



A Quarterly Assessment of Key Local Economic Indicators in Lucas County

What is the Wade Wire?

As a public information service, the *Wade Wire* is a regularly published/released quarterly report in which we identify, measure, and analyze key local economic indicators within Lucas County.

Rather than formulating a complex Index of Leading Economic Indicators aimed at predicting trends yet to occur, we want to determine how well our local economy is *currently* performing (compared to the prior year) based on three essential questions:

1. Are people working? 2. Are people spending?

3. Are people building?

The data sources we use generally fall under the category of “concurrent” economic indicators (reflective of present conditions). However, some of them have had historically leading or predictive qualities. Thus, each report will also include a quarterly assessment, aimed at summarizing significant developments within and among our indicators and evaluating their potential impact on our county’s economy.

Wade Kapszukiewicz
Lucas County Treasurer

2015 · Fourth Quarter/Year-End Highlights

U.S. Economy Slows in Q4, But Posts Solid Gains in 2015

Are People Working?

- Local jobless numbers continue to drop/job market tightens
 - Lucas County December 2015 rate: 5.1% (Dec. 2014: 5.3%)
 - Toledo December 2015 rate: 5.5% (Dec. 2014: 5.8 %)

Are People Spending?

- Area consumer confidence/spending remains high
 - Q4 sales tax collections up 8.83% from 2014, up 7.53% in 2015
 - Q4 new car sales up 1.62% from 2014, up 0.38% in 2015

Are People Building?

- Local construction sector up in fourth quarter/mixed for the year
 - Nearly all Q4 data categories posted gains over the previous year
 - New residential, commercial surge/adds & alts drop in 2015

Report Highlights:

- Tightening job market bodes well for higher wages this year
- National housing and construction sector poised for growth in 2016
- Was recent stock market dip a sign of looming recession?