



2020 ANNUAL REPORT

HAMILTON COUNTY

PLANNING + DEVELOPMENT



HAMILTON COUNTY

Planning + Development

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MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

On behalf of the Hamilton County Commissioners and the various Boards and Commissions that this department serves, I am pleased to provide you with the Annual Report of the Hamilton County Planning + Development Department. This report contains an overview of our 2020 accomplishments across our five divisions and two support areas.



2020 provided plenty of challenges to businesses, governments, and non-profits, to maneuver their organizations through new restrictions and working environments. It also shone a bright light on the importance of adaptability and diversity to provide strength and leadership.

Planning + Development Department staff continued to prove their value by adapting to these challenging environments. The Department continued to provide all established services and helped administer additional services such as CARES Act funding assistance to meet the needs of Hamilton County. The fluidity to adapt not only helped customers and constituents requiring these existing and new services, but it also kept Hamilton County moving forward during COVID shutdowns.

Some significant accomplishments for each P+D division or area in 2020 include:

- >> Building + Inspections - added the Village of Terrace Park for residential building services. Processed the third highest volume of permit applications over the past twenty-five years.
- >> Community Development - added the Village of Glendale to the CDBG Program. Received \$12,500,000 in HUD Grants (including CARES Act Funding) of which \$11,770,000 was allocated. Worked on 130 separate projects, yet the team consisted of only three members for most of the year.
- >> Community Planning - shifted operations mid-year to complete planning mini-grants using CDBG funding, saving County General Fund \$100,000. Assisted in the Symmes Township Land Use plan update.
- >> Development Services - issued the highest annual total of zoning certificates over the past six years. Completed an overlay zoning district for the Amberly Village.
- >> Financial - Created and hired new Fiscal Officer position to facilitate improved financial accounting and reporting for the department's five separate funding sources.
- >> Information Systems - nimbly responded to the need for remote work opportunities by implementing Zoom licenses, VPN access and distribution of new laptops.
- >> Stormwater + Infrastructure - managed the addition of 7,634 linear feet of new water line on Buffalo Ridge Road in Miami Township. Added Fire Hydrant repair services for the Village of Woodlawn.

I am proud to lead an organization that makes a difference and impacts our County in so many ways. Please contact me at james.noyes@hamilton-co.org with your feedback and suggestions.

Respectfully,

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Noyes'.

James Noyes



Building +
Inspections



Community
Development



Community
Planning



Development
Services



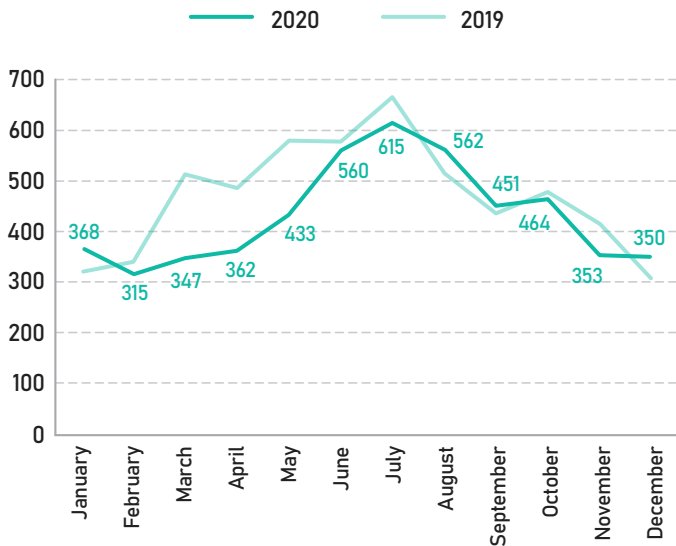
Information
Systems



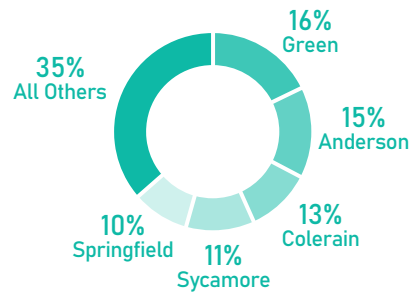
Stormwater +
Infrastructure

BUILDING + INSPECTIONS

All Building Permit Applications Received



The number of building permit applications fell in **February**, then gradually returned to the normal level in **June**.



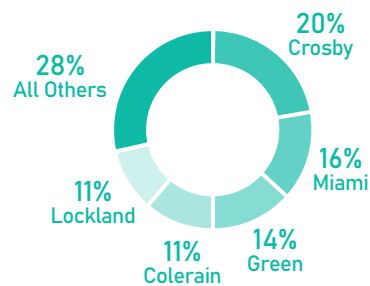
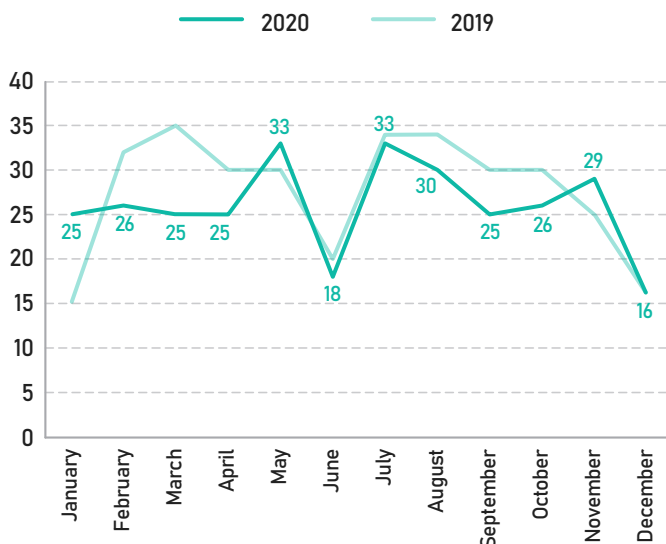
5,180

building permits
were received in total
for approval in 2020

In 2020, a total of **5,180** building permits were received for approval, averaging **432** per month.

The number of building permits submitted varies widely among the unincorporated townships of Hamilton County and eleven contract jurisdictions. While **Green, Anderson, Colerain, Sycamore, and Springfield** filed more than **3,350** applications in 2020, **Elmwood Place, Wyoming, North Bend, Lincoln Heights, and Harrison Township** filed fewer than **100**.

New Residential Permit Applications Received



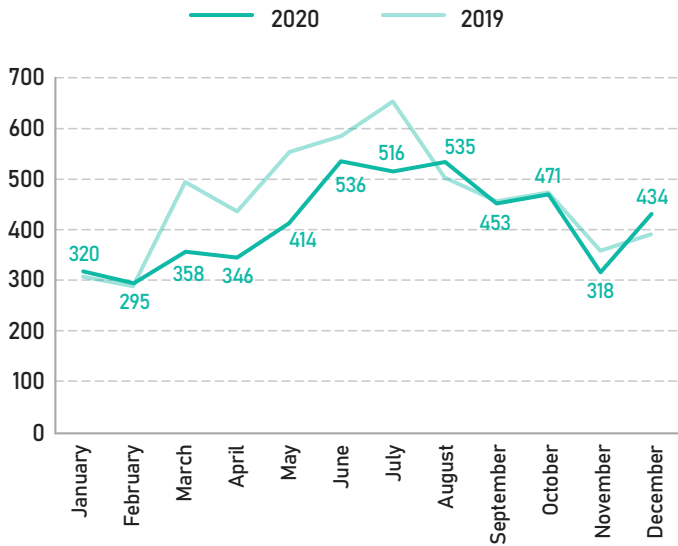
311

new residential permits
were received in total
for approval in 2020

In 2020, a total of **311** permits were received for **new residential units (1, 2, or 3 family) construction** approval, accounting for **6%** of all building permits applied, with an average of **26** per month, a slight **decrease of 1%** compared to 2019.

While more than half of the new residential permits were from **Crosby, Miami, and Green** in 2020, no applications were submitted by **Delhi, Golf Manor, or Woodlawn**.

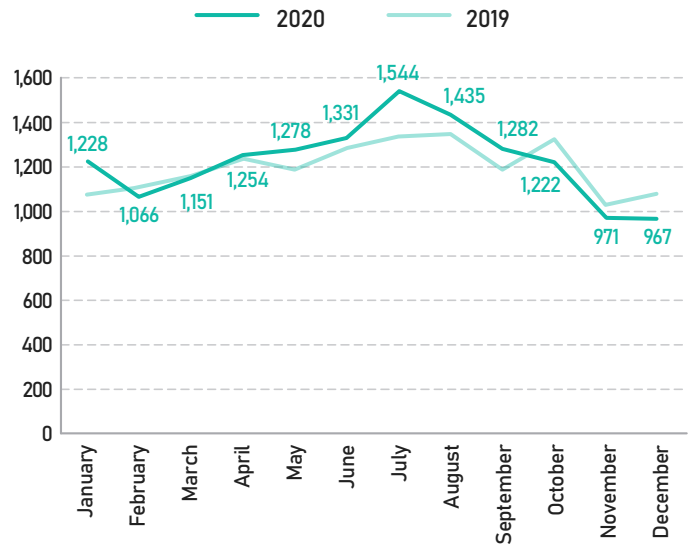
Building Permit Applications Issued



In 2020, a total of **4,996** building permits were issued, accounting for **96%** of all building permits applied. Permits issued **decreased 9%** from 2019.

On average, about **416** building permit applications were issued every month.

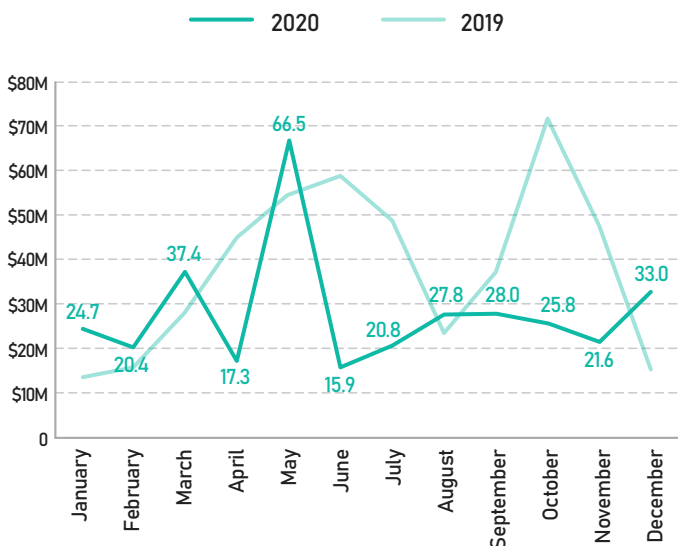
Inspection Requests Completed



In 2020, a total of **14,729** inspection requests were completed, a slight **increase of 3%** compared to 2019.

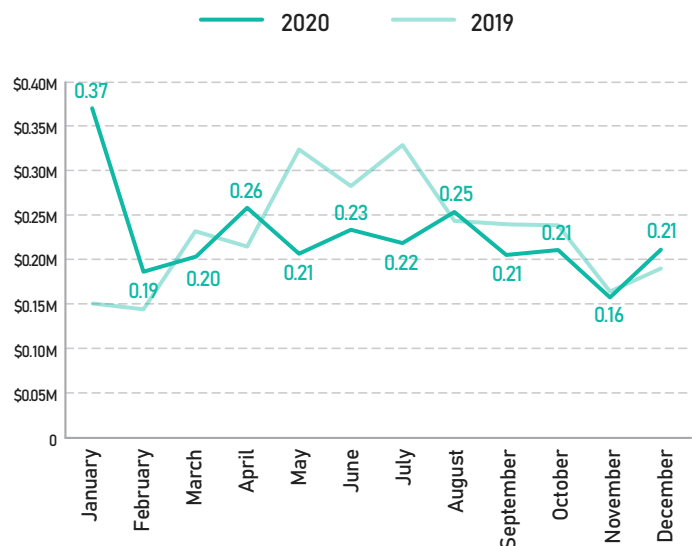
On average, about **1,227** inspection requests were completed every month.

Reported Valuation

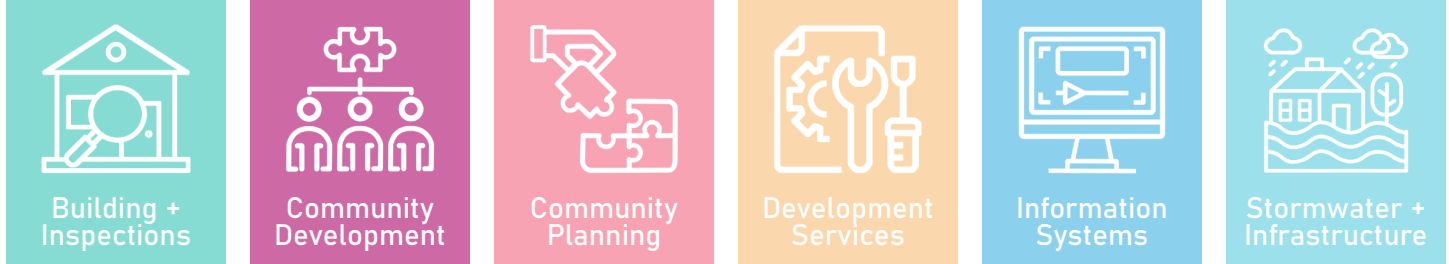


In 2020, a total of **\$339,142,618** in valuation was reported, a significant **decrease of 27%** compared to 2019. A **peak occurred in May** with \$66,473,719, which was more than twice the size compared to monthly average of \$28,261,885.

Permit Fees Received

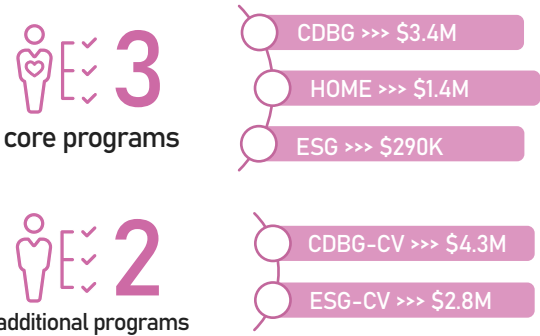


In 2020, a total of **\$2,728,264** in building permit fees were received, a slight **decrease of 1%** compared to 2019. **January** was a peak with \$373,142 in fees.



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Core & Additional Programs

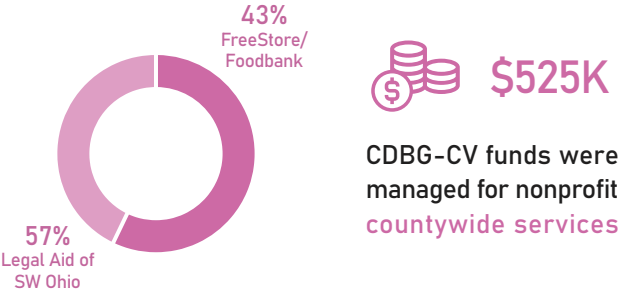


The mission of this division is to manage three core programs funded by HUD. In 2020, two additional COVID-19 related programs were administered.

In 2020, more than \$12 million in grants were administered.

CDBG Under The CARES Act

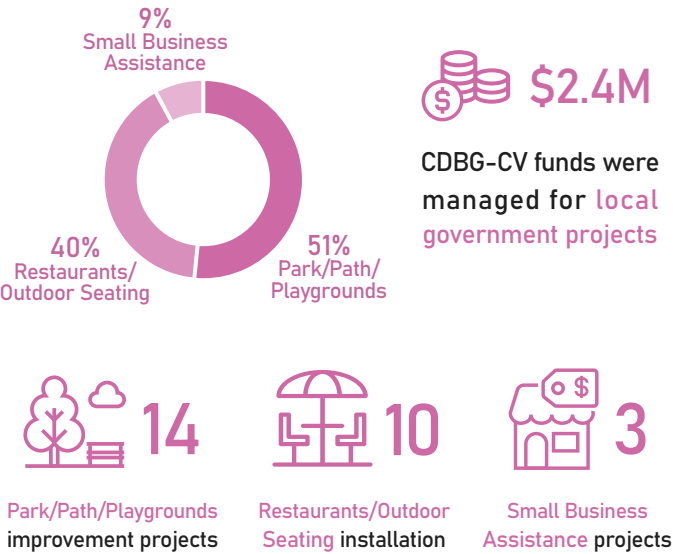
Nonprofit Countywide Services



The County received Community Development Block Grant awards as part of the CARES Act (CDBG-CV).

In 2020, a total of \$525,000 CDBG-CV funds were awarded to two nonprofit agencies. FreeStore/Foodbank received \$300,000 of CDBG-CV award and Legal Aid of SW Ohio received \$225,000.

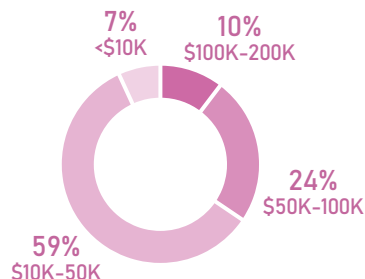
Local Government Projects



In 2020, a total of \$2,413,000 CDBG-CV funds were awarded to 27 local government projects. For example, Lincoln Heights was awarded \$250,000 to install a new safer, accessible playground in Memorial Field Park, and Silver-ton was awarded \$100,000 to install permanent outdoor seating and safety measures along Plainfield Road.

Community Development Block Grant Program

Local Government Projects



\$1.3M

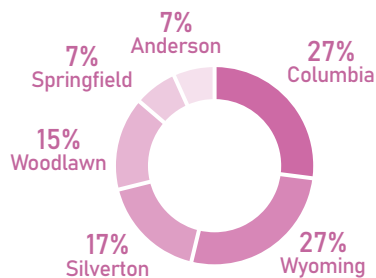
CDBG funds were awarded for **local government projects**

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds awarded to local government projects can be used for improving **public facilities**, improving **public infrastructure**, or providing **loan or grant programs** to small businesses or homeowners.

In 2020, a total of **\$1,278,658** CDBG funds were released to twenty-nine projects applied by twenty communities.

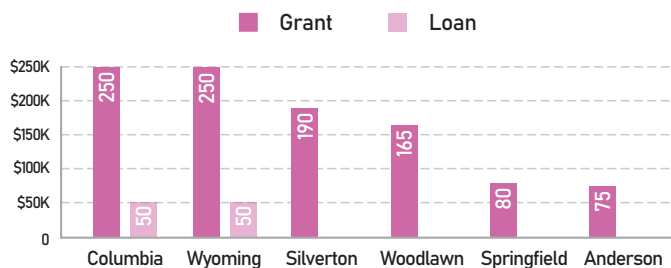
Three projects received awards of more than \$100,000, **seven** projects received awards of \$50,000 to \$100,000, **seventeen** projects received awards of \$10,000 to \$50,000, and **two** projects received awards of less than \$10,000.

Community and Economic Development Assistance Program (CEDAP)



\$1.1M

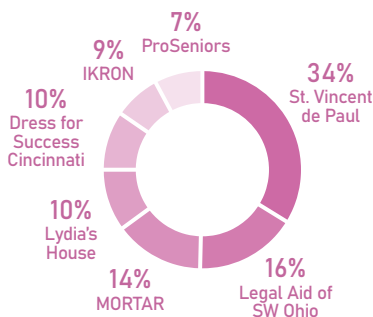
CDBG funds were awarded for **CEDAP**



In 2020, a total of **\$1,110,000** CDBG funds (grants and loans) were released to five CEDAP projects, of which the total project cost was \$2,152,000.

Columbia Township and Wyoming received more than half of the CDBG funds released to CEDAP, with each receiving \$300,000.

Nonprofit Countywide Services

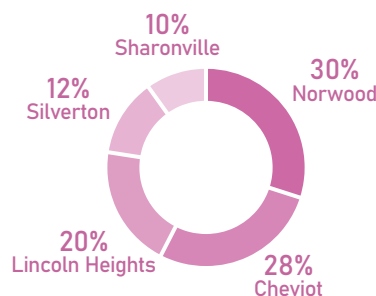


\$700K

CDBG funds were awarded for **nonprofit countywide services**

In 2020, a total of **\$700,000** CDBG funds were awarded to seven nonprofit agencies. For example, **St. Vincent de Paul** received \$238,000 and **Legal Aid of SW Ohio** received \$115,000.

Mini-Grant Planning Program



\$100K

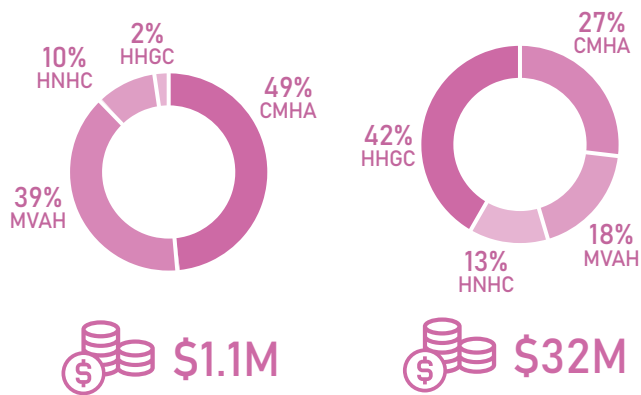
CDBG funds were used for **mini-grant planning program**

In 2020, a total of **\$100,000** CDBG funds were awarded to five Mini-Grant Programs.

Norwood received the most funds at \$30,000, while **Sharonville** received the least funds at \$10,000.

HOME Investment Partnerships Program

HOME Overview



In 2020, \$1,100,000 in HOME funds leveraged \$32 million in housing investment.

The five projects above would add 66 new rental units, 6 new single-family homes, and rehabilitate 74 rental units.

Housing Action Plans



\$90K

HOME funds were designated for housing action plans

The County utilized HOME funds to contract with LISC and CBI to provide Housing Action Plans for communities that wanted to analyze their current housing conditions and how to move forward to protect, produce and preserve housing.

In 2020, the LISC/CBI team started 5 of 6 Housing Action Plans for Silverton, Deer Park, Cheviot, Addyston and Norwood. A total of \$90,000 was awarded.

Emergency Solutions Grant Program



1,400

individuals/families received services from Rapid Rehousing



800

individuals/families received services from Shelter Diversion

The Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funding was used to provide emergency shelter and homelessness prevention activities.

In 2020, a total of \$290,000 was spent for emergency shelter and homelessness prevention activities.

On average, approximately 3,800 individuals were provided services every year in the past.

ESG Program Under The CARES Act



1,158

children (under 18) were served from ESG-CV program



35

veterans were served from ESG-CV program

The Emergency Solutions Grant under the CARES Act (ESG-CV) funds were used to house people in hotels and motels for non-congregate shelter for individuals and families experiencing homelessness during COVID. The funds were also used for food, transportation, personal items as needed. Additional funds will be used for Rapid Rehousing to pay for permanent housing.

In 2020, a total of 2,565 people were served with ESG-CV.



Building +
Inspections



Community
Development



Community
Planning



Development
Services



Information
Systems



Stormwater +
Infrastructure

COMMUNITY PLANNING

General Projects



Land use plan
& zoning map update



First Suburbs Consortium of
Southwest Ohio



Taking Root



Regional watershed network



Mill Creek Alliance



CARES Act implementation

Housing Our Future



5

housing plans
were developed
in total in 2020

Village of Addyston

City of Cheviot

City of Deer Park

City of Norwood

Village of Silverton

In 2020, **five housing action plans** were developed in collaboration with **LISC Greater Cincinnati** and the **Community Building Institute (CBI)** to maximize county and community resources and expand the jurisdictions' housing capacity.

Community Development Block Grant Projects



1. City of Norwood Montgomery Road
Redevelopment Plan



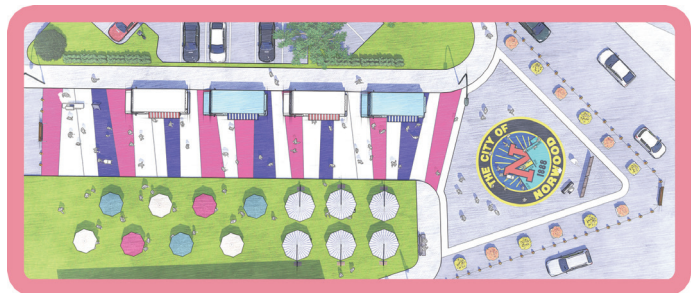
2. Village of Silverton Interim
Comprehensive Plan Update



3. City of Sharonville Bike Trail Feasibility Study:
Connecting Downtown, People and Parks

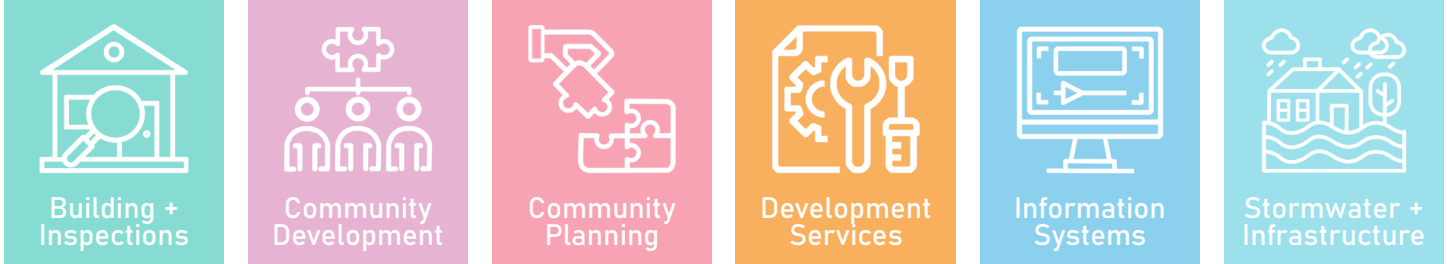


4. Activating City of Cheviot's Commercial
Overlay District



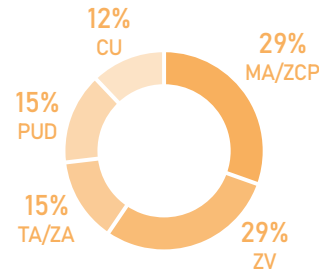
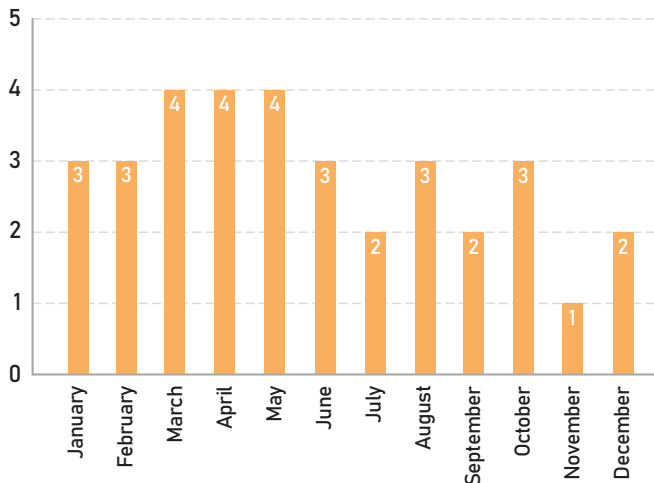
In 2020, **four CDBG projects** were produced in collaboration with **Community Development division**. Local oversight committees were active in developing these plans and making recommendations for revisions.

Three new innovative software packages, **mySidewalk**, **ArcGIS StoryMaps**, and **ArcGIS CityEngine** were utilized in CDBG projects to create compelling and insightful interactive plans that include videos, photos, maps and text.



DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

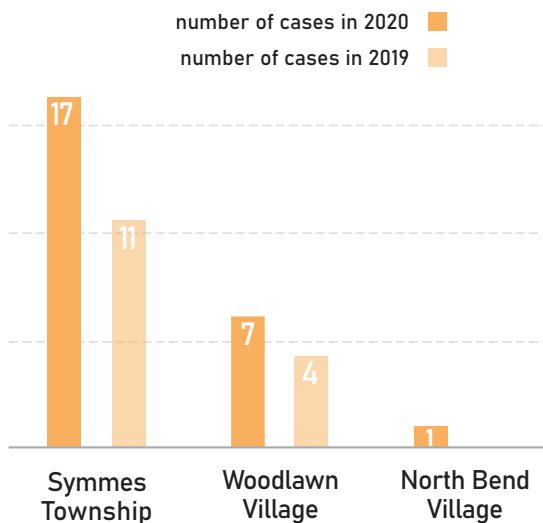
County Zoning Development Cases Reviewed



34
county zoning
development cases
were reviewed

In 2020, there were **10** zoning cases reviewed for major adjustment/zoning compliance permits (MA/ZCP), **10** for zoning variance (ZV), **5** for zone change (TA/ZA), **5** for planned unit development (PUD), and **4** for conditional use (CU).

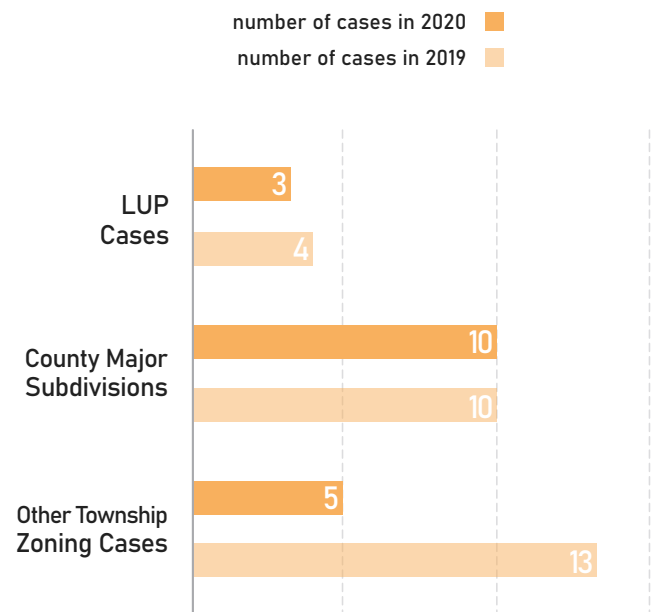
Contracted Jurisdiction Zoning Cases Reviewed



In 2020, a total of 25 zoning cases were reviewed for the contracted jurisdictions, compared with 16 in 2019.

Symmes Township accounted for about half the total, including 12 BZA meeting presented cases, 4 final development plans and 1 zone change.

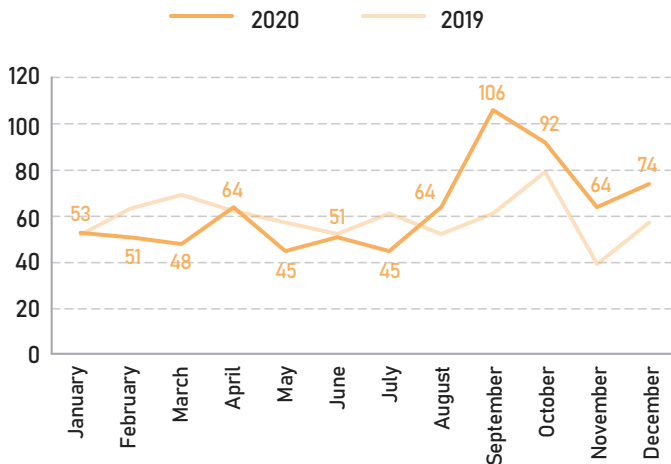
Other Cases Reviewed



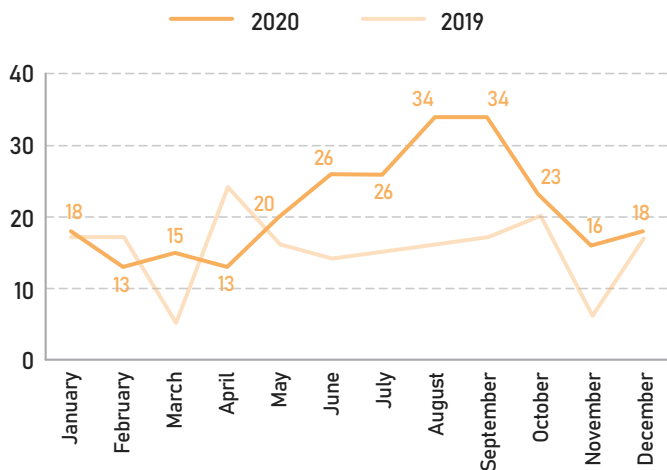
In 2020, **5** zoning cases for other townships were reviewed, including **1** zone text change and **4** zone map changes.

Zoning Enforcement

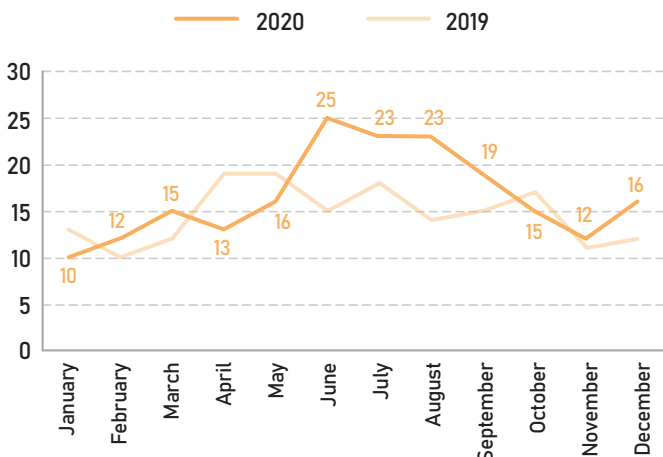
Final Zoning Certificates Issued



Violation Notices Issued

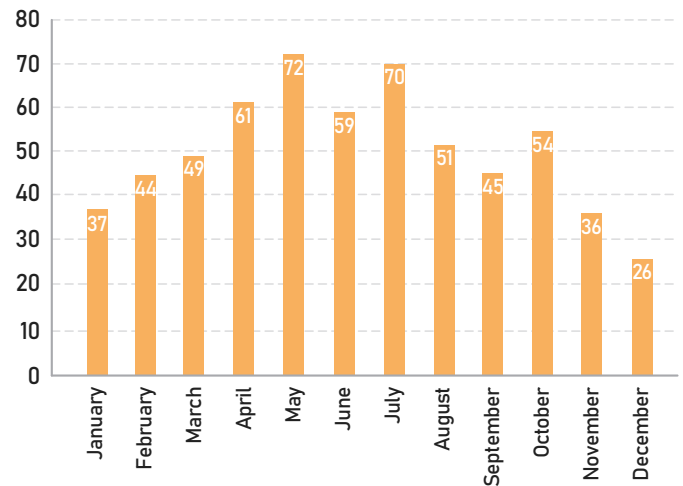
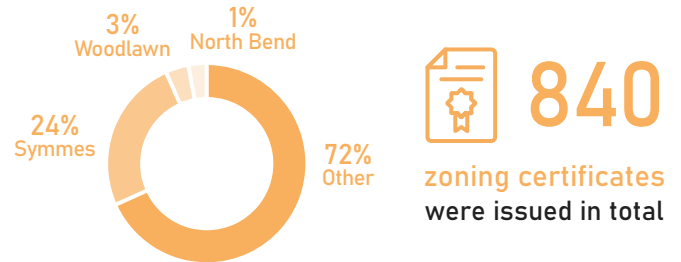


Complaints Responded



Zoning Certificates

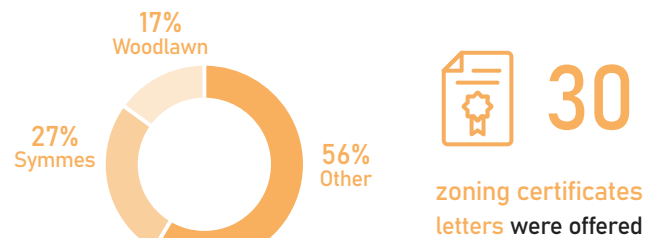
Zoning Certificates Issued



On average, **70** zoning certificates were issued **every month**, an **increase of 12%** compared to 2019.

The county zoning jurisdictions (Columbia, Green, Miami, and Harrison Township) had **604** zoning certificates issued, while Symmes Township had **203**, Woodlawn Village had **23** and North Bend Village had **10**.

Zoning Certificate Letters Offered



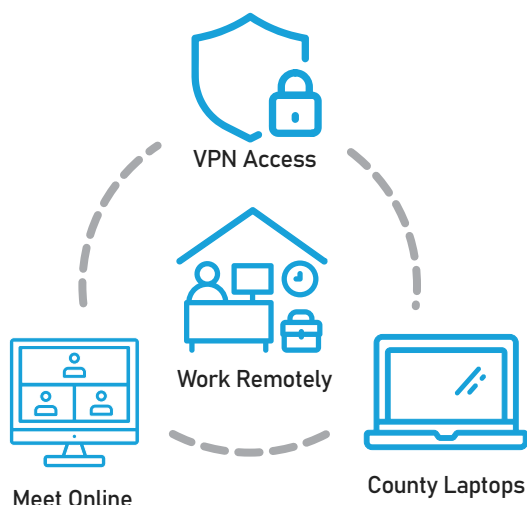


INFORMATION SYSTEMS

Remote Work Support

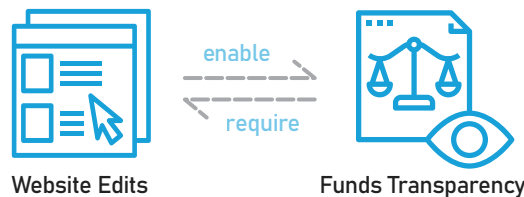


2020 reinforced the importance of the Department's Information Systems Division. The continued effectiveness of the Department depended on the quick pivot to remote work. The Information Systems Division made remote work possible.

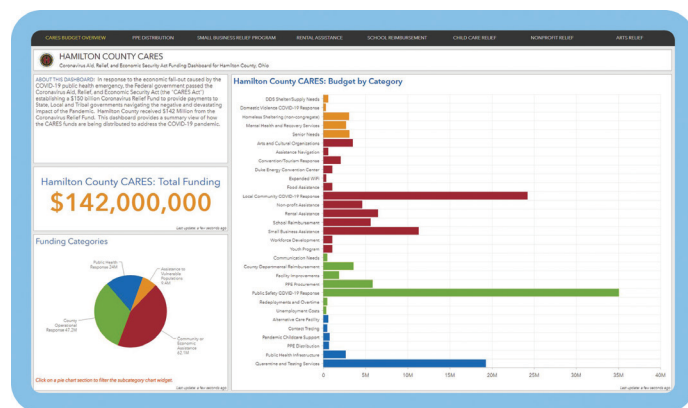


Remote staff needed VPN services and then laptops. The staff that were providing essential services at the office needed webcams in order to serve the public who preferred online meetings. All of this was made possible through the work of the Information Systems Division.

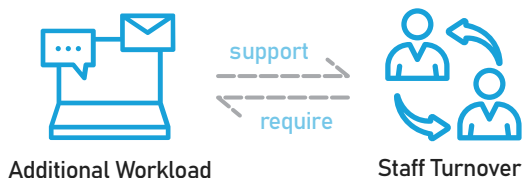
County Website Edits



The County's response to the pandemic also required that more information be posted on, and more frequent edits be made to the County website. Staff from the Information Systems Division handled this increased workload and were also able to add CARES Act information to the website to maintain transparency about the allocation and dispersal of those funds.



Additional Workload



In addition to website and remote work support, the Information Systems Division faced a considerable increase in workload through a high rate of turnover of staff.



Building +
Inspections



Community
Development



Community
Planning



Development
Services



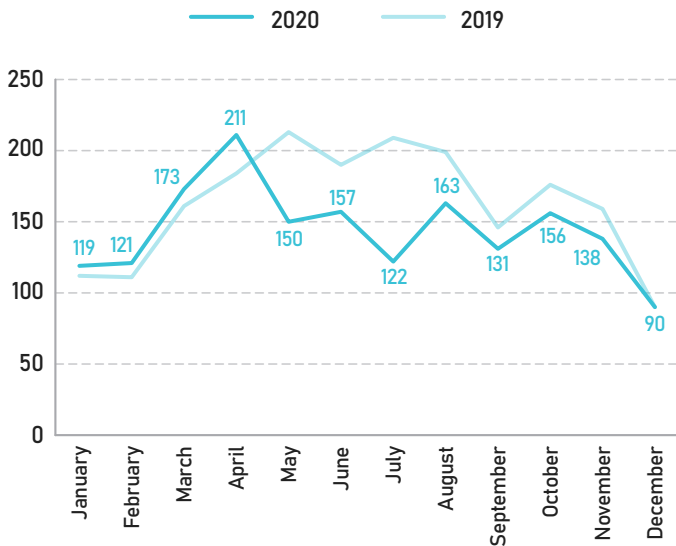
Information
Systems



Stormwater +
Infrastructure

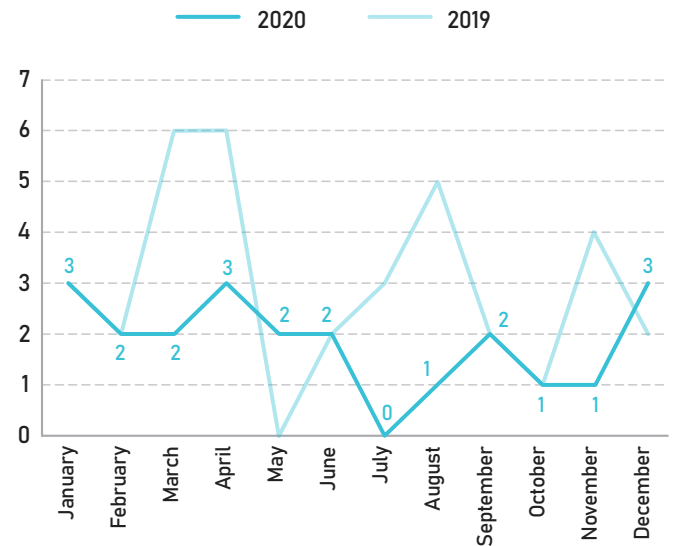
STORMWATER + INFRASTRUCTURE

Building Permits Reviewed for Flood Approval



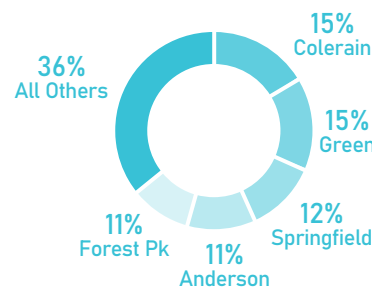
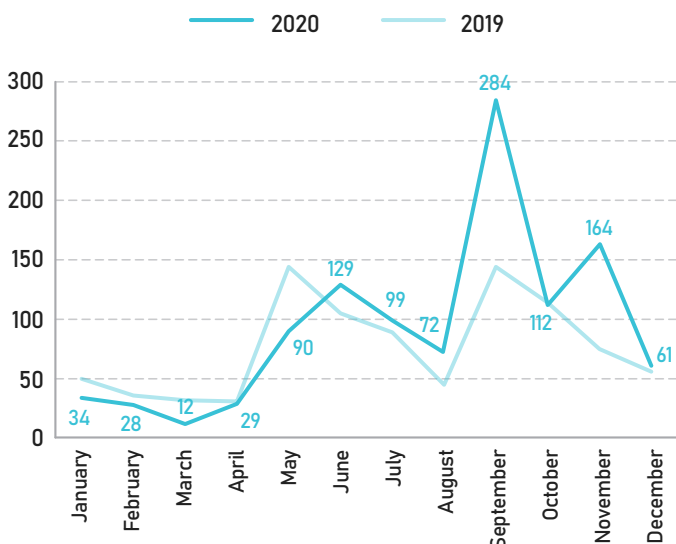
In 2020, a total of **1,731** building permits were reviewed for flood approval, averaging **144** per month, a **decrease of 11%** from 2019.

Flood Permits Issued



In 2020, a total of **22** flood permits were issued, a **decrease** from 36 in 2019. No flood permits were issued in July.

Fire Hydrants Serviced



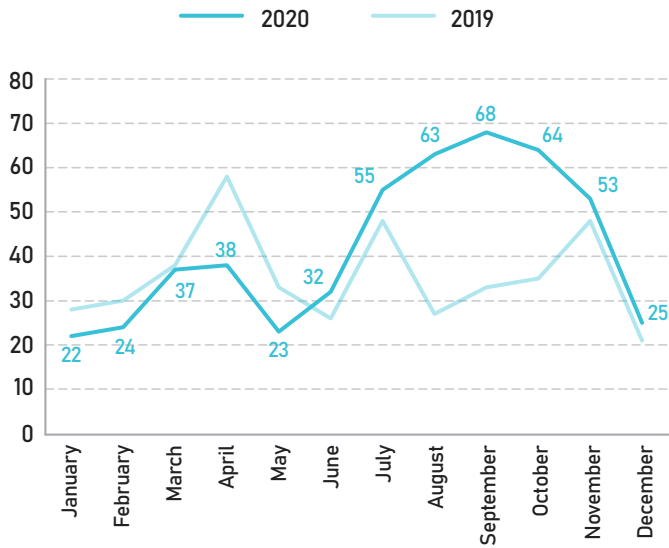
 **1,114**

fire hydrants
were serviced

On average, about **93** fire hydrants were serviced **every month**. A service peak occurred in **September**, when the number of fire hydrants maintained was **3** times the average.

While **Colerain**, **Green**, **Springfield**, **Anderson** and **Forest Park** had more than **100** fire hydrants serviced in 2020, **Addyston**, **Glendale**, **Mariemont** and **Woodlawn** did not require any fire hydrant service.

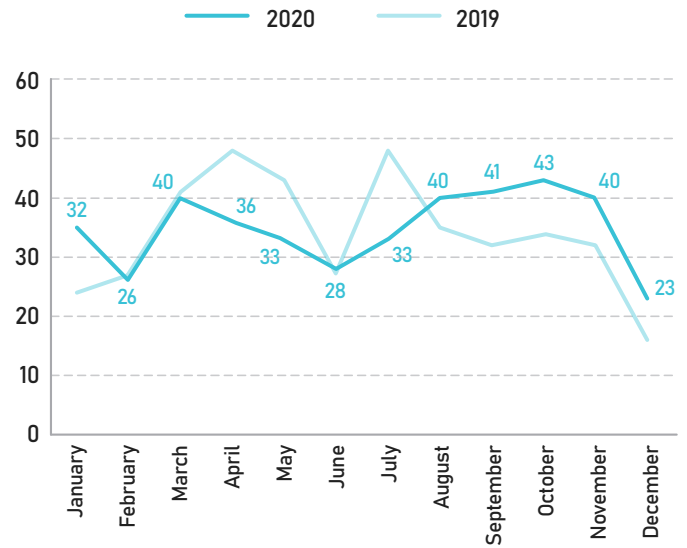
Stormwater Projects Reviewed



In 2020, a **total** of **504** stormwater projects were reviewed, an **increase** of **19%** from 2019.

On average, about **42** stormwater projects were reviewed **every month**. More than **2/3** of applications in 2020 were reviewed between **July** and **November**.

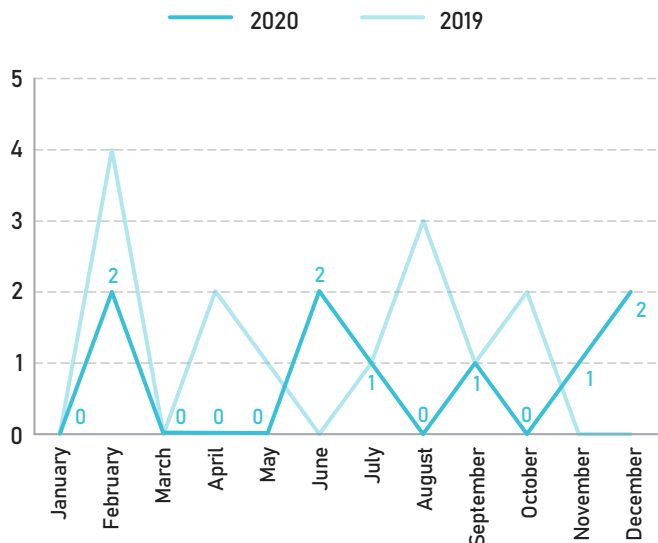
Stormwater Approved for Riparian Setback



In 2020, a **total** of **418** stormwater projects for riparian setback were approved, a slight **increase** of **3%** compared to 2019.

On average, about **35** stormwater projects for riparian setback were approved **every month**.

Water Line Preliminary Applications Processed



In 2020, a **total** of **9** water line preliminary applications were processed, compared with 14 in 2019.

There were **6** months that did not have any water line preliminary applications processed.

Buffalo Ridge Water Line (Miami Township)

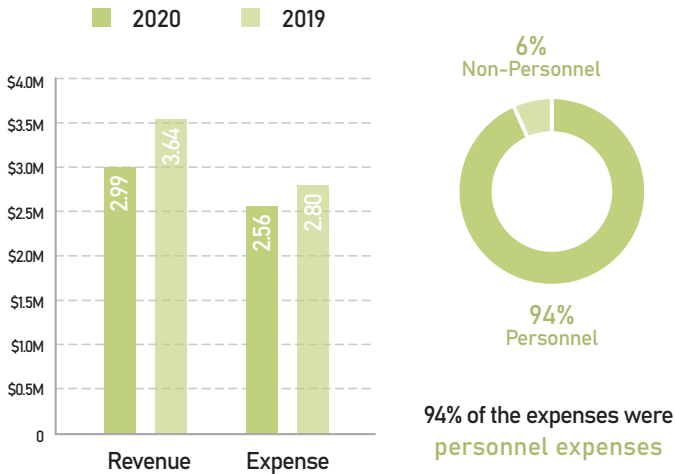
In 2018, BOCC and the Miami Township Trustees approved the installation of a **7,394 linear foot water main** along **Buffalo Ridge Road**. The project was co-funded by **Miami Township and Hamilton County**. **20** fire hydrants were installed along the waterline to ensure property safety.

This project started in January 2018 and was completed in **October 2020**. The total cost was **\$1,123,687**.



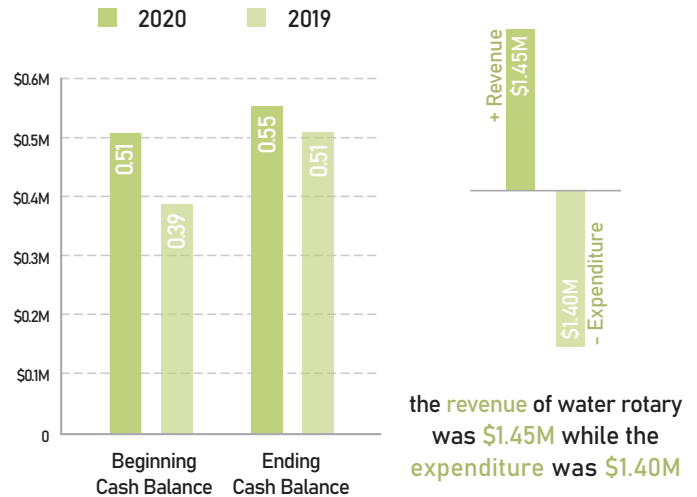
FINANCIAL

General Fund Budget



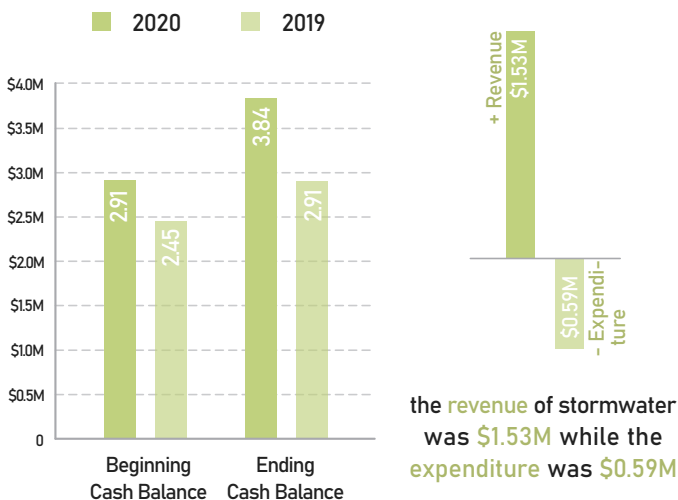
In 2020, the total revenue to the general fund was \$2,991,781, a decrease of 15% from 2019. The total expense to the general fund was \$2,558,953, a decrease of 8% from 2019.

Water Rotary



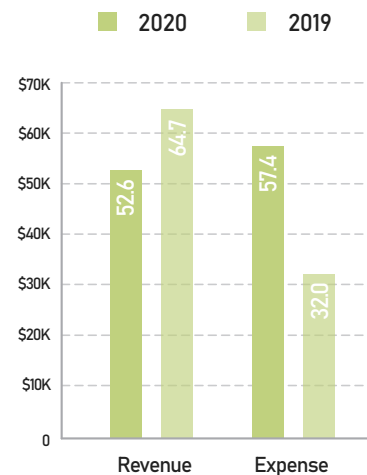
In 2020, the beginning cash balance of water rotary was \$508,605, an increase of 31% from 2019. The ending cash balance of water rotary was \$553,049, an increase of 9% from 2019.

Stormwater



In 2020, the beginning cash balance of stormwater was \$2,905,770, an increase of 18% from 2019. The ending cash balance of stormwater was \$3,839,706, an increase of 32% from 2019.

Regional Planning



In 2020, the total revenue of regional planning was \$52,639, a decrease of 19% from 2019. The total expense of regional planning was \$57,446, an increase of 80% from 2019.



HAMILTON COUNTY
Planning + Development