

Sustainable Ohio Public Energy Council

Annual Report 2024



SOPEC

10TH ANNIVERSARY

2014 - 2024



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Our Mission

Provide simple, valuable, and reliable public energy programs that help our members achieve their local energy and sustainability goals.

Summary

In this annual report, learn about how SOPEC supported its members in their sustainability goals through community grants, community choice aggregation, and grant writing. Discover how SOPEC evolved in 2024 to better adapt to the needs of its members through grant support, capacity building, and innovative problem solving.

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A Letter from our Executive Director

The year 2024 marked SOPEC's tenth anniversary and a significant period of evolution for the organization. As we entered the year, we continued to focus on our mission to provide simple, valuable, and reliable public energy programs that help our members achieve their local energy and sustainability goals. In 2024, we refined our work around community grants, community choice aggregation, and grant writing, and expanded our role in capacity building and problem solving for public entities across Ohio.

Our membership remained diverse and growing, spanning cities, villages, townships, a county, transit authorities, sewer and waste districts, park and conservancy districts, and libraries across the state. The map of our members in 2024 illustrates how SOPEC now connects members throughout the corners of Ohio, reflecting the increasing recognition that shared public energy programs can help local governments meet ambitious energy, climate, and resilience goals. Our internal capacity grew alongside this network, with a dedicated leadership team, regional directors serving Northeast, Southeast, and Central Ohio, and an expanded grants and programs staff focused on member support.

Through the community choice aggregation program, SOPEC supplied approximately 1.1 terawatt hours of electricity in 2024, delivering an estimated \$13.9 million in combined savings to participating customers compared to the local utilities' standard service offers (also known as the Price to Compare). Furthermore, the SOPEC Public Pricing Program continued to serve public sector institutions that are not part of the SOPEC community choice aggregation programs. By pooling demand and negotiating competitive supply, the Public Pricing Program helps local governments and agencies manage costs while aligning their energy use with broader sustainability objectives.

Grant writing became an even more important part of SOPEC's work in 2024. SOPEC's grants team helped secure more than \$16.7 million from the U.S. Department of Transportation's Charging and Fueling Infrastructure (CFI) program. We also advanced rural energy initiatives through the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Energy Development Assistance (REDA) program and a Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) Technical Assistance Grant. Additional support from the Sustainable Cities Fund and the U.S. Department of Energy's Energy Future Grant Program, including a subrecipient award in partnership with the City of Cincinnati, further demonstrated the strength of regional collaboration, even as some awards were later affected by federal policy changes in early 2025.

As we reflect on 2024, our tenth year of existence, it is clear that SOPEC's value lies in the collective action of its members. By working together, we are delivering tangible savings, financial resiliency, building out sustainable energy solutions, reinvesting in local projects, and opening new funding pathways for communities and organizations that might otherwise be left out of the energy transition. Thank you for your continued partnership and for the trust you place in SOPEC as we move into our next decade of service.

Sincerely,
Luke Sulfridge
Executive Director

Our Leadership and Staff in 2024

STAFF:

Luke Sulfridge
Executive Director

Phil Leppla
Deputy Director & General Counsel

Dana Vingris
Director of Grants and Development

Shaunquitta Walker
Director of Finance

Melissa Dalton
Director of Administration

Chloe Musick
Director of Public Affairs and Marketing

Jennifer McMillin
Regional Director for Northeast Ohio

Jessica Arnold
Regional Director for Southeast Ohio

Stephen Harris
Regional Director for Central Ohio &
Director of Government Relations

Mat Roberts
Special Programs Manager

Erin Stevens
Southeast Ohio Community Liaison

Lacey Babnik
Grants Manager

Michael Moses
Grants Manager

Emily Bails
Programs Coordinator

BOARD:

Steve Patterson
Chair

Matt Joseph
Vice Chair

Gary Goosman
Treasurer

Susan Miller
Secretary

Susan Abdella

Johnnie Burns

Craig Butler

Chris Chmiel

Austin Davis

Matthew Jolson

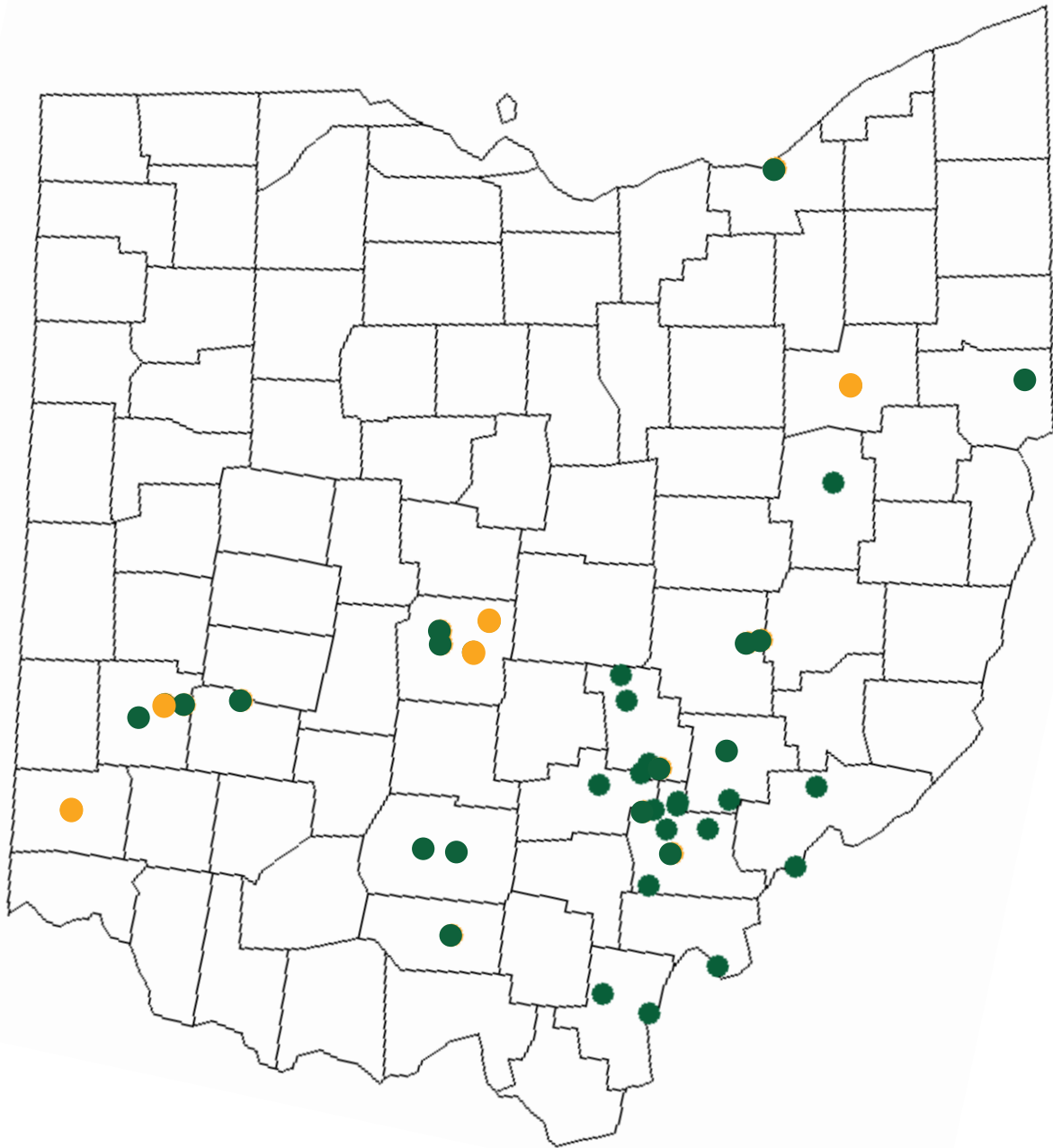
Chris Pion

Joshua Rauch

Jacolyn Thiel



Our Members in 2024



Albany • Amesville • Athens • Athens County • Athens-Hocking Solid Waste District
Belpre • **Blendon Township** • Buchtel • Chauncey • Chesterhill • Cleveland • Dayton
Dayton Metro Library • **Gahanna** • Five Rivers MetroParks • Gallipolis • Glenford • Hemlock
Hocking Conservancy District • Jacksonville • Logan • Lowell • Marble Cliff
MetroParks of Butler County • Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District • New Concord
New Straitsville • Norwich • Oxford • Piketon • Racine • Rio Grande • Riverside • Shawnee
Somerset • **Stark Area Regional Transit Authority** • Syracuse Racine Regional Sewer District
Trimble • Unity Township • Upper Arlington • Yellow Springs

All of the names in orange joined in 2024.

Community Choice Aggregation

1.1

terawatt hours
of electricity provided

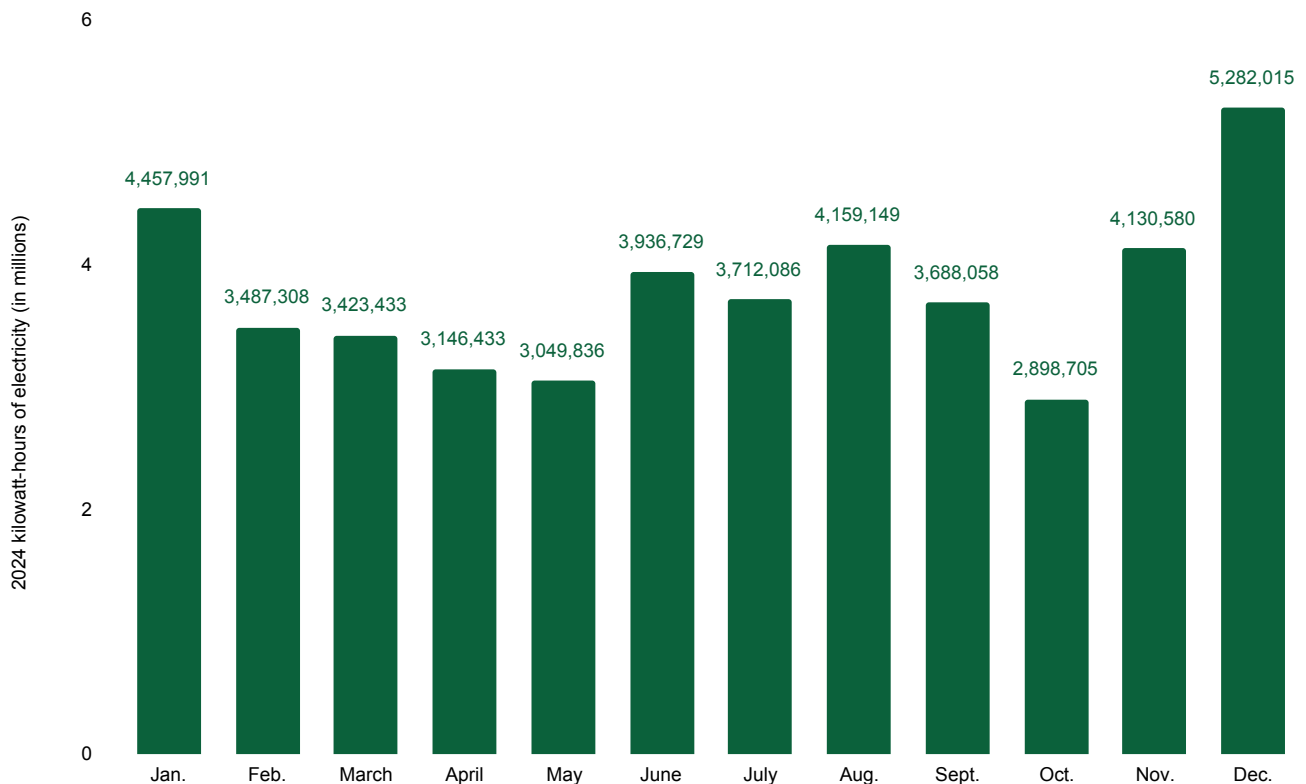
779,000

Green-e[®] RECs purchased
by SOPEC in 2024

\$13.9

million
in estimated combined
savings against the SSO

Energy Consumption in 2024



What is a Green-e[®] Renewable Energy Credit?

A renewable energy certificate (REC) represents the property rights to the environmental, social, and other non-power attributes of renewable electricity generation. RECs are issued when one megawatt-hour (MWh) of electricity is generated and delivered to the electricity grid from a renewable energy resource. Because the physical electricity we receive through the utility grid says nothing of its origin or how it was generated, RECs play an important role in accounting, tracking, and assigning ownership to renewable electricity generation and use. Overall, their use supports sustainable energy efforts and increase grid resiliency through diversification of assets.

Green Power Impact

Based on national electricity emissions, SOPEC's purchase of green power is:

Equivalent to the amount of green power to support:

2.1
billion
miles driven by an electric vehicle

78
wind turbines running for one year

535
football fields of solar panels for one year

Equivalent to greenhouse gas emissions from:

413
million
pounds of coal burned

948
million
miles driven by a gas vehicle

22.9
billion
number of smartphones charged

Equivalent to the carbon sequestered by:

373
thousand
acres of U.S. forests in one year

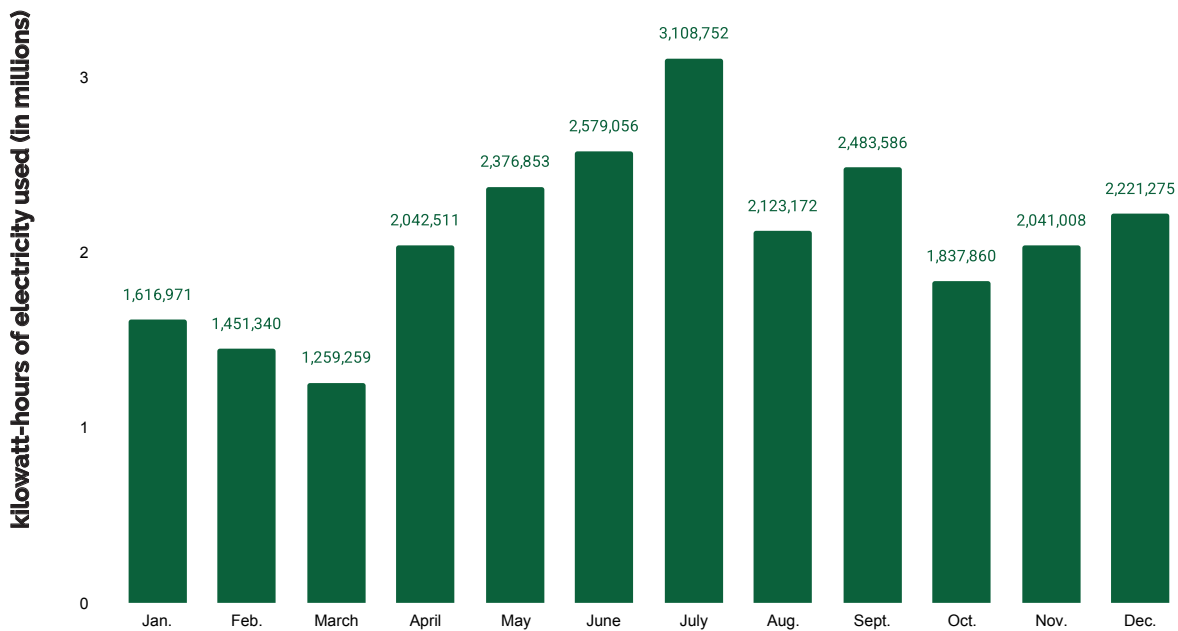
6.1
million
tree seedlings grown for 10 years



Public Pricing Program

The Public Pricing Program (P3) provides a competitive, opt-in electric supply rate for public-sector customers, including local governments (cities, villages, counties, townships), political subdivisions of Ohio, non-profit and faith-based organizations, and other public agencies with service located in a SOPEC member community. Any SOPEC member political subdivisions of Ohio can join, too.

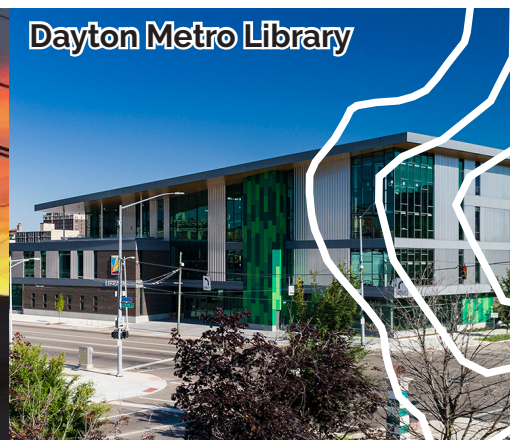
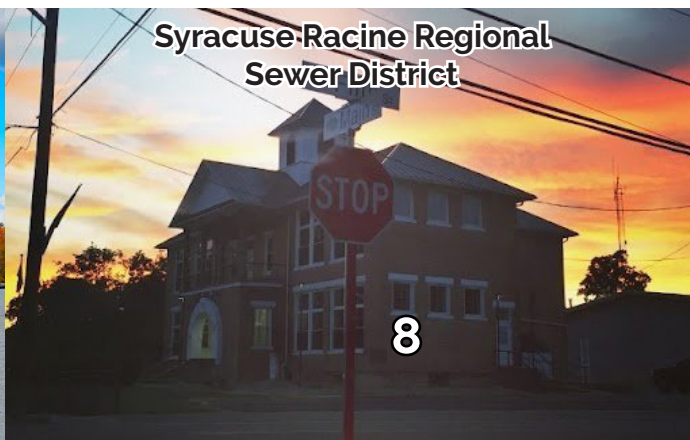
Energy Consumption by the Public Pricing Program in 2024



32
customers
served

25.1 million
kWh
provided

581
accounts
served



Community Grants

Member communities of SOPEC with an active opt-out electric aggregation program have the option to participate in the SOPEC Community Grant Program, which provides funding for local governments to invest in community projects, including energy efficiency measures and sustainable energy projects.

City of Athens | \$176,100.75

The first grant in the amount of \$41,100.75 supported a rooftop solar project and supporting roof structure, located at the Athens Armory. The second grant in the amount of \$135,000 supported a solar project on the rooftop of the Athens County 9-1-1/EMA project.

City of Chesterhill | \$560.62

This grant supported the update of the landscaping in the Village of Chesterhill's sitting garden.

City of Dayton | \$228,623.39

This grant supported the City of Dayton for the City's Office of Sustainability, which has a special revenue account to receive SOPEC annual funding and supported the salary of Tim Pritchard.

City of Logan | \$23,000

This grant supported Logan in Bloom, an all-volunteer community group that promotes community beautification by encouraging the use of flowers, plants, trees, and other environmental and lifestyle enhancements.

Village of New Straitsville | \$2,773.23

This grant supported the purchase and install a solar lamp post for the garden across from New Straitsville's municipal building.

Village of Somerset | \$4,843.74

This grant supported the restoration, cleaning, and polishing of the General Phil Sheridan Monument that is located in the center of Somerset.

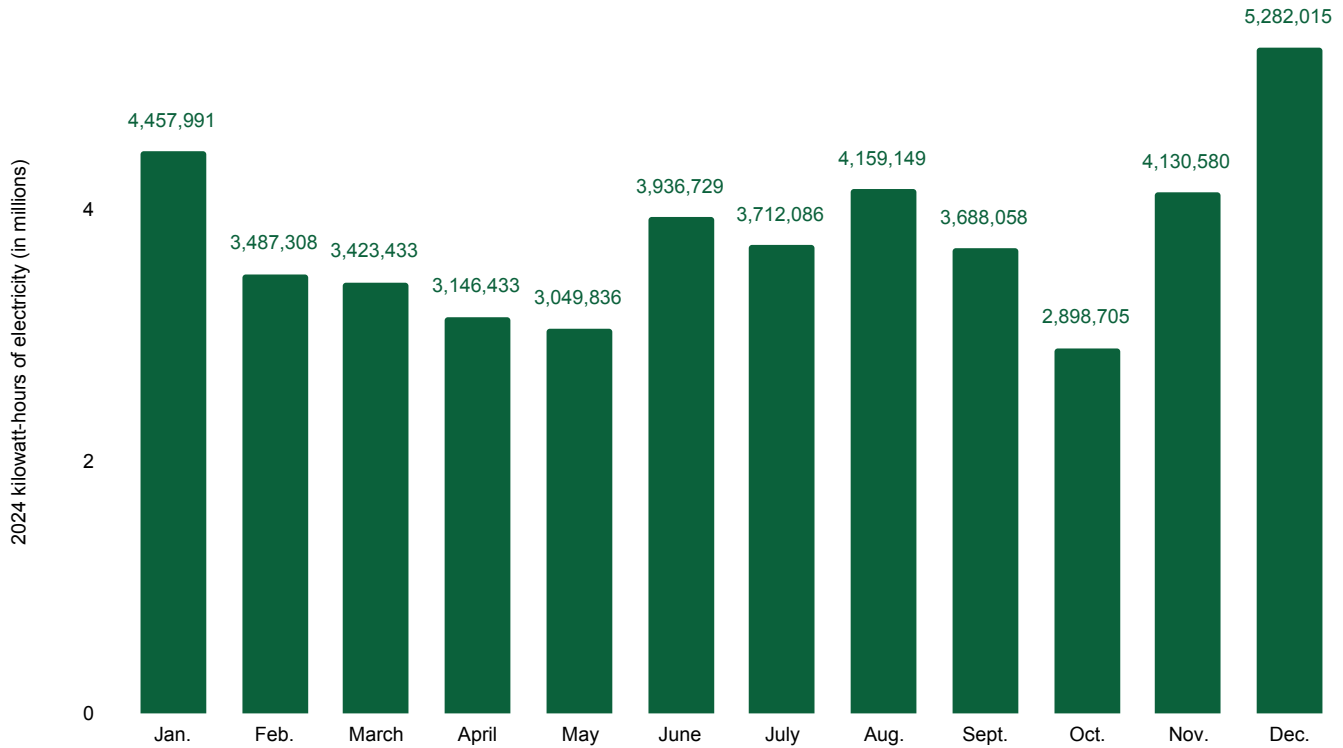


The General Phil Sheridan Monument in Somerset, Ohio.

City of Dayton Office of Sustainability team in 2024: Meg Maloney, Matthew Worsham, Tim Pritchard, Michele Simmons

Athens Carbon Fee

An Overview of the Athens Carbon Fee in 2024



\$91,000

revenue generated
in 2024

45

million
kwh of electricity
consumed

What is the Athens Carbon Fee?

On May 8, 2018, voters in Athens, Ohio approved a first-of-its-kind carbon fee for residents and small businesses in the SOPEC Electric Aggregation Program. Passed with 76% support, the fee was added to the 2020 supply contract. Today, residential customers pay less than \$2 per month for the carbon fee, which is included in the generation rate from AEP Energy on AEP Ohio bills.



Athens Armory Park

Athens County
911 Building



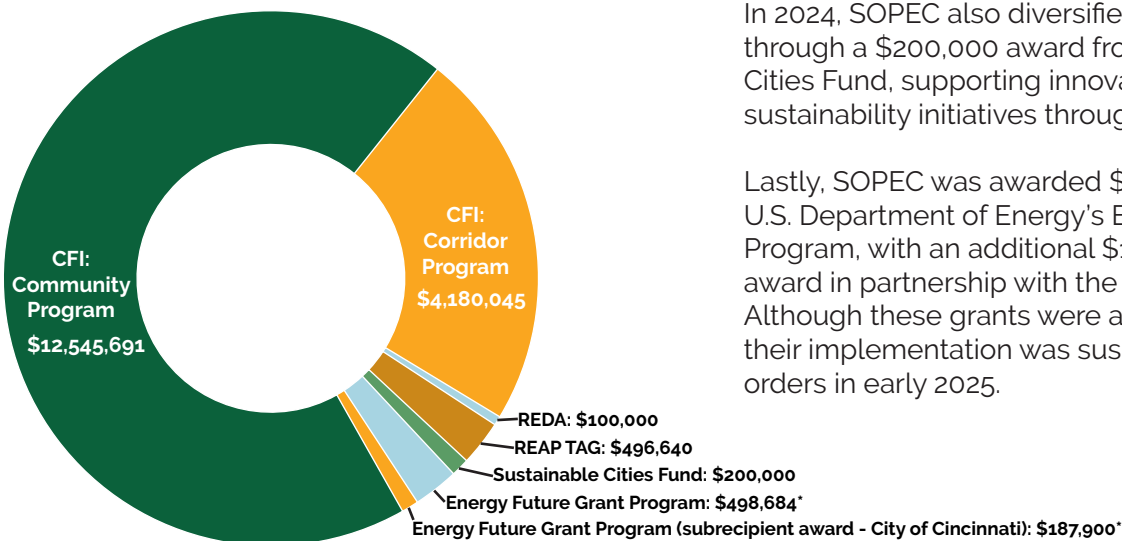
Federal Grants

Overview

In 2024, SOPEC advanced its grant initiatives by securing multiple high-impact awards across state, federal, and philanthropic programs. These efforts reflected the organization's continued focus on leveraging collective capacity to bring transformative energy and sustainability investments into its member communities across the state of Ohio.

SOPEC successfully obtained major awards from the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration through both the Community and Corridor programs under the Charging and Fueling Infrastructure Discretionary Grant Program, totaling more than \$16.7 million. These projects, running through 2031, will expand the region's electric vehicle charging and alternative fueling network, improving access and reliability across member jurisdictions.

SOPEC continued to strengthen its role in supporting rural energy development. Through the U.S. Department of Agriculture, SOPEC was awarded \$100,000 under the Rural Energy Development Assistance (REDA) program and an additional \$496,640 through the Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) Technical Assistance Grant. These programs extend technical support to rural, small businesses, and agricultural producers pursuing renewable energy and efficiency projects through Spring 2026, directly reducing energy burdens across Ohio.



In 2024, SOPEC also diversified its funding base through a \$200,000 award from the Sustainable Cities Fund, supporting innovative community-scale sustainability initiatives through September 2026.

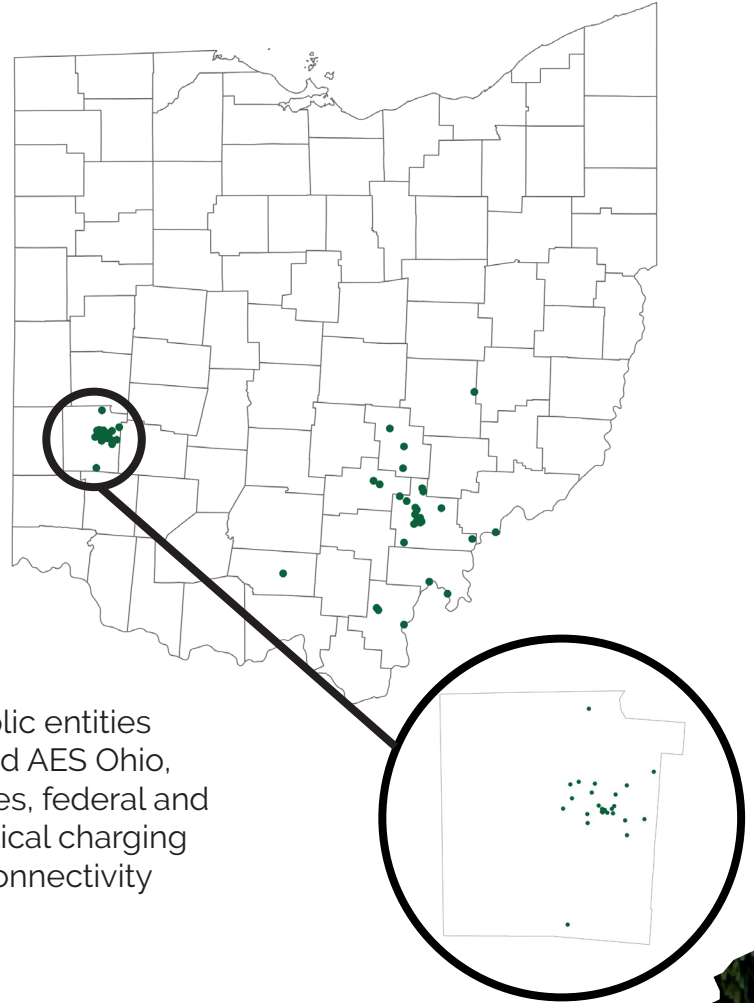
Lastly, SOPEC was awarded \$498,684 under the U.S. Department of Energy's Energy Future Grant Program, with an additional \$187,900 subrecipient award in partnership with the City of Cincinnati. Although these grants were awarded in April 2024, their implementation was suspended due to executive orders in early 2025.

*Awarded April 2024, but not realized due to impacts of executive orders in January 2025.



Southeast to Southwest Ohio Responsive Interregional Deployment of Electrification Solutions (RIDES)

As part of the U.S. Department of Transportation's Charging and Fueling Infrastructure (CFI) Discretionary Grant Program, the RIDES program aims to support EV adoption, reduce carbon emissions, provide convenient charging options, enhance regional connectivity, and ensure long-term sustainability and reliability.



60
charging
stations

200
Level 2
charging ports

30
Level 3
charging ports

SOPEC is collaborating with municipalities and public entities across southwest and southeast Ohio, AEP Ohio and AES Ohio, community members, organizations, and businesses, federal and state agencies, and other project partners to fill critical charging infrastructure gaps and expand accessibility and connectivity within communities.



Renewable Energy Development Assistance Grant

This was a \$100,000 grant awarded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture for the May 2023 - April 2024 cycle, and another \$100K awarded for May 2024 - April 2025 cycle. This program provided free on-site solar assessments to rural, small businesses and agricultural producers in Ohio, including urban farms that meet the criteria and outlined the economic, market, technical, financial, and management feasibility of a proposed solar installation.

81 **46 kW** **41**

completed solar assessments*

average proposed system size in kilowatts*

counties in Ohio assessments were conducted*

Rural Energy for America Program Technical Assistance Grant

This was a \$496,640 grant awarded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture for the October 2023 - March 2026 cycle. The program partnered with Rural Action (RA) and leveraged existing SOPEC and RA programs to identify applicants, which supported 12% of the qualified applicant pool, targeted REAP projects that requested \$20,000 or less, and focused on applicants in distressed and disadvantaged communities.

16 **23** **50%**

applications submitted*

previous REDA clients*

success rate for awardees*

*Each figure represents the data collected from January 1, 2024 to December 31, 2024.

Solar installers on a McConnellsville-area business' rooftop, a project that was funded by REAP.

**Cover Photo:
Village of
McConnelsville**



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