STATEHOUSE REPORT

Published by: County Commissioners Association of Ohio

209 East State Street • Columbus, Ohio 43215-4309
Phone: 614-221-5627 • Fax: 614-221-6986 • www.ccao.org

December 22, 2023

CCAO conducting two surveys: jail projects and legislative relationship practices

County Jail Projects

CCAO and the Buckeye State Sheriffs Association have partnered to gather data on statewide capital funding needs for county and regional jail facilities. We hope to have all information gathered by January 31, 2024.

When we last conducted a survey into these needs in 2019, we identified nearly $1.4 billion in funding needs across 44 counties and four regional jails. Since 2019, the DeWine-Husted Administration and the General Assembly have provided $175 million to jail projects across the state, helping to bring needed improvements to county jails.

As we head into the third capital budget since the state-county partnership on jail construction was renewed, both associations believe it is time to provide lawmakers an updated estimate of the statewide need, particularly given how costs have increased since 2019.

You can access the survey through the link below and can provide answers either through the questions in the survey or through a document upload link included at the survey's end. Please complete the survey here.

If you have any questions regarding this survey, please contact Kyle Petty, Managing Director of Policy for CCAO, and/or Bob Cornwell, Executive Director of BSSA.

Legislative Relationships

At its September meeting, the CCAO Board of Directors voted unanimously to create a Statehouse Advocacy Task Force. The mission of the task force will be to strengthen the advocacy efforts of CCAO members through effective relationship building strategies with members of the Ohio General Assembly and education on key CCAO policy priorities.

As part of the Task Force's mission to strength the Association's members' advocacy efforts through effective relationship building strategies with members of the Ohio General Assembly, CCAO is asking members to take a few minutes to complete a brief about how our members currently advocate and build relationships with their legislative delegation.

You can access the survey here. If you have any questions regarding the survey, please contact either Kyle Petty or Nick Ciolli.

Three Commissioner Handbook chapters receive updates

This week, CCAO published updates to three Commissioner Handbook chapters, a result of our continuing mission to provide our members with the most up-to-date information regarding the various duties they are responsible for in their role as county commissioners, executives, and council members.

Chapter 24: Purchasing was updated to include changes made in House Bill 33, the state's operating budget for SFY 2024 and 2025, most notably provisions regarding use of county credit cards. Prior to the changes made in HB 33, counties could only use credit cards to pay for certain goods and services explicitly prescribed by the Revised Code. The updated handbook chapter explains the new flexibility counties have in their use of credit cards.

Chapter 136: Ohio State Extension was updated to include more timely data regarding the statewide Extension office's budget and recent changes to the cost-share between counties and the statewide office as it pertains to educator salaries.

The final update published this week was to Chapter 47: Alcohol, Drug Addiction & Mental Health Services. This chapter had last been updated in 1994, so it was not provided online due to how out of date it was. As part of CCAO's renewed objective to ensure our publications are as useful for our members as possible, the Association worked with the Ohio Association of County Behavioral Health Authorities to update the chapter and ensure our members have accurate information regarding this important component of the county human services apparatus.

The Policy Team is targeting several chapters for updates in 2024, including those covering services for individuals with developmental disabilities, veterans services, county homes, the Local Government Fund, county 9-1-1 systems, and more.

Ohio Department of Development releases All Ohio Future Fund guidelines; webinar to take place January 5

The All Ohio Future Fund (AOFF) is a new $750 million state program that will be administered by Ohio Department of Development (ODOD). The purpose of the fund is to make strategic investments across the state of Ohio to increase the state's inventory of project-ready economic development sites. Assistance will be provided mainly in the form of loans, which may be partially forgivable, although some grants may be available. Counties are eligible to apply, along with port authorities, community improvement corporations, land banks, and other local governments. Eligible costs include public roadwork, water/wastewater and related infrastructure, design and engineering, demolition, wetland mitigation, utility-gap funding, and other one-time site enhancements. Funding cannot be used for land acquisition.

Members are encouraged to read the complete guidelines. All applications require evidence of formal county support, even if the county is not the lead applicant or project manager. There is no minimum acreage for a project site, but preference is given to sites that meet JobsOhio's Site Certification criteria and have the following capacities:

- 200 acres
- 500,000 GPD water capacity
- 500,000 GPD sewer/wastewater capacity
- 111 MCF per hour gas capacity
- 40 MW electrical capacity

Organizations that are interested in applying must submit an indication of interest (IOI) outlining the project. The IOI portal will remain open for one year, but projects will be approved on a rolling basis. ODOD will coordinate review of applications with JobsOhio and other state agencies to conduct due diligence and to determine if more appropriate alternative funding options exist.

An informational webinar will be held January 5, 2024, at 10:00 a.m. CCAO will forward registration information when it becomes available.

Members with questions should contact Jon Honeck, Senior Policy Analyst, jhoneck@ccao.org, 514-220-7982.