



DELAWARE
COUNTY *Ohio*



2026 ANNUAL REPORT

Delaware County
Board of Commissioners

Jeff Benton, President
Gary Merrell, Vice President
Barb Lewis

PICTURED: The Historic Courthouse, located at 91 N. Sandusky St. in Delaware, houses the Delaware County Commissioners' Office and the Veterans Services Commission. Constructed 1868-1869 at a cost of \$80,000, the iconic structure originally housed most of Delaware County's elected officials and their staffs. The building was vacated in November 2017 when the offices working there (including the Court of Common Pleas and the Clerk of Courts) moved to the new Delaware County Courthouse at 117 N. Union St. The historic building has undergone renovations in 1928, 1954, 1980 and 2020, the last of which cost \$9.5 million and was funded by the general fund and the county's share of state casino revenues.

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COMMISSIONER JEFF BENTON



We carefully manage our fiscal resources to invest in planned smart growth initiatives. Our investments in new roads, sewers and economic development drive the growth that is the hallmark of Delaware County. We see this with the new Mercedes Benz of Sunbury dealership and Camping World in Berkshire Township. We see it in the City of Delaware with the exciting new Maridel multi-use development and the \$280 million expansion by longtime community partner PPG.

We see it in the facilities we use to serve the public: a new EMS treatment facility near Powell; a renovation of the Willis Building where our Board of Elections, a title office for our Clerk of Courts, and our Records Center operate; and a Shared Services Building to be used by a variety of agencies.

Throughout this growth, we have maintained our commitment to reduce our residents' tax burden wherever we can, including a property-tax rollback over the last four years that totals \$25 million. There is more work to be done, but we are making great progress.

COMMISSIONER GARY MERRELL



Our county is growing at a rate that requires planning, vision and implementation.

We have brought those three elements to our partnership with ODOT, working on the Rts. 36/37 and I-71 interchange, and planning for the connector to 36/37.

We will soon break ground on a Shared Services building that will serve many in our community as we bring our Job & Family Services Department, Board of Developmental Disabilities, Mental Health & Recovery Services Board and Veteran Services Office all under one roof.

We support continued road improvements throughout the County, economic development initiatives that create quality jobs, improvements to our 911 system, plans to expand our EMS services and facilities, and so much more.

Our future is bright because each of us — from elected officials to those who volunteer their time and resources — support their local communities and the nearly 250,000 people who make Delaware County their home. Together we are all making Delaware County the envy of Ohio.

COMMISSIONER BARB LEWIS



When I first assumed this office in January 2015, the landscape of Delaware County looked far different than it does today. As I prepare to conclude my third and final term, I am proud of the progress we have made and encouraged by the steps we are taking to ensure our continued prosperity.

The pace of growth has been incredible. People flock to Delaware County for its opportunity, its resources and its reputation as one of the best places to live, work and raise a family.

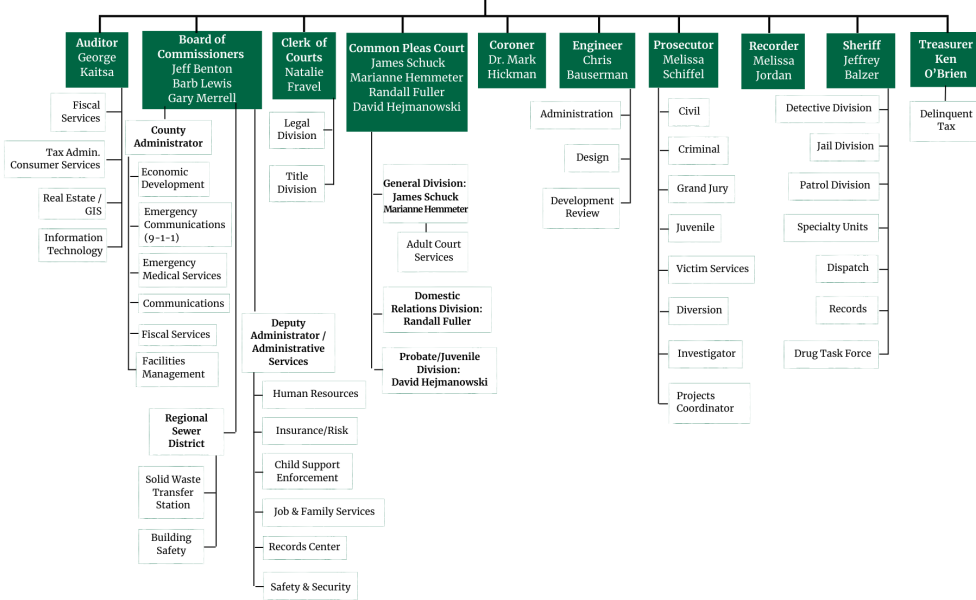
Managing the implications of such rapid growth has not been easy. But thanks to the strong partnerships formed by our elected leaders and other stakeholders, we have kept our taxes low, our community safe and our infrastructure sound. We have achieved great results through our shared commitment to good governance, fiscal accountability and doing right by the people who have placed their trust in us.

As I reflect on my career and prepare to begin retirement, I realize that this work is never done. Our county must continue to grow its workforce housing while attracting the right kind of jobs in the right places. And we must remember the principles that made our home one of the fastest-growing counties in the country.



DELAWARE COUNTY GOVERNMENT

Citizens of Delaware County

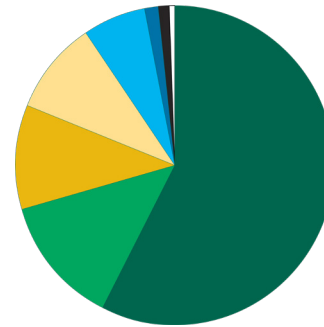


2026 Approved Budget: \$163.5 million

2025 Expenditures: \$168.7 million

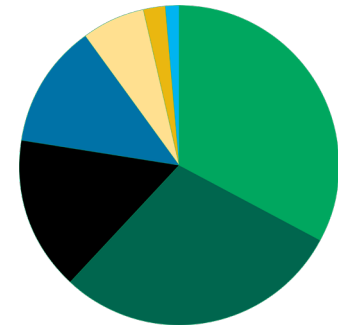
Revenues by Source (2025)

Sales Tax	\$99.2M
Fees And Charges For Services	\$22.3M
Interest	\$18.3M
Real Property Tax	\$16M
Intergovernmental	\$10.9M
Licenses And Permits	\$2.4M
Miscellaneous Revenue	\$2.1M
Interfund Revenue	\$374K
Fines And Forfeitures	\$306K
Other Financing Sources	\$57K



General Fund Expenditures by Category (2025)

Salary	\$55.6M
Transfers	\$49.3M
Services And Charges	\$26.2M
Benefits	\$20.8M
Capital Outlay And Equipment	\$11.1M
Materials And Supplies	\$3.6M
Grants In Aid	\$2.1M



DELAWARE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Citizens of Delaware County

Board of Commissioners



FISCAL SPOTLIGHT: In December 2025, Delaware County was recognized for outstanding financial reporting for the fiscal year that ended in 2024. Auditor George Kaitza and his team joined the Commissioners in session to accept the Ohio Auditor of State Award with Distinction, which recognizes a level of clean and accountable financial reporting achieved by only the top 4% of governmental entities audited by the state.





5,727

Permits Issued

39,314

Inspections Completed

\$3M

Revenue



\$22.98M

Collected in 2025

4,125

Child Support Cases

85.3%

Collection Rate



RESIDENTIAL, COMMERCIAL GROWTH DRIVE INSPECTIONS TO NEW RECORD LEVEL

Delaware County Building Safety set a new record for inspections in 2025. Inspectors logged 137,846 miles while traveling to job sites where they completed 39,314 inspections.

The department also issued 5,727 permits and oversaw \$1.1 billion of construction activity, reflecting the continued investment in residential and commercial growth in Delaware County.

STATE RECOGNIZES LEADERSHIP IN CASELOAD DIVISION

In 2025, the Delaware County Child Support Enforcement Agency received top honors from the state of Ohio for exceptional performance and leadership in strengthening the Ohio Child Support Program. The 2025 Awards for Outstanding Performance by County Child Support Enforcement Agencies recognize Delaware County CSEA as a statewide leader in the Medium Caseload Division in the following areas:

- Best Overall Performance
- Best Performance in Collections on Cases with Arrears
- Best Performance in Collections on Current Support
- Total Disbursement per Total FTE
(For every \$1 spent, Delaware County CSEA collected \$11.50 in child support.)
- Most Improved Paternity Establishment
(Increased from 103.97% in FFY 2024 to 105.34% in FFY 2025.)





168

Public Records Requests

26,133

Social Media Followers

CONSTITUENT ENGAGEMENT UP

Two metrics used for tracking the public's engagement with county government trended upward in 2025. The number of public records requests increased 15.1% over 2024, and the county's social media following rose 11.2% from the year prior.

More than 1.1 million users saw a Facebook post promoting Touch-a-Truck at Olentangy Berlin High School, making it the most viewed post of 2025. Information about a \$21 million federal grant for the Orange Road Underpass was also popular, as were instructions for receiving snow emergency alerts.

View our recent videos at:
co.delaware.oh.us/current-videos

or scan this QR code



\$1 BILLION+

of investment secured in the county by incentivizing businesses with financial tools provided by the Delaware County Finance Authority

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

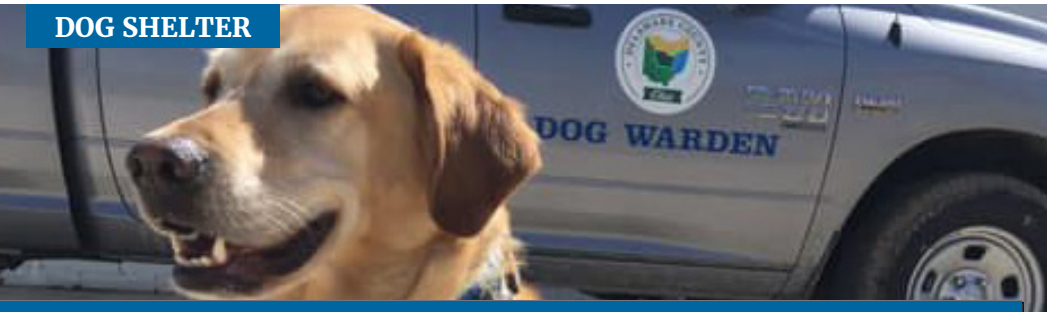
People are Delaware County's greatest asset, and the Economic Development Department continues its efforts in fostering an economy that facilitates existing businesses to expand and attracts new businesses to Delaware County.

The Delaware County Workforce Initiative was launched in 2024 and has now matured into a Workforce Alliance. Earlier this year the Alliance completed a strategic plan and, with this direction, will work to strengthen the local workforce ecosystem through interorganizational coordination. The Economic Development Housing Report has evolved into a more robust State of the Market Report that includes not only data on the for-sale and rental housing markets, but also commercial real estate, encompassing retail, office and industrial sectors.

EXECUTING ON A SHARED VISION

In 2025, the department assisted the Delaware County Finance Authority, a quasi-governmental agency appointed by the County Commissioners, in securing infrastructure construction bonds and capital lease sales tax waivers for 13 development projects in the county. In doing so, the Delaware County Finance Authority secured its 10th bond fund deal and can now pursue a bond rating. Only five of the 61 existing port or finance authorities in Ohio have received a bond rating from a rating agency.

Delaware County Economic Development provides ongoing support to local townships and municipalities that are crafting their economic-development and strategic-planning initiatives. Finally, the department continues to perform site analysis in key growth corridors throughout the county to identify business expansion and attraction opportunities and position the county to compete on regional, national and global scales.



146

Returned to Owner

123

Transferred to Rescues

22

Direct Adoptions

FINDING HOMES FOR ADOPTABLE DOGS

The Delaware County Dog Shelter continues to offer low-cost adoption opportunities. Through careful screening of those wishing to adopt from the County-operated dog shelter and kennel, many dogs are successfully placed with responsible owners each year. Dogs that cannot be reunited with their owners or directly adopted are transferred to 501(c)(3) rescue groups and humane societies to find loving, forever homes.



115,000+

Calls Answered

99.6%

Calls Answered Within 10 Seconds

97.74%

Customer Satisfaction

95%

Customer Satisfaction

< 6 Mins.

Countywide Response Time

15,000

Training Hours



STATS EXCEED STANDARDS

In 2025, 99.6% of 911 calls in Delaware County were answered within 10 seconds, far exceeding the state standard of 90% within 15 seconds and 95% within 20 seconds.

When calls required a fire or EMS response, 98.98% were dispatched in less than 90 seconds.

Five Lifesaver Awards and one Stork Award were presented to dispatchers for providing CPR and baby-delivery instructions to callers.

VOTERS SUPPORT LEVY

In November, Delaware County voters approved a renewal of the 911 levy with a 0.05-mill increase, which will be used to address obsolete and end-of-life equipment at the dispatch center and transmission tower sites.



AGENCY EARNS DUAL ACCREDITATION

In 2025, Delaware County's Emergency Medical Services Department became the only government-based EMS agency in Ohio to earn national accreditation from the Commission on Accreditation for Prehospital Continuing Education (CAPCE). Fewer than 25 ground-ambulance services in the country have earned this distinction.

Additionally, it has recently earned a perfect score from the Commission on Accreditation of Ambulance Services (CAAS) for its re-accreditation site visit from that organization. Only 187 out of the roughly 15,000 EMS agencies nationally have achieved CAAS accreditation.

The agency also received the Mission Lifeline Gold award with Heart Attack and Stroke Honor Roll, claiming the highest recognition possible from the American Heart Association for the 11th straight year.

SUNBURY-AREA STATION READIES FOR OPENING



In March 2025, Delaware County EMS and the BST&G Fire District broke ground on a new station in Berkshire Township. Located just north of Camping World and Tanger Outlets on Wilson Road, Fire Station 352, which will house Medic 11, is slated to open in the first half of 2026. BST&G and DCEMS serve a rapidly growing residential population in the 54-square-mile fire district and are often the first responders for incidents on nearby I-71.



39

Facilities Maintained

806,000

Total Square Footage

EXPANDING FACILITIES, BUSY FLEET MAINTAINED

Led by the director, two supervisors and a fiscal administrative assistant, a staff of 13 custodians, eight maintenance workers, four day-porters and a painter maintain all County buildings except those operated by the Regional Sewer District. A staff of one lead mechanic and two mechanics at the Service Center maintain the County’s fleet, excluding the County Engineer’s fleet. In 2025, the Service Center maintained 300+ vehicles that traveled more than 2.75 million miles in total.



\$171.9M

Revenues
(2025)

\$168.7M

Expenditures
(2025)

\$2.8M

Collected by Lodging
Tax Program

PROPERTY TAX ROLLBACK RENEWED

In 2025, the Delaware County Commissioners renewed a 0.5-mill property tax reduction. This was the fourth annual renewal of the reduction and is estimated to save property owners \$6,884,362 in calendar year 2026. This 0.5-mill rollback has resulted in accumulated savings of nearly \$25 million.



7,496

Applications Received

151

Orientation Attendees

947

Training Hours
(Web-Based)

LEADERSHIP, WELLNESS, SAFETY PROGRAMS SUPPORT COUNTY WORKFORCE

In 2025, the Human Resources team continued investing in employee development and organizational support across the County. Eleven employees participated in the Leadership Onboarding program, engaging in discussions with HR and County leadership focused on expectations, accountability and effective management practices. An additional 31 employees completed the Delaware County Employee Academy, expanding their understanding of County operations and strengthening professional competencies. HR also supported departments with targeted training initiatives designed to enhance leadership capacity and workplace effectiveness.

In support of employee well-being, the County established a partnership with a local mental health provider to ensure employees and their family members can access counseling services within 48 hours, reinforcing its commitment to both physical and mental health. The annual Health Fair again brought together employees, families and more than 50 community vendors to promote preventive care and wellness resources.

Workplace safety also remained a priority, with strengthened protocols for high-risk operations and completion of detailed Job Hazard Analyses for safety-sensitive positions, with expansion planned for 2026. Safety training and emergency preparedness resources were made available to departments, and employees working in extreme weather conditions were provided seasonal safety supplies using grant funding received through the County’s health insurance consortium to support comfort and well-being. The County’s commitment to safety was further reflected in the appointment of the department’s Safety Coordinator as Northwest Director of the County Loss Control Coordinators Association.



6,252

Avg. Monthly SNAP Active Members

\$313M

Medicaid Benefits Paid Out

417

Prevention, Retention and Contingency Applications

109,582

Images Scanned / Month

292,007

Microfilm Images Digitized

18.5

Tons Shredded/Recycled

LEADERSHIP RECOGNIZED, STATS LEAD STATE

Two members of the Delaware County JFS leadership team were recognized in 2025 by professional organizations for their contributions to the field.

In June, the National Public Employer Labor Relations Association presented Delaware County JFS Director Bob Anderson with the National Pacesetter Award. The award recognizes innovative leadership in public sector labor relations and the development of a new tool or technique for use in resolving conflicts, addressing new challenges or assisting others in their professional growth. It was the second award of its kind for Anderson, who earlier in the year received the Ohio Pacesetter Award.

In October, Placement and Foster Care Supervisor Lynn Stacey was recognized as the Supervisor of the Year by the Public Children’s Services Association of Ohio. Having served in child protection since 2006 and in the broader social services field for more than 40 years, she now supervises placement and foster care at JFS. Delaware County typically has only 10 to 15 children in foster care at any given time, an incredible achievement for a county of our size.

Delaware County's state-monitored metrics continue to place the Protective Services team in the Top 3 for large counties. Delaware County has the lowest percentage of the child population in custody in Ohio and is tied for the lowest number of youth in congregate care among large counties. The agency also completed four adoptions in 2025.

Delaware County JFS also recovered \$38,000 of fraudulent claims while processing a combined total 7,853 new applications for SNAP, Medicaid and childcare assistance.

More than 1,300 job seekers visited the OhioMeansJobs resource center, and 3,124 more received virtual assistance.

DIGITIZATION EXPANDS ACCESS TO LARGE-FORMAT DOCS

Further building on a Family Search project that helped preserve Probate Court journals from 1920-1933, the Records Center purchased a large-format scanner to digitize many of Delaware County's other historical books. Once digitized, the scanned materials will be posted online.

The Records Center website, which was redesigned in December 2024, provides easy access for those seeking to learn more about the early years of Delaware County.

It includes Commissioners' journals dating to 1808, map collections, Common Pleas indexes from the 1820s through the 1950s, Engineer's road records from 1808-1940, Recorder's records and cemetery guides.

The Records Center routinely posts snapshots from the past on their Facebook page, which continues to engage new audiences, contributing at least in part to a 27% increase in foot traffic at the Records Center in 2025.





1,429

New Sewer Connections

2,800

Tons Recycled in Delaware City

17,000+

Pounds of Hazardous Household Waste Collected

COLLABORATIVE PROCESS SAVES ON PLANT UPGRADE

The Regional Sewer District is currently completing a \$46.4-million upgrade to the Olentangy Environmental Control Center. The upgrade impacts all major processes and equipment at the facility and adds a new headworks screening building. A new centrifuge was also installed for redundancy.

The OECC Renewal Project is the first in Delaware County to utilize Progressive Design Build (PDB), an engineering, design and construction process where, instead of “bidding out” construction after design is completed, design is done in collaboration with engineering and construction firms, thereby enabling better design decisions while lowering costs.

PILOT PROGRAM EXPLORES WATER REUSE



The Regional Sewer District also began work on a water reuse study in partnership with Del-Co Water. A pilot program proved that the Alum Creek Water Reclamation Facility is an excellent candidate for reusing water with minimal additions to equipment or processes.

SEWER TAPS STEADY, TRANSFER STATION SETS RECORD

Following a record-setting year in 2024, the number of sewer taps returned to the rates seen in 2021-2023. The Regional Sewer District logged 1,429 new connections in 2025, down from 2,120 the year before.

Meanwhile, the Delaware County Transfer and Recycling Center processed 35% more Municipal Solid Waste than the prior year. Waste flows have nearly doubled since the new transfer station was opened.

The Delaware County Board of Commissioners appoints members to a number of boards, commissions, committees and new community authorities. These individuals generously volunteer their time. Their service plays an important role in ensuring that citizens’ needs are served well.

The following individuals are appointees of the Delaware County Board of Commissioners:

**Berkshire Landing
New Community Authority**

Patrick Blayney Justin Nahvi
Seiji Kille Rob Riley

**Berlin Meadows
New Community Authority**

Tracie Davies Tiffany Maag
Dawn Huston Rob Riley

**Bridges Community Action
Partnership**

Jeffrey Sell

**Concord-Scioto
Community Authority**

David Fahrenholz Tiffany Maag
Robert Grant Erik McPeek

**Delaware City
Airport Commission**

Christopher Acker

**Delaware County
Board of Building Appeals**

Matthew Akers James Price
James Barnett Rajat Shah
Ray Blinn

**Delaware County Board of
Developmental Disabilities**

Erica Fouss Kimberly Mann
Howard Heffelfinger Kim Pirie
Theodore Klecker

**Delaware County
Board of Zoning Appeals**

Ryan Bard Teresa Watkins
Collin Howard Lauren Wheeler
Kent Manley Dan Huffman (alt.)

**Delaware County Community
Corrections Planning Board**

Neil Patel Amanda Weitz

**Delaware County Convention
and Visitors Bureau Board**

Rob Leeds

**Delaware County
District Library Board**

Reginald Ike Stacey Neff
Lisa Kraft Connie Skinner

**Delaware County
Finance Authority Board**

Bill Bishop Angel Mumma
John Comerford Frank Reinhard
Franz Geiger

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Service Spotlight



PICTURED: Board Member Laura Blumenstiel [right] swore in Nathan Braden [left], an appointee of the Morrow County Board of Commissioners, as a member of the Delaware-Morrow Mental Health & Recovery Services Board.

Delaware County Rural Zoning Commission

Brad Jolliff	Donna Meyer
Kent King	Ed Reely
Brenda Manley	

Delaware County Transit Board

Sarah Huffman	Todd Miller
Jill Love	Benjamin Turner
Bruce Luecke	Forest Wilson
Darlene Magold	

Delaware County Transportation Improvement District

Chris Bauserman	Seiji Kille
Pat Blayney	Tom Price
Tracie Davies	

Delaware County Volunteer Peace Officers' Dependents Fund Board

Jeffrey Balzer	Laura Hatcher
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Delaware-Knox-Marion-Morrow Solid Waste District Policy Committee

Jane Hawes	Tom Price
Barb Lewis	Paul Wise

Delaware Metropolitan Housing Authority

Amanda Marie Fava

Delaware-Morrow Mental Health & Recovery Services Board

David Black	Jodi Galloway
Laura Blumenstiel	Gordon McDonald
Lynnette Cook	Zachary Miller
John Cruise	Mallory Sribanditmongkol

Evans Farm New Community Authority

Pat Blayney	John Kirksey
Seiji Kille	Rob Riley

Liberty Grand New Community Authority

Dawn Huston	Justin Nahvi
Tiffany Maag	Rob Riley

Service Spotlight



PICTURED: Commissioner Gary Merrell [right] administered an oath to Kimberly Mann [left], the newest member of the Delaware County Board of Developmental Disabilities Board of Directors in February 2026. Mann recently graduated from the DCBDD's inaugural Access to Leadership program. Following her appointment by the Commissioners, she became the first person to serve on the board while receiving services.

Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission

Jeff Benton	Barb Lewis
Ron Bullard	Glenn Marzluf
Tracie Davies	Gary Merrell
Brad Ebersole	Andy Volenik

Millstone New Community Authority

Kari Dennis	Seiji Kille
Laura Hendricks	Bob Letterio

Northstar New Community Authority

Glenn Evans	Erik McPeck
Howard Heffelfinger	Patrick Paykoff

Ohio Children's Trust Fund: Central Ohio Child Abuse and Child Neglect Regional Prevention Council

Kristan Warren	Megan Teague
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West Central Community Correctional Facility Governing Board

Kathy Nicolosi

For more information on the board appointment process or to sign up for email notifications when future board appointment opportunities are posted, please visit:

<https://co.delaware.oh.us/commissioners/boardappointments/>

OR SCAN THIS QR CODE



In September 2025, the Board of Commissioners announced the recipients of their annual Community Enhancement Grants, which totaled \$224,996.

Since 2014, this program has focused on enhancing the quality of life in Delaware County by distributing money from the general fund to nonprofit organizations in the County for the implementation of specific projects that will improve the delivery, quality and efficiency of programs and services to residents.

The 2025 recipients are:

Andrews House Inc. (\$20,000) for a roof replacement

Central Ohio Symphony (\$8,000) in support of the Link Up education program for county fourth graders

Delaware County Cultural Arts Center (\$23,480) to refurbish windows in the Arts Castle



Andrews House



Stockhands Horses for Healing

Delaware County Historical Society (\$18,000) for roof repairs at the Historic Jail and Sheriff's Residence

Family Promise of Delaware County (\$14,906) to replace flooring in the Promise House

People In Need, Inc. of Delaware County, Ohio (\$17,771) for replacement of pantry doors and polyurethane coating of pantry and warehouse flooring

Recreation Unlimited Farm and Fun Inc. (\$21,305) for the revitalization and accessibility upgrades of prairie walking trails

Safe Harbor Peer Support Services at Annie's Outreach (The Group of Delaware County) (\$5,000) for the renovation of a new headquarters

Stockhands Horses for Healing (\$15,000) to install fiber for internet connectivity

Strand Theatre and Cultural Arts Association (\$11,534) for the purchase and installation of presentation equipment

Stratford Ecological Center (\$20,000) for construction of an education building

TAG Community Living Inc. (The Alpha Group) (\$25,000) to purchase a maintenance vehicle

Turning Point (Concerned Citizens Against Violence Against Women, Inc.) to purchase a van for use at the Delaware shelter



People In Need, Inc. of Delaware County

DELAWARE COUNTY, OHIO BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

The Historic Courthouse
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