

# Journal News

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## Port authority asks county for funding aid

Agency seeks \$87K to finance budget

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JOURNALNEWS

HAMILTON — The Butler County Port Authority is passing the hat around the county again this year to find the roughly \$87,000 it needs to stay afloat.

The authority, created by county



John  
Fonner

commissioners in 2004 as an independent economic development group, can generate its own funds through financing charges and other means. But, like other new port authorities, it is largely dependent on local government for operating dollars.

Port Authority Secretary John Fonner said most of the money was solicited from last year's contributors: Hamilton, Middletown and Butler County. Fonner said he is soliciting another \$20,000 from other communities that have expressed some interest in the authority's activities.

He said the authority is considering some development projects that may help the group stock its coffers, but did not elaborate.

Fonner said he's also looking for another \$27,000 from county communities to help fund a railroad study project. The money is needed to match a \$100,000 grant from the Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Council of Governments for the project. The county railroad study was funded by OKI as a pilot for a regional look at tying together rail and other forms of transportation.

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## Funding

### Agency seeks county's help

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The authority's inaugural project, the installation of an electric lock to improve rail service at the Symmes Industrial Park in southern Hamilton, is still underway, but has been delayed by work on other transportation projects and the sale of one of the park's companies, Terry Industries.

Fonner said the local paving

company was recently purchased by New Jersey-based Barrett Paving Materials. Barrett is owned by the French construction firm Colas, which is, in turn, owned by French construction, development, media and telecommunications conglomerate Bouygues.

"We're hoping to get things signed up and the money spent and the lock in place. Once all the agreements are in place, it should take about 120 days to design and install the lock," Fonner said. "By summertime, I hope that it would be in operation."

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