



APPALACHIAN OHIO
Return On Investment
2024 ANNUAL REPORT

Innovate. Partner. Invest.





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Front Cover: Barge on the Ohio River, Portsmouth, Scioto County
Left: Micro Machine Works, Vincent, Washington County (Michell Waters for OhioSE)
Back Cover: Piatt Park Gorge, Monroe County

Strengthening Ohio's Appalachian Region

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

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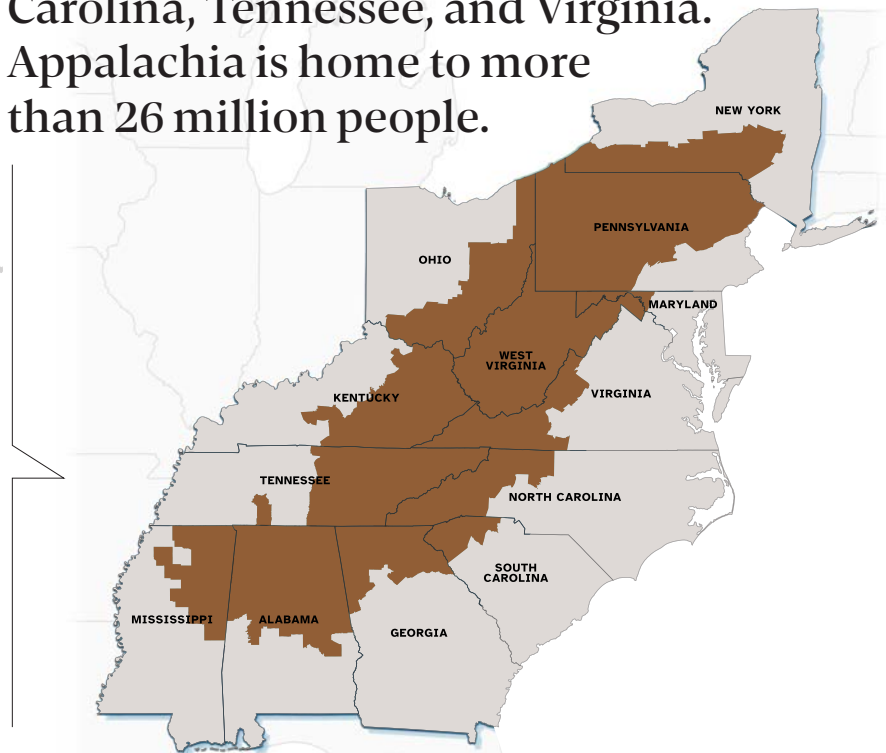
Investing

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.

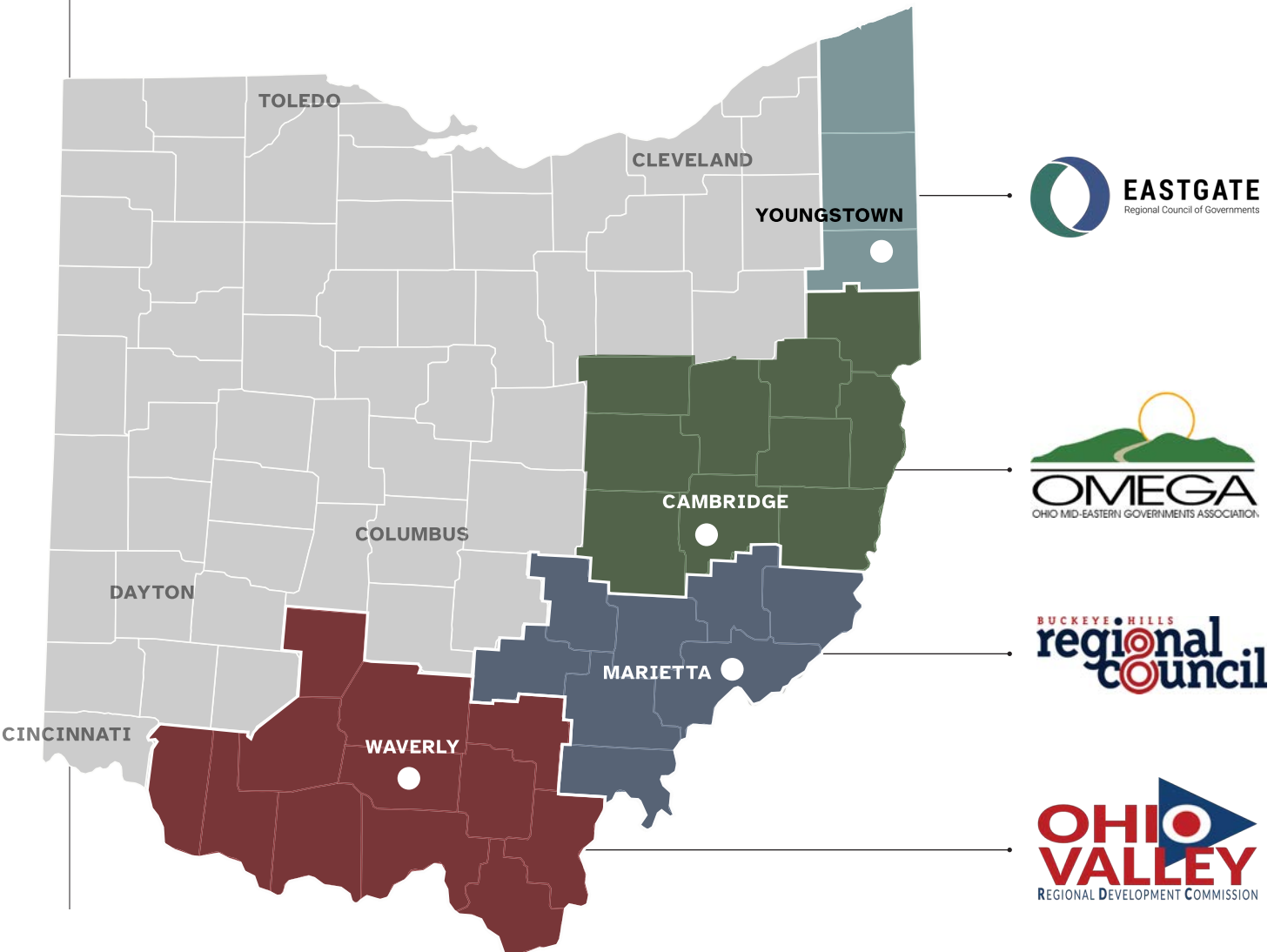


With the goal of bringing the region to socioeconomic parity with the rest of the nation, the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) has focused investments into fundamental community and economic development needs, including building Appalachia's businesses, workforce ecosystem, infrastructure, regional 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 most important role of the LDDs 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 grassroots 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

In 2024, 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 60 projects representing a historically high one-year total of \$133.8 million in federal, state, and local investments. These projects created 211 new jobs, helped employers retain 1,471 positions, and improved the quality of life in the region.

Ohio's LDDs and Appalachian communities maximized the use of state and federal dollars in 2024. For each dollar invested by the Appalachian Regional Commission, LDDs and local communities leveraged an additional \$4.96 in local, state, and other federal sources. For each dollar invested by the Governor's Office of Appalachia, LDDs and local communities leveraged an additional \$8.45.

The combined administrative costs of \$2 million represented just 1.5% of the region's \$133.8 million in total project costs. Ohio's LDDs use this administrative support to identify, prioritize, and work with local leaders to 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 over 50 years of experience 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. **Working 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.

Ohio's Local Development Districts 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.

Investment Overview

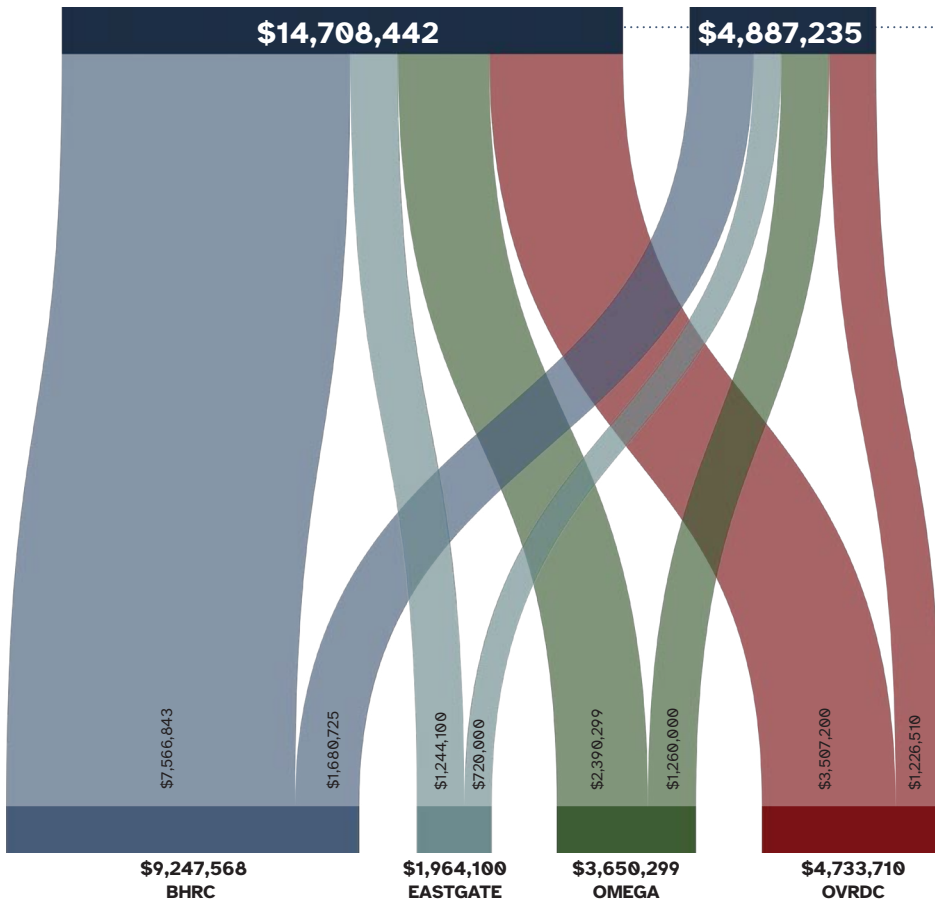
Federal and State Investment

Federal ARC Investment

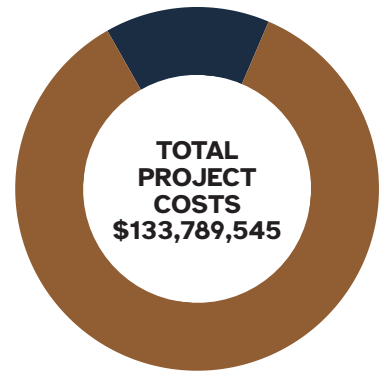
For every \$1 invested by ARC, Ohio LDDs leveraged \$4.96 in additional investments.

Ohio GOA Investment

For every \$1 invested by GOA, Ohio LDDs leveraged \$8.45 in additional investments.



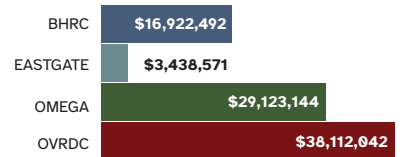
\$19,595,677
Federal and State Investment



\$114,193,868
Total Leveraged Investments

Federal ARC Grant Programs

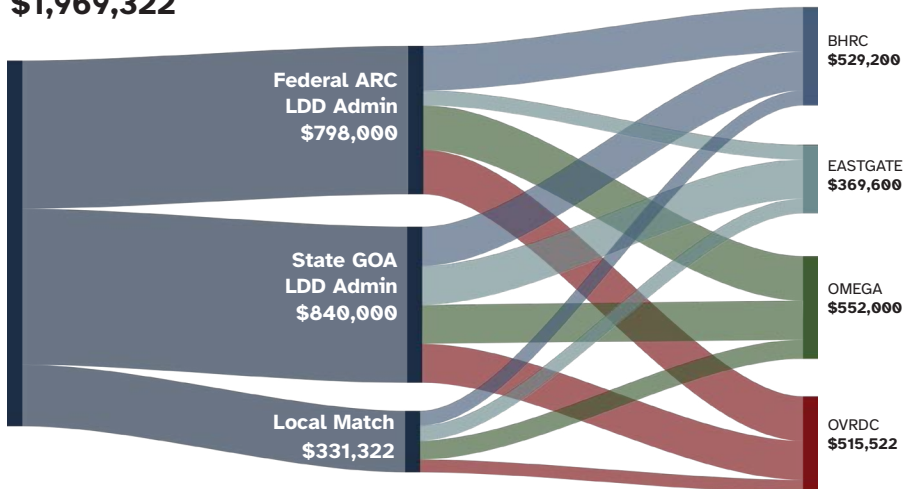
2024 TOTAL PROJECT COSTS



Total Admin Cost

Admin costs represented 1.5% of total project costs in 2024

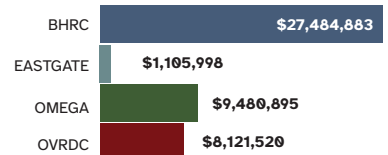
\$1,969,322



PROJECTS ADMINISTERED **42** JOBS CREATED **169** JOBS RETAINED **1,360**

State Appalachian Assistance Grant Programs

2024 TOTAL PROJECT COSTS



PROJECTS ADMINISTERED **18** JOBS CREATED **42** JOBS RETAINED **111**

INVESTMENT Impacts

Color key

- BHRC
- OMEGA
- EASTGATE
- OVRDC

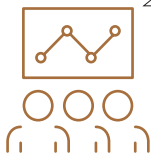
TOTAL PROJECTS
IN THE REGION



TOTAL JOBS
RETAINED

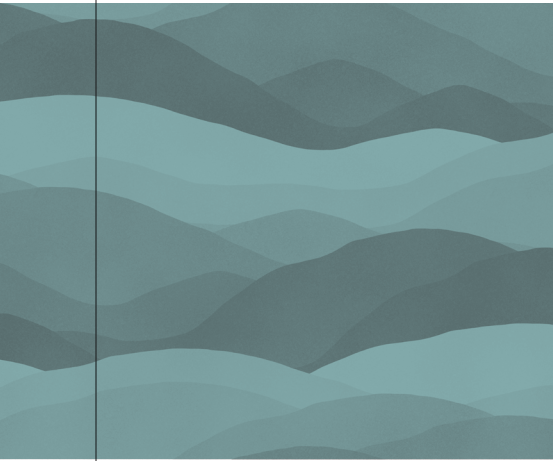


TOTAL JOBS
CREATED



TOTAL PROJECT
INVESTMENT





Community Investment Highlights

Community Infrastructure



City of Gallipolis Waterline Replacement

GALLIA COUNTY

OVRDC

ARC Area Development Funds

\$500,000

Total Project Costs:

\$8,058,700

Partners:

ARC, Ohio Environmental Protection Agency

The project is critical to ensuring access to basic quality infrastructure, replacing asbestos cement, cast iron and galvanized watermain that is over 100 years old and suffered a catastrophic failure in 2014 that left customers without water for nine days. Replacing 15,180 linear feet of 12-inch PVC, 11,800 linear feet of 10-inch PVC, 32,600 linear feet of 6-inch PVC, 181 gate valves, 59 fire hydrants, 51 connections to existing waterline, and 543 service line connections to main will improve customer services and eliminate water main breaks which regularly caused boil orders to be issued. Replacing outdated service like this ensures residents access to reliable and affordable utilities so they can successfully live and work in the community and grow the region.



Hannibal Wastewater Collection and Treatment System

MONROE COUNTY

The Ohio & Lee service area faces issues with outdated home sewage treatment systems that often malfunction, leading to improper discharges into stormwater or state waters. This lack of centralized wastewater services has hindered development in the region. In response, the Ohio & Lee Township Water & Sewer Authority is committed to providing safe wastewater services.

To address these challenges, a decentralized wastewater collection and treatment system is being established for the Hannibal area. This system will be integrated into the Duffy Treatment System, transforming it into a Regional Project aimed at eliminating discharges from failing sewage systems into state waters enhancing the region's development potential.



BHRC

ARC Area Development Funds:

\$500,000

Total Project Costs:

\$12,893,127

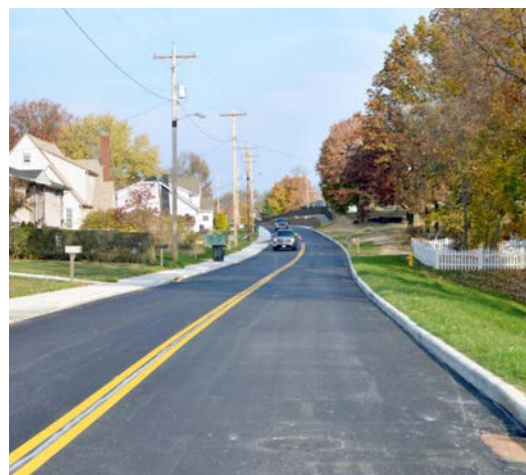
Partners:

Ohio & Lee Water and Sewer Authority, Appalachian regional Commission, Ohio Department of Development, Ohio Water Development Authority, Monroe County Commissioners, Ohio Environmental Protection Agency, Rural Community Assistance Partnership

Steubenville Lovers Lane Improvements

JEFFERSON COUNTY

The Lovers Lane project in Steubenville captured not just road widening, but also new waterlines, storm sewers, retaining wall, and five-foot sidewalk. This highly traveled area transports 10,500 vehicles per day. Capital improvements in and around the area have created additional traffic demands and capacity problems, and there had been three waterline breaks in the previous year along this route. Benefits of the project included: reduction of accidents and traffic congestion; improvement of traffic flow, waterlines, and access to existing facilities; promotion of future development; and creation of future employment opportunities. Outcomes included road conditions improved, 48 businesses improved, and 320 households improved.



OMEGA

GOA Appalachian Assistance Funds:

\$250,000

Total Project Costs:

\$3,387,790

Partners:

City of Steubenville, Brook-Hancock-Jefferson Metropolitan Planning Commission, Ohio Public Works Commission, and OMEGA for Governors Office of Appalachia



Eastgate

ARC Area Development Funds:

\$250,000

Total Project Costs:

\$783,000

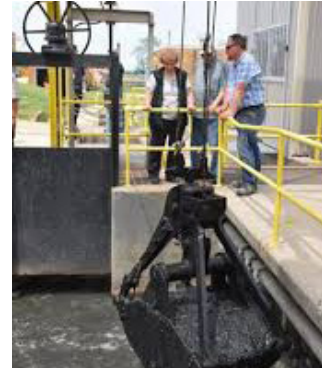
Partners:

Ashtabula County Commissioners, Ashtabula Township Trustees, Local area businesses

Palmer Avenue Sewage Retention Basin and Pump Station Improvements

ASHTABULA COUNTY

This project will enhance public infrastructure and support economic development with sewage retention basin and pump station improvements in Ashtabula Township. The improvements to an aging wastewater tank during high flow events will prevent sewage backup into basements initially along East 27th Street and East 30th Street and ultimately from Columbus Ave East to Cook Road. This project will serve 1,737 households, and 113 businesses in Ashtabula Township.



OMEGA

GOA Appalachian Assistance Funds:

\$250,000

Total Project Costs:

\$1,175,565

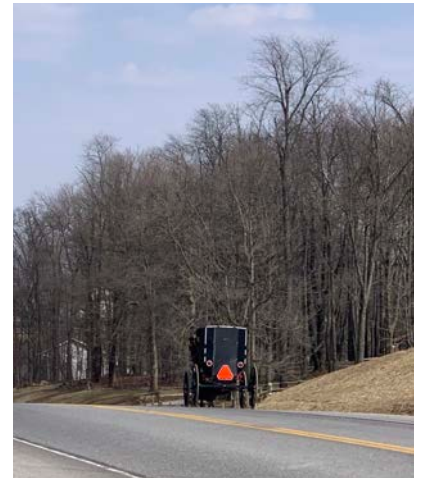
Partners:

Coshocton County, Northeast Coshocton County Infrastructure Connection, Ohio Department of Transportation, Coshocton Port Authority, and OMEGA for Governors Office of Appalachia.

Coshocton County Road 126

COSHOCTON COUNTY

According to the Northeast Coshocton County Infrastructure Connection, the completion of this project is proving to be regionally and generationally transformative. Located in our Amish Country Region, this road is home to two school-houses, 25 homes and 32 businesses; serving a high number of Amish residents, businesses, and travelers. With an increasing number of e-bikes and horse-drawn buggies on the road, it was imperative for the safety of all travelers. The project reconstructed CR-126 from CR-12 north to the Holmes County line (approximately 4 miles), providing safe and reliable travel.



Eastgate

GOA Appalachian Assistance Funds

\$297,100

Total Project Costs:

\$480,261

Partners:

Rural Community Assistance Partnership (RCAP), US Army Corps of Engineers, Ohio Environmental Protection Agency

Salt Springs Road Waterline Replacement

TRUMBULL COUNTY

This project will enhance public infrastructure and support public health with the construction of a 1,400 linear feet of waterline improvements in a low-to-moderate (LMI) income area to improve economic and community development. This project will serve 1 community and 8 households.



Culture & Tourism

Recreational Infrastructure Improvement

MONROE COUNTY

Monroe County, located along the Ohio River in the Appalachian foothills, is known for its wilderness and outdoor adventures. The area features stunning sites like the waterfalls of Piatt Park and scenic views from Kiedaisch Point. This project enhances the Monroe County Park District's recreational offerings, including:

- Piatt Park: Trail improvements, a 6.5-mile mountain bike trail, construction equipment, signage, and a security system.
- Kiedaisch Point: New facilities including restrooms, a shelter with a grill, parking, a driveway, signage, and a security system.
- Sunfish Creek: Improvements including a driveway, parking area, restroom, kayak launch, adult interpretive trail signage, and a security system.



Dennison Railroad Depot Museum Clay Museum Improvements

TUSCARAWAS COUNTY

In addition to preserving a historic building in downtown Uhrichsville, this project created a new community center with museum exhibition space and retail locations to drive economic, educational, and tourism development. The outcomes have included eight full-time jobs and an internship, downtown businesses improved, and a historic renovation with ten new exhibitions. The core project addresses the downtown development and tourism corridor that travels through the communities of both Dennison and Uhrichsville, while critically serving the educational and professional development of the youth.



BHRC

GOA Appalachian Assistance Funds:

\$261,000

Total Project Costs:

\$372,858

Partners:

Monroe County Park District, Outdoor Recreation Council of Appalachia, Ohio Department of Natural Resources Division of Wildlife, River Valley Mountain Bike Association



OMEGA

GOA Appalachian Assistance Funds:

\$100,000

Total Project Costs:

\$775,000

Partners:

City of Uhrichsville, The Village of Dennison, Village of Newcomerstown, the Claymont School District, Tuscarawas County Community Foundation, State Historic Preservation Office, Ohio History Connection, Local Foundations, Area Chambers of Commerce



OVRDC

ARC Area Development Funds:

\$495,536

Total Project Costs:

\$619,420

Partners:

**City of Portsmouth,
Portsmouth Murals Inc.**

Portsmouth Riverfront Multi-Use Path and Mural Preservation Project

SCIOTO COUNTY

The Portsmouth Riverfront Multi-Use Path and Mural Preservation project will construct a 1.5-mile-long, paved path along the Ohio riverfront and floodwall area in Portsmouth. The path will be dedicated to active transportation activities and connect to a recently constructed 1.7-mile multi-use path along Front Street and extend to the new \$2.7M recreational dock and boat ramp under construction. The project also provides preservation needed for the Portsmouth Floodwall Murals; a 2,000-foot-long top tourist attraction painted by world-renowned muralist Robert Dafford. The projects will serve both residents and visitors, improving 50 businesses in the area and creating 3 additional businesses as tourism numbers increase.



Workforce Ecosystems



BHRC

ARC Area Development Funds:

\$574,668

Total Project Costs:

\$5,562,483

Partners:

Athens Community Improvement Corporation, City of Athens, JobsOhio, Governor's Office of Appalachia, U.S. Department of Transportation, Sustainable Ohio Public Energy Council

Athens Armory

ATHENS COUNTY

This project focused on acquiring essential components for the Athens Armory coworking and event hub, including furnishings, audio-visual equipment, and access control systems. These upgrades will enhance the space's quality and functionality. The armory had previously stood vacant for over 20 years. The initiative is part of a \$5 million renovation funded by the City of Athens, JobsOhio Vibrant Communities, and the Governor's Office of Appalachia, along with support from the U.S. Department of Transportation and Sustainable Ohio Public Energy Council.



YWRA Flight Center

MAHONING COUNTY

This project purchased flight simulator equipment for the Youngstown-Warren Regional Airport to strengthen the workforce through job training initiatives in high-paying in-demand jobs. The purpose of the Flight Center is to establish a pilot training school to develop skills and create a career pathway for Appalachian residents in the in-demand aviation industry. The project will serve 6 Businesses, 3 communities in ARC-designated At-Risk counties, 3 organizations, 100 students, and create 6 jobs.



Field of Hope

GALLIA COUNTY

The Field of Hope project to Equip the Business Enterprise Zone provides equipment and workforce development training to graduates of the Field of Hope recovery outreach program, expanding recovery-to-work efforts. Clients will gain hands-on experience in career pathways including manufacturing, computer technology, business, cosmetology, culinary arts and entrepreneurship. The Business Enterprise Zone at Field of Hope supports people in recovery with marketable skills that lead to employment which is proven to be one of the cornerstones of sustained recovery and community connection.



Eastgate

ARC Area Development Funds:

\$244,100

Total Project Costs:

\$348,768

Partners:

Kent State University, Southern Airways, JETS, Winner Aviation, Mahoning County Commissioners, Youngstown-Warren Regional Chamber, Pittsburgh Institute of Aeronautics



OVRDC

ARC Area Development Funds:

\$456,200

Total Project Costs:

\$797,065

Partners:

Ohio Capital Budget, Field of Hope

BHRC

In May 2024, Ohio Governor Mike DeWine announced historic investments in the Appalachian region through the Appalachian Community Grant Program. Communities within the Buckeye Hills region received a total of \$132 million across various initiatives aimed at revitalizing downtown areas, enhancing riverfronts, and expanding school-based healthcare services.



The Appalachian Downtowns and Destinations Initiative allocated \$38 million to 7 projects in the Buckeye Hills region, including the City of Athens Central Business District Beautification Project (\$6.5 million) and the Monroe Theatre Restoration and Renovation (\$4.6 million). Additionally, the Ohio's Wonderful Waterfronts Initiative invested \$51 million in 8 communities in the Buckeye Hills region, including \$9.4 million for Levee Park Improvements in Marietta and \$10 million for Riverfront Redevelopment in the Village of Racine.

Buckeye Hills Regional Council is now working with lead applicants Ross County and the Ironton-Lawrence Community Organization to administer and assist communities with the implementation of 16 projects across the Buckeye Hills region totaling \$95,303,533.

In recognition of its significant impact in Southeast Ohio, Buckeye Hills Regional Council's Development Division was honored as the Community Development Department of the Year by the Ohio Conference of Community Development in July 2024. This accolade highlights the division's dedication to empowering local communities through innovative initiatives and collaborative efforts. Notably, the team engaged in an eight-part community workshop series to rewrite the region's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, "Buckeye Hills Forward," involving over 200 community members and gathering more than 2,000 data points. This award is as much a recognition of the collaborative spirit of Southeast Ohio communities and their dedication to improving the region's quality of life as it is of the work of Buckeye Hills Regional Council.



EASTGATE

Over the past year our district came together tirelessly to collaborate and strengthen our partnerships as a region with the private sector, elected officials, non-profit sector, local communities, Regional Chamber and Eastgate to identify projects to provide sustainable, regional, transformative change for future economic and community development within our region. The response to ACGP was overwhelming with many good projects being identified and resulted in strengthening collaboration in public-private partnerships within our communities. Eastgate was awarded \$19,628,618 for 10 projects within our three-county district. These 10 projects will promote economic growth through downtown revitalization along our riverfronts and small communities as well as investments in shoreline restoration. In addition, four projects were also awarded in our district through the Appalachian Children's Coalition ACGP project.

Eastgate completed a Regional Housing Plan for Mahoning and Trumbull Counties. As part of this plan, various deliverables have been created including: A Market Value Analysis (MVA) which is a data-based, field-validated examination of the region's residential real estate market informed by local stakeholders. It is a tool to inform community revitalization and manage neighborhood change. The Housing Needs Assessment analyzes the need for affordably priced housing and identifies populations that may be vulnerable due to a lack of housing supply. The Strategy consists of housing stock and trends information, housing development in an informed way, and provides strategies on a regional level with localized recommendations communities can initiate on their own based on the MVA.



1000 Highlights

100 Highlights

OMEGA

In 2024, the Appalachian Community Grant Program made available up to \$500 million in ARPA funds to be awarded across the 32-county Appalachian region in Ohio. The priorities included workforce, infrastructure, and healthcare. Each regionally-transformational project was required to be under construction by September 2024 and completed by October 2026.

Having carefully vetted over 90 projects, 41 went into OMEGA's regional application, titled "Destination Appalachia: Pathway to Prosperity," as they demonstrated the ability to deliver transformational, sustainable projects through quantifiable, actionable, and achievable outcomes and research. With a request of \$158,029,208 and representation of 10 counties, 26 communities, and 41 projects with one unified vision - to influence Covid-impacted economic activity and social well-being for our region's (a) resiliency, (b) strengthening, and (c) sustainability efforts - OMEGA worked intimately with each local community and their state-appointed procured planners.

Seven projects were funded, creating an investment of nearly \$32million in the following OMEGA communities:

- Zanesville-Muskingum County's Gateway District overhaul of Secrest Auditorium and the district-wide streetscape to improve public gathering spaces.
- Coshocton's Skip's Landing at the confluence of the Walhonding and Tuscarawas Rivers, a river corridor destination, planned as a food access/farmers market hub with riverwalk trails linking to downtown's pedestrian crossings.
- The popular Amish tourism destination, Holmes County, creates and connects trails in the Village of Killbuck, designed for non-motorized use.
- The Great Guernsey Trail extension in Cambridge (Guernsey County) links Lore City and Kipling to Cambridge with a trailhead.
- The Village of Newcomerstown in Tuscarawas County will revitalize its downtown by improving business facades; providing remediation to 16 downtown-area small businesses that suffered losses during the pandemic and two that invested in its aftermath.
- In Harrison County, cyclists benefit from wayfinding, road markings, and enhanced amenities along the Conotton Creek Trail in Jewett and Scio.
- In Jefferson County, a building transferred to the Adena Historical Society will boast an eatery with outdoor seating, retail space, the Health Department, and potential future university medical site.



OVRDC

In May 2024, Appalachian Community Grant program awards were celebrated across the region. Communities across the OVRDC region are achieving remarkable progress to complete 51 transformative projects by fall 2026. Two lead applicants from our region, Ross County/City of Chillicothe, and the Ironton Lawrence Community Action Organization, were awarded a combined \$306+ million dollars for projects in downtown development and tourism. Collaboration was key to the awards and as projects build out OVRDC will work with staff from Buckeye Hills Regional Council and Ohio University media students to document the historic impact of the grant program.



In 2024, transportation activities included additional funding for the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program, growing transit services, deploying "Work Ride Solutions," a workforce transportation learning launch program, conducting public safety outreach, collecting valuable survey data, working with Mobility Managers and leading transportation planning meetings to consolidate ten county plans into a unified regional Coordinated Public Transit Human Services Transportation Plan before June 2025 for ODOT Region 7.

Clean Ohio and the National Resource Assistance Council District 15 awarded \$2.1 million to four projects in Gallia, Highland and Scioto counties. This will preserve nearly 990 acres of land in southern Ohio, and ensuring public access to new hiking trails that will immerse both residents and visitors in our most stunning natural landscapes.

INDO Highlights



**THIS REPORT WAS PRODUCED
IN GRATITUDE FOR OUR FUNDERS,
PARTNERS, AND SUPPORTERS
OF THE FEATURED INITIATIVES.**



**Appalachian
Regional
Commission**



**Department of
Development**