



# Connecting Stories and People – Using the America 250 Anniversary as a Sustainability Strategy



# What We Will do Today

- Introduction/ Update on America 250-Ohio Commission
- Characteristic's of Sustainable Solutions Partnerships
- Leveraging AM250-OH Anniversary
- Tips on Building Partnerships
- Overcoming Challenges
- Future Opportunities and Trends
- Questions



# Instructions

Go to

[www.menti.com](https://www.menti.com)

Enter the code

6704 5417



Or use QR code



This is Ohio's Time: America 250-Ohio  
as a way to bring people together.



# LEADERSHIP: AMERICA 250-OHIO COMMISSION

- 29 Appointed Commissioners and one ex-officio member- representatives from all regions of Ohio
- Quarterly public meetings
- Co-chairs: Michael B. Coleman and Douglas J. Preisse



Next public commission meeting:  
June 15, 2024



# OHIO REVISED CODE: THE OHIO COMMISSION FOR THE U.S. SEMIQUINCENTENNIAL



*“...to plan, encourage, develop, and coordinate the commemoration of the two hundred fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the United States and the impact of Ohioans on the nation’s past, present, and future.”*

Ohio Revised Code (149.309)





**Michael B. Coleman and Douglas J. Preisse**  
*America 250-Ohio Co-Chairs*

*“We see the coming celebration in 2026 as a good time to share our stories – happy and unhappy ones, ones that we can all feel good about and ones that trouble us and complicate our national story.*

*We hope the whole of America 250, and our part of it here in Ohio, will be an **occasion of national unity and respect.**”*



## OUR KEY MESSAGE

To tell the story of Ohio's contributions to the U.S. for the past 250+ years and create a sense of pride about the impact that Ohio and Ohioans have on the state, nation, and the world.





## KEY GOALS:

- Engagement - build public awareness and foster public participation.
- Connecting dots - across all levels of government and private organizations to include infrastructural improvements and projects or programs to welcome and encourage regional, national, and international tourists.
- Statewide - involve and showcase all **88** counties.
- Comprehensive - draw attention to the achievements, struggles, honors, innovations, and significance of all people in Ohio from before its founding to the present day.
- Resources – providing resources such as grants, expertise and promotional materials.



# STRATEGIC INITIATIVE CATEGORIES

- 88 county engagement and support
- Statewide signature events and programs
- Education
- Public awareness strategy
- Programs and projects produced with partners
- Grants program to distribute funds for projects and community-led initiatives
- Tourism, industry, stakeholder, and community-led events



# AMERICA 250-OHIO INITIATIVES AND THEMES

- Celebrations and Signature Events
- Ohio Originals – Highlighting Ohio firsts, points of pride and unity
- Engaging Youth and Lifelong Learners – Developing educational touchpoints
- Inclusive Statewide Engagement – History, Arts, Culture, Museums, & People
- Telling Ohio's Stories – Highlighting under-told stories



## Past

Heritage  
Reflection  
Preservation

## Present

Interpretation  
Celebration  
Commemoration

## Future

Education  
Building for the next  
generation



# AMERICA 250-OHIO COMMUNITIES



Bucyrus Bratwurst Festival Queens – New Philadelphia  
First Town Days-2023

- A special designation for counties, cities, villages, and townships
- Opportunity for local leaders to network and coordinate AM 250-OH activities
- Recognition as an AM 250-OH community
- Access to resources
- Simple to activate

Learn more at <https://america250-ohio/communities/>

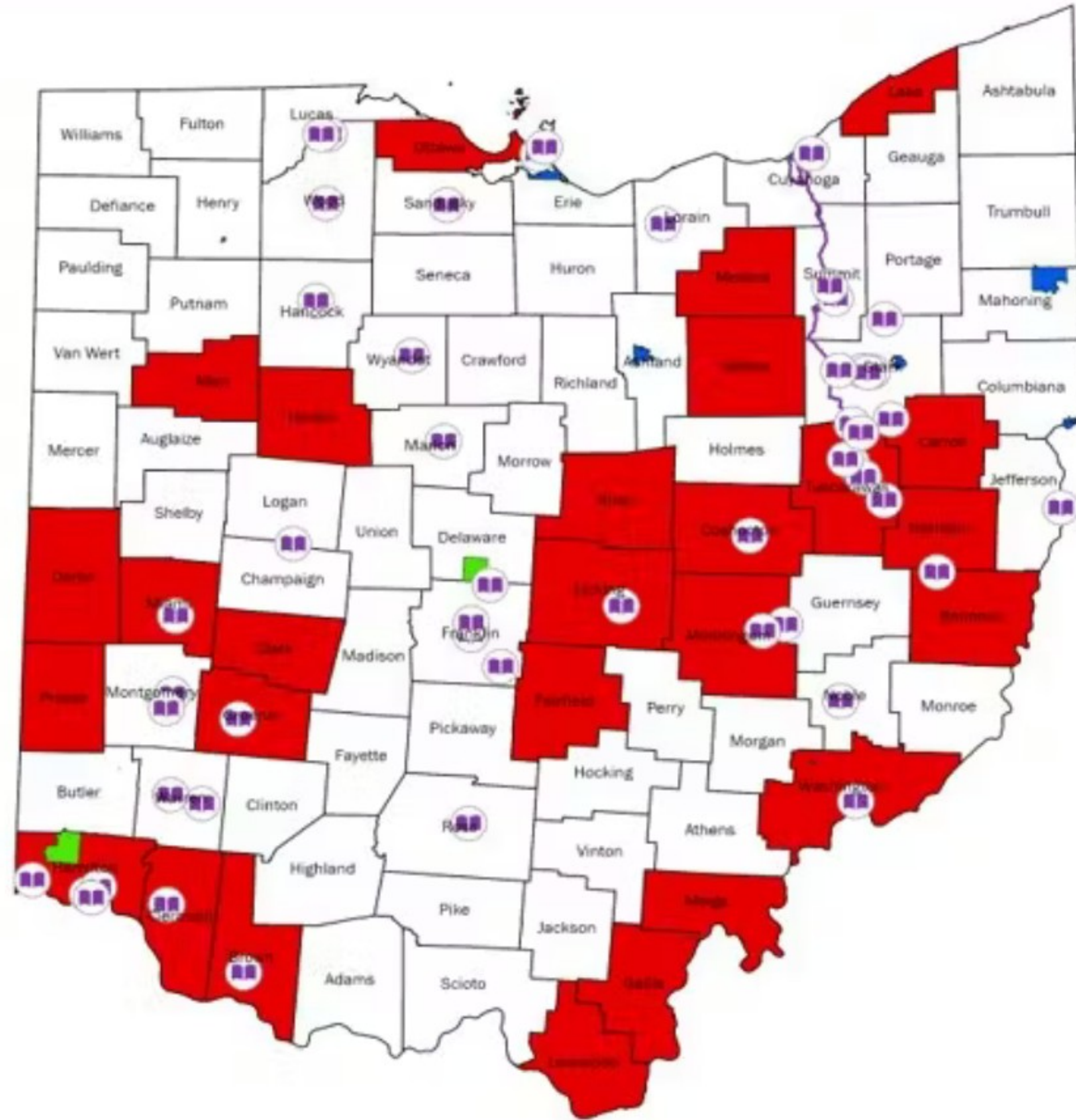


# Current List of Official America 250-Ohio Communities

- Allen County
- Belmont County
- Brown County
- Carroll County
- City of Ashland
- City of Chillicothe
- City of East Liverpool
- City of Louisville
- City of Medina
- City of Lima
- City of Ravenna
- City of Sandusky
- City of Sidney
- City of Wiloughby Hills
- Clark County
- Clermont County
- Coshocton County
- Darke County
- Fairfield County
- Gallia County
- Greene County
- Hamilton County
- Hardin County
- Harrison County
- Knox County
- Lake County
- Lawrence County
- Licking County
- Medina County
- Meigs County
- Miami County
- Muskingum County
- Orange Township
- Ottawa County
- Preble County
- Richland Township
- Tuscarawas County
- Village of Beverly
- Village of Hamler
- Washington County
- Wanye County



# America 250-Ohio Communities



**40 Communities have signed on as an Official 250 Community!**



# FUTURE PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES 2024 - 2025



4<sup>th</sup> Grade History Pass  
Began Feb 8, 2024



Introduce first statewide  
trails



Revolutionary War  
Veterans grave markers



Tree planting - 2025



Youth Passport Program



Ohio statewide film festival  
"Ohio Awards" - 2025



# BARNES, URBAN MURALS & PUBLIC ART





# FUTURE PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES – 2026

Celebrating Ohio's Contributions to the U.S. for 250+ years...

We are creating monthly themes for 2026 that celebrate different aspects of Ohio's contribution. Each monthly theme can include events, experiences, content highlights, and more.

January – Ohio Firsts & Originals

February – Inventions, Innovation, Business & Work

March – Music & Entertainment

April – Transportation: Planes, trains & automobiles (and more!)

May – Arts & Culture and Movies

June – Natural Resources

July – The Ohio statewide picnic & homecoming

August – The Ohio state fair and county fairs

September – Sports

October – Agriculture

November – Veterans and First Responders

December – Future Ohio



# Let's Talk about Sustainability

AM 250-OH AS A SUSTAINABLE MODEL

# What does sustainability mean to you?

55 responses



# Building Sustainable Solutions Partnerships

A. Establishing a long-term vision for partnerships beyond the anniversary year

B. Integrating sustainability into partnership objectives for lasting impact

C. Nurturing relationships beyond the initial celebration

D. Measurement and evaluation of partnership success for sustained collaboration

10 MINS

Now with the person next to you discuss the following questions and give input.

How can you incorporate sustainable practices in your work?

What are some of the challenges to making your work sustainable?

What partnerships or markets are you interested in exploring in your work?

# What did you find most interesting about your conversation?

New ideas

Same challenges

Different opportunities

We were very different types of institutions but have similar issues

To find other taxy levy funded institutions, with lots of "old guard" board members holding back innovation

Finding some common ground and ideas between 2 very different organizations

New ideas for partnerships outside of our small county

How different organizations are working towards America 250 regardless of size or focus.

# What did you find most interesting about your conversation?

Sustainability means different things to different groups

How sustainability can be applied to each department

Challenges of planning anniversaries/commemorations.

Sustainability depends on an engaged and inclusive audience

Funding

Seeing what other organizations are doing/planning

The different types of challenges and advantages different cities and institutions face within one state

Enthusiasm for getting our cities into the Ohio 250 program

# What did you find most interesting about your conversation?

Reestablishing old relationships that have lapsed

Many hands make light work.  
Everyone gives a little and  
make a big impact without  
one giving all.



# Leveraging America's 250th Anniversary for Partnerships

Recognizing the potential of this milestone for partnership development

1. Timing and readiness: Preparing for the commemorative year
2. Identifying shared goals and values: Connecting with organizations aligned with America's values
3. Collaboration and communication: Engaging stakeholders for partnership opportunities

# Ohio's Trails and Tales

An example for your Consideration

# Goals



America 250-Ohio statewide trails encourage local and partner engagement



Ohioans and others learn more about the state's heritage and culture through exposure to these story-based trails



America 250-Ohio statewide trails draw visitors, supporting businesses and communities through increased visitor spending

## Legacy Goal

Inspire, facilitate and incentivize collaboration among sites beyond 2026



# Our Process to Launch

- Define Topic Area
- Call for submissions
- Site Selection
- Gather Sites
- Secure MOU Agreements
- Create overarching Story and Themes
- Develop tools and Content to Promote
- Launch

# Overcoming Challenges

Common challenges in leveraging historical milestones for partnerships include:

Competing Priorities and Stakeholder Agendas

Limited Resources and Funding

Historical Sensitivities and Interpretation

Inclusivity and Representation



# Strategies for mitigating challenges and fostering resilience

1. Early Engagement and Collaboration

2. Transparent Communication and Conflict Resolution

3. Diverse Funding and Resource Mobilization

4. Inclusive Planning and Decision-Making

# How can you use today's information in your work going forward?

Coordination with other sites.

Being more forward-thinking about creating community-based exhibits

A great foundation to build off of for our own county.

Think of how we can connect our collections to partner with other museums and organizations

Plan to sign resolution

Reach out to my community who isn't on the list yet

Get Toledo listed as one of the communities

Switch mindset to long term vs one day



# How can you use today's information in your work going forward?

Teaching our staff what we learned!

Set a meeting with fellow history organizations in advance of our city's bicentennial (also 2026)

Get business cards for who i talked to today!

Get Akron and Summit county listed as Community

Collaboration

Focusing on stories and using the lead up to the 250th to build interest in our museum that opens in 2026

Figure out how my museum can get involved with our city group

Actively plan to use our museum to amplify diverse voices and be inclusive about how we tell Ohio stories



# Lessons learned from past experiences

Importance of Collaboration and Partnerships

Inclusivity and Representation Matter

Keep Sustainability and Legacy Building at forefront

Adaptability and Resilience is key

TEACHER TRAINING CHECKOUT

# What will you start doing differently Today?



# Are there any Questions?

Happy birthday!

Thank you!! Happy birthday!

Could you please upload slides to the oma conference resource page? :) thank you!

# Thanks for joining

We hope you learned something new today that will encourage your participation in America 250-Ohio

## STAY INFORMED – FOLLOW US!



@America 250-Ohio



@am250ohio



@America 250-Ohio



#America250Ohio



<https://america250-ohio.org>



[info@america250-ohio.org](mailto:info@america250-ohio.org)

# STAY INFORMED – FOLLOW US!



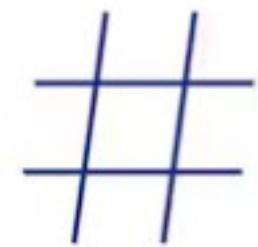
@America 250-Ohio



@am250ohio



@America 250-Ohio



#America250Ohio



<https://america250-ohio.org>



[info@america250-ohio.org](mailto:info@america250-ohio.org)



THIS IS OHIO'S TIME: JOIN US  
TO CONNECT AND CELEBRATE TOGETHER!

