

On Track



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Willard

ON THE MOVE!

Written by Janet Cok, WAEDC Director



“There are many opportunities in Willard and we want people to know about them.”

Brian Humphress
Willard City Manager

Willard has a long and rich history of being recognized as a focal point in transportation. From the time the small town was founded in 1874 as Chicago Junction to the present day city of Willard, Ohio this location has met the important and ever-changing logistical needs of a diverse range of industries.



Driving Distance to Major Cities from Willard

Albany, NY	520	Milwaukee, WI	400
Baltimore, MD	420	Nashville, TN	450
Buffalo, NY	260	New York, NY	525
Cleveland, OH	100	Philadelphia, PA	500
Chicago, IL	290	Pittsburgh, PA	200
Columbus, OH	80	Rochester, NY	320
Detroit, MI	125	St. Louis, MO	460
Indianapolis, IN	250	Toronto, Canada	450

Ashland Railway currently provides Willard's local interchange service. Cars are moved in and out on a daily basis for the R.R. Donnelley's book manufacturing plant and, at times, the outdoor power equipment manufacturer, MTD, also uses this service.

New industries to the area are able to utilize transloading services or could take advantage of the abundance of available land around Willard to add additional spurs to the rail system.

HIGHWAYS

Strategically located in the center of the eastern United States, Willard is situated to take full advantage of our country's highway system. In fact 60% of the US population and 50% of Canadian population live within 600 miles of Willard, Ohio. Within a single day, drivers can reach 63% of US manufacturing facilities and 80% of US corporate headquarters.

US Highway 224 and state highways 103, 99 and 61 all run directly through the Willard area. While several divided highways are also easily accessible. East-West bound routes include: US 30 the Ohio and I-70. North-South routes include: US 23, I-71 and I-75.

RAIL

Back in the 1870's the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Company developed this mid-Ohio location as a key connection point for iron, steel, and coal industries of Pittsburgh and the East with Chicago and the great plains of the West. Additionally, the north-south line to Sandusky, Ohio gave quick access for cargo being transported on the Great Lakes.

Willard's long tradition with the railroad continues today. One mile north of the city is CSX's hub for the Great Lakes Division. Freight trains leaving the Willard terminal go directly into Chicago.

In 1999 when CSX and Conrail merged, the Willard terminal was modernized and its capacity expanded. This hub truly helps CSX Transportation provide a comprehensive rail system for both domestic and international shipments in an efficient and extremely cost effective manner.

The trucking industry definitely recognizes the geographic advantages of Willard. Just south of the city is the CDL of Northern Ohio Commercial Driving License Test Center. They are kept busy year round, seven days a week, qualifying truck drivers. An average of 300 drivers are tested each month at this site.

What Is

WAEDC

WAEDC is a not-for-profit organization founded to maximize the economic potential of the Willard area while preserving the legacy of the past and promoting the promise of the future.

The goals of the corporation are:

- create new investment in the Willard area
- build a diversified employment base through planned growth
- develop a marketing strategy for the community
- improve quality of life for residents of the area.

Since its formation in 2001, WAEDC has obtained grant funding from the state of Ohio, created attractive brochures and marketing materials, developed a web site (www.waedc.com), established important relationships with the Ohio Department of Development, appeared in area and national trade journals, and worked closely with the City to create new investment in the community.

Realizing that many challenges exist and that much more hard work lies ahead, WAEDC recently hired Janet Cok. As the WAEDC Economic Development Director, Cok is helping the organization put its plans and ideas into actions. Currently, Cok's enthusiasm and dedication to the community is also being utilized in Willard's Downtown Revitalization project.

WAEDC is committed to moving forward and welcomes local input and support. They encourage everyone in Willard to become active ambassadors for the area – to recommit ourselves to building on the proud heritage we all share and, by working together, transform this community's full potential into a promising new tomorrow!

For More Information

To obtain more information about services that WAEDC offers, please contact:

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"Traffic patterns and drive times are predictable; weather calamities are not an issue. Not being located on a major interstate is actually an advantage – especially when you factor in the price of such property," says Sam Burrer, Vice President of Operations at Dutch Maid Logistics

Three trucking companies are based in Willard, Ohio:

- Decker Transport has located its "Cleveland Terminal" along the north-west edge of Willard. Decker is part of P.A.M. Transportation Services, Incorporated, whose 5,000 units provide nationwide dry van truckload, intermodal and logistics services to the manufacturing, retail and automotive industries.
- K & P Trucking was founded in Willard in 1980 to assist the local Pepperidge Farm plant. While K & P operations have expanded, it continues to be locally owned and operated. This dry van carrier specializes in servicing the local community with 90 trailers and 50 tractors.
- Dutch Maid Logistics was formed in 1977 to meet the specific needs of its parent company, Wiers Farm Incorporated - one of several large vegetable growers in the area. In fact, Huron County is ranked No. 1 in Ohio for vegetable production and boasts some of the nation's largest vegetable operations across 47,000 acres.

Today, Dutch Maid Logistics is located just east of Willard. The company continues to assist the area farm industry, but has also grown into a general, full-service refrigerated hauler, operating 157 trailers and 100 tractors that specialize in east coast deliveries.

They also provide spotting service and cooler storage and have a fully-staffed maintenance facility.

On the average, over 1,000 trucks are routed out of Willard industries on a weekly basis. Sam Burrer, Vice President of Operations of Dutch Maid Logistics, oversees many of these requests. He feels Willard's location has many advantages.

Finally, both Federal Express and UPS have also set up stations close to Willard where packages are sorted and drivers are dispatched. The Federal Express terminal is only 12 miles away in Shelby's Industrial Park and the UPS Customer Center is 25 miles away in Mansfield, Ohio.

AIR

When it comes to airports, Willard, Ohio is definitely in the heart of it all with many viable options. If flyers choose Cleveland Hopkins International Airport or the Akron-Canton Regional Airport the drive time is about 90 minutes, while Port Columbus International Airport and Toledo Express Airport can be reached in about 110 minutes. Also, the Detroit Metro International Airport is less than a 2-1/2 hour road trip.

Even closer are Norwalk-Huron County Airport, Mansfield Lahm Airport and Seneca County Airport. Each of these airports is only 25 miles away from Willard and has facilities to accommodate single engine airplanes and small corporate aircraft. Finally, the Willard Municipal Airport has operated on the south edge of the city since 1942. In addition to charter services for small aircrafts, the Willard airport also assists in agricultural crop spraying and provides a critical helicopter landing site for Life Flights associated with Mercy Hospital of Willard.

CONVENIENCE

As indicated above, Willard's location offers many strategic and geographic advantages when it comes to travel and transporting raw or finished goods. Plus the abundance of affordable land and business sites, the dependable workforce and low cost of living all add to the convenience of locating businesses in Willard. WAEDC hopes you will soon visit our fine city of Willard to see all that it has to offer – especially now that you know how easy it is to get here!