

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

April 12, 2022

I am pleased to present you with the annual report for 2021. It's been a year of recovery, rebound, and renewal. In this year, we witnessed a commitment to renewed unity coming out of the COVID-19 pandemic. The circumstances of 2020 may have pulled many of our lives apart, but last year we started a campaign to unite our community around the opportunity for positive change. One key component of that positive change has been our Façade Improvement Program. We will spend a small portion of our report on the program later, but no written word can fully tell the uniting, positive impact we will experience through implementing this significant plan.

Greenfield continues to be dedicated to delivering exemplary municipal services responsive to our entire community and consistent with our history, culture, and unique character. We will continue to deliver services through common-sense initiatives and by holding to our values: fiscal responsibility, responsiveness, honesty, integrity, and effective communication. This report cannot memorialize all the positive work our village employees are doing, yet it will seek to highlight the passion and commitment that the council, administration, police, workforce, water, and sewer departments have for our village.

Our Downtown Revitalization will be a significant accomplishment for Greenfield in 2022 when it is completed. The Downtown Façade Improvement Program, a component of the Downtown Revitalization, will be instrumental in the success and attraction of many business opportunities in Greenfield. These business opportunities, in turn, will be the driving force to impactfully affect all three economic development strategies which were passed by the Village council in 2019 -- Downtown Revitalization, Destination Tourism, and Industrial Park Development -- to make Greenfield unique and attractive to businesses and citizens. I'm proud to report that our local government has stayed focused on those three strategies.

We are on the brink of many successes that will guide us through 2022. We will attempt to describe those goals while recognizing several of the highlights and achievements of 2021.

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

2 - Administrative Office

13 – Full-Time Police Department, 6 – Auxiliary Police Officers

1 Chief

1 Lieutenant

2 Sergeants

6 Patrolmen

3 Dispatchers

6 Auxiliary

1 - City Manager

30 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 two long-term employees this year. Mrs. Carolyn Snodgrass and Ms. Beverly Giffin retired this year.

DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION

Our downtown continues to remind us of our rich heritage and history and deserves the opportunity to thrive once again. We have started our Façade Improvement Program using the Federally allocated ARPA funds. Last summer, when we started the program, we received \$1.2M of funding applications. The opportunity we have created is a one-of-a-kind program that will enable a property or business owner in the Historic Downtown to apply for a 50% grant and a 50% loan for the costs to renovate their façade, roof, or HVAC system. The total project costs covered by the grant and loan cannot exceed \$100,000.00.

The Façade Improvement Program was established through the guidance given by the Federal Government. Through this guidance, we allow businesses who struggled to keep their doors open through the pandemic to be able to apply for assistance and fix up their building envelope. We will see our downtown become jubilant and vibrant through this process, attracting destination tourism and establishing a quality of life that will attract individuals and businesses to our downtown.

We have requested a partnership with the Madison Township Trustees to help with the program's financial impact. We have also applied for money through the county and CDBG funds to continue extending the impact this program will have for years to come.

This program allows businesses to pay it back over five years with zero percent interest through the loan. This will build up a Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) that we can utilize for many years. The RLF can be used by newly established businesses that need assistance in Gap financing or by established companies that need to expand. We are excited about this opportunity and know it will be utilized by many in the future growth of Greenfield.

INDUSTRIAL PARK DEVELOPMENT

We have been working through several RFI's (Request for Information) from JobsOhio. 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 have seen Weastec reopen its doors here in Greenfield. They are adding a line here in Greenfield, which will bring jobs to their facility.

Greenfield Precision Plastics started operations this year. They currently make and ship products and have several employees working with them.

Adient announced their tank farm expansion that will secure jobs in Greenfield. The tank farm will store materials for all North American plants and increase traffic on our railroad.

We will continue to work with our established businesses to help them grow and expand.

FINANCES

I want to thank our team for working hard in 2021. We had some changes with personnel: Mr. Gary Lewis became the new Finance Director, and Ms. Sunny Taylor was hired to help within the finance and other departments. These changes should prove more efficient and create new strategies to save taxpayers money.

We manage our budgets daily to ensure we are fiscally responsible with the Greenfield taxpayers' money. We started 2021 with a \$442,049.65 carryover in the General Fund, and we ended the year with a \$676,691.06 carryover in the general fund. That is an increase of \$234,641.41 throughout last year. I can't express how impressive this achievement is, considering many neighboring communities experienced significant decreases in their finances.

This year's budget was completed in November. We considered a potential loss in tax receipts due to the economic downturn we are all experiencing. We expect to have a great carryover into 2023, but we don't anticipate any growth in the carryover as we may experience a loss in revenue in 2022.

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. We have assembled a dynamic group of individuals to create a Highland County Think Tank to tackle our workforce dilemma. This group will help bridge the gap between schools, government, and businesses.

We have collaborated with Mrs. Tasha Weery of Building Bridges to Careers to help us through this process. We were able to get all five Highland County Schools to participate, as well as Future Plans, the Highland County Economic Development Office, the Chamber of Commerce, Southern State Community College, Ohio Means Jobs, the Southern Ohio ESC, and the City of Hillsboro. We have had a few meetings in which Lt. Governor Husted's office has had representation.

By design, the Think Tank will bridge the language barriers between schools and businesses. Together, we can create a robust workforce that will positively change the future of our current students as well as that of our companies.

Our goal is to prepare for increased opportunities in our area with the announcement that Intel will soon be located in Columbus. They may have ancillary businesses that want to locate in our region and tap into our skilled workforce.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

Our police department had an extremely successful year. We removed drugs and crime from our streets in record numbers. The Greenfield Police department's work ethic and camaraderie cannot be matched, and we are very impressed with our department's ability to remove crime from our village.

We purchased three new cruisers for the police department and retired the older fleet of vehicles. The vehicles look great and are a valuable asset to the Police Department. Each car has been equipped with the same tools, and we are providing the same level of personal equipment for each employee to ensure their safety.

ACHIEVEMENTS

We experienced many milestones in 2021, and we will highlight a few of them here.

- Paved many streets throughout town, including portions of 7th Street, Summerfield Street, Oak Street, 10th Street, and the Police parking area at City Hall
- Established the Mitchell Park Youth Sports League through the Recreations Committee with guidance from Mr. Travis Howland; Mr. Howland is doing a great job running the league, and we have seen much improvement at the park.
- Demolished a couple of vacant and blighted structures, the most significant of which was 311 North Street
- Partnered with and worked with Small Nation on Downtown Redevelopment ideas
- Ordered new historic windows for City Hall
- Installed new lighting in City Hall, saving the village energy costs
- Implemented and enforced our new zoning code for Greenfield
- Created and executed a new Façade Improvement Program in the 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 the Fayette Street reconstruction
- Utilized Industrial Park for Weastec to open a production facility
- Utilized Industrial Park for Greenfield Precision Plastics to open a production facility

- Started Small Business Round Table meetings
- Created a Highland County Think Tank, including other municipalities, all five 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 positively impact Workforce Development in Highland County
- Spoke at the annual summit regarding workforce development at Burr Oak State Park
- Launched "Tea with Todd," a Facebook live event designed to interact with the community and make updates on community events
- Moved Chief Oyer into a new role of Public Service Director to help with the management of projects within the Village
- Created the "We're Hiring" event to attract individuals to jobs available to them in Highland County
- Auctioned two drug homes seized in forfeiture
- Continued Industrial Round Table meetings with our Industrial leaders/partners
- Awarded a TAP grant through ODOT to build a pedestrian bridge at the stream next to the Library
- Completed our Critical Infrastructure grant on 5th street
- Welcomed the opening of Highland County Community Action Organization services in Greenfield
- Purchased three new police cruisers

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.

2021 was an excellent year for opportunities. The work we are accomplishing with the Highland County Think Tank will create a vibrant workforce while preparing our current students and young adults for available jobs within the county and region. We will continue with this significant work, pursuing to establish relationships with businesses looking for skilled workers.

The Facade Improvement Program will make significant changes to our Downtown. Those changes will be realized this year and for many years to come. The opportunity we are providing our current businesses and future entrepreneurs will change our downtown landscape. The future is bright for Greenfield, and if we all strive to work towards this same goal, we can celebrate success together. Through the continued development of our Downtown Redevelopment plan with our key partners, we expect to see many projects come to fruition that will stimulate positive change in our historic downtown.

Our goal is to build lasting partnerships with our local businesses in Greenfield and our region. One of our focuses for this year will not only be attracting new business to Greenfield but also helping our current businesses. We will make every effort possible to create an attractive atmosphere for established companies to stay and grow and draw new businesses here.

We will be paving new streets in 2022 and will continue this pattern for years to come. We will work hard to ensure our roads are in good shape and the underlying issues remediated. We hope to implement programs to replace the failing infrastructure under our streets, restore curbs and gutters throughout the town, and perform necessary road work.

While still in its initial stages, we have a vision to create a master public park plan. This plan will include the creation of a parks district and will consist of Felson Park, Mitchells Park, the cemetery, railroad park, and our industrial park. We will continue to develop our parks into a regional destination attraction and will do this by involving our community in developing those plans. 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.

We have so much to look forward to in 2022!

IN CONCLUSION...

I have enjoyed my fourth year as city manager, and I thank Village Council for giving me this opportunity. The citizens and businesses of Greenfield 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 Greenfield's fantastic town.

Thank you,

Todd Wilkin

Greenfield City Manager