



2021 ANNUAL REPORT

**CONNECTING COMMUNITIES
TO RESOURCES**



Letter from Director Wierzbicki

Dear OMEGA Members and Partners,

As yet another year passes, I continue to be impressed by the hardiness and resourcefulness of the OMEGA region. While 2020 was a year of challenges and adaptation, 2021 was a year of growth and perseverance. In March 2021, President Joseph Biden signed into law the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) which provided communities with financial aid to recover from hardships incurred as a result of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The OMEGA region rose to the opportunity, demonstrating unrivaled ingenuity and fortitude in finding unique, meaningful uses for the ARPA funding. From infrastructure improvements and revenue recuperation to broadband expansion programs, ARPA funding in the OMEGA region is being allocated for projects that will lead to community and economic growth in the region. The funding allocation process will extend through 2024, giving communities ample time to make thoughtful, precise decisions.

Congress also passed the bipartisan infrastructure law, Building a Better America which promises to be of substantial benefit to our region. Outlined in the bill are three key areas of focus: transportation, climate/energy/environment, and broadband, which are all of vital importance across our region. We look forward to working alongside our communities on projects pertaining to these focus areas.

We are also excited to participate in the Recovery to Work Cohort Learning Academy, which strives to foster and curate partnerships between area businesses, recovery service providers and individuals in recovery from substance abuse disorders (SUD) who are ready to enter the workforce. The program is designed to coordinate Recovery to Work efforts on a regional scale while increasing the number of employers that hire, support, and retain individuals in recovery. The program is operating under the Development District Association of Appalachia (DDAA) through funding from the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) and also seeks to provide support services to program participants. During the coming year, we are hopeful that this initiative will increase labor participation rates and help to address the labor shortage that we are currently experiencing.

With Intel's plans to invest \$20 billion in Central Ohio, the largest private investment in state history, much of our region is well positioned to benefit through increased employment opportunities, new supply chain and other business opportunities, population growth, and new housing developments. We look forward to working with our members to make sure that we are prepared for this new development that will positively impact our region for years to come.

I would be remiss if I did not also mention the pride that I have for my staff and the entire organization. Like many businesses and entities across the nation, OMEGA experienced staffing changes in 2021. While we did have to say goodbye to two excellent employees, we also had the privilege and excitement of welcoming aboard three new employees: Evan Scurti joined the OMEGA team as a Senior Development Specialist; and Josh Sliker and Josey Rabare joined our transportation team. Although change is never an easy road, our strength as an organization is evident as we navigate these staffing changes. I am so grateful for the hard work, resourcefulness, and dedication of our staff as we strive to provide quality services to our members, and partners. By working together, we will strengthen our communities and economy by providing the pathways to build our businesses, workforce, infrastructure, culture, tourism, community leaders, and capacity.

Sincerely,

Jeannette M. Wierzbicki

Jeannette M. Wierzbicki, 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.*



Ohio

Department of
Development



U.S. Department
of Transportation
Federal Highway
Administration



2021 Meeting Highlights

As the COVID-19 pandemic continued into 2021, OMEGA hosted its February, March, and May meetings via Zoom Video Conference. However as the year progressed, COVID-19 cases decreased and in-person meetings were able to be held safely.



August Legislative Mixer -
Congressman Johnson speaks at The Wilds
(Muskingum County)



September Semi-Annual Membership Meeting-
Millersburg Brewing Company (Holmes County)



2021 Officers with Director Wierzbicki -
Domenick Mucci, Ray Eyler, Chris Abbuhl,
Director Wierzbicki, Tiffany Swigert



December Meeting -
OMEGA Office
(Guernsey County)



June Meeting -
Froehlich's Classic Corner
(Jefferson County)

The Resilience Initiative for Southeastern and Eastern Ohio (RISE Ohio)

Spearheaded by a \$2.2 million grant from the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) in January 2021, RISE Ohio is a bold initiative and unique partnership among OMEGA, Buckeye Hills Regional Council, and Ohio University's Voinovich School of Leadership and Public Service. The program is designed to yield quality job creation and economic diversification within an 18-county area (OMEGA and Buckeye Hills' regions) that is striving to move beyond an over-reliance on coal-related industries. EDA's investment was matched with \$250,000 from JobsOhio and \$300,000 from the Voinovich School's Appalachian New Economy Partnership (ANEP) State appropriation to create a \$2.75 million program that will offer a variety of services through the Local Development Districts and the Voinovich School.

RISE Ohio partners are tasked with engaging in several key strategies, including an analysis of the coal supply chain's ability to diversify into new markets; optimizing development within the 26 Opportunity Zones throughout the 18 counties; and a focused effort on economic recovery in Coshocton County in the wake of the 2019 closure of the Conesville power plant. OMEGA was specifically charged with retaining the Coshocton County Economic Recovery Coordinator as well as collaborating with Buckeye Hills on a plan to catalyze development in opportunity zones by offering technical assistance to our local partners as they strive to encourage investment in their respective Zones. Evan Scurti was hired on August 16, 2021 as OMEGA's Senior Development Specialist to oversee our RISE Ohio work program.



(LEFT): AEP's former Conesville Power Plant, Coshocton County, closed in 2020.

OMEGA procured the Hamman Consulting Group in July to serve as Coshocton County's Economic Recovery Coordinator. Principal/Owner Jason Hamman brings an impressive track record of local development success, specifically in communities rebounding from the loss of a major employer. Beginning with a September 9th kick-off meeting attended by over 30 local leaders from throughout Coshocton County, Jason is offering a unique perspective to the Coshocton Port Authority and its various stakeholders. A critical component of Jason's work is his assistance to local governments, as they analyze utility expansion strategies to support growth plans. Jason will provide detailed industrial development recommendations in 2022 along with an analysis of the local tourism economy's ability to attract more investment.

The Resilience Initiative for Southeastern and Eastern Ohio (RISE Ohio)



To support development in the region's Opportunity Zones, OMEGA partnered with Buckeye Hills on the September procurement of the consulting team of Steadfast City and Strategic Advisory and Investment Services. The team's scope of work focuses on providing legal and technical assistance in regard to this new federal income tax incentive program. The Federal Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 created 8,764 zones in low-to-moderate census tracts around the country (320 in Ohio), and OMEGA is focused on ensuring that our staff and local leaders understand how to deploy these new tax benefits into our region's 14 Opportunity Zones. Since September the consulting team has engaged each local economic development office, meeting with 23 local leaders from the OMEGA region to explain the Opportunity Zone program. They also presented their consulting plan at OMEGA's December board meeting as well as at the November 5th Eastern Ohio Development Alliance (EODA) meeting to a combined audience of 113 attendees. The consultants' findings will help them design a 2022 series of workshops, with topics aligned with the unique development needs of the OMEGA and Buckeye Hills Opportunity Zones. Finally, in late 2021 OMEGA presented a framework for a Regional Opportunity Zone Prospectus to the consulting team. As the consulting project progresses into 2022, each of the 14 Zones will be profiled within the prospectus, with a publication goal of 3rd Quarter 2022. Steadfast City and Strategic Advisory and Investment Services are gaining great traction, and our staff fully expects to engage with local leaders on 3-5 substantive Opportunity Zone development projects in 2022, ranging from industrial park expansion to downtown redevelopment.

OMEGA looks forward to continuing these great RISE partnerships throughout 2022. We are confident that exciting new development and quality job creation will serve as a great return on investment for the generous grants that made the program possible.

2021 OMEGA Executive Board

Member	Representative	Title	Appointed By
Belmont County	J.P. Dutton	Commissioner	Belmont County
Carroll County	Chris Modranski	Commissioner	Carroll County
Columbiana County	Roy Paparodis	Commissioner	Columbiana County
Coshocton County	Tiffany Swigert	Port Authority Director	Coshocton County
Guernsey County	Ernest "Skip" Gardner	Commissioner	Guernsey County
Harrison County	Paul Coffland	Commissioner	Harrison County
Holmes County	Ray Eyler	Commissioner	Holmes County
Jefferson County	Robert Naylor	Port Authority Director	Jefferson County
Muskingum County	Mollie Crooks	Commissioner	Muskingum County
Tuscarawas County	Chris Abbuhl	Commissioner	Tuscarawas County
City of Cambridge	Thomas Orr	Mayor	City of Cambridge
City of Coshocton	Mark Mills	Mayor	City of Coshocton
City of Dover	Richard Homrighausen	Mayor	City of Dover
City of East Liverpool	Gregory Bricker	Mayor	City of East Liverpool
City of Martins Ferry	John Davies	Mayor	City of Martins Ferry
City of New Philadelphia	Joel B. Day	Mayor	City of New Philadelphia
City of St. Clairsville	Kathryn Thalman	Mayor	City of St. Clairsville
City of Salem	John Berlin	Mayor	City of Salem
City of Steubenville	Domenick Mucci	Mayoral Appointment	City of Steubenville
City of Toronto	John Parker	Mayor	City of Toronto
City of Uhrichsville	Mark Haney	Mayor	City of Uhrichsville
City of Zanesville	Donald Mason	Mayor	City of Zanesville

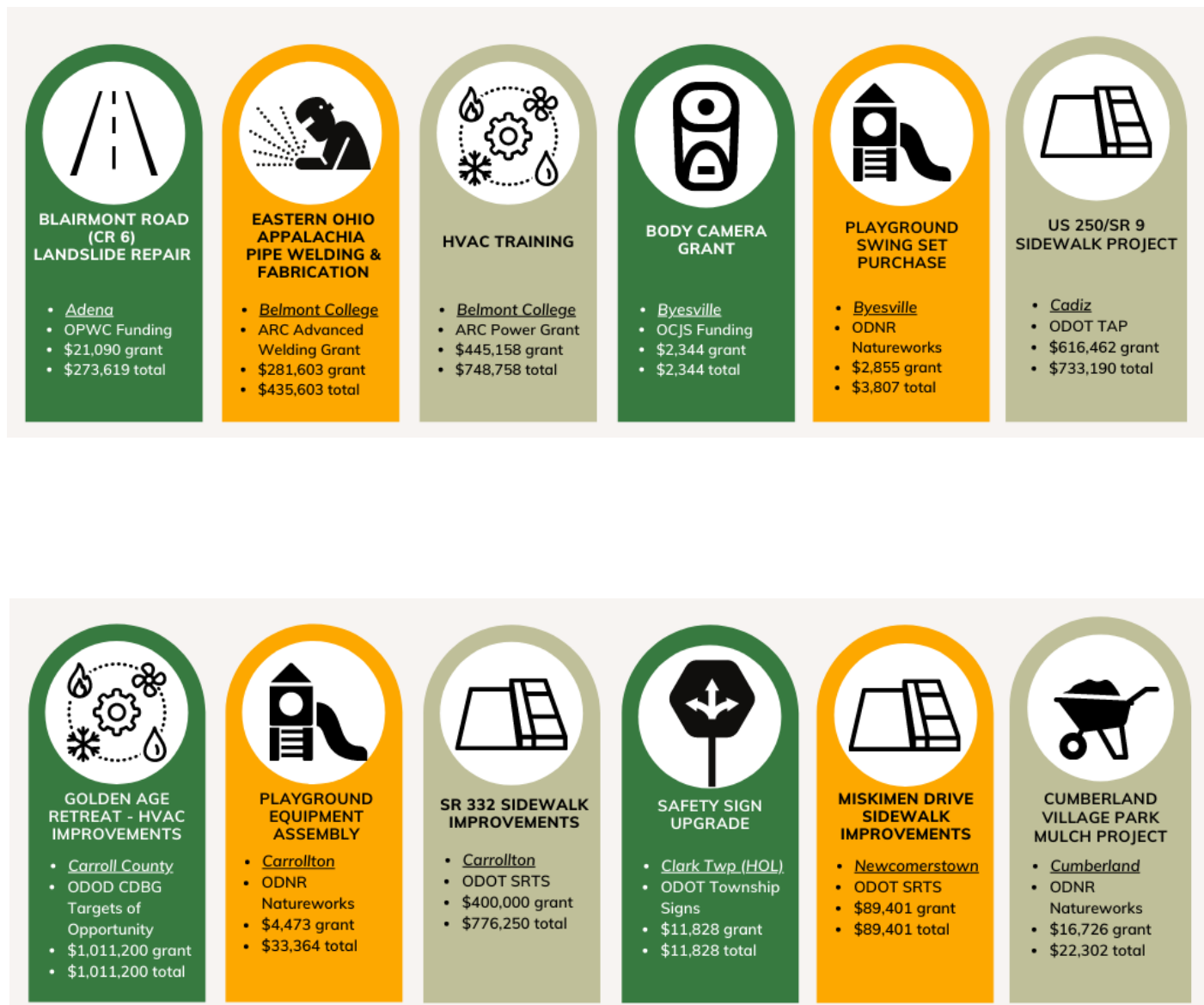
Financial Report

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, 2021

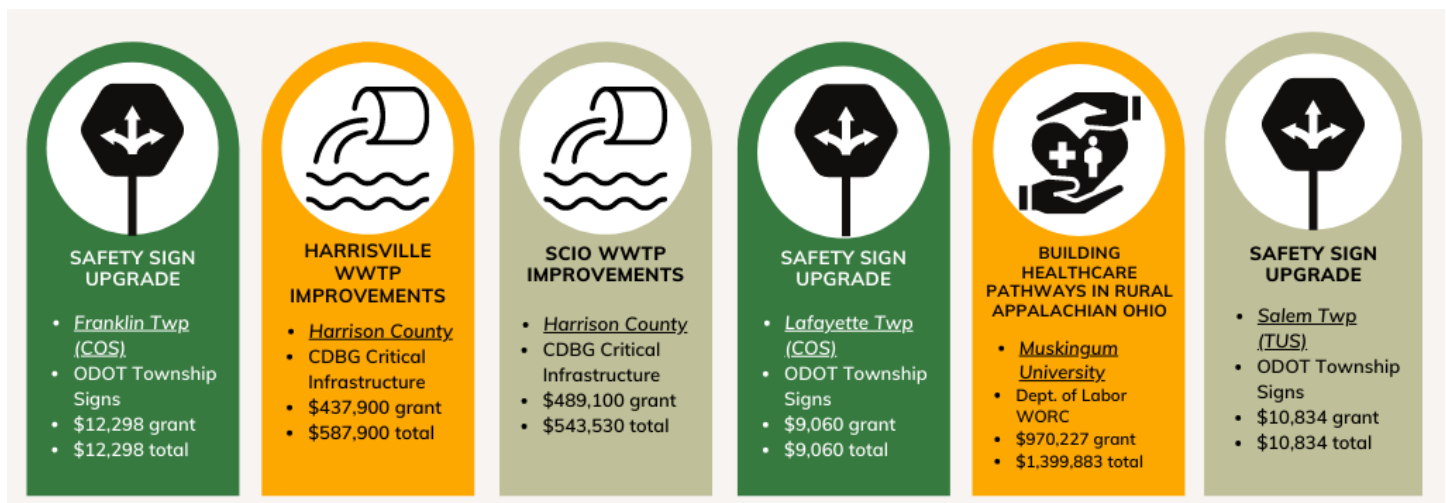
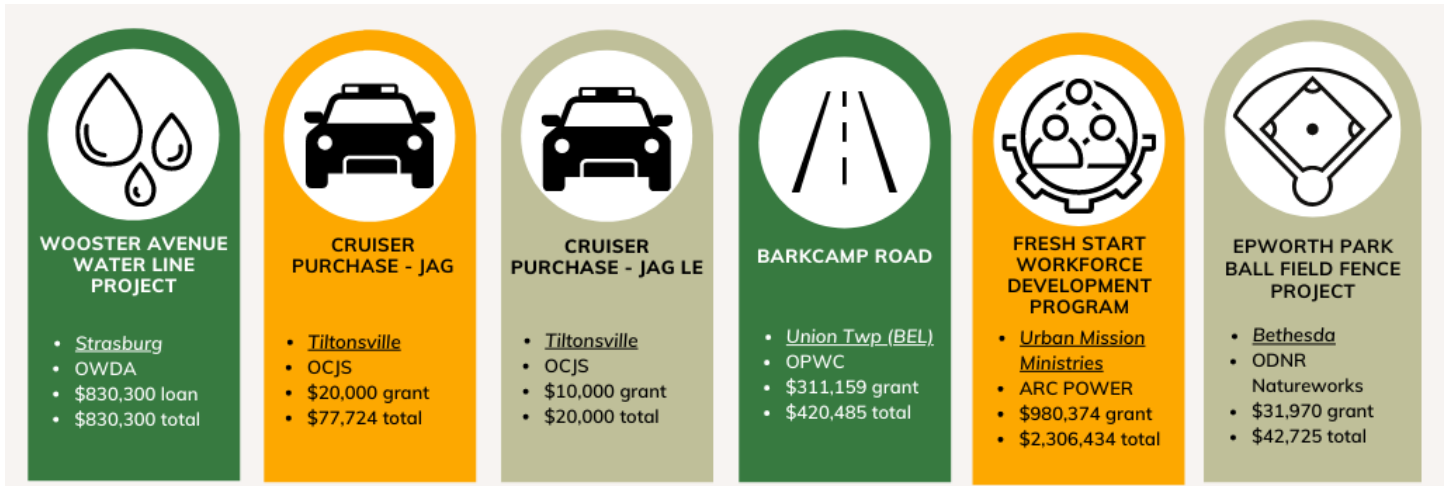
	General	Revolving Loan	Appalachian Regional Commission	State Appalachian Development Program	Economic Development Administration	Rural Transportation	Rural Transit Pilot Program	Regional Job Training Program	Other Governmental Funds	Total Governmental Funds
Revenues										
Intergovernmental	\$ -	\$ 544,319	\$ 209,000	\$ 159,094	\$ 179,931	\$ 168,469	\$ 116,165	\$ 473,393	\$ 5,000	\$ 1,855,371
Investment Income	501	21,291	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	21,792
Membership Fees	88,600	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	88,600
Charges for Services	36,912	10,151	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	47,063
In-Kind Contributions	-	38,790	39,488	-	9,425	-	-	-	-	87,703
Miscellaneous	-	234	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	234
Total Revenues	126,013	614,785	248,488	159,094	189,356	168,469	116,165	473,393	5,000	2,100,763
Expenditures										
Current:										
Economic Development	33,979	27,330	212,110	143,248	224,529	-	-	473,363	10,779	1,125,338
Transportation Planning	-	-	-	-	-	202,956	74,400	-	-	277,356
Indirect Costs	6,099	4,752	23,073	23,092	20,356	27,377	13,773	-	1,349	121,871
Debt Service:										
Principal Retirement	192	37	788	725	751	860	433	-	42	3,828
Total Expenditures	40,270	32,119	237,971	167,065	245,636	231,193	88,606	473,363	12,170	1,528,393
Excess of Revenues Over (Under) Expenditures	85,743	582,666	10,517	(7,971)	(56,280)	(62,724)	27,559	30	(7,170)	572,370
Other Financing Sources (Uses)										
Transfers In	-	-	-	-	55,787	22,028	-	-	-	77,815
Transfers Out	(77,815)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	(77,815)
Total Other Financing Sources (Uses)	(77,815)	-	-	-	55,787	22,028	-	-	-	-
Net Change in Fund Balance	7,928	582,666	10,517	(7,971)	(493)	(40,696)	27,559	30	(7,170)	572,370
Fund Balances Beginning of Year	481,803	1,949,338	118,351	67,310	55,455	73,706	2,890	(30)	(1,384)	2,747,439
Fund Balances End of Year	\$ 489,731	\$ 2,532,004	\$ 128,868	\$ 59,339	\$ 54,962	\$ 33,010	\$ 30,449	\$ -	\$ (8,554)	\$ 3,319,809

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.



Grant Assistance



\$7.02 M Total

2021

Grant Assistance/ GOA & ARC Outcomes

37 Applications Submitted

24 Applications Approved

683 Jobs Created/Retained

2,021 Existing Businesses Improved

36,548 Households Improved

8.2 Miles of Waterline Constructed

6.25 Miles of Sanitary Sewer
Improved/Constructed

1 Police Cruiser Purchased

4 Body Cameras Purchased

4 Wastewater Treatment Plants Improved

1 HVAC System Improved

1 Water Treatment Plant Improved

2.2 Miles of Road Improved

0.8 Miles of Sidewalk Improved

683 Safety Signs

1,651 Persons Trained

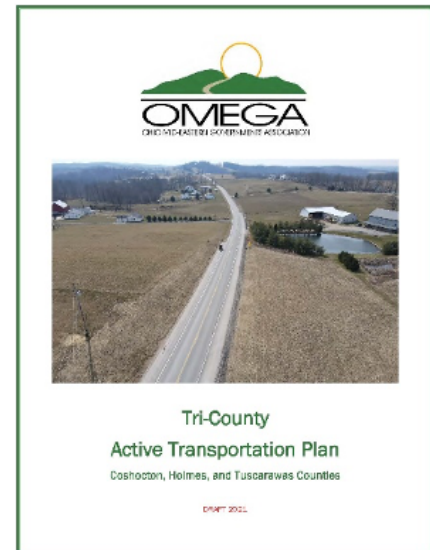
4 Parks Improved

RTPO Executive Update

Tri-County Active Transportation Plan for Coshocton, Holmes, and Tuscarawas Counties

In 2021, OMEGA re-launched and completed the Tri-County Active Transportation Plan for Coshocton, Holmes, and Tuscarawas Counties. The purpose of this plan is to improve the safety and reliability of walking, bicycling, and buggy infrastructure and educational resources for Coshocton, Holmes, and Tuscarawas Counties. This plan is the result of a collaborative effort with OMEGA, ODOT, tri-county area local officials, community members, and other stakeholders. The vision is to develop a safe, connected multimodal system for people of all ages and abilities. Recommendations and implementation strategies were developed to achieve this vision and to meet the established goals. The Tri-County region will be able to use this plan as the basis to procure funding for recommended non-infrastructure and infrastructure improvements.

Full Plan available here: <https://omegadistrict.org/tri-county/>



Regional Roadway Safety Plan



In August 2020, OMEGA kicked off the Regional Roadway Safety Plan. Feedback from our stakeholders was crucial to the success of this plan, as no one knows the local roads better than the people that drive them regularly. Using a multi-disciplinary approach, we developed a robust list of safety concerns and relevant, cost-effective countermeasures to mitigate those concerns. Throughout this process, our planning team worked with individual counties to determine the needs and concerns of each of their local areas, and then developed a regionwide approach to tackle potential safety issues. As part of this plan, the consultant team created a new tool to analyze crashes on a regional level. This plan, completed in June 2021, will be instrumental in pursuing federal, state, and other funding sources to implement the proposed countermeasures. Full Plan available here: <https://omegadistrict.org/safety/>

RTPO Executive Update

RTPO Allocation Program

In 2021, House Bill 74 of the 134th Ohio General Assembly allocated \$5.2 million in funding over the state's biennium for the creation of a Regional Transportation Planning Grant Program. Since being officially designated as a Regional Transportation Planning Organization in 2016, this is the first time that the OMEGA RTPO region will receive an allocation from the federal Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) program. Each Ohio RTPO was allocated funding dependent on a base allocation of \$100,000 and a formula-based calculation based on land area and population. Based on these calculations, OMEGA is allocated **\$572,321** annually in state fiscal year (SFY) 2022 and SFY 2023. OMEGA's Executive Board adopted the **OMEGA RTPO Allocation Policy** in December 2021 and OMEGA will accept applications to this new program in 2022.

Key Planning Activities & Notable Events:

- Completed Tri-County Active Transportation Plan for Coshocton, Holmes, and Tuscarawas Counties
- Completed Regional Roadway Safety Plan with ODOT and a Consultant team
- Developed OMEGA RTPO Allocation Policy
- Facilitated Ohio State University Planning Studio for the Village of Byesville Multi-Modal Mobility Plan
- Completed one Safe Routes to School Travel Plan and drafted three School Travel Plans
- Presented at Ohio Transportation Engineering Conference

SAFETY SNAPSHOT

2019-2021

CRASHES	27,660	0.12%
FATAL CRASHES	180	+9%
INJURY CRASHES	6,437	-0.2%
LEADING CRASH TYPE	FIXED OBJECT	21%

Regional Coordinated Transportation Pilot Program

OMEGA's Regional Coordinated Transportation Pilot Program is guided by the Steering Committee, Regional Coordinated Council, and ODOT. The pilot program includes all OMEGA counties except for Columbiana County and is designated Region 9 by ODOT.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

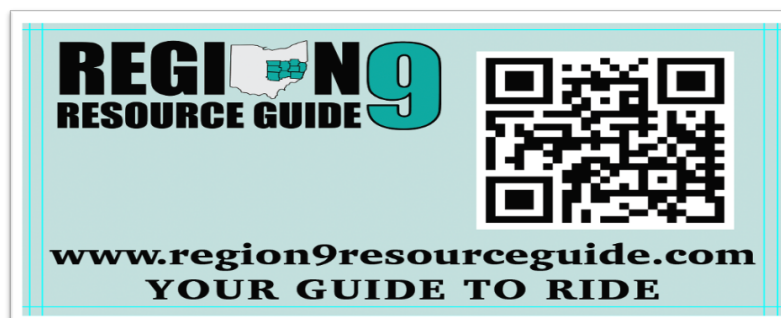
- Developed Regional Intake Form
- Developed Regional Performance Measures
- Received over 1,800 responses from the Regional Survey of Unmet Needs
- Participated with ODOT in the review, scoring, and priority ranking of all FTA 5310 and Mobility Management funding applications from the OMEGA Region. FTA 5310 funding supports non-profit, public transit and private transportation services for the elderly, disabled, and low-income populations.
- Completed the 2021 yearly update to the Regional Coordinated Plan. The update is contained in Appendix Q of the plan. Access to Appendix Q and the full Regional Coordinated Plan may be found here: <https://omegadistrict.org/programs/transit/regional/>

The **Steering Committee** has become as integral and effective platform to advance the directives of the Regional Coordinated Transportation Plan. The Steering Committee has been able to create regional initiatives with broad based regional support and become a vital platform for the region to utilize to best meet the many and varied transportation needs of all persons in the region. Region 9 remains thankful to have strong ODOT support and backing as OMEGA, the Steering Committee, and the RCC continue to explore ways and means of moving the Region 9 Coordinated Transportation Plan forward.

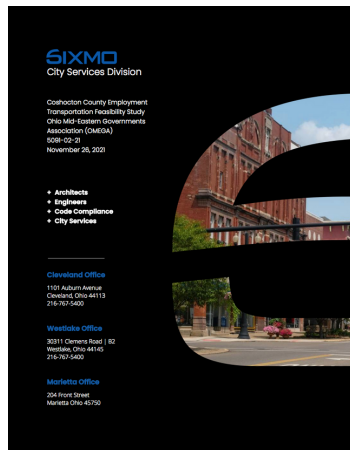
SPECIAL GRANT FUNDING:

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. The four special projects were all initiated, implemented, and completed in CY 2021, and are listed below.

The **Region 9 Resource Guide** is an interactive online resource guide for all OMEGA Region 9 counties listing comprehensive information about all transportation options, HHS services, and counseling by county. The web address for the Guide is www.region9resourceguide.com. The Region 9 Resource Guide became available to the public on October 12, 2021. To date it has increased in site visits by about one hundred additional views each month with 222 views reported for the mid- December to mid-January month alone.



Regional Coordinated Transportation Pilot Program



The **Employment Transportation Feasibility Study**, conducted by SIXMO Consulting, developed four potential employment transportation routes to service Coshocton County and eventually expand to include Muskingum, Tuscarawas, and Holmes counties. The study in its entirety can be found at the following link: <https://omegadistrict.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Sixmo-Study.pdf>

The **One Call/One Click Regional Call Center Strategic Planning Study**, conducted by KFH Consulting, developed a regionally responsive and accepted model for the Mobility Solutions Center (regional call center). The Study and implementation plan can be found at the following link: <https://omegadistrict.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/KFH-Final-Report.pdf>



The **Media Outreach Campaign** featured both local and regional media projects. OMEGA Region 9 counties utilized print media (newspapers and billboards) and social media formats. For the regional level campaign, two Public Service Announcement (PSA) television commercials were produced. Both PSA spots highlighted all the public transits in the OMEGA region and featured actual riders and transit drivers from the OMEGA region. The PSA spots were aired approximately 112 times on two regional television stations and received 52,972 streaming impressions over a period of several months. They were also distributed and shown regionally through social media outlets. The link to the TV spots can be accessed here:

30 second version: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ygz91_zRdYs

60 second version: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zobpR_vN2kk

OMEGA Staff



Jeannette M. Wierzbicki, P.E., Executive Director reports directly to the President of OMEGA and the Executive Board. She oversees all programmatic areas, staffing, budgets, and other duties as may be assigned by the Executive Board. Ms. Wierzbicki is also responsible for assuring compliance with all rules, regulations, and requirements pertaining to the function and administration of the agency. Jeannette is President of the Development District Association of Appalachia (DDAA), 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



George Dolney, RLF Administrator/ Regional 166 Program Administrator

is responsible for all activities required to administer the RLF and Regional 166 Programs 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. He also performs on-site monitoring visits and conducts file audits on a regular basis. George is cross-trained to assist the Finance Director in a back-up capacity.

Email: gdolney@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 and INSPIRE. Alan also managed the Regional Job Training Program and is leading OMEGA's Recovery to Work 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 CDBG 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

is the program manager for the Economic Development Administration (EDA) Partnership Planning Grant and develops the OMEGA Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Report and annual updates to the CEDS. Hannah also assists communities with 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. Hannah also assists local governments and nonprofit organizations with funding applications.

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. Trina prepares applications for CDBG funding and assists communities with the administration of CDBG grants, including environmental reviews, status reports, drawdowns and amendments.

Email: trinaw@omegadistrict.org





Kennedy 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, social media content, and OMEGA website content. Kennedy also organizes and assists with preparations for OMEGA Executive Board Meetings, Legislative Mixers, Annual/ Semi-Annual Meetings, and various events across all departments.

Email: kblakley@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



Evan Scurti, Senior Development Specialist

is responsible for the management of OMEGA's Resilience Initiative for Southeastern and Eastern (RISE) Ohio Initiative, a U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) Assistance to Coal Communities program initiative led by Ohio University's Voinovich School, Buckeye Hills Regional Council, and OMEGA, focused on economic diversification; Opportunity Zone planning, development, and investment; and assistance to communities impacted by coal fired power plant closures. He is also responsible for the overall supervision of other EDA programmatic activities and coordination of other economic development initiatives for the region.

Email: escurti@omegadistrict.org



Josey Rabare, Transportation Planner / GIS

Coordinator works in conjunction with the Executive Director and other transportation planning staff on the Transportation Program. Josey's responsibilities under the Transportation Program include: short range transportation planning activities (Active Transportation Plans, Safe Routes to School Travel Plans, etc.) development of the 4-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/updates to the Regional Transportation Plan. Josey also develops the Geographic Information Systems (GIS) needed to support transportation, the transit pilot program and other planning/economic development activities. He also provides GIS services to communities within the OMEGA region upon request.

Email: jrabare@omegadistrict.org

Josh Sliker, Transportation Planner works with the Executive Director and other transportation planning staff on the Transportation Program. Josh responsible for short range transportation planning activities (Active Transportation Plans, Safe Routes to School Travel Plans, etc.); development of the 4-year Transportation Improvement Plan; administering the RTPo Capital Allocation Program; participation in statewide transportation planning activities; providing technical assistance (e.g., traffic counts, crash analysis, road safety audits, transportation grant writing, training); conducting transportation related surveys; development of performance measures and targets, and revisions/updates to the Regional Transportation Plan. Mr. Sliker in conjunction with the Transportation Planner/GIS Coordinator also facilitates the public involvement component of the Transportation Program. Mr. Sliker also prepares funding applications for transportation projects, and assists communities with transportation planning activities.



Email: jsliker@omegadistrict.org

ARC Projects for Program Year 2021

Applicant/Project	County	ARC Request	Other \$	Total Cost
City of Steubenville West End Water Improvements	Jefferson	250,000	7,117,600	7,367,600
City of East Liverpool WWTP Improvements - Phase 1	Columbiana	250,000	4,674,800	4,924,800
Village of Gnadenhuttен WWTP Rehabilitation	Tuscarawas	250,000	1,771,000	2,021,000
Columbiana County Hanoverton Sanitary Sewer Project	Columbiana	250,000	5,402,211	5,652,211
Total for ARC		\$1,000,000	\$18,965,611	\$19,965,611

GOA Projects for Program Year 2021

Applicant/Project	County	GOA Request	Other \$	Total Cost
Village of Wellsville WWTP Improvements - Phase 1A	Columbiana	245,250	595,500	840,750
Village of Barnesville Slope Creek Waterline Project	Belmont, Guernsey, Monroe, Noble	250,000	5,332,000	5,582,000
City of St. Clairsville Belmont Co. Waterline Connection	Belmont	155,000	199,000	354,000
Village of New Concord Friendship Drive Waterline Replacement	Muskingum	227,800	385,530	613,330
East Liverpool Community Partnership Broadband Extension Feasibility Study	Columbiana	25,000	25,000	50,000
Village of Glenmont Water Treatment Plant Improvements	Holmes	129,090	301,210	430,300
SODC. Inc. Salem Industrial Maintenance Readiness and Training Center Computer Lab	Columbiana, Mahoning	128,000	244,000	372,000
Carroll County Mirth and Meter Roads	Carroll	100,000	601,452	701,452
Total for GOA		\$1,260,140	\$7,683,692	\$8,943,832

Recovery to Work Cohort Learning Academy

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the state and nation have experienced both a rise in opioid use and a decline in workforce availability. As individuals in recovery search for employment, area agencies across the OMEGA region are partnering to participate in the Recovery to Work Cohort Learning Academy, under the Development District Association of Appalachia (DDAA), through funding from the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC).

The Recovery to Work Cohort Learning Academy will strive to foster and curate partnerships between area businesses, recovery service providers and individuals in recovery from substance abuse disorders (SUD) who are ready to enter the workforce. The program is designed to coordinate Recovery to Work Efforts in the OMEGA Region, increase the number of employers that hire, support, and retain individuals in recovery, and to provide support services (transportation, housing, childcare) to program participants.

Core Team members include OMEGA, Coleman Health Services, The Columbiana County Port Authority, and Belmont College. Home Team members represent the Jefferson County Prevention and Recovery Board, the Urban Mission, the Area 16 Workforce Board, Kno-Ho-Co-Ashland CAC, Ohio Guidestone, Muskingum Behavioral Health, Guernsey Health Choices and Coshocton County Common Pleas Court. Alan Knapp, ARC Program Manager, is leading this effort.



(ABOVE): Recovery to Work Cohort Learning Academy holds Core Team Meeting in Steubenville.

Muskingum University Building Healthcare Pathways in Rural Appalachia Ohio

In October 2021, Muskingum University was awarded a \$970,227 grant from Workforce Opportunity for Rural Communities (WORC III) through the US Department of Labor for the grant project, Building Healthcare Pathways in Rural Appalachia Ohio. Grant funds will be used by Muskingum University and partners to train up to 900 new healthcare professionals and upskill existing healthcare professionals to improve their employability and earnings. The university is partnering with the hospitals in the service area, including Southeast Ohio Regional Medical Center, Muskingum Valley Health Center and Genesis Healthcare System, which is constructing a new hospital in Coshocton, creating 300 new healthcare jobs. Educational partners including Mid-East Career and Technology Centers, Zane State College and Central Ohio Technical College, will create pathways for healthcare training. The grant project also includes other partners to enhance this program, including Muskingum County Ohio Means Jobs to help with job placement, Muskingum Behavioral Health to promote employment of persons recovering from Substance Use Disorder, and the Ohio Mid-East Governments Association to assist with grant administration. The program also complements the university's new Health and Wellness Center, which has received funding from the Ohio Governor's Office of Appalachia.

Alan Knapp, ARC Program Manager worked closely with Muskingum University on this successful grant application.



BUILDING HEALTHCARE
PATHWAYS
IN RURAL APPALACHIAN OHIO

Golden Age Retreat Carroll County

Carroll County received \$1,011,200 in COVID 19 Response CDBG Target of Opportunity Program funds to complete upgrades to the HVAC system at the Carroll County Golden Age Retreat, a residential assisted living facility which can house up to 50 residents. The implementation of this project will deliver a long-term measure to ensure that residents of the Golden Age Retreat have consistent access to proper ventilation and that fresh air is regularly circulated; thereby minimizing the potential to spread COVID-19 and other viruses.



The project will replace an outdated radiant heat boiler system that provides no method for ventilating fresh air throughout the building. The county is using the funding to install new ductwork, interior natural gas work and other modifications and repairs to promote air filtration and bi-polar ionization to assist in cleaning the air being discharged into the building. The ductwork will provide heating and ventilation to common areas of the building, including the basement activities room, basement beauty shop, two first floor dining rooms, first floor kitchen, first floor hospital ward and breezeway and second floor multi-purpose room.

Trina Woodland, Community Development Specialist for OMEGA prepared the application and is currently administering the grant which is scheduled for completion in late 2022.

Revolving Loan Fund

In 2021, the OMEGA Revolving Loan Fund Program approved and closed its largest loan in the history of the program for \$550,000 to Mountaineer Products, Inc., a multi-modal transloading company located in Bellaire, Ohio for the acquisition of adjacent properties for the expansion of their business capabilities. OMEGA also successfully closed the two previously reported pending loans to OBM Productions LLC and Kurz-Kasch, Inc.. Currently we are in the process of closing the approved loan to Master Manifest Properties LLC for the purchase of Creative Learning Childcare Inc., a very successful Preschool and Daycare facility located in St. Clairsville, Ohio. In 2021, OMEGA successfully defederalized the traditional EDA RLF Program.

OMEGA Loans Approved/Closed in 2021

Borrower	Loan Amount	Date Approved	Closing Date	Funding Source	FTE Jobs
OBM Productions, LLC.	\$125,000.00	10/21/20	01/21/21	RBEG	3 Created
Kurz-Kasch, Inc.	\$180,205.36	10/21/20	05/04/21	EDA CARES Act	5 Created
Mountaineer Products, Inc.	\$550,000.00	02/12/21	05/10/21	EDA CARES Act/OMEGA Match	11 Created
Master Manifest Properties LLC	\$100,000.00	11/15/21	Pending	ARC	2 to be Created

2021 RLF Statistics

RLF Statistics as of 12/31/2020	All Loans	ARC Only
Total Loans	99	48
Total Loan Amount	\$7,771,427	\$3,698,066
# of Jobs Created	1,192	519
# of Jobs Retained	506	244
Total # Jobs Created/Retained	1,698	763

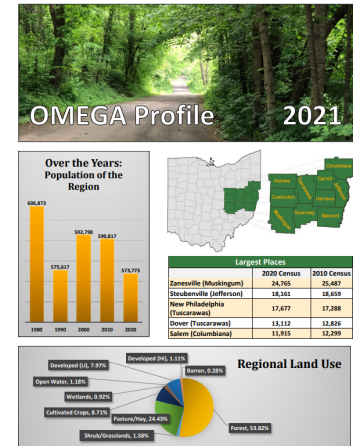
EDA Partnership Planning

During 2021, OMEGA assisted with the preparation of two major grant applications to the Economic Development Administration (EDA) ARPA Programs.

The Coshocton Collaborative was a major EDA Economic Adjustment Assistance ARPA application in 2021. OMEGA has assisted with the project beginning with both the procurement of architect and EDA application. The complete application was submitted on December 29, 2021. If approved, the Coshocton Collaborative would convert a dilapidated Main Street building into a useful business incubator, maker space, and co-working space. The total project cost is \$3,899,814 with an EDA funding request of \$3,009,814. Additional project contributions include \$690,000 from JobsOhio and \$200,000 from the Coshocton County Commissioners.

The Wilds EDA Travel, Tourism, Outdoor Recreation Grant Under ARPA

OMEGA assisted the Wilds in applying for a \$2,155,616 grant from the Economic Development Administration (EDA) ARPA Tourism Grant Program for a total \$2,855,616 project. Funds will be used to construct water and sanitary sewer facilities to serve the proposed 75-unit Recreational Vehicle Campground at the Wilds, to increase visitors to the area and create and retain jobs and businesses in the regional hospitality industry.

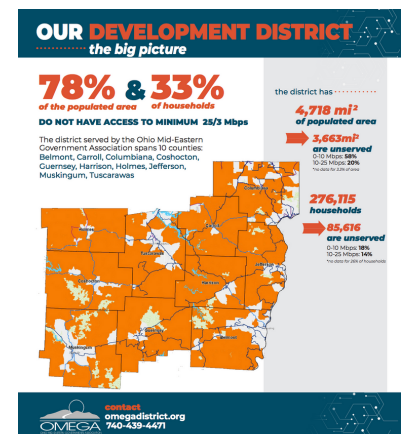


<https://omegadistrict.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/2021-OMEGA-Profile.pdf>

EDA CARES Act Planning Grant

OMEGA Broadband Feasibility Study

After the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated the digital hardship of access to broad-band, 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 broad-band access to be identified accurately and will identify short and long-term solutions to extend broadband to unserved and under-served areas. In 2021, OMEGA retained the Reid Consulting Group to conduct its ongoing Broadband Feasibility Study. Tom Reid and his team have been working diligently alongside OMEGA to develop broadband profiles for each county across the region. These profiles are able to depict which areas in each county do not have adequate access to broadband and includes download speeds common to each area. The profiles were developed using Ookla data and speed test survey results from residents. County level meetings were held in which local elected officials were able to review broadband profiles, ask questions, and provide input. Tom Reid was able to serve as guest speaker for the June 2021 OMEGA Executive Board Meeting, held in Steubenville. Reid took the opportunity to present his most current findings and outline a path forward for broadband access in the OMEGA region. OMEGA also worked with Buckeye Hills Regional Council and the Ohio Valley Regional Development Council to develop Connecting Appalachia. This study is to be completed in June 2022.



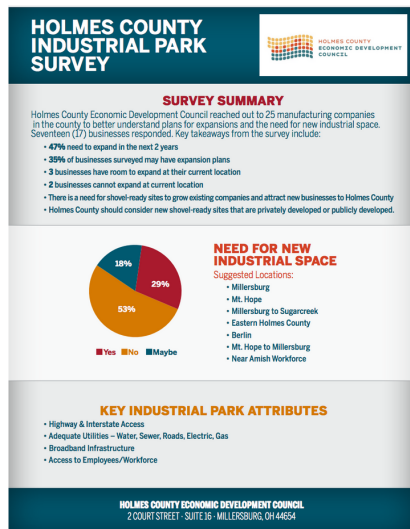
(ABOVE): OMEGA Regional Broadband Profile

EDA CARES Act Planning Grant

OMEGA Economic Recovery Coordinator

OMEGA retained the Montrose Group as its Economic Recovery Coordinator in 2021. The Montrose Group organized and facilitated two meetings with the Guernsey County Strategic Plan Committee to develop the Economic Development portion of the Strategic Plan. The Montrose Group also facilitated separate meetings with the Strasburg and the Franklin Township JEDD to discuss expansion and development plans. They also assisted in advising the groups regarding best practices.

In Tuscarawas County, The Montrose Group developed the Property Card for the Tuscarawas Regional Technology Park after research and discussion with the Tuscarawas EDC regarding the goals and vision for the park.



Based on discussions with Local Economic Development Officials (LEDOs) in Holmes County, The Montrose Group developed the Holmes County Industrial Survey for the county to distribute, analyzed and summarized responses, and brainstormed with the group on how best to achieve the goals identified by the survey.

Based on the needs identified by the counties, The Montrose Group prepared Business Retention and Expansion Strategies for Carroll and Columbiana Counties that the counties have been able to implement into their economic development activities.

Utilizing their extensive network gained through the combined 70+ years of private and public economic development experience, The Montrose Group has connected several LEDOs with potential developers for industrial sites and spec buildings. The Montrose Group also has experience with applying for Rural Industrial Park Loan (RIPL) funds that can help LEDOs put together the best capital stack for industrial development.

2021 OMEGA Speakers



(LEFT): Cara Dingus Brook, President/CEO of Foundation for Appalachian Ohio served as speaker for the virtual February OMEGA Executive Board Meeting. Dingus Brooks provided members with an update from FAO, including grant funding programs and opportunities.

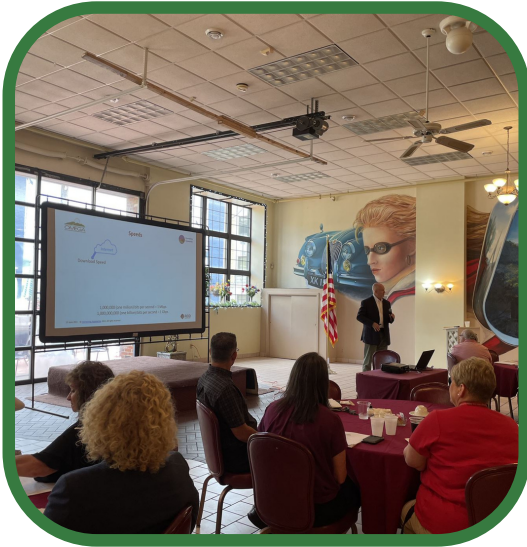


(RIGHT): OMEGA was honored to receive telegenic remarks from Lt. Governor Jon Husted at its March 2021 Annual Membership Meeting, held virtually. Husted's remarks included various state level updates and expressed gratitude for local government officials.



(LEFT): Sue Marzano, AEP Senior Energy Efficiency Program Coordinator, presented exciting information on EV Charging Stations at the May OMEGA Meeting, held virtually.

2021 OMEGA Speakers



(LEFT): At its first in-person meeting in 16 months, OMEGA hosted Tom Reid, with Reid Consulting Group, as speaker in June 2021. Reid traveled to Steubenville to give members an update on the Broadband Feasibility Study.

(RIGHT): OMEGA was honored to host several legislators at its August Legislative Mixer, where State Senator Tim Schaffer and Representative Adam Holmes served as keynote speakers.



(LEFT): Jamie Beier Grant, with the Montrose Group, presented an update from her group which was retained as OMEGA's Economic Recovery Coordinator at the September Semi-Annual Membership Meeting.

(RIGHT): Joel Glasscock rounded out the year as OMEGA's December speaker. Glasscock provided an update from Steadfast City Economic and Community Partners regarding Project RISE Ohio.



GOA Tour of Columbiana County

In December 2021, Governor's Office of Appalachia (GOA) Director John Carey and Austin Ward accompanied OMEGA staff members on a tour of Columbiana County. The tour included the Salem SOD Training Center, CTM Labeling Systems, COMPCO Training Center, Humtown Products, CCCPA Global Investment Hub, CCCPA Wellsville Intermodal Facility, and a meeting with East Liverpool Mayor Gregory Bricker.



(ABOVE): GOA Director John Carey and OMEGA Executive Director Jeannette Wierzbicki tour CTM Labeling Systems



(ABOVE): Tour group members pose at the COMPCO Training Center



(ABOVE): GOA Director John Carey and CCCPA Director Penny Traina at the Wellsville Intermodal Facility Pier 48



(ABOVE): Humtown founder Mark Lamoncha, staff member, and Director Carey observe 3D printing technology



(ABOVE): Humtown founder Mark Lamoncha shows Director Carey machinery parts created through 3D printing



(ABOVE): Tour group listens as CTM Labeling Systems officials present facility information

2021 Impact Statement

Appalachian Regional Commission and Governor's Office of Appalachia

OMEGA secured **\$2.26 M** in federal and state ARC and GOA funding for communities in the region. These funds leveraged **\$26.6 M** in other funding sources.

Other Federal and State Funding Sources

With **24** approved applications, OMEGA helped secure **\$7.02 M** in grants and low-interest loans from other funding sources for our region leading to the creation/retention of **683 jobs**.



(ABOVE): GOA Director John Carey and Austin Ward visit Columbiana County in December 2021



Connecting Communities to Resources

326 Highland Avenue

Suite B

Cambridge, OH 43725

(740) 439-4471

www.omegadistrict.org