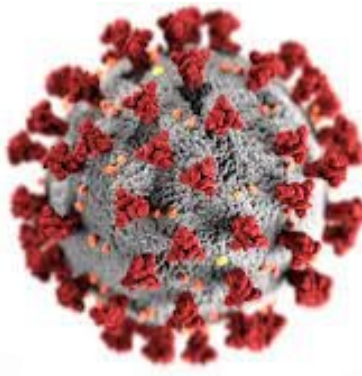




Annual Report 2020



Connecting Communities to Resources



Dear OMEGA Member Cities and Counties,

As I reflect upon the unprecedented year that was 2020, I am proud of each and every one of our OMEGA communities and of our staff for quickly adjusting to an everchanging landscape. The year began on a high note, with our first Executive Board Meeting of the year held in person at the Ernest Warther Museum and Gardens in Dover. As we gathered together that February afternoon, we could not have imagined the trajectory that 2020 would take or the challenges and triumphs that it would hold for the region. In March, Governor Mike DeWine made the difficult decision to place the State of Ohio under a stay-at-home order due to the deadly nature of the quickly spreading COVID-19 pandemic. This presented a new host of challenges for OMEGA and the communities that we serve.

Throughout the course of the ongoing pandemic, our members and communities have risen to every challenge and hardship that they've encountered only to return stronger and more resilient than ever. Your grit and dedication are to be forever remembered and admired. I am impressed with your focus on ensuring the safety of the community and employees and for finding new ways to provide basic government services in the wake of the global pandemic and to make those difficult decisions.

We all adjusted to the challenges to meet safely and continue the regular cycle of business across the region. Through the use of platforms such as Zoom, GoToMeeting, and Microsoft Teams, OMEGA and its member communities were able to meet safely and conduct business while continuing to partner on vital projects.

As the state and federal governments joined forces to provide beneficial and much-needed aid, many local governments and organizations were met with the challenge of how to best expend funds allotted through the CARES Act. There had never been an economic aid package as vast in scope and size as the CARES Act. Our OMEGA communities rose to the occasion and discovered new, innovative ways in which to expend their funds. From improving government facilities to protect workers and the public, to the City of Zanesville's provision of chrome books to area students in need, to broadband expansion in Columbiana County, the Downtown Wireless Project in Coshocton, and the purchase of newer squad vehicles for the Byesville Fire Department, there was no lack of creativity and ingenuity in the OMEGA region. Recognizing that small businesses were hurt most by the pandemic, our members implemented small business grant programs to aid in recovery.

Even when faced with the economic, mental, and technological hardships brought about by COVID-19, the OMEGA region was able to adapt and accomplish major projects through teamwork and resiliency. In fact, 2020 saw a variety of meaningful projects come to fruition such as the Coshocton-West Lafayette Water Line Extension which has provided all village residents with clean, safe water and has positioned the City of Coshocton as a regional water supplier. With additional funding from the US Economic Development Administration, we were able to implement new programs that will assist with long term economic recovery to include a new Revolving Loan Fund Program with very flexible terms, a Regional Broadband Feasibility Study, and the Regional Economic Recovery Coordinator. These programs will provide tangible solutions to financial hardships encountered as a result of COVID-19.

Although oil and gas activity slowed during the pandemic, construction of the natural gas-fired power plants in Columbiana and Guernsey Counties continued. These investments will bolster our energy independence and provide the power needed for our businesses and industries to recover and grow and to attract new businesses to the region.

While 2020 will not be remembered by anyone as an easy year, it was indeed a year full of accomplishments for which you should be proud. We often say that our communities are what makes the region great, and that is a fact which cannot be overstated. You have gone above and beyond to lead your counties and cities through this exceedingly difficult time in history. Thank you for your leadership during this difficult year and a very special thank you to our staff their ability to provide excellent service to our region during these unprecedented times. I look forward to 2021, meeting in person, and working together to enhance community and economic growth in our region.

Sincerely,

Jeannette M. Wiersbicki, P.E.

Executive Director

OMEGA Member Governments



The member governments of OMEGA include 10 county governments — Belmont, Carroll, Columbiana, Coshocton, Guernsey, Harrison, Holmes, Jefferson, Muskingum and Tuscarawas — as well as 12 city governments — Cambridge, Coshocton, Dover, East Liverpool, Martins Ferry, New Philadelphia, St. Clairsville, Salem, Steubenville, Toronto, Uhrichsville and Zanesville.

OMEGA is a collaborative body of member governments that serves as a facilitator between federal and state government agencies and local entities to provide opportunities in economic and community development through networking, education, planning research and allocation of resources. OMEGA's main objective is to foster a cooperative effort in planning, development and implementation of local and regional plans, programs and projects which will increase the economic activity in the area and improve the quality of life for its citizens. OMEGA is also the Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO) for Carroll, Columbiana, Coshocton, Guernsey, Harrison, Holmes, Muskingum and Tuscarawas counties.

OMEGA Mission Statement: *Provide a pathway to enhance community and economic growth in our region.*



Development
Services Agency



February 2020 Meeting and Highlights



(STANDING LEFT to RIGHT): Executive Director Jeannette Wierzbicki, Assistant Executive Director/Finance Director Cindi Metz, and Ohio Auditor's Office Liaison Dominic Ciano as Metz is presented with the Clean Audit Award from the Ohio Auditor's Office at the February 2020 Executive Board Meeting at the Ernest Warther Museum & Gardens in Dover



(ABOVE): A tour of the Ernest Warther Museum & Gardens is offered to attendees of the February 2020 OMEGA Executive Board Meeting



(LEFT, TOP to BOTTOM): In February 2020, Director John Carey, GOA; Jen Bowman, Director of Environmental Programs at the OU Voinovich School; and Russell Flagg, Assistant Chief of the Ohio EPA Southeast District Office address OMEGA members and guests regarding the Appalachian Clean Drinking Water Initiative at the Ernest Warther Museum & Gardens in Dover.



(ABOVE): Governor's Office of Appalachia Director John Carey addresses OMEGA members, staff, and guests at the February 2020 meeting

Coshocton-West Lafayette Water Line

Extension Project

The Coshocton-West Lafayette Water Line Extension Project regionalizes water systems in Coshocton County to provide an ample supply of safe quality drinking water from the City of Coshocton to the Village of West Lafayette. The Village's water system has been threatened by a VOC plume that is approaching the Village's water wells, which will be abandoned through this project. This collaborative approach not only resolves the potential contamination issue, but also provides lower water rates for the residents and businesses in West Lafayette and provides water for an unincorporated area of Coshocton County that will facilitate economic growth by attracting new businesses to the area. This project exemplifies the collaboration that is occurring throughout the OMEGA region and may be used as a successful model for other communities.

The City of Coshocton and the Village of West Lafayette have agreed to regionalize their systems with the City of Coshocton assuming ownership of the Village's water utility assets. The project will improve water quality for all 948 households and 39 businesses in West Lafayette and provide new water service to 105 households and three businesses.

The project commenced construction in June 2020 and will be completed by April 2021. The project involves constructing of 22,100 feet of 12" water main from the City of Coshocton to the Village of West Lafayette and replacing 13,000 linear feet of undersized 4" waterlines with 8" waterlines in West Lafayette to address flow and pressure issues and installing 900 new water meters. OMEGA recommended an ARC grant of \$250,000 for this project, and prepared a CDBG RPIG grant application for \$750,000, and is administering the grant and budget for this project.

Other funding was provided by:

- Ohio EPA WSRLA \$5,078,340 (principal forgiveness and loan)
- H2OHIO \$500,000
- US Army Corps of Engineers \$994,444



(ABOVE): OMEGA Executive Director Jeannette Wierzbicki attends Coshocton-West Lafayette Water Line Extension Project H2Ohio Announcement with City, Village, and EPA officials at Coshocton City Hall (pre-pandemic).

2020 OMEGA Executive Board

<u>COUNTY</u>	<u>REPRESENTATIVE</u>	<u>TITLE</u>	<u>APPOINTED BY</u>
<i>BELMONT</i>	J.P. Dutton	Commissioner	Belmont County
<i>CARROLL</i>	Jeff Ohler	Commissioner	Carroll County
<i>COLUMBIANA</i>	Tim Weigle	Commissioner	Columbiana County
<i>COSHOCTON</i>	Tiffany Swigert	Executive Director, Coshocton Port Authority	Coshocton County
<i>GUERNSEY</i>	Ernest (Skip) Gardner	Commissioner	Guernsey County
<i>HARRISON</i>	Dale Norris	Commissioner	Harrison County
<i>HOLMES</i>	Ray Eyer	Commissioner	Holmes County
<i>JEFFERSON</i>	Evan Scurti	Jefferson County Port Authority	Jefferson County
<i>MUSKINGUM</i>	Mollie Crooks	Commissioner	Muskingum County
<i>TUSCARAWAS</i>	Chris Abbuhl	Commissioner	Tuscarawas County
<u>CITY</u>	<u>REPRESENTATIVE</u>	<u>TITLE</u>	<u>APPOINTED BY</u>
<i>CAMBRIDGE</i>	Thomas Orr	Mayor	City of Cambridge
<i>COSHOCTON</i>	Mark Mills	Mayor	City of Coshocton
<i>DOVER</i>	Richard Homrighausen	Mayor	City of Dover
<i>EAST LIVERPOOL</i>	Gregory T. Bricker	Mayor	City of East Liverpool
<i>MARTINS FERRY</i>	John Davies	Mayor	City of Martins Ferry
<i>NEW PHILADELPHIA</i>	Joel B. Day	Mayor	City of New Philadelphia
<i>ST. CLAIRSVILLE</i>	Kathryn Thalman	Mayor	City of St. Clairsville
<i>SALEM</i>	John C. Berlin	Mayor	City of Salem
<i>STEUBENVILLE</i>	Domenick Mucci	Retired Mayor	City of Steubenville
<i>TORONTO</i>	John Parker	Mayor	City of Toronto
<i>UHRICHSVILLE</i>	Mark Haney	Mayor	City of Uhrichsville
<i>ZANESVILLE</i>	Don Mason	Mayor	City of Zanesville

OMEGA Financial Report

Ohio Mid-Eastern Governments Association Guernsey County, Ohio
Statement of Revenues, Expenditures and Changes in Fund Balances Governmental Funds
For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2020

	General	Loan	Revolving	Appalachian Regional	Appalachian Development Program	State Appalachian Development Administration	Economic Development Transportation	Rural Pilot Program	Rural Transit Pilot Program	AML Reclamation Economic Development Program	Regional Job Training	Total Governmental
Revenues												
Intergovernmental		\$ 0	\$ 94,000	\$ 199,628	\$ 170,000	0	\$ 73,424	\$ 194,314	\$ 63,237	\$ 1,356	\$ 645,472	\$ 1,441,431
Investment Income	3,699		57,361	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	61,060
Membership Fees	86,823		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	86,823
Charges for Services	11,275		4,308	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	15,583
In-Kind Contributions	0		0	41,562	0	0	9,425	0	0	0	0	50,987
Miscellaneous		0	102		0 0		0	0 0		0	0	102
Total Revenues	101,797		155,771		241,190	170,000	82,849	194,314	63,237	1,356	645,472	1,655,986
Expenditures												
Current:												
Economic Development	34,135		21,909	185,999		129,577	109,144	0	0	2,370	645,871	1,129,005
Transportation Planning	0		0	0	0	0	0	143,987	70,587	0	0	214,574
Indirect Costs	1,379		3,560	34,252		31,178	22,852	37,827	14,854	700	0	146,602
Capital Outlay	49		126	2,397		1,099	806	2,345	524	25	0	7,371
Debt Service:												
Principal Retirement			93	894	814		597	988	388	18	0	3,828
Total Expenditures	35,599		25,688	223,542	165,668		133,399	185,147	86,353	3,113	645,871	1,501,380
Excess of Revenues Over (Under) Expenditures	66,198		130,083	17,648	7,332		(50,550)	9,167	(23,116)	(1,757)	(399)	154,606
Other Financing Sources (Uses)												
Transfers In	0		0	0	0	501	62,075	20,906	57	0	0	83,539
Transfers Out	(83,539)		0	0	0		0	0	0	0	0	(83,539)
Total Other Financing Sources (Uses)	(83,539)		0	0	501		62,075	20,906	57	0	0	0
Net Change in Fund Balance	(17,341)		130,083	17,648	7,833		11,525	30,073	(23,059)	(1,757)	(399)	154,606
Fund Balances Beginning of Year	499,144		1,819,255	100,703	59,477		43,930	43,633	25,949	373	369	2,592,833
Fund Balances End of Year	\$ 481,803		\$ 1,949,338	\$ 118,351	\$ 67,310		\$ 55,455	\$ 73,706	\$ 2,890	(\$ 1,384)	(\$ 30)	2,747,439

Grant Assistance

OMEGA's Community Development Specialists and other staff provide assistance to local governments and non-profit organizations to identify potential funding sources and financial strategies. They also facilitate meetings with funding agencies and other interested parties. OMEGA's specialists help prepare funding applications, conduct environmental reviews and provide funding administration services. The provision of these services increases the capacity of communities in Appalachian Ohio, enabling them to be more competitive with the urban areas of the state.

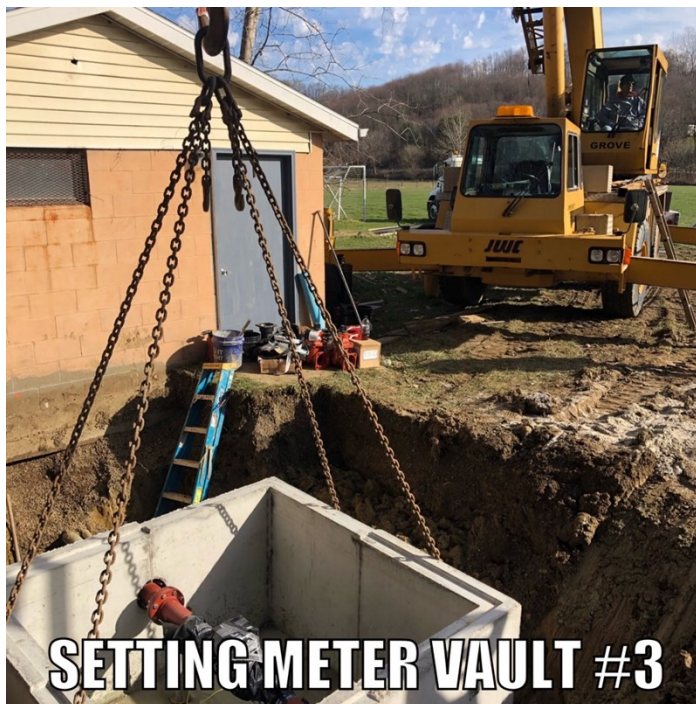
2020 Grant Applications

Applicant	Project	Funding Agency	Grant/Loan	Total Project Cost	Status
Adena	Blairmont Road (CR 6) Landslide Repair	OPWC	\$ 21,090	\$ 273,619	Pending
Belmont*	Village Street Improvement Project	OPWC	\$ 334,480	\$ 452,000	Approved
Belmont College	Eastern Ohio Appalachia Pipe Welding & Fabrication	ARC Advanced Welding Grant	\$ 281,603	\$ 425,603	Pending
Berlin Twp (HOL)	Berlin Sidewalk Project	ODOT SRTS	\$ 373,778	\$ 373,778	Not Approved
Bethesda	Dump Truck and Utility Truck	USDA	\$ 168,000	\$ 168,000	Approved
Bowerston*	SR 212 Water Line Relocation	OPWC	\$ 25,024	\$ 36,266	Approved
Byesville*	Byesville Recreational Trail	ODNR RTP	\$ 59,893	\$ 74,866	Approved
Cadiz*	SR 9 Sidewalk Project	ODOT SRTS	\$ 400,000	\$ 521,865	Not Approved
Cambridge	Steubenville Avenue Water Line Replacement	OWDA	\$ 1,575,188	\$ 1,575,188	Approved
Coshocton	Traffic Signal Upgrade	ODOT HSIP	\$ 500,000	\$ 1,974,754	Approved
East Liverpool	Officer laptops & Sanitizing Equipment	OCJ (Coronavirus Emergency)	\$ 31,253	\$ 31,253	Pending
East Liverpool	Officer Reinstatement	OCJ (Coronavirus Emergency)	\$ 168,391	\$ 168,391	Not Approved
East Palestine	Additional Personnel (COPS Hiring Grant)	US Department of Justice	\$ 125,000	\$ 237,622	Not Approved
East Palestine*	EP Walking Trail Rehabilitation	ODNR RTP	\$ 112,000	\$ 142,000	Approved
Fox Twp (CAR)	Fire Truck Replacement	FEMA	\$ 333,333	\$ 350,000	Not Approved
Glenmont*	Water Treatment Plant Improvements	OPWC	\$ 249,574	\$ 430,300	Approved
Harrison County	Scio Wastewater Treatment Plant Improvements	CDBG Critical Infrastructure	\$ 489,100	\$ 543,530	Pending
Holmes County	Connecting Mohican Valley	USDOT BUILD	\$ 1,531,730	\$ 1,531,730	Not Approved
Killbuck Twp (HOL)	Township Signs	ODOT HSIP	\$ 18,477	\$ 18,477	Approved
Lore City*	Lore City Paving Project	OPWC	\$ 88,905	\$ 120,142	Approved
Newcomerstown	Boat Ramp	ODNR Paddling Enhancement	\$ 75,000	\$ 151,000	Approved
Newcomerstown*	Park Hill Water Storage Tank	OPWC	\$ 248,430	\$ 507,000	Approved
ODOT	US 250 Bridge Replacement in Harrison County	USDOT INFRA	\$ 8,448,162	\$ 14,397,801	Not Approved
OMEGA	Brownfields Coalition Assessment	US EPA	\$ 600,000	\$ 600,000	Pending
OMEGA, Buckeye Hills, OU	Project Rise	EDA	\$ 2,200,000	\$ 2,750,000	Approved
Salem	PPE & Disinfecting supplies	OCJ (Coronavirus Emergency)	\$ 10,613	\$ 10,613	Approved
Steubenville	University Blvd District	EDA	\$ 1,569,353	\$ 1,961,691	Not Approved
Uhrichsville	Additional Personnel (COPS Hiring Grant)	US Department of Justice	\$ 125,000	\$ 254,650	Not Approved
Union Township (BEL)	Barkcamp Road	OPWC	\$ 420,485	\$ 311,159	Pending
Urban Mission	Fresh Start Workforce Development Program	ARC POWER	\$ 1,420,000	\$ 3,253,110	Not Approved
Wellsville	Wastewater Treatment Plant Improvements	CDBG RPIG	\$ 420,375	\$ 840,750	Approved
The Wilds	Conservation & Ecotourism as Catalyst for Growth	ARC POWER	\$ 840,000	\$ 1,667,097	Not Approved
ZMCPA	National Road Business Park	EDA	\$ 3,464,864	\$ 4,331,080	Not Approved
TOTAL			\$ 26,729,101	\$ 40,485,335	
TOTAL GRANTS/LOANS APPROVED					\$6,085,959

*Application prepared prior to January 1, 2020, but status known after January 1, 2020.

Outcomes for Grant Assistance Applications and ARC/GOA Projects

- 33 Applications Submitted
- 15 Applications Approved
- 125 Jobs Created or retained
- 474 Existing Businesses Improved
- 25,390 Household Improved
- 14.7 Miles of Waterline Constructed
- 3.4 Miles of Sanitary Sewer Improved/Constructed
- 1 Wastewater Treatment Plant Improved (3.0 MGD peak capacity)
- 3 Water Treatment Plants Improved (0.79 MGD total capacity)
- 1 New Job Training Center Established
- 1.3 Miles of Road Improved
- 0.5 MG Water Storage Tank Improved
- 3.1 Miles Recreational Trails Improved
- 279 Safety Signs
- 1,407 Persons Trained
- Traffic Signal Improvements
- Personal Protective Equipment
- 7,410 Sq. Feet of Building Renovations
- 174 Pieces of New Equipment
- \$352,000,000 New Private Investment



(ABOVE): Village of Jewett Water Treatment Plant Improvements under construction

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION

The OMEGA RTPO includes Carroll, Columbiana, Coshocton, Guernsey, Harrison, Holmes, Muskingum, and Tuscarawas Counties.



Key Planning Activities & Notable Events:

- ⇒ Completed Regional Transportation Improvement Program 2021-2024
- ⇒ Relunched Tri-County Active Transportation Plan
- ⇒ Coordinated Regional Roadway Safety Plan with ODOT/Consultant team
- ⇒ Tuscarawas Valley School Traffic Impact Study
- ⇒ Facilitated Ohio State University Planning Studio based on MAGNAM Innovation Park
- ⇒ Presented at NADO Regional Transportation Conference & Ohio Transportation Engineering Conference

SAFETY SNAPSHOT

2018 - 2020

CRASHES	27,694	-7.4%
FATAL CRASHES	165	+0.01%
INJURY CRASHES	6,449	-11.8%
LEADING CRASH TYPE	FIXED OBJECT	28%

RTPO Executive Update

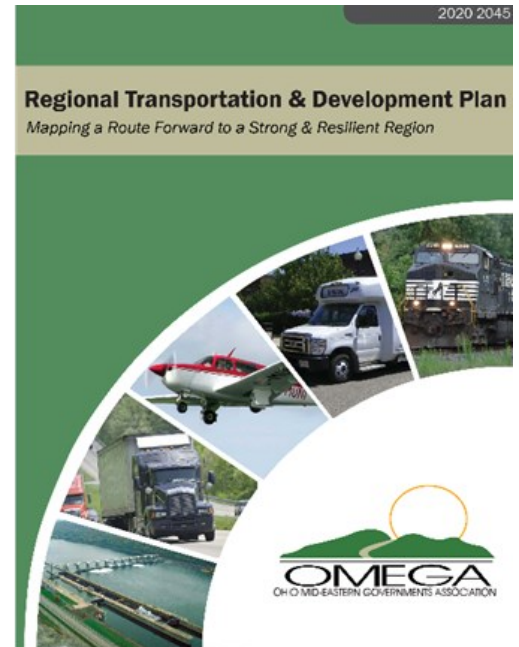
Regional Transportation & Development Plan

In 2020, the RTPO staff led all of OMEGA through the development of the first Regional Transportation & Development Plan. This plan combined the second long-range transportation plan with the annual update to the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). The goals and strategies of this plan have aligned across all our major programs and helps ensure the entire region is moving forward, together.

This plan is also the first to feature an interactive Regional Story Map that takes the information from the plan and shows additional insights and allows people to zoom into their community to see how future projects may impact them on a more localized scale.

Full Plan & Story Map available here:

<https://omegadistrict.org/programs/transportation/plan2020/>



Going Virtual

The RTPO was faced with a challenge early in 2020. How would OMEGA hold public meetings amidst COVID-19?

The answer was to fully utilize our available assets. For the first time in OMEGA's history, the RTPO staff hosted public information forums for the Regional Transportation Improvement Program and Regional Transportation & Development Plan via Facebook Live and YouTube Live. With over **500 views**, this public outreach effort was among the most successful in the RTPO's short history. RTPO staff also hosted the first Virtual Walk Audit for the Carrollton & Newcomerstown Safe Routes to School Travel Plans. OMEGA took proactive steps to minimize risk and ensure the necessary work was completed on time and safely for all stakeholders.



(LEFT): OMEGA Transportation Director Kevin Buettner and Transportation Planner/GIS Coordinator Megan Carmel present at the Regional Development Plan Virtual Public Meeting, held via Facebook Live and YouTube.

Staff Responsibilities and Contact Information

Jeannette Wierzbicki, P.E., Executive Director oversees all program activities in the office. She ensures the proper administration of policies and procedures; as well as program budgets. Jeannette represents OMEGA at meetings with public officials and the general public. She also provides executive oversight of the Regional Transportation Planning Programs. Jeannette is First Vice President of the Development District Association of Appalachia (DDAA), Vice President of the Ohio Association of Regional Council (OARC); and serves as OMEGA's representative on the Small Community Environmental Infrastructure Group.

Email: jeannettew@omegadistrict.org

Cindi Metz, Assistant Executive Director / Finance Director works in conjunction with the Executive Director to further the mission of OMEGA and assumes the responsibilities of the Executive Director in her absence. As Finance Director, she administers the organization's long-term and short-term budgets and prepares all financial reports for the board of directors and members. She works directly with the auditors to ensure compliance with all federal and state requirements. Cindi also manages the daily operation of the office, including human resources, payroll, deposits, payments and account reconciliation. She is cross-trained to assist the Revolving Loan Fund Administrator in a back-up capacity.

Email: cindim@omegadistrict.org

Lolly Ravak, Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) Administrator / Regional 166 Loan (166) Program Administrator is responsible for all activities required to administer the RLF and 166 including coordination of business loan packages, analysis of loan requests, facilitation of loan closings, compliance with state and federal regulations, monitoring repayments and performing all accounting processes related to the loan programs. She also performs on-site monitoring visits and conducts file audits on a regular basis. Lolly is cross-trained to assist the Finance Director in a back-up capacity.

Email: lravak@omegadistrict.org

Alan Knapp, ARC Program Manager / Community Development Specialist is the program manager for the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) and Governor's Office of Appalachia (GOA) programs and develops the OMEGA ARC/GOA Project Package on an annual basis. He provides technical assistance to applicants requesting ARC/GOA funding to include assistance with direct applications to ARC for POWER. Alan also manages the Regional Job Training Program. He provides assistance to local governments and non-profit organizations on the identification of potential funding sources and facilitates meetings with local officials, community leaders and funding agencies. Additionally, Alan prepares applications for Community Development Block Grant funding and assists communities with the administration of CDBG grants, including environmental reviews, status reports, drawdowns and amendments.

Email: alank@omegadistrict.org

Hannah Stillions, EDA Program Manager/Development Specialist assists local governments and non-profit organizations with the identification of viable financing strategies for needed improvements and prepares funding applications. Hannah also manages Economic Development Administration (EDA) grant programs, including communication of program intent, eligibility criteria, funding availability, and leveraging requirements in addition to application preparation and funding administration. She also produces the OMEGA Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Report. Hannah also assists other development specialists as needed.

Email: hstillions@omegadistrict.org

Trina Woodland, Community Development Specialist assists local governments and non-profit organizations with the identification of viable financing strategies for needed improvements. She also facilitates meetings with local officials, community leaders and funding agencies. She prepares funding applications, conducts environmental reviews, and provides funding administration services. Trina is also responsible for conducting the local review for the Intergovernmental Review (IGR) process for project applications submitted to federal and state agencies. She also serves as the liaison for the Ohio Public Works Commission Natural Resource Assistance Council for District 14.

Email: trinaw@omegadistrict.org

Kevin Buettner, Transportation Director works with the Executive Director and Transportation Planner / GIS Coordinator on the Transportation Program. Responsibilities under the Transportation Program include: development of a four-year Regional Transportation Improvement Plan; participation in statewide transportation planning activities; providing technical assistance (e.g. school travel plans, traffic counts, crash analysis, road safety audits, training); maintenance of transportation databases; conducting transportation related surveys; development of performance measures and targets, and revisions to the Regional Transportation Plan. Kevin also facilitates the public involvement component of the Transportation Program and prepares funding applications for transportation and non-transportation projects.

Email: kevinb@omegadistrict.org

Megan Carmel, Transportation Planner / GIS Coordinator works in conjunction with the Executive Director and Transportation Director on the Transportation Program. Responsibilities under the Transportation Program include development of a four-year Transportation Improvement Plan, participation in statewide transportation planning activities, providing technical assistance (e.g. traffic counts, crash analysis, road safety audits), maintenance of transportation databases, conducting transportation related surveys, development of performance measures and targets, and revisions to the Regional Transportation Plan. Megan also develops the Geographic Information Systems (GIS) needed to support transportation, the transit pilot program and other planning/economic development activities. She also provides GIS services to communities within the OMEGA region upon request.

Email: mcarmel@omegadistrict.org

Deb Hill, Transit Planner is responsible for implementation of the coordinated plan and required updates. She also manages OMEGA's Regional Coordinated Public Transit/Human Services Transportation Pilot Program. As part of the planning process, she leads public workshops; distributes surveys; facilitates meetings with stakeholders including senior citizens, people with disabilities, mobility managers, transportation service providers, human service agencies and other interested parties; analyzes data; and conducts origin and destination studies. Deb also coordinates with the Ohio Department of Transportation on mobility initiatives and grant programs.

Email: dhill@omegadistrict.org

Kennedy Webb-Blakley, Communications Manager is responsible for all areas of public relations and communication, including membership, media and the general public. She oversees the production and release of annual reports, newsletters, press notices and social media content.

Email: kwebb@omegadistrict.org

GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF APPALACHIA (GOA)

STATE APPALACHIAN DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM PY 2020

Applicant/Project	County	GOA Request	Other \$	Total Cost
Zanesville Muskingum County Port Authority Project Catalyst	Muskingum	134,300	134,300	268,600
Village of New Waterford Phase 3A Water System Improvements	Columbiana	244,200	700,872	945,072
Zane State College AEP/Zane State College Training Center	Belmont Coshocton Guernsey Harrison Muskingum Tuscarawas	250,000	305,658	555,658
Buckeye Water District Frederick Heights Waterline Project	Columbiana	250,000	1,421,489	1,671,489
Village of New Concord Water Treatment Plant Clarifiers Repairs	Muskingum	54,100	120,000	174,100
Urban Mission Ministries, Inc. Fresh Start Workforce Development Program	Belmont Brooke, WV Carroll Hancock, WV Harrison Jefferson	250,000	400,000	650,000
TOTAL		\$ 1,182,600	\$ 3,082,319	\$ 4,264,919

APPALACHIAN REGIONAL COMMISSION (ARC)

AREA DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS PY 2020

Applicant/Project	County	ARC Request	Other \$	Total Cost
City of Coshocton West Lafayette Waterline Extension	Coshocton	250,000	7,153,000	7,403,000
Village of Cadiz North Trunk Collection System Phase II	Harrison	250,000	2,131,450	2,381,450
Village of Jewett Water Treatment Plant Rehabilitation	Harrison	250,000	1,120,500	1,370,500
City of Steubenville University Blvd District Sewer Upgrade	Jefferson	250,000	1,886,700	2,136,700
TOTAL		\$ 1,000,000	\$ 12,291,650	\$ 13,291,650



(LEFT): The Urban Mission has proposed the Fresh Start Workforce Development Program to help recovering addicts in the region learn new skills and obtain meaningful employment. The Urban Mission has purchased a shopping plaza on North Seventh Street near downtown Steubenville to house the Fresh Start training center to include a grocery store, restaurant and a warehouse for food, clothing and other community needs. Revenue from other tenants at the plaza will sustain this program once renovations are completed.

(PICTURED): Rev. Ashley Steele, Executive Director of Urban Mission Ministries

REVOLVING LOAN FUND PROGRAM

In 2020, the OMEGA Revolving Loan Fund Loan closed a loan for \$200,000 for the expansion of AVC Communications Multimedia Group, LLC and closed a loan with Sikole Properties LLC for \$100,000. In October the Loan Review Committee approved two loans. One to OBM Productions LLC of Dennison, Ohio for the start up of a nano brewery. The other was for Kurz-Kasch, Inc of Newcomerstown, Ohio for the purchase of equipment. The company has a large contract for a new client.

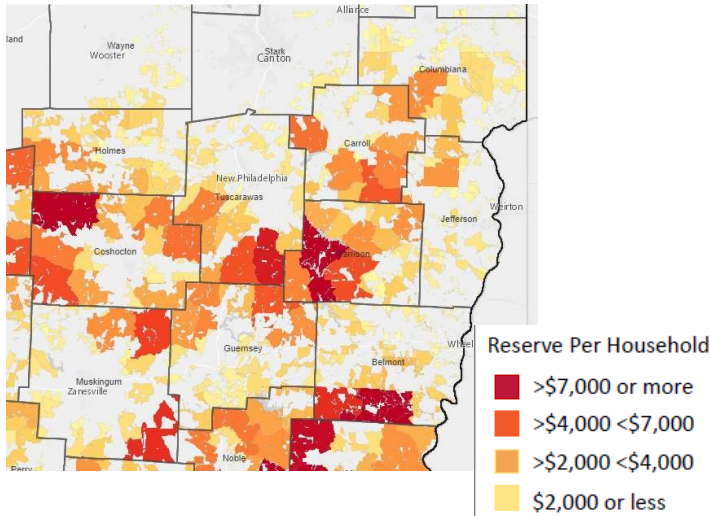
The OMEGA RLF Program Approved and/or Closed the Following Loans in 2020:

Borrower	Loan Amount	Date Approved	Closing Date	Funding Source	FTE Jobs
AVC Communications Multimedia Group, LLC	\$200,000	08/06/2019	5/20/20	ARC	4 Created
Sikole Properties LLC, dba Olympic Tae Kwon Do Academy, LLC	\$100,000	12/14/18	6/25/20	EDA	2 Created
OBM Productions LLC	\$125,000	10/21/20	Pending	RBEG	3 to be created
Kurz-Kasch, Inc.	\$190,000	20/21/20	Pending	EDA Cares	5 to be created

2020 Statistics:

RLF Statistics as of 12/31/2020	All Loans	ARC Only
Total Loans	97	48
Total Loan Amount	\$7,041,222	\$3,698,066
# of Jobs Created	1,176	519
# of Jobs Retained	435	244
Total # Jobs Created/Retained	1,612	763

EDA CARES ACT Projects



Broadband has been a challenge across rural Ohio for several years, including in the OMEGA region. After the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated the digital hardship of access to broadband, OMEGA utilized EDA CARES ACT funding to conduct a Broadband Feasibility Study through Reid Consulting Group. This ongoing project will allow areas with little to no broadband access to be identified accurately and will identify short and long-term solutions to extend broadband to unserved and underserved areas.

As community residents experienced both temporary and permanent loss of employment due to the pandemic, the need for economic recovery became more apparent. The Montrose Group was selected as the Regional Economic Recovery Coordinator and will provide targeted technical assistance and support the implementation of local priorities in the OMEGA region. Montrose will focus on business attraction strategies and opportunities, position sites for development or redevelopment in industrial and downtown districts, provide support for access to state and federal funding, and support alignment of workforce development efforts to business needs.



>> The Road to Economic Recovery Begins HERE!

Announcing a Special Loan Program!

OMEGA EDA CARES ACT RECOVERY ASSISTANCE RLF PROGRAM

OMEGA CARES ACT Loan Program Offers:

- 2% Fixed Interest Rate on Average
- No Commercial Loan Participation Required
- \$50,000 per Job Created/Retained

OMEGA CARES ACT Loan Program can assist private-for-profit businesses with:

- Access to Capital—Working Capital Term Loans
- Fixed Assets—Loans to Purchase Machinery/Equipment, Buildings
- Construction
- Refinancing of Existing Debt—special economic circumstances only

Eligible Borrowers for the OMEGA CARES ACT Loan Program:

- Private-for-Profit Businesses in Belmont, Carroll, Columbiana, Coshocton, Guernsey, Harrison, Holmes, Jefferson, Muskingum, and Tuscarawas Counties
- Startups, Existing, and Expanding Businesses

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740-439-4471 ext. 203

Another project made possible through EDA CARES ACT funding was the OMEGA EDA CARES ACT Recovery Assistance Revolving Loan Fund Program. Announced in August 2020, the program is a wonderful opportunity for existing/expanding businesses across the region; as it offered 2% fixed interest rate and no commercial loan participation. OMEGA was grateful to be able to offer assistance to small businesses across the region that were struggling and continue to struggle as a result of COVID-19.

Appalachia Drinking Water Initiative

Procuring access to clean, potable drinking water has long been a challenge across Appalachian Ohio; and the OMEGA region is no exception. Throughout the course of autumn 2020, OMEGA partnered with the Governor's Office of Appalachia (GOA) and the Ohio University Voinovich School of Leadership and Public Affairs to host virtual meetings with member communities to kick off the Appalachia Drinking Water Initiative. The goal of the initiative is to help ensure access to clean drinking water for all citizens of the OMEGA region. Through the partnership with the GOA and the Voinovich School, OMEGA communities were asked to share GIS data to assist in identifying which areas did not have access to clean drinking water. This data will be used to identify potential sources of clean drinking water to unserved areas.



Two from OMEGA Region Graduate from the Appalachian Leadership Institute



The Appalachian Leadership Institute (ALI) is a wonderful 9- month program operated under the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC), through which professionals from 12 Appalachian states gather together with the common goal of helping their communities thrive. The program runs from October to July and features skill building seminars and best practice reviews. ALI fellows partake in extensive training opportunities developed by the ARC, in conjuncture with the University of Tennessee, Knoxville; The Howard H. Baker Jr. Center for Public Policy; Tuskegee University; and Collective Impact. Graduating with the ALI Class of 2019-2020 were **OMEGA Treasurer Tiffany Swigert** (RIGHT) and Byesville Village Administrator Brennan Dudley (MIDDLE), during a virtual graduation ceremony on November 18, 2020. "The Appalachian Leadership Institute is preparing leaders from diverse career fields that are passionate about their Appalachian community with wonderful tools and instruction. This group of fellow have incredible "can-do" attitudes that help in drive progress throughout our communities", Swigert said, "Our ability to connect, share, learn and challenge each other will benefit us as individuals throughout our careers. I would certainly recommend this experience to any colleague that is ready to make a passionate commitment to the development of their community." Congratulations, Tiffany and Brennan! The OMEGA region is proud of you.

Regional Coordinated Transportation Pilot Program: Steering Committee



In 2020, OMEGA created a Steering Committee to more effectively guide the implementation of the Regional Coordinated Transportation Pilot Program. The Steering Committee provides a platform that promotes fair, equal, and comprehensive representation for all counties in the pilot region, designated as Region 9 by ODOT and includes all OMEGA counties with the exception of Columbiana County. The Steering Committee helps to develop best practices, regional initiatives and directives, and also to have input on funding decisions. The Steering Committee membership is comprised of all transit directors in the region, all mobility managers in the region, and other representatives from each county in the region. Members of the Steering Committee have also been selected to ensure that the needs of seniors, persons living with a disability, and persons with low-income are given equity in all considerations. It is important for the success of transit in the region that all persons in the region are well and equitably represented in transit funding opportunities, regional transit initiatives and projects, and local and regional goals and strategies. The overarching

goal for this program is always to provide the safest, most reliable, and efficient transportation services to all residents of the nine-county region. To accomplish this, the Steering Committee is instrumental in the continuation and implementation of the Regional Coordinated Plan. This newly dedicated working group is a subcommittee of the larger Regional Coordinating Council (RCC) and reports to that council on a quarterly basis. The Regional Coordinated Council makes recommendations directly to the OMEGA Executive Board.

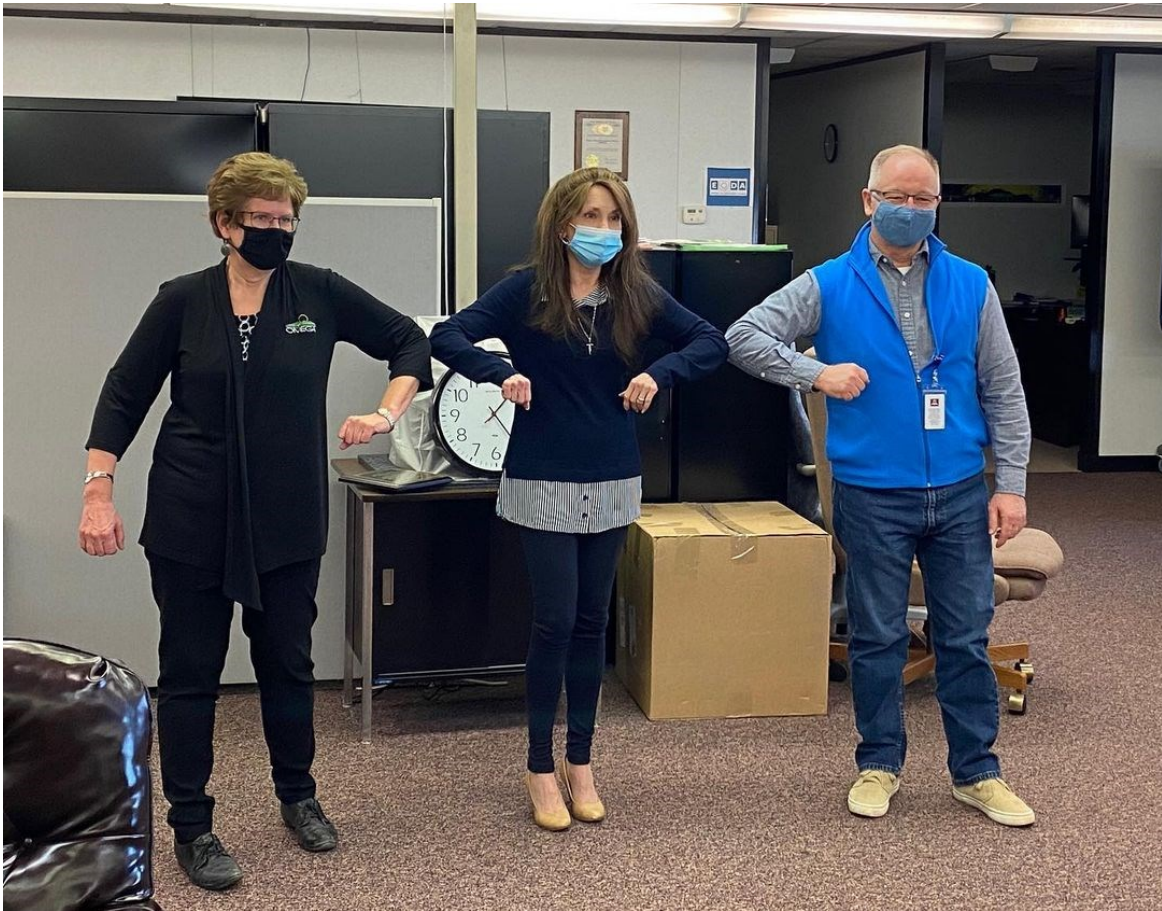
In CY 2020, ODOT awarded OMEGA \$100,000 in special grant funding to support regional coordinated goals through the development and funding of regional projects. Four projects were selected by the Steering Committee, supported by the RCC, and approved by OMEGA's Executive Board. These projects include:

- Employment Transportation Feasibility Study for a tri-county area centered on Coshocton County
- Creation of an online (and print) Regional Resource Guide for transportation services and other health and human services resources
- One Call/One Click Feasibility Study to develop a best practices model for a Regional Transportation Resource Center (call center)
- A Media Outreach Project to promote transportation services and other regional initiatives throughout the region with equitable funding distribution for each county

"The Steering Committee has quickly become a very effective, efficient, and important platform for the region to utilize in order to best meet the many and varied transportation needs of all persons in the region. In the Steering Committee, every county has an equal voice and each voice is heard. The unofficial motto that "Everyone who needs or wants a ride, gets a ride!" drives all of our regional initiatives and projects as well as informing our funding opportunities and choices. We are thankful to have strong ODOT support and backing as OMEGA, and the Steering Committee, continue to explore ways and means of moving the Region 9 Coordinated Transportation Plan forward."



OMEGA RLF Administrator Lolly Ravak Retires



(LEFT to RIGHT): OMEGA Executive Director Jeannette M. Wierzbicki, P.E.; RLF Administrator Lolly Ravak; and OMEGA President Chris Abbuhl pose for a photo at Ravak's Retirement Open House Celebration at the OMEGA office in December 2020.

2020 marked the 27th year of service to the OMEGA region for retiring RLF Administrator Lolly Ravak. Upon beginning her tenure in 1993, Ravak became instrumental in the success of the OMEGA Revolving Loan Fund Program which is still in use today. The program began in 1992 through a \$500,000 investment from OMEGA, EDA, and the ARC; with an additional \$99,000 received from USDA in 1999. Since the program began, OMEGA has been able to lend approximately \$7M to area businesses with an 11 to 1 return on investment ratio to help leverage \$41M in private investments. As a result of the RLF program and Ravak's efforts, local businesses were able to create and retain over 1,600 jobs. Lolly dedicated her time, talents, and career to helping small businesses in our 10 counties and 12 cities thrive. "I really appreciate everyone that I've worked with through the almost 27 years, and the many friendships that I've made; whether it was with board members or committee members, or even my borrowers.", Ravak said, "We've had several borrowers come back to us over and over because of the program and how well it works. I wish OMEGA well and I just want the best for all of our programs. Thanks, everyone for your support"

OMEGA Goes Virtual



(LEFT): In what would be the first of many virtual OMEGA meetings, OOGA Director of Public Affairs Mike Chadsey delivered remarks in April 2020 concerning the state of the oil and gas industry during the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

(RIGHT): Mike Jacoby, President and CEO of OhioSE, delivered an update from his organization at the May 2020 virtual OMEGA Executive Board Meeting.



(LEFT): The ongoing Ohio opioid epidemic was the topic of focus at the June 2020 OMEGA Executive Board Meeting, as OSU Associate Professor of Human Sciences Michael Betz detailed the challenges of addiction and potential strategies for improved public health and safety.

OMEGA Goes Virtual

(RIGHT): With 2020 being an election year, OMEGA was honored to host Ohio Secretary of State Frank LaRose at the August meeting. LaRose encouraged attendees to vote and volunteer to become poll workers.



(LEFT): ODOT Highway Safety Program Manager Michelle May served as speaker at the September Semi-Annual Membership Meeting, detailing the dangers and consequences of distracted driving in Ohio.

(RIGHT): Kristi Tanner, JobsOhio Senior Managing Director, closed out the year at the December 2020 OMEGA meeting. Tanner discussed available programs, such as the Vibrant Communities Grant, and gave JobsOhio history ahead of the organizations 10th anniversary.



2020 Impact Statement

Appalachian Regional Commission and Governor's Office of Appalachia

OMEGA secured **\$2,183,000** in federal and state ARC and GOA funding for communities in the region. These funds leveraged **\$15,374,419** in other funding sources, and **100** new jobs created.

Other Federal, State, and Private Sources

OMEGA helped secure **\$6,085,959** in grants and low-interest loans from other funding sources for our region.



(ABOVE): OMEGA recommended a State GOA with matching funds from the Zanesville Muskingum County Port Authority to construct 2,200 linear foot of 18" waterline at Eastpointe Business Park near Zanesville in Muskingum County to serve the site of the new AMG Vanadium facility at the business park. AMG Vanadium is the world's leading provider of resid spent catalyst recycling and metal reclamation services and is developing its second spent catalyst recycling facility at the Eastpointe Business Park. This new roasting and ferroalloy production facility will enable AMG Vanadium to respond to growing demand from the global refining and steel industries by essentially doubling its resid spent catalyst recycling capacity and annual ferrovanadium and ferronickel-molybdenum production.

Appalachian Tourism Expansion Meeting at Salt Fork State Park March 6, 2020



(ABOVE, LEFT TO RIGHT): Julia Hinten, GOA; Kathy Zook, Eastgate Regional Council; OMEGA Executive Director Jeannette Wierzbicki; GOA Director John Carey



(ABOVE, FAR LEFT): OMEGA ARC Program Manager Alan Knapp serves as panelist at Appalachian Tourism Expansion Meeting



(ABOVE): Attendees listen as tourism panelists discuss topics facing the industry