



Service. Progress. Excellence.



2024
STATE OF THE COUNTY

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About the Cover: Old Columbus Union Station Arch

The architectural arch from old Union Station in Columbus is one of a pair of arches that formed the station's entrance. Union Station opened in 1897 and served Central Ohio until 1977. This last piece of the structure was relocated first to Arch Park in 1980 and then to its current position at the north end of McFerson Commons Park in the Arena District in 1999.



Service. Progress. Excellence.

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2024
STATE OF THE COUNTY



Franklin County

**BOARD OF
COMMISSIONERS**

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Welcome Letter

To the extraordinary residents that make up Franklin County,

Thank you for taking the time to learn more about our county and the Board of Commissioners' efforts to make it a better place to live, work, and raise a family. As we reflect on the past year's achievements and challenges, we are excited to share with you the progress and impact we have made in serving our community.

Our annual State of the County report serves as a testament to the dedication and hard work exhibited by Franklin County employees, partners, and stakeholders. It acknowledges the challenges our community faces and outlines the proactive measures we're taking to combat them.

Throughout this report, you will find detailed information on key projects, programs, and services that have contributed to the well-being and prosperity of our residents. From infrastructure developments to community outreach efforts, each section of the report showcases our commitment to excellence and innovation. Our desire is to help residents thrive, not just survive.

In 2023, we invested more than \$60 million in affordable housing and support for struggling renters, health equity grants to reduce disparities in health access and outcomes, and the Columbus and Franklin County Local Food Action Plan. We also convened a symposium on the nationwide maternal mortality crisis that has seen maternal death rates skyrocket by nearly 60%. We hosted a team from the Whitehouse to tour and learn more about our first-of-its-kind Building Futures program, which helps struggling residents into middle-class careers in the skilled building trades. We awarded \$4 million in grants for the arts and even invested in a new urban farm to help provide healthy local food options for our residents. Franklin County continues to grow rapidly, and we are determined to ensure that we look after the needs of every resident, every day.

Thank you for your interest in our State of the County Report. For more comprehensive details, including the county budget and the commissioners' fundamental principles of effective governance, please visit the commissioners' website. Please don't hesitate to contact our offices with any questions or concerns you might have.



Kevin L. Boyce
President



John O'Grady
Commissioner



Erica C. Crawley
Commissioner

Community Safety, Security, & Effective Justice



Providing for the safety and security of Franklin County residents is among the commissioners' most important duties and one they take very seriously. Almost 60% of the commissioners' General Fund budget supports safety, security, and justice programs such as the Sheriff's Office, the county court system, Animal Care and Control, and the jail. In addition to protecting residents, the commissioners are also committed to the ideals of smart justice and a justice system that supports the people with whom it is in contact so that they can be successful in the community and to reduce recidivism.

Agency Partner: Justice Policy and Programs

The commissioners' [Office of Justice Policy and Programs](#) provides comprehensive justice planning and oversight to support smart justice initiatives, and also includes [CASA](#) (Court Appointed Special Advocates), which advocates for the best interests of abused, neglected, and dependent children in the courts and child welfare system. Through legal advocacy, CASA volunteers work to interrupt generational trauma and ensure that children are in safe and loving homes.

In 2023, CASA of Franklin County served 767 children, a 10% increase over 2022, and a CASA attorney became one of the first in Ohio to be designated a Child Welfare Law Specialist by the National Association of Counsel for Children. Justice Policy and Programs also connected 218 residents with medication-assisted treatment and post-release treatment services, a 38% increase.

2023 Justice Policy and Programs Stats:

10,209

victims and survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, and/or sexual assault were provided with services.

2,236

providers of services to survivors of domestic violence were provided training.

1,609

naloxone kits distributed to at-risk individuals released from the Franklin County Correctional Centers.

151

residents were linked to mental health and/or substance use treatment.

3,518

justice practitioners were taught the dynamics of domestic violence.

137

people were enrolled in and received case management and peer support through the Pathways program.

126

justice-involved fathers were enrolled in a parenting program offered at the Franklin County Jail and Community Based Correctional Facility.

Community Partner: Emergency Management and Homeland Security

The county's Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency (EMA) coordinates and prepares for natural disasters and man-made hazards in order to help keep our community safe. EMA focuses extensively on community education, first-responder coordination, and grant funding to ensure that Franklin County is prepared and resilient.

In 2023, the county purchased the land and facility that EMA has long used as a headquarters, providing much-needed long-term stability for the agency. EMA also approved agreements to use the Greater Columbus Convention Center as a family and victim assistance center if it's ever needed, much as it was set up to be used as an overflow hospital during the pandemic. The Franklin County Natural Hazard Mitigation plan that the agency oversees includes a risk assessment and mitigation strategy for critical facilities that will help keep our county up and running in the case of future natural disasters.

2023 EMA Stats:

13,196

hours of training provided to...

816

local public safety and health personnel.

90%

participation rate from local jurisdictions in the Natural Hazard Mitigation planning project.

\$3.1 Million

in disaster, security, and hazardous materials grants secured and overseen.



Program Highlight: Emergency Communication

In the event of a natural disaster or man-made hazard, safety officials have a number of ways to communicate with the public in order to help keep them safe, many of which are coordinated by the county's Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency.

Franklin County's Outdoor Warning Siren System consists of 198 sirens spaced around the county and divided among four quadrants so that warnings can be directed locally. The sirens are maintained to a very high standard of 99.9% fully operational status, and tested each week at noon on Wednesday. They can broadcast a siren or spoken messages at 70 decibels, which is enough to be heard more than a mile away. When the National Weather Service issues a tornado warning, the sirens will sound for three minutes followed by seven minutes of silence, with the sequence repeating until the warning is canceled.



ALERT Franklin County is a county-wide mass notification system and important compliment to the tornado sirens that can be used to alert residents about severe weather and important emergency information on their electronic devices. It causes mobile phones in the affected area to alarm and is enabled automatically unless it has been turned off by the user. To learn more, visit AlertFranklinCounty.org.



FCReady is a text message alert system that can send detailed information about developing emergency situations (that are not weather-related) and what residents can do to stay safe. To sign up for FCReady, simply text "FCReady" to **888777**.



The Integrated Public Alert & Warning System (IPAWS) is a collaboration among local jurisdictions and the Federal Emergency Management Agency to send electronic alerts directly to cell phones and through local broadcasters via the Emergency Alert System.



Scan to find out more about
Community Safety, Security, & Effective Justice
on the Commissioners  **YouTube** channel.



Agency Partner: Franklin County Coroner's Office

The [Franklin County Coroner's Office](#) is charged with investigating unexpected and unattended deaths in our community, and with doing so in a compassionate, respectful, and professional manner. The office investigates more than 3,000 cases each year, including performing an average of nearly five autopsies each day and, in 2023, completed 96% of autopsies within three months of the decedent's passing, a significant improvement.

This year, the coroner's office also worked to successfully identify two previously unidentified decedents, bringing closure to families that had not known the fate of their loved ones since 1992 and 2006, respectively. Also, this year, the coroner's Forensic Toxicology Laboratory was accredited by the American National Standards Institute, one of only 16 in the United States and Canada to receive this accreditation.



Community Partner: Franklin County Public Health

[Franklin County Public Health](#) is a full-service health department that works to improve the health of Franklin County and the 41 municipalities it serves by preventing disease, promoting healthy living, and protecting against public health threats through education, policies, and partnership. The agency's [Community Health Improvement Plan](#) addresses important health priorities, acknowledges existing impact work, and highlights a new social determinants of health framework. The new FCPH [Data Hub](#) also displays metrics, dashboards, maps, and reports to evaluate the community's health and the agency's programs.

One of Public Health's initiatives in 2023 was a pilot program with the commissioners' health and human services agencies to provide transitional housing and other supportive services to struggling residents. Neighborhoods and housing security are a social determinant of health in Franklin County and have a direct impact on health outcomes. This program connects families with Community Health Workers who will meet with them regularly to build relationships and connect the residents with the services their families need to thrive.

Community Safety, Security, & Effective Justice

2023 Public Health Stats:

117

health literacy trainings conducted for more than 2,500 participants.

200

home visits and telephone consultations conducted by public health nurses.

85

safe sleep assessments for families with infants.

3,872

vaccines were administered.

17,500

at-home COVID-19 tests were distributed.



7,627

food safety inspections were carried out.

111

body art permits were awarded.

298

locations were inspected for lead paint.

77

animals were tested for rabies.

18,121

naloxone kits were distributed.

33

tobacco cessation trainings were conducted.

Agency Partner: Franklin County Sheriff's Office



The [Franklin County Sheriff's office](#) works to protect and serve all of our community's residents. In 2023, the sheriff's office added a new Recruitment *Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion* division that is dedicated to cultivating a diverse and inclusive workforce that reflects the community as a whole. The office expects to host three sheriff's academy classes in the coming year as part of its goal to hire 100 new deputies.



Another program in the county sheriff's office is the Central Ohio Violence Eradication Response Team, or COVERT Task Force, which represents an innovative approach to reducing violent crime and creating pathways to success for at-risk residents by connecting them with services to address the root causes of crime in our community.

Program Highlight: SAFER Station

In 2021, the commissioners were awarded a grant for the Stop Addiction For Everyone Resource (SAFER) Station, which led to the creation of a new SAFE Station at a municipal firehouse in the community that included a multidisciplinary team that could screen, refer, and transport residents seeking help directly to substance use treatment services. Since then, the project has left the firehouse and taken up residence in Franklinton at 368 W. Park Avenue, but it still provides walk-in harm reduction, education, free naloxone and fentanyl test strips, and direct linkage to substance use treatment, including transportation to the client's chosen facility.



The program is designed to engage the addiction and recovery community with compassion and support for their current needs, and the multidisciplinary team uses a First Responder Diversion model to:

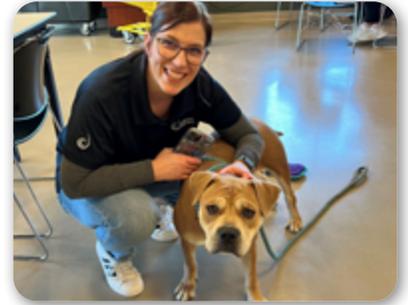
- Expand awareness about, access to, and availability of substance use treatment in Franklin County.
- Target naloxone distribution and overdose prevention education.
- Provide brief case management and support services for patients as early post-detox intervention for risk of overdose.

The team can even help with other services such as connection to mental health resources and enrollment in SNAP, Medicaid, and other benefits, and has become an important outpost of hope in a struggling neighborhood.

Agency Partner: Franklin County Animal Care and Control

The [Franklin County Dog Shelter and Adoption Center](#) is operated by the commissioners' Animal Care and Control agency, and continues to be a healing, though temporary, home for nearly 10,000 dogs each year. Animal Care and Control responsibly enforces the dog laws in Franklin County, keeping the public safe from animal-related health or safety dangers, and provides compassionate care for impounded animals at the shelter, as well as education, adoption, and lost dog services to the community.

This year, in addition to its regular work, the shelter was one of the county agencies that responded to support residents who were forced out of their homes at the holidays during an emergency at their apartment complex, providing free boarding, medical care, and other resources for their pets as they worked to secure new long-term housing.



We recognize the bond between people and their pets, and that safeguarding that relationship is crucial to keeping families whole.

~ Kaye Persinger, Director of Animal Care and Control

Incoming:

- **3,244** dogs impounded.
- **2,218** strays brought in by the public.
- **20** puppies born in the shelter.

Outgoing:

- **3,322** adoptions.
- **1,677** dogs reclaimed by owners.
- **1,360** dogs in foster homes.

2023 Animal Care and Control Stats:

- **125** dogs visited Franklin County homes for the holidays as part of the Holiday Sleepover program (a new record).
- **2,992** microchips implanted.
- **2,694** spay/neutering procedures performed.
- **2,239** volunteers provided 28,198 hours of their time to support the community's dogs.

Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion



The commissioners' commitment to equity is rooted in the principles of justice and the understanding that our country is not yet living up to some of its highest ideals, such as that people's chances of success in the world should be based on their character, their work ethic, and their big ideas. A child's future should not be determined by their zip code, skin color or religion, or by how much money their parents have, and good intentions aren't enough to make the change. Equity work is about erasing disparities, and requires affirmative, systematic, and forward-thinking action.

Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion

Agency Partner: Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

The commissioners' [Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion](#) (ODEI) leads the effort for equity in their office, guiding a sustainable infrastructure to advance the principles of diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility in the ways that we recruit, retain, develop, procure, and offer our services. ODEI coordinates the commissioners' participation in events such as the annual Pride Parade and Juneteenth celebrations, and also engages the commissioners and their team through the [Racial Equity Council](#), which is made up of employees from throughout the BOC.

Program Highlight: Columbus Fashion Alliance

Since its founding in 2019, the Columbus Fashion Alliance has reinvested nearly \$1 million in the community through programs and initiatives that are dedicated to advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion in the fashion and retail industry, including:



- Innovative workforce, education, and skills development programs to help fashion and retail creatives increase their skills and earning potential.
- Building a community and industry ecosystem that support the launch and growth of fashion-based businesses while lowering the barriers to access and entry.
- Promoting the art of fashion and the many designers who call Franklin County home.

Columbus has the third-largest fashion economy in the nation, behind only New York and Los Angeles, and the commissioners have invested nearly \$2 million in recent years to support the Columbus Fashion Alliance's efforts, most recently for a workforce development program that focuses on retail readiness and entrepreneurship training, and which will provide hands-on, essential jobs skills training for young adults. The commissioners and the Columbus Fashion Alliance are working together to provide new opportunities in a growing industry and to make sure that the world of fashion is accessible to all.



Scan to find out more about
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
on the Commissioners  YouTube channel.



Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion

We're working every day in Franklin County to ensure that DEI is part of our DNA so that we can best serve all of our residents in every part of our community.

~ Kenneth N. Wilson, County Administrator

In 2023, ODEI hosted the first ever Franklin County DEI conference with more than 300 participants, and a focus on economic equity and development, workforce development, effective collaboration, and driving policy using data. The agency also increased its outreach to Small and Emerging Businesses Enterprises (SEBEs) by more than 100%, and expanded the County Futures program, which helps low-income Franklin County residents into middle class careers in county government. There were 12 County Futures career fairs held throughout Franklin County with 526 participants, of which 60 were hired.

ODEI also partners regularly to provide grant funding to community organizations that provide opportunities for underserved residents, providing more than \$3.2 million in grants and sponsorships this year, including:



\$850,000

for youth programs such as the Made for Medicine program that prepares minority students for careers in medicine.



\$750,000

for the African American Male Wellness Agency to support the African American Male Wellness Walk and the launch of new Uplift Her initiatives to support women's health.

\$231,000

for US Together for Welcoming City initiatives to support New Americans with family stability, education, health equity, civic engagement, workforce development, and other similar programing.



\$60,000

for Tech Corps to support the Tech Corps Hack-a-Thon in which students participate in computer science competitions.

Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion

Agency Partner: Purchasing Department

The commissioners' [Purchasing Department](#) works closely with ODEI to increase the diversity of the companies with which the county does business, and with the commissioners' [Public Facilities Management](#) Agency to ensure that the businesses and people employed to build and maintain the county's facilities reflect our community as a whole.

- **504** number of purchase orders with SEBEs, a 27% increase over 2022
- **\$25,106,244** dollar value of purchase orders with SEBEs, a 170% increase over 2022
- **30.2%** SEBE participation in construction of the James A Karnes Corrections center (goal was 12%)
- **30.4%** SEBE participation in construction of the Franklin County Crisis Care Center (goal was 18%)

Program Highlight: Health Equity Grants

Last year, the commissioners provided grants totaling \$1,683,000 to community partner organizations for the purpose of promoting equity in healthcare for Franklin County residents. The nine grant recipients were chosen from among more than 50 applicants because of their focus on reducing disparities in health outcomes primarily for populations that have been historically underserved by high-quality healthcare and health services. The grants are administered by the commissioners' [Community Partnerships](#) Agency which has made similar grants since 2021, and which oversaw more than \$10.5 million in total grant funding the year before.

Recipient organizations included the Children's Hunger Alliance and the Charitable Pharmacy of Central Ohio, both of which are expanding their nutritional support for at-risk youth, and the Cancer Support Community of Central Ohio and Physicians CareConnection, which are working to reduce barriers to care, including by providing education and other culturally appropriate services. In addition, Catholic Social Services will use the funding to provide preventative health measures aimed at Central Ohio's Hispanic population, Lutheran Social Services will use it to address health concerns for residents of the Faith Mission and CHOICES domestic violence shelters, and OhioHealth's grant will go to maternal health and infant mortality efforts.

Applicants for the health equity grants were required to not only show that they are providing healthcare to residents in need, but that they are also focused on long-term improvements in health outcomes, and also on moving health equity forward within the organization and its partners. The commissioners' 2019 [Rise Together Blueprint for Addressing Poverty in Franklin County](#) identified disparate health outcomes as both a symptom and a cause of poverty in our community.



Efficient, Responsive, & Fiscally Sustainable Government Operations



Efficient, Responsive, and Fiscally Sustainable government operations are the hallmark of a strong and accountable local government, and the commissioners' commitment to this principle is reflected in everything from the way that they manage our county's more-than \$2 billion budget, to the way that they recruit, retain, and take care of the best local government workforce in Ohio.

Agency Partner: Office of Management and Budget

The commissioners' [Office of Management and Budget](#) (OMB) works with every county agency and elected official to help the commissioners and county administration create a balanced, thoughtful, and forward-looking \$2.2 billion budget each year. OMB staff also ensures that the county's resources are aligned with goals and performance measures, and creates financial reports and forecasts. Together, they provide fiscal accountability and facilitate informed decisions in support of the highest-quality services for county residents.

This year, OMB redesigned its annual [Residents' Guide to the Budget](#) publication, helped our county maintain its double Triple-A bond rating, and met its cash balance goal with 41.7% of total 2023 expenditures.

2023 Office of Management and Budget Stats:

3%

percentage of local governments nationwide with double Triple-A credit.

56.5%

of the General Fund budget is devoted to public safety and security.

39.9%

of the All-Funds budget is devoted to human services.

\$92 Million

in the Franklin County Rainy Day Fund.

Program Highlight: Talk of the County

This year, County Administrator Kenneth N. Wilson started a new podcast all about the business of running Ohio's largest county in which he interviews engaging guests to showcase projects and growth throughout the community. The first episodes focused on local government leaders and community cultural attractions, and featured guests such as Brooke Minto of the Columbus Art Museum, Dr. Frederick Bertley from COSI, Tom Katzenmeyer, CEO of the Greater Columbus Arts Council, and Stacy Rodgers, the President-elect of the National Forum for Black Public Administrators. All three county commissioners have guest-hosted or been guests themselves on the podcast, and many more exciting episodes are planned for the coming year. You can find Talk of The County online and anywhere you find your podcasts, with new episodes released every other Monday.



Efficient, Responsive, & Fiscally Sustainable Government Operations

Our new hires are amazed at the benefits, starting pay, and training we offer at Franklin County... We have heard from many employees that getting a job with Franklin County has been life changing and that they never dreamed they could have careers that would be so rewarding.

~ Laura Repasky, Director of Human Resources



Agency Partner: Human Resources

The commissioners know that the strongest part of county government will always be our devoted team members who work every day to ensure that the county is running smoothly and that our residents can access the services and supports that we offer. Their [Human Resources](#) department is responsible for providing quality employment services, effective training, and technical human resources assistance as well as [benefits and wellness](#) programing for the commissioners' approximately 1,500 employees and the 14,000 people covered by the county's cooperative health plan.

A few of the amazing benefits of working at Franklin County:

- Comprehensive health and wellness care.
- No-cost preventive care.
- Emotional well-being solutions.
- Family forming services, including adoption, surrogacy, and Assistive Reproductive Technology.
- Gym membership reimbursement.
- Tobacco cessation programing.
- Financial coaching.
- Nutrition counseling.
- Comprehensive cancer resources.
- Mental health first aid.

Program Highlight: 5K

Each year since 2019, the commissioners have sponsored a 5K fun run for all county employees and their families as part of their regular wellness programming, and each year the event gets bigger and bigger. In 2020, county employees even completed virtual 5K runs on their own and submitted pictures of themselves and their families getting exercise together while staying six feet apart from everyone else.



Completion of the event counts toward wellness incentives and the event promotes employee health, team building, and morale. Last year, as many as 500 county employees and their family members from every agency and elected office participated, and the next Franklin County 5k is already on the calendar for 2024.



2023 Human Resources Stats:

More than \$277,308

raised for local charities through the county's Combined Charitable Campaign.

Every zip code

throughout the county is home to a Franklin County employee.

361

jobs posted.

6,631

applications received.

135

Full Time employees added.

Scan to find out more about
Human Resources
on the Commissioners  YouTube channel.



Award-Winning Care for Our Team

The investment the commissioners make in their team is even award-winning. In 2023, the county was named the Fifth Healthiest Employer in Ohio for its size and achieved a gold-level award from the Healthy Business Council of Ohio for the healthiest worksites.



Their Thrive On team was even invited to present at the annual Ohio Employee Wellness Conference, to serve on committees with the Healthy Business Council of Ohio and the uLead Leadership Network for Mental Health, and to appear on OhioHealth's Wellbeing at Work podcast.



Program Highlight: Franklin County's New Digital Front Door

This year, the commissioners began a county-wide initiative to reimagine Franklin County's public facing websites to better serve the needs of the public. This initiative, called One Franklin County, is taking its first public steps with a new digital front door for the county on www.franklincountyohio.gov which launched in April 2024. This new portal makes finding the services Franklin County provides to the public simple with intuitive and optimized search, service-centered navigation, and interactive features. But more than that, it is our first digital step in delivering on our promise to serve every resident, every day.

Agency Partner: Purchasing Department

The commissioners' Purchasing Department oversees Procurement Services, Compliance, Mail Services, a Graphic Arts & Print Shop, and Surplus Auction Services, and helps county agencies procure the goods and services they need in a timely, cost-effective manner. Purchasing also partners closely with the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion to support outreach opportunities with local Small and Emerging Business Enterprises to help them learn how to work with the county and ensure that our list of contractors and vendors reflects the community we serve.

2023 Purchasing Department Stats:

Compliance:

7,060	Total number of purchase orders processed
\$479,508,919.67	Total dollar amount of purchase orders processed
386	Total number of P-Card accounts processed
3,431	Total number of P-Card transactions

Mail Services:

1,803,496	Total pieces of outgoing mail processed
\$230,519.94	Total savings

Print Shop:

159,638	Printed tax bill impressions for the treasurer
2,574,570	Printed envelope impressions for all agencies
870,451	Printed color copier impressions
2,304,966	Printed black and white copier impressions
2,547,462	Printed sheetfed - offset impressions
107	Printed wide format impressions (posters)
5,424,907	Impressions for court file printing
30,904	Printed impressions absentee test decks
75,140	Printed impressions for live absentee ballots
1,679,979	Printed impressions for provisional ballots
\$1,283,223.02	Estimated cost savings

Surplus Auction:

4,792 items sold totaling **\$5,032,695.61** from 2003-2023

Good Stewardship of Natural Resources, Environmental Sustainability, & Civic Engagement



Protecting the natural resources that make our community beautiful and preserving them for future generations is just as important as things like promoting economic growth and operating a responsive local government. The commissioners are committed to providing good stewardship of the environment as well as management practices that will help ensure that our beautiful community stays that way for many years to come.

Community Partner: SWACO

With nearly a million tons of material arriving at the Franklin County Sanitary Landfill each year and a steadily growing population, sustainable waste management is at the forefront of the commissioners' environmental priorities, and the [Solid Waste Authority of Central Ohio](#) (SWACO) is an invaluable partner in the work of sustainability.

Program Highlight: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, & Compost

This year, Franklin County reached an all-time record rate of recycling and diversion of 54%, compared to the national average of about 34%, and SWACO continued its work to encourage reducing, reusing, recycling, and composting to preserve our community's resources and conserve space in the landfill.



Two all new **Recycling Convenience Centers** are making it easier than ever for our residents to responsibly dispose of hard-to-recycle things like clothing, furniture, electronics, and food waste. The self-service, drive-up facilities provide a convenient and accessible place to drop off a wide range of materials, mostly for free, and are the first of their kind in Central Ohio. Seventy-six percent of everything that goes into the trash could be diverted elsewhere, so the new Recycling Convenience Centers provide a great opportunity to extend the life of our landfill, which has only 42 years of space remaining.

Recycle Right, Make a Difference: While Central Ohio's recycling rate continues to exceed the national average, more than 700,000 tons of materials that could otherwise be recycled arrives at the landfill each year. The newly reintroduced Recycle Right, Make a Difference program is an awareness and education initiative that aims to help Franklin County residents recycle more household items instead of throwing them away. It includes renewed efforts to reach people who describe themselves as half-hearted recyclers, and to build their confidence that recycling matters, and that they can make a difference.

The Business Recycling Champions initiative provides local businesses with financial incentives and technical assistance to start a recycling program, and includes collaboration with COSI and The Ohio State University to expand recycling education opportunities in our community.

Scan to find out more about
Fleet Management
on the Commissioners  **YouTube** channel.



Agency Partner: Fleet Management



One of the county's smallest agencies, with fewer than a dozen team members, the commissioners' [Fleet Management](#) department also works to safeguard the environment while keeping county government moving forward by looking after its fleet of more than 500 vehicles.

One hundred and forty of those are alternative fuel vehicles, a nearly -10% increase from last year.

2023 Fleet Management Stats:

5,003,858

miles driven by county vehicles.

921

oil changes.

320,150

gallons of fuel provided.

481

tires replaced.

36

alternative fuel stations.

Utilizing Alternative Energy – a look at the county's fleet:

66

- Flex fuel or E85

2

- All electric

47

- Hybrid

3

- Biodiesel

20

- Plug in Hybrid

2

- Propane

Agency Partner: Public Facilities Management

The commissioners' [Public Facilities Management](#) (PFM) agency oversees the maintenance and administration of 40 county buildings to support not only county staff but also the residents who visit our facilities for services.

This year, PFM absorbed a large number of employees who were previously contract workers tasked with housekeeping and cleaning county buildings.

The department also hired more than 100 new staff through expanded hiring opportunities such as from the Family Stabilization Unit, Office of Justice Policy and Programs, the Ohio Reformatory for Women, [Service! Relief for Hospitality Workers](#), and multiple County Futures and other on-the-spot hiring fairs.

Five county buildings are LEED certified, which is a recognition that they were constructed using methods and materials that help save money, improve efficiency, lower carbon emissions, and create healthier places for people to live and work. Two are LEED-Gold certified and three are LEED Silver-certified, and PFM also took the lead this year in beginning construction for a new \$60 million [ADAMH](#) Crisis Care Center, which is slated to open in 2025 and also aiming for LEED certification.



Agency Partner: Department of Sanitary Engineering

The commissioners' [Department of Sanitary Engineering](#) provides safe and reliable clean water and sewer services in more than 30 separate neighborhoods around the county, operating two wastewater treatment plants, one drinking water treatment facility, and 21 sanitary sewer pump stations. The costs for water and sewer service from Franklin County have remained unchanged since 2021.

2023 Sanitary Engineering Stats:

4,077

households rely on the county for water service.

5,966

households rely on the county for sewer service.

275,103,584

gallons of clean water delivered.

529,642

centum cubic feet (CCF) of sewage treated.

80

miles of water distribution lines.

140

miles of sanitary sewer mains.

Community Partner: Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission

The commissioners also partner very closely with the [Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission](#) (MORPC), which is the regional council for nearly 90 local communities and regional partners, facilitating collaboration on planning for a sustainable and prosperous future in Franklin County.

MORPC supports our region by:

- Convening local governments to plan, prioritize, and advance strategic transportation and infrastructure investments.
- Providing data tools, insights, and technical assistance for sustainability programs, growth planning, residential services, and shared solutions.
- Engaging Central Ohio's community leaders and residents on public policy.

2023 MORPC Stats:

450

households provided home energy-efficiency services.

60

homeowners assisted with home repair services.

\$500,000

grants secured to expand passenger rail service.

\$1 Million+

in grants awarded to complete a Safety Action Plan for Central Ohio.



Our work prioritizes housing initiatives that preserve existing housing and addresses critical social determinants of health in our neighborhoods... These programs don't just make financial sense; they help make the region healthier for all.

~ William Murdock, Executive Director of the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission

Program Highlight: Urban Agriculture Infrastructure Grant

This year, the commissioners' Economic Development and Planning department provided \$166,667 to Franklin Soil and Water to support the creation of a new Franklin County Urban Agriculture Critical Infrastructure grant program, which makes funding available to small for-profit urban farms and non-profit community gardens. The grants support initiatives to strengthen the local food supply chain, increase food crop production, and accelerate the ability of growers to scale up their operations, with a particular focus on supporting local farmers who have traditionally been socially disadvantaged, such as women, immigrants, and refugees. Forty-three grantees, each farming less than five acres, received a total of more than \$500,000 in funding.



Community Partner: Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District

Another valued partner that helps the commissioners protect and preserve our community's natural resources is the [Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District](#), which was founded more than 70 years ago to educate residents about conservation and promote responsible land-use decisions. Franklin Soil and Water teaches local students how to be good environmental stewards, and the agency provides hundreds of construction site inspections annually to reduce sediment and other harmful runoff.

2023 Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District Stats:

17,000

native trees and shrubs distributed to increase climate resiliency and create habitat.

17,198

students reached with educational presentations and hands-on activities on stormwater, water quality, soils, and erosion.

\$97,765

reimbursed to county residents for the purchase of rain barrels, compost bins, and native plants.

1,839

stormwater compliance inspections performed.

33

conservation easement inspections performed, protecting 556 acres of land.

Job Creation, Strategic Economic Development, & Fiscal Security



Ensuring that the Franklin County economy continues to thrive is one of the commissioners' top priorities, but they also recognize that we'll only be successful as a community when every Franklin County resident has the opportunity to benefit from that prosperity. Much of the work that the commissioners' team focuses on is aimed at ensuring plentiful opportunities for employment, high quality education, workforce development, affordable housing, and the other things families need to get ahead.

Job Creation, Strategic Economic Development, & Fiscal Security

Community Partner: Rev1 Ventures

One of the ways that the commissioners support equitable economic development is through support of community partner organizations like [Rev1 Ventures](#), which is a venture development organization with a mission to help entrepreneurs build great companies in Central Ohio.



They provide coaching and mentoring services to technology start-ups to help them identify markets, attract investment, and create jobs. Last year, we funded Rev1 to match state grant dollars and provide product development, financial modeling, and concept and commercialization exploration for Franklin County start-ups.

2023 Rev1 Ventures Stats:

\$5 Million

invested in 14 Franklin County start-ups.

90

other start-up opportunities facilitated.

\$430,000

delivered in reduced-fee services to 63 Franklin County start-ups.



Greater economic development is the best opportunity we have to build the strength our communities need to achieve a better quality of life and overall wellbeing. We must never forget that what we do or choose not to do with this opportunity will directly impact the families we serve.

~ Economic Development and Planning Interim Director Ruchelle Pride

Community Partners: One Columbus & Experience Columbus

Another way that the commissioners support economic development in Central Ohio is through support of [One Columbus](#), which is the economic development organization for our 11-county region, and [Experience Columbus](#), which is the convention and visitors bureau for Central Ohio. One Columbus works with local and state partners to support and recruit businesses in our community as they grow, innovate, and compete in the global economy.

The logo for One Columbus, featuring the text "One Columbus" in white on a red rectangular background.

2023 One Columbus Stats:

33

projects, 20 located in Franklin County.

1,310

new job opportunities.

\$253.4 Million

in fixed capital investment.

Experience Columbus markets and promotes Columbus as a destination for meetings, conferences, sporting events and other tourism. The commissioners provide more than \$3 million in annual support for Experience Columbus, and the return on that investment helps grow our entire local economy, including by supporting nearly 75,000 local jobs.



2023 Experience Columbus Stats:

50 Million

visitors make annual trips to Central Ohio.

\$6.6 Billion

spent by visitors to Columbus.

342

group meetings hosted in Columbus in 2023.

\$13.60

is returned for every \$1 invested by Experience Columbus.

\$1,400

saved by each household in Franklin County in tax payments each year due to the taxes paid by visitors.

Job Creation, Strategic Economic Development, & Fiscal Security

Recent events attracted by the Greater Columbus Sports Commission, which is part of Experience Columbus include:



In addition, the commissioners also sponsor events like the HBCU Classic for Columbus College Basketball All-Star Game & Celebrity Extravaganza. This annual event lasts five days and has an estimated \$10 million economic impact on Central Ohio, with popular attractions including a game that features top seniors from Historically Black Colleges & Universities vs. top players from Ohio's traditional universities. Franklin County is also the only county in America that owns a baseball team and the stadium it plays in. The Columbus Clippers are a triple-A affiliate of the Cleveland Guardians baseball team.



Program Highlight: Magnet Fund

A lack of affordable housing remains one of the greatest challenges facing our community today and one of the greatest barriers to families trying to climb the economic ladder. The commissioners' Magnet Fund grant program helps to ease that strain by investing in new affordable housing projects.

The commissioners created their affordable housing Magnet Fund in 2019, increasing the conveyance fee that is paid whenever somebody sells a property in Franklin County in order to raise an additional \$6.5 million per year that is divided between the Magnet Fund and the Franklin County Land Bank. Their initial goal was to use these funds to help create more than 2,000 new affordable housing units over ten years. They surpassed that goal in less than four years, however, and are reaching for new heights in the funding of quality, affordable places for families to live that are near jobs, schools, shopping, and transportation. Ensuring that there are sufficient affordable places to live is one of the 120 goals and action steps in the commissioners' Rise Together Blueprint to address poverty.

- \$4.6 million invested to support...
- 572 new housing units that are affordable to families...
- Between 30% and 80% of the area median income.
- 280 new affordable housing units begun in previous years were completed in 2023.

Program Highlight: Local Food Action Plan

Since 2014, the commissioners have partnered with the City of Columbus on a planning effort to create a stronger, more sustainable local food system, with unified efforts to support growing, processing, transporting, selling, consuming, and disposing of food. The [Local Food Action Plan](#) aims to address inequalities in access to healthy, affordable, local food, and last year's annual report highlighted four community goal areas and the progress that is being made toward them:



- **Enhance Coordination and Communication**
 - A number of nutrition-focused community organizations were able to strengthen their local networks to build broader community and economic development in historically underserved neighborhoods.
- **Improve access to and education about healthy food, affordable food, and local food**
 - The Mid-Ohio Food Collaborative provided more than 38 million pounds of emergency groceries, while Lutheran Social Services and LifeCare Alliance provided more than two million meals, and Produce Perks served more than 1,000 Franklin County households with reduced-cost fruits and vegetables.
- **Increase the role of food in economic development**
 - Franklin Park Conservatory, What Chefs Want, and other local partners facilitated millions of dollars in new sales for local farms and vendors.
- **Prevent food-related waste**
 - The Solid Waste Authority of Central Ohio launched new food waste drop-off programs around the county, Food Rescue-Columbus completed more than 180 "food rescues", and the OSU Zero Waste Initiative launched an expanded composting program for more than 120 campus buildings.



Scan to find out more about
Investing in Local Businesses
on the Commissioners  YouTube channel.



Job Creation, Strategic Economic Development, & Fiscal Security

Agency Partner: Economic Development and Planning

The commissioners' Economic Development and Planning department also serves as the zoning, land use, and building permit agency for Franklin County, working tirelessly to improve plan review and permitting services for residents and businesses, including streamlined processes in which plan reviews are turned around in less than five days and inspections are conducted within 24 hours.



2023 Economic Development and Planning Stats:

5,507

building inspections.

3,350

building permits.



151

new home Permits.

626

zoning applications.

\$786,650

in building and zoning receipts.

Supportive Health & Human Services



At the core of the commissioners' philosophy is an earnest effort to ensure that no one goes without essentials like food, clothing, shelter, and medical care, and that every Franklin County family has an opportunity to thrive. Health and Human Services encompass a wide range of services that are available throughout a resident's lifetime and even before they are born. From efforts to reduce infant and maternal mortality rates, to support that help senior citizens maintain their independence so that they can "age in place", the commissioners' credo of EVERY RESIDENT EVERY DAY informs the way that they provide all of their services for residents. Health and Human Services are largely provided by Franklin County's Department of Job and Family Services, the Office on Aging, and the Child Support Enforcement Agency. More than 40% of all county expenditures support social, health, and human services for our residents.

Supportive Health & Human Services

Agency Partner: Franklin County Office on Aging

The [Franklin County Office on Aging](#) serves as a vital hub for enhancing the well-being of our older residents, dependent adults, and their families and caregivers. At the forefront of these initiatives is the levy-funded Senior Options program, a flagship effort empowering Franklin County residents aged 60 and older with the tools essential for maintaining independence. The agency also ensures a safe and secure living environment for older homeowners in Franklin County through its Minor Home Repair program and is committed to recognizing and supporting non-paid and kinship caregivers, while Adult Protective Services plays a pivotal role in responding to reports of elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

2023 Office on Aging Stats:

80,000+

seniors served.

15,000

clients enrolled in Senior Options.

4.8 Million

contacts with seniors.

2.1 Million

free meals delivered.

1.3 Million

miles of transportation provided.

2,349

cases investigated by Adult Protective Services.

80,450

hours of respite care provided.

460

community events attended.

5,000+

emergency kits delivered.

850

box fans provided to senior residents during the summer.

Last winter, I had problems with my heat and furnace. You were so helpful. We won't have those fears this winter! The furnace you and your agency got for us, is keeping us warm and safe. You got Larry here and he got things together. It makes me happy to know I have a caring person like you in my corner!

~ Franklin County Office on Aging Services Recipient, S.A.

Program Highlight: Bridging the Digital Divide

One of the Office on Aging's grant partners, NCUS TEC, is a local agency that works to bridge the technology skills and opportunity gap for seniors, and the senior technology classes that the commissioners fund help our older residents to become more tech savvy in a world that requires it.



- **95%** of senior participants were able to learn to connect with friends and family via social media.
- **90%** learned to use the internet to find resources independently.
- **100%** of the participants successfully navigated a telehealth visit with their medical provider.

Agency Partner: Department of Job and Family Services

The commissioners' largest agency and the one that touches the lives of the most Franklin County families is the [Department of Job and Family Services](#) (JFS), which supports residents with services such as food assistance, medicaid health coverage, publicly funded child care, and emergency housing assistance.

Nearly 1-in-3 Franklin County families engaged with JFS in 2023, more than 1,000 for each JFS employee. Sixteen million dollars in emergency housing assistance allocated by the department helped keep thousands of families in their homes, and more than \$680,000 in federal funding was used to expand the award-winning Building Futures and Driving Futures workforce development programs.

In 2023, the agency also provided more than \$70 million in funding to support initiatives such as:

- Franklin County RISE, which offers child care scholarships for working families and incentives for early learning providers.
- Summer employment and paid work experience opportunities for teens and young adults through the Ready 2 Earn program.
- And innovative workforce development programs aimed at addressing historical disparities and shattering glass ceilings like Tech Women of Color.



In 2024, Job and Family Services will be deploying two new mobile office units that can bring the agency's services directly into neighborhoods where people need them, and which can respond to urgent needs throughout the community.



Supportive Health & Human Services

2023 Job and Family Services Stats:

9,000 families & 25,000 children

are receiving publicly funded child care, and...

600 more

received RISE scholarships this year, and returns are as high as...

9-to-1

on investments in early childhood learning.

83.4%

of families receiving emergency housing assistance did not have a subsequent eviction.

Up to 20,000

calls per week are answered at Job and Family Services.

423,000+

residents benefit from Medicaid coverage.

Nearly

162,000

residents are receiving SNAP benefits.

8,800

residents are receiving Ohio Works First cash assistance.

900+

young people worked paid summer jobs through Ready 2 Earn, including almost...

400

that obtained industry-recognized credentials.

3,000

young people are in free after-school programs and summer camps.

170+

Building Futures and Driving Futures graduates.

80+

graduates of the Tech Women of Color program.

Scan to find out more about
Job and Family Services Mobile Unit
on the Commissioners  YouTube channel.



Supportive Health & Human Services

Agency Partner: Franklin County Child Support Enforcement Agency

Franklin County Child Support Enforcement Agency (CSEA) supports a healthy community of secure families who are supported and empowered by trustworthy community partners, and encourages parental responsibility so that children receive financial, emotional, and medical support from both parents even when they live in separate households. Child Support is an anti-poverty program, with child support payments helping families to cover essentials like rent, utilities, food, school supplies, and clothing.

2023 Child Support Enforcement Agency Stats:

65,213

open child support cases.

76,741

children supported.

\$143,793,139

in 2023 Collections.

42,780

children connected to their fathers through establishment of parentage.

122

outreach events attended plus participation each week with the Health and Human Services Mobile Unit.

\$1,287,55

in grant funding administered:

\$420,554

for Safe Access for Victims' Economic Security.

\$827,000

for Economic Mobility and Responsible Parenting.

\$40,000

for Access & Visitation.



6

fatherhood talk sessions with...

23

fathers participating.

Program Highlight: Maternal Mortality Symposium

Last summer, the commissioners hosted a Symposium on Maternal Mortality to discuss the rise in preventable deaths among new mothers nationwide and in Central Ohio. In recent years, the maternal mortality rate is up nearly 60% across America, and the U. S. Centers For Disease Control and Prevention has determined that more than 80% of these deaths are from preventable causes. Even more troubling are the disparities experienced by various groups. The maternal mortality rate for Black women is more than twice that of White women, and women over 40 are dying at a rate that is seven times higher than that of younger mothers.

Hundreds of guests attended, and the commissioners participated in several panels on the topic along with local and national experts, as well as hosting a free screening of the documentary Aftershock, which follows the tragic cases of two young American women who died after giving birth. The commissioners are dedicated to addressing the maternal mortality crisis and the inequities within, and have advocated in recent years for women’s health initiatives at the statehouse, as well as supporting Celebrate One, sponsoring a partnership between Franklin County Public Health and the reproductive justice organization, ROOTT, and making grants to support the African American Male Wellness Agency’s new doula program.



Agency Partner: Community Partnerships

The commissioners’ [Community Partnerships](#) agency is committed to improving the lives of every Franklin County resident every day through collaboration and in partnership with local non-profit organizations, business owners, and national, state, and local governments. In 2023, this team granted nearly \$33 million to more than 90 different recipients to support the organizations that our residents rely on for support.

Directory

Animal Care & Control

(614) 525-3400

Dog Shelter & Adoption Center

(614) 525-3647

dogs.franklincountyohio.gov

Board of Elections

(614) 525-3100

vote.franklincountyohio.gov

Clerk of Courts

(614) 525-3600

clerk.franklincountyohio.gov

Court of Common Pleas

(614) 525-3453

fccourts.org

Emergency Management & Homeland Security

(614) 794-0213

fcemhs.org

Guardianship Services Board

(614) 525-2279

guardian.franklincountyohio.gov

Law Library

(614) 525-4971

lawlibrary.franklincountyohio.gov

Office on Aging

(614) 525-5230

officeonaging.org

Public Health

(614) 525-3160

myfcph.org

Sanitary Engineering

(614) 525-3940

cleanwater.franklincountyohio.gov

Treasurer

(614) 525-3438

treasurer.franklincountyohio.gov

Auditor

(614) 525-4663

franklincountyauditor.com

Child Support Enforcement

(614) 525-3275

support.franklincountyohio.gov

Coroner

(614) 525-5290

coroner.franklincountyohio.gov

Domestic Relations/Juvenile Branch

(614) 525- 3628

drj.fccourts.org

Engineer

(614) 525-3030

franklincountyengineer.org

Job & Family Services

(614) 233-2000

jfs.franklincountyohio.gov

Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission

(614) 228-2663

morpc.org

Probate Court

(614) 525-3894

probate.franklincountyohio.gov

Purchasing Department

(614) 525-3750

purchasing.franklincountyohio.gov

Sheriff

(614) 525-3333

sheriff.franklincountyohio.gov

Veterans Service Commission

(614) 525-2500

vets.franklincountyohio.gov

Board of Developmental Disabilities

(614) 475-6440

fcbdd.org

Children Services

(614) 275-2571

childrenservices.franklincountyohio.gov

Court of Appeals

(614) 525-3580

tenthdistrictcourt.org

Economic Development & Planning

(614) 525-3095

development.franklincountyohio.gov

Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District

(614) 486-9613

franklinswcd.org

Justice Policy & Programs

(614) 525-5577

jpp.franklincountyohio.gov

Municipal Court

(614) 645-8214

municipalcourt.franklincountyohio.gov

Municipal Court (Clerk's Division)

(614) 645-8346

fcmcclerk.com

Prosecuting Attorney

(614) 525-3555

prosecutor.franklincountyohio.gov

Recorder

(614) 525-3930

recorder.franklincountyohio.gov

Solid Waste Authority of Central Ohio

(614) 871-5100

swaco.org



Report.FranklinCountyOhio.Gov