



## MAHONING VALLEY MARKET PULSE™

Issue #17 • Week of June 29, 2026

**FROM THE EDITOR:** Trumbull Energy Center's completion gives the Mahoning Valley a major new energy asset at a time when electricity capacity is increasingly central to industrial growth, AI infrastructure and data-center site selection. The project is a reminder that economic development depends on what happens with power, utilities, land-use rules, transportation systems and development-ready sites.

In parallel, WRTA's bus barn project, YNDC's brownfield funding and Central Tower's redevelopment path show that the region's growth story is being driven not only by major private investment, but by the public infrastructure, incentives and site-preparation work needed to support it.

All items sourced June 22–28 unless otherwise dated. Capital Pipeline Tracker and Economic Indicators are cumulative reference tables updated weekly.

### ON DECK — JUNE 30–JULY 4

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- **Tuesday, June 30** — Trumbull County Commissioners public workshop.
- **Tuesday, June 30** — Ashtabula County Commissioners work session and agenda session.
- **Tuesday, June 30** — Regional Chamber Power Lunch at Anejo Mexican Restaurant and Cantina.
- **Wednesday, July 1** — Trumbull County Commissioners regular meeting.
- **Thursday, July 2** — Mercer County Commissioners meeting.
- **Friday, July 3 / Saturday, July 4** — Independence Day holiday schedule impacts likely for local-government offices and meeting calendars.
- **Mark Your Calendar** — America Makes MMX 2026, Aug. 4-5, Youngstown/Canfield.

Sources: [Trumbull County](#) · [Ashtabula County](#) · [Regional Chamber](#) · [Mercer County](#) · [America Makes](#)

### LEAD STORY

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#### **\$1.2B Lordstown Power Plant Goes Live**

A \$1.2 billion power plant is now operating in Lordstown, adding a major new energy asset to the Mahoning Valley as electricity capacity remains central to industrial growth, AI infrastructure and

data-center siting. Project partners and regional leaders celebrated completion of the Trumbull Energy Center this week, marking the transition of the 953-megawatt combined-cycle facility from years of planning and construction into commercial operation.

The project is one of the Valley's most significant infrastructure gains of the year. Beyond its power-generation role, the facility brings a long-term economic-development signal: large-scale private capital is still finding its way into the region when the site, grid, permitting and local partnership pieces line up.

Sources: [WFMJ](#) · [BJD](#) · [Regional Chamber](#)

## STRATEGIC SIGNALS

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**SOBE rate hike adds pressure for downtown steam-heat customers.** Ohio regulators approved emergency rates for SOBE Thermal Energy Systems, meaning many downtown Youngstown customers who use steam heat could see much higher bills during peak seasons. The move helps keep the system running for now, but it also shows how older downtown utility systems can become costly and difficult to maintain. Source: [Vindicator](#)

**Data-center governance keeps spreading locally, even as the statewide ballot push misses 2026.** Girard City Council advanced a one-year data-center moratorium, with final reading expected July 13, adding another Valley jurisdiction to the growing roster of communities pausing large-scale projects while they study zoning, power, water and land-use impacts. Separately, the statewide proposal to ban large data centers fell short of the signatures needed for the 2026 ballot and is now positioned as a 2027 effort. Sources: [Vindicator \(Girard\)](#) · [Vindicator \(ballot issue\)](#)

**WRTA's bus barn project adds a transit, fleet and grid-readiness signal.** WRTA broke ground on a \$6.5 million bus barn project that includes charging infrastructure for battery-electric buses, electrical upgrades and solar panels intended to reduce grid impact. The project is part of the region's gradual shift toward cleaner fleet operations and more resilient workforce-mobility infrastructure. Sources: [Vindicator](#) · [WRTA project page](#)

## INFRASTRUCTURE & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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- **FEMA awarded Columbiana \$664,596 for stormwater upgrades** in a June 18 award. The funding will help install new storm sewers in neighborhoods near East Park Avenue, Friend Street, Pittsburgh Street and Fairfield Avenue, supporting flood mitigation and protection for homes and businesses. Source: [FEMA \(June 18 award\)](#)

- **YNDC received a \$1 million EPA Brownfields grant for assessment and cleanup work along the Greater Glenwood Avenue Commercial Corridor.** The funding will help evaluate and remediate contaminated vacant properties, including former service-station sites, so land can be returned to development-ready use. Sources: [WFMJ](#) · [WKBN](#)

## POWER, DATA & SITE READINESS

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- **Trumbull Energy Center strengthens the Valley's power-infrastructure position as electricity demand becomes a bigger factor in industrial recruitment, AI infrastructure and data-center site**

**selection.** The 953-megawatt Lordstown facility adds large-scale generation capacity at a time when power availability is increasingly shaping where major users can locate and expand. Sources: [WFMJ](#) · [BJD](#)

- **Girard advanced a one-year data-center moratorium, with final reading expected July 13.** The move would put Girard alongside other Valley communities using temporary pauses to study zoning, utility, noise, water and land-use impacts before large-scale projects move forward. Source: [Vindicator](#)

For a closer look at the power, zoning, and economic considerations influencing data center projects in the Mahoning Valley, download our white paper: [The Data Center Dilemma](#).

## DATA-CENTER GOVERNANCE TRACKER

| Jurisdiction                | County      | Term / Status              | Date / Update                                                                      |
|-----------------------------|-------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Lordstown Village           | Trumbull OH | 180 days + extension       | Original moratorium approved January; extension approved June 15, effective July 5 |
| Hubbard City                | Trumbull OH | 12 months                  | Approved June 1; New Albany lessons discussed June 20                              |
| Hubbard Township            | Trumbull OH | 12 months                  | Approved Feb. 10                                                                   |
| Boardman Township           | Mahoning OH | 1 year                     | Approved at April township meeting; zoning commission studying impacts             |
| Niles City                  | Trumbull OH | 180 days                   | Approved May 20                                                                    |
| Weathersfield Township      | Trumbull OH | 6 months                   | Effective April 30                                                                 |
| Vienna Township             | Trumbull OH | 180 days                   | Approved week of Feb. 16; reported Feb. 21                                         |
| Bazetta Township            | Trumbull OH | 180 days                   | Approved May 12                                                                    |
| Braceville Township         | Trumbull OH | 6 months                   | Approved June 2, effective immediately                                             |
| Cortland City               | Trumbull OH | 1 year                     | Approved June 1                                                                    |
| Howland Township            | Trumbull OH | 6 months                   | Approved June 10                                                                   |
| Warren City                 | Trumbull OH | Permanent ban proposed     | In process / watch                                                                 |
| Girard City                 | Trumbull OH | 1-year moratorium proposed | Second reading June 2026; final reading expected July 13                           |
| Mahoning Township           | Lawrence PA | Zoning ordinance           | Enacted local zoning controls                                                      |
| North Beaver Township       | Lawrence PA | Zoning ordinance           | Enacted local zoning controls                                                      |
| Ohio statewide ballot issue | Ohio        | Ballot proposal            | 2026 signature threshold missed; 2027 effort possible                              |

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- **Central Tower received a \$4.25 million state historic preservation tax credit** for a planned \$21.7 million renovation of Youngstown's tallest building. The project would convert the 17-story downtown tower into a mixed-use building with 64 apartments on the upper floors and office space below. Sources: [Vindicator](#) · [BJD](#)
- **A \$750,000 state capital-budget allocation will help advance the Youngstown Innovation Hub for Aerospace and Defense.** The funding is expected to support early renovation work at the

second Vindicator Printing Co. building, creating manufacturing-ready space for companies tied to defense, aerospace and advanced manufacturing. Source: [BJD](#)

## RETAIL & RESTAURANT BEAT

● **DICK'S Sporting Goods celebrated the grand opening of its next-generation Eastwood Mall store June 26-28**, relocating from its former 52,000-square-foot Great East Plaza building into a 72,000-square-foot anchor position inside the enclosed mall. The expanded format adds enhanced team-sports areas, a House of Cleats, more than 1,000 footwear styles and golf simulator technology, reinforcing Eastwood's ongoing repositioning around larger-format, experiential retail. Sources: [Tribune Chronicle](#)

● **Layne's Chicken Fingers is coming to Boardman, filling the former Taco Bell location along Route 224**. The Texas-based chicken-finger chain would make the location its first in the Mahoning Valley, adding another fast-casual entrant to the U.S. 224 corridor. Source: [WFMJ](#)

## ECONOMIC INDICATORS

| Indicator                      | Latest        | Prior        | Change     | Signal                       |
|--------------------------------|---------------|--------------|------------|------------------------------|
| Mahoning County unemployment   | 3.8% May      | 4.4% Apr.    | ↓ 0.6 pts. | Improving                    |
| Trumbull County unemployment   | 4.1% May      | 4.6% Apr.    | ↓ 0.5 pts. | Improving                    |
| Columbiana County unemployment | 3.1% May      | 3.4% Apr.    | ↓ 0.3 pts. | Improving                    |
| Ashtabula County unemployment  | 3.0% Apr.     | 4.5% Mar.    | ↓ 1.5 pts. | Latest available county data |
| Lawrence County unemployment   | 4.0% Apr.     | 5.1% Mar.    | ↓ 1.1 pts. | Latest available county data |
| Mercer County unemployment     | 4.0% Apr.     | 4.6% Mar.    | ↓ 0.6 pts. | Latest available county data |
| Ohio unemployment              | 3.7% May      | 3.9% Apr.    | ↓ 0.2 pts. | Stable-to-improving          |
| Pennsylvania unemployment      | 4.2% May      | 4.2% Apr.    | Flat       | Stable                       |
| U.S. unemployment              | 4.3% May      | 4.3% Apr.    | Flat       | Stable                       |
| Valley home sales              | 475 May sales | 484 May 2025 | ↓ 2%       | Slightly softer              |

**Mortgage rates remain a key housing-cost pressure point.** Beginning next issue, Market Pulse will track the weekly 30-year fixed mortgage-rate trend alongside unemployment, home sales and other regional indicators to better show how capital costs are affecting buyers, builders and redevelopment activity.

Sources: [BJD unemployment report](#) · [OhioLMI LAUS](#) · [Pennsylvania DLI](#) · [BLS/FRED county data](#) · [BJD home sales](#)

## CAPITAL PIPELINE TRACKER

Cumulative reference table updated weekly. NEW = added this issue.

| Project                       | Invest.    | Jobs      | Status                                                 | County    |
|-------------------------------|------------|-----------|--------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| SoftBank/Stargate - Lordstown | \$3B+      | TBD       | Site work continues; online 2026-27                    | Trumbull  |
| Ultium Cells - Lordstown      | \$2.3B     | ~1,500 pk | August callback target; income-tax impact now visible  | Trumbull  |
| Graphite One - Conneaut       | \$1.4B     | Ph1 150+  | FAST-41 Sept. 29; AGM June 26                          | Ashtabula |
| Kimberly-Clark - Warren Mfg   | \$800M     | ~500      | Construction active; 1.2M SF on 560 acres              | Trumbull  |
| K-C Distribution Center       | \$160M     | 65        | Board decision pending                                 | Trumbull  |
| Keel Data Center - Sharon     | \$5B       | 134       | Zoning approved with conditions; Mercer Co. RPC review | Mercer PA |
| FirstEnergy Grid - Trumbull   | \$24M      | -         | 138-kV rebuild; Energize365 reliability work           | Trumbull  |
| Warren Steel Site             | \$15M loan | -         | Foreclosure; 360-acre industrial site                  | Trumbull  |

|                                         |                           |                   |                                                                                    |             |
|-----------------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| Everest Aluminum - Warren               | \$19.5-33M                | 70                | Tax abatement approved; site decision pending                                      | Trumbull    |
| Innovation Hub - A&D                    | \$62M                     | 450 by 2029       | State \$750K allocation supports first-phase renovations; summer 2026 start target | Mahoning    |
| Mercy Health - Champion ER              | \$30M ER + \$843K bridge  | 75 prior estimate | \$500K ODOT bridge award tied to ER access                                         | Trumbull    |
| Vallourec - Premium Thread              | \$48M                     | 40                | Commissioning Q1 2027                                                              | Mahoning    |
| EOG/Encino - Utica Drilling             | \$6.5B                    | 1,000s            | Regional upstream priority                                                         | Regional    |
| McDonald Steel Site                     | \$3.25M                   | -                 | 51.8 acres cleared; sale window Jul-Oct 2026                                       | Trumbull    |
| Youngstown REDD Infill                  | \$2.5M                    | 220 units         | Awarded March 6                                                                    | Mahoning    |
| Warren Peninsula Project                | \$851K                    | 306 units         | Awarded March 6                                                                    | Trumbull    |
| Mahoning National Bank Bldg             | \$18.5M                   | 71 units          | Renovation active                                                                  | Mahoning    |
| Mahoning Co. Gov't Center               | \$60M                     | 400+              | WRPA design / demolition path; construction 2027                                   | Mahoning    |
| Bristolville 25 / Lordstown             | \$3.6B                    | 120 projected     | Lordstown moratorium extended 180 days effective July 5                            | Trumbull    |
| Zuharis / Project Astralus              | TBD                       | 2,000-5,000       | 510-acre DC + power plant + water; Q3 2027 target                                  | Columbiana  |
| AMG Chrome - New Castle                 | \$15M                     | TBD               | Opened; sole U.S. chrome-metal producer; 6,500-ton capacity                        | Lawrence PA |
| YNG Aviation Education Center           | \$6.98M                   | -                 | Contract awarded; awaiting EDA / FAA notice to proceed                             | Trumbull    |
| Youngstown river / sewer infrastructure | \$10.35M sewer + dam work | -                 | Sewer overflow work finalized; Anthony's appraisal tied to dam access              | Mahoning    |
| East Palestine Train Depot              | \$889,545 contract        | TBD               | Renovation contract awarded; work expected early July                              | Columbiana  |
| SB 450 Valley line items                | Mult                      | -                 | Capital budget signed; local line items enacted                                    | Mult        |
| Amazon Bazetta DC                       | \$30M                     | ~120              | Under construction; opening date pending                                           | Trumbull    |
| NEW Trumbull Energy Center              | \$1.2B                    | -                 | 953-MW Lordstown power plant completed / commercial operation                      | Trumbull    |
| NEW WRTA Bus Barn                       | \$6.5M                    | -                 | Groundbreaking; EV charging, electrical upgrades and solar                         | Mahoning    |
| NEW Central Tower                       | \$21.7M                   | 64 units          | \$4.25M historic tax credit supports mixed-use conversion                          | Mahoning    |
| NEW YNDC Glenwood Cleanup               | \$1M                      | -                 | EPA Brownfields grant supports assessment and cleanup                              | Mahoning    |
| NEW Columbiana Stormwater               | \$664,596                 | -                 | June 18 FEMA award for storm-sewer upgrades                                        | Columbiana  |

**Green** = construction / active **Yellow** = planning **Blue** = awarded / funded **Purple** = renovation **Red** = paused / distressed

### Mahoning Valley Market Pulse™

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