



Ohio & Erie Canalway Coalition

Project Title: The Ohio & Erie Canalway Coalition Institutional Archives

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Summary of Project Activities and Accomplishments

The Ohio & Erie Canalway Coalition primarily holds materials related to its role in the development of the Ohio & Erie Canalway National Heritage Area, Towpath Trail and connector trails in collaboration with congressional leaders, park districts, municipalities and other partnerships between 1989 to present.

The Institutional Archive Project aims to organize, preserve and make accessible materials documenting the development of the Ohio & Erie Canalway and Towpath Trail. Early on it became clear that the institutional archives project would have to be completed in multiple phases due to the sheer volume of records and the work that needs to be completed in order to make those records accessible and retrievable over the long-term. After onboarding intern Sara, our staff ended up locating even more files stored on our lower level. We scaled back our initial idea of how many record boxes would be ready to transition over to The University of Akron Archives' care this year, and focused mainly on implementing our newly refined records retention policy and offloading some of the bulk in our collection that do not fit those parameters.

About 15 cubic feet of materials were assessed/processed during this phase of the greater institutional archive project, reaching our project goal. Since August, we've accomplished:

- Our intern Sara weeded event, conference, board meeting, financial/audit, annual reports, publications, legislation documents, and some project committee records for retention of records of value to OECC and The University of Akron, while discarding bulk copies and draft/working documents. Our volunteer reviewed project committee records, grant files and the Richard Howe House restoration records for retention. A working finding aid was drafted with the series Events & Programs, Governance, Financial, Executive Director, Conferences, Trail and Greenway Projects, and Restoration Projects.
- Sara conducted mold remediation on scrapbook covers for temporary retention until the scrapbooks can be digitized in a later project phase.
- Sara created a guidance document for collecting and storing institutional records, referencing The University of Akron Archives collection policy, Society of American Archivists, National Archives and Records Administration, and others for our organization to follow on our own, and for the new President & CEO transition that will happen this spring.
- Reviewed and accessioned some photographs, but most were unlabeled and did not have a lot of context in their original packaging/order. Our President & CEO will need to review photographs and provide context for further organization.
- Assessed storage needs with Sara and The University of Akron Archive Director S. Victor Fleischer for the records that have been reviewed/retained (Phase I) and placed a supply order from Gaylord Archival.





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Summary of expenses

All grant funds were expended by December 31, 2025. \$1,850 of grant funds were used to hire intern Sara Montagnano, and the OECC matched \$1,750. \$1,967.97 of the remaining grant funds went to purchasing archival supplies for storing, organizing and improving records of highest importance, and the OECC provided additional matching dollars through staff and volunteer time, totaling an additional \$2,142.95. Total grant funds spent were \$3,817.97 with a match of \$3,892.95 for \$7,710.92 total investment into the project.

Amount of staff and volunteer time spent on the project

Staff	Intern	Volunteer	Total
40 hours	240 hours	36 hours	316 hours

Project publicity

We spotlighted the project in our biweekly email newsletter, *The Towpath Times* to 6,053 subscribers. We plan to provide an update on the project in our email newsletter, social media and print Silver Ribbon newsletter in the first quarter. We also plan to release a joint press release with The University of Akron once records are transferred in the summer to highlight the partnership and success of making the history more accessible to the public.

Future needs and plan phases

Staff continues to move materials that will be transferred to The University of Akron Archives into the storage boxes/sleeves/etc. purchased from Gaylord Archival after beginning the process in December, separating those records from what will be retained in filing cabinets at the OECC. While a finding aid draft was started, there is a large collection of records that still need appraised for retention/discard and organized within the completed files. We hope to re-focus on the project in the summer of 2025, when we may re-hire Sara as intern/part-time personnel. Discussions are currently taking place in regards to legacy formats, digitization, record identifiers, metadata creation and storage, and standards and practices regarding future work.

Ohio & Erie Canalway Coalition receives funding award to preserve institutional history



The Ohio & Erie Canalway Coalition was awarded an Ohio Archives Grant to organize, catalog and enhance accessibility to its 35 years of institutional history related to developing and preserving the Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail; its management of the natural, recreational and cultural resources of the Ohio & Erie Canalway National Heritage Area (established in 1996); and its technical assistance in the development of a robust regional trail network and public park projects throughout northeast Ohio. The Ohio Archives Grant of the [Ohio Historical Records Advisory Board](#) is funded by the National Historical Publications and Records Commission, an arm of the National Archives and Records Administration.

The Ohio Archives Grant funds the hiring of a project intern and the purchasing of archival-quality storage and preservation supplies to store the records. The project will produce an inventory and finding aid for researchers with the assistance of the University of Akron Archives, where the majority of the records will be housed.

Our Archives Intern, Sara Montagnano joined us in August to assist with the project. Sara graduated with her Master of Library and Information Science in Archival Studies in May of 2025 from Kent State University. Before attending KSU, she earned her Master of Arts in History from Case Western Reserve University where she focused on 19th and 20th century American history as well as the history of the Western Reserve of Ohio. Sara is an avid hiker and considers the parks and pathways of Northeast Ohio a second home. This internship has provided her with an opportunity to blend her love of local history with her archival knowledge to work toward preserving the institutional history of the Ohio & Erie Canalway Coalition.



**Ohio Historical Records Advisory Board
National Historical Records & Publications (NHPRC)
State and National Archival Partnership (SNAP) Grants Regrant Program**

Salaries and Wages	Grant Funds	Matching Funds	Total
Intern, 240 hours at \$15/hour	\$1,850.00	\$1,750.00	\$3,600.00
Staff time, 40 hours at \$20/hour		\$800.00	\$800.00
Volunteer time, 36 hours at \$34.79/hour		\$1,252.44	\$1,252.44
			\$0.00
Subtotals: Salaries and Wages	\$1,850.00	\$3,802.44	\$5,652.44
Supplies	Grant Funds	Matching Funds	Total
Mold remediation supplies for scrapbooks	\$17.76		
Stabilo-All pencils for photographs	\$9.49		
Hanging file folders for basic office records		\$26.59	
(5) Half-cut tab file folders (100 pack) - letter	\$220.00		
Half-cut tab file folders (100-pack) - Legal	\$47.99		
(5) Flip-top document case (4w)	\$44.80		
(25) Record storage carton	\$257.00		
(3) Flip-top photo & print box (4x6)	\$46.08		
Flip-top photo & print box (5x7)	\$16.40		
(3) Polypropylene presentation pockets (100-pack)	\$50.04		
35mm slide preservation kit	\$67.19		
(3) 35mm negative sleeves (50-pack)	\$43.08		
Oversize newspaper folders (10-pack)	\$23.43		
(3) Newspaper/oversized print box (18x13)	\$63.12		
3" diameter roll tubes 4-pack	\$131.92		
(4) Roll storage end plugs 2-pack	\$29.92		
Hinged lid triangular roll storage box (6x30)	\$17.80		
Hinged lid triangular roll storage box (6x36)	\$20.12		
Temperature & humidity data logger	\$164.00		
E-flute spacers (5-pack)	\$10.96		
(2) Micron black pen	\$12.40		
Polypropylene label holders (100-pack)	\$13.36		
Gaylord shipping & handling	\$661.11	\$63.92	
Subtotals: Supplies	\$1,967.97	\$90.51	\$2,058.48
Equipment	Grant Funds	Matching Funds	Total
			\$0.00
			\$0.00
			\$0.00
			\$0.00
Subtotals: Equipments	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Contracted Services	Grant Funds	Matching Funds	Total
			\$0.00
			\$0.00
			\$0.00
			\$0.00

Subtotals: Contracted Services		\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Other Eligible Expenses		Grant Funds	Matching Funds	Total
				\$0.00
				\$0.00
				\$0.00
Subtotals: Other Eligible Expenses		\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Summary Budget		Grant Funds	Matching Funds	Total
Salaries and Wages		\$1,850.00	\$3,802.44	\$5,652.44
Supplies		\$1,967.97	\$90.51	\$2,058.48
Equipment		\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Contracted Services		\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Other Eligible Expenses		\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total Project Budget		\$3,817.97	\$3,892.95	\$7,710.92

Yes No

If you do not receive full funding, will you accept partial funding and still complete the project as outlined in the application?

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