



# 2021 ODOT REGIONAL SPECIAL FUNDING PROJECTS: EMPLOYMENT TRANSPORTATION FEASIBILITY STUDY

*Project Funded by Ohio Department of  
Transportation*



## SECTION ONE: BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW

The Ohio Mid-Eastern Governments Association (OMEGA) is organized as a Council of Governments pursuant to Section 167 of the Ohio Revised Code and is designated by the Appalachian Regional Commission as a Local Development District and by the US Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration, as an Economic Development District. OMEGA's region includes ten counties in eastern Appalachian Ohio: Belmont, Carroll, Columbiana, Coshocton, Guernsey, Harrison, Holmes, Jefferson, Muskingum, and Tuscarawas. OMEGA is a collaborative body of member governments that serves as a facilitator between state and federal government agencies and local entities to provide opportunities in economic and community development through networking, education, planning, research, and allocation of resources. OMEGA's mission is to provide a pathway to enhance community and economic growth in the region.

On January 27, 2016, Former Governor of Ohio John Kasich, pursuant to United States Code, Title 23, Section 135 (m), officially designated OMEGA as an Ohio Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO). The OMEGA RTPO includes all counties previously listed with the exception of Belmont and Jefferson Counties which are served by the Belomar and Brooke-Hancock-Jefferson metropolitan planning organizations, respectively. In January 2018, the Ohio Department of Transportation selected OMEGA to participate in a Regional Coordinated Public Transit/Human Services Transportation Pilot Program. The purpose of this pilot program is to promote effective and comprehensive coordination of transportation services throughout the region and to increase mobility, equity, and ridership especially for seniors and disabled persons. In 2019, Columbiana County made the decision to opt out of the pilot program as their transportation patterns better aligned with another region. The OMEGA Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Coordinated Transportation Plan includes the counties of Belmont, Carroll, Coshocton, Guernsey, Harrison, Holmes, Muskingum, and Tuscarawas.



In 2020, The Ohio Department of Transportation, ODOT, awarded the OMEGA Region (ODOT Region 9) Coordinated Transportation Pilot Program \$100,000 in special funding in order to promote regional initiatives that advance the coordination, equity, and accessibility of transportation options within the region.

Steering Committee members, which equally represent each of the counties in Region 9, were asked to develop and present for consideration potential project proposals for best utilizing the special funds. At the November 4, 2020, Steering Committee meeting, four special projects were proposed for consideration. Project summaries including proposed budgets and project lead contact information were sent to all members for review, consideration, and comment.

After an adequate review period, a vote was taken at the Steering Committee meeting held on November 17, 2020, to accept and fully fund the four special regional projects. Each project was considered and voted on separately. The vote was to accept the project and award full project-specific funding. Each project was adopted by unanimous affirmative vote.

The projects and their budgets included:

1. An Employment Transportation Feasibility Study centered in Coshocton County.  
Project Budget: \$25,000.00
2. Development of a Region 9 Resource Guide: an interactive, online, coordinated resource guide. Project Budget: \$2,000.00
3. A One Call/One Click Regional Call Center Strategic Planning Study.  
Project Budget: \$35,000.00
4. A Media Outreach Campaign Project with both regional and local components.  
Project Budget: \$38,000.00

OMEGA was responsible for administering the special funds from ODOT. All funds were required to be expended in CY 2021.

## **SECTION 2: PROJECT DETAILS AND RESULTS**

On November 17, 2020, the Steering Committee approved the Employment Transportation Feasibility Study centering on Coshocton County with a budget of \$25,000.00. Funds came from ODOT special funding and were administered by OMEGA. OMEGA developed an RFP which was published for not less than 30 days. SIXMO Consultants were chosen to provide the study and the OMEGA Executive Board granted approval on March 16, 2021. An agreement between SIXMO Consulting and OMEGA was signed on April 30, 2021, effective April 20, 2021.

SIXMO consultants held a kick-off meeting on June 2, 2021, with stakeholders and a Coshocton Core Team. At the Regional Coordinated Council (RCC) meeting on June 16, 2021 the project start was announced and SIXMO began interviews with stakeholders and local Coshocton and nearby businesses. SIXMO presented a mid-study report at the RCC meeting on September 24, 2021, and asked for comments, concerns, or questions from the larger regional group. At the

RCC meeting on November 17, 2021, the draft final report was presented to the group for final comment.

Results from the study concluded that, in fact, an employment transportation route centered in Coshocton County was feasible and drafted four potential employment routes with two of the potential routes showing promising potential for a pilot program. The study in its entirety can be found by accessing the following link: <https://omegadistrict.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Sixmo-Study.pdf>

The report may also be found on the OMEGA website. Requests for the report in paper form or in a pdf file may be made to Deborah Hill, Regional Transit Planner, OMEGA at [Dhill@omegadistrict.org](mailto:Dhill@omegadistrict.org).

