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**September 2, 2025**

**Thank you to all the commissioners, executives, and council members who attended the 2025 CCAO Summer Symposium last week in Hocking Hills! Read more about the event below.**

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Association and Member News | State and Federal News |
Education and Grants | County News |
Job Postings

Statehouse Report and Counties Current Archive | Dates to Remember

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## ASSOCIATION AND MEMBER NEWS

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### CCAO hosts successful Summer Symposium

Last week, CCAO held our 2025 Summer Symposium at the Hocking Hills State Park Lodge. Thank you to all the members and county staff who attended the event, and thank you to Hocking County for hosting us! Photos from the event can be found on our Facebook.

The event ran from Sunday to Tuesday and featured sessions on property taxation, tourism, the federal One Big Beautiful Bill (HR 1), and having crucial conversations as a leader. Copies of presentations are available on the event page of our website.

A special thank you to our speakers, including State Representative David Thomas, CCAO 1st Vice President and Hamilton County Commissioner Denise Driehaus, Stark County Commissioner Alan Harold, Hocking County Commissioner Michael Linton, and more!

Thank you again for all those who attended and our Hocking County hosts! We hope to see you all at the 2025 Winter Conference, which will be held from December 3 to December 5 at the Downtown Hilton in Columbus. More information about the event will be available in the coming weeks.

***Top**: Representative David Thomas discusses property tax proposals with CCAO members.*

***Middle Left**: Williams County Commissioner Scott Lirot and CCAO President and Clermont County Commissioner David Painter.*

***Middle Right**: Franklin County Commissioner John O'Grady and Preble County Commissioner David Haber.*

***Bottom Left**: CCAO Board of Directors Members Jon Hofstetter (Wayne County), Executive Committee Member Tony Anderson (Fayette County), and Board Secretary Joe Antram (Logan).*

***Bottom Right**: CCAO Managing Director of Enterprise and Retirement Services Steve Caraway and Medina County Commissioner Steve Hambley*

### CCAO to host budget briefings in each region during September and October

Beginning in mid-September and running through early October, the CCAO Policy Team will host five regional meetings to bring together commissioners, executives, council members, and key staff from across the state and discuss pertinent policy issues and funding included in the state operating budget. Each briefing will be held in a different CCAO District.

The events will begin at 9:00 am and end at 1:00 pm, with lunch served. You are welcome to attend any of the events listed below.

Please RSVP to Karla Dunbar at kdunbar@ccao.org or 614-221-5627 and specify which event you plan to attend. Please also include any dietary requirements in your RSVP.

We look forward to seeing you soon!

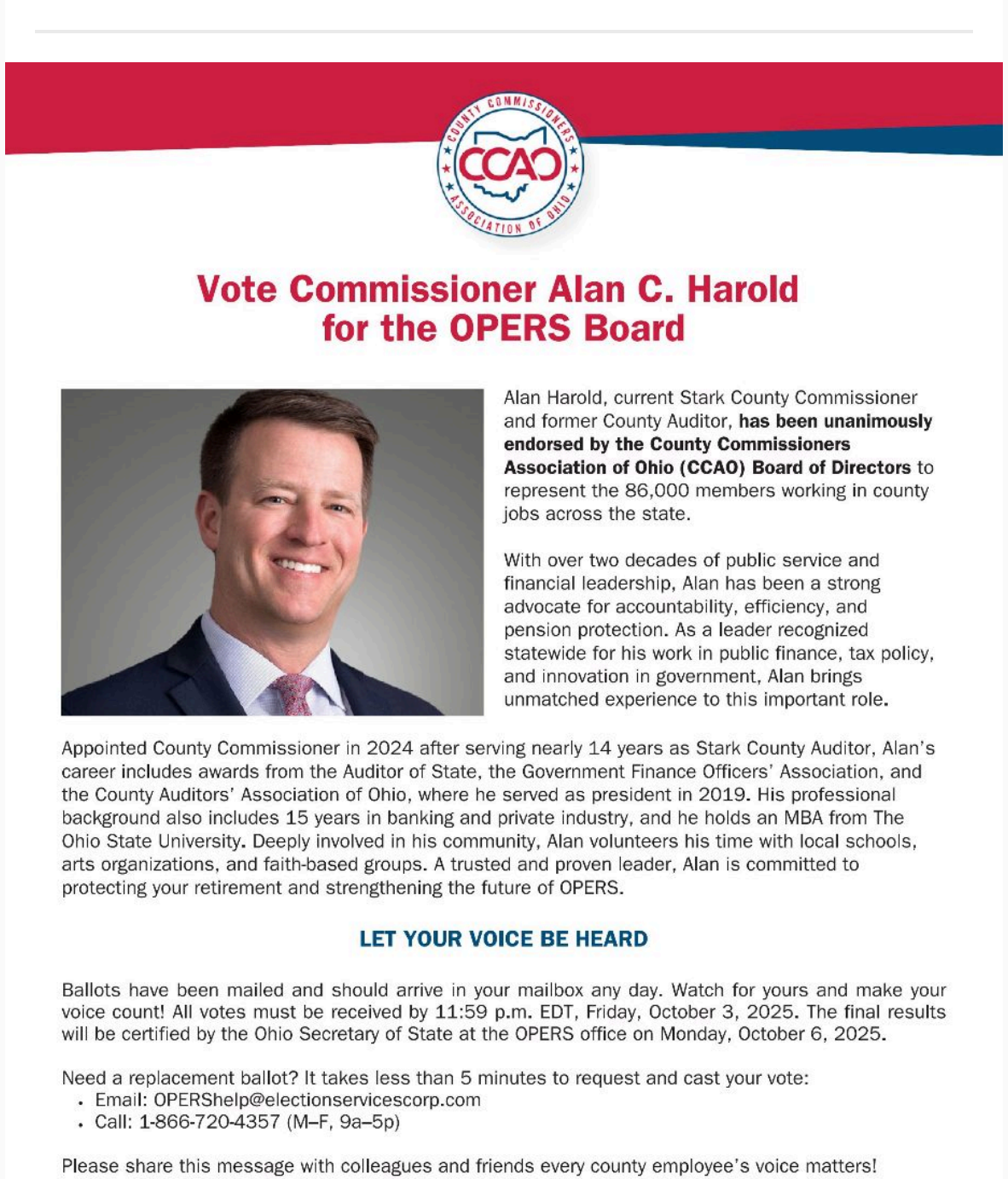
**SEPTEMBER 15 – NORTHWEST REGION**
Allen County OhioMeansJobs
951 Commerce Pkwy, Lima, OH 45804

**SEPTEMBER 22 – NORTHEAST REGION**
Reed Memorial Library / Jenkins Room
167 East Main Street, Ravenna, OH 44266

**SEPTEMBER 29 – SOUTHWEST REGION**
Greene County, Media Room
541 Ledbetter Rd., Xenia, OH 45385

**OCTOBER 03 – CENTRAL REGION**
Delaware County Byxbe Meeting Room
1610 State Route 521, Delaware, OH 43015

**OCTOBER 06 – SOUTHEAST REGION**
Parks Edge Event Center
601 E Main St., Jackson, OH 45640



## Vote Commissioner Alan C. Harold for the OPERS Board

Alan Harold, current Stark County Commissioner and former County Auditor, **has been unanimously endorsed by the County Commissioners Association of Ohio (CCAO) Board of Directors** to represent the 86,000 members working in county jobs across the state.

With over two decades of public service and financial leadership, Alan has been a strong advocate for accountability, efficiency, and pension protection. As a leader recognized statewide for his work in public finance, tax policy, and innovation in government, Alan brings **unmatched experience to this important role.**

Appointed County Commissioner in 2024 after serving nearly 14 years as Stark County Auditor, Alan's career includes awards from the Auditor of State, the Government Finance Officers' Association, and the County Auditors' Association of Ohio, where he served as president in 2019. His professional background also includes 15 years in banking and private industry, and he holds an MBA from The Ohio State University**.** Deeply involved in his community, Alan volunteers his time with local schools, arts organizations, and faith-based groups. A trusted and proven leader, Alan is committed to protecting your retirement and strengthening the future of OPERS.

**LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD**

Ballots have been mailed and should arrive in your mailbox any day. Watch for yours and make your voice count! All votes must be received by **11:59 p.m.** EDT, Friday, October 3, 2025**.** The final results will be certified by the Ohio Secretary of State at the OPERS office on Monday, October 6, 2025**.**

Need a replacement ballot? It takes less than 5 minutes to request and cast your vote:
- Email: OPERShelp@electionservicescorp.com
- Call: 1-866-720-4357 (M–F, 9a–5p)

Please share this message with colleagues and friends every county employee's voice matters!
Thank you for your time and support. Alan's years of experience and proven background in county service will bring strong, trusted leadership for county employees across Ohio.

### CCAO hiring Communications Coordinator

CCAO is seeking to fill the position of Communications Coordinator!

The position is responsible for coordinating of external and internal communication to support the strategic direction of CCAO and its entities. The position will plan, write, design, and layout communication pieces and social media; produce and edit short videos and podcasts; maintain CCAO and its entities' websites; develop and implement media outreach and educational strategies; monitor media outlets for mentions of CCAO and its entities; and take and edit photographs at events.

You can access the full job description here.

Please submit a letter of interest, resume, references, writing samples, and, if applicable, portfolio to CCAO Outreach & Member Engagement Manager Rachel Reedy at rreedy@ccao.org by the close of business this Thursday (September 4).

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*A Special Thanks to our Pinnacle Partner*

Anthem

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## STATE AND FEDERAL NEWS

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### Public comment on draft BEAD proposal period ends *TOMORROW*

Last Thursday, the Department of Development released BroadbandOhio's Draft Final Proposal for the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) program. The draft is accessible here.

The Department is soliciting public comments through tomorrow (September 3). Due to the compressed timeline, if you have interest in providing comment on the draft proposal, you should review the draft today.

Public comments should be sent to bbohgrants@development.ohio.gov.

### Attorney General issues opinion on county agreements on immigration enforcement

Last week, Attorney General Dave Yost released Attorney General Opinion 2025-015, concerning the means through which counties can enter into an agreement with federal immigration authorities and other associated issues.

The opinion finds that agreements with federal immigration authorities to detain aliens subject to removal from the country in the county jail can only be entered into by the board of county commissioners, not by the county sheriff.

Additionally, if such a contract is in place, the 48-hour hold limitation does not apply to aliens being held if there is a decision pending on their removal from the country.

Finally, the terms of the contract between the county and the federal authority will dictate whether or not the sheriff can transport aliens. Reasons an alien may need to be transported include for medical purposes, transfer between facilities, and for court appearances.

### Auditor of State issues bulletins on cybersecurity and public unclaimed funds

Last week, Auditor of State Keith Faber released two bulletins of note for counties. They concern the new cybersecurity policy that local governments are required to adopt and how public offices can claim unclaimed funds in their name.

**Cybersecurity**
House Bill 96, the recently enacted state operating budget, enacted a new Revised Code section governing cybersecurity policy and practice for local governments. Bulletin 2025-007: Adoption of Cybersecurity Program includes an explanation of the statute and expectations of counties to comply with future audits.

HB 96 added definitions of "cybersecurity incident" and "ransomware incident" into state law by enacting R.C. 9.64.

The bill creates new reporting requirements. Beginning September 30, 2025, if a county experiences a cybersecurity incident or ransomware incident, the board of county commissioners or county council must notify two state entities.

Within seven days, the county must notify the Ohio Cyber Integration Center (OCIC) at 614-387-1089 or OCIC@dps.ohio.gov.

Within 30 days, the county must notify the Auditor of State by filling out the cybersecurity reporting form (found here) and submitting the completed form to Cyber@ohioauditor.gov. Counties should update their internal processes to include these notifications. HB 96 amended public records law to exempt these reports from disclosure.

HB 96 requires all counties and other political subdivisions to implement a cybersecurity program. The responsibility to implement the program lies with the legislative body of the political subdivision. In the case of county government, this is the board of county commissioners or, in a charter county, the county council. The Auditor of State requires counties to be compliant with this provision by January 1, 2026. These programs, as well as procurement of cybersecurity services and software, will be exempt from public records disclosure beginning September 30, 2025.

Finally, if a county experiencing a ransomware incident wishes to pay or otherwise comply with a ransom demand, the board of commissioners or county executive and council must formally approve the payment or compliance in a resolution. The resolution must specifically state why the payment or compliance is in the best interest of the county. If a county does not adopt such a resolution, the payment or compliance of a ransom demand is prohibited. This requirement is effective September 30, 2025.

CyberOhio created a landing page for all information related to the implementation of the HB 96 cybersecurity requirements. The administration has hosted two webinars, and the recordings are available on that webpage. CyberOhio plans to update the webpage with Frequently Asked Questions in the coming weeks.

The Auditor of State's office created a landing page for implementation as well; it also plans to release FAQs soon.

**Unclaimed Funds**
Bulletin 2025-008: Process for Seeking Unclaimed Money for Public Offices explains how local governments can reclaim unclaimed funds in their name. The process is similar to that for private individuals but must also include a proof of authority, which typically takes the form of a letter by a chief executive or by a resolution.

When a local government receives its funds, the Auditor of State recommends that "all reasonable efforts" be made to return the money to the fund from which they were expended or that they otherwise would have been credited to. The government should document its efforts to determine the source of the funds. If it cannot do so, the governing authority must adopt a resolution noting it cannot determine the proper fund, at which point the money can be placed in the general fund.

If you have any questions about these bulletins, you can contact the Auditor of State's office at 800-282-0370.

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## EDUCATION AND GRANTS

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### Public risk management conference to be held on Friday

This Friday, September 5, the Ohio Public Risk Management Association (OPRIMA) will be hosting OPRIMA Fest 2025, "Harvesting Knowledge in Risk Management." The event will be held at the Sharonville Convention Center in Sharonville and contain a full day of learning.

Registration costs $100 and can be completed here.

Breakout sessions include a tabletop cybersecurity exercise based on AI threats, injury reporting and investigations, and market updates, among others.

### Proposals for Historical Markers open, grants available to defray cost

The Ohio History Connection maintains Remarkable Ohio, the series of state historical markers across all 88 counties.

Proposals can be made until May 1, 2026, for the latest round of historical markers.

Marker nominations should address at least one important aspect of Ohio's historical, natural, or physical development in one of the following areas: history, architecture, culture, archaeology, or natural history.

All marker subjects must embody one or more of the following:

- Be associated with events that have made a significant contribution to broad patterns of history;
- Be associated with persons no longer living who have made significant contributions to patterns of history and culture;
- Embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, style, period, method of construction, architecture, or represent the work of a master;
- Yield, or be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history;
- Be associated with groups who have made distinctive and significant contributions to history;
- Embody characteristics of the state representing significant aspects of the physical or natural history of the earth and its life.

Markers cost between $4,010 and $4,420, depending on the length of text inscribed. There are additional costs if the marker will have artwork or photos added.

There are three grants available to defray the cost of purchasing an approved marker:

**Ohio Historical Markers Grant**
Provided directly through the Ohio History Connection, the program provides $1,000 of the cost. Markers featuring state and/or national significance will take precedence over local significance only, and preference may be given to markers proposed in counties with fewer markers than others.

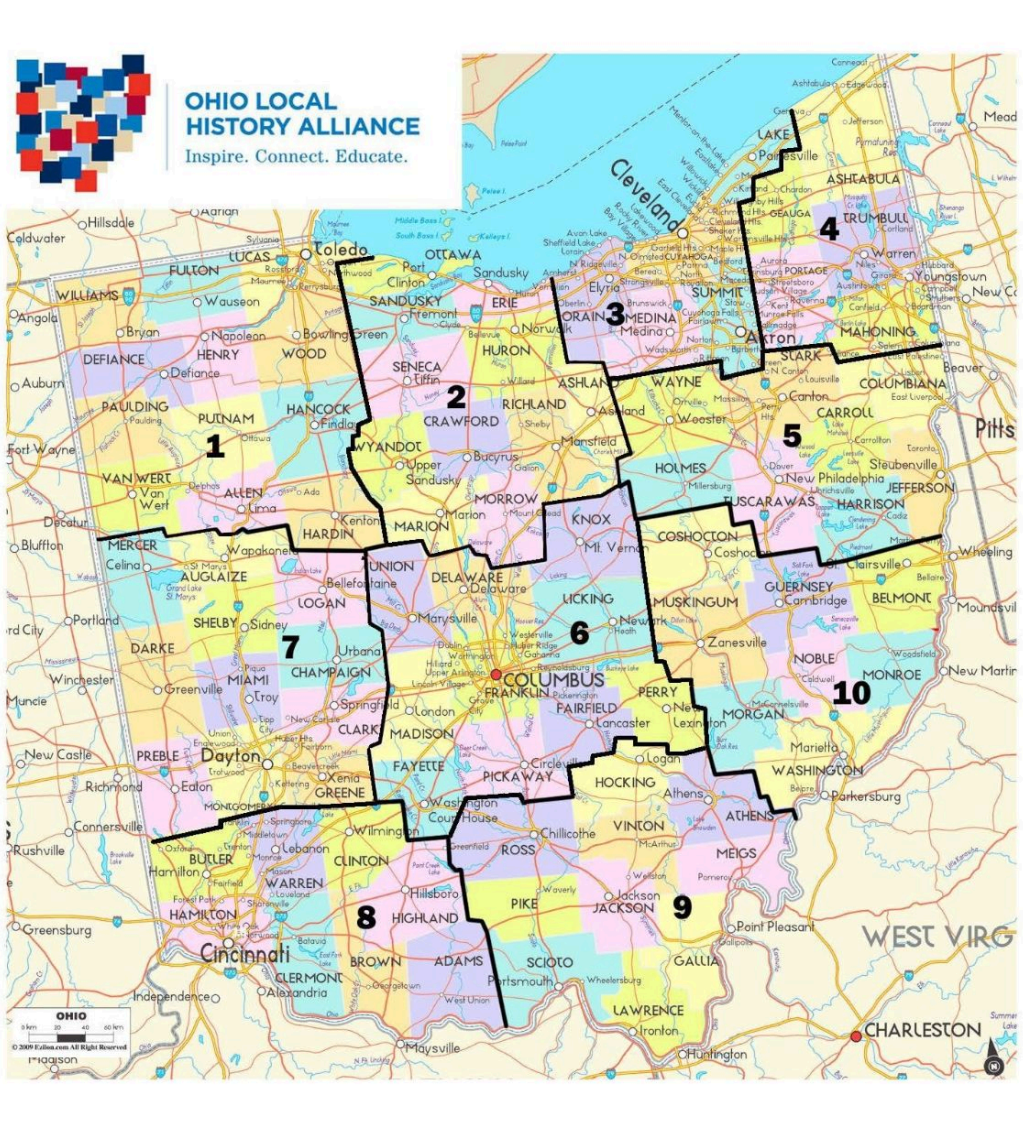
**William G. Pomeroy Foundation Grant**
Provided by the eponymous organization, these grants can cover up to $3,585 of a marker's costs. The foundation uses the same criteria as the general marker program and does not appear to give preferences. Up to 10 grants are awarded per year.

**Robert W. & Karen W. Lucas Regional Fund**
Provided through donations by Robert W. and Karen W. Lucas, these grants can cover up to $3,585 of the cost of a marker. Funds are only available for markers in select counties. These are counties in the Ohio Local Historical Alliance regions 5, 9, and 10 (see map below).

More information about the grants and the program as a whole is available on Remarkable Ohio's website.

*Counties in Region 5, Region 9, and Region 10 are eligible for the Lucas Regional Fund.*

*This includes Athens, Belmont, Carroll, Columbiana, Coshocton, Gallia, Guernsey, Harrison, Hocking, Holmes, Jackson, Jefferson, Lawrence, Meigs, Monroe, Morgan, Muskingum, Noble, Pike, Ross, Scioto, Stark, Tuscarawas, Vinton, Washington, and Wayne counties.*



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## COUNTY NEWS

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*Each week Counties Current highlights the happenings in our counties in the words of their local media. One story from each of the CCAO's five districts is highlighted, and on occasion other stories may be highlighted as well.*

### Northwest District

Putnam commissioners discuss some county financial concerns

**Crescent News, August 25, 2025**

Putnam County commissioners discussed the county's financial situation among other topics during a series of recent meetings.

The county's reserve fund and how much carryover is necessary was one discussion item.

A number of county officials were on hand to discuss finances, including Putnam County Auditor Bob Benroth.

One year's worth of expenses was deemed an appropriate carryover, according to commissioners' meeting minutes. And Benroth noted that early in his tenure $1 million was an adequate amount, but now "it would be much more," the meeting minutes noted.

The county's EMS — generating about $590,000 annually — was another discussion topic. The minutes made mention of ongoing plans to construct a new EMS building addition in Glandorf and noted that "EMS services are expanding."

Therefore, the minutes added that the county's EMS service will have to raise its "revenue stream as well to be able to maintain the new building addition. Some of the items on the wish list for the building can be dialed back to just needs. Hopefully, the bidding will come in under the projections. Any future plans must be done with caution."

### Northeast District

Wayne County won't put incomes, sales tax revision plan on ballot

**Daily Record, August 25, 2025**

A proposal to change the property and sales tax structures in Wayne County will not appear on the November general election ballot.

After concluding a series of public hearings, Wayne County commissioners opted to gather more information and input before approving a ballot issue.

The hearings centered on a proposal to adopt resolutions that would reduce the inside property 2-millage tax and establish a 0.45% permissive sales and use tax as a replacement. The proposal, linked to House Bill 335, was aimed at delivering financial relief to homeowners.

"At this time, we are not moving forward with this proposal. It will not appear on the November ballot," Wayne County Board of Commissioners President Dave McMillen said. "Our responsibility is to perform due diligence, and we believe it is critical to gather more input before making a decision that would have long-term effects on county revenue and public services. We value the time, effort, and thoughtful input from everyone who attended the hearings."

Several attendees expressed concerns that reducing the inside 2 mills now would not prevent future boards of commissioners from re-establishing the millage, a possibility the commissioners acknowledged they could not guarantee.

### Central District

Richland County Transit awaits $500K grant decision to boost workforce mobility

**Richland Source, August 21, 2025**

Jean Taddie is hoping for good news any day now.

$500,000 worth of good news, that is, for Richland County Transit.

Taddie, the transit development manager for the Richland County Regional Planning Commission, said she hopes to hear soon whether RCT has been approved for a grant that would help local residents with transportation to and from work — outside of the agency's normal operating hours.

"We're supposed to find out by (the end of August), which should be any day. I did check my email right before I left, so we're anxiously waiting word on that," Taddie said during a lunchtime presentation to the Richland County Regional Planning Commission.

"If we get this funding for the service, we would anticipate implementing that starting in May of 2026," she said.

"If we are not awarded the funding, then we will continue to search for funding opportunities," Taddie said.

RCT, RCRPC and the North End Community Improvement Collaborative joined forces in December to receive a $150,000 grant to design a pilot program that could help solve a troublesome local workforce issue:

What do people do if they work second or third shift but don't have a way to get to their job and back home again?

The fact is that one in four Americans is unable to regularly and reliably access transportation they require to meet their daily needs, according to the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Transit Administration.

The local partnership demonstration project was one of only eight selected nationwide by the University of Minnesota's Center for Transportation Studies aimed at exploring strategies to improve people's mobility and access to daily needs.

### Southwest District

MC Commissioners OK MOU for School Resource Officer

**Miami Valley Today, August 25, 2025**

The Miami County Commissioners authorized a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for a School Resource Officer (SRO) and authorized and signed an agreement with the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) during their meeting on Thursday, Aug. 21.

The commissioners authorized and signed an MOU for an SRO to the Board of Education of the Miami County Educational Service Center (MCESC) for the 2025/2026, 2026/2027 and 2027/2028 school years, effective Sept. 2, 2025, through May 31, 2028, as requested by Miami County Sheriff Dave Duchak. The SRO will provide guidance and be a positive role model to the students, faculty, and citizens while enforcing applicable laws of the State of Ohio.

The SRO will provide a safe and secure school environment and will serve as an educational resource and a liaison between the school district and the sheriff. The SRO will be scheduled for a 40-hour, five-day-a-week, Monday through Friday schedule, consistent with hours established for a normal school day. The Board of Education of the MCESC agrees to pay the following to the Miami County Sheriff's Office (MCSO), including $95,628 for the 2025/2026 school year billed quarterly; $99,931.28 for the 2026/2027 school year billed quarterly, and $102,929.20 for the 2027/2028 school year billed quarterly.

The commissioners authorized and signed a Subgrant Agreement with the ODJFS and the commissioners at the request of the Miami County Family and Children First Council (MCFCFC) for the SFY2026/2027 Ohio Department of Children and Youth (ODCY) Subgrant Agreement on behalf of the MCFCFC with the ODCY and the Miami County Commissioners as the administrative agent.

### Southeast District

Ohio leaders strike tentative deal with university to take over former college property

**Herald Star, August 26, 2025**

Jefferson County Commissioners met for a special meeting Monday morning to discuss the future of the property Eastern Gateway Community College sits on and the surrounding property.

The county is putting their legal action on pause and hiring a surveyor to survey the land and parcel. It is their goal to retain the mineral rights of the property.

The commission has reached a tentative agreement with Youngstown State University to come in and take over the former EGCC building and the property it sits on.

"I'm excited we have a state university that is willing to come in. Fix it and do what needs fixed. And it won't cost the county any money," Commissioner President Tony Morelli said.

The county is also looking to develop the property that surrounds Eastern Gateway.

Morelli says, "That property is considered the best piece of property in the county for development."

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## DATES TO REMEMBER

*Please view the CCAO Calendar for a comprehensive list of events to note.*

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**SEPTEMBER 12**
**CORSA Annual Meeting**

**SEPTEMBER 15**
**CCAO Post Budget Briefing - Allen County**

**SEPTEMBER 19**
**CCAO Board of Directors Meeting**

**SEPTEMBER 22**
**CCAO Post Budget Briefing - Portage County**

**SEPTEMBER 26**
**Northeast District Meeting - Huron County**

**SEPTEMBER 29**
**CCAO Post Budget Briefing - Greene County**

**OCTOBER 3**
**CCAO Post Budget Briefing - Delaware County**

**OCTOBER 6**
**CCAO Post Budget Briefing - Jackson County**

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