



*Entities in Mahoning and Trumbull County that have been involved*

## *Collaborative Success Stories:* Rollin on the River

Mahoning and Trumbull Counties, and 2 Cities Work Together to Revitalize Business along the Mahoning River

In the summer of 2009, the Fund for Our Economic Future (FFEf) and citizens in northeast Ohio awarded a grant to support a project by the Mahoning River Corridor Initiative (MRCI). The MRCI is a consortium of communities situated along the Mahoning River in northeast Ohio that sought to coordinate their efforts to develop the region economically. The grant supported the MRCI's "Rollin' on the River" project, which implemented an interactive website featuring in-depth information about sites – particularly former industrial locations – available for economic development in the Mahoning River Corridor.

Organizers recognized that innovation requires a new mindset about working together instead of continuing to rely on piecemeal individual efforts, and they took action based on this new mindset. This project demonstrates a collaboration involving numerous communities and local agencies, drawing on the expertise and resources of a local university. Participating communities shared in providing matching funds for the initial project. They also share the cost of managing the website, which provides enhanced economic development services throughout the region as a whole while reducing costs to individual communities.

During months between the summer of 2009 and the summer of 2010, the "Rollin on the River" project moved forward expeditiously. By summer 2010, most of the data for inclusion on the website had been gathered and the website design had been completed. In the fall of 2010, the website became operational, and it is now being used to market properties for the development of the Mahoning River Corridor. More importantly, the collaboration among communities has yielded ancillary benefits, as two of the participants in this collaboration (the Cities of Youngstown and Girard) have forged a joint economic development agreement that has resulted in an expansion of V & M Star, a company that is building a new pipe mill on an old industrial site near its existing Youngstown plant. Yet another JEDD is being developed by the City of Niles and Weathersfield Township.