



Mayor

David DiVencenzo



President



Member



Member



Liz Sauer



Member
Lynette Kitts



# The Village of Grafton: The Beacon of Light in Lorain County

Dear Village of Grafton Residents,

The Village of Grafton is an exciting and dynamic community in Lorain County, boasting a splendid blend of economic development opportunities with a backdrop of small town charm. What makes Grafton so special is its people. As a lifelong resident of Grafton, the hardworking, down-to-earth individuals that comprise Grafton are some of the finest people on the face of the earth. They care, and are compassionate. They work hard, and demonstrate humility. They look ahead to a bright future while retaining the traditional sense of a community that rests upon the pillars of our forefathers. The Village of Grafton is a beacon of light and love in Lorain County and I could not be more proud to serve as your Mayor. Thank you to the fine people of the Village of Grafton for your continued support.

This publication, our 2nd annual State of the Village, provides a comprehensive summary of the year past, including our milestones, completed projects, updates and other matters that reflect all that was good in our community during the last 12 months. Inside, residents will have the opportunity to read through the robust infrastructure needs that were addressed during 2018. Village leaders consider the completion of such projects as investments in the future. Readers will learn about cost summaries, project details and the overall need for the capital improvement as well. Beyond these items, this State of the Village forecasts important planned upgrades for the future. As many know, the Village remains diligent about forthcoming opportunities to not only complete infrastructure projects, but to enhance and enlarge our tax base. This publication provides a glimpse into the future for these planned Village opportunities as well.

Our dedicated business community must be commended as well. From the resurgence of the Kiwanis organization to the loyal membership of our Greater Grafton Business Partnership, the cornerstone of any successful public entity in the State of Ohio, is a thriving and growing tax base. We have that here in Grafton, and I thank the business owners for their commitment to our community and steadfastness in their business endeavors. I encourage the residents of Grafton to patronize our businesses and promote them whenever and wherever possible. Village of Grafton businesses are the lifeblood of our community and we need them and thank them, very much.

Finally, I express my gratitude to our Village leadership. Village Council added a new member in Timothy Strah this past year, who replaced his son Jason, after he vacated his seat for personal matters. Council listens to proposals and professionally makes decisions on vital topics. They are dedicated to the future of this community and I commend them for their service.

Enjoy reading this 2018 State of the Village publication. Thank you for your continued support of the Village of Grafton.

Sincerely,

Mayor David DiVencenzo



#### Home Values in Grafton... On The Rise!

2018 Reappraisal
Salient Data

Village of
Grafton

Sales
Average Price
Sales Ratio

Residential Data

2015

24 Sales

5155,884 - Avg. Sale Price
92.5 - Residential Sales Ratio

2016

36 Sales
5167,177 - Avg. Sale Price
93.1 - Residential Sales Ratio

2017

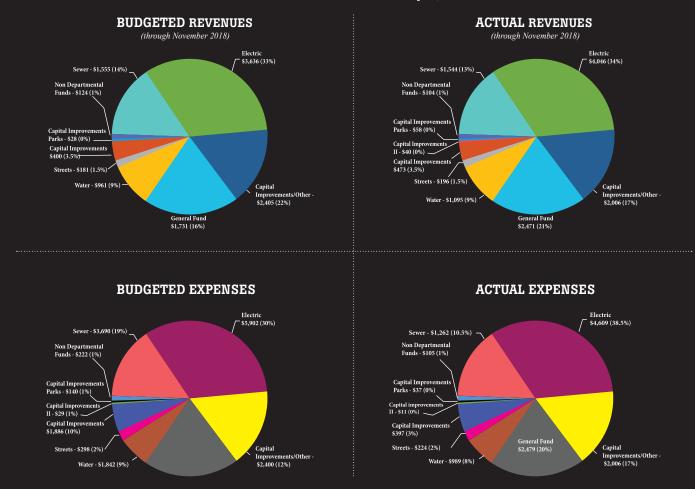
44 Sales
5156,837 - Avg. Sale Price
84.1 - Residential Sales Ratio



# **VILLAGE FINANCES**

The calendar year of 2018 was a significant year for the Village of Grafton in terms of finances. As required by State Statute, the Village produces a series of reports that are all posted on the Village website. Below you will find a sequence of charts and graphs that should help residents to obtain an accurate overview of the Village finances from one year to the next.

\*All dollar amounts in increment of \$1,000



# Municipal Income Tax Receipts **ON THE RISE** since 2015!

The main source of revenue for the Village of Grafton, Municipal Income Tax Receipts, has been on the rise since 2015 due to the deliberate economic development and business attraction initiatives!



## Main Street Watermain Loop Project (Water Supply System Improvements)

In December 2017, the Village awarded the Main Street Water Main Loop project to Fabrizi Construction of Middleburg Heights. The intent of this needed project was to connect the North water main to the South water main in the downtown district. The benefit of this project was two-fold, first to establish a "loop connection" that previously did not exist. This allowed a balanced water pressure in the system and provided a needed connection that could lessen and isolate water outages during times of repair or maintenance. Second, the existing 8" ductile water main had exceeded its life-expectancy, was in poor condition and was suspect as an area we believed the system was experiencing significant water loss. Included in this project was the installation of new fire hydrants and elimination of old lead taps replacing all lateral connection with new copper taps onto the new watermain.

The bid award was \$523,011.50 and the project began construction in January 2018. The project site and new water main installation started at Main Street and Erie Street and extended along Main Street around Parsons curve to Becker Court. The project included 2-bore sites under CSX tracks. This project was completed in early May 2018 with only two change orders requested at the project completion. One change order resulted from the added depth and relocation of the bore-pit at Main Street and Erie Street due to interference with existing underground infrastructure. The other change order came from sidewalk extensions the Village added on Main Street including the 5'-wide sidewalk extension from Our Lady Queen of Peace to Erie Street.

## **Elevated Water Tank Project (Water Supply System Improvements)**

With planning dating back more than 5 years, the Village was able to move forward with the construction of a new 200,000-gallon elevated water tank. The existing 100,000-gallon downtown water tower had exceeded life expectancy after an estimated 89-years of service. Although a landmark and a significant part of Grafton's identity, the tower's construction was antiquated and built in a time before site fabrication welding existed and by iron workers employing hot-rivet construction and seam sealing with materials used at the time. Although maintained throughout the decades of service that followed, metal fatigue made the structure walls porous to the point the exterior would no longer adhere to exterior coatings and interior conditions limited the tower fill to 50% of capacity. The tower did not have, nor was it built for, the systems that stir and circulate the water within, a process that significantly improves water quality. Cost to rehabilitate the undersized tower, improve systems and connect to the newer 12" watermain could not be justified given the improvements could not guarantee a life extension beyond 20-years.

Site selection of the new tower was decided in the spring of 2017 as the Village acquired land on Becker Court. Choosing this site allowed for:

- 1. Planning to move forward
- 2. Would keep a landmark water tower in Downtown Grafton
- 3. Close proximity to the Main Street 12" watermain
- 4. Development of a formerly vacant lot within the Downtown district
- 5. Development of needed additional Downtown parking
- 6. Improve Downtown fire protection
- 7. Allow for future water system growth

Construction of the new 200,000 elevated tank was awarded to Caldwell Tanks of Louisville, Kentucky in the amount of \$1,292,680.00. Site work began in late January 2018 and foundation construction began in March. In addition to downtown parking the project scope of work included the installation of new fire hydrants in the Downtown District. The Elevated Tank testing was completed in December 2018 and put in service the first week of January 2019.



The Old Water Tower was removed in January 2019. Consideration to relocate the tower as a historic monument was determined to be too complicated and too costly. The tower and attached catwalk were 21' wider than the Main Street pavement at points, removal of the tower in one piece would require closing of SR57 for a week or more, add risk to life, safety, welfare, and personal property of surrounding residents, employers and employees who work in the downtown district. Relocation costs were estimated well in excess of a quarter-million dollars.

# **New Water System Pump Station and Former Water Plant Demolition Project (Willow Park)**



The former Grafton Water Plant was decommissioned in 1996. The structure remained as it housed the water supply system pump facilities. Reaching an end-of-service, operated with pumps no longer manufactured and parts becoming difficult to locate, the Village opted to construct a new state-of-the-art

pump facility. The new pump station is automated and employs a scada system that communicates with both systems' elevated tanks, provides system pump and power generation back up.

The Water System Pump Station Project bid was awarded to Elite Construction in

the amount of \$603,470.00. Construction began in May 2018, the pump station and facility was delivered and installed in July 2018. Delays due to scheduling with Columbia Gas, calibration and training on the scada systems and power generation were completed in October 2018, and the pump station went live in November 2018. Demolition of the former water works was performed in December 2018, opening an enhanced scenic view into Willow Park.



# **Willow Park Utility Building Exterior Renovations**

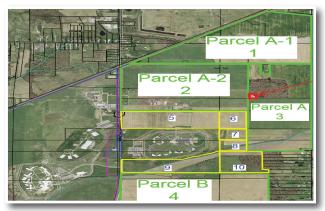


The former Grafton Electric Line shop, the red barn at Willow Park underwent exterior renovations in June 2018. A new roof, two tone steel siding, commercial gutter system added with storm drainage, new windows and man-door. Finishing the exterior renovation, Grafton Electric added exterior LED wall pack lighting illuminating the Willow Park entrance throughout the night. This project was awarded to Classical Construction of Apple Creek in the amount of \$21,587.00.

# **2018 Land Acquisitions**

In May 2018, the Village purchased 388 acres of land from the State of Ohio for proposed Economic Development. The property is located East of Avon Belden Road and includes land North and South of Capel Rd. The land was leased as farm land in 2018, where part is committed to solar development in 2019, and the balance of acreage will again be offered for lease for agricultural farming.

August of 2018, Grafton purchased a Downtown District parcel at Main Street and Becker's Court for the purpose of widening Becker's Court in 2019, and future Downtown parking development.



# **2018 Roadway Resurfacing Project**

In 2016, Village administration established a road surface grading program. This is a subjective as well as conditional evaluation updated annually.

The 2018 Roadway Resurfacing project bid was awarded to Denes Concrete in Wellington, Ohio, in the amount of \$182,127.00. The project addressed poor road conditions on Commerce Drive, Hyanis Drive and Yarmouth Drive. More than 23,000 square feet of concrete roadway surface was replaced, under drainage systems installed, 2 storm catch basins replaced, and new surfaces cracked sealed.

As budget provided funding 13-sinking catch basin surrounds and 8-monument box surrounds in the Emerald Point subdivision were replaced. Contractor estimates were received, and the work was awarded to Denes Concrete in the amount of \$16,000.00.

After lengthy discussions with ODOT and Lorain County Engineering, the Village opted to pursue an improvement to the Elm Street overpass issue. In partnering with Lorain County Engineering, the Village opted to partner with Lorain County Engineering to resurface the North bridge approach and exit, the bridge expansion joint, and extend the asphalt surface to adjust to roadway transition. When completed, the Lorain County Engineering office informed the Village the county would absorb 100% of the cost to improve the bridge approach. The Village is considering an additional alteration that would raise the storm catch basins and this would allow for the pavement elevation to be raised.

### **Oak Street Reconstruction**

The Planned Oak Street reconstruction project will follow the same improvements made to Mechanic Street in 2015 and 2016. With some Oak Street residence are constructed more than 120 year ago, issues regarding failing infrastructure, narrow roadway and roadway condition issues, the Village sought and received funding a reconstruction that will provide new and improved:

- 1. Sanitary sewers, Sanitary manholes, increases system discharge and sanitary lateral taps.
- 2. Storm sewers where none previously existed including storm sewer taps to residential property, Including stormwater redirection under CSX discharging directly into the Black River.
- 3. New natural gas-line mains including lateral taps (provided by Columbia Gas)
- 4. Water main replacement upsizing from 4" to 8" including lateral taps and a watermain loop connection with the watermain on Chestnut Street.
- 5. Replacement of all fire hydrants.
- 6. Widen roadway by a minimum of 8' with concrete curb and gutter construction and full pavement base and asphalt replacement.
- 7. Installation of all new sidewalks.



The Oak Street reconstruction was a bid municipal project with the September 2018 bid award going to Buckeye Construction in the amount of \$926,779.40. As the Village deemed the watermain condition critical, the Village moved forward with construction beginning in October. Somewhat favorable weather conditions have allowed Buckeye to complete the watermain and lateral connections in December. By January 25th of this year, Buckeye was able to complete the install of all sanitary sewers, manholes and laterals. The scheduled project completion date is April 30th, 2019 (weather dependent and the availability of asphalt).



# **ELECTRIC - Grafton Power and Light**

Grafton's electric department completed the LED Roadway Lighting upgrade in 2018. The Village performed a test pilot program of LED roadway lighting in 2015. The LED lighting was found to have a significant improvement with quality of lighting, consistent of lighting color, lower energy consumption, and reduces long-term maintenance cost. In 2016 the electric department began Phase 1 of a 3-year program to convert all municipal roadway lighting to LED. The LED lighting was installed by department personnel and the total added cost to convert over 3-years totaled \$45,000.00. The energy saving estimate calculated the savings in electric cost to match the \$45,000.00 project cost in as little as 27-months.

Grafton electric also planned and bid a line improvement project for the East substation 12kV tie-line. This project was awarded to Thompson Electric totaling \$227,500.00. Funds for this project were encumbered in 2018, due to order time for materials, the project start time was scheduled for early February 2019.

# **Renewable Energy**

In August 2018, Grafton administration initiated an RFP for a Solar project in Grafton. Village administration negotiated a 30-year term to purchase power generated and isolated to Grafton electric grid and transmission. As power costs have risen, a significant portion of added costs come from transmission, capacity and load charges for the power purchased by Grafton and transmitted through the PJM grid. The electric market projection of future of transmission, capacity and load costs are concerning. By generating power behind Grafton's meters, Solar positions Grafton with the ability to lower transmission, capacity and load by 'shedding' this outside grid costs of the same. Load and capacity are a base for cost variables and are calculated by the market using Grafton's load on a minimum of 20-peak load days in a year taken from the prior-year history. Behind-the-meter generation will:

- 1. Provide by agreement a 30-year fixed rate to purchase sustainable renewable energy
- 2. Lower Grafton's load and capacity of the grid
- 3. Provide lower energy rates for Grafton electric customers as early as July 2020
- 4. Attract commerce and economic development
- 5. Allow for system power growth was a solar system that is expandable, and,
- 6. Showcase Grafton regionally, statewide and nationally with recognition as a renewable energy municipality.

Solar field construction is scheduled for February of 2019 with an operational date by mid May 2019.

# Village of Grafton Welcomes Councilman Timothy Strah



Councilman Tim Strah was appointed to the position of Grafton Village Council-at Large on October 16, 2018 to fulfill the remaining term of Jason Strah (son of Tim Strah). Jason Strah resigned due to residency relocation out of the Village.

Councilman Timothy Strah

Darla have called Grafton home. They raised 3 children and are active in the community. Tim has served Grafton as a Volunteer Fireman. Tim is an active member of Our Lady Queen of Peace serving on the finance council and is involved with the Helping Hands Ministry. Tim has recently served on the Mayor's 2018 Charter Review Commission. Tim hopes that his work knowledge and experience as a Lead Maintenance Mechanic will provide insight that will be beneficial to the Village.

Councilman Strah stated, "I see my efforts here on the Village Council as a continuation of my love for Grafton through community service."

Councilman Strah's platform for his first term to council:

- Assure the Village of Grafton remains fiscally responsible to its residents.
- Continue strategic efforts regarding an aging infrastructure and the projects that are designed to address all infrastructure needs.
- Seek way to improve the Village Parks and Recreation.
- Support economic development programs and opportunities benefiting Grafton.
- Continue a legacy of community volunteerism through public service.

Tim feels blessed to have this special opportunity to fill the shoes of his son Jason by serving the remaining time of his term and continue his family's desire to serve Grafton. Councilman Strah's term runs through December 2021.

# A LOOK AHEAD TO 2019: YOUR TAX DOLLARS AT WORK!

## **Chestnut Street Reconstruction Project - PHASE 1**

Chestnut Street reconstruction Phase 1 is a full infrastructure reconstruction project following the same processes as Mechanic Street and Oak Street with new watermain including new residential lateral supply connections, new natural gas line, new sanitary sewer mains and lateral taps, new stormwater drainage, curb and gutter construction and full pavement replacement. Phase 1 scope of work will include all infrastructure from Mechanic Street to Main Street. This project was out to bid in February 2019, and if awarded, construction completion will be in the fall of 2019.

### **Willow Park improvements**

Village administration presented a conceptual project for funding in 2018. The project proposed a new playground at Willow Park to be located closer to restrooms facilities and would provide features that are designed to accommodate children with special needs. Also included was the construction of a 35' by 35' x16' high Sun Shade Structure to be positioned diagonally between the two existing pavilion structures. Site preparation will include removal or relocation of electric supply to fully open the lawn area for public access. The vision is that the improvements will increase activities at Willow Park, including allowing the park to become a center for special events including a proposed community concert venue. Estimated costs of the proposed improvements were in excess of \$220,000.00 and application for funding was submitted to Nature Works. Grafton's application was approved for a grant totaling \$104,277.00. This project will be out-to-bid sometime early 2019 with completion in late 2019.

## **Chestnut Street Reconstruction Project - PHASE 2**

Chestnut Street reconstruction Phase 1 is a full infrastructure reconstruction project following the same processes as Mechanic Street and Oak Street with new watermain including new residential lateral supply connections, new natural gas line, new sanitary sewer mains and lateral taps, new stormwater drainage, curb and gutter construction and full pavement replacement. Phase 1 scope of work will include all infrastructure from Railroad Street to Mechanic Street. Depending on funding, this project is scheduled out to bid in second half of 2019.

# **2019 Roadway Resurfacing Project**

Funding for the 2019 roadway resurfacing is currently under consideration for the 2019 fiscal municipal budget and are not funded at the time of this publication. Roadway areas currently under consideration (not all will be funded in 2019) due to conditions existing in the fall of 2018 are:

- 1. Part of Commerce Drive. This would be the final section of commerce drive identified as in need of replacement
- 2. Part of Hyanis between Yarmouth and Wellfleet
- 3. Section repairs to parts of Wellfleet and Plymouth
- 4. Sections of Vivian
- 5. Yarmouth North cul de sac replacement and installation of added storm drainage
- 6. Asphalt resurfacing of a section of Parsons Road
- 7. Washington section repairs

The list is in order of current evaluation and is subject to reevaluation after cold weather conditions. Each could move up or down the priority list, based condition after the 2018/2019 winter, and a street not currently listed could be added to the list and positioned anywhere on the list due to rapid deterioration.

#### **SOLAR GENERATION and ELECTRIC DISTRIBUTION PROJECT**

The 4MW Solar generation project to be constructed on 36 acres on Capel Rd at Avon Belden Rd, is scheduled to be complete and fully operational before June 2019. Improvements to Grafton's East substation including additional switch controls and communications, are part of improvements planned by Grafton Electric. The substation improvements were required for the solar inner connection to Grafton's electric transmission system and will provide power to the Main substation as well as the East substation.

# A LOOK AHEAD TO 2019: YOUR TAX DOLLARS AT WORK!

# **Waste Water Treatment Plant (WWTP) Improvements**

A vital part of public utility services rests with the continued operation of Grafton's WWTP facility, 24-hours a day, 356-days a year. The ability to receive sewage, process and treat sewage, comply with established EPA standards, and discharge treated clear water back into the Black River, Grafton is continually assessing WWTP operation and processes to meet compliance, improve operations, and lower the cost of treatment. The Grafton 2018 Wastewater Treatment Improvements include improvements to electronics and controls, improvements to the sludge dewatering systems, and lower energy and transportation costs. This project was publicly bid in January 2019 with 8 contractors submitting bids to construct this engineered project. The successful best and low bid was awarded February 5th, 2019, to Workman Industrial Services in the amount of \$1,181,385.00. Work is scheduled for completion in August 2019.

### **North Elevated Water Tower Rehab Project**

The North water tower located on Kelly Drive and has been a Grafton landmark since 1993. Built as a mono-leg structure that is often referred to a "Golf Tee" style tower. The Tower's regularly scheduled inspection in 2017 passed all standards of compliance required for operational certification. The inspection included recommendations to restore the exterior coatings along with a list of modern improvements, added maintenance, and infrastructure updates that will add time to the in-service lifespan of the structure. If funded in 2019 this project will see the exterior surface fully sandblasted and coatings applied that are considerably improved in quality when compared to the coatings first applied in 1993. The tower will be painted to match in color the Downtown District tower built in 2018 and will have a specially designed 'Village of GRAFTON' graphic added to give the North Tower its own unique identity as one of the Village of Grafton gateway landmarks. The new graphic will face Main Street where the graphic will be visible to all SR 57 traffic traveling both North or South.

The North Elevated Tower Rehab is a combination project that includes water main improvements and new fire hydrant installations between Mechanic St south towards Willow Park and will complete total abandonment, cut and capping the old 8" watermain.

Joe B. Price

Joe D. Price

Village Administrator





# OUR PEOPLE FOSTER THE BEACON OF LIGHT THAT THE VILLAGE OF GRAFTON REMAINS FOR ALL OF LORAIN COUNTY!



# **VILLAGE OF GRAFTON ENHANCES COMMUNICATIONS WITH NEW WEBSITE!**

The Village of Grafton took another giant leap into a new world of communications, transparency and public information with the complete overhaul of its Village Website. Thanks to the leadership of Mayor Dave DiVencenzo and Council, a brand new platform has been created with which residents and businesses can interact on a regular basis to stay informed about important matters. Some highlights of the new website include:

- ✓ Important updates of Village events and activities posted on a near-daily basis
- Departmental data, facts and figures along with contact information for ease-of-use with residents
- An interactive calendar function so that citizens can remain apprised of critical dates
- Access to material regarding our business community
- **Employment application**
- Public meeting agendas and minutes
- Ward maps and other geographic information
- Links to the Village's social media page on Facebook

If you have not visited the community website, please go to www.villageofgrafton.org. As the Village grows to become the Beacon of Light in Lorain County, remaining on the cutting edge of innovation and technology will remain a top priority. Thank you for your continued support of our efforts.





### Shining bright for the future.



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MARCH 2019						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1	2 Dads & Donuts at GMPL 10:00AM
3	State of the Village Address 7:30 - 9:30 AM at Grafton VFW Hall	5 Friends of GMPL 6:45 PM Council Meeting 7:30 PM	6 GMPL Family Storytime 10:30 AM at Our Lady Queen of Peace	7	8	9
10	11	12 Midview Kiwanis 12:00 PM at Village Hall	13	14 Community Meeting TLCI Grant Project update 6:00 -8:00 pm at Grafton Town Hall	15	16
17 St. Patrick's Day	18	19 Council Meeting 7:30 PM	20	21	22	23
24	25	26 Midview Kiwanis 12:00 PM at Village Hall	27	28	29	30
31						

<b>APRIL 2019</b>							
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	
	1	Friends of GMPL 6:45 PM Council Meeting 7:30 PM	GMPL Family Storytime 10:30 AM at Our Lady Queen of Peace	4	5	6	
7	8	Midview Kiwanis 12:00 PM at Village Hall	10	11	12	13	
14	15	16 Council Meeting 7:30 PM	17	18	19	20	
<b>21</b> Easter	<b>22</b> Earth Day	23 Midview Kiwanis 12:00 PM at Village Hall	24	25	26	Shred/Dumpster Day *Tentative* 9 a.m. – 12 noon	
28	29	30					

MAY 2019						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1	2	3	4
5	6	Friends of GMPL 6:45 PM Council Meeting 7:30 PM	8	9	10	11
<b>12</b> Mother's Day	13	Midview Kiwanis 12:00 PM at Village Hall	15	16	17	18
19	20	21 Council Meeting 7:30 PM	22	23	24	25
26	27 Memorial Day	28 Midview Kiwanis 12:00 PM at Village Hall	29	30	31	



# **Non-Emergency Contact Information**

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Electric (440) 926-2912 Sewer (440) 926-2765 Fire (non emergency) (440) 926-2075

Police (non emergency) (440) 926-2261