



APPALACHIAN OHIO
Return On Investment
2025 ANNUAL REPORT

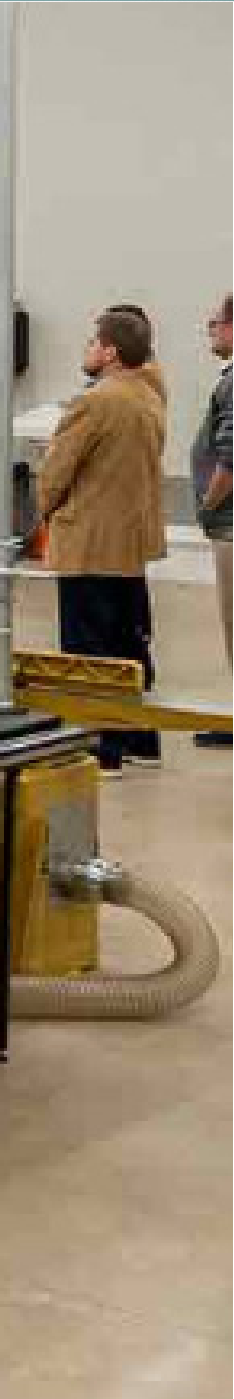
Innovate. Partner. Invest.





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Front Cover: Raven Rocks, Belmont County

Left: Brookfield Local School District Building Trades Lab, Trumbull County

Back Cover: Higginsport Appalachian Community Grant Program Groundbreaking, Brown County

Strengthening Ohio's Appalachian Region

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

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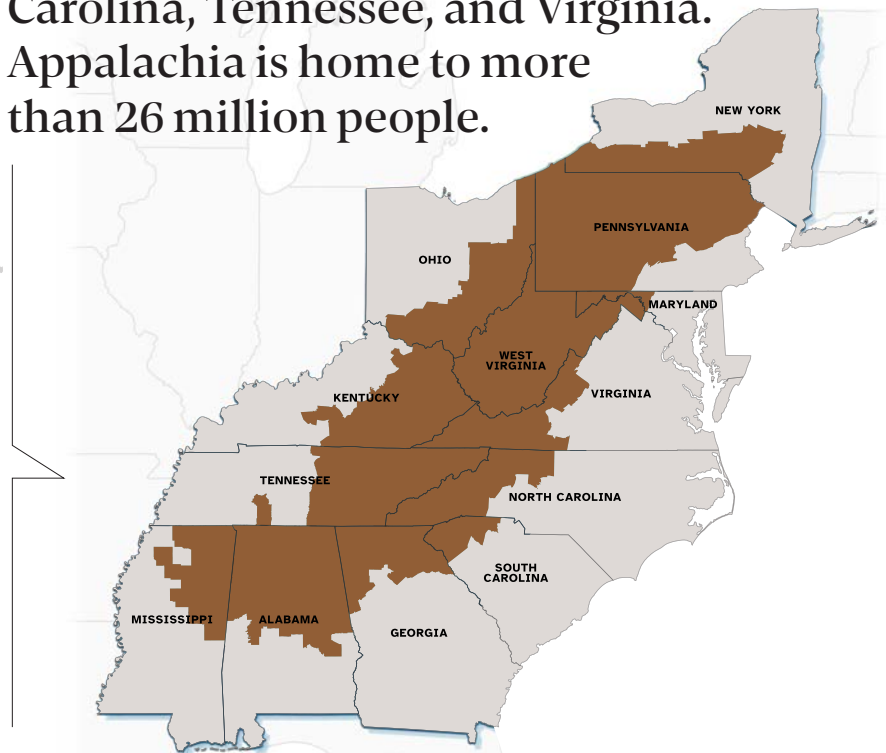
Investing

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.

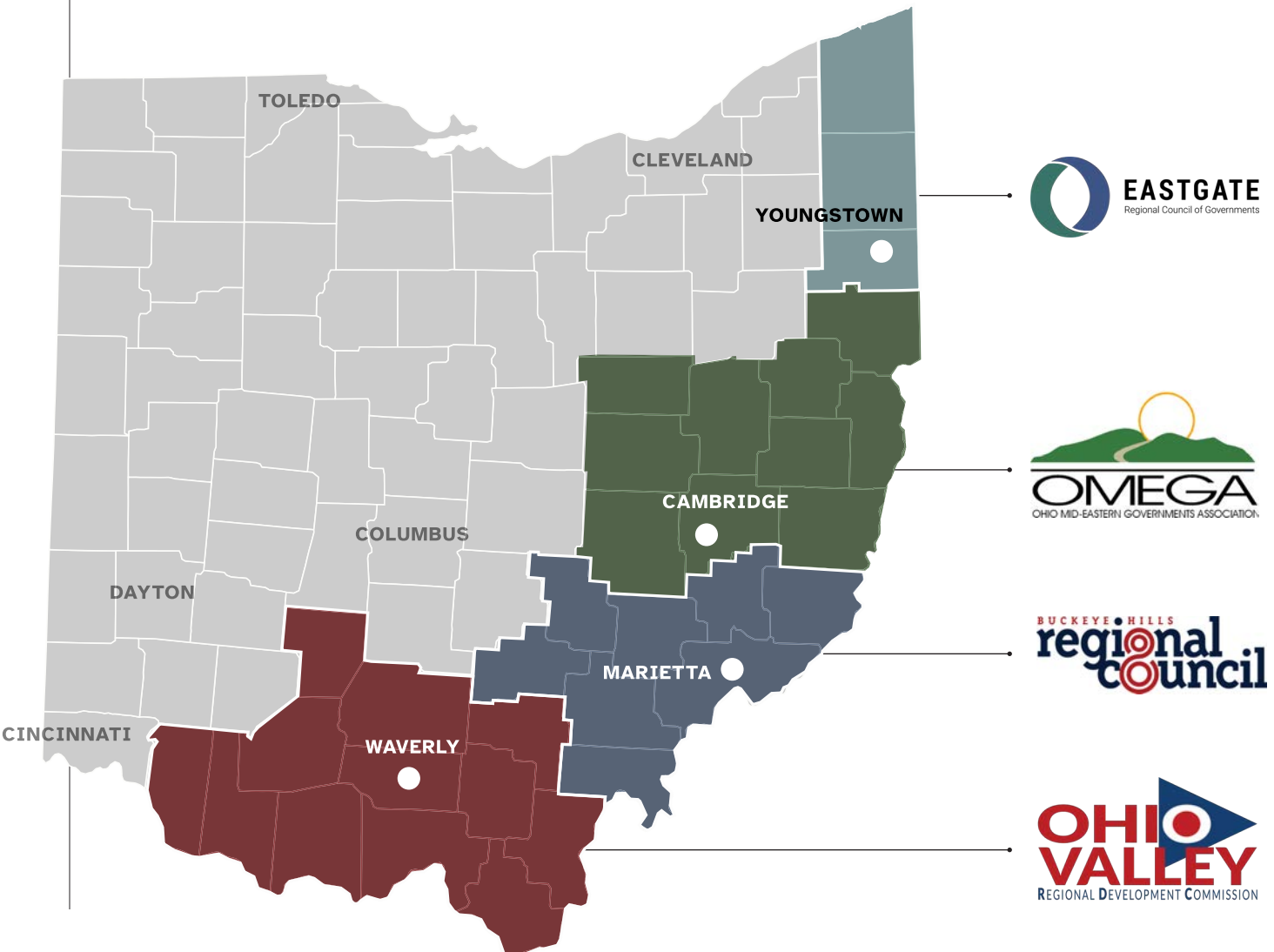


With the goal of bringing the region to socioeconomic parity with the rest of the nation, the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) has focused investments into fundamental community and economic development needs, including building Appalachia's businesses, workforce ecosystem, infrastructure, regional 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 2025, 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 a one-year total of \$107 million in federal, state, and local investments. These projects created 460 new jobs, helped employers retain 98 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 2025. For each dollar invested by the Appalachian Regional Commission, LDDs and local communities leveraged an additional \$5.72 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 \$6.54.

The combined administrative costs of \$2 million represented just 1.8% of the region's \$107 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

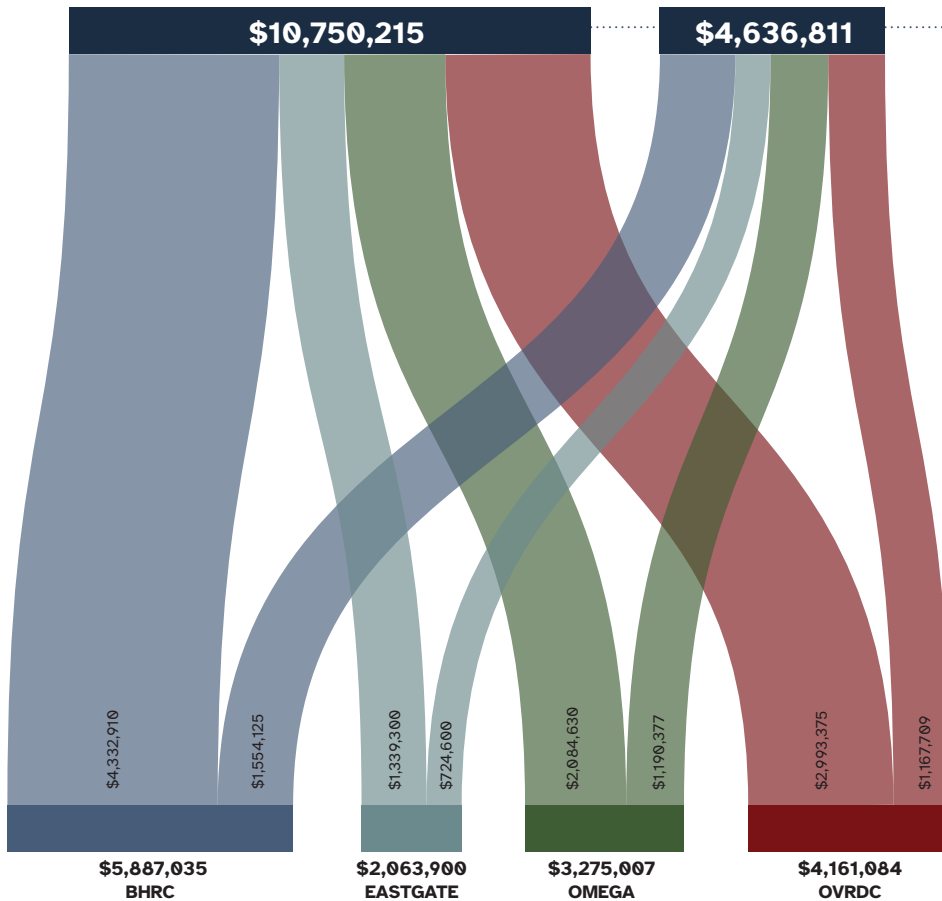
Federal and State Investment

Federal ARC Investment

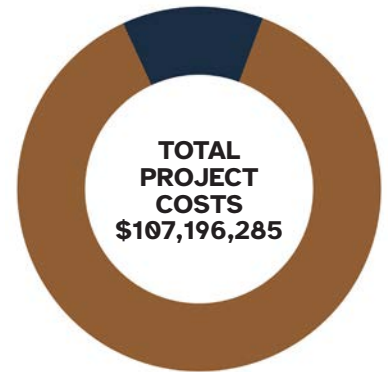
For every \$1 invested by ARC, Ohio LDDs leveraged \$5.72 in additional investments.

Ohio GOA Investment

For every \$1 invested by GOA, Ohio LDDs leveraged \$6.54 in additional investments.



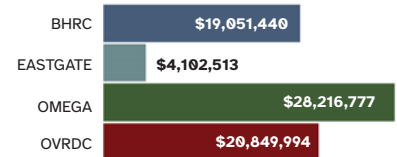
\$15,387,026
Federal and State Investment



\$91,809,258
Total Leveraged Investments

Federal ARC Grant Programs

2025 TOTAL PROJECT COSTS



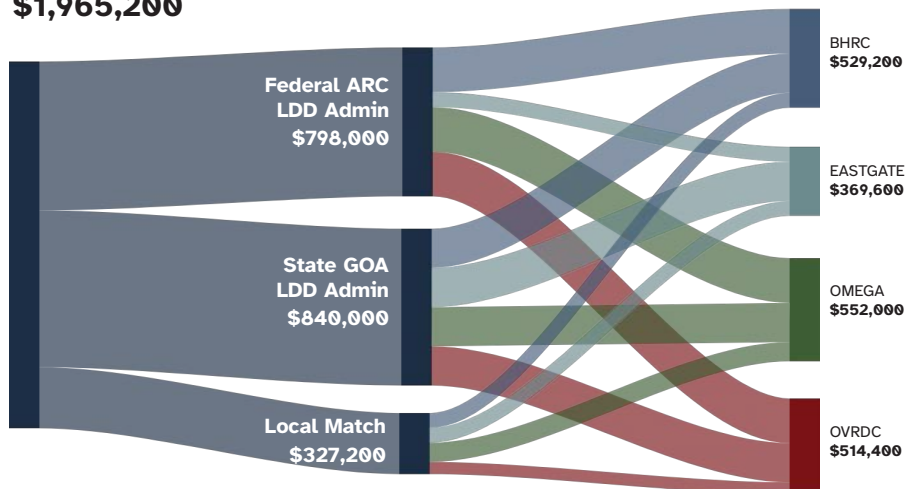
PROJECTS ADMINISTERED
28

JOBS CREATED
22

Total Admin Cost

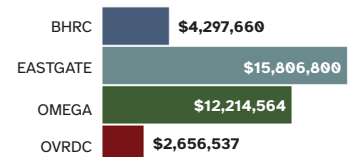
Admin costs represented 1.8% of total project costs in 2025

\$1,965,200



State Appalachian Assistance Grant Program

2025 TOTAL PROJECT COSTS



PROJECTS ADMINISTERED
16

JOBS CREATED
438

JOBS RETAINED
98

INVESTMENT Impacts

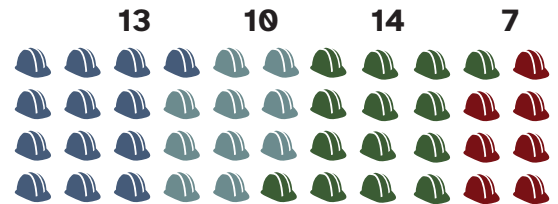
Color key

- BHRC
- OMEGA
- EASTGATE
- OVRDC

TOTAL PROJECTS
IN THE REGION



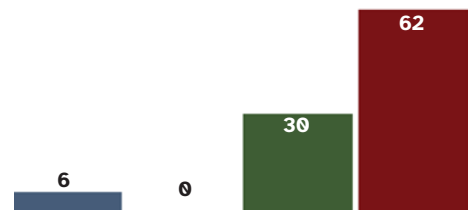
44



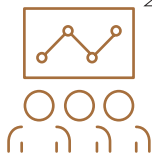
TOTAL JOBS
RETAINED



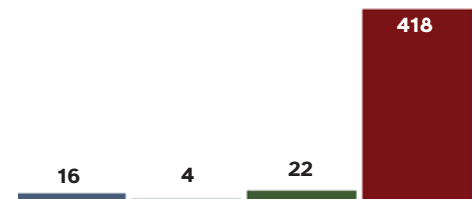
98



TOTAL JOBS
CREATED



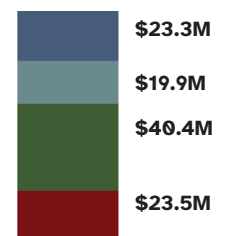
460

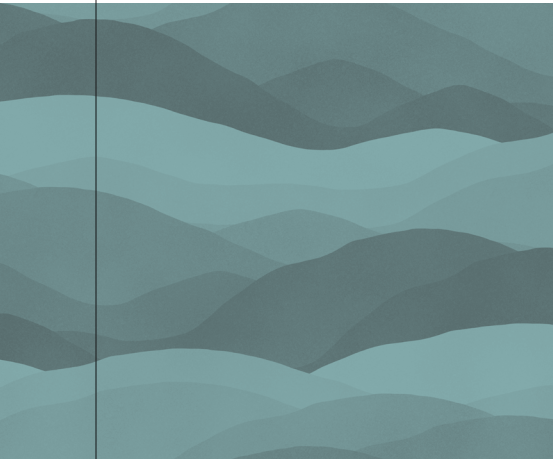


TOTAL PROJECT
INVESTMENT



\$107m





Community Investment Highlights

Community Infrastructure



OVRDC

GOA Appalachian Assistance Funds:

\$214,760

Total Project Costs:

\$429,520

Partners:

Adena Health System

Adena Health System Medical Transport

ROSS COUNTY

The Adena Medical Transport Project strengthened health outcomes and economic stability in Ross County by establishing a reliable regional medical transportation service. By reducing transport delays, patients now receive timelier care, faster discharges, and improved access to specialized treatment. Serving seven counties and more than 14,000 patients annually, the service reduced financial and logistical burdens caused by inconsistent third-party transport. The project also created five new EMT positions, expanded workforce training, reduced patient outmigration, and kept health-care spending local. Fully sustainable after its first year, the project delivers lasting value across South Central Ohio.



Lenox New Lyme Waterline Extension

ASHTABULA COUNTY

This project will enhance public infrastructure and support public health by eliminating the current outdated Jefferson booster station, improving water resilience to Austinburg Township, Jefferson Township, Jefferson Village, Lenox Township, and Roaming Township and boosting water to the Lenox New Lyme area where the new waterline is being installed to service the DFC mobile home park. The improvement will assist the mobile home park in being removed from violation of contaminants in well water. This project will serve 5 communities, 36 households, and 1 booster station.



Wastewater System Improvements

HARRISON COUNTY

In response to a suggested course of action by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Village of Bowerston (located in Harrison County) is working to repair and reinvest in the wastewater system that provides sewer resources to the Village of Leesville in neighboring Carroll County. This work involves installing over 10,000 linear feet of sanitary sewer pipe, replacing a Lift Station, and rehabilitating the Wastewater Treatment Plant. This improvement will secure the health and safety of the sewer district for decades and encourage potential new residents looking to locate into the region.



Eastgate

ARC Area Development Funds:

\$300,000

Total Project Costs:

\$1,180,000

Partners:

**Ashtabula County
Commissioners, Lenox
Township Trustees**



OMEGA

GOA Appalachian Assistance Funds:

\$250,000

Total Project Costs:

\$7,929,020

Partners:

**Village of Leesville, Conotton
Valley Schools, Village of
Bowerston**



BHRC

GOA Appalachian Assistance Funds:

\$750,000

Total Project Costs:

\$1,244,450

Partners:

Athens City-County Health Department; Athens County Ohio Means Jobs; Athens County Jobs and Family Services, Hocking Athens Perry Community Action Program; Survivors Advocacy Outreach Program of Southeast Ohio; Integrated Services for Behavioral Health; Stevens Literacy Center at Ohio University; Ohio University College of Health Sciences and Professions; Rural Action; Athens Community Foundation

Athens Public Library Renovation

ATHENS COUNTY



The Athens Public Library renovation strengthens the region by expanding access to free, modern community infrastructure that supports workforce development, education, and collaboration. As the busiest library in Athens County and a regional hub serving residents from surrounding counties, the renovated facility offers upgraded meeting space, technology and digital literacy training areas, and dedicated spaces for youth, families, and partner agencies. This investment increases capacity for local nonprofits, workforce and health providers, and community organizations to deliver services, collaborate, and build long-term economic and community prosperity across Appalachian Ohio.



OVRDC

ARC Area Development Funds:

\$250,000

Total Project Costs:

\$4,111,584

Partners:

City of Jackson, Jackson County Economic Development Partnership, and the Ohio Department of Development

Downtown Waterline Improvement

JACKSON COUNTY



This project is revitalizing downtown Jackson by upgrading streetscapes, lighting, and underground utilities to deliver long-term benefits for businesses, residents, and visitors. Modernized infrastructure has improved safety, reliability, and capacity, positioning downtown to support future growth and investment. The improvements also sparked renewed momentum among local nonprofits and property owners, leading to storefront renovations, new murals, and decorative electric box wraps. Together, these efforts enhanced walkability, strengthened community pride, and elevated downtown Jackson as a welcoming, vibrant, and economically active city center.

Edgewood Terrace Mobile Home Park and TR 1152/1153 Waterline

COSHOCTON COUNTY



This waterline extension will provide a critical utility to residents in Coshoc-ton living in the Edgewood Mobile Home Park. In addition to providing safe drinking water, this installation will provide fire protection to this commu-nity. The City of Coshoc-ton is committed to providing safe, reliable utilities, and this installation aligns with their long-term goal of sustainable develop-ment and infrastructure improvements.

Sanitary Siphon Replacement

MAHONING COUNTY

This project will enhance the availability of quality infrastructure with con-struction and installation of a sanitary siphon system to improve economic and community development in the Village of Lowellville. The project will serve 231 households, 8 businesses, 3 communities, and 1 school district in a low-to-moderate income area.



OMEGA

GOA Appalachian Assistance Funds:

\$250,000

Total Project Costs:

\$1,438,000



Eastgate

GOA Appalachian Assistance Funds:

\$115,600

Total Project Costs:

\$936,700

Partners:

Falcon Foundry, Republic Services, Lowellville Mayor and Trustees



GOA Appalachian Assistance Funds:

\$250,000

Total Project Costs:

\$1,279,862

Partners:

Jobs Ohio, Ohio Department of Development, Governor's Office of Appalachia, Ohio Department Of Transportation, Team North East Ohio, Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District, Tuscarawas County Economic Development Corporation, Kent State Tuscarawas, Buckeye Career Center, Dover City Schools, as well as the current owners of the land to be developed.

Schaeffler Expansion: Crown Road Upgrade Project

TUSCARAWAS COUNTY

The expansion of Crown Road is a key step in the construction of the Schaeffler automotive manufacturing facility. The \$230 million development will employ 450 workers and have a significant economic impact. The road is structurally inadequate, and lacks a storm sewer system, making it incapable of supporting construction equipment or long-term traffic. Without the funded improvements, the roadway would not be able to sustain site preparation and construction. The project includes constructing 1,525 linear feet of roadway, installing curbs and storm sewers, upgrading the intersection, and adding a traffic signal to manage increased traffic volumes. These upgrades must be completed before facility construction begins.



ARC Area Development Funds:

\$750,000

Total Project Costs:

\$16,879,760

Partners:

Ohio EPA, Tappers Plains, Chester Township, Meigs County Commissioners

State Route 248 and Bashan Road Waterline Improvements

MEIGS COUNTY

The State Route 248 and Bashan Road Waterline Improvements project delivers critical infrastructure needed to support economic stability and growth in Meigs County. By replacing failing, undersized water mains with modern, higher-capacity lines, the project improves system reliability, water pressure, and service for residents and businesses while reducing disruptions caused by leaks and boil advisories. This investment strengthens a core utility that underpins workforce retention, business operations, and future development, ensuring the region can accommodate growth and remain competitive for private investment across Appalachian Ohio.

Workforce Ecosystems

Strategic Equipment Acquisition: Enhancing Operations and Efficiency

GALLIA COUNTY

Funded collaboratively by the ARC POWER and Area Development programs and the U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration, the Buckeye Hills Career Center expanded workforce training for individuals displaced by the coal economy downturn. The project added industry-standard equipment for CDL and Heavy Equipment Operator programs, providing hands-on training aligned with regional employer needs. Gallia County now produces approximately 100 new CDL drivers and 45 heavy equipment operators annually, filling critical gaps in transportation, construction, and infrastructure. This investment increased employability, strengthened household income potential, and enhanced long-term regional economic resilience.



Maritime Training Academy

MONROE COUNTY

The Inland Waterways Maritime Academy is a strategic workforce investment that strengthens the regional economy along the Ohio River. As Ohio's first river-focused maritime training facility, the academy fills a critical gap in the inland waterways industry, preparing workers for high-demand, well-paying careers in vessel operations and marine transportation. Serving a four-state Appalachian region (Ohio, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, and Kentucky), the project includes a reliable talent pipeline, supports river-based commerce, attracts private industry investment, and creates new jobs while positioning Monroe County as a center for workforce training, economic diversification, and long-term regional competitiveness.

Brookfield Regional Community Training & Learning Center

TRUMBULL COUNTY

This project will secure specialized equipment related to Brookfield Regional Community Training & Learning Center facility, enhancing accessibility to adult upskilling and workforce development. The project will expand workforce development programs of industry driven talent needs to provide the building blocks for skill development and employment success. The center will provide essential resources with the creation of an advanced manufacturing lab, computer programming for Individualized Recognized Credentials, and flexible meeting space serving 1,000 students, 1,250 adults, four communities (Masury, Brookfield Center, West Hill, Hubbard) and four businesses.



OVRDC

ARC Area Development Funds:

\$1,699,058

Total Project Costs:

\$3,983,164

Partners:

Buckeye Hills Career Center, U.S. Economic Development Administration



BHRC

ARC Area Development Funds:

\$750,000

Total Project Costs:

\$1,121,000

Partners:

Mountwest College, U.S. Coast Guard, Neale Marine Transportation, Campbell Barge Company, Amherst Madison, Bellaire Harbor Services, Sisterville Ferry, ACNR Barge Line, Borghese Lane



Eastgate

ARC Area Development Funds:

\$250,000

Total Project Costs:

\$779,957

Partners:

Trumbull County Career & Tech Center, Youngstown State University, Stark State College, Ohio Department of Education, Clark-Dietrich Industries

BHRC



In 2025, Buckeye Hills Regional Council advanced high-impact investments across southeastern Ohio by helping communities turn regional priorities into funded, construction-ready projects. As the Local Development District, BHRC supported project development and technical assistance efforts that helped leverage millions in federal, state, and local funding for critical infrastructure, workforce development, and community facilities across its Appalachian service area.

BHRC's work in 2025 supported water and wastewater improvements serving thousands of residents; workforce and training facilities that prepared hundreds of workers for in-demand careers; and community assets that expanded access to services, technology, and collaboration. These investments strengthened the region's economic foundation by improving utility reliability, increasing organizational capacity, and reducing barriers to employment and business growth.

By coordinating local governments, nonprofits, and state partners, BHRC maximized return on investment, ensuring public dollars delivered measurable outcomes, including jobs created or retained, workers trained, infrastructure upgraded, and communities positioned for long-term economic resilience across Appalachian Ohio.

EASTGATE

In 2025 Eastgate continued to work with our partners toward the completion of our Appalachian Community Grant Program (ACGP) projects. As the lead ACGP applicant in our district, Eastgate was awarded approximately \$20 Million 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.



Our first ACGP project was completed in October 2025 with the restoration of a bridge and trail improvements for the Western Reserve Greenway Bike Trail in Bristol Township. The City of Niles broke ground in August 2025, as they began work on both the downtown Public Square and Riverside Park ACGP projects. All of the Eastgate 10 ACGP projects are in various stages of development and will be completed by October of 2026.



In 2025 Eastgate worked to connect with our community's safety efforts to be more involved, including expanding our networks and ways of gathering information about issues of concern. Eastgate assisted Niles and the Trumbull County Combined Health District to put together a demonstration project with creative crosswalks and narrowing roads to improve pedestrian access to school. In 2025 Eastgate and partners cut the ribbon on the new diverging diamond interchange at State Route 46 and SR 82! The project is a much-needed safety improvement to the interchange and will facilitate smoother access for local commuters.

1000 Highlights

OMEGA

With the help of OMEGA, Regional Tourism Professionals were able to secure funding through the ARC/GOA Area Development Program for the Ohio Foothills marketing initiative. The group unveiled its accomplishment at the year-end OMEGA meeting, sharing the Visit Ohio Foothills website and featured media. The marketing campaign is sure to be a success, with a user-friendly resource and stunning visuals showcasing the best of the OMEGA region.



SAVE22, a nonprofit focused on preventing suicide among veterans, active-duty military, and first responders, owns the former Carroll County Veterans Memorial Pool property. The vision for the site is to transform the shuttered facility into the Memorial Community Wellness Center. Due to funding limitations, the project is taking place in phases. The first phase, funded through a \$100,000 GOA award, addressed a critical need: roof replacement.

Destination Appalachia: Pathway to Prosperity came to fruition as OMEGA's Appalachian Community Grant Program (ACGP) funded projects began construction, implementing the \$31.6M award across 8 communities. Groundbreakings were held for the Secret Auditorium renovation and Gateway District streetscape (Zanesville), Skip's Landing Park (Coshocton), and The Great Guernsey Trail expansion (Cambridge). OMEGA also attended celebratory events, such as the Black Horse Inn (Morristown); New Philadelphia's Downtown Community Event Plaza; and Children's Health Initiative in Tuscarawas and Muskingum Counties.

OVRDC



Across the OVRDC region, communities spent 2025 turning big ideas into real progress. More than 50 Appalachian Community Grant Program projects advanced from planning to implementation, supported by nearly \$250 million in ARPA funding through the Ohio Department of Development. These efforts spanned workforce training, infrastructure upgrades, and expanded healthcare access, with all projects finalizing construction contracts and breaking ground in 2025, positioning them for completion in Fall 2026.



Through the Appalachian Regional Commission's Area Development Program, OVRDC also received 28 funding applications requesting more than \$10 million, leveraging nearly \$50 million in private investment to strengthen businesses, workforce capacity, infrastructure, and cultural assets. Transportation and safety initiatives were another major focus. OVRDC completed its first Regional Coordination Public Transit/Human Services Transportation Plan to improve cross-county mobility. In addition, partnering with 11 counties, OVRDC developed a Regional Safety Action Plan through the Safe Streets & Roads for All program, providing a framework to address high-risk corridors and intersections across the region.

2025 Highlights



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



**Appalachian
Regional
Commission**



**Department of
Development**