

Looking to the Future While Respecting Our Heritage.

A Year in Review



Mayor David DiVencenzo Addresses Audience at State of the Village Presentation



Council President Matt Dukles



At-Large Tim Strah



Liz Sauer



Rick Logue



Lynette Kitts

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

Dear Village of Grafton Residents,

On behalf of everyone in the Village of Grafton, I write to wish you a Happy 2020 and extend my best wishes to you for a prosperous, productive and blessed year ahead. Welcome to the State of the Village 2020, a publication designed to "look back" on the major milestones and successes from last year, and demonstrate how those translate into things to which we all can look forward in the coming year. Without question, there were many. From transformative economic development opportunities to continued investment in the Village's infrastructure, successes abounded. With every decision Village leaders make, however, you the residents and business community are paramount in our minds. This State of the Village publication will summarize those successes for you.

Project Beacon and Light of Lorain

Perhaps at no other time in the history of the region has there been more promise for inviting the attention of the energy industry on the Village of Grafton. Project Beacon demonstrated how wise and thoughtful economic development and strategic property acquisition can bring a strong source of renewable energy to our region to help lower such costs for our residents. Those of the many individuals who participated in the "Flip the Switch" event last November 16th saw the power of successful partnerships with public and private entities. In addition, Project Beacon has the potential now to bring more revenue to the Village and cost savings to our residents through the Light of Lorain project. This supplemental renewable energy project holds promise, potential and power for our region. You can learn more about it on the inside of this publication.

Transportation for Livable Communities Initiative

Readers will also learn more about the Village's continued commitment to the Transportation for Livable Communities Initiative, or T.L.C.I. Within this framework, the Village is looking to fund and complete major projects that enhance community livability and connectivity, promote reinvestment in underutilized areas of a community, support economic development, ensure that the benefits of growth and change are available to all members of a community and in the procees, enhance regional cohesion. Grafton

is making big upgrades that we hope will provide our people with safe, reliable and walkable transportation options in an aesthetically friendly manner. The upgrades are exciting and beneficial for our resident. Read inside to learn more. The full TLCI report is published on our Village website.

Enhancing Civic Amenities for our Residents

This past year saw a number of enhancements take place in community assets. One need look no further than Willow Park, where a new ADA-accessible playground was installed with the help of our community last fall. Plus, a shade structure was placed over the performance area so that concerts can take place in a peaceful, safe and protected area. Willow Park will be alive this coming year, and we invite you at this time to our Fireworks Celebration on Friday, July 3rd for our Fireworks Ceremony at dusk. Leading up to the grand display, Willow Park will be home to live entertainment. Please mark your calendars. The community room at North Park experienced upgrades and more are planned this year as well.

So much more awaits you in this publication, and we are excited to present this State of the Village to you. Thank you for the opportunity to serve as your Mayor.

Sincerely,

David M. DiVencenzo, Mayor of the Village of Grafton



PLEASE TAKE OUR SURVEY!

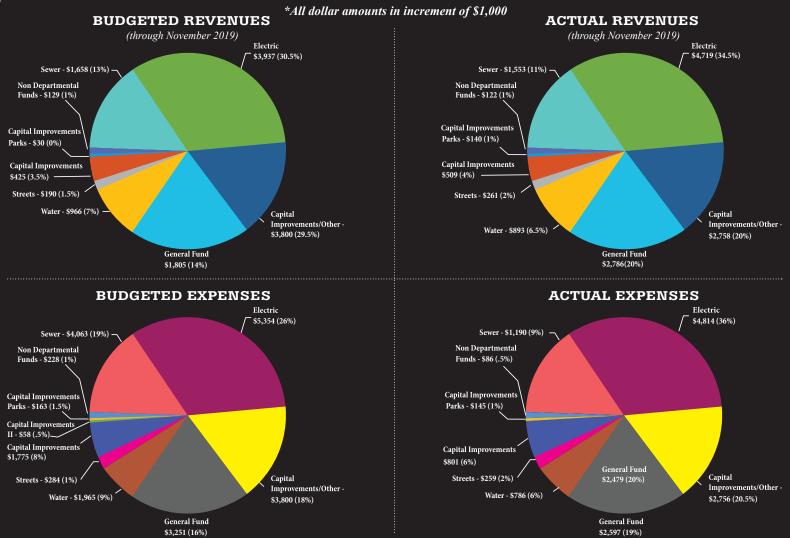
The Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee is working to prepare the vision for the future of the Village of Grafton. We have several events planned to encourage public participation in creating the Comprehensive Plan. The committee has prepared a quick survey on planning issues that is available for public review and input at https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Grafton_Tomorrow_Comp_Plan_. You can also find a link to the survey on the Village's website at www.villageofgrafton.org and on the Grafton-Midview Public Library website at www.gmplibrary.org. Paper copies of the survey will also be available at Grafton Town Hall and at the Grafton-Midview Public Library. The survey ends on March 30, 2020.

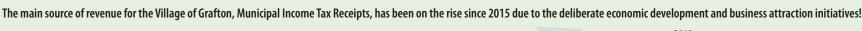
Comprehensive Plan workshops are planned for March 24th from 6-8 pm at the Grafton-Midview Public Library to discuss downtown development, April 28th from 6-8 pm at the Grafton Community Room, North Park, to discuss Economic Development and May 14th from 6-8 pm at Willow Park to discuss future land use, recreational space, housing and other planning topics. Please watch the Village website for further information on these events.



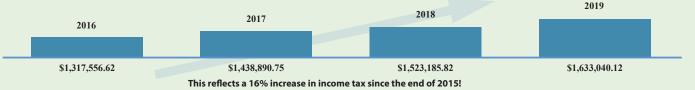
VILLAGE FINANCES

The calendar year of 2019 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.





Municipal Income Tax Receipts ON THE RISE since 2015!



Transportation for Livable Communities Initiative to enhance Grafton for Generations! Read more about this exciting endeavor to further "connect" our community!

Village of Grafton residents have undoubtedly learned about the Transportation for Livable Communities Initiative, or T.L.C.I. as it has been reported over the last year, which is a program sponsored by the Northeast Ohio Area Coordinating Agency to promote enhanced transportation for citizens within our region. For more than a year, Grafton officials have been hard at work planning for Phase I., a reinvestment of the area from Erie Street to Mechanic Street. This Phase I enhancement will include a variety of infrastructure improvements, all designed to benefits pedestrians and promote walkability throughout the community.

This stage of the project includes development of curb and gutters along State Route 57 between Erie and Mechanic Streets, storm water enhancements and new pavement. The Village is working closely with the Ohio Department of Transportation for funding for this project. There will also be a slight re-alignment of Parsons Road and a widening of the turn radius at Mechanic Street. The widening is being done to reduce the speed of turns so that people remain increasingly safe. In addition to these upgrades, a Rapid Flash Beacon Crosswalk will be installed so that pedestrians can safely connect from one side of the thoroughfare to another, undoubtedly encouraging more foot traffic. On Main Street, bump-outs will be installed in a beautifully landscaped style that protrude into the current street to ease traffic speed. When constructed, the Village of Grafton will also be utilizing reverse-in parking only within the downtown Main Street corridor. Most of these projects are anticipating to be completed by the end of 2020.

Phase II is also being planned for 2022 as well, of our T.L.C.I. program, which will run from Mechanic Street south to the Village's corporation limit. Phase II is set to include a realignment of Elm Street and Willow Street. Phase II is also intended to embody the "Envision Grafton" theme of what is possible with such infrastructure upgrades. The Village of Grafton thanks N.O.A.C.A as well as the Ohio Public Works Commission for their major financial partnership in making these upgrades possible.

The implementation component is predicated on the Village's adoption and completion of the "Envision Grafton- Smart Growth Through Transportation" Plan, which is available for everyone to read and review on the "Economic Development" page of our website.

SMART GROWTH THROUGH TRANSPORTATION A TRANSPORTATION FOR LAVABLE COMMANITIES INITIATIVE PLANNING STROY APRIL 2019

See the entire report online at www.villageofgrafton.org

What does the Village desire with these enhancements? A friendlier, more inviting and connected community, where residents and visitors alike feel empowered and encouraged to walk, engage one another, and visit different parts of our downtown and nearby areas in a safe and pedestrian friendly manner. Please stay tuned for information on T.L.C.I. updates in the near future.

New Enhancements Coming to North Park Community Room!



Residents are increasingly using the amenities of the Community Room at North Park. While certain upgrades have already been completed, most notably new windows, this coming year will be another planned step forward to making this facility more "user-friendly" for residents. The Village of Grafton can expect to see a new roof installed, along with new front windows, to compliment what has already been completed. New doors and an entirely upgraded entry system will help enhance the safety and security of the building as well. The stage is being set for an upgrade of the interior of the facility as well, from a decoration and furniture standpoint. The Community Room is one of the most utilized assets in the Village of Grafton, and in order to make it a fine amenity in the future, more investments will be made here as well.

North Park Community Room and Other Village Amenities can be booked by contacting the Village of Grafton at 440-926-2401

Grafton is Planning for the Future!

Thank you to everyone playing a role in the Comprehensive Planning Process!

An exciting Community Visioning meeting was held on January 18th to discuss future planning in the Village for the areas of Transportation and Roadways, Infrastructure and Utilities, Commercial/Industrial Development, Recreation and Green Space, Economic Development, Downtown Revitalization, Housing and Land Use and Zoning. These topics were brainstormed as part of Grafton Tomorrow, a framework of meetings by which the next 20 years is being considered in our Village.

The Village of Grafton began this exciting process to update the 1990 Comprehensive Plan with the help of Poggemeyer Design Group, Inc., a planning consultant, and an appointed 20-person Steering Committee to guide the process. A four-phased approach will follow that includes discovery, collaborative/visioning, plan development, and public review/final adoption. The Village recently adopted a TLCI Shared Vision Plan- Envision Grafton-Smart Growth Through Transportation and is building on information and concepts established in that Plan to update the Comprehensive Plan. The updated Plan will take a more in-depth review of the projected growth within the Village and explore concepts for future economic development.

The community will have another opportunity to participate in this planning process by completing a survey for the Comprehensive Plan. The survey will be available in early March on the Village's website. Please plan on completing a survey and helping shape the plan for the Grafton of Tomorrow.

Information on this meeting can be viewed at the GLW website, www.glwb.net and on the Village of Grafton website, www.villageofgrafton.org.





Project Beacon Shining Brightly on Village of Grafton Transformational Grafton Project for Today... and Tomorrow!

The Village of Grafton celebrated a groundbreaking economic development milestone last year with Project Beacon, a 4-Megawatt solar energy project in our community. The many individuals from our community who participated in the "Flip the Switch" ceremony for Project Beacon last November at the Ohio Department of Transportation facility on Route 83, knew then, as everyone knows by now how monumental of a project this has become. As stated, Project Beacon is the Village's 4-Megawatt solar energy farm that partners Grafton with Eitri Foundry, who built the project along with Safari Energy, who is leasing the 35-acre footprint from Grafton. Project Beacon's solar capacity connects to the Village's power grid, which is already reducing electric costs for everyone.



"From day one, Project Beacon must benefit the Village and reduce our electric costs," said Mayor David DiVencenzo. "We're going to achieve that goal."



The project was conceived in December 2018, when Grafton Public Power & Light made an agreement with EITRI Foundry of Orlando, Florida, in a 30-year plan to supply energy for the Village. The solar panels will generate up to 4MWAC of solar energy during daylight hours, making Project Beacon the single site largest solar installation in a five-county area and hosting more than 17,000 panels! Grafton Electric has already qualified for an estimated \$200,000 electric capacity credits in 2020 and will gradually lower the power cost adjustment to electric system customers, with eligibility for system load credits beginning in July 2021. We can rely for these cost-stabilizing savings over the next 30 years.

In addition to the savings, this is a responsibly "green project," in the sense that the energy produced is carbon free. In addition, the Village engaged local beekeepers to consider how best to plant low-growth wildflowers to attract bees for pollination purposes. Since November, the Village of Grafton has received a considerable amount of notoriety, including spotlights on Spectrum News, WEWS-Channel 5 News and more. Thank you to everyone in the Village of Grafton for their cooperation and belief in a project of this magnitude.

Project Beacon Prompts Project Light of Lorain

While Project Beacon recently and officially came to a close, Village Officials quickly identified an opportunity for a second phase of economic development combined with another renewable energy project. Project Light of Lorain is a 100-150 Megawatt opportunity, primarily in the Village of Grafton and may include land partnerships with Grafton and Eaton Township property owners for a energy developer to lease up to 2000 acres to create and sell renewable energy for commercial purposes in Northeast Ohio. At present, the PJM Market is reviewing the application and will ultimately approve it. While the private developer uses the land, the Village is able to collect additional lease revenue along with additional real estate tax revenues on government owned land not normally taxed.

These two efforts, Project Beacon and Project Light of Lorain, represent the forward-thinking leadership of the Village of Grafton who remains dedicated to cutting-edge opportunities that will help preserve the traditions of our small town while positioning us, and future generations, for years to come. Grafton is on the move, and projects such as these help to supercharge the optimism and belief for even more opportunities for decades. Thank you!



Mayor DiVencenzo Delivers State of the Village Presentation Annual Event Takes Place on March 2, 2020 to Packed Audience!

The Village of Grafton hosted its second annual State of the Village presentation on Monday, March 2, 2020, before a packed audience at the local VFW as a way to bring together citizens, business leaders, elected officials and the public-at-large for an update of the accomplishments during the previous 12 months and a preview of things to come. The State of the Village address accompanies this publication as a new method of sharing with the community progress and achievement. Hosted by the Midview Kiwanis organization, more than 110 participants enjoyed a very tasty hometown breakfast prepared by Grafton's Check Please Café. Then, the audience listened to a detailed update on Village milestones during the last year by Mayor David DiVencenzo. His remarks included a summary of some of the milestone projects completed during the previous 12-month timeframe, with a special spotlight on the Villages partnership to bring one of the largest solar energy projects in the region to our community. Mayor DiVencenzo introduced Village employees along with special elected officials who joined the presentation, including State Representative Gayle Manning. Village Administrator Joe Price then took the floor to share the specifics of various road projects completed in the last year and shared the exciting Village acquisition of more than 700 acres of land which is intended to be used for future economic development. He also previewed anticipated Village endeavors in 2020 and beyond. Superintendent Dr. Bruce Willingham rounded out the presentation by discussing the progress and achievements of the Midview Local Schools. On behalf of the Village of Grafton, thank you to everyone who participated in the recently hosted State of the Village presentation and to the Midview Kiwanis for their partnership. Grafton is the beacon of Lorain County and the residents, businesses, school system and other stakeholders are the lifeblood that makes our community thrive!



Elevated Water Tower

The North Tower Renovation project is one that the community can expect in the coming 12 months. It is anticipated that the project will go out to bid in April 2020, with rehabilitation work to commence during the spring and summer. The anticipated completion date for this project is fall 2020.

Oak Street Reconstruction

The Oak Street reconstruction project followed the same improvements made to Mechanic Street in 2015 and 2016. With some Oak Street residence are constructed more than 120 years ago, issues regarding failing infrastructure, narrow roadway and roadway condition issues, the Village sought and received an OPWC grant and loan funding of \$350,000.00 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 project completion date was July 2020.



Chestnut Street Reconstruction Project - PHASE I

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 awarded in March of 2019 to Underground Utilities for \$865,688.25 and a OPWC grant and loan funding of \$400,000. Project will be completed in July 2020.

Willow Park Improvements

Completed September 2019 as a Community Build. Thank you to all who donated their time, materials or other items for this project. Received \$104,277.00 from ODNR-NatureWorks grant. As part of this project a new type of mulch called Jelly Bean mulch was installed in the new playground. This is a product made from scraps of nylon tiles that is used as a covering for playground structures. A grant from the Lorain County Solid Waste District and the Lorain County Commissioners contributed to the purchase of the mulch.

4MW Village Solar Project

Project went online in November 2019.

Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) Improvements

Project awarded in February 2019 to Workman Industrial for \$1,215,499.00. Completed in February 2020. OPWC grant and loan funding \$400,000.00.

East Substation Improvement

Project awarded in February of 2019 to Kent Power for \$140,996.00. The project will essentially assist in the switching and controlling of power delivery to the community Grafton.

VILLAGE OF GRAFTON INVESTING IN THE FUTURE! Major infrastructure projects for 2020

Chestnut Street Reconstruction Phase II

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. Phase II was awarded in February 2020 to Underground Utilities for \$796,042.10, OPWC grant and loan funding \$400,000.00.

North Elevated Tank 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. This project will be bid in late February or early March of 2020. OPWC grant and loan funding \$300,000.00.

WWTP Lab Improvements

The Village is looking into the idea of constructing an entirely new laboratory with state-of-the-art equipment and functionality. The estimated cost for this improvement is \$500,000.

VILLAGE OF GRAFTON INVESTING IN THE FUTURE! Major infrastructure projects for 2020

North Park Play Structure Addition with All-inclusive play structures

Installation of 6 new swings to include and all-inclusive swing and other all- inclusive play structures. Repairs to existing play structure and installation of Jelly Bean mulch are included in this project. A \$5,000.00 grant from the Community Foundation of Lorain has been awarded to the Village for this project. The Village is working with the Grafton-Midview Kiwanis and other funding sources to help fund this project.

Grafton Envision Main Street/ St Rt 57 Improvements Phase I

This project will include pedestrian and vehicular traffic improvements to include new sidewalks, curb and gutter, intersection realignment at Parsons Road, crosswalks, and bump outs along Main Street from Erie Street to Mechanic Street. The Village has been recommended for OPWC funding and NOACA TLCI Implementation funding. We are working with ODOT for design and funding for this project.

Grafton Reservoir Park Trail, Drive & Parking Improvements Phase I & Phase II

The Grafton Reservoir Park Trail, Drive & Parking Improvements- Phase I is the first phase of a multi-phase plan for improvements to Reservoir and Willow Parks which will include connectivity between the parks. A trail will be constructed around the reservoir in Reservoir Park with pathways leading to both the stone parking area in the park and to a

pedestrian pathway that will connect Reservoir to Main Street St/ Rt 57 and then onto Willow Park via a crosswalk. The trail will continue by way of a bridge and a pathway into Willow park and then onto a future trail along Willow Creek within Willow Park, which is part of Phase II of the planned park improvements. The plans for Phase I also include paving improvements to the main entrance and stone parking area in Reservoir Park. Village has applied to the State for funding through the State Capital Budget for the Reservoir Park- Phase I of this project. Grants will be submitted to ODNR for additional funding with the project to begin in early 2021.

Grafton Veteran's Memorial

Construction of Veteran's Memorial on South Main Street to include 7 flag poles, pavement markers, bench seating, sidewalks and landscaping. The Village has applied to the State for funding through the State Capital Budget. Veterans Memorial Construction to be completed 2022/2023

Grafton Envision Main Street/St Rt 57 Improvements Phase II

This project is a continuation of the improvements that began in the Main St/St Rt 57 Phase I project and will included pedestrian and vehicular traffic improvements to include new sidewalks, curb and gutter, intersection realignment at Willow and Elm Streets, crosswalks, from Mechanic Street east to the Village limits. The Village will work with ODOT on design and funding and will also apply to other sources for funding for this project.



All food collected in the 44044 Zip Code will stay in the community to help those in need.

NIGHT TO SHINE! FEBRUARY 7TH

The evening of February 7, 2020, was an unforgettable moment in our community, as Our Lady Queen of Peace was host to the Night to Shine event, an unforgettable prom night experience centered on love and encouragement for people with special needs ages 14 and older. Grafton participants joined in the 6th anniversary of this event that was coordinated nationwide, with dozens of guests who were honored by countless volunteers. Great job to the Village of Grafton!



MARCH 2020						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2 State of the Village 7:30 - 9:30 AM at Grafton VFW Hall	Council Meeting 7:30 PM Village Hall	4	5	6	7
8	9	Midview Kiwanis 12:00 PM at Village Hall	11	12	13	14
15	16	17 Council Meeting 7:30 PM Village Hall	18	19	20	21
22	23	Midview Kiwanis 12:00 PM at Village Hall Comprehensive Plan Mtg. 8:00 PM at Midview Library	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

APRIL 2020						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1	2	3	4
5	6	Council Meeting 7:30 PM Village Hall	8	9	10	11
12	13	Midview Kiwanis 12:00 PM at Village Hall	15	16	17	18
19	20	Council Meeting 7:30 PM Village Hall	22	23	24	25 Shred/Dumpster Day 9:00 AM - 12 PM Village Hall
26	27	28 Midview Kiwanis 12:00 PM at Village Hall Comprehensive Plan Mtg. 8:00 PM at Midview Library	29	30		

MAY 2020						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1	2
3	4	5 Council Meeting 7:30 PM Village Hall	6	7	8	9 Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive Food Donations at Village Hall
10	11	12 Midview Kiwanis 12:00 PM at Village Hall	13	14 Comprehensive Plan Mtg. 6:00 - 8:00 PM at Willow Park	15	16 Midview Kiwanis 12:00 PM at Village Hall
17	18	Council Meeting 7:30 PM Village Hall	20	21	22	23
24	25	26 Midview Kiwanis 12:00 PM at Village Hall	27	28	29	30
31						



Non-Emergency Contact Information

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Rick Logue Ward 3	rlogue @villageofgrafton.org
Lynette Kitts Ward 4	lmkitts@villageofgrafton.org
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Diane Kazmierczak Village Secretary	(440) 926-2401 opt. 2 djkazmierczak@villageofgrafton.org
Building	(440) 926-2401 opt. 2
Utilities	(440) 926-1093 opt. 1
Streets	(440) 926-2260
Electric	(440) 926-2912
Sewer	(440) 926-2765
Fire (non emergency)	(440) 926-2075
Police (non emergency)	(440) 926-2261