



Innovate. Partner. Invest.

APPALACHIAN OHIO

Return On Investment  
2021 ANNUAL REPORT







- 4** Appalachian Ohio's LDDs
- 5** Investing in Appalachia
- 7** Strengthening Appalachian Ohio
- 8** Investments Visualized
- 9** Investment Impacts

*Community Priority Investment Highlights*

- 10** Water
- 15** Transportation
- 16** Healthcare
- 17** Education and Workforce Development
- 18** Broadband
- 19** LDD Highlights
- 22** ARC Federal Co-Chair's Visit

# Strengthening Ohio's Appalachian Region

This annual report is produced by the four Local  
Development Districts of Appalachian Ohio

## Buckeye Hills Regional Council

1400 Pike Street, Marietta, OH 45750

[buckeyehills.org](http://buckeyehills.org) | 1.800.331.2644

Serving: Athens, Hocking, Meigs, Monroe, Morgan, Noble, Perry and Washington Counties

## Eastgate Regional Council of Governments

100 E. Federal Street, Ste. 100, Youngstown, OH 44503

[eastgatecog.org](http://eastgatecog.org) | 330.779.3800

Serving: Ashtabula, Mahoning and Trumbull Counties

## Ohio Mid-Eastern Governments Association

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[omegadistrict.org](http://omegadistrict.org) | 1.800.726.6342 | 740.439.4471

Serving: Belmont, Carroll, Columbiana, Coshocton, Guernsey, Harrison, Holmes, Jefferson,  
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## Ohio Valley Regional Development Commission

73 Progress Drive, Waverly, OH 45690

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Serving: Adams, Brown, Clermont, Fayette, Gallia, Highland, Jackson, Lawrence, Pike, Ross,  
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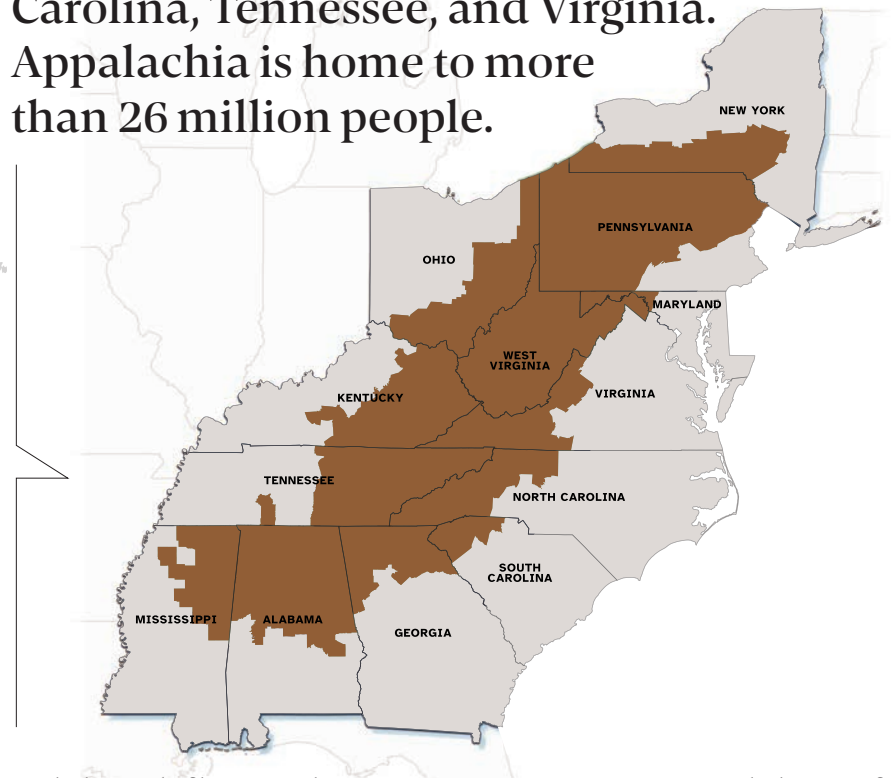


# Investing IN APPALACHIA

With 423 counties, the Appalachian region includes all of West Virginia and parts of 12 other states including: Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, Maryland, Mississippi, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia. Appalachia is home to more than 26 million people.



**The 13-state Appalachian region is defined as a 206,000 square mile area that follows the spine of the Appalachian Mountains from the southern tier of New York to northern Mississippi.**

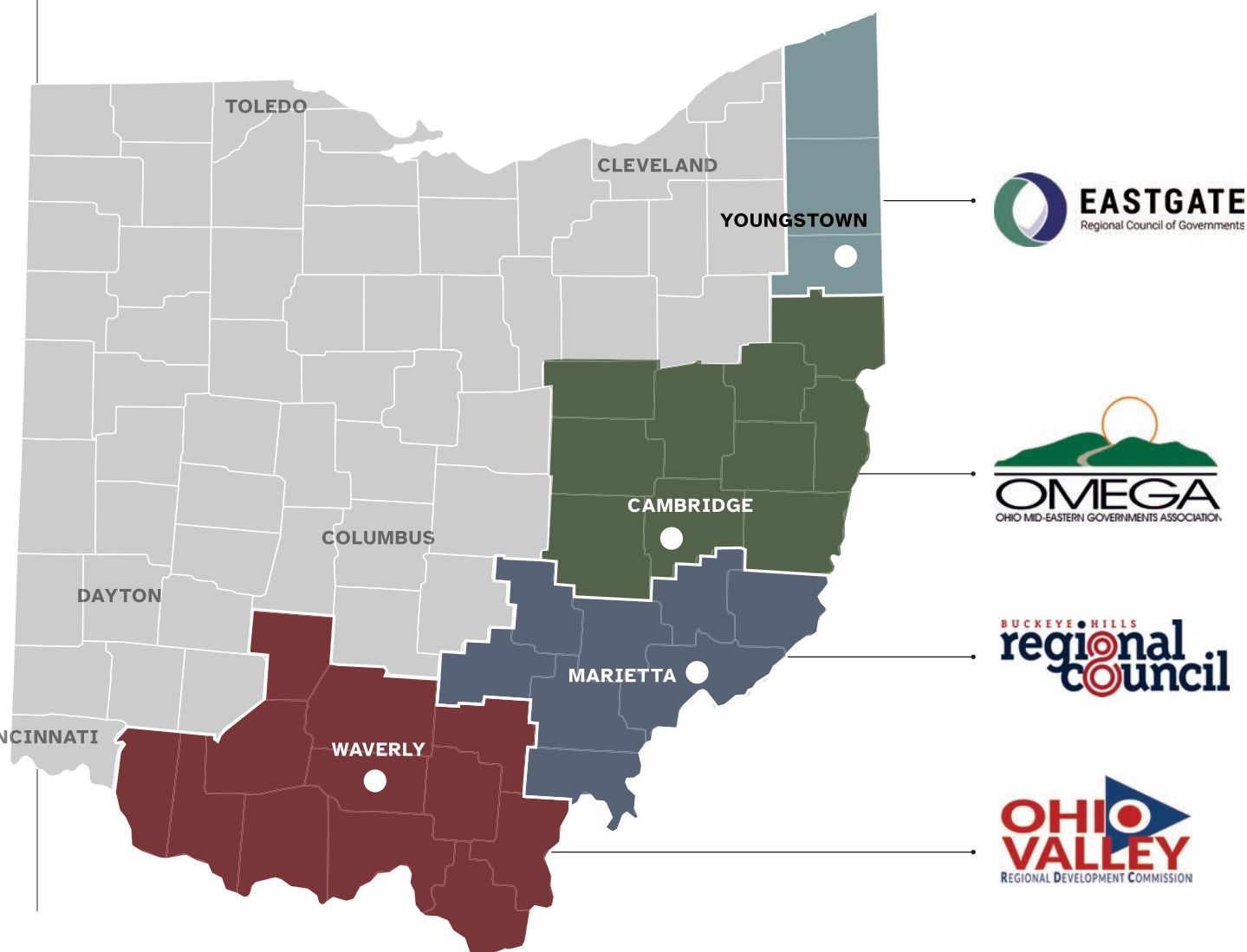


With the goal of bringing the region to socioeconomic parity with the rest of the nation, the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) has focused investments into fundamental community and economic development needs, including building Appalachia's businesses, workforce ecosystem, infrastructure, regional culture and tourism, and community leaders and capacity.

Ohio is home to 32 Appalachian counties and bolsters federal ARC funding with a matching state investment. Within this region, four Appalachian Ohio Local Development Districts (LDDs), organize community-driven projects and target funds for distribution from federal and state partners to ensure positive movement toward the mission of the ARC: to bring the region to socioeconomic parity.

The LDDs' most important role is to identify the priority needs of their local communities. To ensure that funds are used effectively and efficiently, and to strengthen local participation, Ohio's project selection process includes a grass-roots approach through which local governments prioritize both the state and federal investments across the region for the greatest regional impact.

## OHIO'S FOUR LOCAL DEVELOPMENT DISTRICTS






# Strengthening APPALACHIAN OHIO

Throughout 2021, Appalachian Ohio continued its rebound from the COVID-19 pandemic and its impacts on public health and the economy. Appalachian Ohio's Local Development Districts (LDDs), working in partnership with the Appalachian Regional Commission, the Governor's Office of Appalachia, and local communities, administered 44 projects representing \$74.9 million in federal, state, and local investments. These projects created 809 new jobs and helped the region retain 366 positions.

Once again, Ohio's LDDs demonstrated a strong return on investment on state and federal dollars in 2021. For each dollar invested by the Appalachian Regional Commission, LDDs and their local communities leveraged an additional investment of \$6.14. Likewise, for each dollar invested by the Governor's Office of Appalachia, LDDs and local communities leveraged additional investments of \$6.49.

The combined admin costs of \$1.42 million represented only 1.8% of the region's total \$74.9 million in total project costs. Ohio's LDDs use this administrative support to identify, prioritize, and package projects for state and federal support. The LDDs work to ensure the most impactful projects that leverage significant resources can move forward expeditiously, with transparency and accountability.

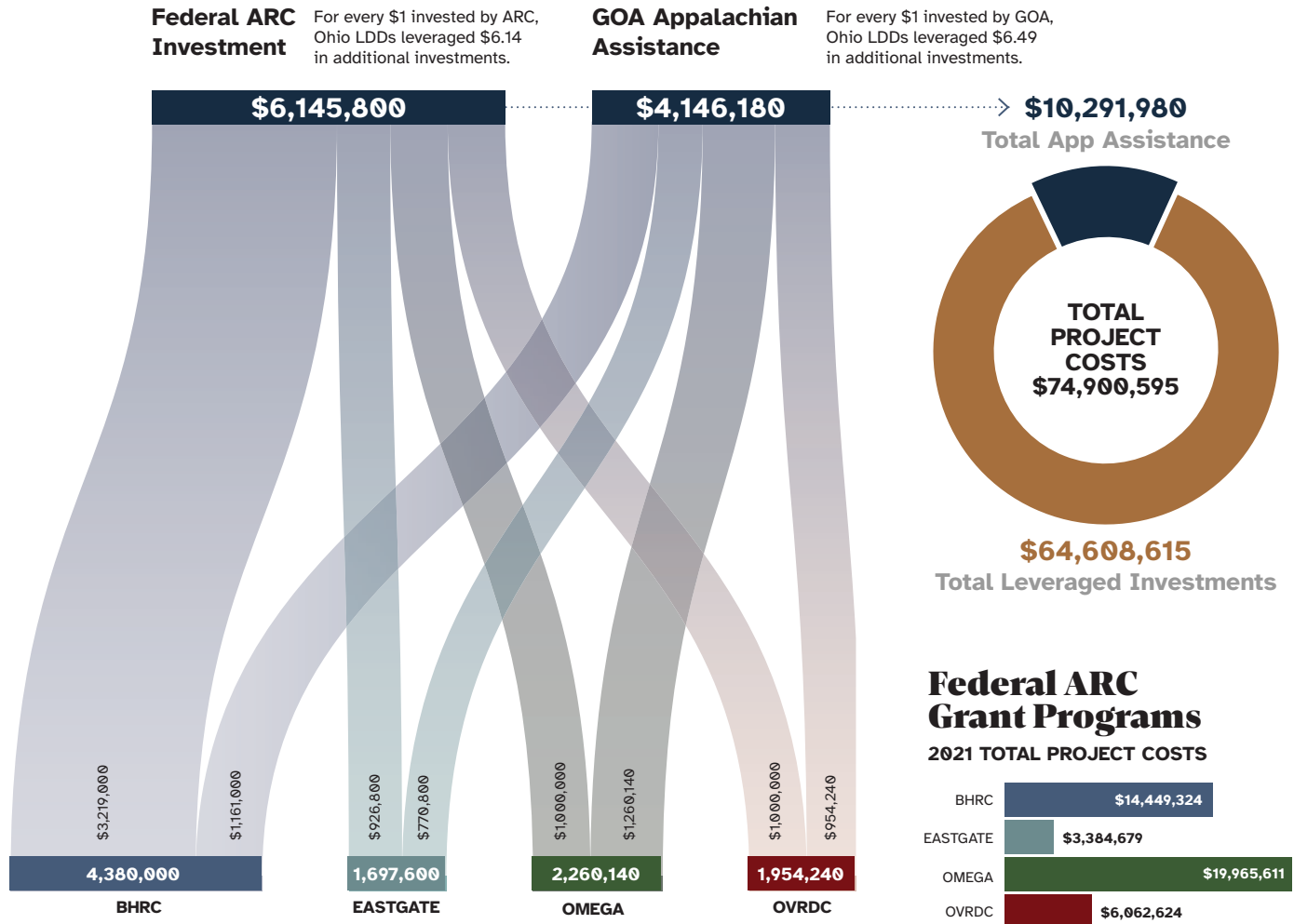
With a 50-year history of providing administrative, policy, and programmatic support to local governments, Appalachian Ohio's LDDs possess:

- 1. Expertise on economic and social challenges facing the region.*
- 2. Organizational transparency, accountability, and capacity managing major projects to address many types of regional infrastructure needs—and with a great return on investment (ROI).*
- 3. Deep knowledge of the region's challenges and opportunities for infrastructure, entrepreneurship, and workforce development.*
- 4. Solid, trusted relationships with local communities and key stakeholders in the public, private and nonprofit sectors.*

As Appalachian Ohio recovers from the historic pandemic, Ohio's Local Development Districts continue to work with communities to support projects that align with the Appalachian Regional Commission's strategic goals of Building Appalachia's Businesses, Workforce Ecosystem, Community Infrastructure, Regional Culture and Tourism, and Community Leaders and Capacity.

# Investments Visualized

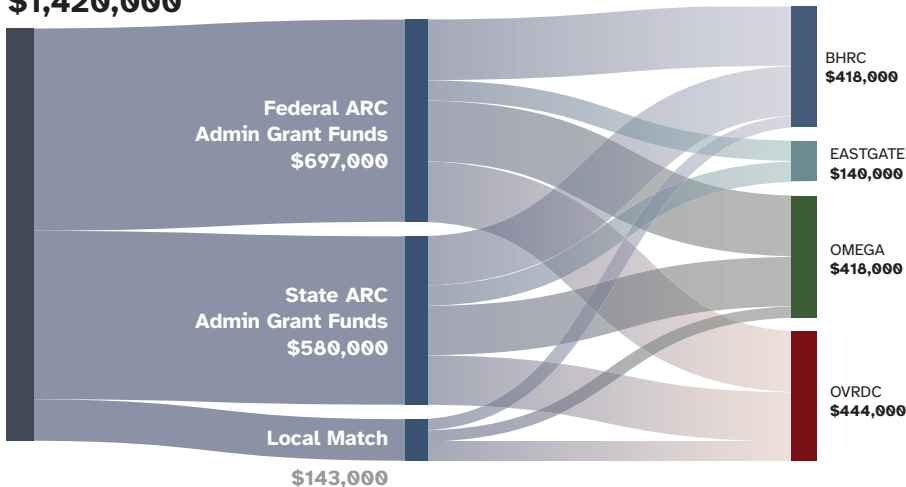
## Federal and State Investment



## Total Admin Cost

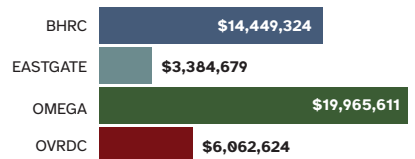
Admin costs represented less than 2% of total project costs in 2021

**\$1,420,000**



## Federal ARC Grant Programs

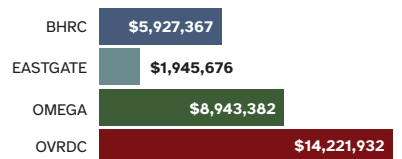
2021 TOTAL PROJECT COSTS



**PROJECTS ADMINISTERED** **19** **JOBS CREATED** **493** **JOBS RETAINED** **53**

## State Appalachian Assistance Grant Programs

2021 TOTAL PROJECT COSTS



**PROJECTS ADMINISTERED** **25** **JOBS CREATED** **316** **JOBS RETAINED** **313**

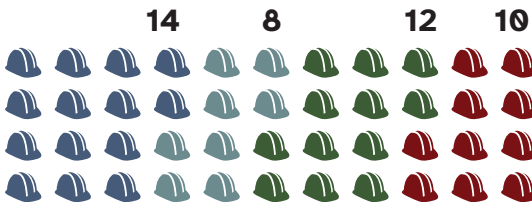


# INVESTMENT Impacts

TOTAL PROJECTS  
IN THE REGION



44



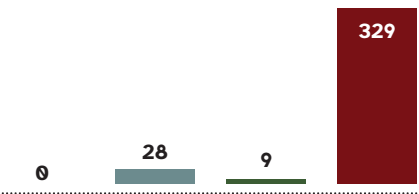
Color key

- BHRC
- EASTGATE
- OMEGA
- OVRDC

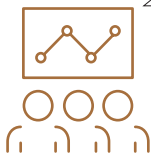
TOTAL JOBS  
RETAINED



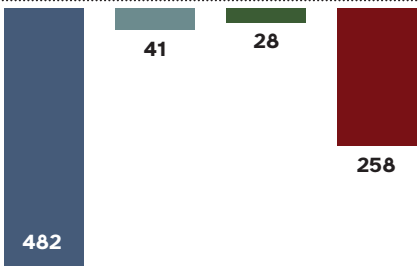
366



TOTAL JOBS  
CREATED



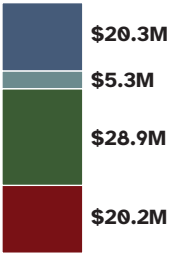
809



TOTAL PROJECT  
INVESTMENT



\$74.9m



# Community Investment Highlights

## Water



**BHRC**

Appalachian Assistance Funds:

**\$322,000**

Total Project Costs:

**\$3,732,000**

Partners:

**Noble County Board of Commissioners, Village of Caldwell Water, Noble County Water Authority, Village of Byesville, Ohio EPA, Federal EPA WIINs, Ohio H2O, OWDA, Ohio RCAP, Buckeye Hills Regional Council, and Ohio State University Extension-Noble County Community Development**

### *East of I-77 Waterline Expansion*

**NOBLE COUNTY**

The proposed project will provide extended water main service and a regional water interconnect for the Noble County Water Authority (NCWA). NCWA is served by The Village of Caldwell to Pleasant City (which is served by the Village of Byesville). The interconnect is needed to mitigate for instances of drought, as noted in the Noble County Emergency Management Agency and Office of Homeland Security's Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Through this project, NCWA will install 81,610 linear feet of new water main to connect 91 households and install 15,120 linear feet of waterline to create an interconnect with the Village of Bayesville. The new water infrastructure will improve water service for 510 households and 10 businesses.

The NCWA serves approximately 520 customers and will be adding an additional 91 connections through this project. The households to be connected are currently served by private wells; according to the Noble County Health



Department, water from approximately 35% of the wells is unsafe for human consumption. Many of the wells have very low yields of less than two gallons per minute. The lack of access to basic water infrastructure has been a barrier to new development and investment.

## *Laurelville Wastewater Treatment Plant Improvements*

**HOCKING COUNTY**

This project will provide the Village of Laurelville and Village of Adelphi with adequate wastewater treatment facilities. By having adequate facilities, the villages would have the potential to maintain existing businesses and increase economic development opportunities.



**BHRC**

Appalachian Assistance Funds:

**\$250,000**

Total Project Costs:

**\$2,476,250**

Partners:

**Ohio EPA, Ohio Public Works Commission, Ohio Development Services Agency**



## *Trumbull County Commissioners Yankee Lake Sanitary Sewer Improvements*

**TRUMBULL COUNTY**

This project will enhance public infrastructure and improve economic development with the construction of 9,500 linear feet of sanitary sewer improvements in Brookfield Township serving 83 households, 3 commercial structures, and the 2 communities of Yankee Lake Village and Brookfield Township. With the elimination of the failed septic systems this sanitary improvement will improve public health and safety to all who may come into contact with waters of the Shenango River Watershed downstream of the project area. It is anticipated this project will create 16 new jobs and retain 28 jobs.



**Eastgate**

Appalachian Assistance Funds:

**\$250,000**

Total Project Costs:

**\$2,465,305**

Partners:

**Trumbull County Commissioners, State Legislature, Ohio Public Works, Ohio EPA**



**OMEGA**

Appalachian Assistance Funds:

**\$250,000**

Total Project Costs:

**\$5,652,211**

Partners:

**Army Corps of Engineers,  
Ohio EPA WPCLF, OWDA,  
Columbiana County, Village  
of Hanoverton**

## *Hanoverton Sanitary Sewer System Project*

### **COLUMBIANA COUNTY**

The Village of Hanoverton received Findings and Orders from the Ohio EPA identifying failing on-site septic systems resulting in raw and untreated sewage being discharged to roadside ditches, storm sewers and streams. Columbiana County has stepped forward with a regional solution, connecting Hanoverton by force main to the existing Kensington Wastewater Treatment Plant, and proposing to construct a wastewater collection system in Hanoverton.

Based on the health and safety concerns of the failing septic systems, Columbiana County has been able to obtain grant funding for nearly all of this project, including \$250,000 from the ARC, \$3,627,211 in principal forgiveness from the Ohio EPA WPCLF, \$925,000 from the US Army Corps of Engineers, and \$500,000 from the State of Ohio H2O Grant Program. The project will improve 153 households and seven businesses.

**OMEGA**

Appalachian Assistance Funds:

**\$250,000**

Total Project Costs:

**\$5,582,000**

Partners:

**Ohio EPA, Ohio BUILDS Water  
Infrastructure, US Army  
Corps of Engineers**

## *Village of Barnesville Slope Creek Waterline Project*

### **BELMONT COUNTY**

In Belmont County, the Village of Barnesville's water system has recently experienced an increased demand. The previous line from the Slope Creek Reservoir to the Barnesville Water Treatment Facility was a 12" concrete asbestos line, installed in 1963. This original line was meant only to serve the population of Barnesville. However, in recent years Barnesville has become a regional water supplier for 8 other neighboring communities. As a result, the village has experienced difficulty in transporting the higher volume of water through the original line. This project entailed the installation of approximately 25,000 linear feet of 16" PVC Raw Water Transmission Line with all appurtenances and a Raw Water Pump Station. The project is slated for completion by the end of 2023. Project outcomes include: 3,683 households and 153 businesses improved. The installation of the 16" waterline will provide the water needed to supply the Barnesville Treatment Plant with safe drinking water for more than 10,000 residents and 153 businesses in 9 communities in a portion of 4 counties.

## West End Water Improvements Project

JEFFERSON COUNTY



The City of Steubenville in Jefferson County was facing challenges to providing a reliable supply of potable water to the city's West End which provides service to several critical users including Trinity Medical Center West and Eastern Gateway Community College. This project will provide a more resilient and reliable water system to support sustainable redevelopment and economic growth in the City's West End. The project includes the installation of 5,000 feet

of 12-inch water line, a new water booster station, and a new 400,000-gallon water storage tank. With these improvements, the City will have a second means of supplying water to the West End service district. This project will improve 2,944 households and 127 businesses.



**OMEGA**

Appalachian Assistance Funds:

**\$250,000**

Total Project Costs:

**\$7,367,600**

Partners:

**Army Corps of Engineers, Ohio EPA,  
City of Steubenville**

## Hanging Rock/PureCycle Industrial Sewer Improvements Project

SCIOTO & LAWRENCE COUNTIES

The PureCycle Industrial Sewer Improvement Project will install 30,000 linear feet of 8-inch new sanitary sewer line, lift stations and improvements to run between the PureCycle Plant and the Wheelersburg Sewer Plant in Scioto County. In addition to 67 new and retained FTE jobs created, the infrastructure project will leverage \$372 million in private sector investment committed by PureCycle. Further, it will enhance development and support growth of the industrial complex surrounding the plant, which is populated with other industrial and manufacturing operations. The project would not have been possible without significant collaboration between the county commissioners and economic development teams of Scioto and Lawrence Counties who worked together to secure funding for the industrial expansion of Pure Cycle and the entire Hanging Rock and Haverhill Industrial corridor area along the Ohio River. With this upgrade, "all needed utility services" will be in place to distinguish it as one of very few site-ready locations in southern Ohio.



**OVRDC**

Appalachian Assistance Funds:

**\$250,000**

Total Project Costs:

**\$3,902,000**

Partners:

**Pure Cycle Technologies, Ohio Department  
of Development, JobsOhio, Scioto  
County Sewer District, Lawrence and  
Scioto County Commissioners, JEDISO,  
Lawrence Economic Development Corp,  
Scioto County Economic Development**







**OVRDC**

Appalachian Assistance Funds:

**\$250,000**

Total Project Costs:

**\$1,880,188**

Partners:

**Ohio Public Works Commission, Army Corps Engineers, Village of Coalton**

## *Coalton Sanitary Sewer Replacement*

**JACKSON COUNTY**

The Coalton Sanitary Sewer Replacement Project will install 5,600 linear feet of 8-inch sanitary sewer, 4,800 linear feet of 6-inch line, upgrade a lift station, install manholes, and serve 61 households and 6 businesses. The project will replace a portion of the existing septic tank effluent gravity collection system with a conventional, sealed gravity collection system. The project will reduce unsustainable operation and maintenance costs associated with frequent pumping of the existing tanks, eliminate sewer overflows at existing businesses, eliminate sewer overflows which are a severe health and safety risk, and provide a reliable and adequate sewer collection system to residential and commercial structures in the area. The project is a priority project, because it provides adequate sanitary sewer facilities to existing residential, commercial and industrial customers in an area that currently lacks adequate facilities.



**OVRDC**

Appalachian Assistance Funds:

**\$250,000**

Total Project Costs:

**\$3,234,460**

Partners:

**Ohio Public Works Commission, Ohio EPA, Village of Frankfort**

## *Frankfort Sanitary Sewer & Wastewater Plant Improvement Project*

**ROSS COUNTY**





The Village of Frankfort Sanitary Sewer and Wastewater Plant Improvement Project will provide major improvements to the wastewater treatment plant and the existing sanitary sewer system which is experiencing severe infiltration and inflow problems. The Village's wastewater treatment plant has violated conditions of the Ohio EPA NPDES Permit, five out of the last eight years (2013-2020), and this project will mean a reliable, safe and efficient sewer collection system to support and retain existing businesses and also encourage future economic development activity. This project investment in critical infrastructure will ensure that communities have adequate basic infrastructure to implement their community and economic development objectives by installing 5,633 feet of sewer lines, 144 manhole upgrades and upgrade one wastewater treatment plant. With support and collaboration from the Ross County Commissioners, the project outcomes will improve infrastructure for 459 households and 67 businesses.

## Transportation

### *West Union Street Access Road*

#### ATHENS COUNTY

This access road will provide improved access for deliveries to the Innovation Center, which houses 11 businesses and three University Departments, and Stewart MacDonald, a national mail order supplier, who are two major shipping and receiving stations in Athens. Additionally, the access road would provide a safer access to the West State Street Park, an extremely popular destination in the summer, and home field for multiple sports teams and leagues. Athens Transit, the City Service Garage, and Water Treatment Plant would also be able to access West Union Street directly, rather than driving through a residential area with an elementary school.

### *Mirth and Meter Road Improvement Project*

#### CARROLL COUNTY

The Mirth and Meter Road Improvement Project focuses on improving the roadway to Miller's Rolling Acres Metal Sales, LLC in order to accommodate the business expansion and the heavy commercial truck traffic bringing supplies to the business. Trucks were becoming stuck regularly due to the inadequate conditions of the roadway. The Mirth and Meter Road Improvement



#### Eastgate

Appalachian Assistance Funds:

**\$456,800**

Total Project Costs:

**\$505,574**

Partners:

**Village of Lowellville, SOBE Thermal Energy Systems, Youngstown-Warren Regional Chamber, Western Reserve Port Authority, Youngstown State University, and Mahoning County Commissioners**



#### OMEGA

Appalachian Assistance Funds:

**\$100,00**

Total Project Costs:

**\$701,452**

Partners:

**Augusta Township Trustees, Carroll County Commissioners, Carroll County Community Improvement Corporation, Miller's Rolling Acres Metal Sales, LLC, Ohio Southeast, Ohio Department of Transportation**

**BHRC**

Appalachian Assistance Funds:

**\$500,000**

Total Project Costs:

**\$500,000**

Partners:

**City of Athens, Ohio Department  
of Transportation, Ohio University,  
Ohio Health, Local Businesses**

Project will make it possible for the roadway to support the high volume of commercial traffic and allow the business to expand as planned. Outcomes of the projects' success include: 5,100 LF of improved roadway, 1 business improved, 6 households improved, 9 full-time equivalent jobs retained, and 6 full-time equivalent jobs created.

## *Village of Lowellville McGaffney Road Access Road Phase 2*

**MAHONING COUNTY**

This project will improve critical infrastructure and enhance economic development with the construction of 20,730 ft access road in Lowellville, Ohio, serving one existing business/manufacturer and attracting two additional businesses. The project will create 20 in-demand high paying manufacturing jobs and bring over \$126 million in private investment by the local businesses.

## Healthcare

**BHRC**

Appalachian Assistance Funds:

**\$200,000**

Total Project Costs:

**\$3,902,300**

Partners:

**Ohio Hills Health Services, Monroe  
County Health Department, Monroe  
County Commissioners**

## *Monroe Family Health Center*

**MONROE COUNTY**

The Monroe Family Health Center has been a thriving medical facility since 1976. However, the patient volumes have increased by 30% in the last 5 years and the existing rented space no longer met the demand for healthcare. The new facility will allow for an expansion in the scope of services provided. This project will improve access to affordable, high quality healthcare, which is essential for area workers and their families and also necessary to recruit new employers to the region.

## Education & Workforce Development

### *Ashtabula County Next Generation Leadership Communication and Development Project*

#### ASHTABULA COUNTY

This project will assist the LEADERShip Ashtabula County non-profit agency purchase equipment and supplies to empower and support next generation leaders and organizations to innovate, collaborate, and advance economic/community development through the Ashtabula Leadership Development Center Program. The project will offer an array of courses in critical thinking and leadership development serving 10 communities, 60 students, 8 school districts, 20 businesses, and 15 organizations.



#### Eastgate

Appalachian Assistance Funds:

**\$66,200**

Total Project Costs:

**\$151,300**

Partners:

**Growth Partnership for Ashtabula County, the City of Conneaut Office of the City Manager, Ashtabula Area City Schools, Ashtabula County Medical Center Foundation, Ashtabula County Medical Center, and the Greater Ashtabula Chamber of Commerce**



### *Sustainable Opportunity Development Training Center*

#### COLUMBIANA COUNTY

In Columbiana County, the City of Salem's Sustainable Opportunity Development (SOD) Center recently developed a state-of-the-art training center in order to provide area businesses and industries with a safe, convenient learning environment. The space enables the SOD Center to reach unemployed and underemployed individuals by providing entry level skills training and offering an ideal environment for company and employee training sessions, workshops, and meetings. The SOD Training Center also hosts general professional development courses that are open to all area businesses and employees. 125 persons are projected to successfully complete computer-based training in multiple software applications. An additional 20 persons are expected to be participating in the Industrial Maintenance Readiness Program and to receive offers of employment. In December 2021, the SOD Training Center was honored to host GOA Director John Carey for a tour and visit of the facility.



#### OMEGA

Appalachian Assistance Funds:

**\$128,000**

Total Project Costs:

**\$372,000**

Partners:

**City of Salem Sustainable Opportunity Development (SOD) Center, Butech Bliss**





### Eastgate

Appalachian Assistance Funds:

**\$250,000**

Total Project Costs:

**\$505,923**

Partners:

**City of Youngstown, FlyingHigh Inc., MYCAP, and CDBG**

## *FlyingHigh Professional Development Center Project*

**Mahoning County**



This project will construct the FlyingHIGH Professional Development Center (PDC) to increase education, knowledge, skills needed to re-enter the workforce for individuals recovering from substance use disorder, incarceration, and COVID-19 impacts. The PDC will provide training through 2 state-certified professional development schools, state-certified addiction disorder treatment, and agricultural skills training serving 100 workers and 40 business in Mahoning and Trumbull counties, which will directly benefit 10 communities, 60 students, 8 school districts, 20 businesses, and 15 organizations.

## Broadband



### OVRDC

Appalachian Assistance Funds:

**\$340,000**

Total Project Costs:

**\$425,000**

Partners:

**Adams County Commissioners, Adams County Community Improvement Corp.**

## *Winchester Industrial Park Broadband Project*

**Adams County**

The Winchester Industrial Park Broadband Project will install critical infrastructure in the form of an above ground, open-access, 5.9-mile fiber network along county, township and village routes. The project will provide strategic use of broadband services in the county's new 55-acre industrial park, enhancing regional connectivity to high-bandwidth networks critical to business development and industrial expansion. The site is owned by the Adams County Commissioners and the Adams County Community Improvement Corporation (CIC). The site will help fill the site selection gap in southern Ohio and is an essential focus for economic development in the county, which is still negatively impacted by the closure of the DP&L electric generating plant and a loss of 1,130 FTEs. The Winchester Industrial site will encourage business expansion and attract new growth to the area, to help close the regional unemployment gap. This broadband infrastructure project will serve 47 businesses, 420 households, 811 students and one community.



# EASTGATE

## *Eastgate Regional Broadband Feasibility Study*

In 2021, the Eastgate Regional Broadband Feasibility Study was completed addressing the need of the district's three county region (Ashtabula, Mahoning, and Trumbull Counties). This study was the result of an ARC POWER award to the Trumbull County Planning Commission in 2019, a 2020 EDA award to Eastgate, and matching contributions from our county partners. The study provided the region with a guidebook with which to navigate improving the broadband standing of the region that has significant issues with connectivity as it relates to access, affordability and adaptability. What the study proved, is that the region not only lacks appropriate broadband speeds, but also that there was an inherent problem with digital equity and inclusion. In 2021, it was reported that among the top least connected cities in the State of Ohio, that two of the region's largest cities, Youngstown & Warren, were ranked 2nd and 5th respectively. In light of these figures, Eastgate and the region quickly got to work pursuing the recommendations of the study which can be found by utilizing the following link to the Eastgate website <https://www.eastgatecog.org/broadband>. Eastgate accepted the role as the regional convener for all things broadband. By taking on this leadership role, it has allowed the agency to serve as a repository for broadband related developments in the region, while helping to avoid duplication of initiatives and projects. Eastgate has also brought on a Broadband Coordinator to work with our local communities and county governments to ensure that funding sources and project opportunities are being taken advantage of.

## *Mahoning River Corridor Revitalization Plan*

Eastgate Regional Council of Governments and thirteen communities along



and highlights

# IND HIGHLIGHTS

the Mahoning River are working together to restore a river that built our region – the Mahoning River. Restoring the river began with removing the first of nine, low-head dams in the Village of Lowellville and continues with the start of a second removal project upstream in the City of Struthers. Complimenting the dam removal projects is the Mahoning River Corridor Revitalization Plan. Eastgate initiated the plan, which was completed in December 2021, to create a roadmap for communities to utilize as they move forward towards embracing the river that built the region. The plan provides a regional approach to re-envisioning and redefining the river corridor. The plan focuses on ecological improvements, restoration efforts, expands recreational amenities, and enhances economic development opportunities regionally and within each of the 13 communities. The Community Implementation Toolkits outline each community's unique traits, provide context to existing conditions, and offer recommendations for the future. In the end, the kits explore how the corridor-wide objectives may be specifically applied and identifies implementation funding. A copy of the plan, along with the community toolkits, can be found at <https://mymahoningriver.com/resources>.

## *Eastgate Utility Study*

Eastgate has begun work with Raftelis to conduct a utility regionalization study for Mahoning and Trumbull Counties. The goals of the study are to create a baseline GIS inventory of current utilities infrastructure to inform economic development and planning efforts, and to plot a course to enhance regional collaboration and advance economic development goals. The projects emphasis will focus on water, wastewater, and electric power (particularly renewable energy sources) utilities that increase the catalytic development potential of large-scale job creation at commercial and industrial development sites. The study is anticipated to be completed in the Spring of 2022.

## BHRC

## *Expanding Broadband Access in Appalachian Ohio*

At the 2021 State of the Region Conference in May, Buckeye Hills Regional Council joined with its fellow Appalachian Ohio Local Development Districts to re-launch [ConnectingAppalachia.org](http://ConnectingAppalachia.org) with support from the Foundation for Appalachian Ohio, Ohio Southeast Economic Development, and the Ohio University Voinovich School. The resulting mapping and data from the project were shared with local leaders, agency partners, and lawmakers to show the areas in our region in most need of investment. The following August Buckeye Hills Regional Council announced the hiring of our new broadband staff members. In the fall, our region began to see significant federal investments in broadband from the Appalachian Regional Commission, including in the communities of Athens, Noble County, and Monroe counties. Additional investments are on the horizon in 2022 with 13 applications for major broadband expansion projects in south-east Ohio filed through the newly-created Residential Broadband Expansion



Grant Program. The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act also authorized more than \$62 billion in additional broadband investments nationally.

### *HealthJay Tablets Help Connect Older Adults*

In November, Buckeye Hills Regional Council announced its partnership with California-based software company HealthJay Inc. in a joint effort to deploy JayPad tablet solutions to older adults in several senior living communities. Hundreds of older adults will benefit from the initiative that is to address the pressing challenges of social isolation and staffing shortage. This partnership will also put Marietta on the map as one of the early adopters in the country to use smart technology to deliver hybrid senior care. A No Wrong Door grant from the Ohio Department of Health and Human Services, the Administration for Community Living, and the Ohio Aging and Disability Resource Center is helping Buckeye Hills Regional Council and Buckeye Hills Support Services put the tablets into the Washington County Home and the upcoming Buckeye Fields independent living community, in partnership with the Washington County Commissioners and Washington County Job and Family Services. The Marietta Community Foundation provided the initial funds for the environmental and marketing studies to apply for the grant.

## OVRDC

### *INSPIRE Will Establish Southern Ohio Employer Resource Network*

The Ohio Valley Regional Development Commission (OVRDC) continues to see progress, making strides despite the impacts felt by year two of the ongoing COVID crisis. OVRDC is proud of our local governments and the people we serve who are working hard for their communities. Their success reflects the unity, resilience and determination of our members and affiliated organizations. In 2021, OVRDC received an ARC INSPIRE grant award to establish the Southern Ohio Employer Resource Network (SOERN), aligning with local employers and the Community Action agencies of Ross and Jackson/Vinton Counties to establish on-site success coaches who connect workers and those in recovery to existing community resources to support workforce training, transportation, childcare, affordable housing and more. The Clean Ohio Greenspace Conservation program, which OVRDC administers for the District 15 Natural Resource Assistance Council (NRAC) and Ohio Public Works Commission (OPWC), now has a successful governing board made up of 11 members to award projects. This year OVRDC, and the other five ODOT-designated Regional Transportation Planning Organizations (RTPOs), successfully advocated for a \$5.2 million budget line item in the State of Ohio biennium budget to support work on functionally classified roadways, bike, pedestrian, safety, transit, and non-highway freight projects. Special projects also included our EDA-funded broadband mapping effort to support critical broadband infrastructure coverage and expansion, and a tourism study to collect data and build baseline support for greater tourism and ecotourism economic development opportunities in the region.

IND H is n i s h t s

# Highlights

## OMEGA

### *Belmont College Workforce Development Program (Belmont County)*

OMEGA has assisted Belmont College in Belmont County with obtaining grants for several workforce development projects. The ARC Advanced Welding grant will allow the college to provide training for welding with aluminum and titanium for use in the oil and gas and metal fabricating industries.

Belmont College was a partner in two grant cycles of the GOA Regional Job Training Program, providing job training for advanced manufacturing and Commercial Drivers Licenses (CDL). In September 2021, Belmont College was awarded an ARC POWER grant for the Heating, Ventilation and Air-Conditioning (HVAC) Training Center. In the POWER Project, Belmont College will work with the Belmont County Drug Court to provide HVAC training in lieu of jail time or fees for drug offenders. This is one of several ARC Grant Projects in the OMEGA Region with a Recovery to Work component. Others include the ARC POWER grant for the Urban Mission Ministries for the Fresh Start Workforce Development Program, and ARC INSPIRE grants for the Jefferson County Prevention and Recovery Board and Knox-Holmes-Coshocton-Ashland CAC for peer support Recovery to Work projects.



### *ARC Federal Co-Chair Gayle Manchin Visits Southern And Southeast Ohio*

On July 20, ARC Federal Co-Chair Dr. Gayle Manchin and Executive Director Brandon McBride joined John Carey, director of Ohio Governor's Office of Appalachia, and Julia Hinton, ARC Ohio state program manager, on a tour of Ohio's Local Development Districts to see ARC investments in action. To bring the region to socioeconomic parity with the rest of the nation, the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) has focused investments into fundamental community and economic development needs, including basic infrastructure, education, job training, health care, entrepreneurship, and capital market development. From critical infrastructure to career readiness, recovery-to-work, the creation of a vibrant downtown, and collaboration and strong community partnerships, Dr. Manchin, as well as ARC and GOA leadership saw the ways these investments are having a real impact in Appalachian Ohio.



### *Recovery to Work Cohort Learning Academy (Regional Project)*

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the state and nation have experienced both a rise in opioid use and a decline in workforce availability. As individuals in recovery search for employment, area agencies across the OMEGA region are partnering to participate in the Recovery to Work Cohort Learning Academy, under the Development District Association of Appalachia (DDAA), through funding from the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC). The Recovery to Work Cohort Learning Academy will strive to foster and curate partnerships between area businesses, recovery service providers and individuals in recovery from substance abuse disorders (SUD) who are ready to enter the workforce. The program is designed to coordinate Recovery to Work Efforts in the OMEGA Region, increase the number of employers that hire, support, and retain individuals in recovery, and to provide support services (transportation, housing, childcare) to program participants. Core Team members include OMEGA, Coleman Health Services, The Columbiana County Port Authority, and Belmont College. Home Team members represent the Jefferson County Prevention and Recovery Board, the Urban Mission, the Area 16 Workforce Board, Kno-Ho-Co-Ashland CAC, Ohio Guidestone, Muskingum Behavioral Health, Guernsey Health Choices and Coshocton County Common Pleas Court.



# ADD Highlights



THIS REPORT WAS PRODUCED  
IN GRATITUDE FOR OUR FUNDERS,  
PARTNERS, AND SUPPORTERS  
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