

Annual Report 2019

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



The Spring Azure, Celastrina ladon, is one of the first hibernating butterflies to appear each spring in Ohio.

Message from the Director

The Portage County Regional Planning Commission (RPC) had another productive year in 2019. We were able to receive additional grant funding for a variety of projects which helped our funding improve from past years. Funding is always challenging, but we are working to find more consistent funding sources that we can rely on year to year. 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 behalf of the County Commissioners, and write multiple grants for our member communities. Other activities included fair housing calls, attending member zoning commission meetings per their request, and assisting with mapping data as requested. We also sit on several boards representing Portage County in the regional setting.

Some exciting projects that occurred in 2019:

RPC worked on four community projects that included: The Streetsboro Comprehensive Master Plan, Windham Village Land Use Plan and Suffield Township Land Use Plan. All of these plans were completed in 2019 with a few final approvals pending. These plans included a lot of public input through community surveys and meetings; action plans for who would be the implementing entity and a series of Goals, Objectives and Policies that each community made uniquely their own.

PCRPC Staff

Todd Peetz
Director

Evelyn Beeman
Office Manager

Lisa Reeves
CDBG Coordinator

Gail Gifford
Community Planner

Susanna Lebas
GIS/Planner

Richard Messner
Volunteer

We completed a **Local Government Innovation Fund grant (LGIF) for parks and recreation collaboration and a market and branding grant**. These grants helped to create an interactive parks map, which has evolved into a dozen potential other maps that will better serve our communities as a whole. This project will launch the RPC into a variety of new opportunities that will show case Portage County.

RPC is updating the **Portage County Subdivision Regulations** which will be completed in 2020. The Subdivision Regulations have not had a major amendment in more than three decades and those agencies that implement the subdivision regulations, including the Great Akron Home-builder's Association and others have provided valuable insight into the process.

Looking ahead to 2020, we seek to build on the accomplishments of last year. We added a grant writer and a GIS/planner. We are looking forward to working on the County's first comprehensive plan and updating Brimfield Townships land use plan. We are actively seeking grant funding opportunities on behalf of our communities and for projects that will benefit our residents. We continue to seek membership gains in the RPC. As we believe that our services 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.

Sincerely,

Todd Peetz, Director
Portage County Regional Planning Commission



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

Atwater Township

- Nuisance Prohibited
- Solar/Wind Energy
- Border Zoning Appeals
- Fences, Walls and Hedges
- Purpose of Planned Residential Development District
- Area and Yard Regulations
- Temporary Signs

Brimfield Township

- Medical Marijuana Distribution and Manufacturing
- Temporary Mobile Vendors

Franklin Township

- Definition of Structure
- Accessory Building Setbacks
- Location of Solar Energy Systems
- Off-Site Parking and Loading
- Outdoor Storage Yards

Freedom Township

- Section 230.0 (Residential-Commercial District)
- Section 406.0 (Accessory Buildings in All Districts)
- Definition of Carport

Hiram Township

- Section 203-5 (Accessory Buildings in All Districts)
- Fences, Walls and Hedges
- Driveways

Nelson Township

- Permitted Family Business
- Section 502.4 (Prohibited Uses)
- Definition of Recreational Vehicle

Ravenna Township

- Chapters 1-10; Page Numbering in Chapters 11-15 and Appendix A-B

Rootstown Township

- Section 440 and Section 660.03 (Public Hearing and Notice by Trustees)
- Section 430.04 (Screening)
- Section 430.02 (Landscaping Along the Street Frontage)
- Section 350.03 (Schedule of Permitted Uses)
- Section 370.0 (Use Regulations)
- Section 420.09 (Signs Exempt from Regulation)
- Section 310.09 (Additional Regulations for Accessory Buildings)
- Definition of Project Area
- Section 640.07.B and Section 640.07H (Review by the BZA)
- Section 320.09 (PRD Regulations, Supplemental Requirements)
- Section 340.09 (Accessory Use Regulations for Lake District)
- Section 390.03 (Specific Development Standards)
- Section 309.06.G (Commercial Recreation, Outdoor and Riding Stables, Swimming pools and Golf Courses)
- Section 610.03.A (Zoning Certificates for Single-Family Dwellings and Accessory Thereto)
- Section 620.07.B (Final Development Plan)
- Section 410.10 (Access Drives on Roads in the Commercial and Industrial District)
- Section 310.04 (Minimum Lot Size for a 2-Family Dwelling)
- Section 310.09.J (Fences and Walls)
- Section 340.06 (Unleased Common Ground)
- Section 310.09.C and 340.09.C (Maximum Floor Area of Accessory Buildings and Structures)
- Section 230.05.C (Dairying and Animal and Poultry Husbandry)
- Freestanding Identification Signs in Residential-Village, Commercial and Industrial Districts
- Solar Energy Systems/Telecommunication Towers
- Additions, Alterations and Re-Construction

Text Amendments Continued

Shalersville Township

- Administrative Authority
- Article VIII (Zoning Inspector Duties)
- Mixed Use Development Properties (MRC, NC, LI-D) Districts
- Add Definitions of Micro-Distillery and Ohio Farm Winery and Add Micro-Distillery to Permitted Use, Section 310

Suffield Township

- Definitions
- Section 301.2(A) (Agricultural Uses); Section 301.2(S) (Supplementary Regulations); Section 310.2(Y) (Storage of Junk Vehicle)
- Section 304.0 (Buffering and Screening)
- Accessory Building Size Per Lot Acreage

Zoning District Amendments

- Brimfield Township Map Amendment-OC District to R-1, R-2 and R-4; OC District to HC (Highway Commercial); RO District to R-2
- Brimfield Township Rezoning from R-O (Residential Office) to G-C (General Commercial) on Tallmadge Road, McKinley Development Group, Ltd., applicant
- Franklin Township Rezoning from C-1 and R-1 to R-4 on Summit Road and Burnett Road, Burnett Road Associations, LLC., applicant
- Nelson Township Rezoning from C-1 to L-1 and L-1 to C-1 on State Route 88
- Palmyra Township Rezoning from Residential to Business, N.E. Corner of I-76/ State Route 225 (Loves Travel Stops)
- Randolph Township Rezoning from Town Center to General-Commercial, Lot 55 and 65, Danica Enterprises, LLC and SAS Randolph Enterprises, LLC., applicant
- Rootstown Township Rezoning from R-2 to L-D (Residential Lake District), East Muzzy Lake Inc., applicant
- Shalersville Township Rezoning from Light-Industrial to R-2/A-RR on Infirmary and Lake Rockwell Road, Lakeview Grass Fed Farms, Inc., applicant
- Shalersville Township Zoning Map Amendment from LI-D (Light Industrial) to Agricultural/Rural Residential (A/R-R and Low Density Residential with sewer R-2
- Suffield Township Rezoning from Industrial to R-2 on State Route 43, Loren Harter, applicant

RPC Interactive Mapping

Recreation Opportunities in Portage County

Parks Activity and Recreation Collaboration

To view public fitness centers only, [click here.](#)

Below is a list of recreation activities. Click on an activity to produce a map showing where it is located in the county.

NOTE: This list includes public and private recreation. For example, clicking on Canoe/Kayak/Boating will display privately-owned outfitters and boat rental locations as well as public launch areas and marinas.

1. Archery Range
2. Baseball/Softball
3. Basketball
4. Biking: includes rental locations and mountain biking areas
5. Bowling
6. Camping
7. Canoe / Kayak / Boating
8. Crossfit & Fitness Courses
9. Dance
10. Disc Golf
11. Dog Parks
12. Fishing
13. Golf
14. Gyms including gyms with fitness programs & Public Fitness Centers
15. Hiking
16. Horseback Riding
17. Hunting (see ODNR website for permits)
18. Laser Tag
19. Libraries
20. Martial Arts
21. Mini-Golf
22. Movie Theaters
23. Off-Roading / ATV Park
24. Open Fields for soccer, football, lacrosse, field hockey, etc
25. Personal Training
26. Pickleball

Activities

Mapping of the Future...

On November 21st, 2019, Portage County Regional Planning Commission officially launched the Interactive Parks map. This interactive mapping allows the user easier access about individual parks, their activities and their amenities. This interactive mapping process also included private sector recreation. While this was all exciting to us, we quickly realized that we can make interactive maps about anything as long as we have the data to make it with. The limits to interactive mapping is our own imagination.

Be on the look out for Interactive Chamber Maps; Comprehensive Plan maps, Historic Structures, Public Health, Tourism, Agricultural Tourism, Environmental Tourism, Things to do in Portage County and Regional and potentially state-wide maps.

This will be the future of mapping going forward.

Portage County Subdivision Regulations

The Subdivision Regulation Update Committee met to review and finalize updates to assure the requirements reflect current needs. The committee is expected to recommence meetings in early 2020 to finish reviewing the proposed regulations. When the committee finishes its review, a copy of the proposed regulations will be forwarded to the Board of Commissioners and County Prosecutor for review.

Subdivisions

Major subdivision activity significantly increased with Preliminary Plans in 2019, but total new plots were approximately the same.

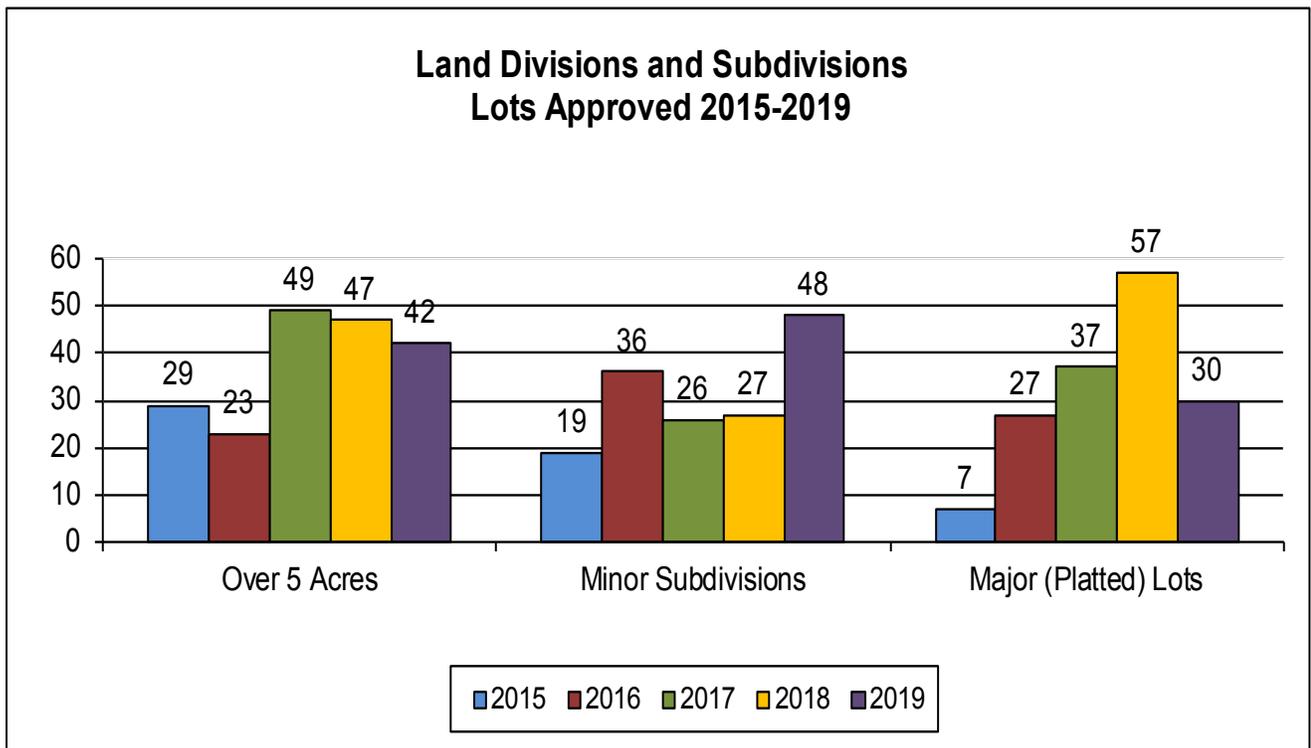
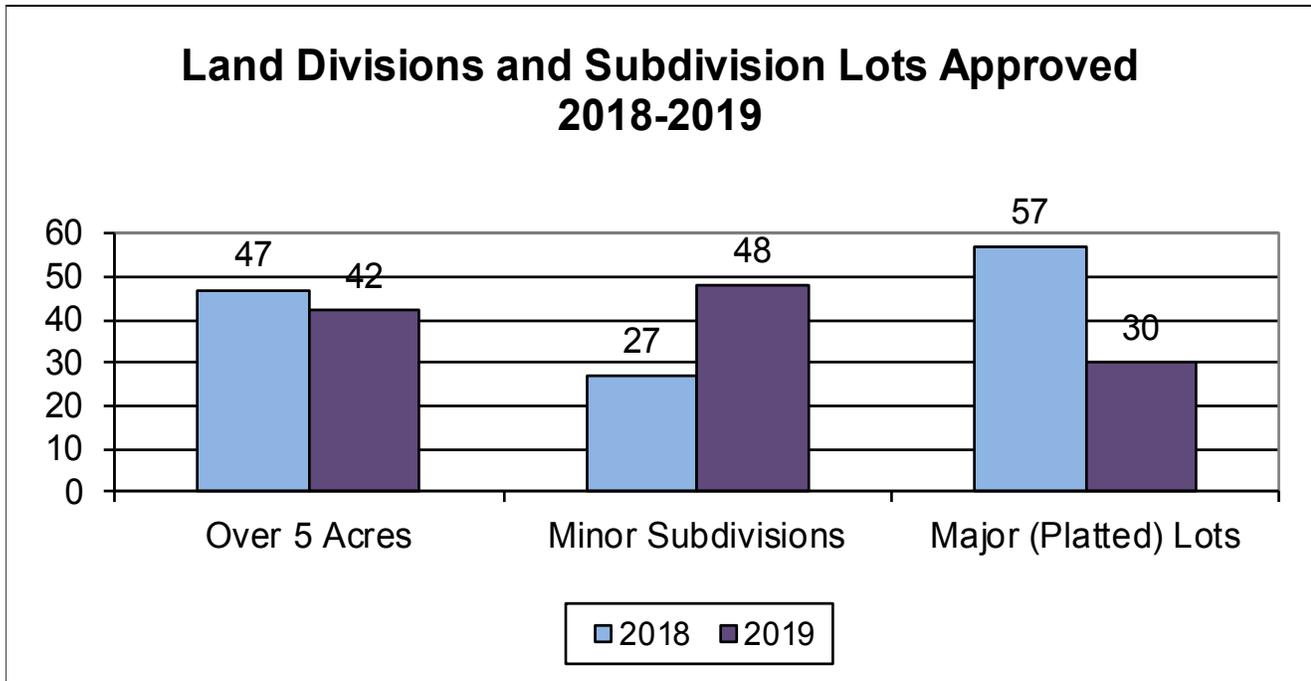
Land Divisions and Subdivisions in Portage County 2019

Over 120 lots were created in 2019 with two variances from the Subdivision Regulations.

Township	Over 5 Acres	No. of Lots Created by Minor Subdivisions	No. of Lots Created by Major Subdivisions	Total
Atwater	3	0	0	3
Brimfield	0	0	12	12
Charlestown	0	0	0	0
Deerfield	2	5	1	8
Edinburg	0	0	0	0
Franklin	0	7	1	8
Freedom	1	0	0	1
Hiram	11	0	2	13
Mantua	5	0	1	6
Nelson	5	0	0	5
Palmyra	7	0	0	7
Paris	2	0	0	2
Randolph	5	10	0	15
Ravenna	1	4	5	10
Rootstown	0	0	2	2
Shalersville	0	7	0	7
Suffield	0	13	6	19
Windham	0	2	0	2
Total	42	48	30	120

Transfers to an adjoining property owner totaled 39 and is not included in table.

Land Divisions and Subdivision Lots Approved



Community Development

PCRPC administered \$420,800.74 in Revolving Loan Fund (RLF), CDBG Community Development Grant Program and Critical Infrastructure Grant Funds for the Portage County Board of Commissioners with the following results:

2018 CDBG Allocation Grant

- Engineering was completed and a contract was awarded to run a waterline that will enable the Ravenna Head Starts facility, located 4833 Harding Avenue in Ravenna Township to tap into the City of Ravenna’s water system.
- Demolition was completed of the former church located at 10352 Silica Sand Road in Windham Township.
- Needed repairs were made to the Coleman supportive living sites located at 4155 State Route 14 in Edinburg Township and at 5974 Rhoades Road in Franklin Township:

Edinburg House

1. Removed all carpeting from the living area and bedrooms. Installed new flooring and new base trim.
2. Replaced kitchen sink, faucet and dishwasher.
3. Replaced tub, shower and faucets in both first floor bathrooms. Also replaced the bathroom sinks, vanity and painted both bathrooms.
4. Installed handicap wall sink and faucet in the second floor bathroom.
5. Replaced hot water tank with 50 gallon electric and installed new sub panel for power.
6. Replaced front porch decking surface, installed new hangers and installed new handrail.

Rhodes Road House

1. Demo decking and ramp and disposed of old wood.
2. Installed new decking, ramp and steps.



F&CS Chiller Systems Project



Highland Avenue Concrete Replacement Project

- Replaced 80-ton chiller system for a Family & Community Services owned facility located at 705 Oakwood Street in Ravenna City.
- Replaced 560 Linear feet of deteriorated concrete roadway on West Highland Avenue between North Diamond Street and Franklin Street in the City of Ravenna.
- In conjunction with 2017 CHIP Grant and the 2018 CDBG Allocation Fair Housing assistance was provided to 61 households within Portage County excluding the City of Kent. Provided educational materials regarding fair housing to 16 agencies/organizations and provided training to three agencies/organizations.

2018 Critical Infrastructure Grant

- Construction was completed for the replacement 750 linear feet of sidewalks, three ADA ramps, 740 linear feet of roadway will be rebuilt and the replacement of 750 linear feet of waterline and installed 2 fire hydrants along Bauer Avenue in the Village of Windham.
- A 2018 Critical Infrastructure Grant was awarded in the amount of \$495,000 for the replacement of 1,560 linear feet of waterline, six catch basins to be installed and three manholes; 575 linear feet of 4 inch sidewalk and 150 linear feet of 6 inch sidewalk will be upgraded to ADA guideline; 1,750 linear feet of concrete curb will be replaced and 882 linear feet of asphalt resurfacing will be done along Vine Street and 622 linear feet of chip and seal resurfacing will be done on Gill Street in the City of Ravenna.

Contract was awarded and construction of the waterline started in December 2019. Construction is anticipated to be completed by mid-May 2020.



Bauer Avenue roadway and water improvements in Windham Village



Vine and Gill Street waterline replacement City of Ravenna



Awards Dinner

Committees



Celebrate Portage

The RPC is a core participant in Celebrate Portage! which is a grassroots effort to prepare a countywide vision plan. We celebrated our 6th year of projects and activities in 2019.

The events started off with the Ravenna Cruise-in on East Main Street in Ravenna with over 2,000 cars and 10,000 to 12,000 people in attendance. We had the Runway Fest at the Portage County Airport which was 2-day event with a 5k race on the runway Friday night and a family friendly open house at the airport on Saturday. Young Eagles (kids 8-17) were given free rides by the local pilots which ended up being over 75 free flights. There was a car show, touch-a-truck and other things for families to enjoy. The Awards dinner celebrated the good to great things that are happening in Portage County including Most Engaging High School, Best Community Art and Festival Show, Community Hero, Best Public Health Initiative, Best Community Project, and Best Economic Development Project. We ended the Portage Events event with volunteer community service projects throughout places around the County.

The goal is to continue to grow these events as we continue to celebrate the successes happening in Portage County.

Celebrate!
PORTAGE!
2019

- Awards Dinner**
8/15/19
- Ravenna Cruise-In**
8/28/19
- Runway Fest**
8/30/19 - 8/31/19
- Volunteer Day**
9/12/19



Ravenna Cruise-In

Member Projects

Streetsboro Comprehensive Master Plan Update

Regional Planning updated the Streetsboro Comprehensive Master Plan with current maps, demographics, public input, and recent accomplishments by the city. Goals, objectives, and strategies were updated to reflect current trends and needs. The plan included responsible partners and agencies that would be involved with implementing the plan; as well as, a thorough review of the land use plan as part of the update. The Comprehensive Master Plan was adopted by the Streetsboro City Council in April 2019.

Suffield Land Use Plan Update

Suffield Township's 2003 Land Use Plan was updated by RPC to reflect changes to the township over the past 15 years and the current desires of its residents. This was done through a community survey with over 400 participants. In addition, staff, on a monthly basis, met with Suffield Township's Zoning Commission to ensure the desires of the community were well represented. Suffield Township trustees approved the Land Use Plan in February 2019.

City of Ravenna Land Use Plan

Regional Planning prepared a land use plan for the City of Ravenna to guide future development and revitalization. A series of objectives and strategies was laid out along with potential partners needed to implement the plan. There were several community meetings and interaction with various local community groups for input. The land use plan is the first planning document prepared by professionals.

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Windham Village Land Use Plan

RPC prepared a land use plan for Windham Village to guide and encourage future development. A particular emphasis was placed on economic development and incentives to drive growth within the village. A heavy focus was on both development and redevelopment and on identifying locations where new and redeveloped were most likely to occur.

Parks Collaboration Grant

We collected all of the park information throughout the county including amenities, park programs being offered and private sector recreation facilities. The final step was to create an interactive mapping program for the public to use and be updated on an annual basis by the local community park people via PCRPC staff. A launch party on November 21, 2019 kicked off the release of the interactive map. It can be found at <https://arcg.is/1PXn5i>.

Marketing & Branding

This is a combination of live, work and play on the County website. The website has been updated and funding helped to get other County agencies up to speed with what the County is doing. In addition, marketing and branding is to find examples from around the country and create an a la carte menu of ideas that county, cities, villages and townships can use to brand and market our area further. This includes School districts as a means to tell the public, region and world about good to great things happening here.

Zoning Resolutions and Mapping

Several communities have revised zoning resolutions and updated zoning maps to reflect recent development trends and to prepare their communities for future development. Staff reviewed and amended zoning map requests throughout 2019.

**Portage County Regional Planning Commission
2019 Financial Report**

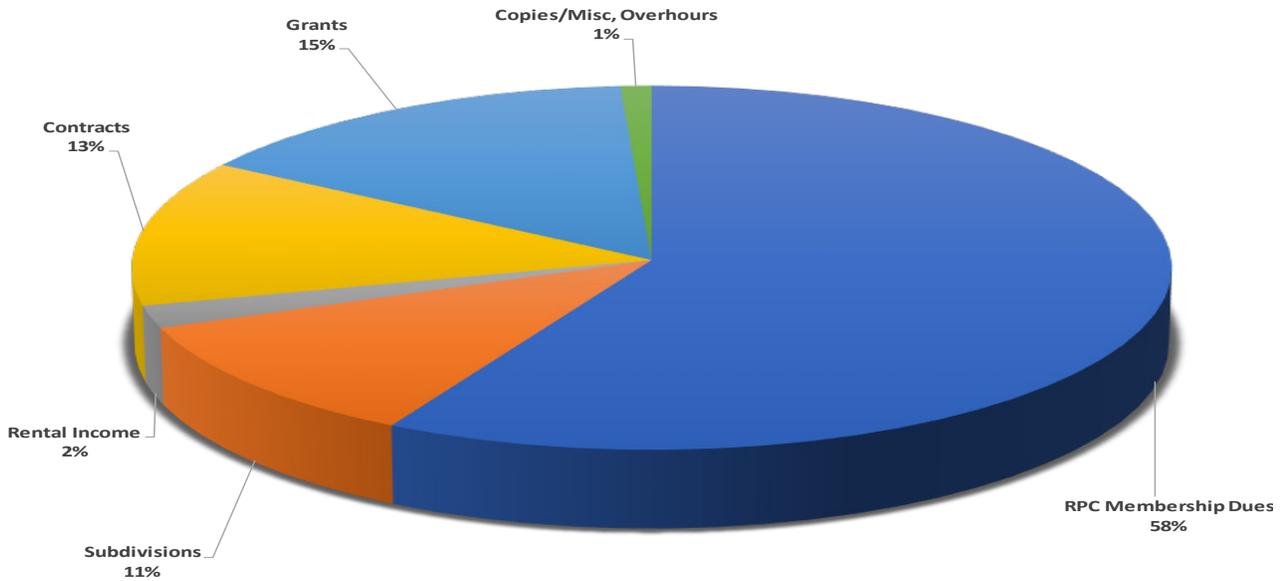
Beginning Cash Balance		\$21,809.72
REVENUE		
RPC Membership Dues		\$255,380.54
Subdivisions		\$43,925.00
Intergovernmental Reviews		\$ -
Copies/Misc./Overhours		\$3,312.77
Publications		\$ -
Rental Income		\$6,300.00
Contracts		
Land Bank Admin	\$366.37	
Suffield Township Land Use Plan	\$265.92	
Ravenna City CHIP Fair Housing	\$3,211.62	
Streetsboro City Master Plan Update	\$4,087.00	
LGIP Parks and Recreations Plan/Inventory	\$5,148.83	
Septic Program	\$6,604.02	
Geauga County	\$25,272.62	
LGIP Branding/Marketing	\$5,595.61	
Total Contracts	\$50,551.99	\$50,551.99
Grants		
2018 CDBG Formula GRant Admin	\$36,359.19	
2018 CDGB Formula Grant Fair Housing	\$7,180.39	
2018 CDBG FG Copies	\$1,024.15	
Ravenna City Critical Infrastructure	\$6,061.04	
Windham Village Critical Infrastructure	\$8,165.99	
Total Grants	\$ 58,790.76	\$58,790.76
Donation		\$750.00
Refund/Reimbursement		\$60.19
TOTAL REVENUE/BUDGET		\$410,880.97

EXPENDITURES

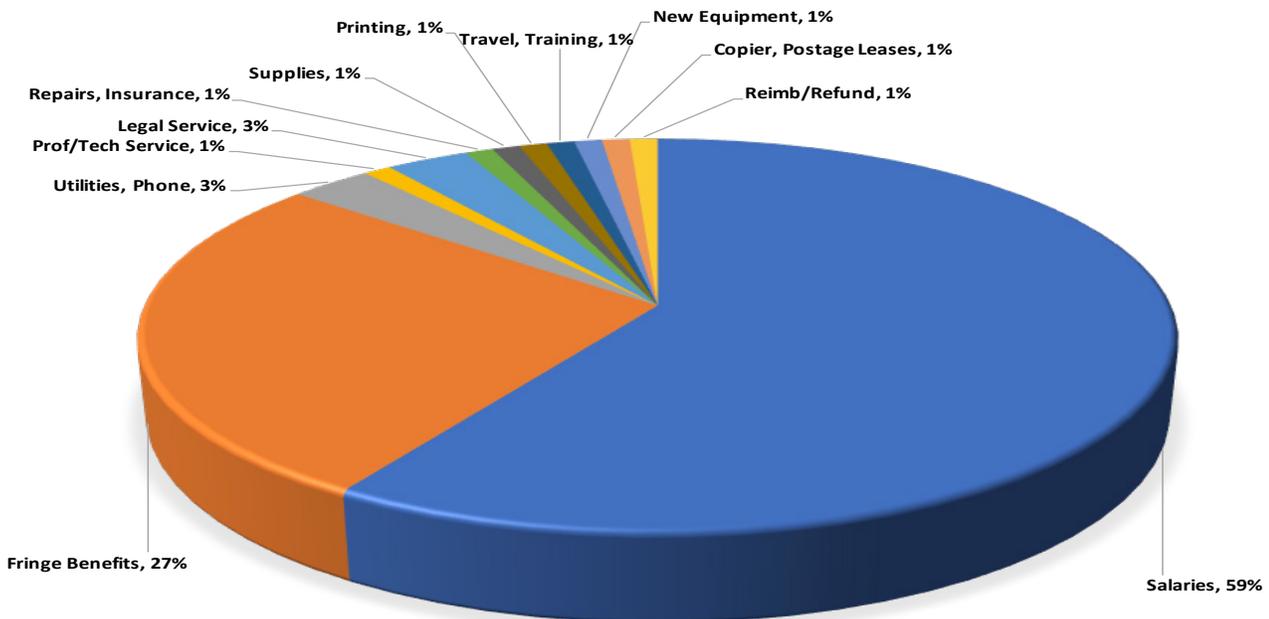
Salaries	\$209,554.48
PERS	\$29,337.75
Medicare	\$2,901.00
Workers Comp	\$3,562.48
Health Insurance	\$60,107.58
Insurances (bldg and bonds)	\$354.00
Maint/Custodial Contract	\$ -
Utilities	\$8,254.12
Telephone	\$1,133.48
Contract Services	\$ -
Professional and Technical Services	\$5,300.72
Audit Services	\$ -
Computer Services	\$ -
Legal Services	\$10,000.00
Repairs (equipment, rental, bldg.)	\$1,554.50
Advertising	\$656.79
Postage	\$1,200.00
Supplies	\$3,183.83
Photocopying/Printing	\$2,167.59
Dues/Periodicals	\$882.49
Travel/Training	\$2,052.89
Food Supplies	\$1,652.00
Equipment	\$3,264.25
Copier/Postage Meter Rentals	\$3,912.58
Loan (multi purpose building)	\$9.76
Building Improvements	\$ -
Reimbursement/Refund	\$3,250.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$354,292.29
Ending Cash Balance	\$56,588.68

*Unaudited Financial Information

2019 Revenue Sources



2019 Expenditures



Members

Atwater Township

John Kovacich
Lynn Whittlesey*

Brimfield Township

Mike Hlad
Jendy Miller*

Franklin Township

Joseph Ciccozzi
Jenny August*
Sam Abell*

Freedom Township

Jeffrey Derthick
Roy Martin*

Garrettsville Village

Mayor Rick Patrick
Tom Collins*

Hiram Township

Steve Pancost
Jack Groselle*

Hiram Village

Robert Dempsey
Frank Hemphill*

Mantua Township

Victor Grimm
Sandy Engelhart*

Mantua Village

Paula Tubalkain
Robert Gaglione*

Nelson Township

Kevin Cihan
Joe Leonard*

Palmyra Township

Sandy Nutter
James Deffenbaugh*

Paris Township

David Kemble
Dan Spicer*

Randolph Township

Victoria Walker
Susan White*

City of Ravenna

Mayor Frank Seman
Kay Dubinsky*

Ravenna Township

James DiPaola
Pat Artz*

Rootstown Township

Joseph Paulus
Jordan Michael*

Shalersville Township

Ronald Kotkowski
Frank Ruehr, Jr.*

Suffield Township

Adam Bey
David Vartenuk*

Sugar Bush Knolls

Jim Beal
John Palik*

Windham Township

Rich Gano
Joe Pinti*

Windham Village

Deborah Blewitt
Cheree Taylor*

PARTA

Clayton Popik
W. Frank Hairston*
Denise Baba*

Portage County

Vicki A. Kline
Terry Montz*
Sabrina Christian-Bennett
Matt Adelman*
Kathleen Clyde

Portage Park District

Allan Orashan
Chris Craycroft*

Water Resources Department

Gene Roberts
Tia Rutledge*

Soil and Water Conservation Office

James Bierlair
Eric Long*

Portage County Engineer

Mickey Marozzi
Larry Jenkins*

Ex-Officio Members

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

*Indicates alternate member

Officers/Executive Committee

Jim DiPaola, Chairman

Sabrina Christian-Bennett, Vice Chairman

Todd Peetz, Secretary

Deborah Blewitt

Allan Orashan

Sandy Nutter

Jim Beal

Frank Seman