



# REGIONAL REVIEW

**Volume 15, Issue 2**

**Brooke-Hancock-Jefferson  
Metropolitan Planning Commission**

**Summer 2014**

## **NEW OHIO RIVER BRIDGE BETWEEN BRILLIANT, OH AND WELLSBURG, WV PROJECTED FOR A YEAR 2016 START**

In 1994, the Brooke-Hancock-Jefferson Metropolitan Planning Commission designated the construction of a new Ohio River Bridge as its #1 regional transportation priority. In the last 20 years, the vision has never changed and the work has never stopped. But, due to necessary environmental reviews and the estimated cost of \$120 million, the project has moved slowly. However, this past November all environmental review documents were completed and, according to Secretary Mattox, right-of-way acquisition and construction could start in 2016.



(L-R) Mark Henne, WV Senator Rocky Fitzsimmons, John Brown, Gov. Earl Ray Tomblin, Mayor Sue Simonetti and WV Senator Jack Yost.

On May 20, Wellsburg Mayor Sue Simonetti and Wellsburg City Manager Mark Henne met with West Virginia Governor Earl Ray Tomblin and Transportation Secretary Paul Mattox to discuss the proposed bridge. There they learned that although a complete funding package has yet to be confirmed, significant consideration has been given to the use of Public Private Partnerships (P3). P3 funding typically involves a contract between a public authority and a private party (contractor). The contractor assumes substantial financial, technical and operational risk in the project up front on the strength of the public authority's contract. In Ohio, P3 funding will finance downtown Cleveland's second innerbelt bridge. In West Virginia, P3 funding is the preferred approach to financing the \$215 million road expansion between Mason County and Putnam County.

Also attending the meeting were West Virginia Senators Rocky Fitzsimmons and Jack Yost and West Virginia Delegate Phil Diserio. R.J. Scrites, director of engineering for the West Virginia Department of Transportation and John Brown, executive director for BHJ.

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**FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**



The big news at BHJ is the New Ohio River Bridge. With the completion of a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) in November and encouraging statements from West Virginia's Governor and Transportation Secretary, a year 2016 construction start is within our reach. The need for this long standing regional priority is no better illustrated than the recent stacking of traffic on Veteran's Bridge. While temporary and due to necessary US 22 improvements, the clear and present issue of emergency access, safety and job creation are pointedly illustrated. So, take a look at our encouraging New Ohio River Bridge article.

Other articles include:

On March 31<sup>st</sup>, the City of Wellsburg and its partners including the Business Development Corporation of the Northern Panhandle (BDC) celebrated a milestone event with the transfer of property to the BDC. Recognized as a key moth-balled commercial industrial property with significant community return, Wellsburg Mayor Sue Simonetti pointed to the recovery of the Brooke Glass property on 6<sup>th</sup> Street as a continuing redevelopment theme. In 2013, the City leveraged environmental cleanup improvements at a vacated Banner Fiberboard site and created 20 new jobs through Eagle Manufacturing's expansion.

On May 19<sup>th</sup>, BHJ reconfirmed its working intern relationship with the University of Cincinnati's Urban Planning School and welcomed Nicholas Charles, a senior undergraduate. Truly, a win-win for all involved, Nicholas arrives with significant geographic information system (GIS) experience.

On June 2<sup>nd</sup>, BHJ welcomed Nicholas Orsay as its new Senior Transportation Planner. A May graduate from the Catholic University of America in the District of Columbia, Nicholas has an undergraduate degree in Mechanical Engineering. His initial assignments will include guiding new infrastructure projects through Full Commission adoption and sharing traffic count need responsibility.

On May 22<sup>nd</sup>, BHJ and Froggy 103.5 held its annual Broadcast Event at M & M Hardware in Steubenville to promote and solicit partnership in the commuter Rideshare Program. According to the U.S. Census, there are over 6,000 BHJ residents commuting outside the region to work. As of April 2014, there are 74 commuters riding in 7 vans sponsored by BHJ's CommuteInfo Program.

Finally, over the past year, BHJ and its Full Commission formally adopted the investment of \$ 160 million regionally. Under federal legislation, we've been entrusted with the final designation of these funds. In many cases, these investments are life lines to a community's survival. We've summarized several key projects to illustrate their impact.

John C. Brown  
Executive Director

## FINDING A PATH TO JOB CREATION: THE BROOKE GLASS STORY



*Mayor Sue Simonetti (left) of Wellsburg welcomes an early morning crowd on March 31<sup>st</sup> to the "Sale of Property" event at Brooke Glass in Wellsburg*

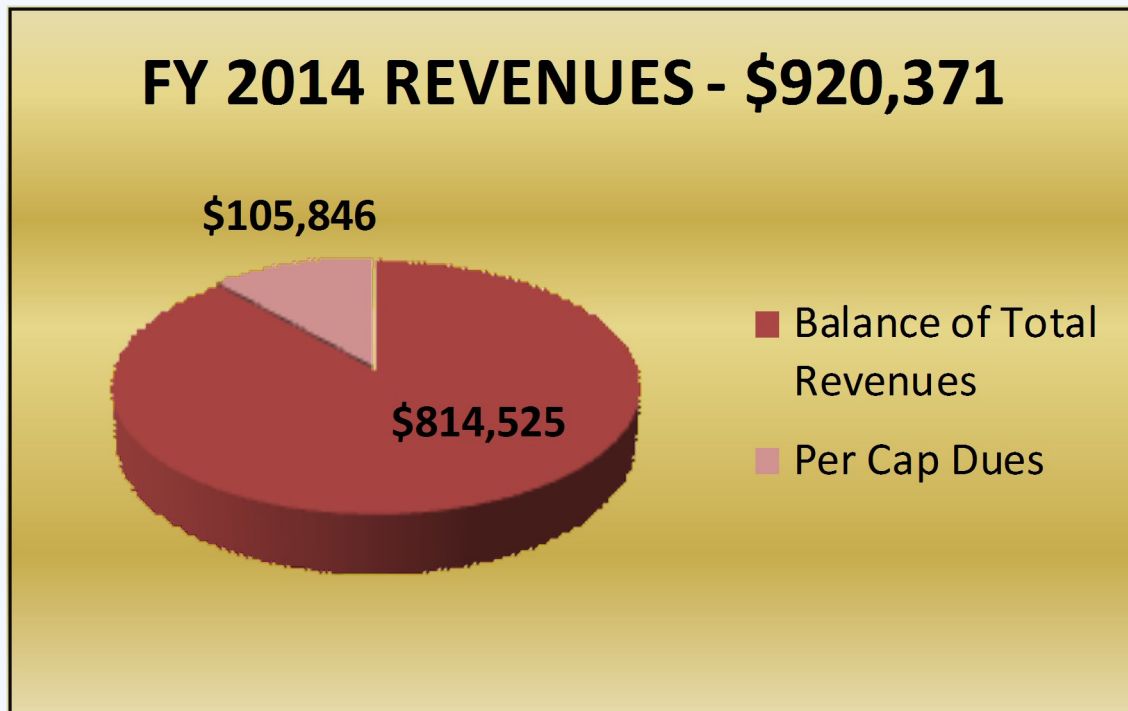
In November 2011, Wellsburg Council called for a strategic approach to prioritize its moth-balled commercial properties for redevelopment and job creation. In January 2012, they formed a Redevelopment Authority. In mid-2013, with the help of the West Virginia University Law and Sustainability Clinic, they initiated actions to update their community-wide comprehensive plan and target dilapidated building sites. Since that time, through federal and state partnerships, environmental risks at the Banner Fiberboard site on 22nd Street were resolved and Eagle Manufacturing, a lynch pin Wellsburg business, expanded on the site to create 20 new jobs.

Building upon this first success story, Wellsburg has turned its attention to the Brooke Glass site on 6<sup>th</sup> Street. In March, through a cooperative sales agreement, the Business Development Corporation of the Northern Panhandle (BDC) took possession of this seven acre site along Yankee Trail. Located one block from Wellsburg's City Hall and Brooke County's Court House, the return of Brooke Glass to the tax rolls can bring an undoubtable positive return for the community. As a partner in the recovery of many moth-balled properties in Brooke and Hancock County, the BDC was delighted to offer a new leverage account called "Site Ready" funds. Acquired through a productive negotiation with the Benedum Foundation and as a private loan fund, the Site Ready Program is designed to support the development of speculative shovel-ready sites. The Program can invest up to 50% of project cost to prepare land with loans ranging from \$1 to \$10 million.



## **YOUR PER CAP DUES ARE AN IMPORTANT PART OF THE BHJ BUDGET**

As mandated by Federal law, each of the 27 municipalities in the BHJ region annually pay Per Cap dues. In Fiscal Year 2014, these monies comprised 12% of BHJ's overall budget.



These local dollars cover the matches required for the Federal and State funding we receive. Without them, the government will not fund our projects. For an example: If Per Cap dues owed totaled \$55,000 and just \$30,000 were received, federal funding would drop from \$440,000 to \$240,000. There would be no way to make up the difference and projects would have to be delayed or cancelled altogether.

BHJ has a 50% match for Appalachian Regional Commission and Economic Development Administration funds. Transportation projects have a 10% match and the Per Cap dues pay indirect costs that EPA does not cover. Local dollars help to pay for the administration of small local grants as well.

On the next page are examples of projects using local dollars. It's an impressive list and just a small sampling of where your Per Cap dues are spent.

In addition, 346 traffic counts were completed over the past year. In West Virginia, traffic counts were obtained on various routes in Brooke County, Hancock County and at travel demand model screen line routes in the Follansbee and Wellsburg areas. In Ohio, traffic counts were obtained on various county routes in the northern and southern parts of Jefferson County such as Mt. Pleasant, Yorkville and Adena and at locations in Steubenville, Wintersville, Mingo Junction, Brilliant and Toronto.

No matter where you live in the tri-county area, the projects supported by your local dollars affect you. Everyone benefits.

## SEARCH FOR NEW BHJ EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BEGINS

The Brooke-Hancock-Jefferson Metropolitan Planning Commission (BHJ) seeks to fill the Executive Director position with a highly qualified candidate to oversee the staff, transportation plans, community plans and program needs for this Ohio-West Virginia Metropolitan Planning Commission (MPO) located 35 miles west of Pittsburgh, PA. The MPO serves 124,000 residents in a three-county, two-state region covering 600 square miles. Interested person should apply through John Brown, BHJ Executive Director [jbrown@bhjmpc.org](mailto:jbrown@bhjmpc.org). Please attach a cover letter and resume. All applications must be postmarked, e-mailed or hand delivered on or before Friday, August 15 at noon. BHJ is located at 124 North Fourth Street, Steubenville, OH 43952. Further background may be obtained upon request. [www.bhjmpc.org](http://www.bhjmpc.org) BHJ is an Equal Opportunity Employer

## HOW ARE YOUR PER CAP DUES SPENT?

Examples of transportation and community development projects supported by Per Cap dues include:

### Transportation

Miscellaneous repairs and concrete joint repairs to the Veterans Bridge

Miscellaneous repairs to the Jennings Randolph Bridge

Slide repair in Richmond, OH

Park & Ride lot at Harmon Creek

Colliers Way Bridge repair

Pennsylvania Avenue improvements in Weirton

University Blvd improvements in Steubenville

Ohio 42 bankment repair in Richmond, OH

Wellsburg Charles Street Streetscape

Weirton Panhandle Trail

OH 7 truck parking lot in Rayland

Replacement of two steel beam bridges in Island Creek

Resurfacing of Harmon Creek Road in Colliers; Wylie Ridge and Allison Road in Hancock County

### Community Development

Brooke County PSD's Phase 1&2 Mahans Lane/Eldersville Rd/Bruin Drive Sewer Project

Wellsburg CSO Project—Phase 1; Phase 2 starting

Wellsburg Water System Improvements Projects—Phase 1

Weirton CSO Project

Two J.C. Williams Grants for the Weirton Event Center

Hancock County Historical Museum grant for roofing, chimney and driveway

Greater Weirton Senior Center elevator

Serra House—Application for infrastructure

Hancock County PSD—Route 8 Sewer Project

New Manchester sidewalks

Follansbee sidewalks

Three-way water tie-in for Brooke County Commission

Oakland PSD's water system upgrade, tank construction & water line extension project

## **BHJ WELCOMES NEW SENIOR TRANSPORTATION PLANNER AND SUMMER INTERN**



On June 2 we welcomed Nicholas Orsay as BHJ's Senior Transportation Planner.

Well qualified for the position, Nick recently graduated from The Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C. There he earned his Bachelors Degree in Mechanical Engineering.

He was born in Indianapolis, the second oldest of seven children. He has lived in a number of places since then and moving here. In mid-August he will be getting married to AnneMarie Feeley who is from Toronto, OH and a graduate of Franciscan University. They plan to move onto a farm in Toronto to settle down.

Nick says, "I'd like to bring my enthusiasm and work ethic to BHJ." We are sure he will and look forward to working with him.

Nicholas Charles came on board in May as our summer intern and will be here until mid-August.

Nicholas is from the Cincinnati area (about 20 miles north) and is a student with the University of Cincinnati majoring in Urban Planning. With two semesters left after the current one, he is set to graduate in the spring of 2015. Eventually, he hopes to move out West.

Nicholas's main hobby/passion is playing music, and he loves animals.

Nicholas says, "I am very interested in transportation as well as the concept of social justice and how they relate to everyday life in cities. While at BHJ, I hope to become well versed in GIS as well as to accrue a better understanding of transportation planning and how planners interact with government and politics/politicians."

Nicholas is our third intern from the University of Cincinnati.





**CHESTER  
NEW CUMBERLAND**

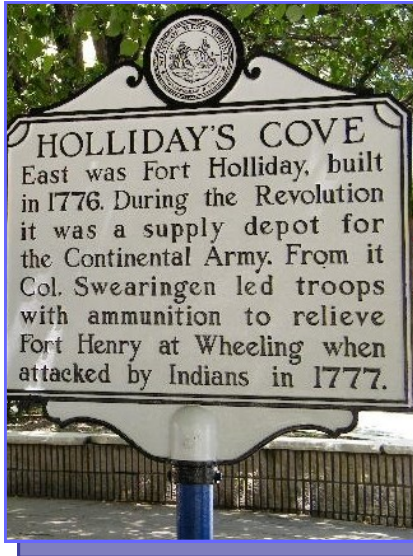
## HANCOCK COUNTY WEST VIRGINIA

**WEIRTON**

Hancock County is the farthest north in West Virginia and located at the tip of the state's Northern Panhandle. Fifteen years before West Virginia became a state, the county was formed from Brooke County in 1848 and named for John Hancock, the first signer of the Declaration of Independence.

The county may be small, but has a lot of history. Hancock County was important during the Revolutionary War because of its location on the Ohio

River south of Fort Pitt and north of Fort Henry. Revolutionary War forts and blockhouses in Hancock County included Holliday's Cove Fort which is now downtown Weirton and Chapman's Blockhouse now known as New Cumberland.



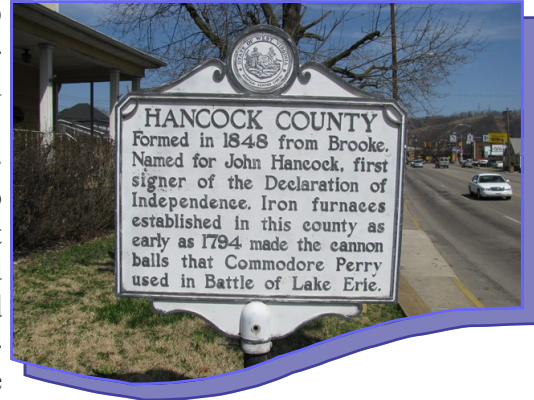
Indian conflicts played a big role in the early years. The area was the scene of the massacre of Chief Logan's family in 1774 which is the current site of Mountaineer Race Track and Casino.

In 1781, Adam Poe was involved in a famous fight with an Indian known as Big Foot at the mouth of Tomlinson Run. The story goes that seven Indians crossed the Ohio in canoes near Tomlinson Run to raid an isolated cabin in the woods. An old man's son was "lured" into the woods looking for wild turkeys when he heard the loud call to their mate. It was an Indian imitation. He returned to find his father dead and everything gone. A posse was formed which included Adam Poe who came upon Big Foot and a fight ensued leaving Poe injured and Big Foot dead. A marker commemorating the event is at the site.

Through the late 19th century the economy was mostly agricultural, with some transportation improvements and a few manufacturing and mining establishments. The abundance of **clay** deposits led to the formation of firms producing bricks and pottery. A natural gas well was drilled in 1862, which resulted in the ability to produce carbon black for printing ink.

Then in the early 20th century two new enterprises transformed the county's economic base. The Homer Laughlin China Company of East Liverpool, Ohio, purchased the Newell farm in 1902 across the river in Hancock County. At Newell, the world's largest pottery to manufacture dishes was built. In 1909, Ernest T. Weir established Weirton Steel and the town of Weirton about one mile north of Hollidays Cove. It's interesting to note that the Peter Tarr Furnace which one of the first iron furnaces west of the Allegheny Mountains had operated in proximity to the site of the new mills from the 1790s until the early part of the 19th century. The Furnace produced iron cannonballs for Commodore Oliver Perry's successful campaign against the British on Lake Erie during the War of 1812.

There is so much more to tell. Search the Web for Hancock County's history to learn more.





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Planning Commission**

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## CALENDAR

July 4	Fourth of July—BHJ Office Closed	
July 7	Executive Committee Meeting	Noon
August 4	Executive Committee Meeting	Noon
September 1	Labor Day—BHJ Office Closed	
September 2	Executive Committee Meeting	Noon
September 24	Technical Advisory Committee Full Commission	10:30 Noon
October 22	Annual Dinner— St. Florian's—Wintersville, OH	6:00

**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.cityofsteubenville.us](http://www.cityofsteubenville.us)

**CommuteInfo**  
[www.commuteinfo.org](http://www.commuteinfo.org)

**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)

**State of Ohio Government Information**  
[www.ohio.gov](http://www.ohio.gov)

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

**Top of WV Convention and Visitors Bureau**  
[www.topofwv.com](http://www.topofwv.com)

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

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

**U.S. Economic Development Administration**  
[www.commerce.gov](http://www.commerce.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.transportation.wv.gov](http://www.transportation.wv.gov)

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

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