OHIO'S TIME

BUDGET OF THE STATE OF OHIO FY 2024-2025

Investing in Ohio's Communities

The success that the state is experiencing during Ohio's Time in history must also be reflected in our individual communities. Because the DeWine-Husted Administration believes that a key function of state government is to support local communities, the new budget invests in housing infrastructure, natural resources, and the overall safety and security of local neighborhoods.

Safety and Security

To help ensure that Ohio's first responders can easily communicate and coordinate responses during emergencies, Ohio's new operating budget will reduce the cost of local government users for the **Multi-Agency Radio Communication System (MARCS)** with $21 million over the biennium. This investment allows first responder agencies to easily join this critical network, which provides state-of-the-art wireless digital communications connecting more than 3,000 public safety and public service agencies across jurisdictions.

Local governments will receive emergency service upgrades to better ensure that citizens get a fast response when they call 911. With support from the new operating budget, Ohio will complete the $45.9 million infrastructure for **Next Generation 911**, which will allow citizens to contact 911 via text message, smartwatches and other wearable technology, home security systems, and vehicle systems. The new technology will better direct emergency calls made from cell phones to the correct jurisdiction and improve response times.

Ohio's new operating budget provides $46.5 million to fund 988, the new three-digit number that connects callers to the existing National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, where compassionate, accessible care and support is available to anyone experiencing mental health-related distress or for those with a loved one who may need crisis support.

Ohio's new operating budget supports Governor DeWine's recommendation that the State Fire Marshal be able to support Ohio's volunteer firefighters by waiving fees at the State Fire Marshal's Fire Academy, increasing equipment and training grants, and upgrading the State Fire Marshal's systems to allow for online training.

Ohio law enforcement officers will gain access to more top-notch training opportunities with $40 million per year allotted in the operating budget for continuing professional training. This allocation was recommended by both Governor DeWine and the Law Enforcement Training Funding Study Commission to ensure that Ohio's peace officers receive consistent training to keep their skills sharp. In addition, the Ohio Department of Public Safety will receive $6 million to create a statewide law enforcement accreditation program to support local agencies that work to meet the highest levels of professionalism.

Building on the success of the Ohio Department of Public Safety's Ohio Narcotics Intelligence Center (ONIC), Ohio's new operating budget provides $13.1 million per fiscal year to expand ONIC and to aid more local law enforcement agencies in investigating violent, drug-related crimes through intelligence gathering and forensic evidence examination. This doubling of the support dedicated to ONIC continues the strong partnerships the state has developed with the local law enforcement community.

New programming focusing on increased accessibility to driver training and stronger driver education requirements to promote safety will receive $6 million per fiscal year.

Housing Infrastructure

Ohio's new operating budget is investing $600 million into the creation and rehabilitation of housing. This includes $100 million in tax credits per fiscal year for the development and rehabilitation of low-income, multi-family rental housing projects that increase the affordable housing supply. The credits are part of a four-year program totaling $400 million.

The budget also supports the supply of affordable single-family housing with a new

tax credit. Qualifying projects will be eligible for tax credits totaling $50 million per fiscal year. These credits are part of a four-year program totaling $200 million.

Ohioans planning to purchase a home will be able to open an account with support from the operating budget. Homeowners and prospective home buyers, their families, and their employers will be able to contribute to an account, and a person who contributed will be eligible to deduct such contributions on their Ohio personal income tax return.

The budget also invests $150 million over the biennium through the creation of the Welcome Home Ohio Program. This program will allow landbanks across the state to protect, preserve, and create a pathway to homeownership by revitalizing some of Ohio's existing older housing.

Brent Spence Bridge

The once-in-a-generation Brent Spence Bridge Corridor Project will significantly improve the quality of life for those who live and travel along I-75 and I-71 through Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky. The Ohio Department of Transportation continues to work in partnership with the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet to undertake this major project. This budget includes the appropriations necessary for the project, including more than $1.6 billion in competitive federal infrastructure grants.

Strong Local Communities

The fiscal stability of local governments and public libraries is extremely important to Ohio's well-being. The new budget continues the DeWine-Husted Administration's commitment to Ohio's local governments and public libraries by permanently increasing shared revenue to these critical local partners.

The new operating budget supports Governor DeWine's commitment to providing counties more funding to cover the cost of providing legal defense for people accused or convicted of a crime who cannot afford an attorney. The budget includes $338 million over the biennium to continue the support of indigent defense.

Ohio is focused on caring for its older residents. Ohio's new operating budget takes steps to improve quality of life for seniors so they can remain in their homes and connected to their communities. The budget includes $40 million in funding for developing a pilot program to help Ohio's senior citizens delay entry into Medicaid, preserve their personal assets, and live a healthy, independent, active lifestyle. For

those seniors that need a higher level of care, the budget includes an additional $1.4 billion investment to increase the quality of care in nursing homes. By increasing the number of patient advocates available to residents to help ensure patient safety and encouraging nursing homeowners to increase pay to attract and retain top-notch staff because Ohio's seniors should receive the highest quality of care.

Over $9 million over the biennium will be dedicated to anti-human trafficking initiatives for emergency housing, specialized training for foster parents, grants to organizations providing direct support to survivors of human trafficking, and additional resources for anti-trafficking law enforcement efforts.

The Ohio Department of Youth Services' population has increased by 38% since 2020. The new operating budget includes more than $7 million over the biennium to support youth committed to or transitioning from custody. This funding will be available to support such items as year-round vocational education classes for youth in grades 6-12; initiatives to engage families and the committed youth; and additional staff for a multisystemic therapy trauma team. The budget also funds recently enacted legislation allowing for supportive educational or rehabilitative services for youth leaving supervision at 21 years old.

To better protect the safety of local communities, Ohio's new operating budget provides $100 million to fix up to a dozen hazardous railroad grade crossings around the state.

More than $100 million is also provided in the budget for new and continuing investments in multi-modal transportation including rail development, county airport improvements, and public transit. This funding leverages new competitive federal grants made available through the federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.

Included in this operating budget is a $500 million investment in the state's transportation infrastructure under the Connect4Ohio plan. This funding will further strengthen Ohio's transportation network by improving safety and supporting economic development.

A total of $75 million in additional capital grants will be dedicated for construction and renovation at local county jails. This is in addition to $50 million in grants provided to counties through the 2023-2024 state capital budget.

The budget will support several programs within the Ohio BUILDS (Broadband,

Utilities, and Infrastructure for Local Development Success) program, which was launched by the DeWine-Husted Administration to strategically invest in projects to improve quality of life and support economic growth.

- $124 million will be directed toward **addressing critical water infrastructure projects** in Ohio communities.
- $350 million will support the **Ohio Brownfield Remediation Program** to clean up and prepare hazardous brownfield sites for redevelopment.
- $150 million will go toward the **Ohio Building Demolition and Site Revitalization Program** to help local communities demolish dilapidated commercial and residential buildings and revitalize surrounding properties to attract investments, businesses, and jobs.

Protecting Ohio's Resources

Ohio's operating budget provides $111.5 million each fiscal year to continue the work of **H2Ohio**, which is Governor DeWine's comprehensive, data-driven approach to improve Ohio's water quality over the long term. This funding will support the continuation of concerted efforts by the Ohio Department of Agriculture, the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency, and the Ohio Lake Erie Commission to lessen the severity of algal blooms and ensure that more communities have access to quality water infrastructure.

In addition, $23.4 million annually will go toward a new H2Ohio initiative to improve the quality of waters, specifically in Ohio's rivers. The **H2Ohio Rivers Initiative** will protect streamside habitats, monitor aquatic species, and repair streams impacted by acid mine drainage. The initiative will also survey contamination and work to reduce salt and chloride in streams and rivers.

This summary was compiled by the Ohio Office of Budget and Management. More information is available at obm.ohio.gov.