

Lordstown Smart Logistics Hub Stakeholder Interviews Phase 1 Report January 2022

Executive Summary

Rasor was contracted to interview stakeholders in the Lordstown area to garner feedback and document needs in relation to the possible construction of a Smart Logistics Hub (SLH) in Lordstown. Information will be used to help build a case to secure federal funding and private technology partners.

The list of stakeholders – including both private and public entities – was provided by the Michael Baker team working in conjunction with Eastgate Regional Planning Commission. Rasor reached out to all contacts for whom email and/or phone contact information was provided. In-person and virtual interviews were offered for the weeks of December 6 and December 14. A total of 43 stakeholders were contacted and 24 interviews were scheduled. As of December 23, 22 interviews have been held. There are two interviews pending rescheduling.

Throughout the discussions additional names and organizations were mentioned as being important to talk to for various reasons. A complete list of referrals is included at the end of this report. At this point, we have not reached out to any of these contacts.

In general, five themes were prevalent in the interview discussions and warrant further research or conversation.

- 1) **Possible backhaul opportunity via rail could support cost reductions for both manufacturer/distributors and farmers** – Based on information gathered by one of the interviewees via the Farm Bureau, there are four land owners in Lordstown who do the bulk of the farming and have the most to gain or lose from the building of a SLH. One person suggested that containers coming in via rail from China with raw materials could be used for backhauling grain to China. This would not only reduce expenses for the original shipper bringing raw materials in, but farmers could fill rail containers higher and ship more product this way. Shared benefit opportunities like these should be further explored with the stakeholders involved.
- 2) **Business prospects interested in Lordstown could provide additional insights** – There is plenty of available land in Lordstown and no lack of interested buyers. The commercial realtor we spoke to said he is contacted regularly by prospects. He suggested working with the Chamber of Commerce to find out which companies are seriously considering Lordstown and what their current and future logistics needs would be. Several stakeholders mentioned the WRPA property – 800 acres of the former BDM Steel Company being redeveloped – as a high priority for improved access to the 45 corridor. More research is needed, in general, to determine how new companies to the

area could benefit from the SLH and determine how that aligns with the current business and community needs.

- 3) **More detail needed from businesses in the SLH corridor** – More information is needed from the current private businesses in Lordstown and the surrounding area. Of the ones we spoke to, they're satisfied with how things are. There are valuable stakeholders on the original list that didn't respond to our request for a meeting, and there are more potential stakeholders suggested by those we talked to. We recommend continuing the interviews to be able to include more input on the needs from the private sector.
- 4) **More information about the SLH requested in Lordstown** – The administration of the Village of Lordstown, with the exception of Mayor Hill, expressed that they need more information. Ten individuals from key village positions attended the interview that was scheduled with Kellie Bordner, Planning & Zoning Administrator. All were in agreement that there has been a lack of communication and they weren't prepared to answer any questions. They requested a meeting and presentation in January to learn more about the study.
- 5) **A strong combination of resources, businesses, and partners** – A combination of factors create a synergy which indicates Lordstown could be an ideal location for a SLH. Some highlights of these factors are:
 - a. BRITE Energy Innovations in Warren, energy incubator connected to 50 members across the U.S., as well as thought-leadership at a national level on next gen energy innovation, offers access to testing and ideation. Already working with Ultium and Lordstown Motors.
 - b. Ultium Battery, which opened its Lordstown plant in 2021 is building electronic vehicle batteries.
 - c. Organizations such as The Ray, Clean Fuel Ohio and Envision are advancing the availability of clean energy.
 - d. Lordstown is approximately eight hours or 500 miles in any direction to 60 percent of the US population, which makes it ideal from a trucking perspective.
 - e. Both Norfolk Southern and CSX have class 1 rail lines coming directly or in the nearby vicinity of Lordstown.
 - f. Infrastructure is strong with roadway network into Lordstown, turnpike access, energy grid, etc.

Interview Highlights

Rick Stockburger, BRITE Energy Innovations, Energy Incubator

- What's coming down from fleet electrification; how to charge vehicles faster.
- GM will be doing chemical processing in US. What are opportunities to provide and welcome those types of companies? We want to capture as much of that business as possible; infrastructure as logistics hub is excellent.
- Charging – fueling logistics; more apt to stop at a place that has cheaper gas than where you run out of gas. Can directly integrate that the SLH is cheap and reliable allowing the growth here to be market-driven

Randy Partika, Western Reserve Port Authority

- Talk to east coast companies who travel through this area to learn what benefits a SLH in Lordstown would bring to them; truck drivers could transfer containers in Lordstown and be home the same day
- How do the cities benefit financially to manage maintenance of infrastructure? Lordstown has 1% income tax; maybe opportunity to form a Joint Economic Development District (JEDD) between Lordstown with Jackson Township for new jobs to generate income tax to solve that problem; eventually more housing, stores, etc., could improve the quality of life for Lordstown
- Connectivity to a large property (200 acres) recently acquired by the WRPA (former BDM Warren Steel Holdings) is critical.
- Idea - Logistics reserve warehouses to be prepared for the next disaster. Stockpile at the airport to reach the US. Pandemic distribution logistics center somewhere for emergency response.

Ralph Zerbonia, Metaverse News

- Autonomous vehicles have bandwidth issues; need 5G to be pervasive; almost a dream at the moment; best autos will be ones run out of the cloud; will be good to have software that takes over; Captcha – data for autonomous vehicles to run on their own when outside of 5G network
- He had some interesting points about virtual reality and augmented reality - use for training and remote repair on manufacturing equipment

Ken Miller, Trumbull Industries, Distributor to Lowes, Wayfair and More

- Doesn't know much about SLH
- Dealing with increases from freight carriers. One today up 17% and can't pass on to customers.
- No shipping problems, however, could use rail as original spur to his property in Warren was abandoned due to cost of repairs

Sam Miller, Trumbull Industries

- Ken's Brother, he operates plumbing and cabinet national distribution
- They hire trucks one way only. Go out full, come back empty.
- They picked Warren to relocate when they decided to go from regional to national distribution
- EV charging would impact the region, allow for sooner adoption of EV
- Triple trailer transfer yard would allow for better rates
- At any one time, they have 40 in-bound containers on west coast. Rail could speed up his receipt of goods, would reduce inventory, save costs. Now takes 14 days from Long Beach to Trumbull Industries
- Suggested drawing a circle 500 miles in every direction from Lordstown (daily limit for truck drivers) and talk to companies around that radius.
- Suggested talking to Gasser Chair company in Youngstown

Dan Crouse, Platz Realty, Commercial Realtor

- Gave list of potential contacts to interview
- He recommends talking to the four major farmers in the area. Ask about grain. Transloading of shipping containers and autonomous vehicles to TJX. Then we have one of the few backhauls to China; soy, corn and wood; could fill thousands of containers with grain (20%) shipped back to China.
- He has no shortage of companies contacting him wanting to build in Lordstown.
- Sees how improved rail could benefit. If we have trains coming every day here; could have a unit train with grain cars, CSX containers, etc. drop those at the Goodman Yard; will improve RR service because increase volume; more rail served businesses will better serve the businesses here.

Gary Shaffer and Steve Gerberry, Trumbull County Engineer's Office

- Industrial site for Steel (BDM property) is being cleaned up for resale (as discussed with WRPA). Big to those communities, but pipe dream because no access. It could be opened up in that area - Lane West, Highland to Burnet and Main Street; need to get to other side of the river; lane and bridge improvement to Todd Ave to Pine Street creates a whole other corridor. That would be huge because so many discussions happening around BDM – couple hundred acres. Port Authority is working on the project.
- Triple-trailer transfer yard has come up in Mahoning County. Now have to drop them at the Turnpike; FedEx was trying to work with county engineer; Drop a lot at Warren exit; he could bring them all the way down to Ellsworth Bailey; FedEx distribution is right there; dedicated electric truck from FedEx to the turnpike would be huge; emission reduction would be good.
- Need to stay ahead of pavement management and safety conditions if we have mix of residential, business and industrial traffic.

Kellie Bordner, Planning & Zoning Admin/ED Director for Lordstown Village

- Assembled Village officials to attend
 - a. Bob Bond, Village Council
 - b. Travis Eastham (fire chief)
 - c. Chris Kogelnik, PE, Village Engineer
 - d. Don Reader,
 - e. Vinnie Goddard, Utility Dept.
 - f. Darren Biggs, Utility Dept.
 - g. Brent Milhelm, Police Chief
 - h. Terry Campbell, Village Council
 1. Ron Radtka, Village Council
- All were not happy; felt that they do not have enough information to talk about this. Clearly want to be in on it as village services will be impacted. Also, feel like they should have a say in what goes on in their jurisdiction.
- Would welcome a presentation with Q&A in Jan.

Aaron Conley, ODOT District 4, Planning Traffic and Safety Division

- He's responsible for traffic and speed limits in Trumbull County
- Discussed recent highway safety improvement study to assess high-crash areas – Lordstown is not identified as a problem area
- ODOT would get involved in improvements such as school zone changes or traffic light additions
- His office responds/investigates complaints regarding traffic and speed
- Mentioned that Ultium Battery did a study about a year ago that proposed new traffic signals, his office reviewed and commented.
- He's not aware of any road capacity issues in the Lordstown area

Jeff Magada, Flying High Inc., Non-profit Workforce Development Group

- Economic growth is great, but barriers to employment include lack of transportation (no vehicle or no driver's license)
- It is a huge problem. There are job openings and his organization provides training but many people can't get to the jobs
- Said Ultium Battery is looking into providing transportation for employees
- Autonomous shuttle could be a huge help in getting people to work locations
- Would like to know what percentage of jobs in Lordstown go to people from outside the area due to transportation issue. Could build a case for better transportation.

Rich Granger, DriveOhio, Works in Workforce Development and Smart Mobility Jobs

- Common question these days is "Where's my stuff?" – Problem is the movement of goods.
- How can new technology accelerate the movement of goods? Work with all sides of the industry including shippers, technology developers and public/private infrastructure
- Regarding the transfer yard – technology developers are working on this, suggested talking to Outrider
- Can make jobs safer with technology
- People worry about losing their job to technology, but they need to get trained for the changes
- In regards to EV – will there enough workers? Need partnerships on training
- Ohio EPA has a grant call out for DC charging, he suggests putting charging at Youngstown State and use for training, too
- Automated shuttles being tested on private property
- Said to consider air mobility, not just drones but advanced autonomous aircraft
- Provided links to several related studies

Andrew Duvall, National Renewable Energy Laboratory, Works in Mobility Lab, Liaison to DriveOhio and SMART Columbus

- Regarding EV – discussed advantages of hydrogen – fuel cells are smaller, reduced charging time, less weight add to vehicles, on-board generator
- Suggested that SLH needs to be prepared for EV charging of hydrogen, too
- Idea to let trucks trade out dead batteries for charged ones so they don't have to wait for charging time, they can keep going

- Regarding autonomous vehicles - There is a challenge in finding workers so use technology to reduce long distance drivers, focus manpower on final mile. This would lead to fewer workers needed and enhance quality of life for workers.
- Anything that moves can be automated – reduces human error and provides energy gains
- Problem is there is no regulation about autonomous vehicles at this time

John Zehentbauer, Mahoning County Career and Technical Center, Trade High School and Adult Education Center

- Applied for a grant to run a program that teaches how to install EV charging stations
- He sees plethora of job openings, not enough trained people
- Enrollment down for adult learners and high school students
- Population decreasing and 50 percent of high school seniors go to college
- Ultium Battery wants to hire 1,000 employees by next fall

Christina Wagner, ODOT Central Office, Office of Jobs & Commerce, Works on Funding for New Roads if it Means New Jobs

- Any requests for road funding must be tied to new jobs or higher paying jobs
- Evaluation is based on number of added jobs either at existing companies or new companies wanting to build, it must be impactful
- Example of adding 5 laborers would not qualify for funding to build a new access road
- All levels of jobs are considered

Mark Locker, ODOT, Office of Planning, Freight and Logistics

- Ohio is the 5th largest state in terms of infrastructure so intermodal piece is important
- Suggested looking at Transport Ohio study
- He's submitting a statewide five-year plan regarding truck parking, will include charging while parked, turn off so no idling and no diesel emissions, could use solar
- 68% of all freight is truck freight
- He can provide information on which roads have the most traffic and which commodities they carry and weight

Brian Kelley, Ohio Turnpike, Chief Technology Officer

- Has all statistics on usage of the turnpike
- Truck parking is a problem – turnpike has 1,300 spaces and is at 110% capacity nightly
- Only road in Ohio to allow triple trailers, he can provide names of companies that operate triple trailers – suggested talking to them
- Regarding EV – need to talk to Fed Ex, UPS, etc. Could do a pilot project on triple trailers and EV
- In Ohio, four service plazas have EV charging, one in Mahoning Valley
- Discussed possible solar fields to generate power at tolls could also have EV charging station
- Said autonomous vehicles are the future, compared it to when Ford developed first car and buggy companies closed, this will transform transportation
- Would like to open a tire safety station like FL turnpike has, its automated and solar powered, as trucks roll passed the tire condition is assessed in seven seconds. Maybe this could be at the EV charging station.

Emil Liszniansky, Envision, Works with Companies on Net Zero Goals, Focused on Clean, Secure and Affordable Energy

- Challenge in finding the right people to talk to at companies about their logistics needs, people who are at Lordstown locations aren't necessarily decision-makers for the company
- Said railroads need to be convinced that their customers have a need for intermodal hub in Lordstown
- Discussed regional utility study
- Discussed chamber study on available property for development, researching what is needed
- Need for solar – clean energy source on public right-of-way, suggested talking to The Ray
- Lordstown area is prime spot for entire region to be an employment hub
- Who is the next big company to build in Lordstown? What do they need?
- Importance of transfer yard – he can provide data on truck damage to roads

Laura Rogers, The Ray, Deputy Director

- Mission is to make roadways have “Zero Deaths. Zero Waste. Zero Carbon. Zero Impact.” through the use of solar.
- The lower 48 states have over 52,000 acres of empty roadside land at interstate exits suitable for solar energy development. Placing solar panels at these exits could generate up to 36 tera-watt hours (TWh) a year - that's enough to power 12 million passenger EVs. The value of this energy generated by roadside solar is an estimated \$4 billion per year.
- Partnered with Ohio Turnpike to analyze right-of-way property assets where solar could be built
- Big savings if using solar
- Autonomous vehicles could use solar. Start with yard truck. Look at Walmart.
- Charging, handling cables will be a safety concern. Better to have wireless charge at slow speeds. Gave example of EV charging in Port of LA. Trucks charge while in queue at port.
- Recommended talking to ASPIRE. Find OEM partner, like Kenworth, Cummings, UPS, that will work with ASPIRE.
- EVs are harder on tires. Need for more tire inspection. Could have automated truck tire inspection at EV charging station. Currently, there is \$250 million in tire waste per year.
- Executive Director, Allie Kelly, was on the call, too

Travis Heitsch, Outrider, Director of Sales

- Founded in 2017 and focused on the automation of logistics yards for companies; all automation on private property at this point; “cross apron” movement in stockyards; two production units in the field today – Georgia Pacific in Chicago and a food service bakery; nine other signed customer in either proof of concept or strategy and planning phases
- Have done some proof of concept with class I rail, but “hit pause” to work on distribution centers; some nuanced and specific functionality needed with rail, so coming back to that in 2023
- Alliance, TX is one of the biggest smart hubs out there (<https://www.alliancetexasmiz.com/>);

- Outrider very familiar with the Alliance smart hub; start with autonomous vehicles within distribution centers, then to intermodal hubs, then short haul shuttles (maybe over a mile) to move a trailer between rail and warehouse
- They've talked with multiple auto OEMs; different manufacturers have done a lot of just-in-time delivery straight to a dock door; not a lot of movement in the yard; however, now need to store more parts on campus; GM just announced they are connecting to shuttle parts around the campus – 2-3 miles at a time; then public roads next; could also work for triple trailer drops
- Most companies like the transfer hub model because they don't want to maneuver through cities and congestion; would rather bring trailer to transfer hub and then something else takes it that final mile
- Mentioned Kalmar starting to build electric yard trucks (<https://www.kalmarottawa.com/terminal-tractors/>); 50K diesel yard trucks today only have useful life of 5-7 years, so will eventually phase out
- Warehouse checklist for autonomous yard (he can send): electrical infrastructure is huge; WIFI or dedicated 5G; control of the environment and good layout of roads & access; guard sheds or gates; ingress or egress points; opportunity to separate personal vehicle traffic from industrial traffic helps a lot; everything else centered around warehouse itself

Mark Corrocce, R&J Trucking, President

- Bulk commodities trucking company; involved with heavy industry – steel, aluminum, plastic resin, some trash hauling (20% of business); run about 700 trucks and 100 owner-operators; 15 terminals; do some agriculture line hauling and fertilizer, but not a lot
- Also own related business – City Stone on 45 in Lordstown; have a concrete plant and aggregate distribution site supported by rail; they bring in from western OH by rail and then distribute to construction sites; mentioned they supplied the aggregate and cement for the GM LG Battery plant; also do some work at Lordstown Motors plant; new power plant in Warren
- His company doesn't currently pull containers, but would entertain the idea; interested in learning more about the autonomous freight part
- Discussed driver shortage a given in the trucking industry; part of the reason is drivers want to be home more often; so freight relaying system and hub here could be helpful
- Discussed truck parking issues; said he can't really address because only 1/3 of their trucks have sleepers; 2/3 of his drivers are home every night, but he knows parking is an issue; said they talk to customer base and ask if they can park in their yard once they arrive to avoid crowded lots; constantly having claims because of trucks bumping each other in crowded spaces
- They are considering electric vehicles; however, they learned when they jumped into natural gas trucks (ran about 15 of them), which never took off, to wait for proven business model; not seeing significant progression toward electric – some buses and other vehicles; UPS probably doing the most; natural gas had significant maintenance issues; will wait on electric before jumping in to see how it's working
- When asked if anything could enhance logistics if money wasn't a factor, he suggested adding a turnpike interchange at 45
- Suggested that if this project could be tied in with the 800 acre parcel and WCI former steel plant to get better access to get this hub would be a first priority; Port Authority is actively looking for companies to move in because it's shovel ready; it really needs

better access to the 45 corridor though; that would be one of the highest priorities he could think of for the region

Referrals

Recommended by Dan Crouse, Platz Realty:

- 1) Farmers/land owners Ron Kirshner, Harvey Lutz, Bob Bond, Lamar Lyming, in Lordstown
- 2) Warren Anderson, Anderson-DuBose food service distributor, Warren
- 3) Mike or Tido, Matalco aluminum recycler/producer of billet, Lordstown
- 4) American Freightways, no contact provided
- 5) Anderson's Plant Nutrient fertilizer wholesaler, no contact provided, Warren
- 6) Rob Berk or Frank Valley, Berk Brands importer of disposable food service products, Warren
- 7) Bruce Zoldan, Phantom Fireworks largest importer of fireworks, Warren
- 8) Steve Dines, M&M Industries, Warren
- 9) George Baker, Ohio Commerce Center, Lordstown
- 10) Mom's Meals, no contact provided, North Jackson

Recommended by Ken Miller, Trumbull Industries:

- 1) Steve Levy, IT expert, lives in Lordstown, would have interesting perspective

Recommended by Ralph Zerbonia, Metaverse News:

- 1) Dave Martin, Intwine Connect, IoT company, Warren
- 2) America Makes, no contact provided

Recommended by Randy Partika, Western Reserve Port Authority

- 1) Mike Hillman, Jets FBO, Youngstown Airport

Recommended by Rick Stockburger, Brite Energy Innovations

- 1) Fyda Freightliners, sells freight trucks, Austintown
- 2) Ron Knight, AIM Transportation, commercial truck leasing

Recommended by Lauren Rogers, The Ray

- 1) ASPIRE

Recommended by Sam Miller, Trumbull Industries

- 1) Mark Gasser, Gasser Chair in Youngstown

Recommended by Emil Liszniansky, Envision

- 1) Chamber of Commerce
- 2) The Ray

Recommended by Brian Kelley, Ohio Turnpike

- 1) Fed Ex
- 2) Smart Belt Coalition (Ohio, PA, MI departments of transportation) looking at smart mobility

Recommended by John Zehentbauer, Mahoning County Career and Technical Center

- 1) Mahoning Valley Manufacturing Coalition
- 2) Art Daley, Eastern Gateway (adult machining training)

Recommended by Rich Granger, DriveOhio

- 1) Andrew Conley, Clean Fuels Ohio
- 2) The Paradox Prize, a fund for economic development, mobility solutions to connect people to jobs

Recommended by Jeff Magada, Flying High Inc.

- 1) Western Reserve Transit Authority