



# REGIONAL REVIEW

Volume 8, Issue 2

Brooke-Hancock-Jefferson  
Metropolitan Planning Commission

Summer 2007

## BHJ'S BRIDGE ACCESS COMMITTEE: BUILDING A FUTURE FOR THE VETERANS MEMORIAL BRIDGE CORRIDOR

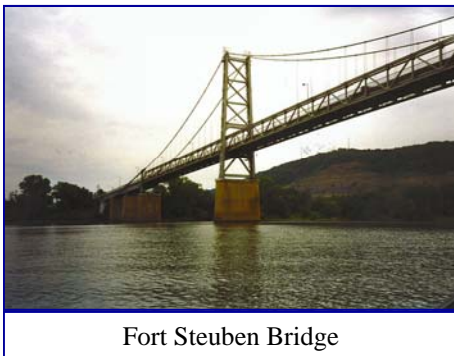
BY: DR. JOHN BROWN

Since January 05, the BHJ Bridge Access Committee (BAC), a strategic planning group, has met on a bi-monthly basis to invest and strategize improvements for the region's true traffic mixing bowl, the Veterans Memorial Bridge Corridor. With two vehicular bridge crossings, one rail crossing, a marina crossing, and the Half-Moon Industrial Park, very real safety and economic blood lines run through this half-mile corridor.

With ODOT's announced demolition of the Ft. Steuben Bridge in FY 09 and a key bridge access point (University and Route 7) being an identified accident hot spot, the push to improve corridor access is on.



Accident at the intersection of University Blvd. and Route 7 in Steubenville



Fort Steuben Bridge

Led by front-line businesses with daily working knowledge of the corridor, the BAC has provided a forum for ODOT and WVDOT communication and led to a variety of mutual decisions.

Pavement and wid-

ening improvements on Freedom Way and Weirton Main Street were completed in the fall of 2006, and due to structural bridge issues, weight limits were lowered twice on the Ft. Steuben Bridge in 2005.

Increased safety and weight limit signage has been posted in the corridor and will be updated as needed. In addition, both the proposal and completion of short-term access solutions to the Veterans Memorial Bridge at University Boulevard were made in the spring 2006.

The BAC's job is not done. They continue to work towards the substantiation of long-term access solutions to the Veterans' Memorial Bridge. Future safety improvements include the widening of Birch Drive in Half-Moon Industrial Park in the fall of 2007 and could include long-term access solutions such as a service road, right turn only access and a roundabout.



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**FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

I have a confession. I believe in a consensus building, long-term vision for significant investments. While the “push and pull” for immediate action is always present, in a world of limited financial resources, our three county region needs to set priorities and agree to a common strategy. For example, BHJ’s *2025 Regional Transportation Plan: Looking Into the Future* projected a need for \$568 million in major new transportation construction in the region while BHJ’s *Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy* for Brooke and Hancock County illustrates a need for \$402 million in community project investment.



Clearly, we can not financially match all this need. The formula to success is not difficult. First, set priorities through a regional partnership. Second, leverage investment through this consensus or priority statement.

Take a look at several regional projects with more than a subtle taste of partnerships.

**Project Achievement Through Regional Partnerships**

PROJECT	COSTS	PARTNERS	STATUS
<b>New Ohio River Bridge Crossing</b>	\$100,000,000	BHJ FHWA ODOT WV DOT	#1 regional transportation priority. \$18,000,000 in federal dollars obtained. Waiting for location/ environmental study.
<b>US 22 Steubenville to Columbus Corridor Study</b>	\$300,000	BHJ 6 OH Counties & Delegates	Designated macro corridor in 2004. \$300,000 in federal dollars set aside for study.
<b>Transit Service Coordination Expansion Study. Brooke &amp; Hancock Counties</b>	\$70,000	BHJ  Local Service Providers	A comprehensive review of public transportation services. A policy committee is considering the study recommendations.
<b>Veterans Bridge Lighting</b>	\$500,000	Community Foundation of Jefferson County; BHJ; Brooke County, Cities of Steubenville, OH and Weirton, WV	Initiated in 2001, this project has leveraged partial funding.

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# GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF APPLACHIA

LOU GENTILE, DEPUTY DIRECTOR

The Governor's Office of Appalachia (GOA) is a division within the Ohio Department of Development and works on behalf of the Appalachian Regional Commission in Washington, DC. In the late 1980's the Governor's Office of Appalachia was created by the Ohio State Legislature. Out of 88 Counties, the Appalachian Region consists of 29 counties in southeast and east central Ohio. The mission of the Governor's Office of Appalachia is to promote opportunities for the people of the Appalachian Region of Ohio to achieve and improve the quality of life.

The Purpose of the Governor's Office of Appalachia is to represent the interest of the 29 Ohio Appalachian counties in state government. The United States Congress designates which counties will be part of the Appalachian Region in all 13 Appalachian states. GOA seeks to facilitate economic and community development in the 29 counties by: Serving as an advocate for the region, being involved in both short-term and long term planning and supporting grassroots proposals that originate from the regions residents and local leaders.

The Governor's Office of Appalachia manages several grant programs. All applicants must be a unit of government or a non-profit organization. The Appalachian Regional Commission has laid out the following goals that each project must satisfy to be eligible for funding, those goals include: 1.) Increase job opportunities and per-capita income in Appalachia to reach parity with the rest of the nation. 2.) Strengthen the capacity of the people in Appalachia to compete in the global economy. 3.) Develop and improve Appalachia infrastructure to make the region economically competitive. 4.) Build the Appalachian Development Highway System to reduce Appalachia's isolation.

GOA had put a great deal of emphasis on the need to be grassroots oriented and support the needs of the local communities within the region. There are three Local Development Districts (LDD) in Ohio that GOA partners with. It is the responsibility of the Governor's Office of Appalachia to manage the Appalachian Development Program and set the direc-

tion of ARC funding within the state of Ohio with the three Local Development Districts. The three Local Development Districts are charged with assisting local officials in preparing plans and projects that improve living conditions, reverse a trend of out migration of people and spur economic development. In Jef-

ferson County and surrounding counties in Ohio, the Ohio Valley Mid-Eastern Governments Association (OMEGA) is the local development district that officials should work with when planning projects that will impact the Ohio Valley. GOA has a close relationship with each of the three LDDs in the region. GOA relies heavily upon each development district to work with local officials to make decisions about priority projects in their respective counties. All three development districts have a ranking system which they use to determine what projects they will present to GOA for funding. Each September GOA conducts a meeting with all three development districts. At this meeting, each district presents its project priority package to the GOA director and deputy director. At that meeting final funding decisions are made. The most critical component for a county to be able to maximize its ability to receive grant funding is for each county to produce and follow a strategic plan. Counties that have a clear idea of what their main priorities are for economic and community development will have the most success when seeking grant funding.

The Governor's Office of Appalachia acknowledges that there are many challenges to overcome in the Appalachian region of our state, however there are just as many opportunities as there are challenges. The Appalachian Regional Commission and the Strickland Administration are both focused on Appalachia as a hub for energy production.

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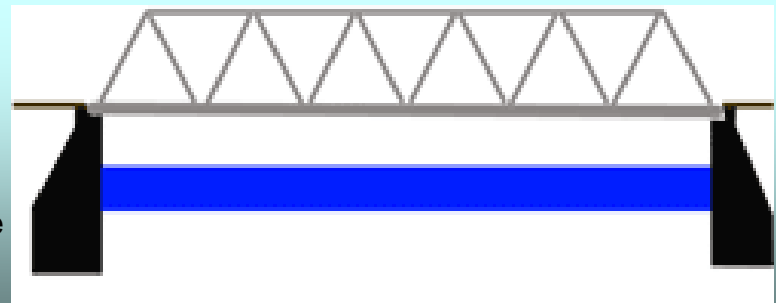


## ODOT AND WVDOT RESPOND TO

The collapse of a freeway bridge in Minneapolis has ignited a great deal of concern for bridge safety all across the country and especially for bridges with an under deck truss support system. But what exactly is a truss bridge?

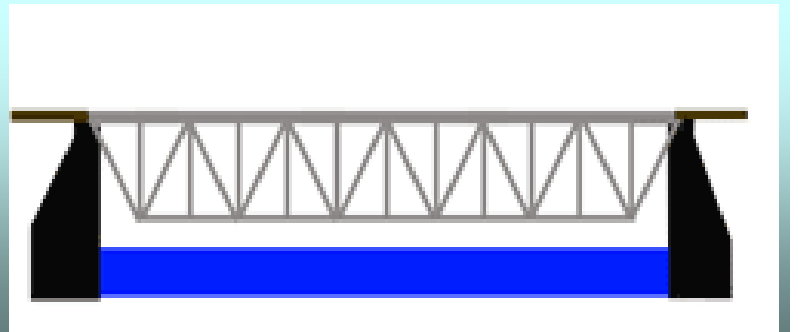
As explained on the ODOT website, a truss is a simple, rigid skeletal structure, usually based on a triangle-shaped frame. A truss bridge uses a series of triangles in some sort of superstructure to transfer the load from the deck to the piers. Since the elements of a truss are subject only to tension (stretching) or compression (pushing) forces and cannot handle bending forces, truss bridges are typically best used for straight alignments. A truss bridge can support heavy weights and span long distances, but it requires a fair amount of vertical room to accommodate the truss structure.

There are a number of types of truss bridge. First, the bridge deck can pass either over or under the skeletal truss structure. In a through-truss bridge, the deck is located under (or through) the truss structure



Through-truss bridge

An under-truss or deck truss bridge has the truss structure under the deck.



Under-truss (deck truss) bridge

The Minneapolis bridge had an under-deck truss support that uses steel beams hooked together geometrically to give it strength. ODOT has 12 similar under-deck truss bridges in the state highway system, including six on interstates. Statewide there are 181 deck trusses, none of which are located in the area.

ODOT recently released the following background information to the media on Ohio's Bridge Inspection and Preservation Program.

- ODOT has an aggressive bridge inspection program and devotes a significant amount of its annual budget to bridge preservation.
- Ohio has over 42,000 bridges, the second largest number of bridges in the country. ODOT is responsible for 14,891 bridges on the state highway system.

# MINNEAPOLIS BRIDGE COLLAPSE

- Federal regulations require that every bridge be inspected once every two years. However, Ohio law requires all bridges to be inspected on an annual basis. This applies to the Department's bridges as well as county and city bridges.
- Bridges are inspected by trained inspectors or consultants. These trained inspectors look at several key appraisal factors, including the bridge deck, the superstructure, and the piers and abutments that support the bridge.

ODOT has \$239 million budgeted in 2008 to the repair, replacement, and maintenance of Ohio bridges under ODOT's authority. An additional \$91 million is devoted to assist Ohio's Counties and Cities on their bridge project.

The State of West Virginia currently owns and maintains approximately 7,000 bridges. Of that number, 18 fit into the category of "similar structure" to the I-35 W Bridge. Again, none are located in the tri-county area.

WVDOT's website says the DOH employs an aggressive bridge inspection program, with 55 bridge inspectors trained to Federal Highway Administration standards. Each bridge in West Virginia is in a continuous state of inspection, being in the pre-inspection, inspection or post-inspection phase.

Like Ohio, West Virginia follows stricter guidelines for bridge maintenance than required by Federal regulations. Bridges that are considered of high importance or consideration are inspected on a yearly basis.

The website states, also, that "while DOH officials are confident the bridge inspection process provides the appropriate safeguards, every effort will be made on behalf of the Governor of West Virginia, the Secretary of Transportation, and Highways Officials to take all precautionary measures to ensure the safety of the traveling public."

## DID YOU KNOW.....

The US has 578,000 highway bridges

The average life span of highway bridges is about 70 years

The majority of bridges currently in use were built after 1945

Structurally deficient means there are elements of the bridge that need to be monitored and/or repaired. The fact that a bridge is "deficient" does not imply that it is likely to collapse or that it is unsafe. It means they must be monitored, inspected and maintained.

# LOCAL BROWNFIELDS PROGRAM—SEPARATING FACT FROM FICTION AND CREATING JOB OPPORTUNITIES

BY: DR. JOHN BROWN

Now in its fourth year and second grant, the Brooke-Hancock Brownfields Program, a \$200,000 federal grant for the redevelopment of perceived or contaminated local sites, is creating regional value. Initially leveraged by the strategic location but moth-balled status of prominent manufacturing sites, the federal brownfield program has created an impressive list of redevelopment successes in East Liverpool, Pittsburgh and Wheeling.

A key to its success is many brownfield sites have limited or no contamination, a fact which once diagnosed creates investor interest. With the cooperation of property owners stirred by the potential for redevelopment, the federal brownfield program generates dollars to investigate these sites.

Over the past year, ten general site evaluations, called Phase I ESA, have been completed while five on-site follow-up studies, called Phase II ESA, have been completed regionally by CEC Engineers. Minimally, this information has created a stronger base for the private sale or clean-up of property. In the case of Cove School in Weirton, a publicly owned property, this investigation has led to the application for further federal clean-up funds.

In the upcoming months, these targeted sites will be marketed on the BHJ web site and the Business Development Corporation of the Northern Panhandle (BDC) web site.

## .....GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF APPALACHIA (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3)

The region has an abundance of coal reserves and a significant agricultural base which could be used for alternative fuels. The expansion of broadband access is another critical component to have in place if the region is going to advance.

Recognizing the need to expand access to broadband Governor Strickland has just recently signed an executive order creating the Ohio Broadband Council; the council will have spending and decision making authority. The Governor's Office of Appalachia has a seat on the council and will represent the 29 counties in the Appalachian region. The most recent budget the Governor signed into law has \$20 million appropriated for his broadband Ohio plan. This level of funding underscores the Governor's commitment to this pressing issue.

GOA is looking forward to partnering with the counties in the Ohio Valley and throughout the OMEGA region to do our part to turn around Ohio.

### About Lou Gentile:

*Lou Gentile was named the Assistant Director for the Governor's Office of Appalachia in January 2007.*

*Most recently, Gentile served as special assistant to then-Congressman Ted Strickland during his successful campaign for Governor in 2006. His prior experience includes service as a field representative in Belmont, Jefferson, Monroe and Noble counties in the sixth Congressional District.*

*A native of Steubenville (Jefferson County), Gentile graduated from West Virginia University with a bachelor's degree in political science.*

## COMMUNITY PROFILE - WINTERSVILLE, OH

What makes the Village of Wintersville, Ohio unique? According to Mary Sanders, who contributed to a booklet written for the 1972 Wintersville Community Days, it's because Main Street has always been in almost the same location today as it was in Indian times. The name of the street has changed—including being "Steubenville Street" at one point - but throughout the course of time, people have traveled that same path to pass through the Village on foot, on horseback, driving wagons and eventually motor vehicles.



Little, if anything, remains of the Village as it looked in 1800 when two brothers, Isaac and Isaiah Winters settled in the area. The original plan, actually designed by Isaac's son, John, in 1831, included 40 lots laid out in a double row on each side of the road which is now Main Street. All the lots had 60-foot frontage and were 160 feet deep. The first house was built by Mr. Greelin, and the first business was a hotel and store owned by one of the Winters brothers. And, although Steubenville was so close for shopping, Wintersville had its own resources. There was a boot shop and sewing machine shop. Mr. John Ross was the village undertaker who even made his own caskets. Entrepreneurship was alive and well in the 1800s. One homemaker collected rags and old carpets and reweave them into new rugs for sale. Another lady collected hair and wove them into hair switches.

It was a tight-knit community where the residents looked out for each other and enjoyed life together. In the spring and summer, peddlers would arrive in their wagons selling their wares. There was an Italian man who came weekly with a fresh assortment of fruits. There were medicine shows—and there were the gypsies who would come in caravans selling trinkets and telling fortunes.

The Village witnessed Morgan's Raid although details vary. It is believed that on Saturday, July 25, 1863, a skirmish took place at the Two Ridge Presbyterian Church at the intersection of State Route 43 and U.S. 22. where Morgan was overtaken by the 9th Michigan Calvary of Monroe County, Michigan. Two men were gravely wounded, and a third died and is buried in the cemetery by the church. There is also a report that during the raid a young lady, Margaret Dougherty, was mortally wounded when she leaned out the window to observe the skirmish. Another source noted she recovered from her wounds.

Besides the Presbyterian Church, two other historic buildings remain. The first is the Wintersville Grange on Fernwood Road. Although the grange was established in 1905, a permanent building wasn't erected until 1914. The grange was a source of social life for the residents and has the distinction of being the first in Jefferson County.



The other is a one-room school building located on Bantam Ridge Road where children would gather on the lawn at recess and play games or sit under the massive oak trees and sip a cool drink of water drawn from the old well—or in the wintertime huddle around the pot-bellied stove inside to keep warm.



Those days are history. Gone are the old farms, the boot shop, the feed store, the people who struggled through the depression and sending their loved ones off to war. What remains is a legacy of a people who worked hard and took pride in their community—just like the people who live there today.

## COMING EVENTS

September 3	Labor Day	Office Closed
September 4	BHJ Executive Committee	Noon
September 19	<b>BHJ Annual Awards Dinner</b> <b>Serbian—American Cultural Center</b> <b>Colliers Way</b> <b>Weirton, WV</b>	6:00—8:30
September 26	TAC Full Commission	10:30 Noon
October 2	BHJ Executive Committee	Noon

## Related Web Sites

Appalachian Regional Commission  
[www.arc.gov](http://www.arc.gov)

Brooke County Economic Development Authority  
[www.brookewv.org](http://www.brookewv.org)

Brooke Pioneer Trail Assoc. Inc  
[www.brookepioneertrail.org](http://www.brookepioneertrail.org)

Business Development Corporation of the  
Northern Panhandle  
[www.bhbdc.org](http://www.bhbdc.org)

CHANGE, Inc.  
[www.changeinc.org](http://www.changeinc.org)

City of Steubenville  
[www.ci.steubenville.oh.us](http://www.ci.steubenville.oh.us)

Economic Development Administration  
[www.commerce.gov](http://www.commerce.gov)

Environmental Protection Agency  
[www.epa.gov](http://www.epa.gov)

Hancock County Convention and Visitors Bureau  
[www.hancockcvb.com](http://www.hancockcvb.com)

Jefferson County Chamber of Commerce  
[www.jeffersoncountychamber.com](http://www.jeffersoncountychamber.com)

Ohio Department of Transportation  
[www.dot.state.oh.us](http://www.dot.state.oh.us)

Progress Alliance  
[www.progressalliance.com](http://www.progressalliance.com)

State of Ohio Government Information  
[www.state.oh.us](http://www.state.oh.us)

State of West Virginia Government Info.  
[www.state.wv.us](http://www.state.wv.us)

State Route 2 & Interstate 68 Authority  
[www.route2andi68.com](http://www.route2andi68.com)

U.S. Census Bureau  
[www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)

U.S. Department of Transportation  
[www.dot.gov](http://www.dot.gov)

Village of Wintersville  
[www.wintersville.net](http://www.wintersville.net)

Weirton Chamber of Commerce  
[www.weirtonchamber.com](http://www.weirtonchamber.com)

West Virginia Department of Transportation  
[www.wvdot.com](http://www.wvdot.com)

West Virginia Development Office  
[www.wvdo.org](http://www.wvdo.org)