

2012

Annual Report



**Portage County
Regional Planning Commission**



Mission Statement

Our mission is to improve the quality of life in Portage County by helping communities turn vision into action in order to equitably achieve sustainable communities in harmony with the natural environment.



PCRPC Staff

Todd Peetz, AICP
Director

Claudia James
GIS Specialist/Planner

Evelyn Beeman
Office Manager

Lisa Reeves
CDBG Specialist

Eileen Stiffler
Community Development Specialist

Shannon Walker
Administrative Assistant

Olga Andriyevska
Volunteer

Ryan Alfredo
Intern

Message from the Director

The Portage County Regional Planning Commission (RPC) had another eventful year in 2012. While funding has been similar to years past, the RPC continues to make strides in community collaboration and guiding member communities to meet their needs. We continue to provide zoning and mapping needs for our members, process countywide subdivision reviews, administer CDBG grants on the behalf of the County Commissioners, and write multiple grants for our member communities. Other activities included fair housing calls, attending member zoning commission meetings, and assisting with mapping data. We also sit on several boards representing Portage County in the regional setting.

The RPC continued the **Quarterly Zoning Inspector (QZI) meetings**. The QZI meetings are at no additional cost to our member communities. We had four meetings in 2012, two of which included presentations by Assistant County Prosecutor Chris Meduri. The QZI is also open to representatives from our members' Zoning Commissions and Boards of Zoning Appeals.

After developing an **Asset Mapping** project for the City of Ravenna, we applied for and received a Local Government Innovation Fund (LGIF) grant. This grant will be used for a countywide asset mapping project. We will identify all the commercial, industrial and other non-residential parcels and then convert the data into an easy-to-use Excel format. This conversion will greatly improve the availability of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) data. We hope to complete this project in 2013.

The RPC is a core participant in **Visioning In Portage (VIP)**, which is a grassroots effort to prepare a countywide vision plan. This project was kicked off in 2011 and has approximately 200 participants, which includes all the major regional, county and city agencies.

We also began the **Strategic update to the PARTA Plan** to be completed in 2013 which is to assist PARTA in their current and future operations. The purpose of the update is primarily to determine if there are population or development trends that could have an effect on their resource management and service delivery.

Updates to the **Subdivision Regulations** began in 2013 and are expected to be completed within the year. The Subdivision Regulations have not had a major amendment in more than a decade. We are looking forward to working with various agencies, including the Homebuilder's Association of Greater Akron, to provide valuable insight into the process.

Looking ahead to 2013, we seek to build on the accomplishments of last year. We are actively seeking grant funds on behalf of our communities and for projects that will benefit our communities. We believe that we will have membership gains in the RPC. We believe that our services far exceed the cost to our members and we want to strive to increase those benefits. On behalf of our hard working staff, I would like to thank all of our community members for their support and for their desire to make their communities and Portage County a greater place for us all to enjoy.

Zoning

RPC reviewed and provided recommendations to townships on zoning resolution text amendments and zoning district amendments. The following are the zoning amendments in which RPC assisted:

Text Amendments

- Setback Requirements in Residential District; Windham Township.
- Accessory Building Height; Windham Township
- Signs; Randolph Township.
- Commercial Vehicle Parking in Residential District; Randolph Township.
- Temporary Portable Commercial Storage; Freedom Township.
- Nuisances; Palmyra Township.
- Entertainment Device Arcade; Brimfield Township.
- Conditional Use – Recreational Vehicles; Nelson Township.
- Area, Yard and Height Requirements; Brimfield Township.
- Home Based Businesses; Mantua Township.
- Garage/Yard Sales; Rootstown Township.
- Small Family Businesses in Residential District in Accessory Building; Nelson Township.



Zoning District Amendments

- Rezoning from R-1 to R-4 on Summit Road in Franklin Township.
- Rezoning from I-C (Integrated Commercial) to R-3 on Cline Road in Brimfield Township.
- Rezoning from O-C (Open Space Conservation) to L-1 (Light Industrial) and L-1 (Light Industrial to O-C (Open Space Conservation) on Howe Road in Brimfield Township.

Quarterly Zoning Inspector (QZI) Meeting

The RPC continued the **Quarterly Zoning Inspector (QZI)** meetings in 2012. The QZI meetings are at no additional cost to our member communities. The QZI is also open to representatives from our members' Zoning Commissions and Boards of Zoning Appeals. We had four meetings in 2012, two of which included Assistant County Prosecutor Chris Meduri. Topics for the meetings this year included internet-cafes, hydraulic fracturing, property maintenance and fair housing. The meetings are meant to be informal and to give zoning commission members an opportunity to learn how other zoning commissions have handled similar issues.

Portage County Subdivision Regulations

Subdivision Regulations Update

A new effort was launched to address portions of the subdivision regulations that needed to be updated. A committee made up of county departments involved in subdivision reviews, as well as a local engineer familiar with the county's review process and a representative of the Summit-Portage Home Builders Association, identified the "hot-button" issues that warranted changes. The identified issues included road construction inspections and standards, open space, and updates to reflect recent changes in the *Ohio Revised Code*. Using the 2007 proposed regulations and the "hot-button" issues, this committee and RPC staff will continue work to revise the current regulations without doing a complete rewrite.

Rubbermaid Warehouse Project

The Rubbermaid warehouse development involved numerous meetings and more inter-community cooperation than is typical because it spanned Brimfield Township and the City of Tallmadge. RPC worked to complete reviews of the Preliminary Plan and final plat within the developer's timeframe to ensure that work on the site and construction of the warehouse could begin as planned.

Land Divisions and Subdivisions in Portage County 2012

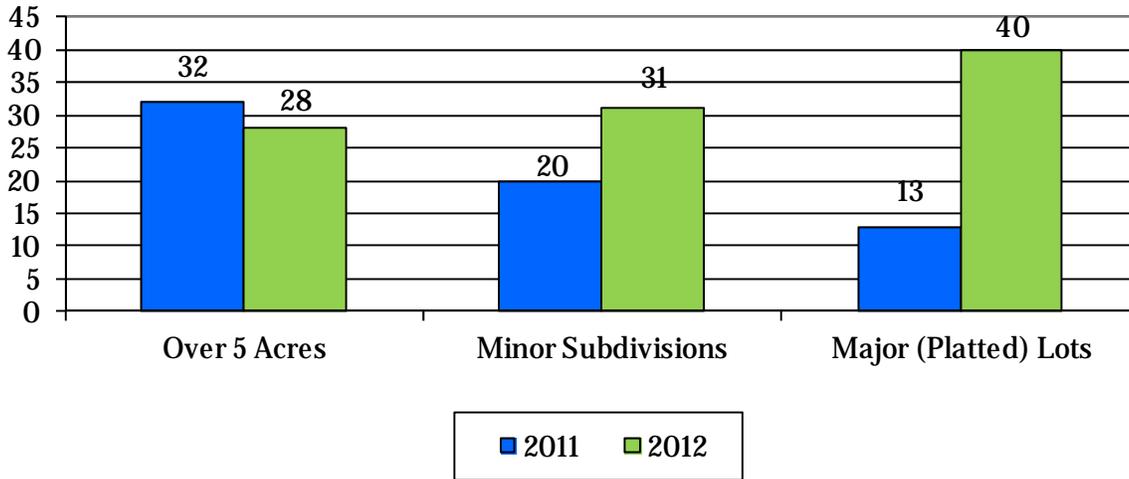
There were 53 subdivision applications and divisions of land to create 65 lots. There was 1 variance from the Subdivision Regulations.

Township	Over 5 Acres	No. of Lots Created by Minor Subdivisions	No. of Lots Created by Major Subdivisions	Total
Atwater	1	0	0	1
Brimfield	1	0	30	31
Charlestown	0	0	0	0
Deerfield	1	0	0	1
Edinburg	3	0	3	6
Franklin	0	2	1	3
Freedom	4	0	2	6
Hiram	2	3	0	5
Mantua	2	9	0	11
Nelson	5	0	0	5
Palmyra	0	4	0	4
Paris	0	3	0	3
Randolph	3	0	0	3
Ravenna	2	10	4	16
Rootstown	1	0	0	1
Shalersville	1	0	0	1
Suffield	2	0	0	2
Windham	0	0	0	0
Total	28	31	40	99

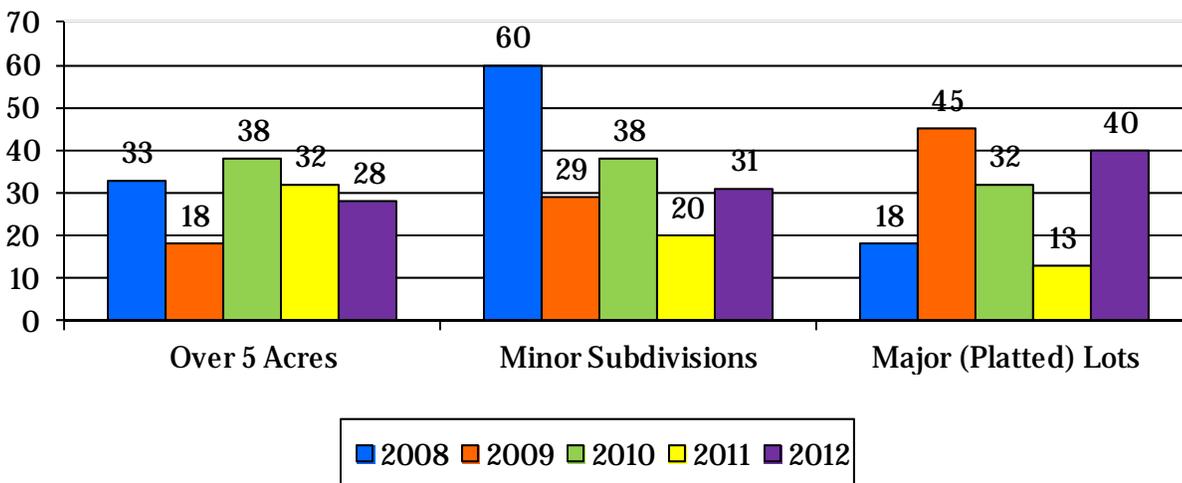
*Transfers to an adjoining property owner=33. (Not included in table).

Land Divisions and Subdivisions Lots Approved

Land Divisions and Subdivisions
Lots Approved
2011-2012



Land Divisions and Subdivisions
Lots Approved
2008-2012



Community Development

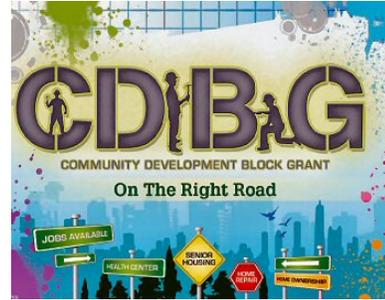
PCRPC administered \$714,813 in Community Development Block Grant Formula Allocation funds and Neighborhood Stabilization Program funds for the Portage County Board of Commissioners with the following results:

- Rehabilitated a 3-unit residential structure owned by Coleman Professional Services housing four persons located in the City of Ravenna. Replaced the roof, two furnaces, windows, the Bilco door, removed three existing exterior main entry doors and prepared the openings as necessary and installed new ADA compliant steel entry doors with ADA compliant hardware and installed new screen doors.
- Demolition of the former White Rubber Manufacturing Facility in the City of Ravenna to eliminate health and safety issues and to remove slum and blight.
- Construction started to renovate a house owned by Family and Community Services located in the City of Ravenna to be used as a shelter that benefits homeless female Veterans and their dependent children.
- Obtained architect to prepare the specifications and drawings needed, prepared the bid document and the rehab went out to bid for a house located in Deerfield Township owned by the Deerfield Historical Society.
- Prepared the specifications, prepared the bid document and the rehab went out to bid for a group home owned by Coleman Professional Services housing four persons located in Edinburg Township.
- Assisted 24 LMI households countywide excluding the City of Streetsboro with home repairs (i.e. roofs, furnaces, waterlines, tie into sewer and/or replacement of septic systems).
- Assisted 12 LMI households in the City of Streetsboro with home repairs i.e. roofs, furnaces, waterlines, tie into city sewer and water.
- Prepared application for the 2012 Formula Allocation Grant to provide services for low and moderate income Portage County households and/or eliminate a slum and blight.
- Provided fair housing assistance for 18 households within Portage County excluding the Cities of Streetsboro, Kent, Ravenna and Aurora. Provided training and education materials regarding fair housing to 22 agencies/organizations.
- Provided fair housing assistance in the City of Ravenna to 15 households. Provided training and educational materials regarding fair housing to 9 agencies/organizations.
- Provided fair housing assistance in the City of Aurora to three households.
- Provided training and educational materials regarding fair housing to 5 agencies/organizations.
- Provided fair housing assistance in the City of Streetsboro to seven households. Provided training and educational materials regarding fair housing to nine agencies/organizations.



Neighborhood Stabilization Program

- NSP 1 funds purchased property and NSP 2 funds were used to rehab a unit located in the City of Ravenna. The buyer is going through the Home Buyer Education Program to purchase the home.
- NSP 1 funds purchased the property and NSP 2 funds were used to rehab a unit located in the City of Ravenna. The unit has been sold and the funds were recaptured and deposited with the City of Ravenna.
- NSP 1 funds purchased the property and NSP 2 funds were used to construct one unit in the City of Kent. The unit has been sold and the funds were recaptured and deposited with the City of Kent. Construction has been completed for one additional unit and is for sale.
- Prepared application for the 2012 New Horizons Fair Housing Assistance Program which will provide public awareness of Fair Housing needs and opportunities; training to housing providers; eliminate stigma related to group homes and updating local subdivision and zoning regulations including the definition of family.



Related Projects:

- Started to survey the residents around Brady Lake to determine the number of LMI households for assistance from State CDBG funds.
- Environmental Review was completed for the projects proposed in 2013 – 2016 by the Portage Metropolitan Housing Authority (PMHA) that will utilize HUD funds. Also conducted the Environmental Review for the Shelter Plus Care Program and for two additional units located in the City of Ravenna and the City of Kent.

Committees

Portage Revitalization and Economic Planning (PREP)

We continue the **Planning, Revitalization, Economic Planning (PREP)** meetings, which include economic development directors, city planners, zoning inspectors, chambers of commerce, and commercial and industrial realtors. The initiative has been to establish an informal collaboration between the cities, villages and townships of Portage County. The ultimate idea is that through collaboration, we will attract more business opportunities, as well as retain current business. In 2013, PREP will be fine tuning the LGIF Asset Mapping project.

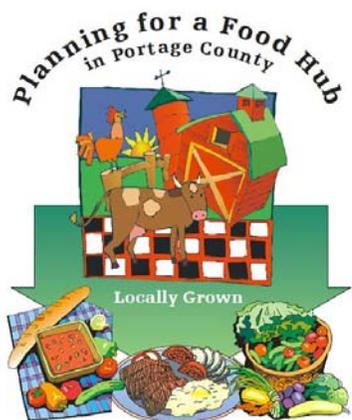
Visioning in Portage (VIP)

The RPC is a core participant in **Visioning In Portage (VIP)**, which is a grassroots effort to prepare a countywide vision plan. This project was kicked off in 2011 and has approximately 200 participants that include the major regional, county, and city agencies. Collaboration and understanding each other’s goals for our communities is key to success in establishing a direction towards which all of us can work. VIP attended the Randolph Fair, Ravenna Balloon-a-Fair and Art in the Park in Kent. In October, VIP hosted “Taste of Portage,” which allowed community members to meet with elected officials. VIP is currently coordinating with the Northeast Ohio Sustainable Communities Consortium (NEOSCC) to create a 12-county regional vision plan. The emphasis is on the six largest populated counties in Northeast Ohio. Though Portage County is not one of those six, the NEOSCC has accepted the idea of working with VIP as a way of including Portage County in the NEOSCC process. VIP serves the important purpose of ensuring that Portage County voices are heard in this larger process.

Activities

Grants

Center for Farmland Policy Innovation Food Hub Grant



In 2011, RPC applied for and received a grant from the Center for Farmland Policy Innovation to plan for a food hub in Portage County. To provide background information for the plan, the staff and a summer intern, Olga Andriyevska, researched existing food hubs across the country, how they operated, and explored sources of funding for operation and management. A steering committee was formed to help inform the process of creating a facility that meets local needs. The final plan, *Planning for a Food Hub in Portage County*, was submitted in November 2012. The plan can be found on the Portage County website at: <http://pcrpc.org/plansandprojects.html>.

RPC will continue to work to implement the plan. Staff will be working with Ohio State University students who are doing food system assessments as part of their coursework at OSU. Their work with actual communities will result in a summary of the food system in Portage County that will provide additional information on the type of food hub that will best serve the needs of our local farmers and food buyers.

Ohio NatureWorks Grant

NatureWorks projects are funded through the Ohio Parks and Natural Resources Bond Issue. The NatureWorks grant program provides up to 75% reimbursement assistance for local government subdivisions (townships, villages, cities, counties, park districts, joint recreation districts, and conservancy districts) for the acquisition, development, and rehabilitation of recreational areas. RPC staff assisted Atwater Township prepare a NatureWorks grant for improving their community park by completing maps and preparing written portions of the grant.

New Horizons

The Ohio Development Services Agency New Horizons Grant funded a project to research zoning codes in Portage County communities that had higher populations of Low-Moderate Income (LMI) residents. The research resulted in a compilation of shortcomings in zoning codes regarding fair housing and possible ways to address these shortcomings. The findings were presented to the Planning Commission, the Portage Revitalization and Economic Planning (PREP) group and to real estate and banking professionals. The brochure for the project was completed in early 2012. The findings from this grant led to another New Horizons grant to be implemented in 2013.



Special Projects

PARTA Transit Development Plan Update

Regional Planning staff worked on new maps and compiled recent Census and American Community Survey data for the update to the 2005 *PARTA Transit Development Plan*. Updates were focused on demographic and economic changes that have occurred in the county since the last plan was completed. Staff researched and made suggestions for population projections for 2025 and compiled data for a build-out scenario based on predicted population growth and business trends.

Community Member Projects

Hiram Township Comprehensive Plan Update

Staff worked with Hiram Township to update the township Comprehensive Plan to be more focused on the township. This included a new community survey; updates to demographic, community and environmental maps; and review and update to the township goals, objectives, and policies.

City of Ravenna

- Staff participated in the Brownfields study area and created maps in downtown Ravenna to assist the efforts to target and restore potential Brownfields sites downtown.
- Staff participated in the Downtown Ravenna Farmer's Market, which included revising the map in the *Guide to Fresh Fruits & Vegetables* brochure that was to be distributed at the market.
- Staff participated in the Connecting Communities grant from AMATS to evaluate transportation and pedestrian patterns along the SR 44 corridor from Rootstown to Robinson Memorial Hospital.

Ravenna Township/City of Ravenna JEDD

RPC coordinated with Ravenna City and Ravenna Township in the creation of a JEDD. This included creating maps to give the communities information about land use and zoning.

Rootstown Township Zoning Review

We began our review of the Rootstown Zoning Regulations as requested by the township's insurance company. As part of this project and using GIS, we inventoried lots that were below the required lot size in the community.

Shalersville Township Zoning Code and Map Update

RPC is working with Shalersville to implement their Land Use Plan to update their zoning code consistent with their proposed changes. This also included changes to the zoning map and updates to reflect the Land Use Plan.

Intergovernmental Reviews

The purpose of an Intergovernmental Review is to make sure that a particular project will not duplicate the goals of other projects or funding for other projects. Reviews ensure that projects are necessary; that they do not negatively impact the environment; and that they will benefit the community as a whole. In 2012, RPC coordinated Intergovernmental Reviews of 3 federal and state grant applications from units of government and nonprofits that affect Portage County, totaling \$953,000 in project funds. Grant applications included requests for funds for infrastructure, housing and economic development.

Portage County Regional Planning Commission 2012 Financial Report

Beginning Cash Balance **32,335.07**

Revenue

RPC Membership Dues	221,115.24
Subdivisions	14,820.00
Intergovernmental Reviews	200.00
Copies/Miscellaneous/Over Hours	1,463.93
Publications	—
Rental Income	5,150.00

Contracts

Aurora City Fair Housing	1,613.38
Portage Metropolitan Housing Authority	5,048.05
Ravenna City Fair Housing	3,594.40
Ravenna City Farmers Market	3,500.00
Streetsboro City Fair Housing	2,260.18
PARTA Transit Development Plan	13,706.66

Total Contracts

29,722.67

Grants

2010 CDBG Formula Grant	34,207.49
2011 CDBG Fair Housing	5,691.05
2011 CDBG Formula Grant	24,882.32
2008 Neighborhood Stabilization Program	4,357.54
EPA SWIF Grant	150.98
New Horizons	1,522.46
Center for Farmland Policy Innovation (Food Hub)	8,636.00
2012 CDBG Formula Grant	9,038.76

Total Grants

88,486.60

County Contribution

—

Refund/Reimbursement

30.85

TOTAL REVENUE/BUDGET

393,324.36

Expenditures

Salaries	206,363.21
PERS	28,890.90
Medicare	2,904.14
Workers Comp	3,644.77
Health Insurance	35,621.30
Insurances (Bldg. & Bonds)	—
Maintenance/Custodial Contract	3,120.00
Utilities	8,597.38
Telephone	2,704.49
Contract Services	1,319.10
Professional & Technical Services	4,133.44
Audit Services	2,050.00
Legal Services	10,000.00
Repairs (Equipment, Rental, Bldg.)	1,277.01
Advertising	102.05
Postage	1,450.09
Supplies	2,798.26
Photocopying/Printing	2,115.57
Dues/Periodicals	592.10
Travel/Training	462.39
Equipment	3,112.63
Copier	3,730.45
Loan (Multi-Purpose Building)	31,776.09
Building Improvements	3,416.73
Reimbursement/Refund	—

TOTAL EXPENDITURES

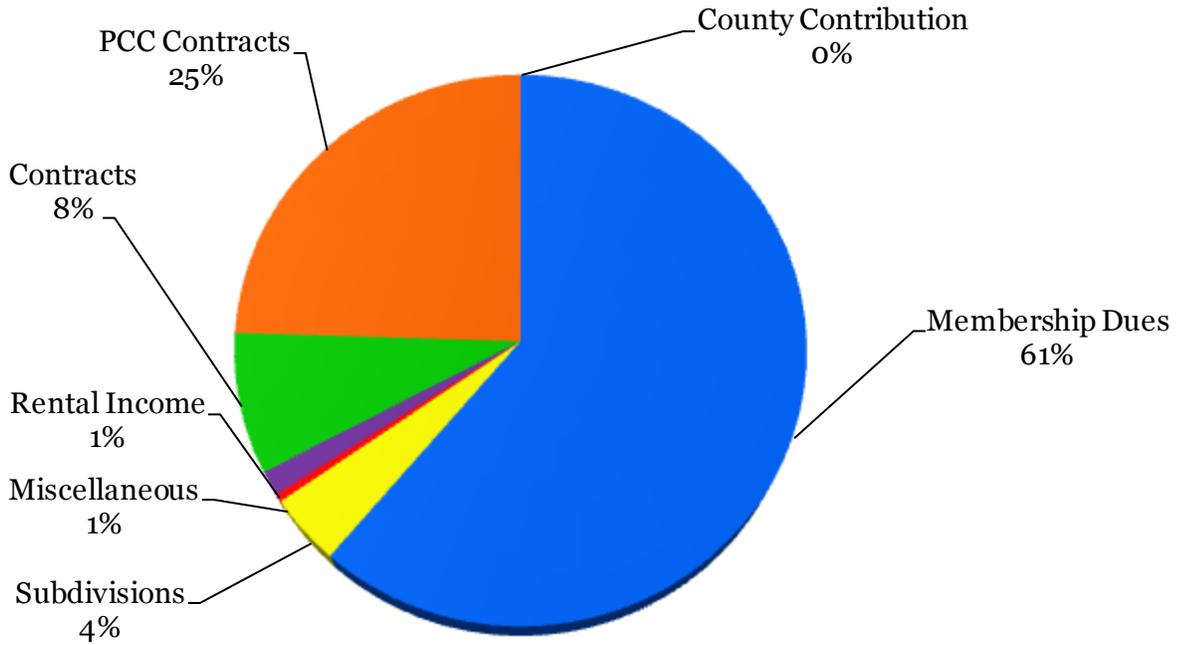
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Ending Cash Balance

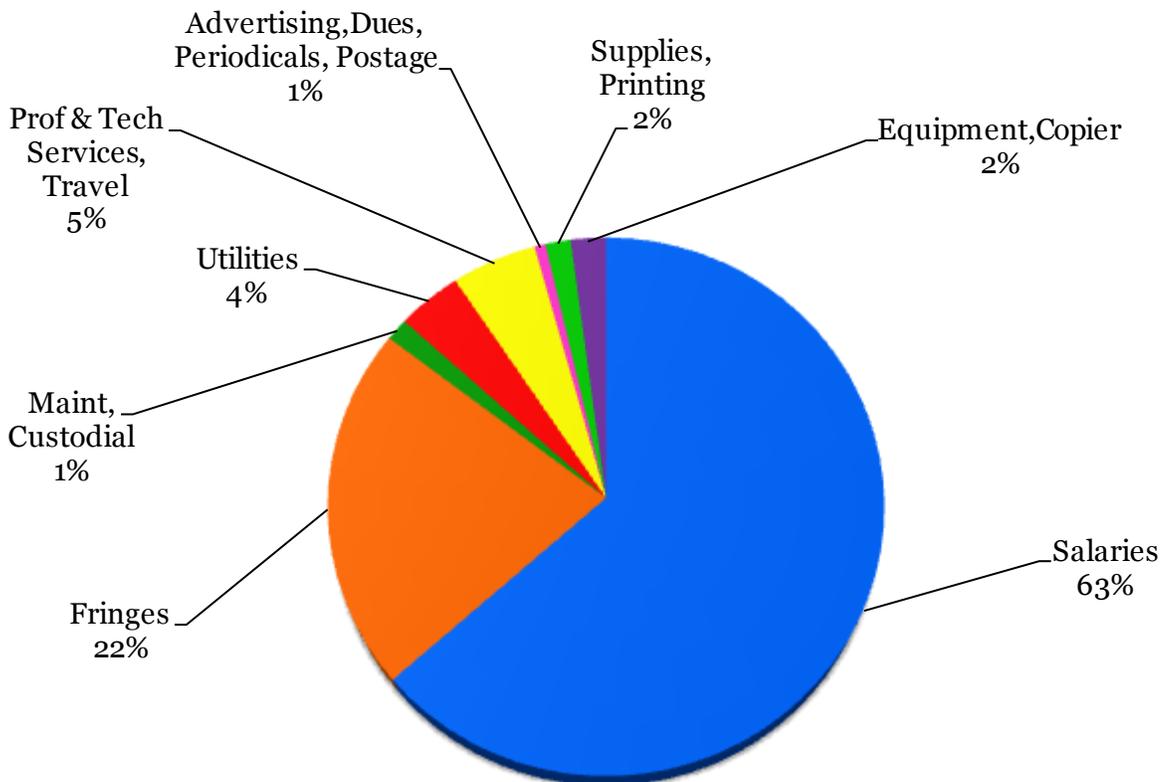
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Financials

2012 Revenue



2012 Expenditures



Members

Atwater Township

Danny Derreberry
*Lynn Whittlesey

Brimfield Township

Richard Messner
*Lisa Cotton

Deerfield Township

Charles Dean
*Randy Wilburn

Edinburg Township

Terry Montz
*John Stephens

Franklin Township

Sam Abell
*Ken Penix

Freedom Township

Jim Hammar
*Roy Martin

Garrettsville Village

Rick Patrick
*Nancy Baldwin

Hiram Township

Steve Pancost
*Norman Webb

Hiram Village

Alan Donley
*Rob Dempsey

Mantua Township

Jason Carlton
*Sandy Englehart

Mantua Village

Paul Janson
*Roger Hawkins

Nelson Township

Jeanne Harkai

Palmyra Township

Sandy Nutter
*Bill Rohn

Paris Township

Tom Smith
*Dorene Spicer

Randolph Township

Susan White
*Dan Kolasky

Ravenna Township

James DiPaola
*Pat Artz

City of Ravenna

Kerry Macomber
*Kelly Englehart

Rootstown Township

Joseph Paulus
*Brett Housley

Shalersville Township

Nancy Vines
*Dennis Bujak

City of Streetsboro

Mayor Glenn Broska
*Jeff Pritchard

Suffield Township

Mark Frisone
*James Demboski

Sugar Bush Knolls

Jim Beal
*Nancy Stillwagon

Windham Township

Brian Miller

PARTA

Bryan Smith
*Doug Wagener

Portage County

Tommie Jo Marsilio
*Gino Calcei
Christopher Smeiles
*Doug McGee
Maureen Frederick
*John Epling, Sr.

Portage County Engineer

Mickey Marozzi
*Dan Jendrisak

Portage Park District

Allan Orashan
*Chris Craycroft

Portage County Water Resources Department

Jeff Lonzrick
*Tia Rutledge

Soil and Water Conservation Office

James Bierlair
*Eric Long

Ex-Officio Members

Hiram College
Kent State University
PC Health Department
Habitat for Humanity
Home Builders Association

*Indicates alternate member.

Officers/Executive Committee

Tom Smith, Chairman (3/10/10-Present)

Richard Messner, Vice Chairman (3/10/10-Present)

Todd Peetz, Secretary

Allan Orashan (4/14/10-Present)

Jim DiPaola (3/10/10-Present)

Sandy Nutter (3/10/10-Present)

Terry Montz (3/10/10-Present)

Maureen Frederick (02/09/11-Present)

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Portage County Regional Planning Commission