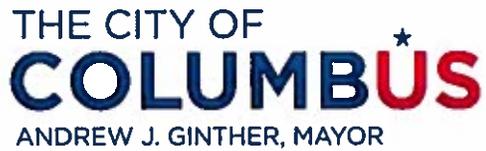


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MEMBERS



COMMUNITY PARTNERS



Moving the Region Forward

The Columbus region succeeds when we work together.

The Columbus Region Coalition represents the business community, our local governments, and other community stakeholders across eleven counties in Central Ohio – Logan, Union, Marion, Delaware, Morrow, Knox, Licking, Franklin, Madison, Pickaway, and Fairfield counties. We are proud to work together to make our area the ideal location to invest, build, and to live, work, and play.

Last year, our community identified a number of projects and priorities to pursue as part of our federal policy agenda. Successes in 2015, and 2016 begins stronger because of our Ohio delegation's leadership. Today, we enjoy a more stable federal environment with regard to taxes, export promotion, transportation, research and development, physician payment structure, and the federal budget. Our agenda for this year builds on those successes and is focused on achievable goals that are aligned with the strengths and interests of our delegation, major new investments in the community, and future growth.

The successful model in our region has been one in which economic development is driven by investments in people, infrastructure, and innovation that will help propel our region forward, making us even more competitive in a dynamic global economy. These investments will drive job growth, economic development and expansion, and new opportunities that will enhance and serve the region's projected growth of more than 500,000 people and 300,000 new jobs by 2050.

Our goal is to not only identify the short-term objectives, but also have the vision and mindset to prepare for mid-range and longer-term projects we can work on together.

The bottom line is this: Economic development and job growth matter to our region. Both are driven by investments in infrastructure, people, and innovation. These investments will help propel our region forward enabling us to be competitive in a dynamic global economy.

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Investment in Infrastructure — Aviation

Legislation authorizing the nation's aviation infrastructure is set to expire in the first quarter of 2016. Congress is exploring significant revisions to the structure and major functions of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) as part of a major re-authorization bill. Given this legislative backdrop, we know that there are potential opportunities for advancement of our federal policy agenda.

Our airports are the front door to our community. Our local elected leadership, along with the business community, have made improving our connectivity with the rest of the country a focal point and a community priority.

Federal investments at Port Columbus, including the recent addition of a second runway, have positioned the airport for growth. The Rickenbacker area, which includes highway, rail, air cargo and aviation infrastructure, has been a magnet for job growth and development, currently supporting 16,000 local jobs with plans for expansion.

Infrastructure at Port Columbus is supported locally and through Passenger Facility Charges (PFCs), a user fee that has not been updated to reflect inflation in 15 years. Modernizing the PFC to reflect more local control over investments is a priority of the community.

Current Department of Defense (DOD) and Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) funding rules currently do not "count" flights in their formulas for federal funding. Dual-use airports such as Rickenbacker, which support both military missions and civilian aviation, as well as increasing international cargo flights, should be adjusted to encourage more cooperation between local, military, and FAA funding streams.

These federal dollars could be used for infrastructure improvements and expansions including replacing the outdated tower and strategic investments to improve and expand air cargo and freight investments to continue logistics job growth.

Investment in Infrastructure — Aviation

Rickenbacker also is eligible for participation in the Contract Tower program, administered by FAA, and an application for participation has been pending since 2011. Larger discussions about the future of the contract tower program have been a source of debate for years, but this is the year for resolution of these applications “caught in limbo.”

Opportunities for our Congressional Delegation

- Encourage Airline Executives to consider Columbus for expanded service
- Support updating the PFC for inflation in FAA Reauthorization
- Support legislation that recognizes the unique characteristics of dual-use military/civilian airports in FAA Reauthorization and annual Defense Authorization bills
- Continued support of the FAA contract tower program in FAA Reauthorization—with a special focus on resolution of pending applications
- Support funding for planning and investment to transform Port Columbus into the region’s premiere transportation center

Investment in Infrastructure — Roads, Rail, and Transit

Transportation connects people, goods, and services throughout our region. One of our long-range goals is to expand the region's capacity to be a true multimodal transportation hub by investing in our roads, rail, and transit assets.

The most exciting new collaborative effort is the City of Columbus' application for the U.S. Department of Transportation's Smart City Challenge. Already recognized as a leader in connected transportation systems nationally, Columbus is ideally positioned to receive this award— which would provide \$50 million in total funding to the winning community. This effort has encouraged collaboration and creative new approaches from the entire Columbus community.

Columbus plans to utilize this funding to improve connectivity, help consumers make smarter and more efficient transportation decisions, and to improve the connection between job growth areas and portions of the community needing employment. With a decision on five finalist cities due in March, Columbus can be the country's Smart City.

Columbus and the region continue to develop and improve access across the transportation spectrum, including ongoing development of the Rickenbacker freight logistics campus. The community is actively seeking federal opportunities through the TIGER grant program and newly established programs originating in the five-year highway bill that Congress passed in 2015.

Thank you

- Thank you for supporting our application for the USDOT Smart City Challenge
- Thank you for supporting the TIGER VII application for Rickenbacker related infrastructure
- Thank you for supporting full funding of the COTA New Starts account in the FY16 Appropriations bill that includes funding for the new CMAX Bus Rapid Transit line
- Thank you for supporting a long-term highway bill, that increased local decision-making authority with increased roadway and transit funding, and new opportunities for freight focused communities
- Thank you for renewing the TIGER program for FY 2017 and for passing legislation providing new federal opportunities for freight and highway projects of national significance

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Investment in Infrastructure — Roads, Rail, and Transit

Opportunities for our Congressional Delegation

- Continue to work with the City of Columbus and its collaborative partners to ensure Columbus becomes a finalist, and then winner of, the U.S. Department of Transportation's Smart City Challenge.
- Support related efforts to fund transportation connectivity and intelligent transportation improvements that align with the Smart City Challenge application
- Support continued efforts to increase intermodal capacity at Rickenbacker
- Support continued funding of the TIGER program overall and other designated funding for intermodal and multimodal connectivity

Investment in Infrastructure — Water & Sewer

In order to provide clean, safe, and affordable drinking water to residents in our region, as well as to provide environmentally responsible storm water and wastewater capacity, the region's water and sewer authorities rely on federal partnerships with the EPA, the Army Corps of Engineers, and other federal agencies.

Despite enormous investment, there are still challenges in addressing these twin goals. Compliance with new rules regarding storm water will require significant additional investment.

Communities in Central Ohio are making short-term fixes and are challenged with implementing the necessary long-term solutions that are needed to truly meet the water and sewer infrastructure needs throughout the region.

MORPC, the City of Columbus, Del-Co Water Company, and other public and private partners completed a planning effort called "Sustaining Scioto" to proactively identify the risks to the region's water resources. This proactive science-based study was conducted to ensure that Central Ohio has clean and secure water resources for current residents and businesses, and to sustain needs for future growth.

Congress is currently actively involved in the implementation of the Water Reform, Resources and Development Act (WRRDA) that was passed in 2014. Congress will begin another reauthorization of WRRDA in 2016. Both implementation of existing legislation and reauthorization legislation provide opportunities to address the region's water and sewer needs.

Opportunities for our Congressional Delegation

- Provide opportunities for water authorities to meet the needs of all communities for clean water supply, and secure federal assistance to plan for the job and population growth projected for 2050
- Support increased funding for water and sewer infrastructure investments to address water supply, water quality and treatment

Healthy Communities

Healthy communities are a hallmark of Central Ohio and a continued focus of the region. Our community is home to world-class health care facilities which benefit from an ongoing partnership with the National Institutes of Health (NIH) on health-related research investments, and cross-community efforts to address a number of local and national priorities which include curing cancer, infant mortality, mental health, and addiction.

Our local health-care community continues to drive investments in health care- better aligning options and facilities to meet the demands of our growing community. A provision included in the two-year budget bill last year created unintentional uncertainty for a number of adult hospital outpatient facilities already under development locally. This issue also has implications for cancer care locally, and we applaud efforts by both Chambers of Congress and our congressional delegation and leadership to address the issue.

Columbus is focused on cancer- from our nationally recognized Pelotonia effort, to cutting-edge research and treatment endeavors. Columbus, with its wide breath of world-class hospitals, to its existing research portfolio at the Ohio State University and Nationwide Children's Hospital, is ideally positioned to play a major, collaborative role in the President's cancer initiative.

The region and the state have sought to tackle infant mortality. The Celebrate One effort provides a working blueprint for continued engagement to address the many factors contributing to infant mortality and to improve maternal and child health overall. Our next step is to link these local initiatives with federal programs to support and expand our efforts.

The community is working together to address mental health in a collaborative way. Pending rules at CMS will provide additional capacity to provide psychiatric care locally.

The misuse of and addiction to opioids such as heroin, morphine, and other prescription pain medicines is a serious national problem that affects public health as well as social and economic welfare. Central Ohio is not immune to this growing public health epidemic. The community supports the development and implementation of multipronged, evidence-based strategies that minimize the intrinsic risks of opioid addiction and make effective, long term treatments more widely available.

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Healthy Communities

Thank you

- Thank you for enacting a long-term “fix” to the long unresolved physician payment issue. Resolving this permanently provides stability to the health care community and the population that depends on uninterrupted access to care
- Thank you for reauthorizing CHIP (Children’s Health Insurance Program)
- Thank you for supporting significant increases in Research and Development funding, including the NIH and other federal R&D sources

Opportunities for our Congressional Delegation

- Support investment in the President’s initiative on Cancer, help us position Columbus’ combined resources for a major role in the Cancer Moonshot initiative
- Resolve the issue facing adult hospital outpatient facilities currently “under development” (HOPD)
- Support existing Congressional efforts to increase funding for health related research - NIH appropriations, 21st Century Cures
- Support Columbus’ community effort to address psychiatric care by seeking a timely resolution with CMS on the rules governing psychiatric inpatient care
- Support ongoing community collaboration on Celebrate One and seek federal legislative and funding opportunities to address infant mortality in Central Ohio
- Support efforts by the Ohio delegation and the Administration to address substance abuse and addiction treatment in our community



Investments in People, Public Safety, and Affordable Housing

Our region is growing for many reasons; but central among them is the quality of life available in our region. Apart from economic opportunities, public safety, access to affordable housing, and a clean environment all contribute as positive attributes for our community.

The community and the City of Columbus' leadership is moving proactively to address public safety issues, and Congressional assistance in identifying and supporting U.S. Department of Justice community grant programs is an area for continued collaboration. We aim to pursue federal funding opportunities for body cameras and other law enforcement/public safety related needs.

The Columbus Metropolitan Housing Authority (CMHA) has innovatively used flexible financing and partnerships to expand our region's pool of affordable housing. To generate more than \$100 million in additional investment in our region's housing, the "cap" on using Project-Based-Vouchers (PBVs) should be increased, as included in H.R. 3700, legislation recently approved by the U.S. House of Representatives. The community is also actively involved in eradicating homelessness, including a stalwart commitment to get veterans off the streets and into appropriate housing with quality care and support services.

The Columbus region is also highly invested in workforce development, including supporting apprenticeships, GED opportunities, and other types of job training to grow a qualified competitive workforce that can keep up with the challenges of a dynamic global economy.

Thank you

- Thank you for supporting the Community Development Block Grant and housing funding in the FY16 Appropriations process

Opportunities for our Congressional Delegation

- Support legislation to increase the cap on project-based vouchers that would result in more than \$100 million of public and private sector investment in affordable housing in the Columbus region
- Continue to provide support for federal housing programs including the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and Home Investment Partnerships (HOME) program
- Work collaboratively with employers, local school systems, community colleges, and the Central Ohio college university community on job training initiatives

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Investments in Innovation

The Columbus Region is home to 63 colleges and universities with a total enrollment of more than 138,000 students and 22,000 annual graduates. This extraordinary focus on advanced education fuels a vibrancy and intellectual reservoir for our continued growth.

One of the country's leading research institutions, The Ohio State University, enrolls 57,000 students at its main campus in Columbus. With 200 undergraduate majors and more than 250 masters, doctoral, and professional degree programs, The Ohio State University alone provides the Columbus Region and the entire state with a tremendous pipeline of talented employees.

Ohio State ranks Number 3 among all universities in industry-sponsored research with leading research programs in biological/agricultural engineering, computer engineering and material sciences. The university is also actively engaged in research partnerships with more than 340 companies in Ohio, more than 120 of which are in the Columbus Region.

For example, in a typical year, Ohio State alone spends \$967 million on research and development (R&D), including \$481 million for federal research and \$111 million for industry-sponsored research. R&D efforts underway at Ohio State, Nationwide Children's Hospital, Battelle, and other organizations across the region fuel small business innovation, including spin-offs, start-ups, technology licensing, and commercialization. This focus on innovation dramatically improves our competitiveness as a region, and means that Ohio receives much more than other states in federal R&D dollars. The federal investment in this area is critical to our region and is spread across a host of focused agencies that we can work together to preserve and enhance.

Thank you

- Thank you for addressing the "sequester" and for providing a two-year budget framework for responsible decision-making. This allowed timely completion of the appropriations process and for smart and significant investments in R&D occurring in the region

Opportunities for our Congressional Delegation

- Continue support of federal research including Department of Defense, Agriculture Department, NASA, Department of Energy, National Institutes of Health, National Science Foundation, among others
- Celebrate our local entrepreneurs and growth of small businesses

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Preparing for a Dynamic Global Economy

Direct foreign investment in the region employs more than 53,000 individuals in the region and includes more than 450 foreign-owned firms.

Over the years, we as a region have developed extensive export promotion tools to help drive economic development.

International trade is a major contributor to local economic growth. Over the past ten years, export-supported jobs accounted for 27 percent of employment growth, and overall exports increased from 61 percent to \$11.3 billion.

The community supports three export-related accounts that, similar to the Export-Import Bank, fuel job growth in Central Ohio. Specifically:

Last year, Congress provided \$18 million for the Small Business Administration (SBA) State Trade and Export Promotion Grant Program (STEP). This is a three-year pilot trade and export initiative that uses federal and state resources to assist small businesses enter new export markets. Congress should authorize SBA to continue programs in states, such as Ohio, showing progress with this program, and continue funding in FY17.

SelectUSA, is a U.S.-government-wide effort managed by the Commerce Department's International Trade Administration (ITA) to recruit foreign businesses to invest and create new jobs in the United States. Columbus 2020 has been actively engaged in its work and has benefitted. In 2015, the Columbus Region won a significant project as a result of the SelectUSA Investment Summit. Sofidel Group, one of the world's largest tissue manufacturers based in Italy, is building a 1.4 million-square-foot plant in Circleville bringing a few hundred jobs to the region. This is the largest economic development win for Pickaway County in more than fifty years. The President's budget seeks to double funding from \$10 million to \$20 million in FY17. We support this budget item, and would look for any increase in funding to have a focus on Ohio.

In the state of Ohio there are three Department of Commerce U.S. Export Assistance Centers in Ohio – Cleveland, Cincinnati, and Columbus. USEAC's are focused on providing export-related technical assistance. While Cleveland and Cincinnati's TIC's each employ between 4 - 6 people, Columbus has only one full time position and the person filling that position retired in December of 2014. Congressional assistance in immediately filling this slot would advance the community's agenda and provide much needed export-related technical assistance in Central Ohio.

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Preparing for a Dynamic Global Economy

Last year, the combined and constructive engagement by our entire Ohio delegation led to the reauthorization of the Export-Import Bank, despite significant obstacles to its enactment. This effort adds to the tools the region uses to attract investment, grow exports, and to provide jobs and economic growth in the area.

Thank you

- Thank you for the significant steps and activity that made reauthorizing the Export-Import Bank a reality

Opportunities for our Congressional Delegation

- Support local infrastructure that enables exports - including additional air, rail, and road capacity at Rickenbacker
- Continue to support and encourage direct foreign investment in our region

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Support Our Unique Defense Assets and People

The defense-related activity in the region adds unique talent, abilities and infrastructure attributes to our multi-dimensional economy. Department of Defense activities in the community provide significant economic importance to the Columbus region. The Defense Supply Center Columbus (DSCC), the military complex at Rickenbacker and the defense facility in Newark/Heath provide thousands of jobs locally with an annual payroll of \$615 million and an annual economic impact of nearly \$2.9 billion.

Opportunities for our Congressional Delegation

- Grow the flying mission at Rickenbacker. With the new tanker entering the fleet, divested tankers- common to the current Rickenbacker fleet- will be available for repositioning
- Maximize opportunities that preserve and enhance military missions at Rickenbacker
- In preparation for possible efforts to reduce installation costs, including a future BRAC (Base Realignment and Closure) round, ensure that all data developed on our installations is accurate. Require that any BRAC legislation contains public evaluation criteria that can be addressed by a coalition of defense and local authorities
- Work to ensure that needed local installation improvements are attended to by the Department of Defense, including needed safety, energy efficiency, and other modernization improvements
- Empower public/public and public/private partnerships that cut costs and increase efficiencies of Central Ohio's defense installations thereby enhancing their military value
- Support legislation that supports the unique role served by joint-use military/civilian aviation facilities in the FAA and Defense Reauthorization Acts

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