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New policy brief outlines ways to strengthen, build thriving communities

State policy can help restore and build strong communities. It can support local public services for safe, well-maintained neighborhoods, good schools and rising property values. What happens in Columbus can determine whether Ohio communities thrive or struggle.

These are the main points of a new policy brief that pulls together [the most important of Policy Matters Ohio's recommendations to restore communities](#) across Ohio.

“Historically, Ohio has invested heavily in its communities, ensuring that basic needs are met and creating opportunity around the state,” said Wendy Patton, report author. “But over the past four years, Ohio has reduced funding for local communities across 40 agency line items by nearly a billion dollars.”

This brief is one of a series making recommendations on energy policy, tax policy, worker training and more. [Thriving Communities](#) focuses on the relationship of the state to local governments. Among our recommendations: restore local government funds as well as full funding for public schools, eroded by historic cuts and revenue diverted to poorly-performing charters; invest in neighborhoods devastated by foreclosure; and adequately fund and staff public services to help the neediest.

“Dimmed streetlights, curtailed safety services, closed recreation centers and swimming pools – these things detract from our quality of life,” said Patton. “Ohio should restore state aid to help make all our communities good places to live, work and learn.”

[Read the brief online.](#)

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*Policy Matters Ohio is a nonprofit, nonpartisan state policy research institute
with offices in Cleveland and Columbus.*