

VILLAGE OF GREENFIELD, OHIO
CITY MANAGER'S 2020 YEARLY REPORT
March 16, 2021

2020, the year of the pandemic! 2020 was a year I am sure that we will never forget, but undoubtedly a year we want to forget. Although we all lived through a global pandemic, we can recall bright memories and build upon our learning experiences. I want to thank the employees of the village for a great year. The year was a roller coaster that we all shared, but much of the work and progress we experienced would have never occurred without the employees.

As we navigate this report, we will attempt to capture the progress and success we all experienced last year. This report cannot memorialize all the positive work but will recognize the passion and commitment that we, the council, administration, police, workforce department, water department, and sewer departments have for our village.

We make every decision with five areas of strategic focus at the forefront – fiscal health, economic vitality, intelligent, customer-focused government, community engagement, and a safe and resilient community. I'm proud to report our local government continues to stay focused on the three strategies the Village Council passed in 2019 -- Downtown Revitalization, Destination Tourism, and Industrial Park Development -- to make Greenfield unique and attractive to businesses and citizens.

We still have so much to look forward to in Greenfield, and as we continue to work together as a community, we will see much of the progress we experienced last year extend into the future years of Greenfield's success story.

We are on the brink of many successes that will guide us through 2021, and we will attempt to describe those goals while recognizing several of the highlights and achievements of 2020.

GREENFIELD WORKFORCE

Our workforce is comprised of the following positions:

- 3 - Waste Water Treatment
 - 1 - Water Treatment
 - 2 - Meter Department
 - 4 - Street/Railroad
 - 1 - Mechanic
 - 2 - Water Office
 - 1 - Finance Office
 - 1 - Administrative Office
 - 14 – Full-Time Police Department, 12 – Auxiliary Police Officers
 - 1 Chief
 - 1 Lieutenant
 - 2 Sergeants
 - 7 Patrolmen
 - 3 Dispatchers
 - 12 Auxiliary
 - 1 - Public Service Director
 - 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.

The Village said goodbye to a wonderful employee this year. Mrs. Roberta Karnes retired in December, and we recognized her for her achievements and dedication to Greenfield's citizens for the past 43 years. We will miss her tremendously.

DESTINATION TOURISM

We started a few projects at Felson Park in 2020 that will attract many visitors in the future to Greenfield. One of our successes last year was that we were awarded \$100,000.00 to build a trail from Mitchell Park to the bike path connected to Felson Park. The trail connector will provide access to the Scenic Waterway, Paint Creek and extend trail opportunities to our community and those visiting Greenfield. We are very thankful for the award through the Capital Budget request. We will start planning the path this year and will start the project as the design and agreements are finalized.

The Scenic Waterway is a project that Mr. Phil Clyburn has helped guide, and we are very thankful for his work and dedication to our community. This interest will attract many kayaks,

canoes, and visitors, and without the perseverance of Mr. Clyburn, this would not have been a success.

We will be constructing a pavilion and restrooms at Felson Park this year to provide shelter and necessities for those utilizing it. As mentioned previously, part of the money to build this structure was achieved through an ODNR grant award in 2019. We will need volunteers and sweat equity to help construct the facility. There will also be a new electrical service at the park to host many events at Felson.

We planned to apply for funding and grants in 2020 to continue to develop the park, but due to COVID, many of the grants we wanted to use were not available. In 2021 we plan to apply for several grants to help us build this three-phased project in line with our economic development plan of attracting destination tourism.

DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION

Our downtown continues to remind us of our rich heritage and history and deserves the opportunity to thrive once again. As we mentioned last year, Greenfield was one of four municipalities awarded an Ohio Network grant to create a strategic plan towards the redevelopment and provide ideas on funding and partners. This work started last year, and even though the program plan is not finalized like we hoped, it is moving positively, and we hope to have that program developed this year. We will be reporting back throughout the year on this opportunity, but the Ohio Network was highly impressed with our historic downtown. We have so much beauty in our downtown and will be restoring it.

In 2021, we have plans to help develop a Downtown Community Development Corporation. This group, along with the Village, and G3 will be the change agent necessary to carry out our Downtown strategy. The Development Corporation will help implement a façade improvement program to provide capital for several downtown property owners to spruce up their storefronts.

Our partnership with G3 will help grow our MainStreet program. The Village has been a part of the MainStreet program for several years, but we have never fully utilized the opportunity's benefits. G3's Design Committee also led the effort towards the historic district declaration last year. The historic district distinction will provide opportunities for building owners to restore their buildings while recognizing the benefit of up to a 45% tax credit.

INDUSTRIAL PARK DEVELOPMENT

We are excited about the opportunities that we have in store for the South Central Ohio Industrial Park. We were one of five communities in the OhioSE region (25 counties) to receive a Prepared Communities grant. This grant will help us navigate the developmental options and financing available to develop our Industrial Park. We are thankful for the partnership with OhioSE and Bricker and Eckler and highly excited about the opportunities this collaboration will bring to fruition.

We have been working through several RFI's from JobsOhio, and with each project submission, I believe we are becoming more and 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. We believe these opportunities will be realized in 2021, and we will have more jobs in Greenfield.

To help businesses be successful in Greenfield, we need to focus on developing an active labor workforce. In many of my discussions with our industrial partners, this is a recurring concern. We have applied for a grant and have plans to partner with a regional facilitator who will help us create a workforce strategy that will "bridge the gap to full employment."

FINANCES

Even though the COVID-19 pandemic raged through our community and nation, we had a great year managing and growing our finances, and we saw an increase in our General Fund carryover. We started the year with a \$289,000.00 carryover and ended the year with a carryover of \$442,000.00. I want to thank our team for working hard in 2020. We can't express how impressive this achievement is, considering many neighboring communities experienced significant decreases in their finances.

We manage our budgets daily to ensure we are fiscally responsible with the Greenfield taxpayer's money. We were able to grow our general fund carryover by \$153,000.00 and still completed many projects for the Greenfield community.

INDUSTRIAL ROUND TABLE

We continue to forge many great relationships with our local industry and develop those partnerships to ensure each business can thrive to provide local jobs. We will reinstate our in-person Industrial Round Table meetings this year. Unfortunately, we had to cancel several of our planned meetings this year due to COVID but could still connect through a combination of hybrid and virtual meetings. As mentioned earlier, we plan to attack our workforce dilemma our region is struggling with. Through planning and implementation, we will tackle this problem with our valuable business partners. Our industrial leaders provide jobs needed in Greenfield for our residents and many others in the region.

RAILROAD

In the spring of 2020, we received notification that the CRISI railroad grant we worked hard on in 2019 had been approved. This grant will bring 3.5 million dollars of investment into our deteriorated railroad and ensure we protect 1200-1800 jobs in our region. This was excellent news because we experienced two train derailments in 2020 that caused significant concern about our railroad condition.

Our work and collaboration on the railroad project have been nominated as one of the top three projects in the OhioSE region. I am very proud of our team's work on this endeavor and am so

thankful we have excellent partners in our area willing to recognize the importance of our Greenfield Railroad.

Since the 3.5 million dollar investment announcement, several of our key businesses on the line have either announced expansion or have completed projects that will help secure their presence within Highland County.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

Our police department had an extremely successful year. The Village was awarded a COPS grant that enabled us to hire one full-time officer. The additional officer helped the department continue to be a leading agency within our county and region. We removed drugs and crime from our streets in record numbers. The Greenfield Police department's work ethic and comradery cannot be matched, and we are very impressed with our department's ability to remove crime from our village.

We want to thank Chief Oyer for his leadership and hard work through several quarantine bouts within the department. He was able to cover all of the shifts and personnel without any hiccup in their high-quality service. Keep up the excellent work!

SOCIAL NETWORKING

Although COVID kept us apart in 2020, we still saw groups step forward and provide our community with opportunities. We want to thank Ms. Lynn Riggs for her assistance in creating the warm holiday spirit from Thanksgiving through Christmas. She led the efforts in many of the downtown decorations and the Village Christmas we desired.

We also want to thank Ms. Sandy Kelley for her work in preparing and executing our first annual food truck festival and car show. It was a fantastic event, and we are thankful for her leadership on this project. It was a huge success.

We also want to thank Ms. Susan Howland for her ideas and help implement our quarterly awards and contests throughout the town. She also helped us by making the door hangers for the contest winners.

G3 worked hard to get some events scheduled towards the end of the year, but we expect they will be providing many possibilities and opportunities for the community to come together in 2021.

ACHIEVEMENTS

We experienced many milestones in 2020, and we will highlight a few of them here.

- We completed the installation and implementation of our Gateway system. This system saved the Village countless gallons of water and citizens an enormous amount of money.

- We were able to pave Mill Street and parts of Spring, Lyndon, and 6th Street.
- We demolished three vacant and blighted structures on Waddel, Short Dickey, and Spring Street.
- We restored, in partnership with the Historic Foundation and the McNeil Family, the clock tower.
- We moved the council chambers upstairs into the old water office area.
- We are in the process of installing a new HVAC system into City Hall. The old system was 20 years old and failing, which cost the Village thousands of dollars.
- We implemented a new zoning code for Greenfield.
- The Greenfield CIC acquired and sold their first residential property in an effort to remove vacant and blighted homes from our community.
- We implemented a Citizen of the Month Award.
- We implemented an Employee of the Month Award.
- We created "Welcoming Packets" for new citizens moving into town.
- We received and are implementing our new cemetery software.
- We are now streaming our council meetings on Facebook live for more participation and to ensure our citizens have access to the meetings.
- We started the "Lunch with the City Manager" events.
- We created a Streets Superintendent Position and established department heads over the streets, water, and wastewater departments.
- We implemented a new village website.
- We installed a new roof on City Hall.

VISION FOR THE FUTURE

This report is a reflection of many positive activities taking place within Greenfield. We will continue to push forward and accomplish the economic development goals and strategies established by the Village Council, Downtown Redevelopment, Industrial Park Development, and Destination Tourism.

2020 was a year that we will not easily forget as we fought through the trials of the COVID-19 pandemic. We were still able to see a year where we started and completed many projects and laid more groundwork for several goals we plan to achieve in 2021. We will continue exploring new opportunities but want to focus our attention on what will bring prosperity and growth to Greenfield.

Through the continued development of our Downtown Redevelopment plan with our key partners, we expect to see the projects come to fruition that will stimulate positive change in our historic downtown. We hope to continue our efforts and implement ideas with the MainStreet program's help and hopefully our newly created Community Development Corporation.

We will continue to tackle our dilapidated infrastructures through grant applications, planning, and strategic project execution. Our goal is to remove as much of the blighted system and replace it with new so we can remove the tremendous inflow and infiltration we experience.

We will be paving new streets in 2021 and hope to continue this pattern for years to come to see all of our roads in good shape and the underlying issues remediated. We hope to implement programs to replace or restore curbs and gutters throughout the town along with this necessary road work.

It will continue to be our goal to build great partnerships with all of our local businesses. One of our focuses for this year will not only be attracting new business to Greenfield but also helping our current businesses. We expect there will be more growth for our local and valuable companies. We will make every effort possible to create an atmosphere that is attractive for them to stay and grow and attract new businesses.

Our parks system, and especially Felson Park, will continue to be a priority for us. We will continue to develop our parks into a regional destination attraction. We have the opportunity to establish a door to the natural beauty the Paint Creek region has to offer, from hunting, hiking, bicycling, canoeing, kayaking, fishing, and beyond. We will need the community's help to ensure Mitchell Park continues to grow and develop a successful baseball and softball program again.

The eradication of drugs and crime in town will continue to be our Police Department's number one goal. We will always strive to be the best agency in Highland County.

We have so much to look forward to in 2021!

IN CONCLUSION...

I have enjoyed my third year as city manager, and thank Village Council for giving me this opportunity. The citizens, businesses of Greenfield and McClain schools have been a valuable inspiration for me daily to provide the best common-sense approach to local governance. I am happy to be part of this beautiful community and work hard every day to promote, build, and develop this amazing town we call Greenfield.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Todd Wilkin". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Todd Wilkin
Greenfield City Manager