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## Eastgate Mission...

Eastgate provides

a regional forum

to discuss issues of mutual

interest and concern,

and to develop

recommendations and plans

to address those issues.

All of this in hopes of

leading to a common goal

of improving the

quality of life

for the residents

of northeast Ohio.

## Eastgate Regional Council of Governments

is a voluntary association of local governments in northeast Ohio. Ashtabula County, Mahoning County, Trumbull County, and all cities, villages, and townships in the counties are members. Although our members are unique, they share many common interests. Eastgate brings communities together to create a unified voice in areas such as transportation, water and air quality, land use planning, and local infrastructure projects.

Eastgate Regional Council of Governments is directly responsible for a variety of federal, state, and local planning and project implementation programs. As a Metropolitan Planning Organization, an Areawide Water Quality Management Agency, and an Economic Development District, Eastgate continues to maintain required certifications and planning documents to qualify the region for federal and state funding.

## Eastgate's Board and Committees

The General Policy Board (GPB) is the governing body of the agency. The board consists of elected and appointed representatives from our member communities, as well as the Ohio Department of Transportation, the Western Reserve Transit Authority, the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency, and the Eastgate Citizens Advisory Board.

The Finance/Executive Committee, the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), and the Citizens Advisory Board (CAB) also help guide agency plans and programs. The Finance/Executive Committee is comprised of officials from the GPB and is responsible for budget development and review, as well as fiscal recommendations to the GPB. The TAC is comprised of engineering and planning officials from the area who assist with the development of technical studies and project implementation programs. The CAB, comprised of residents from the area, considers methods and techniques to maximize and insure citizen representation and participation in Eastgate's planning activities.

The above boards and committees, along with the Executive Director and Eastgate's staff, work together to find regional solutions for the challenges of our region.



## Transportation Planning

### About the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)

Federal transportation law requires that a Metropolitan Planning Organization be designated for each urbanized area. An urbanized area is defined by the U.S. Census and recognized by Federal law as a densely settled area with a population of at least 50,000 people. Eastgate is the designated MPO for Mahoning and Trumbull Counties, and as an MPO designated member, communities help to influence where millions of dollars of federal funds for highways, public transit and other transportation modes are spent.

A major component of any metropolitan area is its regional transportation system, which has a basic purpose of providing the means to accommodate local area travel demand. This system must provide for logical development within the region, satisfy requirements for the safe and efficient movement of people and goods, and accomplish this with the most cost effective use of available resources. A regional transportation plan is required in order to maintain this system as a viable part of the metropolitan environment, capable of accommodating present and anticipated demands. Eastgate continues to maintain the long range transportation plans intended to provide the documented framework for transportation development within Mahoning and Trumbull Counties.

Eastgate is also required to prepare an updated Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) at least once every four years, in conjunction with the Ohio Department of Transportation and local transit operators. The TIP provides a comprehensive listing of highway, bridge and transit system improvements that will be utilizing federal and state funding and are scheduled for implementation over the next four years. All federally funded projects must be part of the Long Range Transportation Plan and the TIP in order to be implemented and receive federal funds.

## The Transportation Department also provides planning and assistance in the following areas:

### Highway Planning

Eastgate evaluates existing highways, streets and bridges to determine their current condition and ability to accommodate increased demand. This is done with such programs as Congestion Management Studies, the Pavement Management Program, and the traffic counting program. The Regional Safety Program utilizes traffic crash data to assist local communities in identifying high crash roadway segments and intersections to improve traffic safety. Eastgate's Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) Program incorporates innovative techniques into transportation projects to better manage the existing transportation system.

The key to successful planning is accurate and abundant data. Eastgate collects and uses a variety of information for transportation, economic, and environmental planning, such as: aerial photography, traffic counts, traffic crash data, demographic and land use data, and Geographic Information System/mapping services.

### Bikeway and Pedestrian Plans

Eastgate works with various community and government leaders to conduct miscellaneous studies and make recommendations for regional projects utilizing federal and state transportation funds, such as recommending pedestrian and bikeway plans. The Regional Bicycle Plan is Eastgate's evaluation and promotion of bicycling as a viable means of transportation for the region, and outlines existing, planned, and conceptual bikeways in the planning area. The goal is to bring communities together, to build partnerships among different agencies, and to work towards a safer and more livable region.

### Transit Planning

Eastgate develops the Transit Development Program (TDP) each year to document ongoing transit planning activities in Mahoning and Trumbull Counties. The TDP covers a five year planning horizon and identifies future transit capital improvement projects submitted by the Western Reserve Transit Authority and Niles Trumbull Transit.

### Commuter Services – [www.ohiorideshare.com](http://www.ohiorideshare.com)

The Rideshare Program was established to reduce traffic congestion, air pollution, and utilize natural resources more efficiently through the use of carpools, vanpools, and public transit.

## Other areas of agency responsibility include:

### Sustainability

Eastgate encourages practical planning solutions that enhance and protect quality of life, as well as improve the economic vibrancy of the region, as evidenced in the Trumbull-Mahoning Green Pact. The Green Pact is a series of common sense steps to accomplish green growth, management and living for our jurisdictions. These efforts have been supported by our local communities who have come together to sign and promote the goals outlined in the Green Pact. Eastgate's transportation, economic development, and environmental planning programs all touch on various aspects of the goals put forth in the Green Pact.

### Air Quality Planning

As the designated air quality planning agency for Mahoning and Trumbull Counties, Eastgate continues to monitor the highway network to assess projects that affect air quality, make reasonable efforts to reduce mobile source emissions, and report on the intensity of ground-level ozone and fine particle pollution monitored by the Mahoning-Trumbull Air Pollution Control Agency. The air quality outreach program educates the public on the link between transportation alternatives and air quality. Eastgate's air quality web site, [www.MahoningValleyAir.org](http://www.MahoningValleyAir.org) provides daily air quality forecasts, pollutant mapping, and information on various aspects of air quality in our planning area.

### Public Works Projects

In 1987, the voters of Ohio approved a constitutional amendment authorizing the state to sell bonds and other obligations for capital infrastructure projects. The amendment, renewed by voters in 1995 and 2005, enables the state to use its general revenues as debt support and issue general obligation bonds for local infrastructure projects. Examples of eligible projects include road and bridge repair, waste water treatment facilities, and water supply systems. Eastgate serves as the administrative home for the District 6 Public Works Integrating Committee. The Committee is tasked with evaluating and selecting public works projects to receive State Capital Improvement Program (SCIP) and Local Transportation Improvement Program (LTIP) funds.

### Appalachian Regional Commission

In 2008, Mahoning, Trumbull and Ashtabula Counties were added to the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC), a federal-state partnership that works with the people of Appalachia to

create opportunities for self-sustaining economic development and improved quality of life. Eastgate is the Local Development District responsible for administering the ARC program for our region. The goals of the program are to increase job opportunities and per capita income, increase capacity to compete on a global economy, improve and develop infrastructure, and development of the Appalachian highway system.

### Clean Ohio Conservation Fund

Established in 2000 by the voters of Ohio, the Clean Ohio Conservation Fund provides funding for the protection of open space and sensitive ecosystems through a process that occurs at the local level. Mahoning and Trumbull Counties comprise District 6, and Eastgate's Natural Resources Assistance Council is the local council charged with reviewing, scoring, and ranking local projects.

### Economic Development Administration Planning Program

Eastgate serves as an Economic Development District for Ashtabula, Mahoning and Trumbull Counties. Economic Development Districts are required to prepare a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, a local planning process designed to guide the economic growth of an area. Its purpose is to establish a process that will help create jobs, foster more stable and diversified economies, and improve living conditions. It provides a mechanism for coordinating the efforts of individuals, organizations, local governments, and private industry concerned with economic development.

### Procurement Program

Eastgate's Procurement Program offers individualized counseling and technical assistance to businesses that are trying to secure business in the federal market, and guidance and support for companies that are already selling to the government. We provide orientation to the federal procurement system, help with developing marketing strategies, identification of bidding opportunities, and seminars on technical subjects.

## Environmental Planning

### 208 Water Quality Management Planning

Eastgate is the designated Water Quality Management Agency for Mahoning and Trumbull Counties. Under Section 208 of the Clean Water Act each management agency was to create and submit a plan focused on the construction of wastewater treatment plants and the control of industrial, municipal and point source pollution. Today, the plan has expanded to protect water quality beyond the treatment plant and now includes discussions on home sewage treatment systems, and protection of our area's critical resources. For over 35 years, Eastgate has worked with the Ohio EPA and the region's sanitary engineers, health departments, and other local governments to maintain the 208 Water Quality Management Plan.

### Watershed Planning

Eastgate understands environmental concerns are not unique to one area within the planning region. Rather, environmental concerns and water quality impairments exist on a watershed level and need to be addressed as such through watershed planning. Eastgate's water quality management planning expands beyond basic 208 planning and includes the creation and implementation of local Watershed Action Plans. These plans, in conjunction with the 208 Plan, strengthen Eastgate's vision to improve local water quality. Recognizing the importance of working with local watershed groups to help promote watershed education and outreach within the communities they serve, Eastgate is an active member of the Mahoning River Consortium (MRC) and the Alliance for Watershed Action and Resource Education (AWARE), two of our region's leading watershed groups.

### The Environmental Planning Advisory Committee

The Environmental Planning Advisory Committee is committed to fostering an ecologically-informed planning community through the regional collaboration of community leaders, planners, and technical resource agencies so that community plans, projects, and initiatives to enhance the health of the environment, revitalize communities, and provide a better quality of life for those who live and work in the Mahoning Valley.