



EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

MAY 2, 2025

Buckeye Hills Regional Council

AGENDA

- I. **Call to Order** | James Booth, President
- II. **Roll Call** | Chasity Schmelzenbach, Secretary
- III. **Consent Agenda** | James Booth, President **TAB #1**
- IV. **Management Committee Update** | Ron Moore, Chair **TAB #2**
 - a. Management Committee Report
 - b. Staff Appreciation Gifts/Certificates/Resolutions
 - c. Planner Job Description
 - d. Salary Scale Update
 - e. Organization Chart Update
 - f. Wellness Policy
 - g. Insurance Renewals
 - (1) Increase to Annual HSA Payment
 - h. HB257 – Virtual Meeting Policy
- V. **FY 2026-2027 Alzheimer's RFP Award** | Denise Keyes, Fiscal Director
- VI. **Appalachian Development Corp. Vacancy Appointment for Term 2023-2026**
- VII. **Planning Division Update** | Melissa Zoller, Planning Director **TAB #3**
 - a. Coordinated Transportation Plans: Noble, Monroe, and Washington Counties
 - (1) Resolution to Approve the 2025 Noble County Coordinated Transportation Plan
 - (2) Resolution to Approve the 2025 Monroe County Coordinated Transportation Plan
 - (3) Resolution to Approve the 2025 Washington County Coordinated Transportation Plan
 - b. Transportation Update
 - (1) Resolution to Approve the FY 2026 RTP Work Plan
 - (2) Resolution to Approve the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), Horizon 2050 STBG Funding
- VIII. **Member Round Table**
- IX. **Legislator and Partner Agency Updates**
- X. **Executive Director Report** | Chasity Schmelzenbach **TAB #4**

- XI. **Citizen Participation**
- XII. **Other Business**
 - a. 2025 Conflict of Interests
- XIII. **Adjournment**

TAB #5

THE NEXT MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR JUNE 6, 2024.

**Minutes of the March 7, 2025
Buckeye Hills Regional Council Executive Committee Meeting**

The Buckeye Hills Regional Council (BHRC) Executive Committee meeting was held March 7, 2025. The meeting was held at Buckeye Hills, Marietta, Ohio.

In attendance were:

OFFICERS:	Lenny Eliason, President Ron Moore, Vice President James Booth, Treasurer Chasity Schmelzenbach, Secretary (non-voting member per Bylaws)	Athens County Morgan County Washington County BHRC
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:	Jason D'Onofrio Jeff Dickerson Brian Howard Ken Stewart Mick Schumacher Heidi Maxwell Allen Fraley Ben Carpenter Bev Trovato	Hocking County Hocking County (Private Sector) Meigs County (Private Sector) Monroe County (Private Sector) Monroe County - Alternate Morgan County Noble County Perry County Perry County (Private Sector)
GUESTS:	Allie New Tyce Pott Bryn Stepp Cody Pettit Joy Evangelista Peggi Warthman Amanda Sutphin John White	Office of U.S. Representative Rulli Office of Ohio Senator Moreno Office of Governor DeWine Office of Ohio Treasurer Sprague Hocking County CIC Hocking County CIC OhioSE Marietta College Student
STAFF:	Amanda Reeder Denise Keyes Drew Tanner Emma Yeager Eric Wade Kate Dunn Kimy Porter Jada Riley Jen Huck Jennifer Westfall Jenny Simmons Melissa Zoller Sam Miller	Communications Assistant Fiscal Director Communications Director Development Specialist Senior Planner Senior Planner Fiscal Assistant Development Specialist Fiscal Assistant Aging & Health Director Program Manager Planner Director Development Director

CALL TO ORDER

Lenny Eliason, President, called the meeting to order.

ROLE CALL

Chasity Schmelzenbach, Secretary, conducted roll call.

CONSENT AGENDA

Jason D'Onofrio moved to approve the consent agenda which included the minutes from the February 7, 2025, meeting; Statement of Activities; Administrative Expense YTD; Aging and Disability Programs Services and Funding Report for period July 1, 2024, through January 31, 2025, and Division and Director's Reports. James Booth seconded the motion. All yeas. Motion carried.

ARC PRE-APPLICATION UPDATE

Sam Miller, Development Director, provided information on the upcoming ARC pre-application season which included deadlines dates, regional project workshops dates, and an overview of the pre-application requirements.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

Director Schmelzenbach provided the following updates to the committee:

Congratulations in the Region:

- Hocking Hills was named as one of the "50 Most Beautiful Places in America" by Conde Nast Traveler.
- City of Marietta for being listed among "50 of the Most Charming Small Towns in America" by HGTV.

Current Initiatives:

- Environmental Assessments of Contaminated Buildings and Sites.
 - With the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Brownfields Assessment Grant, BHRC can offer essential services like:
 - Phase I and II Environmental Site Assessments
 - Remedial Action Plans
 - Redevelopment Plans
 - Contaminant Assessment Plans
 - HAZMAT Reports
 - Contact Kate Dunn, Senior Planner, kdunn@buckeyehills.org to receive and submit a Property Intake Form for each site as soon as possible, but no later than June 30

State Updates:

- Issue 2 will be on the ballot on May 6th and for Resources to Support Renewal of State Capital Improvements Program can be found in the Member & Partner Update email
- Biennial Operating Budget Introduced in HB96
- Ohio House Passes Transportation Budget
- Drops Local STBG Grant Dollars - Schmelzenbach passed out the RTPO Impact Report and stated this is the same report given to legislators and asked that committee members do the same to advocate and educate the need for community RTPO dollars.
- BroadbandOhio Opens Capacity Grant Application and closes on Fri., April 11, 2025, at 4pm.
- Ohio Mayors Alliance Proposes State Fund for Local Public Safety

Federal Updates

- Houses Passes Budget Resolution
- USDA Community Connect Program Application Due April 21
- USDOT Updates DOT Rural and Tribal Assistance Pilot Program Opening to March 18
- Schmelzenbach and Leadership staff will be attending NADO Policy Conference next week and meeting with Legislators to talk about projects and budgets. She provided the committee with the Appalachian Ohio Return on Investment 2024 Annual Report that she, along with the other LDD's Directors, will present to the Legislators on the Hill next week.

Mark Your Calendars

- March 13: BHRC RTPO Committee Meeting

- April 4: General Policy Council Annual Meeting – provided a flyer with additional information on how to register.
- May 13: 2025 Appalachian Ohio State of the Region Conference at Baker University Center in Athens, Ohio

MEMBER ROUND TABLE

Each member had the opportunity to share updates from their county. This open-floor format allowed members to discuss their current initiatives, challenges and successes.

LEGISLATIVE & PARTNER AGENCY UPDATES

Amanda Sutphin, OhioSE, provided updates to the committee.

Bryn Stepp, Office of Governor DeWine, provided updates to the committee.

Cody Pettit, Office of Ohio Treasurer Sprague, provided updates to the committee.

Allie New, Office of U.S. Representative Rulli, provided updates to the committee.

Tyce Pott, Office of Ohio Senator Moreno, provided updates to the committee.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

No citizens present wished to address the committee.

OTHER BUSINESS

Jennifer Westfall, Aging & Health Director, announced that ODA will allow BHRC to do Seniors Farmers Market with paper coupons again this year instead of switching to the mobile application or electronic card like the other Area Agency on Aging offices around the state.

ADJOURNMENT

With no other business, James Booth moved to adjourn the meeting. Jason D'Onofrio seconded the motion. All yeas. Motion carried.

Approved By:


Chasity Schnelzenbach, Secretary

Date: 05/02/2025

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Approved By: _____

Chasity Schmelzenbach, Secretary

Date: _____



STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

July 1, 2024, through March 31, 2025

Year to Date Administrative Expense Detail

Administrative Expenses for Fiscal Year 2025 totaled \$5,157,336.03 on March 31. This total represents 64.30% of the Council's administrative budget utilized. Total spending for this time period is budgeted to be 75%. Individual line-item budgets and expenses are monitored monthly to ensure funds are utilized appropriately and budget revisions are requested from funding agencies as needed. The cumulative Indirect Cost rate for this period is 46%. The Projected Indirect Rate for Fiscal Year 2025 is 46%. A Quarterly Budget Adjustment is attached for review. Additional funds budgeted are the result of new, unexpected grants to the Council.

Aging and Disability Programs Services & Funding Report

The Aging and Disability Division worked with various service providers and helped administer a multitude of direct service programs to eligible residents of our eight-county region. Between July 1 and March 31, more than \$14.4 million in direct service dollars were utilized to provide the units of service listed in the report. BHRC continues to support our provider network to evaluate the needs of the communities and serve area seniors in the best way possible.



Administrative Expense Detail

For the Period July 1, 2024 - March 31, 2025

	2024 YTD Actual	2025 YTD Actual	2025 Budget	% of Budget
Salary	\$ 2,445,170.48	\$ 2,740,282.06	\$ 3,767,557.42	72.73%
Fringe Benefits	\$ 1,238,182.71	\$ 1,333,234.64	\$ 2,072,226.67	64.34%
Advertising	\$ 182,788.02	\$ 94,129.31	\$ 128,785.00	73.09%
Audit Costs	\$ 62,300.00	\$ 30,264.00	\$ 32,000.00	94.58%
Building Maintenance	\$ 7,016.00	\$ 20,319.80	\$ 26,000.00	78.15%
Communications	\$ 64,743.95	\$ 71,509.25	\$ 101,875.00	70.19%
Conference Registration Fee	\$ 34,971.55	\$ 34,635.02	\$ 44,200.00	78.36%
Contract Services	\$ 85,740.01	\$ 151,397.36	\$ 957,595.76	15.81%
Employee/Governing Board	\$ 20,256.22	\$ 12,429.03	\$ 16,500.00	75.33%
Equipment Purchase/Maintenance	\$ 49,072.15	\$ 12,326.16	\$ 16,500.00	74.70%
Insurance	\$ 61,694.74	\$ 21,982.00	\$ 41,000.00	53.61%
Legal Costs	\$ 2,207.50	\$ 2,310.00	\$ 3,500.00	66.00%
Organizational Dues	\$ 37,290.90	\$ 56,630.66	\$ 57,000.00	99.35%
Other Costs	\$ 11,998.05	\$ 11,667.58	\$ 13,600.00	85.79%
Postage	\$ 6,054.10	\$ 9,748.72	\$ 13,000.00	74.99%
Printing Costs	\$ 2,914.39	\$ 6,786.89	\$ 7,000.00	96.96%
Software & Licenses	\$ 85,390.88	\$ 68,444.94	\$ 90,815.00	75.37%
Space	\$ 191,505.63	\$ 191,505.51	\$ 255,340.00	75.00%
Staff Training Fees	\$ 13,779.72	\$ 14,719.38	\$ 15,000.00	98.13%
Subscriptions	\$ 8,845.88	\$ 8,843.79	\$ 9,000.00	98.26%
Supplies	\$ 71,283.04	\$ 45,191.66	\$ 75,966.00	59.49%
Travel - Mileage Reimbursement	\$ 115,683.56	\$ 133,673.14	\$ 177,580.47	75.27%
Travel - Out of Town Expense	\$ 68,351.92	\$ 85,305.13	\$ 100,000.00	85.31%
TOTAL EXPENSES FOR THE PERIOD	\$ 4,867,241.40	\$ 5,157,336.03	\$ 8,022,041.32	64.29%
INDIRECT COST RATE FOR THE PERIOD	47%	46%		



Quarterly Budget Adjustment
For the Period July 1, 2024 -June 30, 2025

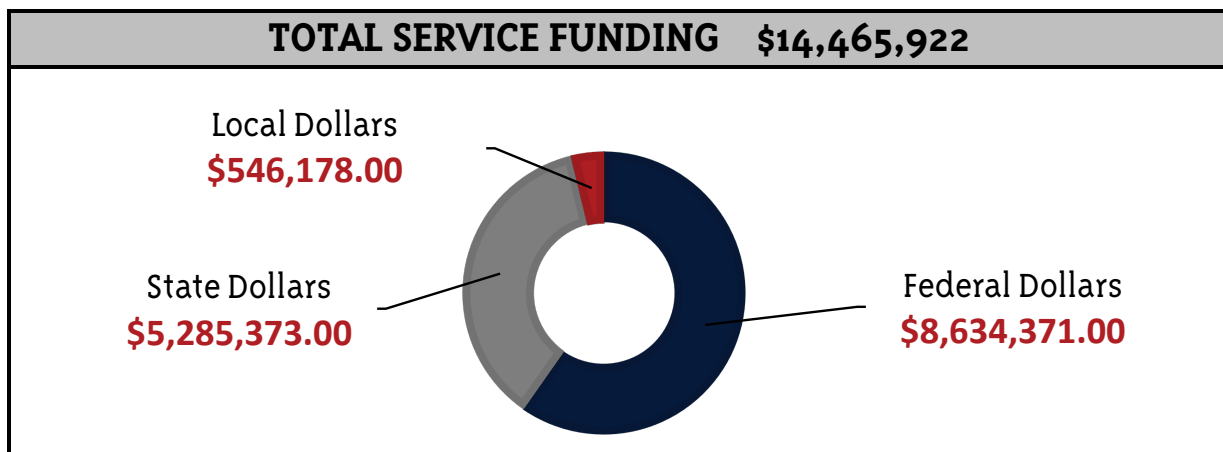
	Original Budget	07/24 - 09/24 Change	10/24 - 12/24 Change	01/25 - 03/25 Change	04/25 - 06/25 Change	Final Budget
Salary	\$ 3,483,759.06	\$ 190,396.12		\$ 93,402.24		\$ 3,767,557.42
Fringe Benefits	\$ 2,009,341.12	\$ 38,412.37		\$ 24,473.18		\$ 2,072,226.67
Advertising	\$ 128,785.00					\$ 128,785.00
Audit Costs	\$ 32,000.00					\$ 32,000.00
Building Maintenance	\$ 13,000.00		\$ 13,000.00			\$ 26,000.00
Communications	\$ 101,875.00					\$ 101,875.00
Conference Registration Fee	\$ 44,200.00					\$ 44,200.00
Contract Services	\$ 87,700.00	\$ 107,052.76		\$ 762,843.00		\$ 957,595.76
Employee/Governing Board	\$ 15,000.00			\$ 1,500.00		\$ 16,500.00
Equipment Purchase/Maintenance	\$ 22,800.00		\$ (3,000.00)	\$ (3,300.00)		\$ 16,500.00
Insurance	\$ 41,000.00					\$ 41,000.00
Legal Costs	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,500.00		\$ (1,000.00)		\$ 3,500.00
Organizational Dues	\$ 20,180.00			\$ 36,820.00		\$ 57,000.00
Other Costs	\$ 13,600.00					\$ 13,600.00
Postage	\$ 13,000.00					\$ 13,000.00
Printing Costs	\$ 16,000.00		\$ (10,000.00)	\$ 1,000.00		\$ 7,000.00
Software & Licenses	\$ 110,815.00			\$ (20,000.00)		\$ 90,815.00
Space	\$ 255,340.00					\$ 255,340.00
Staff Training Fees	\$ 9,000.00			\$ 6,000.00		\$ 15,000.00
Subscriptions	\$ 8,500.00			\$ 500.00		\$ 9,000.00
Supplies	\$ 68,375.00	\$ 27,591.00		\$ (20,000.00)		\$ 75,966.00
Travel - Mileage Reimbursement	\$ 137,628.81			\$ 39,951.66		\$ 177,580.47
Travel - Out of Town Expense	\$ 100,000.00					\$ 100,000.00
TOTAL BUDGET	\$ 6,733,898.99	\$ 365,952.25	\$ -	\$ 922,190.08	\$ -	\$ 8,022,041.32

Buckeye Hills Regional Council

Aging and Health Programs Services & Funding Report

July 1, 2024 -March 31, 2025

SERVICES PROVIDED		
Direct Service Hours Provided	Transportation Trips	Adult Day Service Days Attended
322,023	10,836	1,670
Adult Day Service Miles Traveled	Meals Provided	Home Medical Equipment & Emergency Response Units
16,807	151,572	1,458
Legal Services Contacts	Home Accesibility Modification And Pest Control Jobs	Senior Farmers Market Coupons Redeemed
516	44	26,343
Grocery Shopping and Delivery	Assisted Living Days	Evidence Based Classes
425	13,593	539
	Alzheimers Education Contacts	
	229	



REGIONAL STATS		
Total Consumers Served	Total Population	Total Population Eligible for Services by Age (60+)
5,381	249,172	65,746

PROGRAM UPDATES

ODM & MyCare Education | The Ohio Department of Medicaid continues to offer MyCare education sessions and host bi-weekly meetings with the AAAs in support of the MyCare transition. Information being shared includes transition planning, schedules, contracting information and program requirements. Several staff from BHRC as involved with the calls to ensure a comprehensive understanding of all the various components and requirements.

Medicaid Funding Cut | At the federal level-**Medicaid funding** within the House budget will experience a **\$880 Billion cut**. This funding cut will potentially impact state level Medicaid funding. It is also being shared that a cut this large to Medicaid will impact Medicare since as much as 30% of Medicaid recipients also are Medicare recipients.

Data & Software Systems | The Ohio Department of Aging is re-evaluating, replacing and enhancing data and software systems over the remainder of 2025. Wellsky (OAA documentation), PIMS (PASSPORT documentation), OBLTSS (front door services) and several other systems are slated to be replaced or enhanced over the coming months. It is our hope that there will be little to no disruption in workflow or service delivery.

Seniors Farmers Market Program | The Senior Farmers Market Program has begun within the region. BHRC has remained in paper format and applications are being accepted by mail and email. As expected, the always popular program has staff busy. We anticipate serving our normal census with a possible increase in numbers due to ARPA funding from ODA.

Older Americans Act and Funding | The Older Americans Act (OAA) and OAA funding appear to be at risk within the current administration. With the dismantling of the Administration for Community Living (ACL) at the federal level, oversight of the OAA has been divided between two entities at the federal level. BHRC will continue advocacy to keep the OAA whole and to keep the much-needed funding levels. OAA supports meals, transportation, adult day and other services at our focal points in the region (senior centers/community actions)

Senior Community Services | The Senior Community Services line item in the state budget has been increased by the House to \$1 million over the two-year budget. These funds are used by BHRC to leverage Title III/OAA funds and Housing Funds within the eight-county region. Advocacy will continue with the Senate.

Ohio Housing Trust Fund | The Ohio Housing Trust Fund has been removed from the state budget. BHRC will be working to have the funds returned to the budget. BHRC utilizes the Ohio Housing Trust Fund to support our home repair and modification program within the region. The funds are also leveraged against a Governor's Office of Appalachia grant.

March Assessment numbers: 83 Total Assessments

Athens	15
Hocking	11
Meigs	8
Monroe	5
Morgan	6
Noble	2
Perry	6

Serving Athens, Hocking, Meigs, Monroe, Morgan, Noble, Perry and Washington Counties in Southeast Ohio.

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Staff Kudos | At BHRC's first Ohio Dept of Aging and the Ohio Dept of Medicaid OBLTSS Quarterly meeting, the Front Door and OBLTSS team was commended on a very successful quarter. For the first quarter the BHRC team met 100% of all data points tracked for Ohio Benefits and Medicaid; outperforming the other single-entry point. Congrats to Gerri VanNoy, Jamie Fabien, Brandi Hesson, Angela Purdy and Jennifer Nedeff.

PASSPORT AND ASSISTED LIVING CASELOAD REGIONWIDE

PASSPORT: 815 individuals

Assisted Living Waiver 62 individuals

CONTACT: Jenn Westfall, Aging and Health Director | jwestfall@buckeyehills.org | 740-376-1038
Dawn Weber, Home Care Director | dweber@buckeyehills.org | 740-376-1041

PROGRAM UPDATES

HEAP Outreach | We are continuing to promote Regular HEAP through May 31st through bi-weekly social media posts containing the full press release and additional information on the program. Brochures are being distributed at in-person outreach events and to consumers during home visits. HEAP Summer Crisis Program will begin July 1 and run through September, and we are preparing a round of newspaper ads throughout our counties to complete the grant funding cycle.

Aging Outreach | Spring outreach has been underway; we have already attended eight events since March where handouts and information were made available to attendees.

Upcoming outreach events include:

- May 2- Morgan County Senior Health Resource Fair
- May 7 - O'Neill Center Health Fair
- May 15- Athens Senior Day
- June 11 – Meigs County Elder Abuse Awareness Event

If there is an upcoming outreach event in your community that we should attend or a civic group that would like to have a speaker on Aging topics, please contact Amanda Reeder at areeder@buckeyehills.org.

Medicare Outreach | General Medicare posts and information on Extra Help, Medicare Savings Programs, and Preventative Services are running on a weekly basis across our social media channels. Our Medibag prescription bags started circulating in the region in March at nine different pharmacies to promote the Extra Help Savings Programs. Newspaper ads are running in the Morgan County Herald April- July to compensate for not having a pharmacy contract in that county. We are continuing our partnership with Senior Medicare Patrol and educating seniors about Medicare Fraud and Safety measures.

Local Development Districts on the Hill | The Communications Director coordinated visits to the offices of our Congressional representatives in collaboration with our sister Local Development Districts for the March 11 Districts on the "Hill Day" that as part of the NADO-DDAA Washington Conference. We also worked with the other LDDs to produce the 2024 Return on Investment report, highlighting the impacts of investments by the Appalachian Regional Commission and Governor's Office of Appalachia across the 32 counties of Appalachian Ohio. In 2024, state and federal investments of \$19.6 million supported 60 projects totaling \$133.8 million. In the Buckeye Hills region, 21 projects totaling \$44.4 million received \$7.6 million from the Appalachian Regional Commission's Area Development program, while the Governor's Office of Appalachia invested \$1.7 million in the region. This report was shared with our region's Congressional representatives and their staff to encourage their continued support of ARC funding, as well as EDA programs.

2024 Annual Report | The 2024 Annual Report was presented to the BHRC General Policy Council at its annual meeting on April 4, 2025. In 2024, our Development & Planning Division helped communities secure \$97.9 million in funding to support 53 local projects, improving infrastructure, transportation, and economic development. Programs managed by our Aging & Health Division, such as the Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program, provided fresh, local produce to more than 3,400 older adults, while home modifications and repairs allowed 38 individuals to remain safely in their homes. More than 4,100 older adults benefited from essential services

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buckeyehills.org

funded by the Older Americans Act, while our Home Care Division's Medicaid Waiver Programs helped over 1,200 Southeast Ohioans age with dignity at home and in their communities.

This year also marked major milestones, including \$132 million awarded through the Appalachian Community Grant Program to revitalize communities and create economic opportunities across the region. We strengthened regional partnerships, engaging more than 200 stakeholders in the development of Buckeye Hills Forward, our 2025-2030 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. These accomplishments earned our Development Division recognition as Community Development Department of the Year from the Ohio Conference of Community Development at its July 2024 Summer Meeting.

The report can be viewed on our website at buckeyehills.org/about/impact. Hard copies are available at our office and upon request.

Development Initiatives | The Communications Department worked with Development staff to promote the recent ARC Pre-Application webinar on March 14 and the upcoming round of OPWC grant workshops that will be taking place in each of the 10 counties served by District 18. Those dates and registration links are available on our website at buckeyehills.org/opwc.

Planning Initiatives | The Communications Department supported the Planning Division with several projects in recent weeks, including the Coordinated Transportation Plans for Monroe, Noble, and Washington counties going before the Executive Committee for approval this month. Communications also assisted in the drafting and publication of RFQs for Brownfield Revitalization projects getting underway in Hocking and Noble Counties.

Ohio University Documentary Project | The Communications Department is working with our counterparts at Ohio Valley Regional Development Commission and students from Ohio University's Media Production for the Community class to document some of the projects supported by the Appalachian Community Grant Program in the region. This will be a multi-semester project resulting in several 3–5 minute profiles of projects. The first semester's project is just wrapping up, with videos focused on the Monroe Theatre restoration and the Village of Racine's riverfront redevelopment. Both videos will soon be available on the Buckeye Hills YouTube page at www.youtube.com/@BuckeyeHills.

RECENT MEDIA

- **March 9, 2025 – River Cities Tribune & Register:** Buckeye Hills hosts pre-application webinar for ARC projects March 14
- **March 11, 2025 – Marietta Times:** Buckeye Hills hosts pre-application webinar for ARC projects
- **March 13, 2025 – AVC Radio (YourRadioPlace.com):** Noble County Submits \$6 Million Infrastructure Request to Congressman Rulli
- **March 14, 2025 – Athens Independent:** New Athens County 911/EMA Center Opens
- **March 17, 2025 – The Journal-Leader:** Heating Assistance Available
- **April 2, 2025 – Logan Daily News:** Logan Daily's Senior Expo offers wealth of info for seniors, caregivers
- **April 7-18, 2025 – (Multiple):** Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program Returns for 2025
- **April 10, 2024 – Monroe County Beacon:** Monroe County Treasurer Taylor Abbott and representatives from the Buckeye Hills Regional Council discuss possible brownfield remediation projects in the county.
- **April 14, 2025 – WTAP:** Over 200 homes set to receive broadband access in Meigs County
- **April 15, 2025 – Logan Daily News:** Commissioners told razing of Murray City School could happen by this summer
- **April 17, 2025 – Telecompetitor.com:** Appalachian Regional Commission Broadband Grant to Connect 200 Ohio Homes

CONTACT INFO: Drew Tanner, Communications Director | dtanner@buckeyehills.org | 740-376-1030

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CURRENT INITIATIVES

ARC Pre-Application for Area Development Funding | Buckeye Hills Regional Council released its 2025-26 pre-application for communities and organizations seeking funding from the Appalachian Regional Commission's (ARC) Area Development Program. Completing the pre-application is the first step for local officials working with Buckeye Hills to pursue project funding from the Appalachian Regional Commission and other state and federal partners. Buckeye Hills Regional Council is committed to assisting stakeholders across Southeast Ohio with identifying and securing resources that strengthen the region's communities.

BHRC received 47 pre-applications requesting over \$26 million in funding. Below is a breakdown of the counties served by the applications.

County	Number of Apps
Athens	20
Hocking	10
Washington	10
Morgan	8
Noble	8
Perry	8
Meigs	7
Monroe	7

Ohio Public Works Commission Grant Workshops | Public officials and managers of publicly operated water, wastewater, and sanitation districts are invited to join Buckeye Hills Regional Council for a workshop to help applicants navigate Round 40 of the Ohio Public Works Commission (OPWC) funding process. Workshop dates, locations, and registration links are available at buckeyehills.org/opwc.

These workshops will cover:

- Funding timelines & deadlines
- Project & applicant eligibility
- Application requirements
- Available resources & guidance

The application period opens June 2, 2025. Submissions are due September 5, 2025. (Electronic and hard copy materials are required.) For questions, contact Jada Riley, Development Specialist, at jriley@buckeyehills.org.

NEWS

Program & Service Updates

Call for Nominations: District 18 Ohio Public Works Commission Natural Resources Assistance Council | Buckeye Hills Regional Council is accepting nominations for individuals to serve on the District 18 Natural Resources Assistance Council for a three-year term. Nominations are due by 4:00 p.m. May 30, 2025. District 18 includes Athens, Belmont, Hocking, Meigs, Monroe, Morgan, Muskingum, Noble, Perry, and Washington Counties in Ohio. There is one vacant position to be filled on the NRAC committee. Eligibility information is available in the

Serving Athens, Hocking, Meigs, Monroe, Morgan, Noble, Perry and Washington Counties in Southeast Ohio.
1400 Pike Street | Marietta, OH 45750 | 1.800.331.2644 | 740.373.6400 | fax: 740.373.1594

Call for Nominations notice at buckeyehills.org. Nomination forms can be requested by contacting Kylee Nichols at knichols@buckeyehills.org.

NatureWorks Grant Opportunity for Outdoor Recreation Projects | Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) is accepting applications for the 31st round of NatureWorks, a state-funded program that reimburses up to 75% of project costs for the development or acquisition of public outdoor recreation areas. Eligible applicants include municipalities, counties, park districts, conservancy districts, and joint recreation districts. Applications must be postmarked by June 2, 2025. Project award announcements are expected by November 2025. Information and the application are available on the ODNR NatureWorks page. Questions may be directed to Tim Robinson, ODNR Recreation Services Administrator, at timothy.robinson@dnr.ohio.gov or 614-265-6528

ODOT Releases Updated Resource Guide | The Ohio Department of Transportation has prepared its 2025 Resource Guide to provide local governments, transportation advocacy groups, planning organizations, and Ohio's citizens with an overview of funding programs administered through ODOT and other transportation sources. The programs available have been broken down into the following categories:

- Roadway/Bridge/Safety Resources
- Other System Funding Sources
- Non-Driver Related Resources

You can download the resource guide and visit the companion website at transportation.ohio.gov/funding for the latest updates and links to the funding programs presented in the guide.

New USDA Program Delivers Relief for Ohio Farmers | The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced it will be expediting up to \$10 billion in direct financial assistance through the newly created Emergency Commodity Assistance Program (ECAP) for the 2024 crop year. Payments are based on planted and prevented planted acres for eligible commodities. Eligible crops include wheat, corn, soybeans, and more. Contact your county FSA office to request an application or confirm your eligibility. Applications must be submitted by August 15, 2025.

STAFF UPDATES

- **Michelle Hyer** Michelle Hyer has been working closely with staff on the Appalachian Community Grant Program (ACGP) with the administration of 16 projects. She has also been preparing for the upcoming Region 12 OneOhio Committee meeting. Michelle has also been actively working on three Ohio Department of Development monitorings for Meigs and Washington counties.
- **Kylee Nichols** has fielded applicant questions for the ARC Pre-Application.
- **Jada Riley** has been working on content for the upcoming OPWC workshops.
- **Emma Yeager** has been monitoring the ARC Pre-Application portal and assisting with applicant questions.

CONTACT: Sam Miller, Development Director | smiller@buckeyehills.org | 740-376-1028

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PROGRAM & SERVICE UPDATES

Access Ohio 2050 Stakeholder Meeting will be held at Buckeye Hills on May 28th from 1-3 pm | Join us for a discussion and give feedback on improving safety, condition efficiency, and mobility of the transportation system to better move Ohioans where they need and want to go. If you are unable to attend, you may visit the website <https://www.transportation.ohio.gov/programs/accessohio> for details and the survey link.

Smart Growth 2025 America's Culture and Community Network Cohort | Melissa, Eric, and Christa will collaborate with ten regional transportation planning agencies across the country to assess, design, and begin implementing art and culture strategies for community engagement.

Active Transportation Plan | ODOT awarded funding to Toole Design to work with the region to create an Active Transportation Plan. The plan outlines the regional vision, goals, and strategies needed to support safe, convenient, and accessible active transportation options. Document the current state of safety, risk, and barriers for walking and bicycling. Identify local/regional infrastructure improvements that will improve safety. The planning process is expected to take twelve months. More details will be forthcoming.

USEPA Brownfields Assessment Grant Program Update | To date, the USEPA Brownfields Assessment Grant awarded to Buckeye Hills has supported environmental assessments for 11 projects across six of the eight BHRC counties. These efforts have included the completion of nine Phase I Environmental Site Assessments, one Sampling and Analysis Plan, one Limited Phase II Letter, one Phase II Environmental Site Assessment, three Asbestos Reports, three Lead Reports, three HAZMAT Reports, four Remedial Action Plans, and one Document Review and Recommendation. Several of these sites have progressed to receive further assessments, undergone environmental clean-up, or been demolished; which are actions that have significantly contributed to improving public health and safety in their respective communities. As part of a proactive regional outreach initiative, Kate Dunn, in collaboration with Melissa Zoller and Eric Wade, has led efforts to identify additional project sites. These community engagement activities have resulted in the addition of three new projects to the grant portfolio, which are expected to fully utilize the remaining funds. In tandem with these outreach efforts, Planning Division staff have begun collecting site-specific information and data to enhance and refine the strategic direction of the Brownfields program moving forward.

STAFF UPDATES

Melissa Zoller (Planning Director)

- **Engagement & Community Outreach:**
 - Caldwell Quarterly Site Visit - Attended the Appalachian Community Innovation Center (ACIC) to assess progress and discuss ongoing economic development efforts.
 - County Brownfield Discussions - Participated in brownfield redevelopment discussions hosted by Kate to support environmental remediation and redevelopment strategies across counties.
- **Transportation Planning, Mobility & Innovation:**
 - Advance Air Mobility – Ohio University - Attended an innovation briefing by Ohio University on emerging aerial transportation technologies and their potential regional applications.
 - Developing Street Supplies Lending Library - Initiated development of a lending library for temporary street design supplies (e.g., cones, signage, paint) to support community engagement and pilot active transportation projects.

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- **Professional Development & Conferences:**

- EMAO Spring Conference - Participated in the Emergency Management Association of Ohio's spring event to gain insights on emergency preparedness and local coordination.
- Land Bank Conference - Networked with land bank leaders to discuss property revitalization, abandoned structure reuse, and community development financing.
- OARC Transportation Committee - Represented Buckeye Hills in the statewide committee to collaborate with other regional councils on major transportation issues and policies.
- Active Transportation Conference - Attended the statewide conference to learn best practices and strategies for implementing effective active transportation systems.

Christa Myers (Transportation Planning Manager)

- **Engagement and Outreach:**

- Region 8 Mobility Manager meeting
- Meigs Mobility Management Bridget Gilmore with mentor Julia Hinzman
- Attended Hocking & Athens Transportation Advisory Committee meetings
- Conducted ride-along with Morgan, Noble & Perry County transits with county Mobility Managers Bobby White and Julia Hinzman
- Supported Hocking County Active Transportation Plan & Hocking Valley Trail meetings
- Attended ODOT Active Transportation Conference
- Attended OPTA HB 54 sessions & supported Senate committee testimonials
- Presenter on Athens Co. transportation panel
- Attended DD Advocacy Day
- Joined Athens Age-Friendly Coalition
- Visited senior centers in Morgan, Noble & Perry counties
- Attended Hocking Senior Expo
- Participated in OSU Age-Friendly

- **Transportation Planning, Mobility & Innovation:**

- Attended: Ohio Travel Trainers @ COTA March 28
- OARC Transportation Committee April 25
- Participated in OPTA Education Committee planning on April 9

Kate Dunn (Senior Planner)

- **Engagement & Community Outreach:**

- Coordinated meetings with the Athens County Port Authority regarding the Bill Theisen Industrial Park Speculative Building, as BHRC is administering the EDA grant.
- Met regularly with project partners about the USEPA Brownfields Assessment grant.
- Met with the Monroe County Commissioners and Monroe County Land Bank to discuss Brownfields projects.
- Met with the Hocking County Commissioners to discuss Brownfields projects and the Murray City School Demolition project.

- **Transportation Planning, Mobility & Innovation:**

- Completed the RFQ for the Long-Range Transportation Plan update that the RTPO at BHRC will be undertaking. This RFQ will go live on ODOT's website and the BHRC website on May 15. All qualified transportation planning firms are invited to apply. Questions should come through the BHRC Planning Staff before the deadline.
- Kate also attended transportation-related events alongside Melissa Zoller and Eric Wade.

- **Professional Development & Conferences:**

- Attended the 2025 Annual Ohio Landbank Association conference in Columbus, Ohio. This conference gave BHRC staff valuable insight and information on how to complete Brownfields and Housing projects successfully.
- Attended a webinar to learn more about applying for a USEPA grant.

- **Upcoming Events:**

- **Ohio Brownfield Conference** May 7-8 which will also include a half-day training about the future of energy development on redeveloped Brownfields sites.

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Eric Wade (Senior Planner)

- **Engagement & Community Outreach:**
 - Hocking County Steering Committee Meeting # 2 – April 1
 - Monroe County Commissioners Meeting – April 8
 - Hocking County Commissioners Meeting – April 10
 - STEM Collaborative – Zane State College – April 24
- **Transportation Planning, Mobility & Innovation:**
 - SFY 2026 RTPO Work Plan Submitted to ODOT
 - Draft Approval Received
 - RFQ for the Long-Range Transportation Plan, Horizon 2050 goes live on the 15th of May.
 - STBG Projects for SFY 26-30 will be decided on May 15 by the RTPO committee and recommended for Board approval during the June executive board meeting.
- **Professional Development & Conferences:**
 - Advanced Air Mobility Meeting – April 17
 - OARC Transportation Committee Meeting – April 26
 - Ohio Active Transportation Conference – April 28 and 29
- **Upcoming Events:**
 - ARC Transportation Network Event – Huntington WV - May 6 and 7
 - Ohio Traffic Safety Summit – Columbus OH -May 19 and 20

Kelly Isaly and Julia Hinzman (Mobility Managers)

- **Engagement & Community Outreach:**
 - Belpre Chamber Meeting – April 1, 2025
 - Marietta Chamber Meeting - April 4, 2025
 - SAG Senior Advisory Group– April 9, 2025
 - Transportation Advisory Group – April 14, 2025
 - RSVP Advisory Council – April 15, 2025
 - Washington County Round Table – April 17, 2025
 - Community Resource Event, Ridgewood Apartments – April 18, 2025
 - Marietta Memorial Hospital Matter of Balance – April 24, 2025
 - Hope Alliance - April 3, 2025
 - Substance Use Order Prevention – April 3, 2025
 - Monroe County Sheriff – Derek Norman – April 7, 2025
 - Ohio Hills Health – April 15, 2025
 - Chamber Community Chat – April 24, 2025
 - Noble Cares meeting – April 8, 2025
 - Local Emergency Planning Committee Meeting– April 11, 2025
- **Transportation Planning, Mobility & Innovation:**
 - Monroe Coordinated Transportation Plan Public Meeting – April 10, 2025
 - Noble Coordinated Transportation Plan Public Meeting – April 8, 2025
 - Washington Coordinated Transportation Plan Public Meeting – April 17, 2025
- **Upcoming Events:**
 - Washington Way2Go Transportation Advisory Meeting- May 13, 2025
 - Monroe Transportation Advisory Meeting -May 14, 2025
 - Noble Transportation Advisory Meeting- May 8, 2025

CONTACT: Melissa Zoller, Planning Director | mzoller@buckeyehills.org | 740-376-1027

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RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE 2025 NOBLE COUNTY COORDINATED TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Resolution #2025/05-01

WHEREAS, the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) provides financial assistance for Mobility Management activities as funded by the Specialized Transportation Program (5310) and the Rural Transit Program (5311); and

WHEREAS, Buckeye Hills Regional Council has staffed the Noble County Mobility Manager position on behalf of local partners, including the Noble County Commissioners and the Noble County Developmental Board of Developmental Disabilities; and

WHEREAS, a Coordinated Transportation Plan document must be created and updated as required in order to satisfy an ongoing condition of this funding; and

WHEREAS, the 2025 Coordinated Transportation Plan has been completed by Buckeye Hills Regional Council in partnership with the Noble County Advisory Committee of Noble County and other stakeholder parties interested in transportation services; and

WHEREAS, the Coordinated Transportation Plan for Noble County has been completed in the manner and time frame prescribed by ODOT; and


WHEREAS, the 2025 Coordinated Transportation Plan has been reviewed and approved by the Noble County Commissioners.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, The Buckeye Hills Regional Council Executive Committee hereby approves the submission of the 2025 Coordinated Transportation Plan document to the Ohio Department of Transportation.

Passed on this 2nd day of May 2025.



James Booth, President



Ron Moore, Vice President



RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE 2025 MONROE COUNTY COORDINATED TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Resolution #2025/05-02

WHEREAS, the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) provides financial assistance for Mobility Management activities as funded by the Specialized Transportation Program (5310) and the Rural Transit Program (5311); and

WHEREAS, Buckeye Hills Regional Council has staffed the Monroe County Mobility Manager position on behalf of local partners, including the Monroe County Commissioners, and the Monroe County Developmental Board of Developmental Disabilities; and

WHEREAS, a Coordinated Transportation Plan document must be created and updated as required in order to satisfy an ongoing condition of this funding; and


WHEREAS, the 2025 Coordinated Transportation Plan has been completed by Buckeye Hills Regional Council in partnership with the Monroe County Advisory Committee of Monroe County and other stakeholder parties interested in transportation services; and

WHEREAS, the Coordinated Transportation Plan for Monroe County has been completed in the manner and time frame prescribed by ODOT; and

WHEREAS, the 2025 Coordinated Transportation Plan has been reviewed and approved by the Monroe County Commissioners.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, The Buckeye Hills Regional Council Executive Committee hereby approves the submission of the 2025 Coordinated Transportation Plan document to the Ohio Department of Transportation.

Passed on this 2nd day of May 2025.


James Booth, President
Ron Moore, Vice President



RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE 2025 WASHINGTON COUNTY COORDINATED TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Resolution #2025/05-03

WHEREAS, the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) provides financial assistance for Mobility Management activities as funded by the Specialized Transportation Program (5310) and the Rural Transit Program (5311); and

WHEREAS, Buckeye Hills Regional Council has staffed the Washington County Mobility Manager position on behalf of local partners, including the Wood Washington Wirt Interstate Planning Commission, and the Washington County Department of Job and Family Services; and

WHEREAS, a Coordinated Transit Plan document must be created and updated as required in order to satisfy an ongoing condition of this funding; and

WHEREAS, the 2025 Coordinated Transportation Plan has been completed by Buckeye Hills Regional Council in partnership with the Washington County Commissioners, Wood Washington Wirt Interstate Planning Commission, the Way2Go Advisory Committee of Washington County and other stakeholder parties interested in transportation services; and

WHEREAS, the Coordinated Transportation Plan for Washington County has been completed in the manner and time frame prescribed by ODOT; and


WHEREAS, the 2025 Coordinated Transportation Plan has been reviewed and approved by the Washington County Commissioners.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, The Buckeye Hills Regional Council Executive Committee hereby approves the submission of the 2025 Coordinated Transportation Plan document to the Ohio Department of Transportation.

Passed on this 2nd day of May 2025.



James Booth, President



Ron Moore, Vice President



RESOLUTION OF THE BUCKEYE HILLS REGIONAL COUNCIL TO APPROVE FY 2026 RTPO WORK PLAN

Resolution #2025/05-04

WHEREAS, Buckeye Hills Regional Council is designated as the Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO) for the eight counties making up the Buckeye Hills Region (Athens, Hocking, Meigs, Monroe, Morgan, Noble, Perry, and Washington counties) by the Governor of the State of Ohio, acting through the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT), and in cooperation with locally elected officials in the area pursuant to an Agreement between ODOT and Buckeye Hills; and

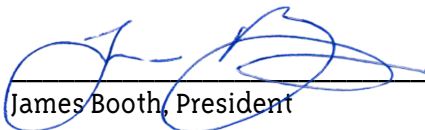
WHEREAS, Buckeye Hills has the authority and responsibility for the direction, coordination, and administration of the regional transportation planning process in accordance with state and federal laws; and

WHEREAS, the Work Plan establishes methodologies and a budget to implement the region's comprehensive transportation planning process and program activities for the upcoming fiscal year; and


WHEREAS, Buckeye Hills has reviewed the State Fiscal Year 2025 Work Plan and budget and finds the prescribed elements to be consistent with the required items identified by ODOT as part of the development and maintenance of a comprehensive transportation plan and related planning activities for the Buckeye Hills region;

NOW THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Executive Board of the Buckeye Hills Regional Council hereby approves the SFY 2026 Transportation Work Plan for the period of July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026, and authorizes the provision of 10% of the total cost of the RTPO program in local matching funds as required.

Passed on this 2nd day of May 2025.



James Booth, President



Ron Moore, Vice President



RESOLUTION OF THE BUCKEYE HILLS REGIONAL COUNCIL TO APPROVE THE LONG-RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN (LRTP), HORIZION 2050 STBG FUNDING

Resolution #2025/05-05

WHEREAS, Buckeye Hills Regional Council is designated as the Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO) for the eight counties making up the Buckeye Hills Region (Athens, Hocking, Meigs, Monroe, Morgan, Noble, Perry, and Washington counties) by the Governor of the State of Ohio, acting through the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT), and in cooperation with locally elected officials in the area pursuant to an Agreement between ODOT and Buckeye Hills; and

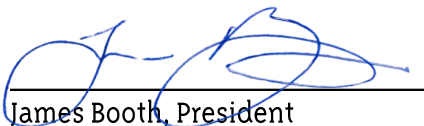
WHEREAS, Buckeye Hills has the authority and responsibility for the direction, coordination, and administration of the regional transportation planning process in accordance with state and federal laws; and

WHEREAS, the Work Plan establishes methodologies and a budget to implement the region's comprehensive transportation planning process and program activities for the upcoming fiscal year; and


WHEREAS, Buckeye Hills has reviewed the Long-Range Transportation Plan, (LRTP) Horizon 2050 requirements and finds the prescribed elements to be consistent with the required items identified by ODOT as part of the development and maintenance of a comprehensive transportation plan and related planning activities for the Buckeye Hills region;

NOW THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Executive Board of the Buckeye Hills Regional Council hereby approves the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), Horizon 2050 STBG Funding (\$300,000) for the period of July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2027, and authorizes the provision of 10% of the total cost of the RTPO program in local matching funds as required.

Passed on this 2nd day of May 2025.



James Booth, President



Ron Moore, Vice President

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Athens County Celebrates New 9-1-1 Emergency Communications Center | Congratulations to Athens County on the opening of their new, state-of-the-art 9-1-1 Emergency Communications Center. Buckeye Hills Regional Council is proud to have been able to help facilitate a \$500,000 investment from the Appalachian Regional Commission in support of this \$11M project to bring cutting-edge 9-1-1 and emergency response capabilities to Athens County and across Southeast Ohio.

Over 200 homes set to receive broadband access in Meigs County | The Meigs County Community Improvement Corporation and New Era Broadband have begun construction to bring broadband to over 200 homes in Meigs County in Longbottom and homes near Ohio Route 681 between Tupper Plains and Reedsville. The Appalachian Regional Commission supported the project with a grant of \$352,000, while New Era Broadband will provide an additional \$88,000 toward the project.

HAPCAP Receives \$300,000 Ohio Housing Trust Fund Grant for Essential Home Repairs | Hocking-Athens-Perry County Community Action received \$300,000 from the Ohio Department of to support home repairs in its service area. The funding comes from the Housing Assistance Grant Program, which utilizes Ohio Housing Trust Fund dollars to help non-profit organizations across the state promote more affordable housing opportunities and improve housing conditions through essential home repairs, renovations for handicap accessibility, limited down payment assistance, and homebuyer education. HAPCAP's grant award was part of \$6.8 million in awards announced across the state on April 9.

Nominations Due May 16: District 18 Ohio Public Works Commission Natural Resources Assistance Council | Buckeye Hills Regional Council is accepting nominations for individuals to serve on the District 18 Natural Resources Assistance Council for a three-year term. Nominations are due by 4:00 p.m. May 16, 2025*. District 18 includes Athens, Belmont, Hocking, Meigs, Monroe, Morgan, Muskingum, Noble, Perry, and Washington Counties in Ohio. There is one vacant position to be filled on the NRAC committee. Eligibility information is available in the Call for Nominations notice at buckeyehills.org. Nomination forms can be requested by contacting Kylee Nichols at knichols@buckeyehills.org. **The due date for these nominations has been updated from May 30 to May 16. The nominations received must be presented to the District 18 Ohio Public Works Committee, which will meet on May 21, 2025*

General Policy Council Celebrates Region's Achievements and Collaboration | At our April 4 Annual Meeting, the Buckeye Hills General Policy Council celebrated key achievements from the past year. Buckeye Hills Regional Council's 2024 Annual Report highlighted over \$116 million in investments across the eight-county region, supporting infrastructure improvements and services that help older adults age in place. The Council also passed a resolution approving the 2025–2030 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy—Buckeye Hills Forward—which outlines regional priorities for job creation, economic diversification, and growth. The strategy will now be submitted to the U.S. Economic Development Administration for approval. In addition to recognizing those planning and progress milestones, the meeting honored two champions of Appalachian Ohio: Governor's Office of Appalachia Director John Carey and the late Mayor of Somerset, Tom Johnson, for their leadership and dedication to improving the quality of life in the region. The council's new officers for 2025-2026 are James Booth, Washington County Commissioner (President), Ron Moore, Morgan County Private Sector Appointee (Vice President), and Allen Fraley, Noble County Commissioner (Treasurer).

CURRENT INITIATIVES

Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program Returns for 2025 | Eligible older adults can receive some relief from food costs as Buckeye Hills Regional Council welcomes the return of the Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program for 2025. The Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program is a collaboration between the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Ohio Department of Aging to allow income-eligible seniors the opportunity to purchase locally grown fruits and vegetables from participating farmers' markets. Each eligible applicant age 60 and older receives \$50 worth of coupons. Grant funding is limited, and coupons are distributed on a first-come, first-served basis. Each participant will receive a total of ten \$5 coupons. Coupons may be redeemed by authorized participating farmers who sell produce at farmers' markets or roadside stands. The program runs through October 31. Individuals interested in participating in the program can visit buckeyehills.org/farmers-market to access the mail-in form or apply online. Applications may also be picked up from the Buckeye Hills office at 1400 Pike Street in Marietta, between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, as well as local senior centers, Job and Family Services offices, OSU Extension, and farmers' markets.

OPWC Grant Workshops Coming to Each County April 28 – May 29 | Public officials and managers of publicly-operated water, wastewater, and sanitation districts are invited to join Buckeye Hills Regional Council for a workshop to help applicants navigate Round 40 of the Ohio Public Works Commission (OPWC) funding process. Workshop dates, locations, and registration links are available at buckeyehills.org/opwc. A flier with all of the workshop dates and locations is also included in the Executive Committee binders.

These workshops will cover:

- Funding timelines & deadlines
- Project & applicant eligibility
- Application requirements
- Available resources & guidance

The application period opens June 2, 2025. Submissions are due September 5, 2025. (Electronic and hard copy materials are required.) For questions, contact Jada Riley, Development Specialist, at jriley@buckeyehills.org.

STATE UPDATES

Ohio Senate Releases Committee Schedule for State Budget Bill | The Ohio Senate laid out the committee schedule to hear testimony on House Bill 96, the state operating budget bill. The Senate Government Oversight Committee will hear testimony on local government at 2:30 p.m. on May 7.

Township Safety Sign Grant Program Applications Due June 6 | The Township Safety Sign Grant application is due Friday, June 6. The following groups of townships are eligible to apply:

- Any township that hasn't received a grant previously
- Any township that received a grant in 2018 or earlier

Townships can receive up to \$50,000 in safety signs, posts, and hardware. (All eligible signs, posts, and hardware are listed on the application.) Townships receive the actual materials delivered directly to their location. This is an on-behalf-of grant, so there is no funding out-of-pocket for the township.

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Learn more and apply at the Ohio Department of Transportation's Township Safety Sign Grant Program page at <https://www.transportation.ohio.gov/programs/local-funding-opportunities/resources/township-safety-sign-grant-program>.

MARCS Radio Authentication Deadline is July 1 | The Ohio Department of Administrative Services is reminding Ohio first responders and public safety agencies that use the Multi-Agency Radio Communication System (MARCS) to authenticate all radios, or the radios won't work on the MARCS system beginning July 1. Each radio – base, mobile, and portable – must have Radio Authentication to operate on the MARCS system after July 1, 2025. Some radios purchased after July 1, 2019, may already have been authenticated. Radios purchased prior to July 1, 2019, may have the ability to be updated to comply with Radio Authentication, without the need to purchase a new radio. To start the authentication process, MARCS radio users are urged to contact their radio manufacturer or programming vendor today. Users can also check with the MARCS Program Office, by emailing DAS-MARCS.admin@DAS.Ohio.gov or calling 614-995-0060.

ODOT Releases Updated Resource Guide | The Ohio Department of Transportation has prepared its 2025 Resource Guide to provide local governments, transportation advocacy groups, planning organizations, and Ohio's citizens with an overview of funding programs administered through ODOT and other transportation sources. The programs available have been broken down into the following categories:

- Roadway/Bridge/Safety Resources
- Other System Funding Sources
- Non-Driver Related Resources

You can download the resource guide and visit the companion website at transportation.ohio.gov/funding for the latest updates and links to the funding programs presented in the guide.

NatureWorks Grant Opportunity for Outdoor Recreation Projects | Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) is accepting applications for the 31st round of NatureWorks, a state-funded program that reimburses up to 75% of project costs for the development or acquisition of public outdoor recreation areas. Eligible applicants include municipalities, counties, park districts, conservancy districts, and joint recreation districts. Applications must be postmarked by June 2, 2025. Project award announcements are expected by November 2025. Information and the application are available on the ODNR NatureWorks page, <https://ohiodnr.gov/buy-and-apply/apply-for-grants/grants/natureworks>. Questions may be directed to Tim Robinson, ODNR Recreation Services Administrator, at timothy.robinson@dnr.ohio.gov or 614-265-6528

FEDERAL UPDATES

HHS Announces Restructuring of Services for Older Adults | On March 28, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) announced a significant restructuring under President Trump's Executive Order, "Implementing the President's 'Department of Government Efficiency' Workforce Optimization Initiative." The restructuring resulted in a total downsizing from 82,000 to 62,000 full-time employees. This includes the reorganization of the Administration for Community Living (ACL), which has historically administered Older Americans Act programs and those that support people with disabilities. Approximately 40 percent of ACL staff have been laid off. These functions will be integrated into other HHS agencies, including the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), ASPE, and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). The administration states reorganization will not impact Medicare and Medicaid services.

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White House Budget Draft Breaks Apart Older Americans Act, Defunds Key Programs for FY 2026 | USAging recently shared a draft copy of the White House's FY 2026 Health and Human Services budget proposal. The draft budget provides new insight into how the dismantling of the U.S. Administration for Community Living (ACL) under the HHS reorganization plan impacts the Older Americans Act and other programs previously administered by ACL. The Older American's Act would be split up across different HHS agencies, with nutrition programs (Title III C, NSIP) moving to the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) and the rest of the OAA (i.e., the rest of Title III, Title VI Part C, Title VII) moved to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS).

The proposed budget would eliminate funding for many critical basic needs programs for older adults, including the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program, support for Adult Protective Services programs, State Health Insurance Assistance Programs (SHIP), Elder Rights Support Activities, and more. If these cuts take place, older adults facing nursing facility eviction, abuse and exploitation, or health care issues will have less support and fewer services available to them to navigate these difficult situations.

Congressional FY 2025 Budget Includes Medicaid and SNAP Cuts | Committees in the House are expected to begin hearings to markup legislation to enact the tax and spending cuts outlined in the budget resolution that passed both chambers earlier this month. The resolution calls for massive, unprecedented cuts to Medicaid, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and other programs older adults rely on to meet their basic needs. Speaker Johnson is aiming to finalize a comprehensive budget bill for a vote by the full House before Memorial Day. The expectation is that if the House can pass the budget bill, the Senate will not go through its own committee process but instead try to move the bill for a vote by the full Senate as quickly as possible.

Reauthorization of the Transportation Bill forthcoming this fall. | Organizations are already beginning education efforts with federal legislators to ensure programming continues.

US DOT Releases Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Program Information | The Department of Transportation has released the fiscal year (FY) 2025 Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for the Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) program. USDOT will host a series of webinars to review pertinent components of this year's NOFO. Visit the SS4A Webinar Series page for details on the webinar and webinar schedule. The SS4A program provides funding for two main types of grants:

- Planning and Demonstration Grants are used to develop, complete, or supplement an Action Plan, as well as carry out demonstration activities that inform an Action Plan.
- Implementation Grants are used to implement strategies or projects that are consistent with an existing Action Plan and may also bundle funding requests for supplemental planning and demonstration activities that inform the Action Plan.

Visit the updated SS4A website, <https://www.transportation.gov/grants/SS4A>, for additional information on how to apply, frequently asked questions, and resources for completing your application.

New USDA Program Delivers Relief for Ohio Farmers | The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced it will be expediting up to \$10 billion in direct financial assistance through the newly created Emergency Commodity Assistance Program (ECAP) for the 2024 crop year. Payments are based on planted and prevented planted acres for eligible commodities. Eligible crops include wheat, corn, soybeans, and more. Contact your county FSA office to request an application or confirm your eligibility. Applications must be submitted by August 15, 2025.

UPCOMING CONFERENCES & EVENTS:

Serving Athens, Hocking, Meigs, Monroe, Morgan, Noble, Perry and Washington Counties in Southeast Ohio.
1400 Pike Street | Marietta, OH 45750 | 1.800.331.2644 | 740.373.6400 | fax: 740.373.1594

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- **May 13, 8:30 a.m.-3:00 p.m. - Appalachian Ohio State of the Region Conference** | Ohio University, Athens
(Virtual registration only; online attendance is sold out)
- **May 15, 11:00 a.m. – BHRC Regional Transportation Planning Organization** | Buckeye Hills Regional Council, Marietta
- **May 20, 2:00 p.m. – BroadbandOhio Accelerator Regional Meeting** | Athens Public Library, 30 Home St., Athens
- **May 21, 10:00 a.m. – District 18 – Ohio Public Works Commission Executive and Integrating Committees** | Buckeye Hills Regional Council, Marietta
- **May 22, 12:00 p.m. – Southeast Regional Meeting: Ohio Community Development Corporation Association** | Buckeye Hills Regional Council, Marietta
- **May 28, 1:00 p.m. – ODOT Access Ohio 2050 Stakeholder Meeting** | Buckeye Hills Regional Council, Marietta
- **May 28, 5:00 p.m. – ODOT Access Ohio 2050 Public Open House** | Buckeye Hills Regional Council, Marietta

CONTACT INFO: Chasity Schmelzenbach, Executive Director
cschmelzenbach@buckeyehills.org | 740-376-1034

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GRANT WORKSHOPS

OHIO PUBLIC WORKS COMMISSION

Join us for a grant workshop near you April 28 through May 29

County, city, village, and township officials and managers of publicly-operated utilities are invited to join Buckeye Hills Regional Council for a workshop to help applicants navigate Round 40 of the Ohio Public Works Commission funding process. Find a location near you and register to join us. The grant application period opens June 2, 2025. Submissions are due September 5, 2025.

~~Washington County~~

~~April 28, 4:00 – 6:00 p.m.~~

~~Buckeye Hills Regional Council~~

~~1400 Pike Street, Marietta, OH 45750~~

~~Athens County~~

~~May 1, 4:00 – 6:00 p.m.~~

~~Ohio University Innovation Center~~

~~340 W. State St., Athens, OH 45701~~

Meigs County

May 6, 4:00 – 6:00 p.m.

The Blakeslee Center

100 Blakeslee Dr., Middleport, OH 45760

Hocking County

May 7, 4:00 – 6:00 p.m.

Hocking Hills Chamber of Commerce

Co-Working Space

96 W. Hunter St., Logan, OH 43138

Muskingum County

May 12, 4:00 – 6:00 p.m.

Muskingum County Conference & Welcome Center

205 N. 5th St., Zanesville, OH 43701

Perry County

May 15, 4:00 – 6:00 p.m.

Perry County Opportunity Center

5250 State Route 37 E., New Lexington OH 43764

Morgan County

May 20, 4:00 – 6:00 p.m.

Morgan County Riecker Building

155 E. Main St., McConnelsville, OH 43756

Noble County

May 22, 4:00 – 6:00 p.m.

OSU Extension Operations (Belle Valley)

16714 Wolf Run Road (SR 215), Caldwell, OH 43724

Belmont County

May 27, 4:00 – 6:00 p.m.

Belmont County Garage

45741 Roscoe Rd., St. Clairsville, OH 43950

Monroe County

May 29, 4:00 – 6:00 p.m.

The Generations Complex

47115 Black Walnut Pkwy., Woodsfield, OH 43793

REGISTER ONLINE:



BUCKEYEHILLS.ORG/OPWC

