

MAYORS' PARTNERSHIP
for
PR **GRESS**

ANNUAL REVIEW

2024

WHO WE ARE

The mayors began meeting in 1995 from the vision of several regional mayors. In 1996, they were formally incorporated as the Mayors' Partnership for Progress, signing an agreement for technical assistance with Ohio University. Originally encompassing an 11-county footprint, the organization became a nonprofit in 2003.

The Mayors' Partnership for Progress brings together mayors and city managers from cities and villages throughout Appalachian Ohio to share information and resources and tackle common issues faced by municipalities throughout the region.

WHAT WE DO

- Share information, concerns, advice, and resources.
- Conduct informational forums regarding issues of potential impact and technical assistance.
- Provide a platform for local leaders to communicate with political stakeholders.

INCREASING LOCAL GOVERNMENT CAPCAITY IN RURAL OHIO

Supporting all municipalities, regardless of size.

Empowers communities to share resources and knowledge.

Advocates for equitable solutions to shared challenges.



OUR REACH

In 2024, the Partnership
expanded its reach to

25
counties,



growing by **6**
counties this year.

25
COUNTIES

205
COMMUNITIES

23
CITIES
Population of 5,000+

182
VILLAGES

MONTHLY SUMMARIES

January

Attorney General Yost provided insight into the new Mount Vernon project; an online training program designed to equip newly elected public officials with key knowledge to be effective public servants.

February

The Housing Committee adopted a purpose statement and agreed upon a state focus for legislation and programs. The Nominations Committee was also formed.



March

Ann Bonner, the region's Urban Forester, ODNR presented "Trees are the Answer! Assisting Cities and Villages with Management of and Funding for their Urban Forests" which highlighted several MPP communities and what they have accomplished in partnership with her office.

April

The Housing Committee began working on the Housing Best Practices Toolkit. Meeting discussion included important topics of the FEMA National Flood Insurance Program, HB 370 regarding ODOT taking responsibility for state routes through villages and McConnellsville Village Administrator Tim Lewis and Southpoint Mayor Jeff Gaskin both provided testimony in support of the bill, and the new PFAS drinking water regulations.

The MPP added Harrison and Jefferson Counties into our footprint, extending our reach to 21 counties.

May

Legislative Advocacy Day was held at the Ohio Statehouse. MPP members had the opportunity to hear from many people and organizations, including a roundtable discussion with Lydia Mihalik, Director of the Ohio Department of Development and John Carey, the Director of the Governor's Office of Appalachia, additional presentations and discussions were held with: JobsOhio, Lieutenant Governor Husted, The Ohio Housing Finance Agency, The Ohio Department of Public Safety, Broadband Ohio, and the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency.



June

Presentations from Shane Wilkin, Ohio State Senator District 17, and Director Carey occurred, highlighting the importance of forming relationships everywhere you go and the abundance of projects requested in the Appalachian Community Grant Program.

July

Todd Kleismit, the Executive Director of the America 250 Ohio Commission, presented about the activities leading up to the 2026 celebration, becoming an America 250 community, and other opportunities. Also, Mayor Johnson of Somerset provided written and verbal testimony on the Ohio Department of Developments Preservation & Reinvestment Initiative for Community Enhancement (PRICE) program.

August

The By-Laws Committee was created. A special session on housing by Bricker Graydon was also provided.



September

Representative Mark Johnson (District 92) provided an update on exciting things happening in the district. Logan in Bloom provided a presentation on how it got started and the economic development it has spurred in the City of Logan. The Logan/Hocking SWD followed with a presentation on their tree commission, how they operate, and the growth they have witnessed.

Coshocton County and Columbiana County were also approved to join the partnership, bringing the MPP to 23 counties served.



October

The Housing Committee hosted a modular housing field trip.

We also hosted the Ohio State Bar Association to discuss their attorney staffing throughout the state and government relations in the region.

November

Annual elections occurred, congratulations to our newly elected officers for the upcoming year! We also heard from the Ohio EPA about new drinking water regulations and opportunities.

Carroll County and Belmont County joined the partnership, growing the MPP to 25 counties served.

December

SOPEC gave a presentation on who they are, what they do, grant opportunities, and their projects in the MPP footprint. Members also discussed their priorities for the upcoming year, which carried over from 2024.



**MAYORS'
PARTNERSHIP**

FOR PROGRESS

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

LEADERSHIP OHIO

Tracy represented the MPP to the Leadership Ohio cohort during their visit to Southeast Ohio.

CELEBRATE WOMEN CONFERENCE

Amista represented the MPP as a presenter at the Ohio University Celebrate Women Conference.

APPALACHIAN OHIO REGIONAL GIS COLLABORATIVE

The Appalachian Ohio Regional GIS Collaborative is a partnership of the Voinovich School of Leadership and Public Service at Ohio University, Mayors' Partnership for Progress, and Ohio's Local Development Districts, this initiative aims to create a centralized, collaborative data-sharing model. This model aims to provide reliable data to facilitate decision-making, problem-solving, grant-seeking, and reporting for our partners and all regional interests.

NEW WEBSITE

MPP launched a new and improved website, allowing for easier navigation and additional features available to members. Check it out at: mayorspartnership.org.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

This year, we were able to provide technical assistance contractors to 33 projects across the MPP footprint, ranging from park design to water and sewer studies.

PRESERVATION AND REINVESTMENT INITIATIVE FOR COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT (PRICE) TESTIMONY

Mayor Johnson of Somerset attended the Ohio Department of Development meeting on behalf of the MPP Housing Committee. Mayor Johnson's testimony addressed the unique housing challenges faced by Appalachian communities, including the deteriorating stock of mobile homes. Appalachian Ohio contains 48% of the state's mobile home units, which is 10% of the region's available housing units. He brought forth concerns that the Housing Committee had on the allocation process and ranking criteria of the PRICE program, proposing preferences that better fit the needs of the region.



THANK YOU TO OUR LEADERSHIP!

OFFICERS



Mayor Steve Patterson
City of Athens



Mayor Jennifer Lyle
City of New Concord



Mayor Jim Ullman
City of Beverly

STAFF



Amista Lipot



Tracy Galway



Sam Jurgena



Misty Crosby

IN MEMORY



Tom Johnson
Mayor of Somerset



Dow Saunders
Gallipolis City Manager



Gregory Morrison
Mayor of Dresden