


OHIO'S ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES CURRENT



Expanded Gas Capacity Ignites Ohio Site Development Opportunity

Over 20 years ago, Consolidated Cooperative, the local electric, fiber and gas cooperative, purchased some unused gas well gathering lines in Morrow County, Ohio. The cooperative engineered the reversal of the pressure to turn the lines into a distribution system that provides natural gas service to commercial development around the I-71/SR 61 interchange in central Ohio.

- By early 2023, industrial growth in the area (including the 1.2-million-SF Dollar Tree Distribution Center) had nearly exhausted the natural gas capacity, threatening future development.
- Addressing this capacity constraint required a \$6.5 million investment to build a new natural gas main distribution line approximately 9 miles long.

 We knew electric growth and economic development in this area was unlikely without additional gas capacity,” said Dan Boysel, Community & Government Relations Vice President for Consolidated Cooperative. “With the projected electricity capacity issues, having gas capacity makes a huge difference and takes pressure off the electric demand.”



PPP proved to be the solution.

As the area's gas provider, Consolidated Cooperative had the expertise to manage the new distribution line project, but faced financial constraints as a not-for-profit entity. But thanks to proactive planning, a potential collaborative solution had already been identified.

Morrow County's 2022 Economic Development Strategic Plan recommended creating a port authority as an economic development tool. This strategic plan, developed by Montrose Group, LLC, and funded by Consolidated Cooperative, Delco Water, and the Morrow County Commissioners, also identified the I-71/SR 61 interchange area as a key zone for economic growth.

- Subsequently, Morrow County Commissioners established the Morrow County Port Authority in 2023, aimed at facilitating large-scale projects.
- In 2024, a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) between Morrow County, the Morrow County Port Authority, and Consolidated Cooperative proposed a solution to extend natural gas to the I-71/SR 61 area. According to the PPP:



The new 9-mile distribution line will provide natural gas service to the I-71/SR 61 area plus businesses and homes along its path from the transmission line connection in northern Morrow County, Ohio.

- ◆ The Morrow County Port Authority owns the new gas line, leasing it to Consolidated Cooperative. The port authority was able to get favorable financing for the \$6.5 million construction cost.
- ◆ Consolidated Cooperative will build, maintain, and manage the gas line.
- ◆ Proceeds from gas sales, tap fees, and a monthly service fee will be used to pay off the loan for the new line, which will eventually be transferred to Consolidated Cooperative.

Through this collaboration, the county secured additional natural gas capacity for strategic growth, while Consolidated Cooperative enhanced community services to its members.

Morrow County is located between two of Ohio's largest population centers.

Sited approximately 30 miles north of Columbus and less than 90 miles south of downtown Cleveland, Morrow County has easy access to major employment hubs and world-class institutions.

While much of the county's land is still in agricultural uses, Morrow County has attracted advanced manufacturing and distribution and fulfillment operations that take advantage of its two I-71 interchanges.

The expanded natural gas capacity enables Morrow County to compete for major economic development projects, positioning the site as a strong candidate for future manufacturing, supply chain, and fulfillment opportunities.



New gas distribution line scheduled for Q4 2025 completion.

Construction on the new 12-inch gas distribution line began in December 2024 and is scheduled for completion in the fourth quarter of 2025.

- The new distribution line is designed to support natural gas service to additional businesses and homes along its path.
- The existing 4-inch line will remain in place, so the full capacity of the new 12-inch line is available for new users.

Over five million square feet planned for 71 North Commerce Center.

The 71 North Commerce Center is poised to benefit from Morrow County's expanded natural gas capacity.

The industrial park was initially developed when Dollar Tree located a 1.2-million-SF distribution center at the I-71/SR 61 interchange.

The 400-acre site can accommodate at least 5-6 million SF of distribution and manufacturing space within four additional 1.2-million-square-foot building footprints and several smaller facilities.

The shell of H&M Construction's first spec 707,940 SF distribution or light manufacturing spec facility is ready for occupancy. The building sits on 48 acres with an additional 22 acres reserved for expanding the building to nearly 1.2 million SF.



“The Columbus market is one of the hottest markets in the country,” said Matt Fite, H&M Construction vice president, “and this site is just 20 minutes north of the Columbus outerbelt. Here you’re not hung up in city traffic, you’re on the interstate in minutes.”

Available labor is an attractive factor.

Recent research indicates that over 80% of Morrow County residents work in out-of-county jobs, meaning a lot of workers are driving right past the I-71/SR 61 interchange to work in Columbus. There's an available workforce in the Morrow County community for new employers to tap into.

For more information about electric, fiber and natural gas service for cooperative served sites in Ohio, contact Dennis Mingyar at (614) 430-7876 or dmingyar@ohioec.org.

Look for Us:

**Industrial Asset Management
Council (IAMC) Local**

Thursday, September 25, 2025
Toledo, Ohio

**Site Selectors Guild
Fall Forum**

October 1-3, 2025
Indianapolis, IN, USA

IAMC Fall Forum

October 18-22, 2025
Indianapolis, Indiana

Buckeye Power and Ohio's Electric Cooperatives can help with:

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- Preliminary site studies
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- Electric rate analyses
- Community profiles
- State and local government contacts
- Contractor introductions

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