



The INSIDE

Q2 2020

Allen Economic Development Group

President's Pitch

The second quarter of 2020 brought an unprecedented level of obstacles before the Allen Economic Development Group team and the business community we support. As we all navigate a uniquely challenging time let's keep in mind the great opportunities we have in Lima/Allen County.



An inspirational author by name of Chuck Swindoll once wrote:

"We are all faced with a series of great opportunities brilliantly disguised as impossible situations."

At AEDG, we believe that statement to be true today. I am proud of the activity and work of our team to advance the economic conditions of our community through the COVID-19 pandemic.

A Review

In the 2nd quarter, the AEDG team made contact with more than 150 business representatives, community leaders, and statewide officials to assess the status of our county/state and determine how we can best stabilize economic conditions and facilitate growth. We met with individuals and corporate contacts via webcasts, virtual meetings, and conference calls.

As a responsive organization we

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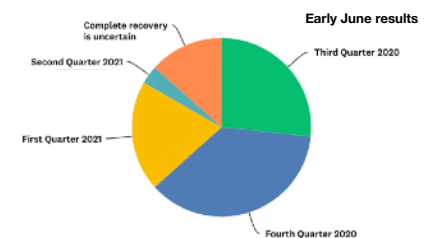
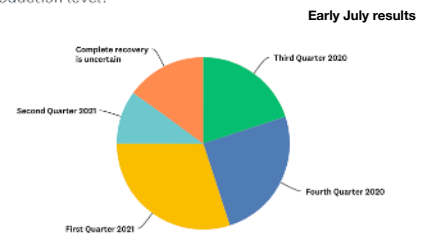
Survey: Employers confident of rebound

Normal school year top concern

Not all Lima-area employees are working in the office, but business leaders at nearly three out of four companies responding to our survey are optimistic that production levels will return to pre-COVID-19 standing before the end of Q1 2021. And while nearly two-thirds of respondents said their production declined more than 10% — 33% reported a decline of more than 25% — a few respondents reported an increase in production.

Even as the nationwide health pandemic continues the positive outlook remains,

When do you expect your business will return to pre-COVID production level?



although the timing of the comeback has shifted.

In our survey distributed the last week of May, a quarter of

See SURVEY, page 2

Gateway V infrastructure work set to begin

A new road, water/ sewer lines and drainage for Lima's newest industrial building lots are to be installed this summer.

The infrastructure project is off McClain Road



See ROAD, page 3

Capital projects



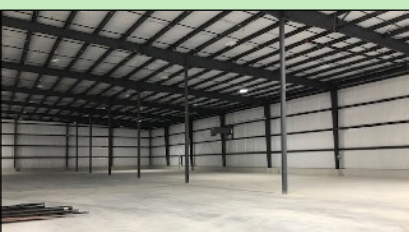
Mercy Health-St. Rita's Graduate Medical Education Center is under construction at the corner of Market and Collett streets. The 48,000-square-foot facility includes simulation labs and classrooms, a 250-seat lecture hall, flexible library and work spaces. The \$15 million project will be used to train residents for the hospital.



Work continues on the 88-unit senior housing development known as Spring Street Senior Lofts, located between Spring and West Market streets. Residents will have an option of a one- or two-bedroom apartment.

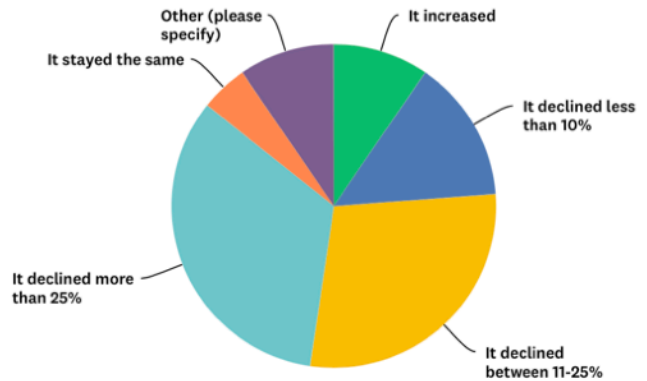


Excitement is rising like the elevator shaft in the Rhodes State Center for Health Science Education and Innovation building on Main Street in Lima. The 50,000-square-foot building is expected to cost \$20.2 million and is planned for completion in June 2021.



Innovative Packaging added 50,000-square-feet of warehouse space to its location on Hanthorn Road, home to the former Cameron Packaging. The project doubled the footprint of the facility.

How did your production change due to the virus?



Survey

From page 1 respondents expected a bounce back in the third quarter of 2020, with another 36% anticipating a fourth-quarter return. By the end of June, respondents' minds had shifted, with 20% expecting normal production in the third quarter and 25% in the fourth. Overall, an expected return to pre-COVID levels by the end of Q1, 2020, dropped from 82% to 75% from the first to second surveys.

The top concerns on what could delay normalcy include: schools and daycares reopening and operating daily, supply chain threats, and the mental fatigue on employees dealing with the virus and taking it seriously.

"People need to work. If parents need to stay home it will negatively impact our workforce. It would be a disaster! Schools need to go back as usual," said one respondent. "Hybrid school

schedules - daycare capacities for our associates who must work regular schedules," was the concern of another.

The continued unrest around the country and enhanced unemployment benefits were additional concerns.

"People need to work. If parents need to stay home it will negatively impact our workforce."

— local employer

"Uncertainty is a large part of the public's thought process. Now, with rioting, looting, and tearing down our history, the future looks darker," was a worry of another respondent.

"Supply chain was our biggest issue. Some suppliers were working at half capacity making it hard to receive complete orders," said another the beginning of July.

Through July, unemployment claims continued to drop in the U.S. and Allen County, even though some local employers reported workers opting to stay home and collect the additional \$600 unemployment pay. That extra pay is to expire July 25.

Overall, responses indicate the longevity of this health scare is weighing heavily on our region's employees.

Stratton

From page 1

have attempted to encourage businesses to consider the health conditions, concerns, and protocols of our residents with the goal of getting our community back to full livelihood. It is essential to assist our employers to get back to full capacity.

The Challenging

Over the last quarter we compiled surveys and reviews of our business community. These interactions have brought to the forefront the following issues:

- Employee re-engagement — schools and childcare facilities are needed to reopen.
- Supply chain shortfalls and roadblocks.
- The costs of mandated protocols and measures are important, but they create costs and detract from productivity.
- Government policies and actions can have a negative impact on businesses and can be a hinderance to the economy and businesses returning to full productivity.

Looking Forward

More than 20 projects are in the development pipeline for Allen County. We are fortunate to have a diverse business community which has fostered resiliency during challenging times.

We constantly are in pursuit of collaboration with all of our partners to see an inviting and clear horizon. It was Henry Ford that once made a statement that rings true for us as a community today: *“Keeping together is progress. Working together is success.”*

Let’s work together for the bright future we all desire.

State offers small business toolbox

JobsOhio is reaching out to small businesses throughout the state with the launch of its PPE toolkits.

The state’s economic development agency realizes the

burden the COVID-19 pandemic has placed on companies, especially small businesses. The agency has spent \$1.5 million to assemble 15,000 kits containing over 100 face masks and a bottle of sanitizer.

Regional Growth Partnership distributed 1,500 kits throughout its 17-county coverage area, with 170 of those designated for Allen County. The kits will go to businesses of less than 100 employees.



According to RGP officials, the toolkit is a thank you to small businesses for their perseverance during this difficult economic time.

AEDG team members will be distributing the toolkits to companies throughout the county.

Road

From page 1

just south of Commerce Parkway in an area known as Gateway V. The Port Authority of Allen County owns the nearly 100 developable acres and is paying for the first phase of the infrastructure work. There is a purchase option on a 16-acre parcel at the opening of the park.

The 1,000-foot road will bring access and utilities to two additional lots being marketed as manufacturing space.

AEDG Board Members

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- Cory Noonan
- David Berger
- Don Klausing
- Eric Pohjala
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