

VILLAGE OF GREENFIELD, OHIO

CITY MANAGER'S 2023 YEARLY REPORT

April 15, 2024

I am pleased to present the 2023 Annual City Manager's Report to you. Throughout the past year, our community has achieved significant milestones, overcome challenges, and continued progressing toward our vision for a vibrant and prosperous Greenfield.

Here are some of the key accomplishments and highlights from 2023:

Economic Development:

We have secured partnerships with several local businesses, which have resulted in the creation of over 100 new jobs in Greenfield Industrial Park alone. We witnessed an uptick in site visits from Industries looking to move into our area to provide high-paying, high-quality jobs for our citizens.

Infrastructure Improvements:

Completed repaving several streets, enhancing safety and accessibility for motorists and pedestrians alike in and through our beautiful downtown.

We completed the Fayette Street and 4th Street projects, which provided much-needed upgrades to the infrastructure on the north side of town. We also started the Phase 1 Water Project throughout town, providing thousands of feet of new water mains, supply lines, and at least 20 new fire hydrants.

We upgraded the city's water treatment facilities by applying for and being awarded a grant to purchase a new backup generator, ensuring we can provide a reliable supply for our residents.

We will continue the infrastructure improvements throughout 2024 for water and sewer lines.

Public Safety:

Collaborated with law enforcement agencies throughout the county to implement community policing initiatives and enhance public safety services.

We provided training and resources to emergency responders to ensure swift and effective responses to crises and emergencies. We had the ability to police neighboring Madison Township for six months, working hard to remove drugs from the streets before they had the opportunity to come into Greenfield.

GREENFIELD WORKFORCE

Our workforce is comprised of the following positions:

3 - Waste Water Treatment

1 - Water Treatment

5 - Street/Railroad/Meters

2 - Water Office

1 - Finance Office

2 - Administrative Office

16 – Full-Time Police Department

1 Chief

3 Sergeants

9 Patrolmen

3 Dispatchers

1 - City Manager

31 Total Full-Time Employees

The Village utilizes seasonal workers, community service workers, jobs and family service workers, and workers from other agencies to help in times of need.

INDUSTRIAL PARK DEVELOPMENT

We continue working through several RFIs (Requests for Information) from JobsOhio. With each project submission, I believe we are becoming more attractive to businesses looking to locate in Ohio. We are also working with a few industrial companies looking to expand their presence here in Greenfield.

Last year, we saw a significant increase in site visits to our South Central Ohio Industrial Park. As we submit great RFI's, we will continue to see growth and opportunity in our Industrial Park.

We continued to work with our established businesses through regular business, expansion, and retention meetings to help them grow and expand.

FINANCES

I want to thank our team for working hard in 2023 in their efforts to maintain and ensure taxpayers' money is spent efficiently and accountable.

We started 2023 with a \$790,936.51 carryover in the General Fund and ended the year with a \$877,536.57 carryover. That is an increase of \$86,586.03 throughout last year, a 10% increase from 2022. Since 2019, we have experienced an average growth in the general fund of 25%.

WORKFORCE

Through our continued efforts in building relationships with businesses, we identified a specific need for a more robust workforce in our region. Without a strong workforce, we cannot attract new businesses to our area, and current employers cannot expand. As mentioned last year, we developed the Highland County Think Tank to tackle our workforce dilemma. This group evolved into the Workforce Leadership Council and has hired Tim Detwiller to run the ACCESS program, which has helped bridge the gap between schools, government, and businesses.

The Workforce Leadership Council comprises members from the Village of Greenfield, Leesburg Schools, Future Plans, Southern Ohio ESC, Southern State Community College, Highland County Chamber of Commerce, Highland County Economic Development, and Highland County Community Action.

The work is gaining traction and is recognized throughout the region as a game changer and a program that others want to recreate in their community. We will continue to push these efforts, and we have been able to secure more financial contributing partners and have all five school districts participating, allowing students access to industry and industry to students.

ACHIEVEMENTS

We experienced many milestones in 2023, and we will highlight a few of them here.

- Paved many streets throughout town.
- Demolished several vacant and blighted structures through the receivership process.
- Continued the Façade Improvement Program Downtown. With the program's creation, we are also establishing a Revolving Loan Fund to be utilized by businesses for years to come.
- Secured OPWC Grant for Jefferson Street work.
- Secured a grant for a backup generator at the Water Treatment Plant.
- Completed infrastructure work and flooding for Sycamore Circle.
- Completed Fayette Street Work
- Completed infrastructure work on 4th Street
- Continued work with the Workforce Leadership Council and ACCESS program with Highland County School districts, Highland County Economic Development Office, Highland County Chamber of Commerce, Ohio Means Jobs, and the Southern Ohio ESC to collaborate on an effort to impact Workforce Development in Highland County positively.
- Continued the "We're Hiring" event to attract individuals to jobs available to them in Highland County.
- Continued Industrial Round Table meetings with our Industrial leaders/partners.
- Installed new bike racks and benches downtown.
- Saw two new murals installed in the downtown.
- Continued Main Street events.
- Received a grant to install two new tornado sirens in town.
- Received another COPS Grant to pay for a new police officer.
- Continued the "Doors of Opportunity" initiative
- Worked on and submitted several projects to the Governor's Office of Appalachia for a portion of the ARPA money available through the Appalachian Community Grant Program. We have been partnered with a procured planner (OHM Advisors) to help develop those projects. We should learn if our project was funded in the Spring of 2024
- Celebrated several business anniversaries milestones
- Continued working with volunteers to help create and imagine a parks district in Greenfield. It would include Mitchell Park, Felson Park, the Cemetery, Industrial Park, and several interior parks.

VISION FOR THE FUTURE

As we look forward, the vision for Greenfield's future remains vibrant and bold. Building upon the achievements of 2023, our dedication to advancing economic development goals set by the Village Council, with a spotlight on Downtown Redevelopment, Industrial Park Development, and Destination Tourism, remains unwavering.

The previous year marked notable progress in project execution and embracing fresh opportunities within our community. As stewards of governance, we must cultivate an environment where businesses flourish, and initiatives like the Façade Improvement Program have propelled us forward. The enduring value of the Revolving Loan Fund, integral to this initiative, is undeniable.

Infrastructure is a top priority, prompting us to seek grants to mitigate repair costs and rejuvenate our aging infrastructure. The agenda for the forthcoming year includes initiatives aimed at infrastructure renewal, curb, and gutter restoration and roadway enhancements.

Housing development is a pivotal agenda item this year, aligning with our quest to generate new employment opportunities in Greenfield and its environs.

Fostering enduring alliances with local businesses and regional stakeholders remains paramount. We will focus on enticing new enterprises to Greenfield while nurturing and fortifying existing ones, fostering an environment conducive to robust growth and prosperity.

The formulation of a master public park plan, in collaboration with our designated planner, stands as an exciting endeavor. This blueprint seeks to elevate our parks into regional gems, including Felson Park, Mitchells Park, the cemetery, the railroad park, and the industrial park. Community engagement will be pivotal, ensuring that our parks mirror the aspirations and needs of our residents while showcasing the natural splendor of the Paint Creek region.

In conclusion, I extend my heartfelt gratitude for the privilege of serving as city manager for the past six years and to the Village Council for their steadfast support. The resilience and dynamism of Greenfield's citizens and businesses continue to inspire me, and I remain steadfast in my commitment to advancing, constructing, and nurturing our remarkable town. Together, we stand poised to embrace the opportunities in 2024 and beyond.

Thank you,

Todd Wilkin

Greenfield City Manager