

THE STATE OF LOGISTICS - Butler County, Ohio

Butler County itself experienced record growth in 2004, outpacing 2002 and 2003 combined in terms of jobs created, jobs retained, and total investment in industrial, commercial, and retail economic development projects. While most areas in the country are still trying to recover from the recession and the loss of manufacturing jobs it caused, over 700 new manufacturing jobs were created in Butler County in 2004. In addition, during the recession years of 2002 and 2003, half of the more than 2,100 new jobs created in the county for that period were in the manufacturing sector.

Examples include a \$25.7 million expansion at Pacific Manufacturing in Fairfield that will add 250 new jobs to this dynamic auto component supplier to Toyota; expansions of two O'Gara-Hess & Eisenhardt that will create 260 new jobs, 200 at its West Chester plant and 60 at its Fairfield facility; a \$7 million expansion project in Monroe at Dayton Technologies that will add 45 new jobs and retain 345 positions in 550,000 square feet of additional manufacturing space; and a \$5.2 million expansion at Middletown's Granger Plastics that will create 25 new jobs and retain 30 existing jobs. In distribution, warehousing, and logistics, 2,090,131 square feet of space was either leased or sold in 2004 in Butler County, including the Dell project. Also in West Chester, Jack of All Games hired 50 new employees and expanded its facility by an additional 400,000 square feet at a cost of \$17.3 million. Presto Foods moved from outside the region to locate in Butler County in a new \$2.45 million, 86,200-square-foot distribution facility in Monroe that created 80 new jobs.

Why has Butler County been so successful in attracting new business and expanding existing business? "A lot of it is because of our location," says Brian Coughlin, Butler County's director of economic development. "We have 11 interchanges with access to major interstate highways including I-75, I-71, and I-74; we're 30 miles south of I-70; we're 25 miles from two world-class international airports; and 54% of the nation's population and 53% of the country's manufacturing plants are within a one-day drive.