

Preserve the Ohio Housing Trust Fund

Ensuring Efficient, Fair, and Effective Solutions for Ohio's Housing Needs



Key Considerations for State-Level Administration of OHTF

- **OHTF Plays a Critical Role in Ohio's Housing Strategy.** The Ohio Housing Trust Fund (OHTF) has been essential in addressing Ohio's housing challenges, providing key funding for affordable housing development, rehabilitation, and emergency home repairs. These investments create jobs and contribute to the local economy, making a meaningful impact on communities statewide.
- **Consolidating Resources at the State Level is Efficient.** Pooling housing funds at the state level ensures a more efficient and strategic approach to resource allocation, allowing investments to meet statewide needs, rather than fragmented, county-level decisions. This system is particularly beneficial to rural areas that don't generate enough revenue to
- **Rural Communities Are Especially Vulnerable to Disruption.** Rural areas, which often lack the revenue streams of more populous counties, rely heavily on centralized funding like the OHTF to make housing projects viable. Shifting control to individual counties could undermine long-term housing solutions in these areas, where resources are already limited.
- **Stability in Funding is Crucial for Long-Term Success.** The OHTF provides predictable, long-term funding for developers and local governments. By maintaining a stable funding mechanism at the state level, projects can be planned effectively, reducing uncertainty and ensuring the continued availability of affordable housing in both urban and rural regions.
- **Removing Centralized Control Could Undermine Effective Housing Development.** Shifting control to counties risks creating a fragmented approach to affordable housing, making it harder to coordinate efforts across jurisdictions and hindering progress. Statewide coordination ensures that funding is directed toward the most impactful and strategic projects, benefiting Ohioans in need.

The Background

The Ohio Housing Trust Fund is a flexible state resource that **helps develop affordable housing, repair homes, improve accessibility, and fund services that prevent homelessness.** It supports Ohio's workforce, seniors, and families with safe, decent, and affordable housing.

Funds are allocated each year by the Ohio Department of Development (ODOD), guided by recommendations from a seven-member advisory committee representing housing, lending, and local governments.

With limited federal funds and rising costs, OHTF plays a **vital role in making housing projects—especially in rural and underserved areas—financially feasible.**

In State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2025, ODOD awarded \$14.6 million from the Trust Fund to the Ohio Housing Finance Agency (OHFA), down from \$16.5 million in SFY2024.

The Impact on Rural Ohio

Because rural developments often face higher costs and lower projected revenues, **OHFA directed its entire SFY2024 OHTF allocation to support rural housing projects** awarded Ohio's affordable housing tax credit (OLIHTC). Without OHTF, these developments would not have been financially viable—even with the state credit.

OHFA used a two-step competitive process to identify strong proposals aligned with state priorities. Five rural projects were invited to submit final applications. Four received OHTF awards and advanced. The fifth, which was not awarded OHTF, withdrew—proving that **the Trust Fund is not optional in rural Ohio; it's essential.**



Ryan Gleason | Executive Director

gleason@ohiohousingcouncil.com

ohiohousingcouncil.com

Created May 2025

Preserve the Ohio Housing Trust Fund

Ensuring Efficient, Fair, and Effective Solutions for Ohio's Housing Needs



Legislative Change Would Undermine Housing Progress

The House-passed version of the state operating budget includes language that would allow counties to retain recorder fees instead of transferring them to the OHTF. This change would result in a significant, ongoing reduction in funding for affordable housing—especially in rural areas—and would jeopardize fiscally sound projects serving seniors, working families, and veterans.

We respectfully urge the Senate to remove this provision and preserve OHTF's dedicated structure.

The OHTF supports fiscally sound developments that serve working families, seniors, and veterans in regions that private markets often overlook. The following rural projects illustrate the program's value.

SFY2024 Rural OLIHTC Projects

Project Name	County	Units	Population	OHTF Requested	OHTF Awarded	Final App?
Cornerstone at Eclipse Run	Athens	58	General	\$2,751,745	\$ 2,751,745	Yes
The Lofts on First	Athens	51	Senior	\$4,000,000	\$ 4,000,000	Yes
Booth Pointe	Jefferson	46	Senior	\$4,000,000	\$ 4,000,000	Yes
Harding Heights Apartments	Marion	50	Senior	\$4,000,000	\$ 3,853,255	Yes
Mackinaw II Senior Housing	Mercer	36	Senior	\$4,000,000	\$ 0	No

Need for a Thoughtful Review

Rather than overhauling the Ohio Housing Trust Fund's funding structure, **we urge the General Assembly to create a study committee** in the state budget to thoroughly evaluate the Trust Fund and recommend improvements. This committee should be charged with:

- Reviewing how the Trust Fund is allocated and deployed today
- Assessing the return on investment and effectiveness of current programs
- Examining administration practices and identifying operational improvements
- Recommending sustainable funding solutions that strengthen the Fund

A thorough review involving stakeholders from across Ohio will help ensure that any changes are well-informed and carefully designed to enhance the Trust Fund's impact—while avoiding unintended consequences for housing development and for Ohioans who depend on safe, affordable homes.

We stand ready to work with lawmakers to ensure this important review is thoughtful, collaborative, and focused on strengthening Ohio's response to housing challenges.

The Ohio Housing Council

The Ohio Housing Council is a statewide association of professionals and organizations involved in the development, management, and financing of affordable housing. OHC advocates for policies that support housing development, keeps members informed on legislative and regulatory changes, and educates the public on the benefits of affordable housing programs. Our members include developers, lenders, architects, and other key players in Ohio's housing sector.



Ryan Gleason | Executive Director

gleason@ohiohousingcouncil.com

ohiohousingcouncil.com

Created May 2025