northern Kentucky Convention Center
- Taste of Cincinnati, Fifth Street

**June**
- Cincinnati Juneteenth Festival, Eden Park
- Country Fest, Alexandria
- Italianfest, Newport
- SummerFair, Coney Island Amusement Park
- Taste of Newport, downtown Newport

**July**
- Bacon, Bourbon & Brew Festival, Newport Riverfront
- Cincinnati Music Festival, Paul Brown Stadium

**August**
- Glier’s Goettafest, Newport on the Levee
- Great Inland Seafood Festival, Newport
- Ohio River Paddlefest, Cincinnati

**September**
- Cincinnati Comic Expo, Duke Energy Convention Center
- Oktoberfest-Zinzinnati, downtown Cincinnati
- Riverfest, Newport Riverfront

**October**
- BLINK Illuminated, Covington and Cincinnati
- Burlington Fall Antique Show, Burlington
- Roebling Reserve Bourbon Festival and Conference, Covington and Newport
- Walton Craft Show, Walton

**November**
- Cincinnati Christkindlmarket, Fountain Square, Cincinnati
- Winterfair, Northern Kentucky Convention Center

**December**
- Christmas Saengerfest, Over-the-Rhine
- Cincinnati Reds’ RedsFest, Duke Energy Convention Center
- Covington Winter Night Bazaar, Roebling Point

Glier’s Goettafest happens in August at Newport on the Levee.
as “Charlie and the Chocolate Factory,” the 20th anniversary tour of “Rent,” “Fiddler on the Roof” and the blockbuster “Hamilton.”

Cincinnati Museum Center at Union Terminal, a 1933 Art Deco train station, has undergone a two-year $224 million renovation. Structural and aesthetic restorations to the iconic building included its inhabitants: Cincinnati History Museum, Duke Energy Children’s Museum, Museum of Natural History and Science, and Omnimax Theater.

Union Terminal “is an iconic building that houses multiple experiences. It is important for architectural and performance and cultural reasons,” Antus said. “There are all kinds of relevant exhibitions. They’ve worked at creating interaction. They really get you involved.”

Year-round throughout Northern Kentucky and Cincinnati, locals and visitors can experience the fine arts, performance and visual arts, and the culture of the region.

“The definition of cultural tourism is embracing and connecting a lot of opportunistic categories,” Antus said. “We are presenting opportunities for people who are outside of our 50-mile loop to come and enjoy our region for arts and culture, and to take a look at the renaissance that has gone on. I love to call it Destination 360.”

Right: On 6th Street in Covington is a colorful view thanks to the BLDG curated “Around the Corner” murals by artist Faile. The pieces were completed in 2014, and are just some of the works that create color and vibrancy on the landscape of Northern Kentucky’s urban core.

Below: The Purple People Bridge is one of the nine crossings of the Ohio River at Cincinnati, but it’s arguably the most fun—and the most purple. The Newport Southbank Bridge, popularly known as the Purple People Bridge, is a pedestrian-only bridge that stretches 2,670 feet (one-half of a mile) across the Ohio River, connecting Newport, Ky. to downtown Cincinnati and to trails along the river in both states. It also hosts events like the weekly Party on the Purple festivals in the warmer months.

Above: The Covington-based Carnegie Center is home to a gallery, education center and theater, showcasing popular performances like “Chicago.” The Carnegie Center is the largest and only multidisciplinary arts venue in Northern Kentucky, with The Carnegie Galleries, the Eva G. Farris Education Center and the Otto M. Budig Theatre housed together under our landmark dome.

Above: The Baker Hunt Art and Cultural Center in Covington offers classes in drawing, painting, photography, ceramics, quilting, dance and yoga for children and adults, serving more than 3,500 students from the tri-state area, annually. In operation for more than 90 years, the center has 40 courses and workshops.

Left: Cincinnati Union Terminal was a significant development in the history of Cincinnati transportation and is regarded as one of the last great train stations built when it opened in 1933. The Art Deco style building now is home to three museums, an OMNIMAX® Theater and the Cincinnati History Library and Archives.

Above: The Covington-based Carnegie Center is home to a gallery, education center and theater, showcasing popular performances like “Chicago.” The Carnegie Center is the largest and only multidisciplinary arts venue in Northern Kentucky, with The Carnegie Galleries, the Eva G. Farris Education Center and the Otto M. Budig Theatre housed together under our landmark dome.
An athletic market segment

Pro teams and picturesque parks make sports a healthy part of the region’s economy

Northern Kentucky officials and business owners realize the region loves sports, and meetNKY President/CEO Eric Summe says the athletic amenities in Kentucky and its nextdoor neighbor in Cincinnati create a perfect atmosphere for fans and players alike.

Multiple professional sports plus recreational leagues and ample park space mean sports play a role in everyday life and contribute to the economy in a big way – even if it’s a hiker or golfer grabbing lunch after a morning in the great outdoors that beckon just a short drive from the urban core or a team hosting a tournament and filling hotel rooms.

“In our world we focus on market segments,” Summe said, “and sports is one of our biggest segments. Being part of the Greater Cincinnati Metro area gives us a lot of advantages for amateur sports. We do a good job of knowing we’re unique and leveraging this part of the state with the advantages of Greater Cincinnati.”

BB&T Arena on Northern Kentucky University’s campus played host to the KHSAA Girls’ Sweet Sixteen basketball championship the past three years, and the region has facilities for baseball, softball, soccer and volleyball. The Northern Kentucky Convention Center in Covington hosts cheer and dance competitions, and Turfway Park in Florence thrills horse racing fans.

Recreational trail

When it comes to outdoor recreation, the biggest ongoing project at the moment is the Southbank Partners Riverfront Commons Trail, an 11.5-mile uninterrupted walking, running and hiking trail. When completed, it will connect all of Northern Kentucky’s six riverfront cities – Ludlow, Covington, Newport, Bellevue, Dayton and Fort Thomas.

Federal transportation grants totaling $1.5 million recently awarded by the Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Council of Governments (OKI) to Covington and Dayton will provide the funding needed to complete half the trail. The new section in Covington will connect to a section of Riverfront Commons that was completed in 2017.

Sports are a major driver of Northern Kentucky’s economy – with exciting things happening on both sides of the Ohio River. FCC, the Fútbol Club of Cincinnati, debuted in 2016 and is slated to get an all-new $250 million stadium in the West End Neighborhood of Cincinnati. When completed, the West End Stadium will meet all current requirements to host CONCACAF and FIFA events, featuring top national teams from around the world, including the U.S. Men’s and Women’s National Teams. Additionally, the facility will be a desirable destination for international club teams to play in during North American tours and friendlies.
“When completed, the new trail section in Covington will allow bikers and hikers to travel next to the Ohio River on the entire northern edge of that city without having to deal or interact with automobile traffic or other obstacles,” said Jack Moreland, president of Southbank Partners.

“Slowly but surely, Riverfront Commons is coming together,” Covington City Manager David Johnston added. “It’s a big, complex project with lots of pieces and lots of hurdles, but when it’s finished it will be a stunning project that links the river cities, provides a lot of recreation opportunities and serves as both a physical and symbolic gathering place for residents and visitors alike.”

Parks, adventure, leagues
The Covington Parks and Recreation Department offers a variety of aquatics, athletics and recreation activities, as well as supporting a growing parks system including the iconic 703-acre Devou Park. Centerpiece of the park is the new Ludlow Connector Trail that features an overlook with panoramic views of the Cincinnati skyline and the Ohio River Valley. It will eventually connect to the Riverfront Commons Trail.

Elsewhere in the region, Greenbo Lake State Report Park has 26 trails totaling 33 miles with colorful names like Full Monty, Pig’s Tale and Goat Path.

Big Bone Lick State Park in Union features trails that run through woodlands, grasslands, woody savanna, the salt-sulfur springs and a bison viewing area. And Boone County Cliffs State Nature Preserve, with 74 acres of old-growth forest and cliff formations, has 14 miles of trails.

Boone County Parks & Recreation provides nearly two dozen parks for outdoor enthusiasts who want to fish, play disc golf, horseshoes or bocce ball.

For college sports fans, NKU has 17 teams. Its men’s and women’s basketball teams compete in the Horizon League and play their home games in BB&T Arena.

Professional sports galore
If pro sports are a passion, Northern Kentucky provides easy access to Cincinnati Reds and Cincinnati Bengals games, FC Cincinnati of the United Soccer League and the Cincinnati Cyclones professional hockey team. The John A. Roebling Suspension Bridge is a popular walkway to the Cincinnati side for NASCAR fans attending races at the Kentucky Speedway in Sparta.

When the speedway is busy, or the Bengals or Reds are playing, Summe said, “there’s not a hotel room to be found in our area.”

Fans of baseball and football can stay and park in Northern Kentucky and then simply walk across the Ohio River to take in the game.
Big investments, big business, unique experiences

**BOONE COUNTY**

Boone County has cooperated on the funding, construction and governance of a new regional communications system. Expected to be implemented in early 2019, the $25 million digital system will improve safety and service by eliminating dead spots and allowing first responders to communicate inside buildings.

Boone County has a new countywide comprehensive transportation plan that identified projects to improve safety, reduce congestion and facilitate future growth and development. Traffic is going to get easier when the conventional diamond interchange at Mt. Zion Road (KY 536) and Richwood Road (KY 338) will be replaced by a double crossover diamond. The I-71/A-75 improvement project is set to begin in 2019 and be completed by 2021 by the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet with a $67.5 million INFRA grant.

Also, a regional STEAM education center opens in fall 2019 for students in grades 9 to 12. Teacher clusters will stay with the same student cohort year to year. Located at the Roebling Innovation Center in Erlanger, Ignite Institute will eventually expand to include all grades.

In Florence, a Kroger distribution center opened in late 2017 and invested $18 million in 2018 to add 250 full-time associates and upgrade technology as it expands its e-commerce and digital services at the facility.

Boone County is an experience-lover’s dream, with attractions like Big Bone Lick State Historic Site, Boone Links Golf Course, Florence Family Aquatic Center and the Creation Museum. The $27 million Creation Museum in Petersburg sees upwards of 8,000 visitors a day; this past year the venue experienced a 20 percent increase in visitors via motor coach tours. — Kathie Stamps

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Infrastructure, innovative education, shopping galore

**CAMPBELL COUNTY**

Campbell County’s long-anticipated Route 9 extension project in Newport, a 1.4-mile road with two lanes in each direction, opened in October 2018, completing a multiyear $45 million project. It created a long overdue four-lane link between I-275 in Wilder, Ky., and downtown Cincinnati, opening a large swath of land for development and redevelopment in Newport and Wilder along the Licking River.

In Highland Heights, a new $105 million Health Innovation Center opened in late 2018 at Northern Kentucky University. Near the NKU campus, ground was broken for a 65,000-s.f. medical office building thanks to a collaborative effort among St. Elizabeth Healthcare, the City of Highland Heights, Campbell County, NKU, OrthoCincy and developer Fairmount Properties. The medical building is the first phase of a Town Center mixed-use project that will soon include restaurants, retail space, a hotel and apartments.

In Bellevue, one of the largest adaptive re-use projects in Northern Kentucky’s urban core is taking place with the $10 million Kent Lofts, a project turning the Kent Industrial Warehouse building into 60 upscale loft-style housing units. Bellevue is just a mile and a half away from the vibrant Newport on the Levee with its shops, restaurants and nightspots.

Residents and businesses throughout Campbell County enjoy proximity to the Ohio River. Big business also calls the county home, including General Cable’s headquarters. — Kathie Stamps

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**Estimated 2019 population:**

- Boone County: 136,757
- Campbell County: 92,732
- Kenton County: 129,219

**Households:**

- Boone County: 45,649
- Campbell County: 35,954
- Kenton County: 39,054

**Median household income:**

- Boone County: $69,165
- Campbell County: $56,772
- Kenton County: $60,195

**Chamber of Commerce:**

- Boone County: Northern Kentucky Chamber of Commerce, nkychamber.com
- Campbell County: Northern Kentucky Chamber of Commerce, nkychamber.com

**City Seats:**

- Boone County: Burlington, Florence Mayor Diane E. Whalen, florence-ky.gov
- Campbell County: Alexandria, Mayor Andrew Schabell, alexandriaky.org; and Newport, Mayor Jerry Peluso, newportkygov

**Judge-Executive:**

- Boone County: Gary W. Moore, boonecountyky.org
- Campbell County: Steve Pendery, campbellcountyky.org

**Economic Development Authority:**

- Boone County: Northern Kentucky Tri-County Economic Development Corp. (Tri-ED), northernkentuckyusa.com
- Campbell County: Campbell County Economic Progress Authority Inc.; Northern Kentucky Tri-County Economic Development Corp. (Tri-ED), northernkentuckyusa.com

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**CVG is working on a more direct route to the terminal from the access road to Interstate 275. The new road is part of a $165 million project to reshape the airport’s main entrance, which also includes a rental car service hub by end of 2021.**

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**Northern Kentucky University is always busy making great strides into the future in Campbell County’s Highland Heights.**

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**Economic Development Authority:**

- Boone County: Northern Kentucky Tri-County Economic Development Corp. (Tri-ED), northernkentuckyusa.com
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lanereport.com
Home of Kentucky Speedway, big on hospitality

Located on the banks of the Ohio River, across from the Indiana side of the river, Gallatin County is the smallest Kentucky county in area (99 square miles), but has plenty of Southern hospitality to go around and a strong work ethic. Gallatin County’s largest employer is Dorman Products, employing 650 at its warehouse and distribution center in Warsaw. The Kentucky company recently tied for the Manufacturer of the Year award in the category of large businesses, presented by the Kentucky Association of Manufacturers.

The largest tourist attraction in Gallatin County is Kentucky Speedway in Sparta. In July 2018, Walmart became the presenting sponsor of the Quaker State 400 at Kentucky’s premier motorsports venue. Quaker State announced the previous year that it intends to remain the title sponsor of the NASCAR Quaker State 400 through 2022. — Kathie Stamps

Former ‘gas and go’ stop is now a tourist destination

Community events, easy access to large cities, a lower cost of living compared to surrounding areas, and neighbors who care about one another make Grant County attractive to residents and business owners. With its accessibility to I-75 and U.S. 25 and by rail, the county has attracted more than 2 million visitors in two years to the Ark Encounter in Williamstown. The attraction is Grant County’s third-largest employer, with approximately 500 full-time and seasonal employees, following Grant County Schools/Williamstown Schools with 937 employees and Dana Corp. with 530.

The Williamstown Marina continues to attract locals and out-of-towners to Lake Williamstown. Williamstown Splash Park opened in August on Waterworks Road. Ground was broken in July 2018 for a hotel in Dry Ridge, the first of three hotels expected to come to the area. Three months earlier, a ribbon-cutting ceremony was held for Duke Energy Solar Farm in Dry Ridge. MGP of Atchison, Kan., spent $1.8 million to convert the Performance Pipe Building in Williamstown into a whiskey warehouse. The Grant Co. Chamber of Commerce spearheaded Market on Main, a seasonal market for local produce, crafts and entertainers in downtown Williamstown and Dry Ridge. And in July 2018, 273 athletes competed in the Grant County Triathlon, an Olympic qualifying event. — Kathie Stamps
Celebrating urban living while protecting nature

Kentucky Wool Festival has been held in Falmouth every October since 1983, near the entrance to Kincaid Lake State Park. The state park has 84 camping sites in open woodland settings, along with fishing and boating on Kincaid Lake, hiking, tennis, miniature golf and other outdoor activities.

Erlanger has added acreage to the Morning View Heritage Area Site, continuing the process of protecting natural areas. Covington’s urban core, the corridor between the MainStrasse neighborhood and Roebling Point, is home to Braxton Brewing, which now distributes its craft beers from Nashville to Columbus. Tech companies also are wending their way to Kenton County.

Technology and healthcare come together in Covington, with CTI Clinical Trial & Consulting Services relocating its headquarters and operations to Covington in 2017 from Blue Ash, Ohio. And Bexion Pharmaceuticals is making national news with its innovative biologic BXQ-350 to treat rare brain and solid tumors.

Coca-Cola Bottling Co. Consolidated is investing $30 million and creating 430 full-time jobs for a new 300,000-s.f. sales and distribution facility in Erlanger, expected to be open in late summer.

And finally, Site Selection magazine awarded a 2018 Mac Conway “Award for Excellence in Economic Development,” to Northern Kentucky Tri-ED. Founded in 1987, Tri-ED is one of 15 economic development groups, out of 5,000 across the country, to be honored with this award.

— Kathie Stamps

In June 2018, the family owned and operated WellFit opened its doors in Covington. After living in the city for 10 years, owner Heidi Cummings said they opened after watching all of the "great growth and development and changes" in the city.

— Kathie Stamps

Appreciation for the outdoors and business

Pendleton County is located between Lexington and Cincinnati, in a picturesque area where the Main and Licking rivers meet. Business owners are involved with both an active Chamber of Commerce and the Pendleton County Tourism Council.

The Kentucky Wool Festival has been held in Falmouth every October since 1983, near the entrance to Kincaid Lake State Park. The state park has 84 camping sites in open woodland settings, along with fishing and boating on Kincaid Lake, hiking, tennis, miniature golf and other outdoor activities.

Rose Hill Farm Winery in Butler produces award-winning white and red wines from grapes grown in its own four-acre vineyard. A few miles north, Faith Acres Farm in Butler offers local produce, eggs, honey, provided by bees on the premises, and maple syrup that’s tapped from trees on the farm.

— Kathie Stamps
HAMpTON County is ready for business—and it’s spelled REDI, as in the Regional Economic Development Initiative Cincinnati. REDI works with relocating and growing companies within a 15-county region in Southwest Ohio, Northern Kentucky and Southeast Indiana. Nine Fortune 500 companies make their headquarters in Cincinnati: AK Steel, American Financial Group, Cincinnati Financial, Cintas, Fifth Third, Macy’s, Procter & Gamble, Western & Southern Financial Group and the Kroger Company. Cincinnati native Barney Kroger founded a company in 1883 that has grown to be the largest traditional grocer in the United States with annual sales in excess of $122 billion.

Hamilton County is also known for healthcare, mostly notably its children’s hospital. According to U.S. News and World Report, Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center ranks No. 2 in the country (up from third place for the past seven years) among all Honor Roll hospitals, and received a dual No. 1 ranking for its pediatric specialties of cancer and gastroenterology/GI surgery care. In late 2018, researchers at Children’s Hospital and the University of Cincinnati were awarded a $577,200 career development grant from the Department of Defense for a specific pediatric brain tumor study.

The county seat of Hamilton County is Cincinnati, the 25th largest metropolitan area in the country. As of 2019, the Queen City has four professional sports teams, as Major League Soccer awarded one of its three expansion teams to Cincinnati. Futbol Club Cincinnati (FC Cincinnati) begins league play in March 2019. Fine arts and tourist attractions abound, including the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, the renovated 140-year-old Music Hall, the Cincinnati Museum Center at Union Terminal and the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center.

RICH quality of life, easy urban access

A 30-minute drive along the Ohio River due east from downtown Cincinnati, Clermont County is part of the Cincinnati metro area but offers a slower pace of life. In terms of employment, the top 10 companies in the county represent a diverse list of industries such as freight logistics, computer programming, insurance, credit card processing, manufacturing, health care and automotive dealerships. There are brewing companies in the Ohio cities of Loveland, Milford and Williamsburg, a boutique winery and vineyard in Bethel, and historical houses and museums to tour throughout the county, including Ulysses S. Grant’s Birthplace & Museum, honoring the 18th president’s place of birth in Point Pleasant.

Community members and tourists alike enjoy fall festivals, summer fests and holiday events. In late 2018, Batavia Village hosted the “Battle Ohio” leg of the Flag Football World Championship Tour.
Corporex offers a wide variety of real estate opportunities in Northern Kentucky: office space of 1,000 to 300,000 square feet for lease; 16 luxury condominiums for the discerning home buyer at The Ascent at Roebling’s Bridge; 250 acres of land available at CirclePort Business Park near the airport; and a 30-acre mixed-use development concept at Ovation in Newport, which could include residential, retail and office space, as well as hotel, theatre, marina, and structured parking.

For over 53 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.

To learn more about our opportunities
859.292.5503  www.corporex.com