

Officials: Road projects will bring jobs

County wants to encourage Gov. Strickland to revive major transportation projects.

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HAMILTON — With \$34.6 million in county road improvements taking place in 2007 and a new state administration in control, Butler County commissioners are looking to revive some major transportation projects.

Their first step is to get Gov. Ted Strickland to visit in late March in hopes that he might then back state funding for building roads here. Though Republican-dominant Butler County is asking for support from a Democrat-controlled state administration, county leaders believe



Gov. Ted Strickland Officials hope to make inroads during March visit

More than 3,000 jobs were created each year in 2004 and 2005, according to the county economic development office. The economic growth sparked by the construction of Ohio 129 is an example of the county's history of success, county

their track record of using road projects as an engine for job growth is their selling point.

"We need each other," Commissioner Michael Fox said referring to Strickland. "Butler County is the leader in creating jobs in the state and in the whole Midwest."

\$34.6 million for county road projects in 2007

Project	Number	Cost	% Outside funds	% Local funds
Bridges	11	\$14.8 million	77%	23%
Culverts	17	\$340,000	0%	100%
Intersections	11	\$79 million	4%	96%
Roads	4	\$8.1 million	22%	78%
Paving	10.8 miles	\$1.2 million	0%	100%
Other	4	\$2.1 million	36%	64%
TOTAL	47 plus paving	\$34.6 million	41%	59%

For a detailed list of current and future projects go to www.bceo.org

Engineer Greg Wilkens said.

"We are not just building projects. We are building jobs," Wilkens said. "That's what we need to be selling with

this new governor."

The county leveraged \$14.3 million in state and federal funds — or 41 percent of the \$34.6 million price

tag — for planned road projects this year, according to the engineer's office. The largest project in the plan the commissioners approved Thursday is the \$10.5 million federally-funded replacement of Liberty-Fairfield Road bridge and realignment of the roadway.

A top priority for the future is reviving the Ohio 63 extension west of Ohio 4. The project once won state funding, but "has been on life support" — as Wilkens put it — since the full local funding didn't fall into place. The county plans to reapply to the Ohio Department of Transportation for funding.

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