worklink

Wood County Workforce Mobility Study

Images Courtesy of Owens Community College

Needs Assessment

August 2025

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Overview

Employment in Wood County is expanding through a growing manufacturing base and the development of new warehouse and distribution centers. This economic growth is supported by strong educational and job training resources, including Owens Community College, Penta Career Center, and Bowling Green State University, as well as major commercial hubs. However, the county's suburban land use patterns and limited transit options are creating mobility challenges, particularly as employers seek to attract workers from the broader region. Without expanded workforce mobility options, access to employees and job opportunities remains largely limited to individuals with private vehicles or those with access to local transit that provides service at convenient times.

The Wood County Workforce Mobility Study - branded as Worklink - aims to address these challenges by developing a medium- and long-term mobility strategy designed to better meet the needs of the regional employers and improve access to their workforce. This needs assessment applies a data-driven approach to evaluate workforce mobility needs, transit service gaps, and examine regional travel markets and patterns.

STUDY AREAS

Given the size and diversity of Wood County and variations in economic development, infrastructure and land uses, the county has been divided into three distinct study areas (see Figure 1):

- **Study Area 1 (northeastern Wood County)** includes the City of Rossford, portions of Perrysburg Township and the City of Perrysburg, the City of Northwood, and the Villages of Walbridge and Millbury. This area has attracted significant investment in manufacturing, retail, and warehouse jobs in recent years, primarily along the I-75 and Highway 795 corridors. Owens Community College and the Penta Career Center are also important destinations in this area not only for workers but also to people training for jobs and advancing their education/careers.

- **Study Area 2 (north and central Wood County)** includes the City of Perrysburg and Perrysburg Township, the City of Bowling Green, the Village of North Baltimore, and the broad swath of rural areas along the I-75 corridor. Perrysburg Township and the City of Perrysburg at the northern end of this area are part of the Toledo metropolitan area and hubs for retail and warehouse employment for the region.

FIGURE 1 STUDY AREA

Perrysburg has experienced significant growth in the past 10 years, adding more jobs than nearly any other community in northwestern Ohio. Located in the middle of the county about 12 miles south of Perrysburg, Bowling Green is a thriving community and major destination for education (Bowling Green State University), health care, and manufacturing. Bowling Green is also the county seat and hub for the smaller cities and rural areas in the county.

- **Study Area 3 (rural Wood County)** includes the non-urbanized areas on the west and southeast part of the county. While most of this area is agricultural, there are several smaller communities that rely on the larger communities for goods, services, and jobs.
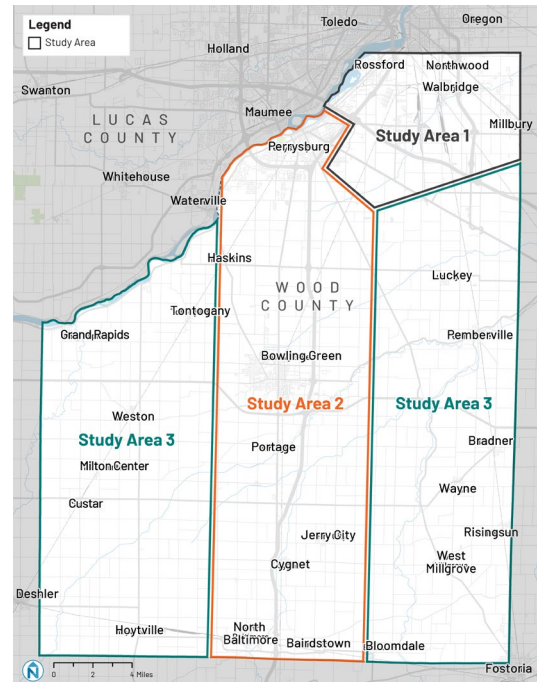
The Needs Assessment is focused on understanding and evaluating specific gaps in the mobility services available for job access in Wood County. It was developed using a combination of quantitative and qualitative data sources.

Existing Transit Services

Wood County does not have a single transit service operating throughout the county and instead is served by several public transit providers operating independently. Fixed route service providers include the Toledo Area Regional Transit Authority (TARTA), which operates Route 10 connecting Rossford to downtown Toledo, and Bowling Green State University, which operates several shuttles within and to the main campus. General public on-demand services are also provided in Perrysburg and Bowling Green. In addition, TARTA offers an on-demand service (TARTA Flex) in Rossford and several cities in Lucas County (including the East Toledo neighborhood of Toledo and Oregon). Figure 4 illustrates the public transit services offered in Wood County and Table 1 provides some basic characteristics for the various transit services operated in Wood County.

There is also limited seasonal regional service connecting Bowling Green and Toledo through Greyhound/Flixbus and Barron's Bus. A description of each of the existing transit services is provided below.

In addition to public transit services, there are a handful of human service agencies and private services that offer transportation services for their clients and people participating in their programming. Most of these programs are oriented around medical appointments and specifically, non-emergency medical transportation. None offers transportation for employment.

FIGURE 2 PUBLIC TRANSIT PROVIDERS IN WOOD COUNTY
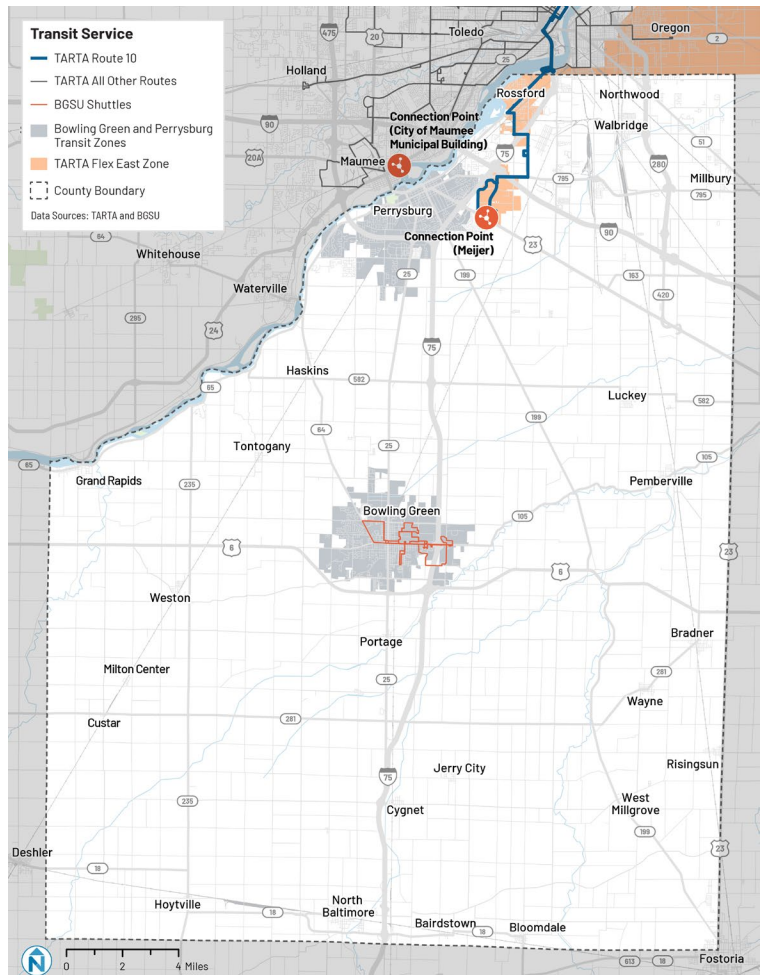
TABLE 1 WOOD COUNTY TRANSIT PROVIDERS

Agency	Areas in Wood County Served	Service Days and Hours	Average Daily Ridership (Oct. 2024)
B.G. Transit	City of Bowling Green + 1 mile outside of city boundary	• Monday-Friday, 6:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m. • Saturday, 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. • Sunday: No service	• Weekday: 82 • Saturday: 25
Bowling Green State University	BGSU Campus and surrounding areas (including Meijer)	• Varies by route, but three routes operate seven days/week when BGSU is in session	• 1,260 (total for all days and routes)
Perrysburg Transit	City of Perrysburg	• Monday-Sunday, 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.	• Weekday: 37 • Saturday/Sunday: 22
TARTA Route 10	Toledo/Rossford	• Monday-Friday, 5:00 a.m. – 11:00 p.m. • Saturday-Sunday, 6:30 a.m. – 9:40 p.m.	• Weekday: 195 • Saturday: 92 • Sunday: 86
TARTA Flex	Rossford/Oregon	• Monday-Friday, 7:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m. • Saturday-Sunday, 7:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.	• Weekday: 6
TARTA Move	¾ mile buffer around Route 10[1]	• Monday-Friday, 4:55 am-10:23 pm • Saturday, 6:30 am- 9:51 pm • Sunday, 6:30 am-8:21 pm	• Varies by day, typically less than 5

Source: B.G. Transit, BGSU, Perrysburg Transit, TARTA (Route 10 and TARTA Flex)

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[1] Includes Rossford and small parts of Perrysburg and Perrysburg Township

FUNDING FOR PUBLIC TRANSIT IN WOOD COUNTY

Public transportation in Wood County, like transit services across the United States, rely on public subsidies to operate. In Wood County funding varies by operator but each of the four operators rely on some form of local funding, using one or more of the following sources: direct taxes, fees or general funds. All the operators, except for BGSU, charge passenger fares, and some earn revenues through contracts and advertisements. B.G. Transit and TARTA also receive funding from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and State of Ohio (see Table 2).

TABLE 2 WOOD COUNTY TRANSIT FUNDING

Agency	Funding Sources	Cost per Hour
B.G. Transit	**Annual Operating Budget: $638,102** • Federal (5310, 5311) and State Funds • Local Assistance: CDBG and General Funds • Directly Generated: Fares, Other Revenue	$111.71
Bowling Green State University	**Annual Operating Budget: $750,000** • Student fees	$117
Perrysburg Transit	**Annual Operating Budget: $623,400** • Source: Property Tax Levy (0.8 mill)	N/A
TARTA	**Annual Operating Budget: $33.2 million** • Federal (5307) and State funds • Local Assistance – Property Tax • Directly Generated: Fares, Contracts, Other	$129.11 Fixed Route $73.00 TARTA Move

Source: B.G. Transit and TARTA: National Transit Database (2023 data). Perrysburg Transit: 2025 Annual Budget

STRENGTHS AND GAPS OF EXISTING TRANSIT SERVICE

Service Strengths

The existing transit and mobility services in Wood County has several strengths that Worklink should build upon.

- **Fixed-route and on-demand connections to Lucas County.** Public transit service Study Areas 1 and 2 includes both fixed-route and on-demand options, providing residents with both intra-community mobility as well as connections to nearby Toledo, Oregon, and Maumee. The fixed routes offer scheduled trips along a few corridors, while on-demand service provides flexible, point-to-point transportation for areas or times not served by fixed route services. While not extensive, these services offer a base from which to build from to enhance access to jobs.

- **Local distribution networks through on-demand services.** In Perrysburg and Bowling Green, city-wide on-demand services are well-established and well used. Passengers can request trips within the city limits at times that fit their schedules, and the service makes public transit more accessible to a broader range of users, particularly in areas where traditional bus routes may not be practical.

FIGURE 3 EXISTING TRANSIT SERVICES

- **Bowling Green State University (BGSU) shuttles.** BGSU operates its own shuttle network, tailored primarily to the needs of the university community. These shuttles run on schedules and routes designed to connect campus facilities, student housing, and key destinations in and around the university. While the service is mainly intended for students, faculty, and staff, it plays an important role in the local transit landscape by reducing traffic and parking demand on the BGSU campus and elsewhere in Bowling Green.

Service Gaps to Focus On

This needs assessment has identified several areas to focus on related to workforce mobility:

- **Connecting northeast Wood County to Lucas County.** Improving transit connections to the area north of I-80/90 in northeast Wood County is a priority as this region has a high concentration of employers and limited transit service. Enhanced access would make it easier for residents across the county, and in neighboring Lucas County, to reach job opportunities while helping businesses attract and retain workers.

- **Expand and build on existing services.** Existing transit services provide some coverage, but gaps remain in reliability, hours of operation, and direct routing. More consistent service, longer operating hours, and a direct connection between Perrysburg and Lucas County, along with county-wide access to major job centers, would create a stronger, more seamless transit services that supports both economic growth and countywide mobility.

- **Improve regional connections to Bowling Green.** While the services offered in Bowling Green are well utilized, strengthening the regional links between Bowling Green and Lucas County is another important goal, with additional opportunities to connect to Perrysburg and, to a lesser extent, south toward Findlay. Better regional connections would expand travel options for jobs as well as for school and other types of trips.

FIGURE 4 SERVICE GAPS
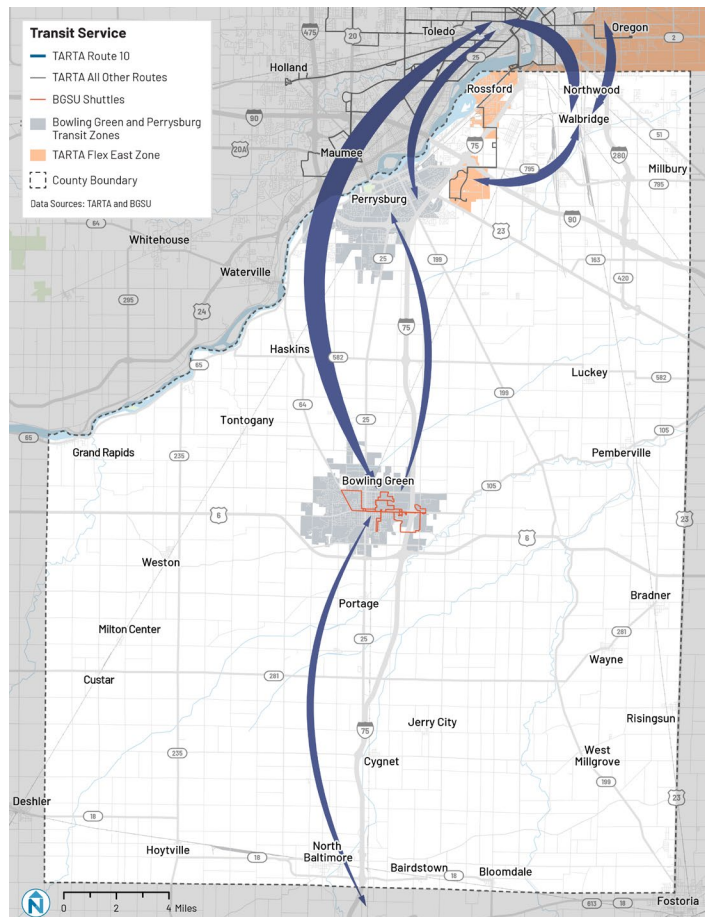
TOLEDO AREA REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY (TARTA)

TARTA's fixed route network is largely focused on the City of Toledo as Northwest Ohio's major urban center, and serves the neighboring communities of Maumee, Sylvania, Ottawa Hills and Sylvania Township in Lucas County and Rossford in Wood County. The network operates largely as a hub and spoke model with most bus routes beginning or ending in downtown Toledo. In 2021, voters in Lucas County approved a ballot initiative to replace TARTA's existing property tax with 0.5% sales and use tax. With a new, countywide revenue source, TARTA has been expanding and diversifying its transit services, including expanded fixed routes to Oregon, Holland and Springfield as well as new TARTA Flex on-demand service (discussed in more detail below).

There are a handful of TARTA services that are relevant to the Worklink project, including Route 10, which offers a connection between downtown Toledo and Rossford and TARTA's Flex's East Zone, which provides on-demand transportation in East Toledo, Oregon and Rossford. These two services are discussed in more detail below:

Route 10 (Downtown Toledo to Meijer Rossford)

Route 10 is available seven days per week and offers a connection between downtown Toledo and the Meijer in Rossford, providing valuable connections between Toledo, East Toledo and jobs and services in Rossford.

While Route 10 provides a critical connection to Wood County, and had about 88,000 annual trips in 2024, it has relatively low ridership compared to other TARTA routes. The stops with the highest average weekday ridership on Route 10 are Huron & Orange NE (APT Side), Amazon Fulfillment Center in Rossford, Hollywood Casino, and Meijer Rossford (see Figure 5).

Source: TARTA 2024 Annual Report

FIGURE 5 ROUTE 10 AVERAGE WEEKDAY RIDERSHIP (OCTOBER 2024)
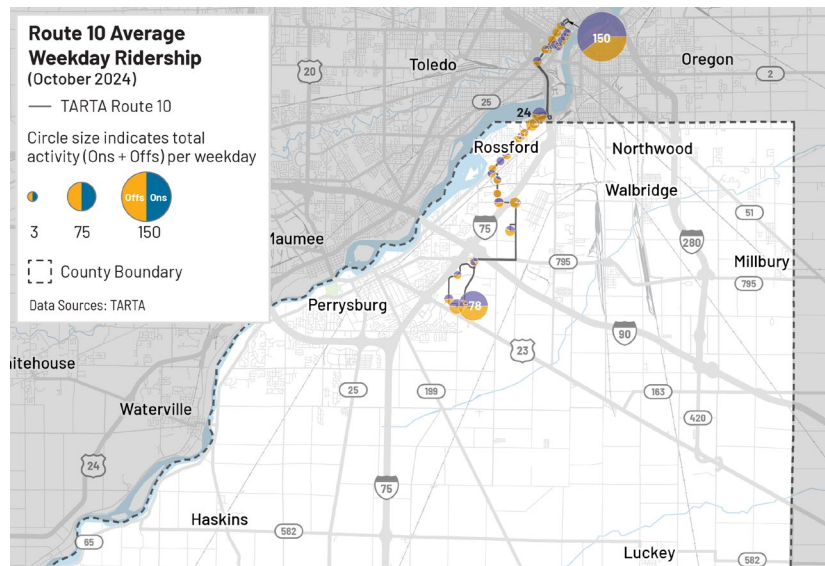
TARTA Flex

TARTA Flex provides on-demand transit service in three designated zones (shown in Figure 6) in Lucas County as well as in Rossford in Wood County. TARTA Flex generally requires that both pick-up and drop-off locations be within the same flex zone, but some exceptions are made that offer trips outside of these zones. The TARTA Flex Eastern Zone operates in Rossford in Wood County, as well as in Oregon in Lucas County.

FIGURE **6** TARTA FLEX RIDERSHIP PATTERNS
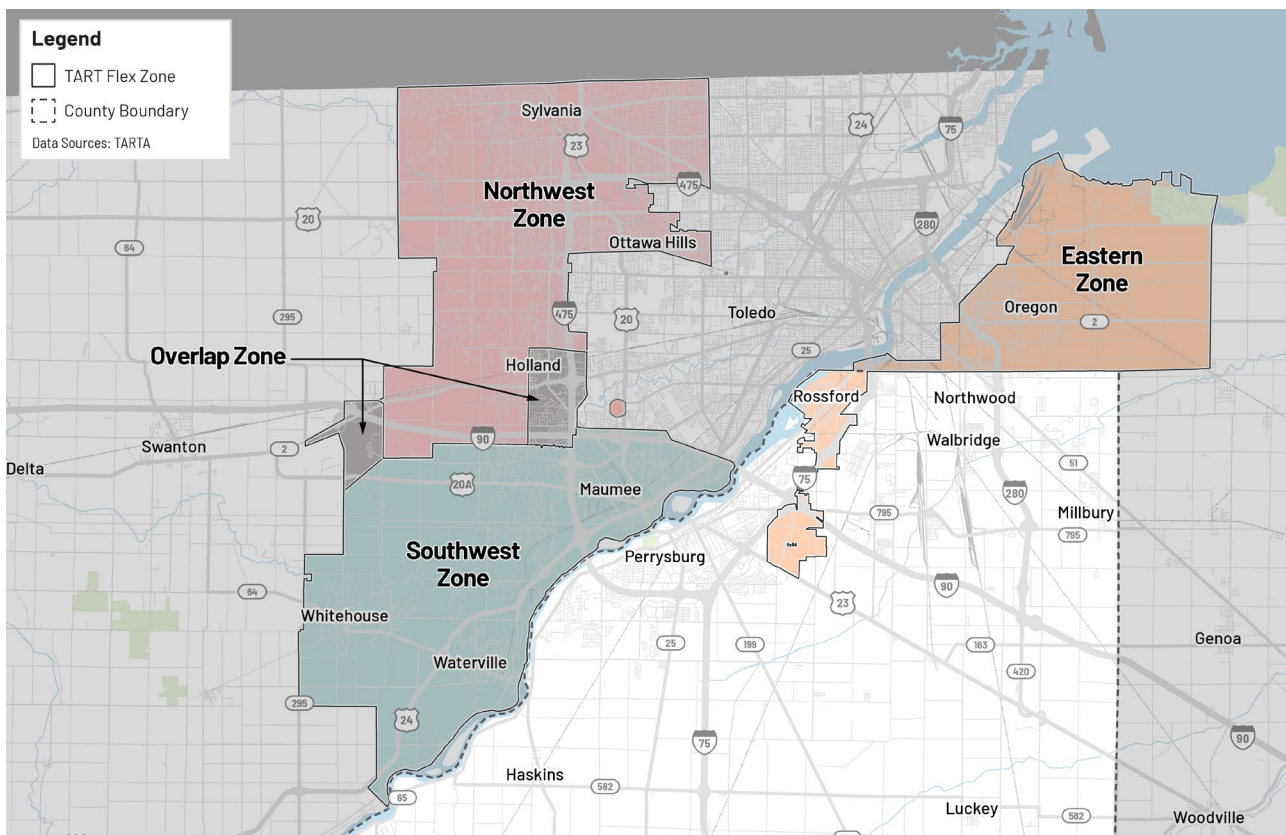
Ridership Patterns for TARTA Flex –From Eastern Zone to Region

Figure 7 shows that weekday trips on TARTA Flex originating from the East Zone are mainly concentrated in Oregon and connect to a wide range of destinations, especially East Toledo, Rossford, Maumee, and Sylvania. Most of these trips were made by single passengers, with fewer trips carrying two or three passengers. While TARTA Flex is intended to serve local needs within each zone, this indicates that the service is also being used to access areas well outside of this area.

FIGURE **7** TARTA FLEX RIDERSHIP PATTERNS
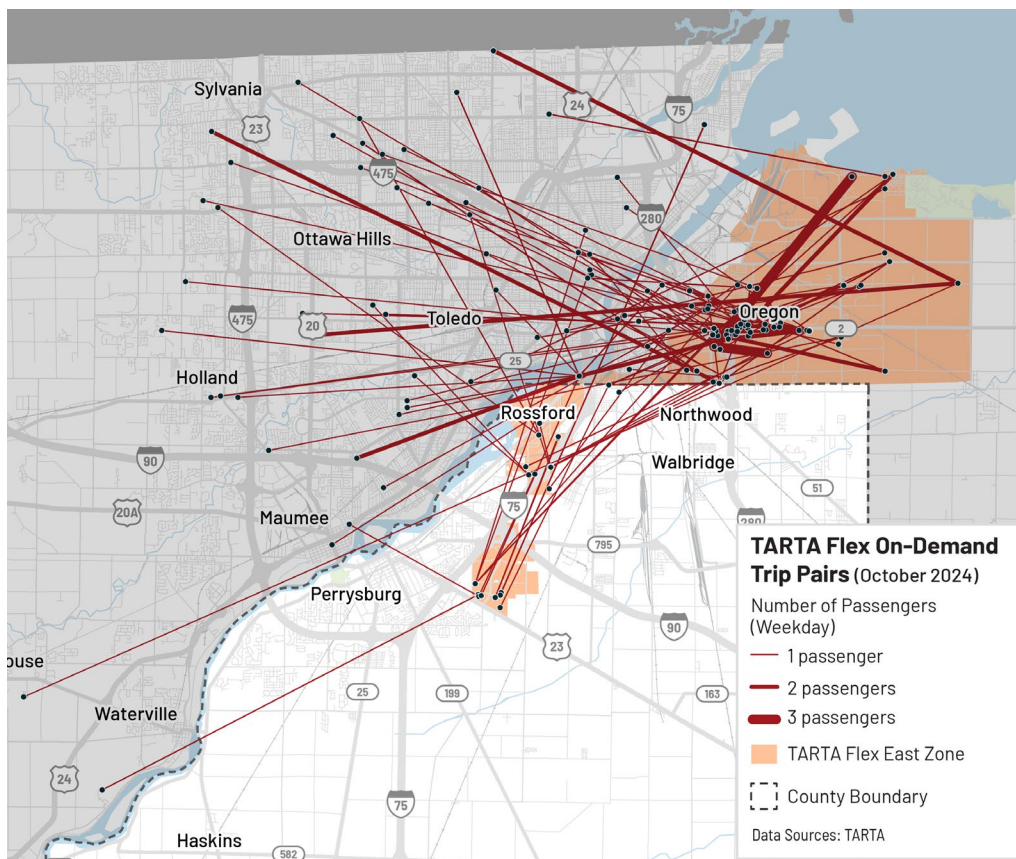
![TARTA Move logo]

TARTA Move

TARTA also provides a shared-ride, complementary paratransit service for people with disabilities whom, in combination with their functional abilities, prevent them from using the regular ADA equipped fixed route bus. All TARTA Move-eligible passengers can use the fixed route service free of charge.

Key elements of TARTA's ADA paratransit service include:

- **Service area:** Paratransit service must be provided within ¾ mile of a fixed bus route, as shown below in Figure 8 within Wood County.
- **Hours/days:** Paratransit must operate during the same hours and days as the fixed-route service.
- **Fares:** Can be no more than twice the fixed-route fare for a similar trip.
- **Eligibility:** Riders must meet ADA paratransit eligibility criteria (not simply age or income).
- **Reservation system:** Riders must be able to book rides at least the day before.

FIGURE 8 TARTA MOVE SERVICE AREA IN WOOD COUNTY
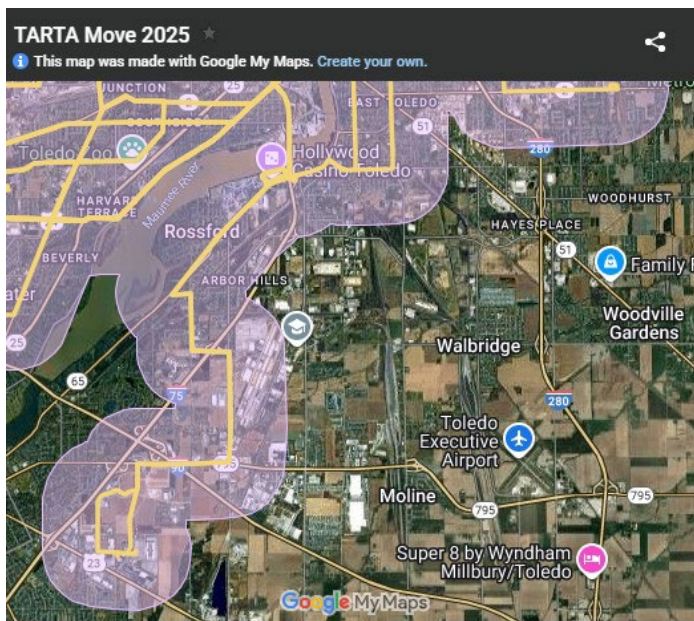
BOWLING GREEN STATE UNIVERSITY (BGSU) SHUTTLES

Bowling Green State University operates several fixed-routes for students and the campus community during the academic year, excluding holidays, semester breaks, and spring break. In 2024, the shuttle system operated four routes within and around the BGSU area:

- Orange Main
- Falcon Express
- Blue South
- Green East

Many of the BGSU shuttle stops are located directly on campus, while others serve key off-campus locations such as residential neighborhoods, student housing complexes, and local shopping centers. The ridership data below shows that the Centrex Building is the busiest BGSU shuttle stop with 10,640 boardings, followed by Offenhauer Tower (4,742) and Lot 12 (2,765). Another shuttle route, the Tractor Pull Shuttle, operates for one of Bowling Green's major special events, the National Tractor Pulling Championships, held annually August 14–16, which attracts thousands of visitors. The service loops between the Wood County Fairgrounds entrance, nearby hotels, and downtown Bowling Green.

TABLE 3 SHUTTLES RIDERSHIP (OCTOBER 2024)

Stop #	Stop Name	Monthly Ridership (Oct 2024)	Avg. Daily Ridership (Oct. 2024)
1	Centrex Building	10,640	355
2	Offenhauer Tower	4,742	158
3	Lot 12	2,765	92
4	Kreischer Quadrangle	2,737	91
5	Meijers	1,809	60
6	Bowen-Thompson Student Union	1,255	42
7	Founders Hall	1,169	39
8	Wolfe Center	1,098	37
9	Elm & Scott Hamilton Ave.	1,009	34
10	Napoleon Rd. & Dunbridge Rd.	1,003	33

There have been several recent service changes for fall 2025. The Orange route will add a new Sunday evening stop at Walmart from 5:00 to 10:00 p.m., while the Brown route will consolidate the former Green and Blue routes and retain the stop at Meijer. The Yellow Route will end service at 7:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The Orange Route ends service at 11:00 p.m. from Sunday through Wednesday. From Thursday through Saturday, late-night service to downtown operates until 2:30 a.m. On Saturdays, service begins at 10:00 p.m. and continues until 2:30 a.m.

FIGURE 9 BGSU SHUTTLES RIDERSHIP (OCTOBER 2024)
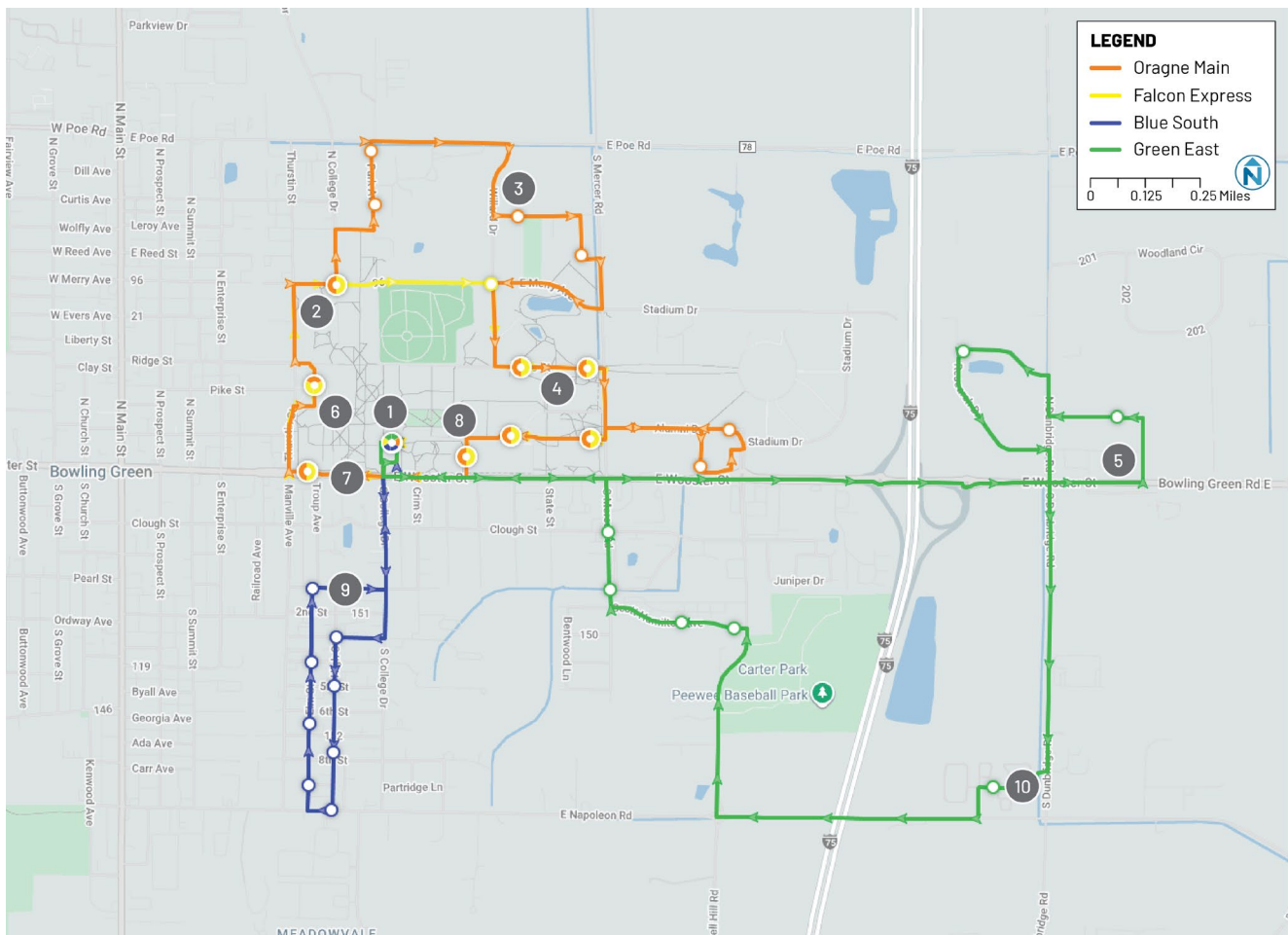
PERRYSBURG TRANSIT

Perrysburg Transit offers curb-to-curb on-demand service within the City of Perrysburg. Riders who wish to travel outside of Perrysburg can connect to TARTA fixed routes at designated transfer points, including the Meijer in Rossford and the City of Maumee Municipal Building.

Perrysburg Transit operates seven days a week, with service available Monday through Saturday and shorter hours on Sundays. As shown in Figure , the system averages around 37 trips on weekdays compared to 22 trips on weekend days. Ridership remains consistent throughout the late morning and early afternoon, particularly between 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.

FIGURE 10 PERRYSBURG TRANSIT DAILY RIDERSHIP
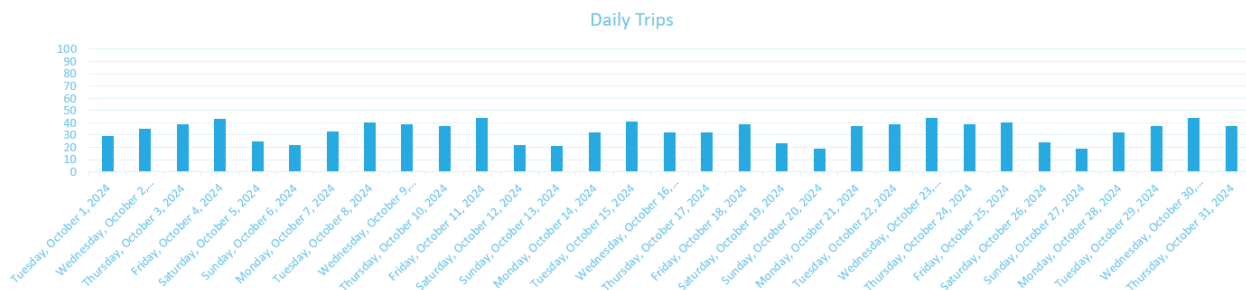
Figure 11 shows trip pairs on Perrysburg Transit for October 2024. This illustrates where rides started and ended within and around the city. Most travel flows are concentrated within the Perrysburg city limits, with dense clusters of origins and destinations connecting the retail destinations along Fremont Pike as well as in the Levis Commons area. The heaviest travel corridors—shown in dark red—represent popular connections, while lighter lines represent less common connections. Trips are occasionally provided to Maumee, but the vast majority remain within Perrysburg's core and to the Meijer in Rossford, reflecting a strong focus on local mobility.

FIGURE 11 PERRYSBURG TRANSIT TRIP PAIRS (OCTOBER 2024)

Perrysburg On-Demand Trip Pairs (October 2024)

Number of Trips
— 1 – 5
— 6 – 15
— 16 – 25
— 26 – 50

County Boundary

Data Sources: Perrysburg Transit
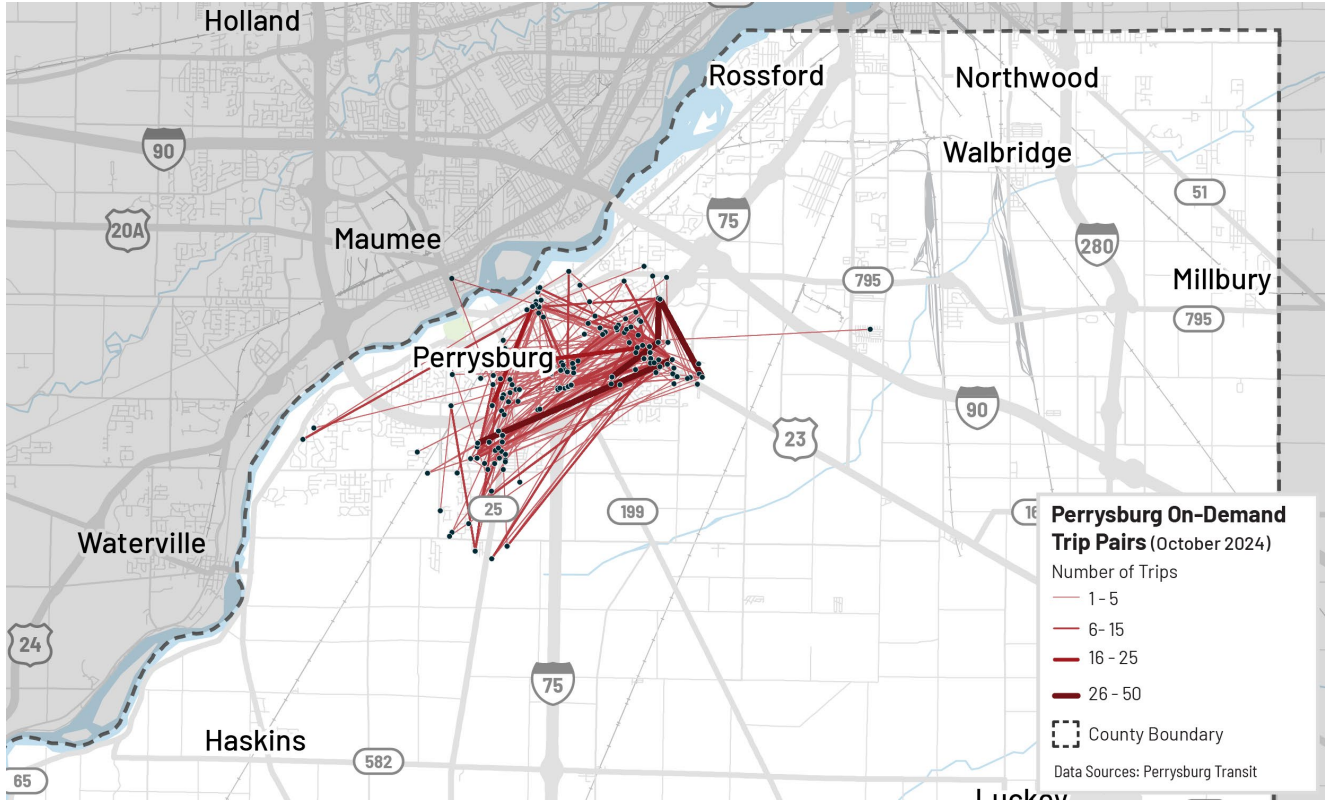
CITY OF BOWLING GREEN OHIO

BG TRANSIT

BG Transit is a curb-to-curb, on-demand transit service that operates within the city limits of Bowling Green.

BG Transit operates Monday through Friday from early morning until evening, with reduced service on Saturdays and no service on Sundays. On average, there are 82 trips on weekdays compared to 25 trips on Saturdays. The strongest ridership occurs between 12:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m., reflecting peak demand during midday and early afternoon hours.

FIGURE 12 BG TRANSIT DAILY RIDERSHIP

Daily Trips
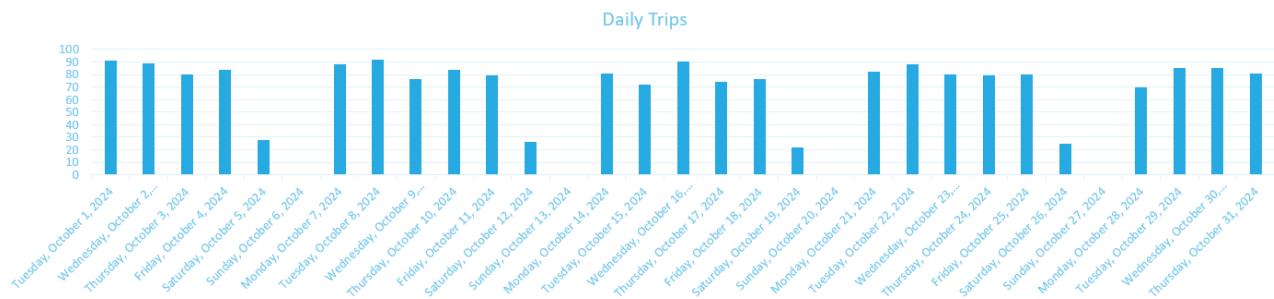
INTERCITY SERVICES

FlixBus, Greyhound, and Barons Bus provide daily intercity services from Wood County, with all services operating out of Bowling Green, the only city in the county served by these providers. Both Greyhound and Barons service serves Bowling Green and Toledo as part of a broader network of intercity bus service, that continues to destinations like Detroit, Cincinnati and Charlotte. Both routes stop at the Speedway just off of I-75 in Bowling Green and the Amtrak Station in downtown Toledo.

TABLE 4 INTERCITY SERVICE PROVIDERS

Provider	Service Frequency	City Served in Wood County
Greyhound (FlixBus)	Daily	Bowling Green
Barons Bus	Daily	Bowling Green

OTHER TRANSPORTATION SERVICES IN WOOD COUNTY

Public transit options connecting Wood County to nearby counties are limited, with only Ottawa County Transit Authority (OCTA) offering limited service to Northwood, Perrysburg, and Rossford on designated days of the week.

While the neighboring counties of Sandusky, Seneca, Henry, and Hancock all have transit service serving their counties, access to those counties from Wood County is limited and on a case-by-case basis. North Central Area Transit operates as a demand-response, curb-to-curb service, providing first-come, first-served trips from Seneca County to Wood County with a 72-hour (3 days) advance reservation requirement. Henry County provides transit service to Wood County. Trips must originate in Henry County and can go to any destination within Wood County. Service operates Monday through Saturday from 4:00 AM to 12:00 AM, and on Sunday from 6:00 AM to 4:00 PM. Transit service from Hancock County to Wood County is only available for riders eligible for Medicaid transportation benefits for medical appointment.

Market Analysis

To supplement the evaluation of existing transit services in Wood County, the project team analyzed the underlying market demand for transit service focused on workforce needs. The analysis integrates quantitative data from sources such as the American Community Survey (ACS), Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD), and Locational Based Service (LBS) data from Replica, combined with spatial analysis tools, to provide a comprehensive understanding of regional travel markets and patterns. It explores where people live and work, how they move throughout the area, and identifies potential gaps in transit access that may impact mobility and connectivity.

This market analysis focuses on places where people live and work, the location of major employment centers, and the travel flows that connect residents to job opportunities. Demand for workforce mobility is strongly related to the following factors:

Major Employers and Activity Centers – Large regional employers, schools/colleges, and retail centers can attract large volumes of people and are therefore more likely to generate transit trips. Major employers are also more likely to support transit service to attract workers and make their workplace more attractive.

Employment and Employment Density – Travelling to and from work are the most frequent and predictable trips for most people – and the focus of Worklink. Places with a high density of jobs are more likely to support regular transit services. Trips to colleges and schools (like Owens Community College and Penta Career Center), also major employers, are important markets for transit.

Low-Wage Workers and Employment – Different people are more likely to use transit than others, especially those who are lower income and/or do not have access to a vehicle. As such, exploring concentrations of low-wage employment in Wood County is a good indicator of places where transit is more likely to be successful.

Population and Population Density – Transit service that provides job access must connect to people, so higher population centers and density makes it more likely for transit to be successful and feasible to provide higher levels of service.

Development Patterns – There is a strong correlation between development patterns and transit ridership. Transit is easier to use and more convenient in areas with denser development and a good pedestrian environment.

Travel Patterns or Flows – Travel flows provide information on where people start and end their trips. This can help us understand which parts of Wood County have the highest travel demand. Inter-county travel flows are also important to assess regional transit priorities.

MAJOR EMPLOYERS

Major employers in Wood County are heavily concentrated in the northern part of the county, particularly around Rossford, Northwood, and Perrysburg, as shown in Table 5 and Figure 13. Bowling Green also has a significant number of major employers, including Bowling Green State University, the county's largest employer with approximately 2,500 employees. The university's presence reinforces Bowling Green's role as a central employment hub, supported by its higher population density. A few large employers are also located in the more rural parts of the county, including one in North Baltimore and one along I-75 between Perrysburg and Bowling Green.

It is important to note that the number of employees listed in Table 5 are estimates only based on Regional Growth Partnership (RGP)/JobsOhio data from April 2024 as well as updates based on research conducted for this study. In addition, these figures are for all employees for each company but many large employers in Wood County have multiple locations throughout the county.

TABLE 5 MAJOR EMPLOYERS OVER 200 EMPLOYEES IN WOOD COUNTY

Rank	Study Area #	City/Township	Company	Industry	Approx. Employees (April 2024)
1	2	Bowling Green	Bowling Green State University	Education	2,500
2	1	Lake Township; Perrysburg Township	First Solar, Inc.	Advanced Manufacturing	2,400
3	2	North Baltimore	Continental Structural Plastics, Inc.	Automotive	1,200
4	1	Perrysburg Township	FedEx Ground Package System, Inc.	Logistics and Distribution	1,200
5	2	Perrysburg	Mercy Health Perrysburg Hospital System	Healthcare	1,000
6	1	Northwood	Norplas Industries Inc.	Automotive	1,000
7	1	Rossford	Amazon	Logistics and Distribution	1,000
8	2	Perrysburg	Promedica	Healthcare	1,000
9	1	Perrysburg Township	Walgreens Distribution Center	Logistics and Distribution	900

Rank	Study Area #	City/Township	Company	Industry	Approx. Employees (April 2024)
10	1	Perrysburg Township	Owens Community College	Education	800
11	2	Bowling Green	MAGNA Vehtek Systems Inc.	Automotive	800
12	1	Perrysburg Township	Great Lakes Window	Advanced Manufacturing	750
13	2	Bowling Green	Wood County Hospital	Healthcare	700
14	2	Bowling Green	Cooper-Standard Automotive Inc.	Automotive	300
15	1	Northwood	Namsa	Information Technology	300
16	1	Perrysburg Township	Fresh Products, LLC	Advanced Manufacturing	300
17	1	Perrysburg	Penta Career Center	Education	275
18	2	North Baltimore	National Beef Ohio, LLC	Food Processing	275
19	1	Perrysburg Township	Oldcastle Buildingenvelope, Inc.	Advanced Manufacturing	250
20	2	Bowling Green	Betco Corp.	Advanced Manufacturing	250
21	1	Rossford	Industrial Power Systems Inc.	Advanced Manufacturing	250
22	2	Bowling Green	Rosenboom Machine & Tool Inc.	Advanced Manufacturing	250
23	2	Bowling Green, Middleton Township	Principle Business Enterprises	Advanced Manufacturing	225

Source: Regional Growth Partnership/JobsOhio

FIGURE 13 MAJOR EMPLOYERS AND DESTINATIONS IN WOOD COUNTY
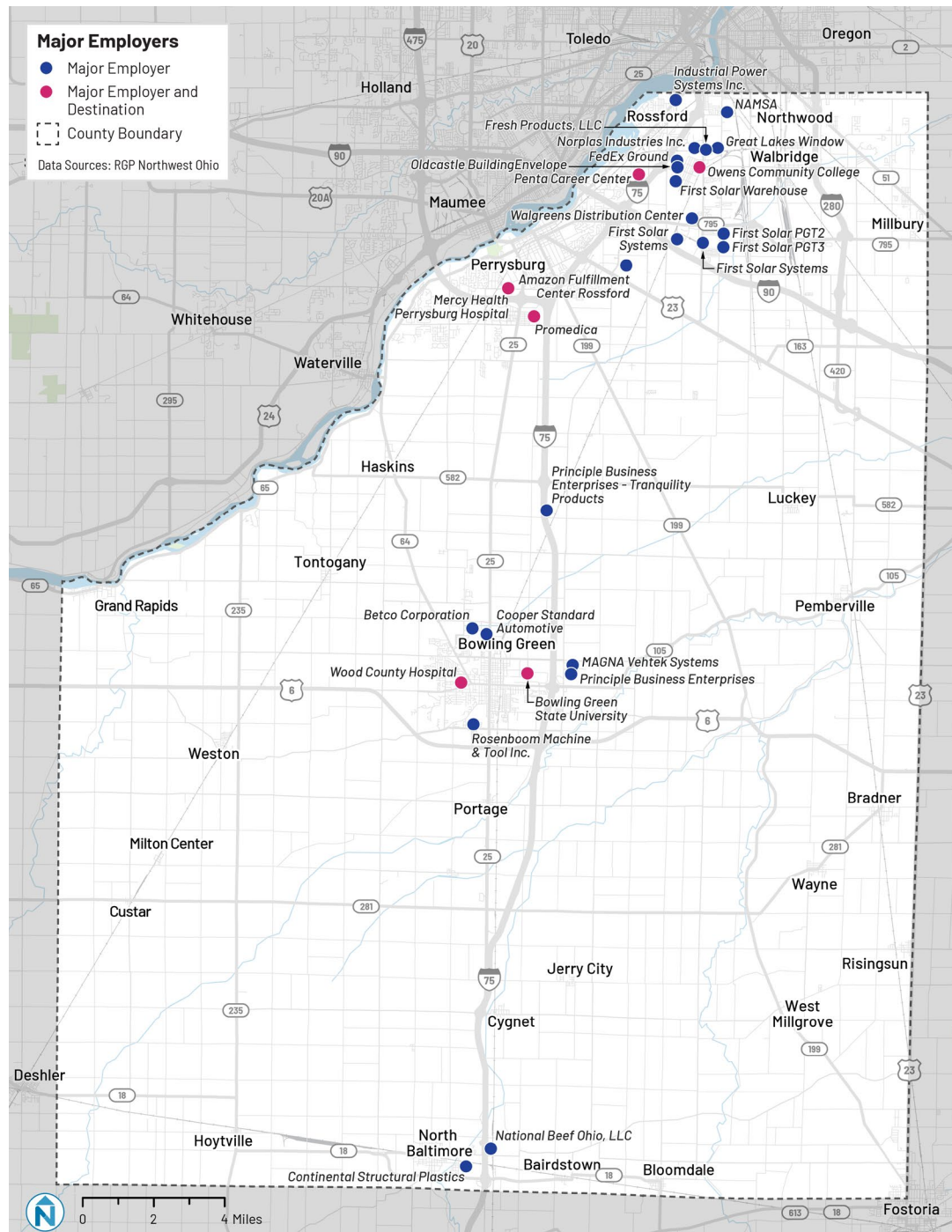
EMPLOYMENT DENSITY

As of 2022, there were about 62,000 jobs in Wood County. Jobs in the county are concentrated in several key industries:

- Manufacturing
- Healthcare
- Education services
- Retail, food services, hospitality

As shown in Figure 14, the highest employment densities in Wood County are located in and around the cities of Bowling Green, Perrysburg, Northwood, and Rossford. Most major employers such as Amazon Fulfillment Center, FedEx Ground, First Solar Warehouse, Norplas Industries Inc., Target, The Home Depot, Meijer, Walmart Supercenter, and others, are concentrated in or around Rossford and Northwood. Bowling Green also has a significant cluster of jobs, with Bowling Green State University serving as the largest employer, providing approximately 2,470 jobs.

While there are a few large employers, most Wood County's rural areas, particularly in the southern and eastern parts of the county, have relatively low employment densities, with fewer than 250 jobs per square mile.

As of 2023, the ratio of working-age people (18-64) to jobs in Wood County is 0.89, which is lower than most neighboring counties. A lower ratio indicates that Wood County tends to attract commuters and that Wood County employers are more likely to seek workers outside of the county boundaries.

FIGURE 14 EMPLOYMENT DESNITY (2022)
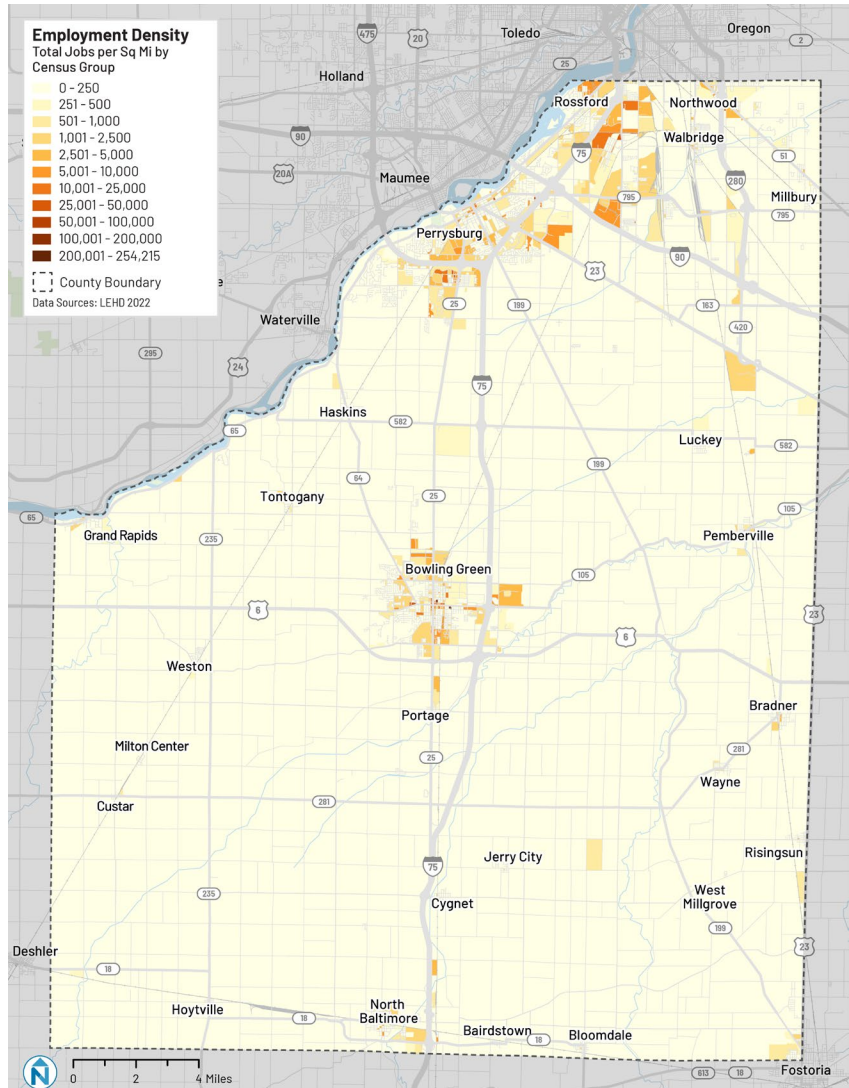
LOW-WAGE EMPLOYMENT DENSITY (2020)

Low-wage jobs, which are defined as those paying $3,333 or less per month, or $39,999 or less annually, are unevenly distributed across Wood County, as illustrated in Figure 15.

The distribution of low-income jobs across Wood County are generally found in the three larger urban centers (Bowling Green, Perrysburg and Rossford), but also along the I-75 and 795 corridors where warehouse and manufacturing jobs are common. In contrast, rural areas in the southern and eastern parts of the county show very low densities of low-income employment due to the limited presence of businesses and job opportunities overall, particularly in sectors that commonly offer lower-wage positions, such as retail, manufacturing, and warehousing.

FIGURE 15 LOW-INCOME EMPLOYMENT DESNITY (2020)
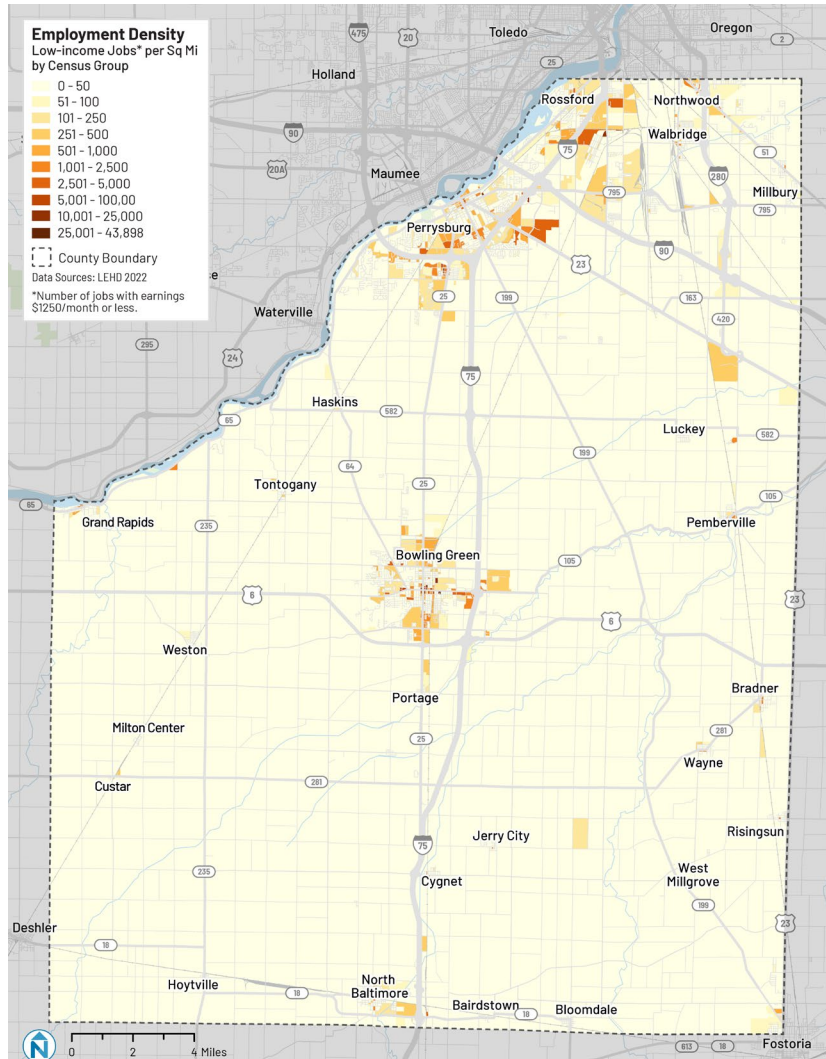
POPULATION DENSITY

Wood County's overall population is about 133,000. About a third of the people in Wood County live in Perrysburg, Perrysburg Township and Rossford. An additional 25% of the county's residents live in Bowling Green, which is home to Bowling Green State University. Other areas of population density include Perrysburg Township between Oregon Road and Tracy Road south of Owens Community College and I-90, as well as pockets in the far northeast part of the county (Walbridge, Millbury, and Northwood).

FIGURE 16 LOW-INCOME EMPLOYMENT DESNITY (2020)
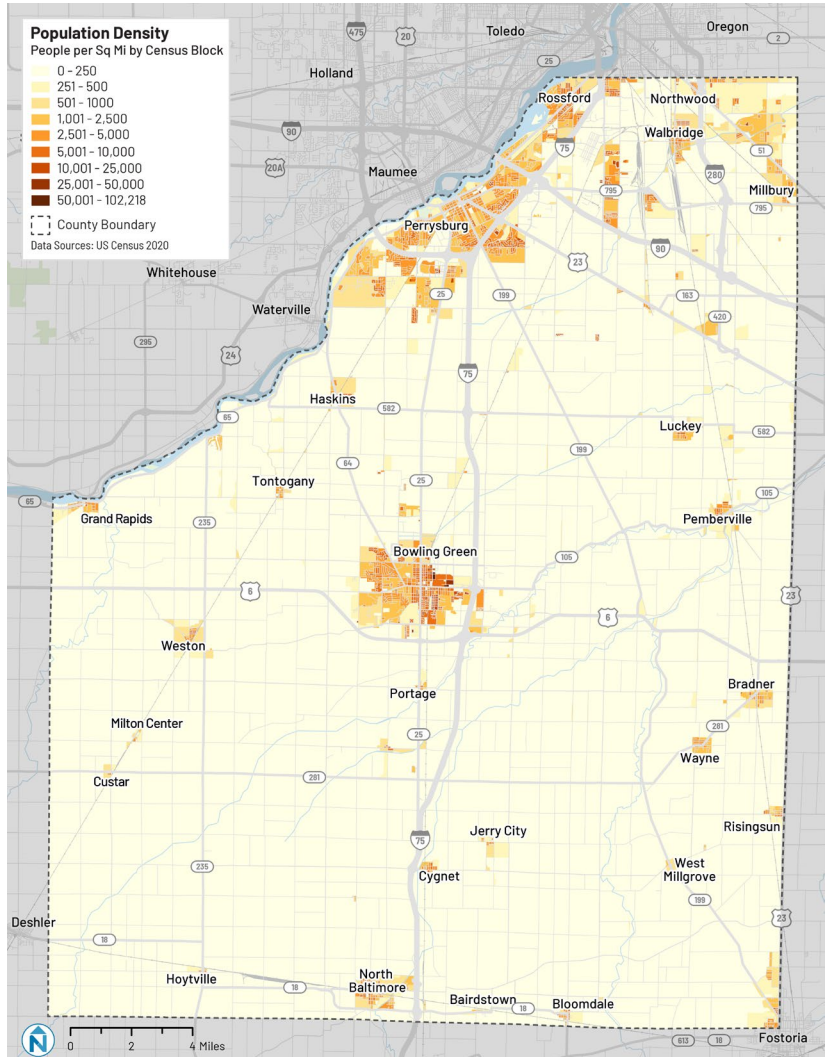
HOW DO PEOPLE COMMUTE IN THE REGION?

Based on Spring 2024 data, commuting patterns in the region show strong inter-county commuter patterns, particularly between the communities in the far north of Wood County (Perrysburg, Rossford, Northwood) and Lucas County (Toledo, Maumee, Holland).

High travel volumes are also present in Bowling Green, though to a lesser degree to areas outside of Wood County, reinforcing its role as a central destination for jobs and services.

A smaller but notable north–south commuter flow is also evident along the I-75 corridor, especially between Bowling Green and the greater Toledo area.

FIGURE 17 COMMUTER TRAVEL FLOWS (SPRING 2024)
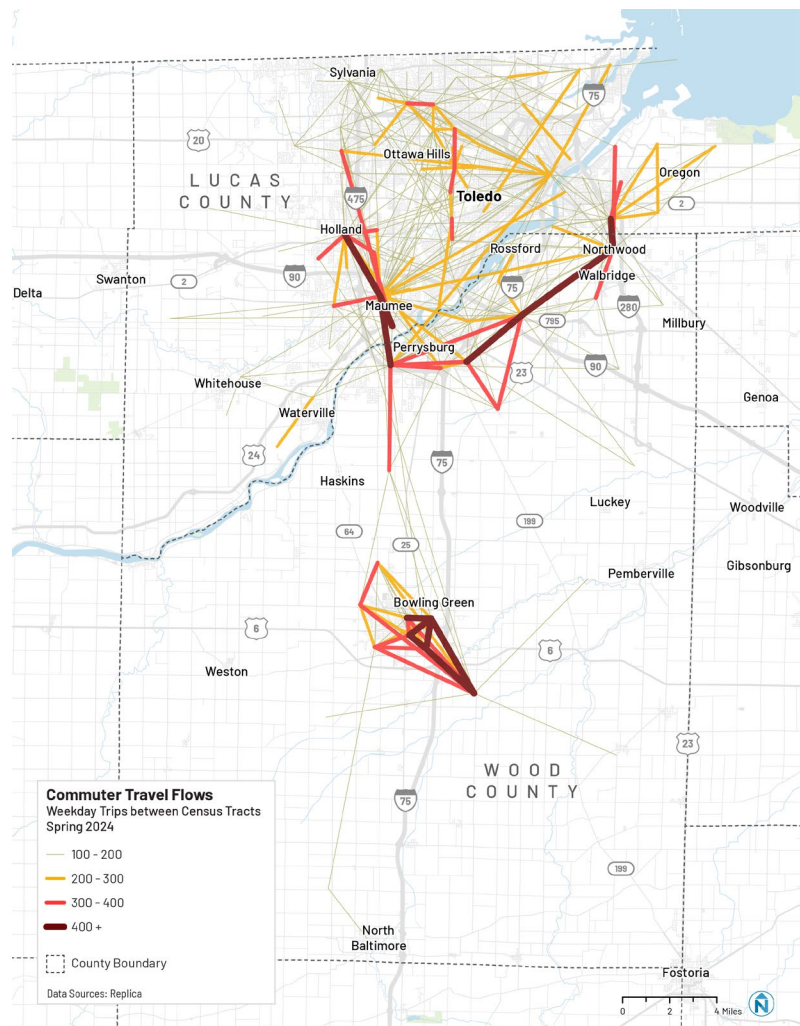
WHERE DO WOOD COUNTY WORKERS LIVE?

The LEHD (Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics) data was used to understand where workers live relative to their workplaces in Wood County. This information is important to identify travel flows and workforce mobility across the region.

According to 2022 LEHD data, more Wood County workers live outside the county in neighboring Lucas County, which accounts for 34% of the workforce, and it is higher than the 31% who live within Wood County itself. In addition, about one-third of Wood County workers live outside both Wood and Lucas counties.

FIGURE 18 JOBS COUNTS BY COUNTIES WHERE WOOD COUNTY WORKERS LIVE – ALL JOBS
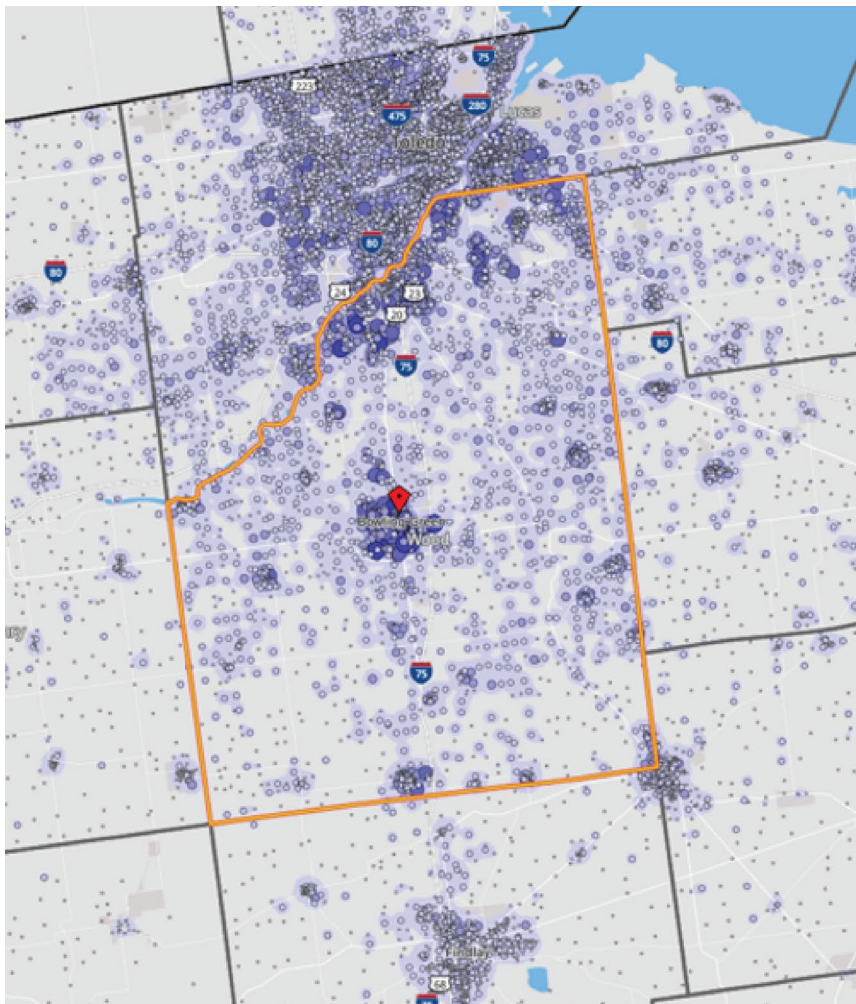
Job Counts by Counties Where Workers Live – All Jobs (2022)

County	Count	Share
All Counties	71,882	100.0%
Lucas County, OH	24,700	34.4%
Wood County, OH	22,107	30.8%
Hancock County, OH	2,086	2.9%
Monroe County, MI	1,840	2.6%
Sandusky County, OH	1,741	2.4%
Ottawa County, OH	1,675	2.3%
Franklin County, OH	1,278	1.8%
Cuyahoga County, OH	1,276	1.8%
Fulton County, OH	1,248	1.7%
Seneca County, OH	1,200	1.7%
All Other Locations	12,731	17.7%

About half of Wood County workers (45%) commute less than 10 miles, indicating a concentration of local employment opportunities and relatively short travel distances for a large portion of the workforce. However, over one-quarter of workers (26%) commute more than 25 miles, highlighting the presence of a large segment of the workforce that travels longer distances.

TABLE 6 JOBS BY DISTANCE – WORK CENSUS BLOCK TO HOME CENSUS BLOCK (2022)

Jobs by Distance	Current	Share
Less than 10 miles	32,008	44.5%
10 to 24 miles	21,137	29.4%
25 to 50 miles	5,760	8.0%
Greater than 5o miles	12,977	18.1%
Total All Jobs	71,882	100%

WHERE DO WOOD COUNTY RESIDENTS WORK?

Similar to where workers live in Wood County, LEHD data also shows where Wood County residents work, which is essential for understanding job accessibility and regional travel flows. Based on 2022 LEHD data, over one-third of Wood County residents (38%) work within the county, while 33% commute north to Lucas County. Another 5% travel south to Hancock County, likely to work in Findlay.

FIGURE 19 JOBS COUNTS BY COUNTIES WHERE WOOD COUNTY WORKERS ARE EMPLOYED – ALL JOBS
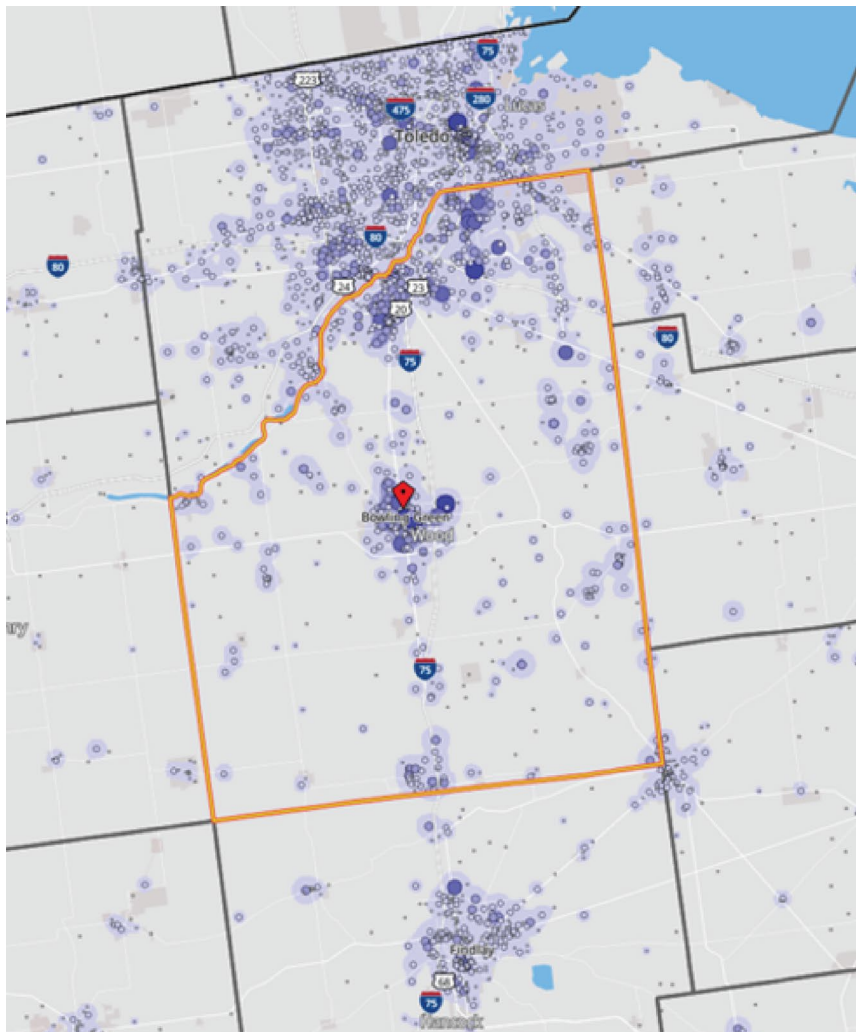
Job Counts by Counties Where Workers are Employed – All Jobs (2022)

County	Count	Share
All Counties	58,740	100.0%
Wood County, OH	22,107	37.6%
Lucas County, OH	19,771	33.7%
Hancock County, OH	3,190	5.4%
Franklin County, OH	1,568	2.7%
Cuyahoga County, OH	1,489	2.5%
Sandsky County, OH	1,086	1.8%
Seneca County, OH	859	1.5%
Hamilton County, OH	786	1.3%
Ottawa County, OH	669	1.1%
Summit County, OH	472	0.8%
All Other Locations	6,743	11.5%

WHERE DO LUCAS COUNTY RESIDENTS WORK?

As the major population center in northwest Ohio, LEHD data was also evaluated to identify where Lucas County residents work. While the majority of Lucas County residents work in the same county (65.5%), a sizable proportion (13.5%) work in Wood County, primarily in and around Perrysburg, Perrysburg Township, Rossford and Northwood and to a lesser degree in Bowling Green (see Figure 20).

FIGURE 20 JOB COUNTS BY COUNTIES WHERE LUCAS COUNTY WORKERS ARE EMPLOYED – ALL JOBS
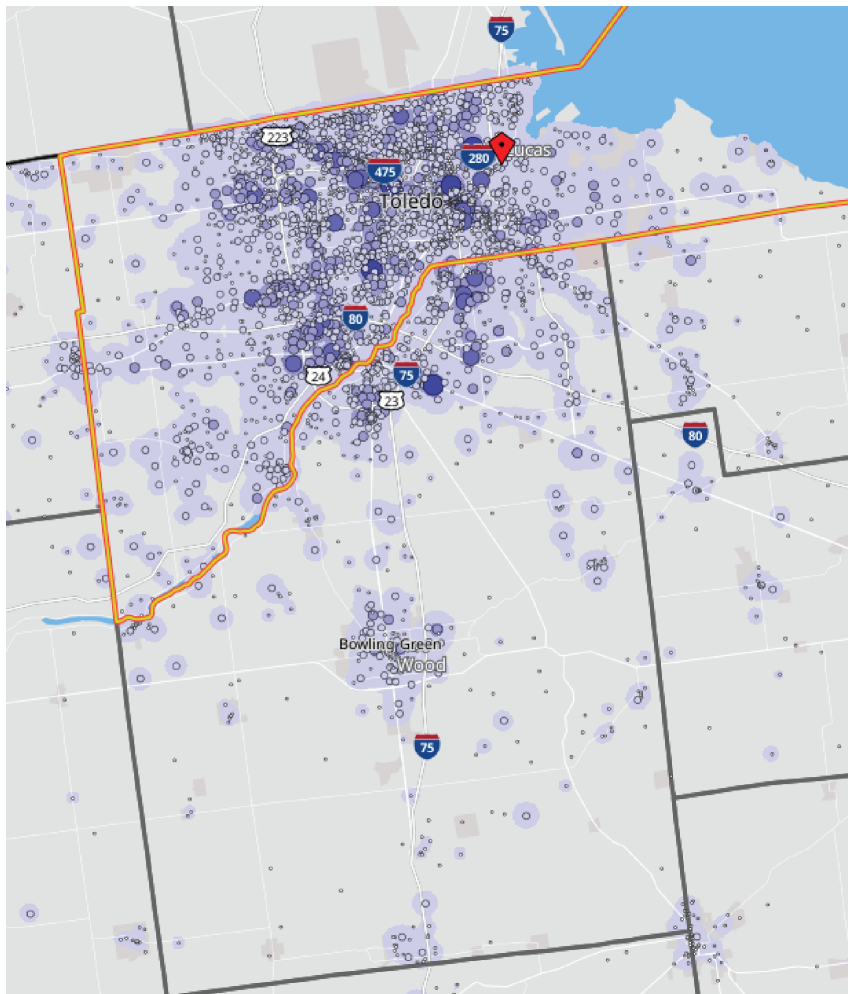
Job Counts by Counties Where Workers are Employed – All Jobs (2022)

County	Count	Share
All Counties	183,246	100.0%
Lucas County, OH	120,073	65.5%
Wood County, OH	24,700	13.5%
Cuyahoga County, OH	5,110	2.8%
Franklin County, OH	5,069	2.8%
Hamilton County, OH	2,592	1.4%
Hancock County, OH	1,977	1.1%
Fulton County, OH	1,880	1.0%
Summit County, OH	1,470	0.8%
Montgomery County, OH	1,144	0.6%
Licking County, OH	1,027	1.6%
All Other Locations	18,204	9.9%

Appendix

How are People Traveling in Employment Focus Areas?

To better understand how people travel to, from and within the communities across the region, with a particular focus on travel patterns of major employment areas in Wood County, the project team used calibrated travel demand data from 2024 using Replica and aggregated the data to the Census Block Group level. These data provide estimates of where trips begin (origin), where they end (destination), and how many trips occur between different geographic zones.

While one of the limitations of this analysis is that it includes all types of trips made by all modes (not just transit), the study area was divided into several "employment focus areas" as shown in Figure 20 below. This focus area approach enables a more detailed analysis of trip origins and destinations in areas with significant employment concentrations, offering clearer insights into potential mobility solutions for these areas.

Key findings from this analysis are provided below. The detailed analysis maps for each focus area are included in the Appendix.

- The areas in the far northeast part of the county (focus areas 1 and 7) have some of the highest travel flows in the county and are strongly connected to Oregon and Toledo (especially East Toledo and the neighborhoods stretching from downtown to the northwest).
- The neighborhoods of Rossford west of I-75 (focus areas 2 and 3) have relatively low travel flows and are most connected to adjacent neighborhoods and areas along the Broadway corridor in Toledo.
- The areas of Rossford east of I-75 (focus areas 4 and 5) are very connected to the rest of the region and have high travel flows compared to other areas. This area is most connected to Perrysburg, Perrysburg Township, the neighborhoods in Rossford west of I-75, and multiple neighborhoods in Toledo (northwest of downtown, East Toledo, and the Broadway corridor).
- The area of Perrysburg around Levis Commons (focus area 6) is very much a part of the larger Toledo region and is strongly connected to Maumee and Holland/Springfield in Lucas County, as well as Rossford and Springfield Township.
- Travel flows in Bowling Green (focus areas 8, 9 and 11) are very high compared to other areas but are largely concentrated within Bowling Green and surrounding areas. However, there are several areas in Lucas County with slightly higher travel flows to Bowling Green, including the University of Toledo area as well as the area around Rogers High School in Toledo.

FIGURE 21 FOCUS-AREA MAP
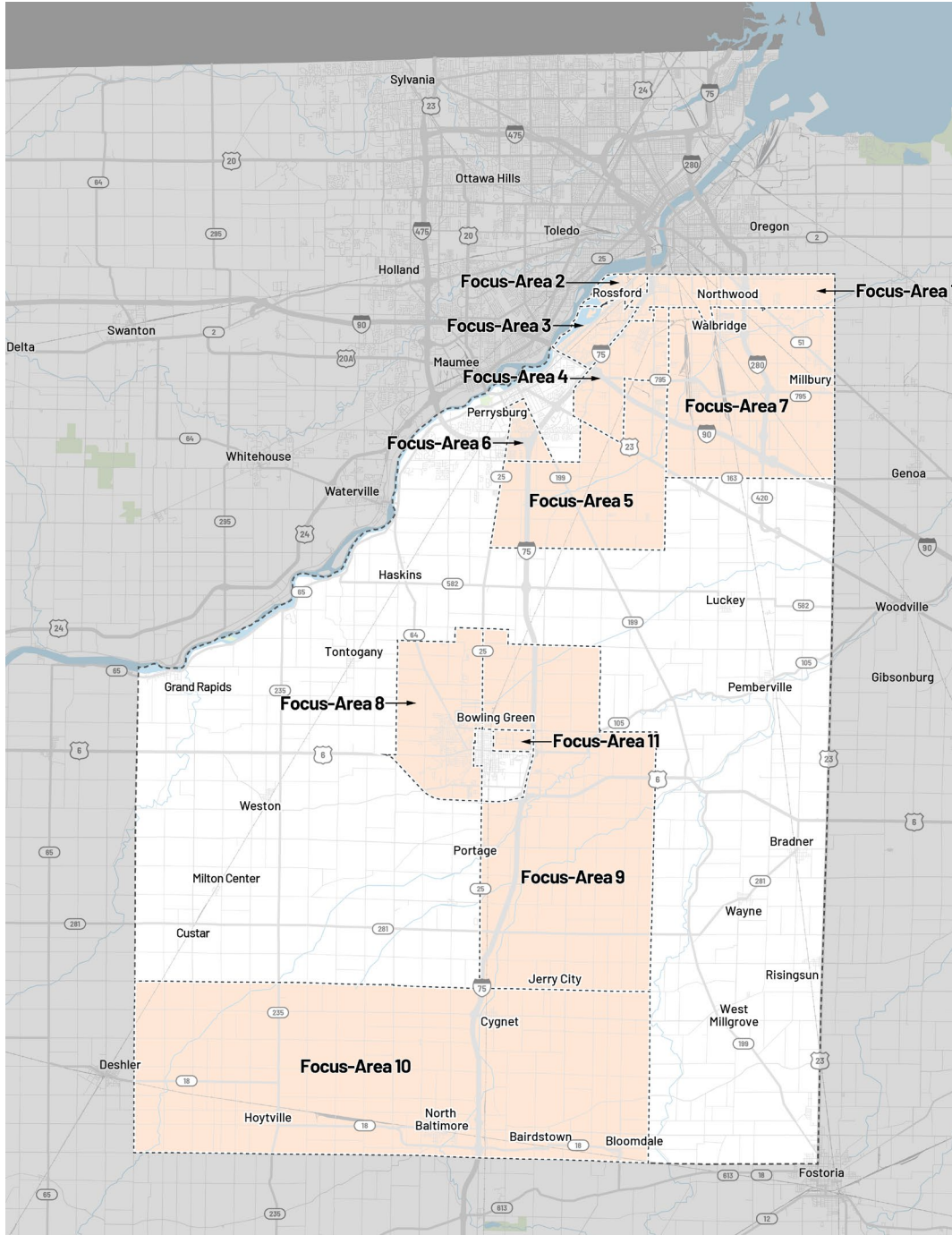
FOCUS-AREA 1: NORTHWOOD (CENSUS TRACT 201)

Key findings from the detailed analysis of Northwood:

FIGURE 22 TRIP BY ORIGIN - FOCUS-AREA 1

- The areas in and around Northwood generate some of the highest travel flows in the region, with adjacent cities such as Toledo, Oregon, and Rossford showing high travel flow concentrations.

- There are different types of trips occurring between Northwood and Toledo, reflecting diverse travel purposes. Many trips are made to residential areas on both sides of the Maumee River. A large number of trips flow toward Downtown Toledo, which serves as a key commercial and employment hub. Additionally, the Toledo Public Schools Adult Education Center (northwest of downtown Toledo) is a key destination for education-related travel between Northwood and Toledo.

- Northwood shows higher travel flow toward Bay Park Community Hospital and St. Charles Mercy Hospital in Oregon. These strong travel flows indicate that healthcare facilities are major destinations for both residents and employees. In addition to healthcare, retail centers along Navarre Avenue in Oregon serve as key shopping destinations. These retail hubs including Oregon Plaza Shopping Center and Walmart.

- To the south, there are strong travel flows between Northwood and the residential areas surrounding Walbridge Railway Park. These trips primarily occur between residential neighborhoods in Walbridge and commercial destinations in Northwood, including the commercial corridor along Woodville Road.

FOCUS-AREA 2: ROSSFORD (CENSUS TRACT 202)

Key findings from the detailed analysis of Rossford:

- This area has relatively low travel flows compared to other focus areas.
- The highest travel flows occur in and around Rossford (Census Tract 202), driven by its mix of industrial, educational, and commercial destinations. Large employers such as High Industrial Power Systems, Beacon Industries, Pilkington North America Inc., Rossford High School, and the commercial areas along Superior Street generate high trip densities.
- There is a relatively strong travel connection between Rossford and the Broadway St corridor in Toledo, between South Ave and Western Ave, which includes both residential neighborhoods and commercial activity.
- Rossford maintains somehow strong travel links to the Fremont Pike corridor, including major retailers like Walmart Supercenter, Kroger Marketplace, and Meijer.

FIGURE 23 TRIP BY ORIGIN - FOCUS-AREA 2

FIGURE 23 TRIP BY ORIGIN - FOCUS-AREA 2
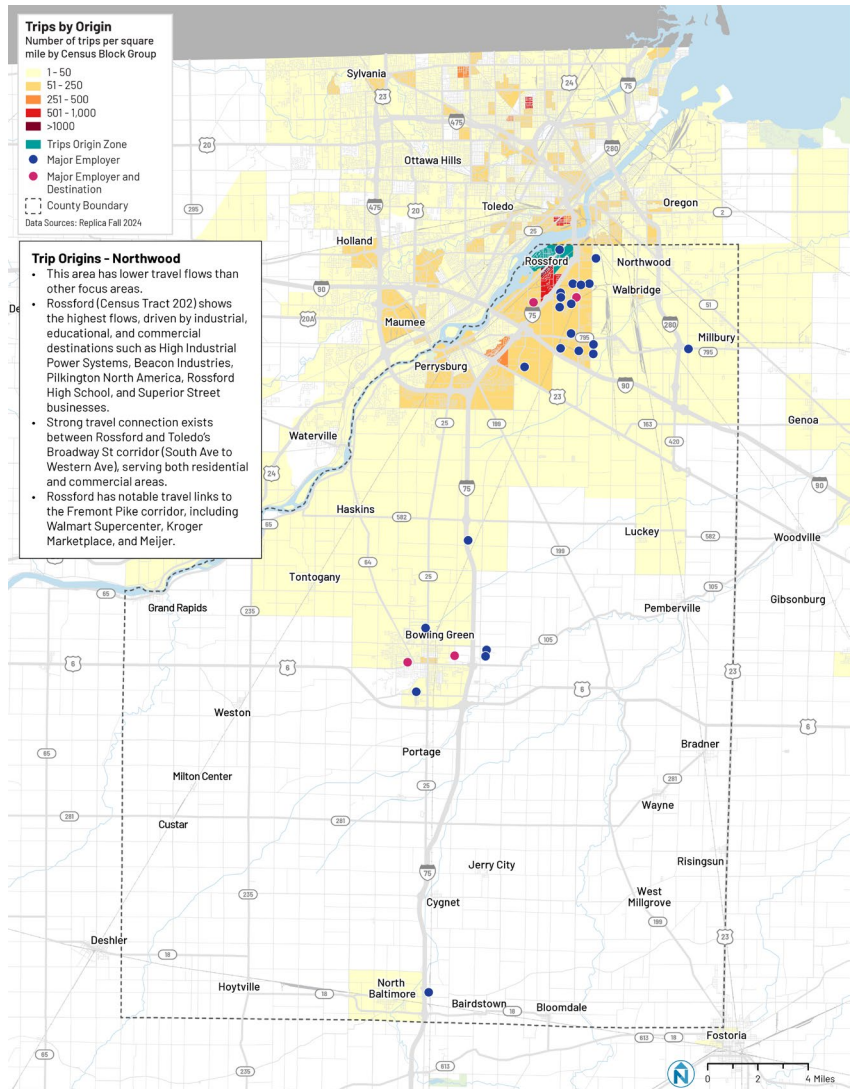
FOCUS-AREA 3: ROSSFORD (CENSUS TRACT 203)

Key findings from the detailed analysis of this focus areas include:

- The highest travel flows in this focus area occur in and around Rossford (Census Tract 203), with most trips originating from residential areas and around the Penta Career Center. These trips primarily distribute to nearby destinations, particularly the industrial area on the north end of Rossford, which is home to major employers such as High Industrial Power Systems, Beacon Industries, Pilkington North America Inc., and Rossford High School.

- Another key area of high travel activity is around the I-75 on the south end of Rossford, driven by major retailers like Walmart Supercenter, Kroger Marketplace, Hobby Lobby, Lowe's Home Improvement, Kohl's as well as surrounding residential neighborhoods.

FIGURE 24 TRIP BY ORIGIN - FOCUS-AREA 3

Trips by Origin
Number of trips per square mile by Census Block Group

- 1 - 50
- 51 - 250
- 251 - 500
- 501 - 1,000
- >1000
- Trips Origin Zone
- Major Employer
- Major Employer and Destination
- County Boundary

Data Sources: Replica Fall 2024

Trip Origins – Northwood
- In Rossford (Census Tract 203), most trips start from residential areas and near Penta Career Center, heading mainly to the north-end industrial area with major employers like High Industrial Power Systems, Beacon Industries, Pilkington North America, and Rossford High School.
- The I-75 south end of Rossford sees high travel activity from major retailers (Walmart, Kroger, Hobby Lobby, Lowe's, Kohl's) and nearby residential neighborhoods.

FOCUS-AREA 4: ROSSFORD/PERRYSBURG TOWNSHIP (CENSUS TRACT 207)

Key findings from the detailed analysis of this focus area include:

- The areas in and around this focus area generate some of the highest travel flows in Wood County.
- This focus area is very connected to the region with adjacent cities such as Toledo, Northwood, Oregon, Perrysburg, Maumee, Walbridge, and Rossford all showing high travel flow concentrations.
- To the south, major retailers such as Walmart Supercenter, Kroger Marketplace, Hobby Lobby, Lowe's Home Improvement, and Kohl's, along with surrounding residential neighborhoods, also generate significant travel activity.

FIGURE 25 TRIP BY ORIGIN - FOCUS-AREA 4

- In Perrysburg, high trip volumes are distributed among residential areas, with additional trips directed to retail destinations (e.g., Costco, Owens Illinois Plaza Four, and Country Charm Shoppes), schools (Toth Elementary School and Perrysburg Junior High School), and the industrial zones south of I-475, reflecting a mix of home, school, and work-related travel.
- There are also high travel flows between residential areas in Maumee and Rossford, indicating strong commuting patterns between these two cities.
- There are also strong travel flows to residential neighborhoods throughout Toledo, especially east Toledo, suggesting a mix of commuting, retail, and leisure trips.
- Other relatively strong travel flows also exist between the residential neighborhoods of Millbury and Walbridge in Wood County, as well as along the I-475 corridor in Lucas County.
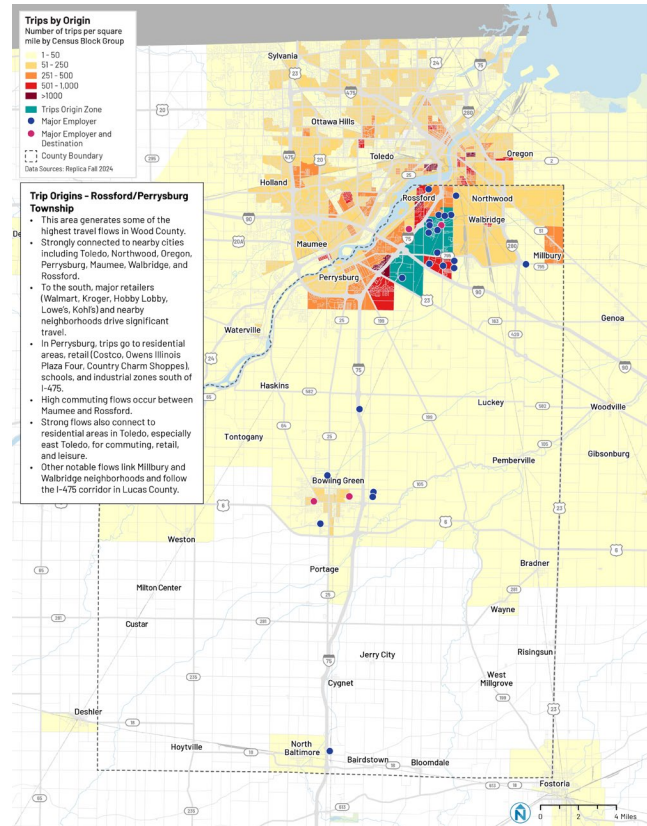
FOCUS-AREA 5: PERRYSBURG TOWNSHIP (CENSUS TRACT 207.02)

Key findings from the detailed analysis of this focus area include:

- As a largely undeveloped and rural area of Wood County, this focus area has relatively low travel flows

- First Solar Systems, located in the northern part of this focus area, is likely attracting trips from and residential areas in Perrysburg, Toledo (especially east Toledo), Rossford, and Oregon.

FIGURE 26 TRIP BY ORIGIN - FOCUS-AREA 5

Trips by Origin
Number of trips per square mile by Census Block Group

- 1 - 50
- 51 - 250
- 251 - 500
- 501 - 1,000
- >1000
- Trips Origin Zone
- Major Employer
- Major Employer and Destination
- County Boundary

Data Sources: Replica Fall 2024

Trip Origins – Rossford/Perrysburg Township
- As a mostly rural, undeveloped part of Wood County, this area has low travel flows.
- First Solar Systems in the north attracts trips from Perrysburg, Toledo (especially east Toledo), Rossford, and Oregon.

FOCUS-AREA 6: PERRYSBURG (CENSUS TRACT 206)

Key findings from the detailed analysis of Focus-Area 6:

- The areas in and around this focus area generate some of the highest travel flows in Wood County.
- The highest trip concentrations are seen in Perrysburg and areas east of Perrysburg, with trips serving diverse purposes. Key trip generators on the west side include Mercy Health-Perrysburg Hospital, Costco Wholesale, Walt Churchill's Market-Perrysburg, Ohio Cat-Perrysburg, Fort Meigs YMCA, Ohio Peterbilt–Toledo, and nearby apartment complexes. To the east, major trip generators include Walmart Supercenter, Meijer, Kroger, and other retail destinations along Fremont Pike. These trips are a mix of residential, commercial, and employment-related travel.
- There is also a strong connection between this focus area and communities in Lucas County, including Maumee, Holland and Springfield.

FIGURE 27 TRIP BY ORIGIN - FOCUS-AREA 6

Trips by Origin
Number of trips per square mile by Census Block Group
- 1 - 50
- 51 - 250
- 251 - 500
- 501 - 1,000
- >1000
- Trips Origin Zone
- Major Employer
- Major Employer and Destination
- County Boundary
Data Sources: Replica Fall 2024

Trip Origins – Perrysburg
- This area generates some of the highest travel flows in Wood County.
- Perrysburg and its east side show the highest trip concentrations, with key generators like Mercy Health, Costco, Walmart, Meijer, Kroger, and other retail and employment hubs.
- Strong travel links connect this focus area to Maumee, Holland, and Springfield in Lucas County.

# FOCUS-AREA 7: WALBRIDGE & MILLBURY (CENSUS TRACT 208 AND 209)

Key findings from the detailed analysis of this focus area include:

FIGURE 28 TRIP BY ORIGIN - FOCUS-AREA 7

Trips by Origin
Number of trips per square mile by Census Block Group

- 1 - 50
- 51 - 250
- 251 - 500
- 501 - 1,000
- >1000
- Trips Origin Zone
- Major Employer
- Major Employer and Destination
- County Boundary

Data Sources: Replica Fall 2024

Trip Origins – WALBRIDGE & MILLBURY
- This area generates some of the highest travel flows in Wood County.
- Most trips come from Walbridge and Millbury neighborhoods to destinations like Meijer, ProMedica Bay Park Hospital, Mercy Health-St. Charles, and retail centers on Navarre Ave (Oregon Plaza, Walmart).
- High trip volumes also come from east Toledo and neighborhoods north/northwest of downtown, showing strong commuting patterns.
- Perrysburg, especially around the I-75 interchange, is another major destination with both residential and commercial activity.

- The areas in and around this focus area generate some of the highest travel flows in Wood County.
- Most of the trips originate from the residential areas of Walbridge and Millbury, heading to destinations such as Meijer, ProMedica Bay Park Hospital, and Mercy Health-St. Charles Hospital in Oregon. In addition to these trips, retail centers along Navarre Ave in Oregon, such as Oregon Plaza Shopping Center and Walmart, serve as key shopping destinations, attracting substantial travel from Walbridge and its surrounding areas
- There are also high trip volumes from residential areas in east Toledo and neighborhoods north and northwest of downtown Toledo, highlighting the strong connectivity and commuting patterns between these largely residential areas.
- Another top destination for this focus area is Perrysburg, particularly the areas east and west of the I-75 interchange which feature a mix of residential and commercial development.
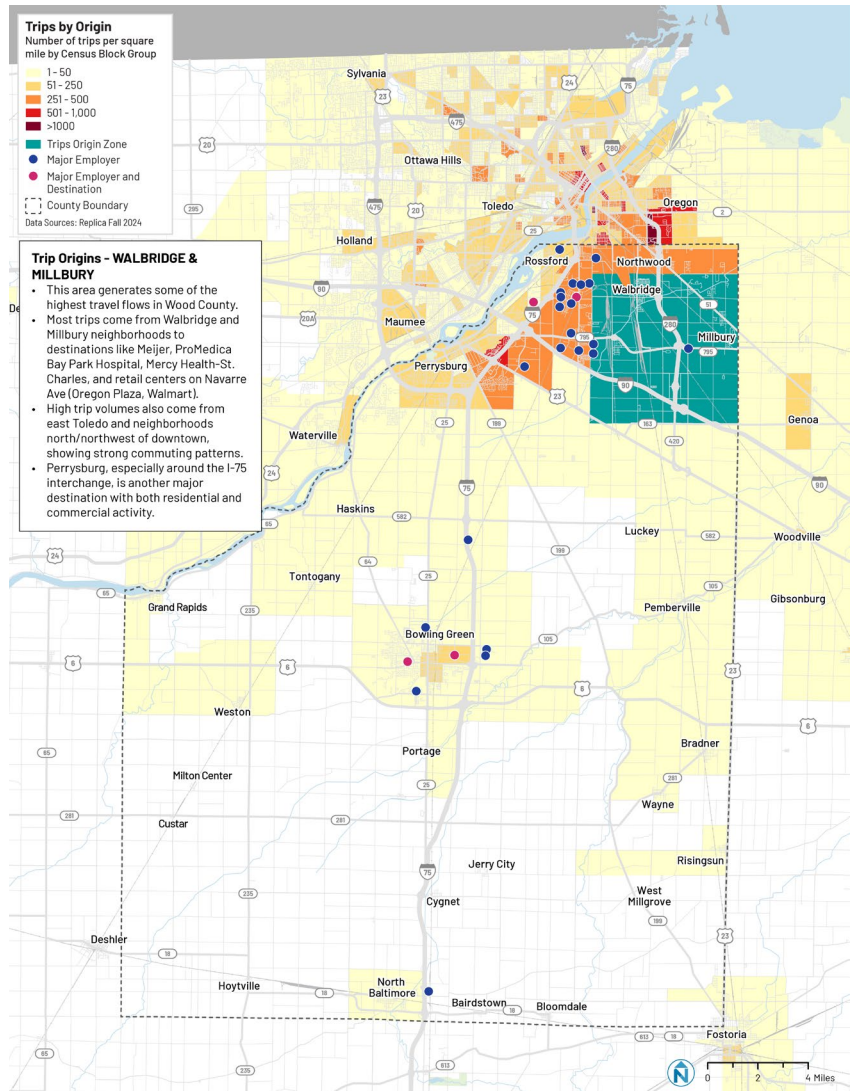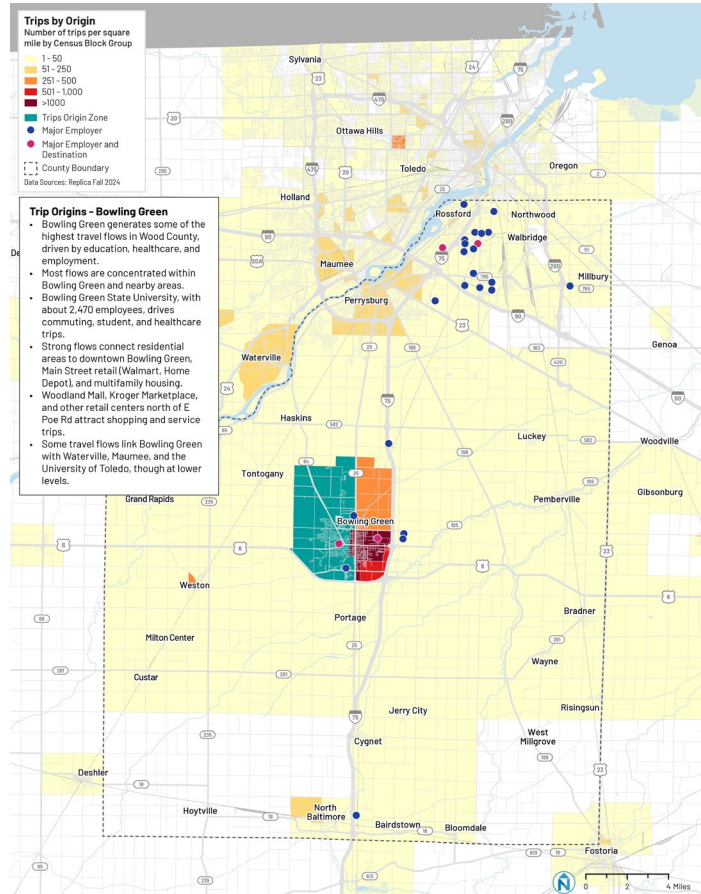
FOCUS-AREA 8: BOWLING GREEN (CENSUS TRACT 216 AND 219)

Key findings from the detailed analysis of this focus areas include:

- Bowling Green generates some of the highest travel flows in Wood County, driven by education, healthcare, employment, and other major destinations.
- Most of the travel flows, however, are largely concentrated within Bowling Green and surrounding areas.
- A significant number of trips in this focus area are generated by Bowling Green State University, the largest employer in the area with approximately 2,470 employees. These trips primarily consist of commuting, student travel, and healthcare-related visits.
- There are also strong travel flows between this focus area, which is largely residential, and areas in downtown Bowling Green and the Main Street corridor, like Walmart and the Home Depot, and nearby multifamily housing.
- Woodland Mall, Kroger Marketplace, and other retail centers north of E Poe Rd have strong travel connections with Sub-area 8. These trips are primarily shopping and service-related, reflecting the retail draw of these destinations for nearby residents.
- While there is a lesser connection between Bowling Green and communities in northern Wood County, some travel flows exist between this focus area and Waterville, Maumee, and the University of Toledo.

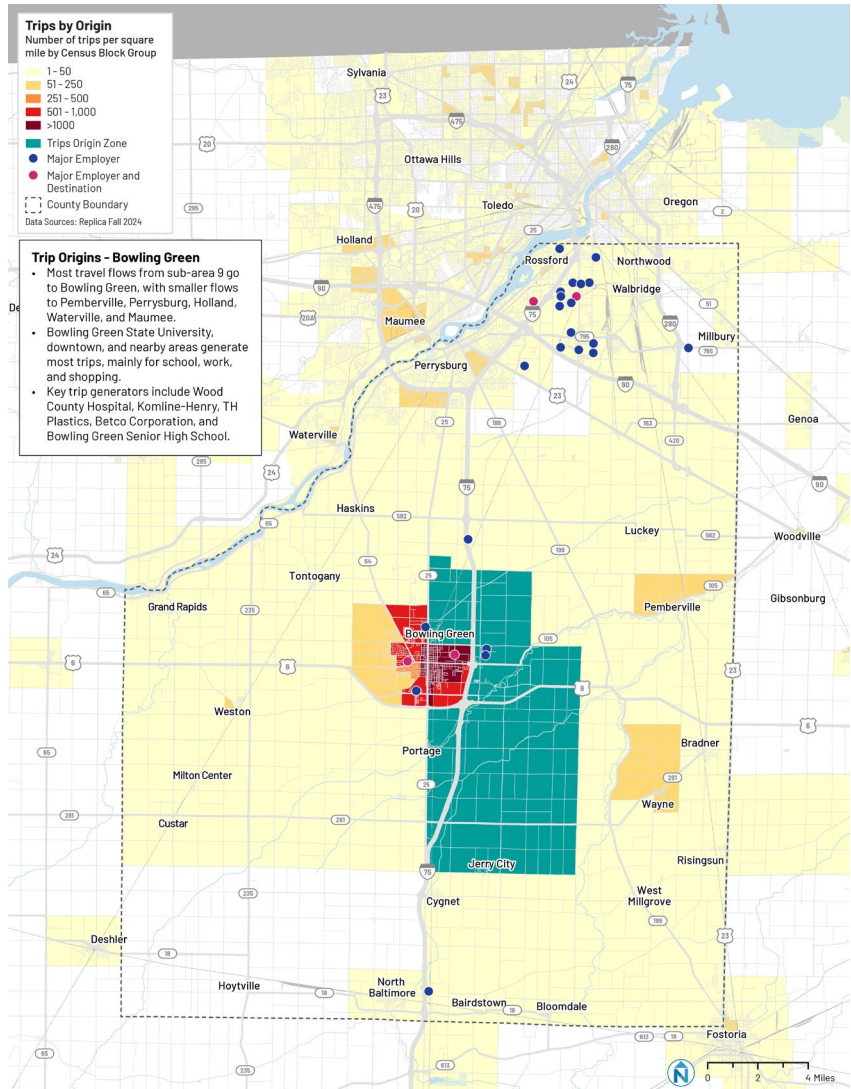FIGURE 29 TRIP BY ORIGIN - FOCUS-AREA 8

FOCUS-AREA 9: BOWLING GREEN (CENSUS TRACT 225)

Key findings from the detailed analysis of this focus area include:

- Nearly all travel flows from sub-area 9, primarily located outside Bowling Green, are concentrated in Bowling Green, except for smaller flows to Pemberville, Perrysburg, Holland, Waterville, and Maumee.

- Bowling Green State University, downtown Bowling Green, and adjacent areas generate most travel flows from this focus area, and likely consist of school, work, and shopping trips.

- Wood County Hospital and its surrounding area, along with Komline-Henry, TH Plastics, Betco Corporation, and Bowling Green Senior High School generate most of the trips within this focus area.

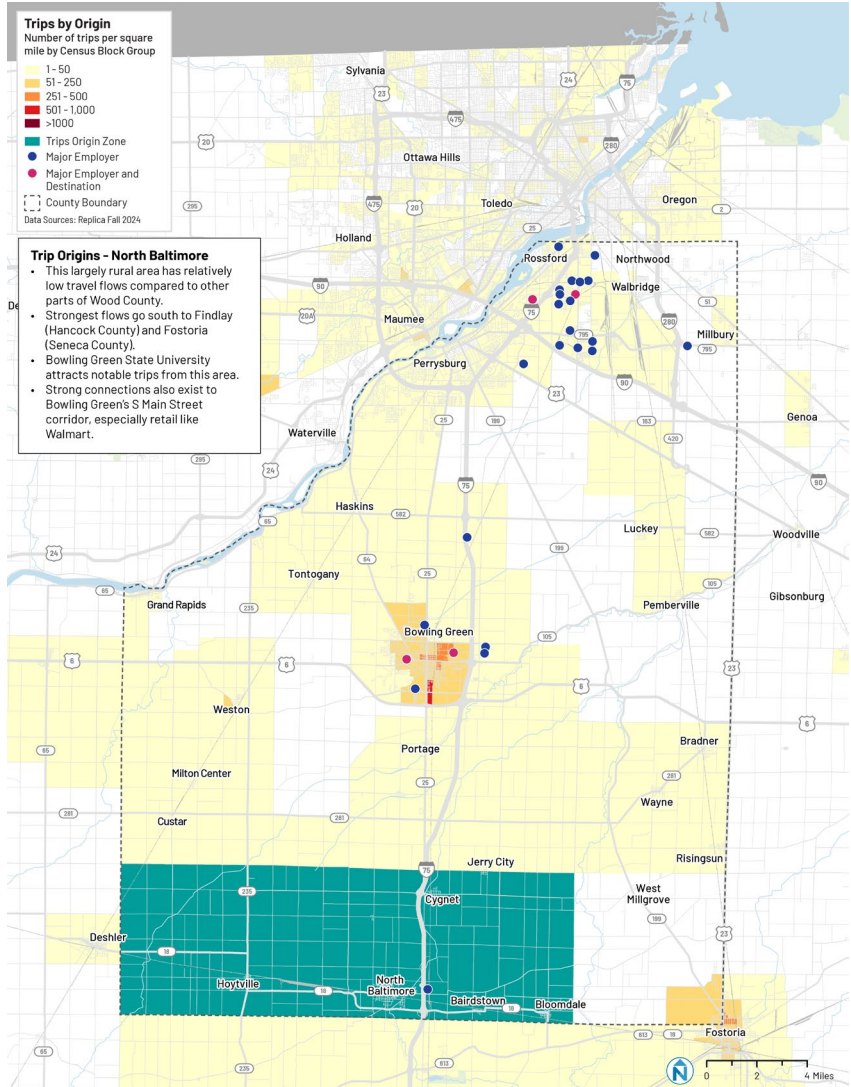FIGURE 30 TRIP BY ORIGIN - FOCUS-AREA 9

FOCUS-AREA 10: NORTH BALTIMORE (CENSUS TRACT 225)

Key findings from the detailed analysis of this focus areas include:

- Travel flows in this area, which is largely rural, are relatively low compared to other areas in Wood County.
- The strongest travel flows are south to Findlay in Hancock County, as well as to Fostoria in Seneca County.
- Bowling Green State University, being a key destination in Wood County, also attracts considerable travel flows from this focus areas.
- There are also strong connections between this focus areas and the S Main Street corridor in Bowling Green, likely related to major retail in this area, like Walmart.

FIGURE 31 TRIP BY ORIGIN - FOCUS-AREA 10

Trips by Origin
Number of trips per square mile by Census Block Group

- 1 - 50
- 51 - 250
- 251 - 500
- 501 - 1,000
- >1000

Trips Origin Zone
Major Employer
Major Employer and Destination
County Boundary
Data Sources: Replica Fall 2024

Trip Origins – North Baltimore
- This largely rural area has relatively low travel flows compared to other parts of Wood County.
- Strongest flows go south to Findlay (Hancock County) and Fostoria (Seneca County).
- Bowling Green State University attracts notable trips from this area.
- Strong connections also exist to Bowling Green's S Main Street corridor, especially retail like Walmart.

FOCUS-AREA 11: BOWLING GREEN STATE UNIVERSITY (CENSUS TRACT 225)

Key findings from the detailed analysis of this focus area include:

- Travel flows in this area are largely concentrated within Bowling Green and on the BGSU campus and surrounding areas.
- Other major travel flows to this focus area include downtown Bowling Green as well as the retail destinations located along S. Main Street, including Walmart and Aldi.
- Lesser but notable connections also exist between this focus area and Pemberville, Perrysburg, and in Lucas County (Maumee, around Reynolds High School, and the University of Toledo).

FIGURE 32 TRIP BY ORIGIN - FOCUS-AREA 11

FIGURE 32 TRIP BY ORIGIN - FOCUS-AREA 11