



# ANNUAL REPORT 2023

[www.omegadistrict.org](http://www.omegadistrict.org)



# OMEGA Member Governments



The member governments of OMEGA include 10 counties: Belmont, Carroll, Columbiana, Coshocton, Guernsey, Harrison, Holmes, Jefferson, Muskingum, and Tuscarawas as well as 12 cities: 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.



Ohio

Department of  
Development



U.S. Department  
of Transportation  
Federal Highway  
Administration



EDA  
U.S. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION

## OMEGA MISSION STATEMENT:

*Provide a pathway to enhance community and economic growth in our region.*





# Executive Director's Message

**DR. VICKI KING-MAPLE**

Hello OMEGA members, friends, and constituents:

As we reflect upon the accomplishments of the past year, there is much to celebrate as we also anticipate what will be another unprecedented year ahead. Throughout 2023, OMEGA and our regional communities experienced significant growth and change. From submitting the highest volume of grant applications in OMEGA's history and securing unparalleled awards, to embarking upon a number of "first-ever" opportunities and entrusting new organizational leadership, we are declaring 2023 as an impact year for OMEGA!

Late in the fourth quarter, I graciously accepted and assumed the role of Executive Director with a vow to bring future-thinking, executive-level leadership skills to bolster relations, advance initiatives, and empower the pursuit of financial prosperity for the people and communities of the Appalachian region. Having led extensive economic resiliency plans, workforce attraction strategies, educational skills gap analyses, and community enrichment and assessment projects across the nation, I have carried these experiences into our own regional, rural footprint – the one I am proud to call home.

In addition to contributing to state and federal grant application processes and to facilitating community consensus-building conversations, my greatest OMEGA achievement comes in the form of leading the fine folks that are responsible for our communities receiving record resources – the OMEGA Team. This group of subject matter experts demonstrate diligence, persistence, and unwavering dedication to our members and constituents.

Collectively, we have trusted one another as we introduce new daily practices and implement new protocols.

We quickly rebuilt a more positive and inviting work environment, while also crafting a new weekly staff engagement called Monday Morning Master-Minding – or M&M2. We also created a State & Federal Funding resource guide that will continue to be updated and proactively shared with communities for advancing their projects. This will be especially helpful upon the announcement of the Appalachian Community Grant Program (ACGP) awards for which OMEGA served as a lead applicant, requesting over \$158,000,000 for the regionally transformative impact of 41 projects within 23 of our communities.

As I continue to gauge the short-and-long-term professional goals of the OMEGA team members, I have also designed new performance evaluation metrics to assist in the career growth and trajectory of each over the coming year. This will lead to organizational chart augmentation and overall organizational development enhancements; plus, in early 2024, we will have results from a competitive wage survey to ensure we are aligned and compensating our talent adequately. To punctuate the strength of these individuals, on the pages to follow are glimpses of the OMEGA Team's 2023 points of pride as we demonstrate our commitment to personal and professional continuous improvement; celebrating everything from small internal wins to major community achievements.

OMEGA's mission for "providing a pathway to enhance community and economic growth in our region" speaks to our tradition of excellence as an organization and to the collaborative spirit of the communities served. By setting the highest standards, modeling superior internal and external customer experiences, and evangelizing community development and economic resiliency, we are certain that OMEGA and our associated counties and communities will have an even brighter future as we illuminate and continue to pave the "pathway to prosperity" in 2024!

In Service & Respect ,

*Vicki*





# OMEGA Team 2023 Points of Pride

## ALAN KNAPP

Alan celebrated the largest grant application approval in his career after preparing and being awarded a \$5,000,000 grant from the State of Ohio through HB 168 (Water and Wastewater Grant Program) for the Coshocton Warsaw Waterline Extension Project. Another career milestone for Alan was participating in the preparation of the \$158,000,000 regional Appalachian Community Grant Program (ACGP) which tops the largest requests he has ever submitted. He also assisted with the preparation of three successful ARC POWER grant applications and continues to help administer them.

## CORINNA KERNS

Corinna has spent much of 2023 onboarding but quickly emerged as a leader in the Geographic Information System (GIS) space, serving as OMEGA's lead representative for the Ohio University-led Appalachian GIS Collaborative. She's contributed to major transportation, community development, and economic resiliency planning efforts, including Tri-Valley and Claymont Schools' Safe Routes to School, the 2023 Township Sign Audits & Mapping, the Title VI Plan, and RISE Ohio. Corinna also created a map detailing the regional transformation to occur within the ACG grant application, *Destination Appalachia: Pathway to Prosperity*. She also assumed responsibility for generating Origin Destination Maps and all demographic maps and charts for the Regional Coordinated Public Transit / Human Services Transportation Plan.

## DEB HILL

In conjunction with Ohio University, Voinovich School of Leadership and Public Services, Deb helped conduct the first-ever national Social Return on Investment (SROI) research study exploring and monetizing the social investment returns created by rural public transit & transportation providers. Deb also led a regional medical outreach campaign to help local & regional medical facilities and offices more effectively utilize public transit for positive patient care and improved health outcomes. CarFit training events were also held in all nine pilot counties for senior drivers, and Deb launched the first-in-the-state Regional Coordinated Transportation Plan revision project. She further initiated the foundational work to implement a Volunteer Transportation Companion pilot project (arriving in 2024).



# OMEGA Team 2023 Points of Pride

## ERIN WRIGHT

Joining OMEGA on March 1st, Erin quickly secured the following grants: NatureWorks (\$38,629); Ohio Public Works Commission (\$500,000); Kimble Foundation (\$60,000); and Community Development Block Grant (\$375,000), while also overseeing funding & project implementation of 37 projects in 16 communities. Awaiting four Congressional District announcements (valued at over \$2 million) and seven Land & Water Conservation Fund Grants (totaling over \$2.5 million), she also anticipates the execution of several EPA water & sewer loans in 2024. Erin also assumed the role of cross-training and mentoring OMEGA team member, Josh Sliker, as a fellow community development planner.

## EVAN SCURTI

Evan oversaw the completion of the RISE Ohio program and continues to work with communities on redevelopment projects that emerged during the 2023 RISE planning process. He also transitioned to overseeing all EDA projects and a new ARC local planning program (ARC Ready LDD). Evan further helped move The Wilds' \$2.15 million EDA grant-funded project into the construction phase (positioning them for a Summer 2025 opening of their 75-unit RV Campground), consulted with Belmont College on the implementation of their \$5 million EDA grant for a new Industrial Trades Building (with a groundbreaking expected in November 2024), and authored Jefferson County's \$400,000 EDA Economic Recovery grant in the wake of the Sammis Power Plant closure.

## GEORGE DOLNEY

In 2023, the Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) Program, under George's leadership, approved loans for \$360,000 to assist with the start-up and expansion of two local businesses creating 11 new, full-time jobs within the OMEGA Region. George also established the East Palestine Recovery Revolving Loan Fund Program to assist with the economic recovery efforts following the catastrophic train derailment in February 2023. George continues to celebrate such wins as the RLF receiving two RLF applications in a single day because of his persistent, grassroots, relational marketing efforts. While the RLF closes an average of 2-3 loans per year, George is currently managing five active RLF applications he fostered in 2023 and one additional "approved-but-not-yet-closed" application.



# OMEGA Team 2023 Points of Pride

## JOSH SLIKER

Leading the implementation of the Regional Transportation Planning Organization's (RTPO) Capital Allocation grant, Josh was responsible for distributing more than a million dollars to our OMEGA communities in 2023. Also assisting with the East Liverpool SR 39 grant application, the \$29.7 million award makes this the largest successfully awarded project he has worked on in his career. Josh also began broadening his professional scope by cross-training in community development to expand intersectionality opportunities between transportation, infrastructure, lighting, water, and sewer resources.

## KENNEDY BLAKLEY

Over the course of 2023, Kennedy was able to successfully assist the OMEGA team with numerous initiatives and projects including the OneOhio 11 Board, Destination Appalachia (lead ACG application), and the annual Appalachia Forward conference hosted at Belmont College. She also continued to excel in and elevate her traditional communications tasks that range from crafting the Annual Report and submitting the LDD Impact Report information, to logistical planning of all OMEGA meetings and events and maintenance of Membership Records, as well as strengthening local media outlet relations and heightening brand awareness.

## KEVIN BUETTNER

In 2023, Kevin worked with the Regional Transportation Planning Organization's (RTPO) team to complete 16 successful grant applications totaling \$4,484,948 in grant funding to 15 different communities. This is the largest number of applications and awards in OMEGA RTPO history. He also assisted the City of East Liverpool and their consultant in pursuing a successful \$29.7 million USDOT Rural Surface Transportation grant which has received national notoriety.

## MINDEE JOHNSON

Upon joining OMEGA in March 2023, Mindee worked with the retiring Finance Director in order to master the financial operations of OMEGA. She swiftly created an innovative method for communities to request pass-through grant funds for ACG Technical Assistance grants; plus, she designed and implemented electronic templates to streamline processes for monthly journal entries and reporting. Mindee continued to grow in her professional development by attending the GMS Summit, where she trained on accounting software and connected with GMS members and financial personnel from across the country.



## 2023 Governor's Office of Appalachia (GOA) & Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) Supported Outcomes

**12** Applications Submitted

Applications Approved **12**

**95** Jobs Created/Retained

Existing Businesses Improved **817**

**12,915** Households Improved

Miles of Waterline Constructed **5**

**3** Miles of Sanitary Sewer Improved/Constructed

Miles of Storm Sewer Constructed **0.4**

**1.2** Miles of Roadway Improved

Wastewater Treatment Plants Improved **3**

**1** Water Treatment Plants Improved

Water Tanks Improved **1**

**55** Workers/Trainees Up-skilled

Students Impacted **497**



# GOA Projects for Program Year 2023

Applicant/Project	County	GOA Request	Other \$	Total Cost
Village of New Concord WWTP Tertiary Filter Replacement Project	Muskingum	\$250,000	\$649,800	\$899,800
KSU Tuscarawas/Buckeye Career Center Multi-County Advancement Manu. Corridor	Tuscarawas	\$117,500	\$117,500	\$235,000
City of Salem Water Treatment Plant Rehabilitation	Columbiana	\$221,094	\$5,081,211	\$5,302,305
Harrison County Harrison County RD 51 Road Improvement	Harrison	\$250,000	\$1,082,750	\$1,332,750
Village of Dennison Grant Street Downtown Streetscape Project	Tuscarawas	\$171,406	\$755,604	\$927,010
Village of Byesville Marietta Road Sewer Extension	Guernsey	\$250,000	\$572,156	\$822,156
Total for GOA		\$1,260,000	\$7,609,221	\$8,619,221



# ARC Projects for Program Year 2023

Applicant/Project	County	ARC Request	Other \$	Total Cost
Village of Tuscarawas Wastewater Treatment Plant Improvements	Tuscarawas	\$250,000	\$1,395,679	\$1,645,679
Village of West Lafayette Sanitary & Stormwater Outlet Improvement	Coshocton	\$250,000	\$3,109,000	\$3,359,000
Tuscarawas County Wilshire Hills WWTP Upgrade - Phase 2	Tuscarawas	\$250,000	\$2,100,000	\$2,350,000
City of Coshocton Warsaw Waterline Extension	Coshocton	\$500,000	\$11,008,500	\$14,492,000
Village of Lisbon Water Tank, North End Pressure Improvement	Columbiana	\$250,000	\$3,017,750	\$3,267,750
Walnut Creek Water Company Cherry Ridge Waterline Extension	Holmes	\$250,000	\$4,200,000	\$4,450,000
Utica Shale Academy Equity thru Individualized Workforce Training	Columbiana	\$149,097	\$149,097	\$298,194
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$1,899,097</b>	<b>\$24,980,026</b>	<b>\$26,879,123</b>



# EDA Partnership Planning

In 2023, OMEGA strengthened its partnership with the U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration (EDA) and overall delivery of EDA-related grant writing services on behalf of our local communities. The region is currently celebrating two EDA construction grants:



**\$5,000,000 to Belmont College for a new state-of-the-art Construction Trades Building** projected to create 250 new jobs and catalyze \$750,000 in private investment across nine local firms that are partnering closely with the College on this important project. The Construction Trades Building is becoming a national success story of local higher education aligning with the needs and opportunities in the surrounding local economy. OMEGA is proud to provide administrative services as this project nears a ground-breaking in late 2024.



## **\$2.15 million to The Wilds**

for waterline extensions to a new 75-unit RV campground. This will allow The Wilds to enter into a new era of tourism success as they meet the demand for overnight stays. Construction is expected in late Spring 2024, with the campground opening for the 2025 tourism season.

ABOVE: Groundbreaking ceremony held at The Wilds

In addition to OMEGA's ongoing administrative services for these projects, 2023 was highlighted by EDA's award of \$400,000 to the Jefferson County Port Authority to develop a comprehensive recovery planning program in the wake of the September 2023 closure of the Sammis power plant. OMEGA offered lead grant writing services and will provide administrative services to the Jefferson County Port Authority through 2025, as the program aims to hire two consulting firms and a full-time Port Assistant Director to implement all recovery plans.



# RISE Ohio: The Resilience Initiative for Southeastern and Eastern Ohio

The multi-year RISE Ohio program, spearheaded by a \$2.2 million Assistance to Coal Communities grant from the Economic Development Administration (EDA) as well as \$550,000 of support from JobsOhio and Ohio University, concluded at the end of 2023 with several impactful achievements around the region.

RISE Ohio revolved around two key mandates:

- 1) Developing and implementing a recovery program for Coshocton County in the wake of the AEP Conesville power plant closure; and
- 2) Providing technical development assistance to each of the region's 14 federal Opportunity Zones.

Managed by OMEGA's Evan Scurti, the many projects and analyses within the RISE Ohio program are now transitioning into OMEGA's general work areas for ongoing grant writing and project development assistance.

## COSHOCTON COUNTY

The Coshocton County Recovery Program received two years of consulting assistance from the Hamman Consulting Group, Inc. which successfully resulted in a broad group of county-wide stakeholders developing a more comprehensive development plan focused on resiliency and balanced growth. Highlights included robust studies of new hotel feasibility (including a detailed guidebook for local leaders to pursue hotel development and attraction) as well as housing development strategies, which is now a critical priority for the western part of our region as the area expects many Intel-related demands for residential options. Hamman also completed several industrial development studies and secured over \$13,000 in OhioSE site readiness grants to assist the Coshocton Port Authority in preparing key development sites.

Finally, Hamman provided targeted analysis of the Conesville power plant area, recommending development strategies for one of our region's largest redevelopment projects. The Coshocton Port Authority is now well-prepared to continue working with the site's new ownership team (Frontier Group of Companies) to facilitate multiple land uses and quality job creation.





# RISE Ohio: The Resilience Initiative for Southeastern and Eastern Ohio



**RISE Ohio's Opportunity Zone consulting process consisted of six technical assistance consulting contracts totaling \$506,000. Each of OMEGA's fourteen Opportunity Zones received marketing prospectuses and specific strategy recommendations to encourage the utilization of these new federal tax incentives to encourage Appalachian redevelopment.**

**OMEGA worked closely with the four consulting firms and various Opportunity Zone communities in nine OMEGA counties. A key focus was to catalyze specific development projects and future grant writing that would emerge from RISE Ohio and result in new real estate and job creation after the program.**

## OMEGA'S RISE OHIO ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Over \$18 million of projected investment within Opportunity Zones via Ohio's Appalachian Community Grant (ACG) program (funding decision expected in February 2024). These projects include new business incubators, trail enhancements connecting historic downtowns, and building redevelopments with committed business tenants.
- Development announcements within several Opportunity Zones, including the new Wellsville Health Clinic and Steubenville's South End development plan in direct response to current site selection opportunities along the Ohio River Corridor.
- Over \$3 million in current loan and grant writing to implement the recommendations in the RISE Ohio studies.





# Community Development

OMEGA's Community Development division had a milestone year in 2023. With more than 40 projects rolling over into 2024 for submission in the first quarter, the team also awaits announcements for four Congressional District Earmarks; seven Land and Water Conservation Fund Grants; eight State Capital Bill grants; and 18 Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Grant Projects. Countless Appalachian communities benefited in 2023 from additional funding resources that were announced through the Congressional Earmarks and the HB 168: Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Grant.



## OHIO PUBLIC WORKS COMMISSION (OPWC)

Killbuck Waterline

◦ \$499,900

Scio Waterline East and Elm

◦ \$249,998



## CONGRESSIONALLY DIRECTED SPENDING

Tuscarawas Wastewater  
Improvement Project

◦ \$500,000

Scio Hilltop Sewer

◦ \$500,000

Toronto Walton Acres  
Waterline

◦ \$600,000

Scio East and Elm  
Waterline

◦ \$300,000



## KIMBLE FOUNDATION

Tuscarawas  
Memorial Park

◦ \$10,000

New Philadelphia South Side  
Community Park

◦ \$50,000



## OHIO DEPARTMENT NATURAL RESOURCES (ODNR)

Coshocton  
Pickleball Court

◦ \$22,435

Tuscarawas  
Memorial Park

◦ \$16,194



# Community Development



## CDBG RESIDENTIAL PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE

Bowerston Water Distribution  
◦ \$750,000



## WATER SUPPLY REVOLVING LOAN ACCOUNT H2O

Coshocton Chestnut Waterline  
◦ \$1,000,000



## ODOT STATE INFRASTRUCTURE BANK LOAN

Tuscarawas Cherry St. Sidewalks  
◦ \$128,000



## WATER & WASTEWATER INFRASTRUCTURE HB 168

Coshocton-Warsaw Waterline Extension  
◦ \$5,000,000



## WATER SUPPLY REVOLVING LOAN ACCOUNT CONSTRUCTION LOAN

Glenmont Waterline and Lead Services  
◦ \$538,371

## OHIO WATER DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY DESIGN LOAN



Coshocton Chestnut Waterline  
◦ \$121,424

## CDBG CV FLEXIBLE GRANT



Tuscarawas Food Truck  
◦ \$330,000  
Harrison County Home  
◦ \$45,400

## 2023 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AWARD MILESTONES & FUNDERS:

### Ohio Public Works Commission

- \$999,896

### Congressional Spending

- \$1,100,000

### The Kimble Foundation

- \$60,000

### Ohio Department of Natural Resources

- \$38,629

### Community Development Block Grant

- \$1,575,341

### Water Supply Revolving Loan Account

- \$538,371

### H2Ohio

- \$1,000,000

### Ohio Water Development Authority Loan

- \$121,424

### Community Oriented Policing Services

- \$125,000

\*Several applications not mentioned were submitted in 2023 and pending awards in 2024.



# Regional Transportation Planning Organization Executive Summary

The Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO) had a banner year in 2023, welcoming Corinna Kerns as OMEGA's new GIS Coordinator in the spring.

The program completed **four** School Travel Plans, which will lay the foundation for improvements to safer walking and biking routes for nearly **7,500** students. Another milestone was the biennial update of the Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) for 2024-2027, detailing all projects taking place within the region over the next five years. These planning efforts will be used to pursue crucial funding opportunities for communities throughout the region.

The RTPO assisted **fifteen** communities within the OMEGA region resulting in the award of **eighteen** grant applications totaling **\$9,168,215**. This is the largest number of transportation grants awarded since OMEGA was designated as an RTPO in 2016.

Of those, the OMEGA staff submitted and assisted with the award of **four** Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Grants and **three** Transportation Alternative Program (TAP) Grants.

One award of particular note was a **\$1.9 million** grant for the Village of Bowerston for the replacement of a deficient bridge using the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) Municipal Bridge Program. This is the first time OMEGA has pursued this opportunity. Also, for the first time, OMEGA successfully pursued an ODOT Abbreviated Safety Application on behalf of the Village of Cadiz, with an award of **\$298,700** to replace the only traffic signal in town with a brand-new system.

The RTPO further awarded **\$1,133,025** to **four** communities within the region through the administration of the newly adopted RTPO Capital Allocation Program. With the aid of this program and RTPO staff contributions, these communities will see their projects come to fruition. These funds are in addition to the previously mentioned more than \$9M in grants that OMEGA successfully obtained on behalf of our member communities, bringing the total RTPO awards to well **over \$10,000,000!**





# RTPO Capital Allocation Awards

## Riverfront Trail Phase 1.2



- East Liverpool
- \$300,000 grant
- \$1,750,000 total project cost
- 4,488 linear feet of multimodal trail

## 3rd Street Bridge Repair / Replacement

- Uhrichsville
- \$247,909 grant
- \$1,896,999 total project cost



## Port Washington Sidewalk Improvement Project




- Village of Port Washington
- \$233,794 grant
- \$1,425,000 total project cost
- 6,980 linear feet of sidewalk

## Berlin Elementary School Sidewalks

- Berlin Township
- \$351,322 grant
- \$702,644 total cost
- 4,400 linear feet of new sidewalk



# Bowerston Bridge Street Project

A photograph showing a bridge structure with metal railings and concrete supports over a stream. The bridge appears to be in need of repair or replacement.

The Village of Bowerston (Harrison County) was successfully awarded a \$1,883,235 ODOT Municipal Bridge Program grant in 2023 for the Bridge Street Replacement Project. Capital Allocation funding will be pursued in 2024 to contribute to the total project cost of \$2,261,953.



# ODOT Grant Programs



## ODOT Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Program

**Village of Strasburg  
(Tuscarawas County)**

- ODOT Safe Routes to School Program
- \$309,000 Grant

**Village of Port Washington  
(Tuscarawas County)**

- \$225,000 Grant

**Village of West Lafayette  
(Coshocton County)**

- \$300,000 Grant

**City of Salem  
(Columbiana County)**

- \$240,000 Grant



## Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)

**Village of Strasburg  
(Tuscarawas County)**

- \$900,000 Grant

**Village of Port Washington  
(Tuscarawas County)**

- \$756,200

**Village of West Lafayette  
(Coshocton County)**

- \$1,153,584



## ODOT Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP): Abbreviated Safety Grant

**Village of Cadiz  
(Harrison County)**

- \$298,700 Grant



# ODOT's Township Sign Grant Awards

## Augusta Twp., Carroll County

- 550 Safety Signs
- \$30,301

## Franklin Twp., Columbiana County

- 484 Safety Signs
- \$47,783 grant

## Jefferson Twp., Tuscarawas County

- 190 Safety Signs
- \$19,203 grant

## Monroe Twp., Holmes County

- 495 Safety Signs
- \$40,516 grant

## Monroe Twp., Muskingum County

- 505 Safety Signs
- \$36,634 grant

## Richland Twp., Holmes County

- 739 Safety Signs
- \$43,355 grant

## Washington Township, Holmes County

- 342 Safety Signs
- \$35,612 grant

## Warwick Twp., Tuscarawas County

- 438 Safety Signs
- \$42,655 grant

## Monroe Twp., Carroll County

- 393 Safety Signs
- \$33,314 grant



# Regional Coordinated Transportation Pilot Program

OMEGA'S Regional Coordinated Transportation Pilot Program includes all OMEGA counties with the exception of Columbiana County and is designated as Region 9 by ODOT. Region 9 was the first in the state to develop a Regional Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan, approved by ODOT in 2019, and the first in the state to begin the implementation phase of the program.



## REGIONAL MEDICAL SCHEDULING CAMPAIGN

This campaign provides an easy-to-use solution for medical scheduling professionals at local doctor offices as well as local and regional medical centers to help alleviate the myriad of issues faced by patients relying on public transit trips for medical appointments. This is especially critical for multi-visit treatment programs that often require longer trips outside of the county of residence and even outside of the region to medical centers in Columbus, Cleveland, Pittsburgh, Canton and Wheeling.



## REGIONAL CARFIT PROGRAM

Regional CarFit events were held in all nine program counties. The CarFit program helps seniors and others to better retrofit their own vehicles for improved safety. Many points of safety, like seat belt and steering wheel positioning and blind spot reduction, are taught to drivers on an individual basis during events.



## FEDERAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY 5310

Region 9 provides direct input to ODOT in the scoring of regional Federal Transportation Authority (FTA) 5310 applications for funding. FTA 5310 resources are competitive grant funding sources designated for benefiting seniors, persons with disabilities, and those who are economically disadvantaged to gain transportation options and equity.



# Regional Coordinated Transportation Pilot Program

In calendar year 2023, ODOT Region 9 commissioned the first-ever-in-the-nation Social Return on Investment (SROI) study which was conducted in collaboration with the Ohio University Voinovich School of Leadership and Social Service.

This innovative research project utilized regional data to examine the social returns provided by public transit and transportation providers in the OMEGA region.

One of the research conclusions found that for every dollar invested in regional transportation, there was a social return on investment of between \$5.00 and \$10.00.

A 500+% ROI is exceptional and was unexpected given the rural nature of the counties and the lack of funding, vehicles, and staff that stress the region. ODOT Region 9 continues to lead the state in innovative transportation problem-solving and the creative but practical implementation of coordinated transportation efforts with the goal of breaking transportation barriers and providing equity in transportation opportunities especially for seniors, disabled persons, and those with low-income.



## VOLUNTEER TRANSPORTATION COMPANION PILOT PROGRAM

Region 9 progressed our initiative to develop a Volunteer Transportation Companion Pilot Program which addresses the number one request to make transportation easier for seniors and those with disabilities. We are currently working with the Kent State-Tuscarawas Leadership Program to develop program foundations. The pilot project is tracking to begin in 2024 in four OMEGA counties.



## WHEELCHAIR RAMP PROGRAM

Mobility Managers in the region expanded a Wheelchair Ramp program helping disabled persons access public transit, gain independence, and access medical care, food, and social/community opportunities. Additionally, mobility managers acquired over \$73,000 in grant funding to help fund needed transportation for those who fall through existing income or other program requirement gaps. A grant of \$130,000 was also secured for help with a multi-use path project.



## REGION 9 RESOURCE GUIDE

Region 9 supports the Region 9 Resource Guide, an interactive online resource listing transportation and other social services by county. Each year another category of services is added; in 2023 food banks and homeless shelter information were added. The resource guide can be accessed at [www.Region9ResourceGuide.com](http://www.Region9ResourceGuide.com)



# Revolving Loan Fund

In 2023, the OMEGA Revolving Loan Fund Program approved two loans. The first was to Loudin Properties, LLC, to provide additional funds, via takeout financing, for the construction of a large building on their property which will serve as an expansion site for an already established and successful daycare company located in St. Clairsville. This new facility will help to address the overwhelming need for additional quality childcare centers within Belmont County. The second loan was to HAHNZ MFG LLC, for the purchase of additional machinery/equipment and for additional working capital. HAHNZ MFG is a start-up manufacturing company located in Columbiana County, which manufactures custom-made trailers with the highest quality craftsmanship to their valued customers.

Also in 2023, using our recently De-Federalized Legacy EDA RLF Funds, OMEGA established the East Palestine Recovery Revolving Loan Fund Program to assist with the economic recovery efforts in East Palestine following the catastrophic train derailment which occurred on February 3, 2023. This loan program was designed for eligible businesses who are looking to expand within East Palestine, by offering loans at 2% interest for the purchase of machinery & equipment and additional working capital with no bank participation required. This temporary program shall be in effect until June 30, 2024, or as long as funds remain available.

## OMEGA Loans Approved/Closed in 2023

Borrower	Loan Amount	Funding Source	FTE Jobs
Loudin Properties LLC	\$210,000	ARC	5 created
HAHNZ MFG, LLC	\$150,000	ARC	6 created

## RLF Statistics

RLF Statistics as of 12/31/23	All Loans
Total Loans	102
Total Loan Amount	\$8,051,428
Jobs Created	1,213
Jobs Retained	522
Total Jobs Created/Retained	1,735



# Appalachian Community Grant (ACG) Program



Appalachian Community Grant

## *Destination Appalachia:* PATHWAY TO PROSPERITY

Ten Appalachian Counties  
Twenty-six Communities  
One Unified Vision

**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ● HEALTHCARE ● WORKFORCE**

GATEWAY  
COMMUNITIES,  
DOWNTOWN  
REVITALIZATION  
& RIVERFRONT  
DEVELOPMENT

STRENGTHENING  
OUR NATURAL  
AND CULTURAL  
HERITAGE

ECOTOURISM:  
GREEN & BLUE  
TRAILS

HEALTHCARE,  
SCHOOL-BASED  
HEALTH  
CLINICS &  
RECOVERY TO  
WORK

WORKFORCE:  
INNOVATION,  
IN-DEMAND  
SKILLS, &  
BUSINESS  
INCUBATION



# Appalachian Community Grant (ACG) Program

## THE OPPORTUNITY

Up to \$500 million in American Rescue Plan funds will be awarded across the 32-county Appalachian region in Ohio. The priorities are workforce, infrastructure, and healthcare, and each regionally transformational project is required to be under construction by September 2024 and completed by October 2026.

## THE REGIONAL APPLICATION

OMEGA submitted the regional application, ***Destination Appalachia: Pathway to Prosperity***, in December. The application, with a request of \$158,029,208 represented 10 counties, 26 communities, and 41 projects with one unified vision - to influence Covid-impacted economic activity and social well-being for our region's (a) resiliency, (b) strengthening, and (c) sustainability efforts.

OMEGA worked intimately with each local community represented and their state-appointed procured planners to ensure projects that most closely aligned with the required HB377 and ARPA guidelines were advanced as part of the regional application.

*"This marked a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for the Appalachian region, and I am most proud of the spirit of collaboration that was demonstrated throughout the process among our partnering constituents,"* explained Dr. Vicki King-Maple, Executive Director of OMEGA. *"We carefully vetted over 90 projects, and the 41 that went into our regional application have not only demonstrated the ability to deliver transformational, sustainable projects, but they have done so through quantifiable, actionable, and achievable outcomes and research."*

The theme of OMEGA's ACGP regional application was ***"Destination Appalachia: Pathway to Prosperity,"*** and it was designed to guide reviewers through a journey.

The Gateway to Appalachia begins at Zanesville-Muskingum County's Gateway District with plans to reform John McIntire Library for telehealth and employment resources and overhaul Secrest Auditorium and the district-wide streetscape, creating improved gathering spaces. Healthcare services at Zane State College include a simulation clinic to serve the public.

The path continues to Coshocton's Skip's Landing at the confluence of the Walhonding and Tuscarawas Rivers, where the river corridor destination is planned as a food access/farmers market hub with riverwalk trails linking to downtown's pedestrian crossings, as well as the Pastime Theater. Converting abandoned mine lands in Linton Twp, a primitive campground and world-class mountain biking trail system will be established.

Travels north lead to popular Amish tourism destination, Holmes County, where they aim to complete the Holmes County Trail through Glenmont to its Main Street; to Millersburg's water trailhead accessing Killbuck Creek; to Holmesville's community park; to Killbuck's Turtle Pond Preserve, all designed for non-motorized use, including horse and buggy.

Image: OMEGA-guided work sessions to define ACG projects.





In Tuscarawas County, the Dennison & Ohio (D&O) Railroad will expand passenger excursions from the National Historic Landmark depot with roundtrip rides to Newcomerstown and Coshocton. The D&O experience includes a railcar for transporting bicycles and kayaks; attracting enthusiasts with a robust trail plan and two state-designated water trails. The Ohio & Erie Towpath Trail retains Zoar's historic sites, museums, and interpretative centers; while the city of Dover capitalizes on the path of the former Canal Dover.

The passage into Guernsey County through the Great Guernsey Trail extension links Lore City and Kipling to Cambridge, where the first courthouse and Cambridge Performing Arts Center are set to be preserved and guest counts forecasted to grow by 250%. In Byesville, the Center for Business Innovation transforms a century-old school building into a facility with resources for commerce, health, technology, and workforce.

In Harrison County, cyclists benefit from wayfinding, road markings, and enhanced amenities along the Conotton Creek Trail in Jewett and Scio; while Washington Township in Carroll County prioritized the renovation, expansion, and repurposing of the shuttered Veterans Memorial Pool facility along with the modernization of the adjacent Veterans Memorial Park to provide mental health, physical fitness, and recreation opportunities for all ages. The project area is owned by Save22, a 501C3 private non-profit organization focused on fighting veteran, active duty, and first responder suicide. In addition to the counseling, aquatic therapy, and mental health resources for veterans, active military, and first responders, the project will provide space for a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) to serve the healthcare needs of everyone in the greater Carroll County area. The new facilities will include indoor therapy and recreational pools, fitness areas and shareable classroom and clinical spaces, providing for the delivery of quality of life services and programs that support holistic health and wellness.

In Belmont County, Barnesville includes two cornerstone properties to move the Downtown Revitalization Plan forward. The Ohio Hills Health Center will expand access to primary care, dental, behavioral health, and addiction services.



Image: Harrison County trail



The Bohandy building will undergo structural repairs/facade enhancements for new tenants and kiosks for mobile app purchases during events. The Barnesville State Theater preservation is led by volunteers dedicating thousands of hours to advance the arts. In Martins Ferry, East Ohio Regional Hospital will erect a new complex and renovate an existing property to provide behavioral health services aiding patients overcoming addiction.

In Jefferson County, a building transferred to the Adena Historical Society will boast an eatery with outdoor seating, retail space, the County Health Department, and university medical site. In Steubenville, Urban Mission serves low-to-moderate income populations across four counties; providing food security, emergency shelter, affordable housing, youth education, and job readiness for adults. Historic Ft. Steuben plans to expand an education center attracting up to 50,000 visitors.

A downtown redevelopment project in Columbiana County spans Salem, East Liverpool, Columbiana, Leetonia, East Palestine, and Lisbon. The project will create 320 jobs and 14 new housing units; 43% of private funding is committed with developers obligating private capital or financing for a minimum of 30% of the total project costs. A company has committed to relocating 75 high-paying jobs to the Thompson Building in East Liverpool. The Career & Technology Center in Center Twp will complete the Innovative Energy Center Automotive facility to address demands of hybrid/EV maintenance and repair; training 150 per year. In Lisbon, a bridge will connect Willow Grove Park to Little Beaver Creek Greenway Trail. In Salem, a multipurpose facility will attract minority owned businesses/remote workers; a culinary institute will provide a café and demonstration kitchen. This Salem City Center Entrepreneurial & Cultural Collective is home to the Hannah Mullins School of Practical Nursing, where Aspire will be the provider of adult education and ESL for the local Hispanic population.

Appalachian Community Grant (ACG) Program



Image: Historic Ft. Steuben



# Appalachian Community Grant (ACG) Program

The sustainability of projects and improvements to be made through OMEGA's *Destination Appalachia* application was also a key area of focus. Due to the scope and size of the collective regional grant effort, OMEGA and its communities wanted to ensure that all of the proposed improvements will be lasting and benefit generations of residents. This was demonstrated through the overall local community vibrancy (i.e., tax climate, healthy job creation) catalyzed by the collection of 41 capital investment projects.

***"In recent history, our 10-county region has never seen this scale of tax, job, and consumer spending impacts emerging from any 2-year construction window as was detailed in an economic impact study performed by The Montrose Group LLC highlighting the unprecedented regional impact of our application," Dr. King-Maple continued. "In addition to the visually transformational aspects of our application and general forecasts, we project tens of thousands of new visitors to the region on an annual basis, and we are equally proud of the fiscal transformation for our local governments, non-profit partners, and residents."***

Highlights of the Montrose Group's regional impact study include:



- The construction years (2025 and 2026) alone will result in a total economic impact of nearly \$174 million, a more than 100% return on the ACG total investment.
- Nearly \$3 million in new local tax revenue to be yielded during construction.
- A 5-year region-wide operations impacts (2027-2031) of \$900 million and 6,098 new jobs to be added.
- A 7-year total region-wide impact (construction plus five years of operations) of over \$1 Billion, plus 7,349 new jobs, and \$18,518,187 in new local taxes to be realized.



## Appalachian Community Grant (ACG) Program

Image: Downtown Zanesville's Gateway District



*"Public-Private Partnerships are also an essential component of the activities proposed in OMEGA's Destination Appalachia application, with business, government, and nonprofits collaborating around regionally transformative projects," King-Maple stated. "Proposals included in the application have identified needs of the region, as documented through longitudinal studies, needs analyses, and economic impact reports. That said, they represent not just valuable economic strengthening projects; they represent the vigilance of the hard-working and visionary people of our Appalachian region."*

OMEGA is an Economic Development District whose main objective is to foster a cooperative effort in the planning, development, and implementation of local and regional plans, programs, and projects to increase economic activity and improve the quality of life for the people of Belmont, Carroll, Columbiana, Coshocton, Guernsey, Harrison, Holmes, Jefferson, Muskingum, and Tuscarawas Counties. All ten counties were represented in the application. Awards are expected to be announced in February 2024.



# Appalachian Community Grant (ACG) Program

## THE PROCESS

In 2023, OMEGA worked with planning groups across all ten counties to prepare a regional grant application for the Appalachian Community Grant (ACG) Development Grant Program. Counties, communities, and local organizations met regularly to discuss and prioritize community and economic needs. Many counties formed Steering Committees to guide their programmatic planning efforts. The State of Ohio secured nineteen planning consultants and provided up to \$250,000 in ACG Technical Assistance grants to each county for leveraging the procured planners. Many counties also hired a Project Manager to help coordinate their ACG proposals.

Working on an aggressive timeline, OMEGA circulated a survey in late August, and the region spoke - elevating a vote of trust in OMEGA to serve as the lead applicant, representing the entire OMEGA footprint. From hosting a meeting with the state-appointed procured planners in September and choosing the regional theme... to hosting a "report-out gathering" for GOA's project manager, Jarrell Potts; to facilitating five cluster workshops over three days and designing & circulating a regional Playbook; to securing Bricker Graydon regarding legal guidance on subrecipient agreements, OMEGA continued to press on and guide the process. Communities were required to meet a project proposal submission deadline of November 10, and following the ODOD scoring rubric, an internal OMEGA team objectively scored over 90 projects; in turn, announcing the final application projects just six days later. OMEGA went on to develop the case statements and application narrative, securing final cost estimates and budgets, designing and editing a compelling application, fielding literally hundreds of calls and emails, working with communities to build consensus around their project proposals. The OMEGA Board received an overview of the application at the December Board meeting.

## OMEGA as ACGP Lead Applicant Process Timeline





# Washington, D.C. Conference

National Association of Development Organizations ( NADO )  
& Development District Association of Appalachia ( DDAA )



Jeannette Wierzbicki discussed regional issues with a staff member at Senator Sherrod Brown's office.



OMEGA and Buckeye Hills Regional Council met with a staff member in Congressman Johnson's office.



OMEGA, OVRDC, and BHRC met with staff from Congressman Balderson's office.



Wierzbicki addressed the audience at the DDAA/NADO Conference held in Washington DC in March 2023.



# Meet your OMEGA Team



**Dr. Vicki King-Maple, Executive Director**, is the chief administrative officer for OMEGA, overseeing all programmatic areas, staffing, budgets, and regulatory compliance from the state and federal agencies that support the agency. Vicki is an experienced executive leader, decision-maker, solution strategist, workforce practitioner, economic strengthening consultant, published researcher, and acclaimed facilitator, speaker, and consensus-builder. Over the years, she has led extensive economic resiliency plans, workforce priorities, educational skills gap analyses, and occupational forecast assessment projects throughout the Appalachian region and across the nation. She is prepared at the doctorate level in Leadership Studies with dissertation research steeped in bridging the engineering technology-based workforce gap. She brings future-thinking leadership skills to OMEGA with priorities in expanding partnerships, programming, professional advancement for the team, and the pursuit of prosperity for the Appalachian region she is proud to call home.

**Email:** [vmapple@omegadistrict.org](mailto:vmapple@omegadistrict.org)

**Mindee Johnson, Finance Director**, works in conjunction with the Executive Director to further the mission of OMEGA and assumes many administrative responsibilities. 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. Mindee also manages many operations of the office, including human resources, payroll, deposits, payments and account reconciliation.

**Email:** [mjohnson@omegadistrict.org](mailto:mjohnson@omegadistrict.org)



**George Dolney, RLF Administrator/ Regional 166 Program Administrator**, will assume **Office Manager** responsibilities in 2024, with his Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) title also elevating to **RLF Program Manager**. He masterfully balances all activities required to administer the Revolving Loan Fund (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 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 supportive capacity and will continue to bolster those skills as well as some internal Human Resources duties.

**Email:** [gdolney@omegadistrict.org](mailto:gdolney@omegadistrict.org)





# Meet your OMEGA Team



**Alan Knapp, ARC Program Manager / Community Development Specialist**, will be promoted to **Federal and State Resources Director** in 2024, as he masterfully manages state and federal programming, including the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) and Governor's Office of Appalachia (GOA). He develops OMEGA's ARC/GOA Project Package on an annual basis, also providing technical assistance to applicants who are requesting ARC/GOA funding. Alan also provides direct assistance and leadership for ARC's competitive POWER and INSPIRE grant projects. He has managed the Regional Job Training Program and continues to spearhead 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 Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) and assists communities with the administration of their CDBG awards, including environmental reviews, status reports, drawdowns, and amendments.

**Email:** [alank@omegadistrict.org](mailto:alank@omegadistrict.org)

**Corinna Kerns, GIS Coordinator**, works in conjunction with the Executive Director and across departments on various economic strengthening, community development, and transportation infrastructure projects. Her primary responsibilities include short-range planning activities (e.g., Active Transportation Plans, Safe Routes to School Travel Plans, etc.); participation in statewide planning activities; providing technical assistance and data analysis; maintenance of databases; and revisions/updates to the Regional Transportation Plan and Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. Corinna also develops the Geographic Information Systems (GIS) maps needed to support transportation, the transit pilot program, and other economic planning and development activities. She further provides expert GIS services to communities within the OMEGA region upon request.

**Email:** [ckerns@omegadistrict.org](mailto:ckerns@omegadistrict.org)



**Erin Wright, Senior Community Development Specialist** will assume the role of **Director of Infrastructure & Community Development** in 2024. With a reputation for finding the best, most comprehensive and individualized funding strategy for each community, she assists local governments and non-profit organizations with the identification of viable financing strategies for needed infrastructure and utilities improvements. She also facilitates and moderates meetings with local officials, community representatives, state and federal leaders, and funding agencies. Erin is a solution strategist who prepares funding applications for several state and federal agencies and local foundations. She also assists with the following: grant administration, completion of environmental reviews, status reports, drawdowns, amendments, close-outs, and Low-to-Moderate Income (LMI) surveys. She is further responsible for conducting the local review for the Intergovernmental Review (IGR) process for project applications submitted to federal and state agencies, while also serving as the liaison for the Ohio Public Works Commission Natural Resource Assistance Council for District 14.

**Email:** [ewright@omegadistrict.org](mailto:ewright@omegadistrict.org)





# Meet your OMEGA Team



**Kennedy Blakley, Communications Manager**, will continue to assume greater responsibilities in 2024 as she works closely with the Executive Director to advance the OMEGA brand and mission. She is responsible for all areas of public relations and communication, including membership, media, and community outreach. Kennedy oversees the production and release of annual reports, newsletters, press notices, social media content, and OMEGA website design. She also organizes and assists with preparations for OMEGA Executive Board Meetings, Legislative Mixers, Annual/ Semi-Annual Meetings, and various events across all departments. Kennedy participated as a key member of the internal Appalachian Community Grant Program team.

**Email:** [kblakley@omegadistrict.org](mailto:kblakley@omegadistrict.org)

**Deb Hill, Transit Planner** will advance in 2024 as **Regional Transit & Mobility Programs Coordinator**. She manages OMEGA's Regional Coordinated Public Transit/Human Services Transportation Pilot Program. As part of the planning process, she leads public workshops; distributes surveys; analyzes data; and conducts origin and destination studies. She also facilitates meetings with stakeholders including the senior population, people with disabilities, non-drivers, mobility managers, transportation service providers, human service agencies, and other interested parties. Deb also coordinates with the Ohio Department of Transportation on mobility initiatives and grant programs, including Mobility Ohio; plus, she leads the Steering Committee for the Regional Coordinated Council (RCC). Deb leverages her skills cross-functionally between public transit, transportation, and community development.

**Email:** [dhill@omegadistrict.org](mailto:dhill@omegadistrict.org)



**Evan Scurti, Senior Development Specialist**, will be promoted in 2024 to **Economic Development Director**, as he is a seasoned professional who is responsible for the overall supervision of the region's Economic Development Administration (EDA) programmatic activities and coordination of other economic strengthening initiatives. He has managed OMEGA's Resilience Initiative for Southeastern and Eastern (RISE) Ohio Initiative, a U.S. EDA Assistance to Coal Communities program initiative cooperatively led by Ohio University's Voinovich School, the Buckeye Hills Regional Council, and OMEGA. Evan prioritizes Opportunity Zone planning, community development and investment, river corridor activity, economic diversification, and assistance to communities impacted by coal fired power plant closures. He also conducts community outreach through the ARC Ready Local Development District (LDD) program.

**Email:** [escurti@omegadistrict.org](mailto:escurti@omegadistrict.org)



# Meet your OMEGA Team



**Kevin Buettner, Transportation Director**, manages OMEGA's Transportation Program with key responsibilities of developing 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; 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](mailto:kevinb@omegadistrict.org)

**Josh Sliker, Transportation Planner**, will be elevated as **Transportation & Community Development Planner** in 2024. He completes short-range transportation planning activities (e.g., Active Transportation Plans, Safe Routes to School Travel Plans, etc.); develops the 4-year Transportation Improvement Plan; administers the RTP Capital Allocation Program; participates in statewide transportation planning activities; provides technical assistance (e.g., traffic counts, crash analysis, road safety audits, transportation grant writing, training); conducts transportation related surveys; and supports revisions/updates to the Regional Transportation Plan. Josh also prepares funding applications for community development and transportation projects; assisting with environmental reviews, data sourcing for reports, facilitating community meetings, and advancing planning and development activities.

**Email:** [jsliker@omegadistrict.org](mailto:jsliker@omegadistrict.org)



## 2023 OMEGA Executive Board Officers

**PRESIDENT**  
TIFFANY SWIGERT

**VICE PRESIDENT**  
RAY EYLER

**SECRETARY**  
JOEL DAY

**TREASURER**  
DOMENICK MUCCI



# Retirements of Jeannette Wierzbicki & Cindi Metz

OMEGA experienced staffing changes as Executive Director Jeannette M. Wierzbicki, P.E. and Finance Director Cindi Metz both retired in 2023 after many years of exceptional service to the region.

After serving four years as an OMEGA Community Development Specialist, Jeannette began her tenure in 2015 as Executive Director. Over the course of her eight years as Executive Director, she assisted countless communities and positively impacted lives across the region through her selflessness and dedication to OMEGA. Jeannette retired on October 31, 2023 as OMEGA's Executive Director.



*ABOVE: Jeannette Wierzbicki (center) with OMEGA staff and incoming Executive Director, Dr. Vicki King-Maple (far left).*



Cindi Metz served as OMEGA's Finance Director for a total of 16 years. During that time, her evident passion and hard work resulted in her being named as OMEGA's Assistant Executive Director/Finance Director.

Cindi received five Clean Audit Awards from the State of Ohio Auditor during her time at OMEGA. She also served as Communications Manager.

*LEFT: Cindi Metz with OMEGA President. Tiffany Swigert*

**The OMEGA Board of Directors, members, and staff are eternally grateful to both Jeannette and Cindi for their many years of unparalleled dedication and service to the region!**



# 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 (OMEGA President)	Port Authority Director	Coshocton County
Guernsey County	Jack Marlin	Commissioner	Guernsey County
Harrison County	Paul Coffland	Commissioner	Harrison County
Holmes County	Ray Eyler (OMEGA Vice President)	Commissioner	Holmes County
Jefferson County	Tony Morelli	Commissioner	Jefferson County
Muskingum County	Mollie Crooks	Commissioner	Muskingum County
Tuscarawas County	Greg Ress	Commissioner	Tuscarawas County
City of Cambridge	Thomas Orr	Mayor	City of Cambridge
City of Coshocton	Mark Mills	Mayor	City of Coshocton
City of Dover	Shane Gunnoe	Interim 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 (OMEGA Secretary)	Mayor	City of New Philadelphia
City of St. Clairsville	Kathryn Thalman	Mayor	City of St. Clairsville
City of Salem	Cyndi Dickey	Mayor	City of Salem
City of Steubenville	Domenick Mucci (OMEGA Treasurer)	Mayoral Appointment	City of Steubenville
City of Toronto	Frank McEwen	Council Member	City of Toronto
City of Uhrichsville	Mark Haney	Mayor	City of Uhrichsville
City of Zanesville	Donald Mason	Mayor	City of Zanesville



# 2023 OMEGA Meeting Highlights



## EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING

Tuscarawas County, Buckeye Career Center  
February 21, 2023

## ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING



Coshocton County, Coshocton County Community Room  
March 28, 2023



## EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING

Harrison County, Harrison Hills Press Box  
May 16, 2023

## EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING

Jefferson County,  
Le Chateau Pier  
June 20, 2023





# 2023 OMEGA Meeting Highlights



## LEGISLATIVE MIXER

Belmont County,  
Belmont Hills Country Club  
August 15, 2023

## SEMI- ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING



Holmes County, Keim Lumber Center  
September 19, 2023



## EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING

Guernsey County,  
Cambridge Country Club  
December 5, 2023



**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, 2023*

	General	Revolving Loan	Appalachia. Regional Commission	State Appalachian Development Program	Economic Development Administration	Rural Transportation	Rural Transit Pilot Program	Other Governmental Funds	Total Governmental Funds
<b>Revenues</b>									
Intergovernmental	\$	0	239,400	190,000	\$ 798,206	\$ 214,686	\$ 137,306	\$ 14,390	\$ 1,593,988
Investment Income	779	\$6,721	-	-	-	-	-	-	57,500
Membership Fees	86,065	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	86,065
Charges for Services	32,000	299	-	-	-	-	-	-	32,299
In-Kind Contributions	-	-	0	-	9,425	-	-	-	9,425
Miscellaneous	625	72	-	-	-	-	-	-	697
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>119,469</b>	<b>57,092</b>	<b>239,400</b>	<b>190,000</b>	<b>807,631</b>	<b>214,686</b>	<b>137,306</b>	<b>14,390</b>	<b>1,779,974</b>
<b>Expenditures</b>									
Current:									
Economic Development	22,244	27,175	250,039	166,402	826,358	-	-	\$ 5,634	1,307,852
Transportation Planning	-	-	-	-	-	207,785	105,236	-	313,021
Indirect Costs	1,017	5,131	41,233	25,277	42,170	35,663	15,546	2,760	168,797
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>23,261</b>	<b>32,306</b>	<b>291,272</b>	<b>191,679</b>	<b>868,528</b>	<b>243,448</b>	<b>120,782</b>	<b>18,394</b>	<b>1,789,670</b>
<b>Excess of Revenues Over (Under) Expenditures</b>	<b>96,208</b>	<b>24,786</b>	<b>(51,872)</b>	<b>(1,679)</b>	<b>(60,897)</b>	<b>(28,762)</b>	<b>16,524</b>	<b>(4,004)</b>	<b>(9,696)</b>
<b>Other Financing Sources (Uses)</b>									
Transfers In	-	-	-	1,224	59,565	25,995	-	4,984	89,768
Transfers Out	(89,768)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	(89,768)
<b>Total Other Financing Sources (Uses)</b>	<b>(89,768)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,224</b>	<b>59,565</b>	<b>25,995</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,984</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Net Change in Fund Balance</b>	<b>6,440</b>	<b>(4,786)</b>	<b>(51,872)</b>	<b>(455)</b>	<b>(1,332)</b>	<b>(2,767)</b>	<b>16,524</b>	<b>(1,020)</b>	<b>(9,696)</b>
<b>Fund Balances Beginning of Year</b>	<b>506,980</b>	<b>2,605,976</b>	<b>146,373</b>	<b>66,401</b>	<b>91,968</b>	<b>71,648</b>	<b>26,123</b>	<b>(7,401)</b>	<b>3,508,068</b>
<b>Fund Balances End of Year</b>	<b>\$ 513,420</b>	<b>\$ 2,630,762</b>	<b>\$ 94,501</b>	<b>\$ 65,946</b>	<b>\$ 90,636</b>	<b>\$ 68,881</b>	<b>\$ 42,647</b>	<b>\$ (8,421)</b>	<b>\$ 3,498,372</b>

# Financial Report

\*NOTE: This financial report has not yet been certified at the time of this publication.



# 2023 Impact Statement

## Appalachian Regional Commission and Governor's Office of Appalachia

OMEGA secured **\$3,159,097** in federal and state ARC and GOA funding for communities in the region. For every **\$1.00** invested by ARC and GOA, our region leveraged **\$10.31** in additional investments for a total return on investment of **\$35,648,344**.

### Other Federal & State Funding Sources

OMEGA also assisted communities, organizations, and businesses with other Federal and State funding sources, including EDA and ODOT. Through the Economic Development Administration (EDA), OMEGA was able to leverage **\$7,550,000** in funding for the region.

In 2023 the safety of our communities was at the forefront of our goals at OMEGA. Through the pursuit of funds from a variety of sources, including RTPD Capital, SRTS, TAP, and Township Sign grants, we were able to successfully secure **more than 10 million dollars** in this endeavor.

OMEGA's Community Development Department was able to secure **\$5,558,661** for the region with funding sources including: Ohio Public Works Commission, Congressional Spending, the Kimble Foundation, Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Community Development Block Grant, EPA's Water Supply Revolving Loan Account, H2Ohio, Ohio Water Development Authority, and Office of Community Oriented Policing Services.

With **19** approved grant applications and **two** approved loans from OMEGA's Revolving Loan Fund in 2023, OMEGA helped secure **\$16,485,824** in grants for communities and organizations and **\$360,000** in low-interest loans to businesses, leading to the creation of a total of **106** new jobs in the OMEGA Region in 2023.

*Image:* Ribbon cutting ceremony for the Spellacy Covered Bridge in Loudonville (Holmes County)





OMEGA  
326 Highland Avenue  
Suite B  
Cambridge, OH 43725  
(740) 439-4471  
[www.omegadistrict.org](http://www.omegadistrict.org)



Credits:  
Front cover photo: Zoar Garden provided by Tuscarawas County Convention and Visitors Bureau.  
Back cover photo: Monticello III Canal Boat provided by Coshocton County Visitors Bureau.  
Annual Report design: Kennedy Blakley with contributions by Dr. Vicki King-Maple.