

# Annual Report | 2021

## Portage County Regional Planning Commission



*Wood Lily, State Endangered Plant  
Photo Courtesy of ODNR*

## 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  
*Director*

Evelyn Beeman  
*Office Manager*

Lisa Reeves  
*CDBG Specialist*

Gail Gifford  
*Community Planner /  
GIS Specialist*

Kailey McMullen  
*Grant Writer*

Maria Palmisano  
*Community Planner*

Abigail Housley  
*Intern*

Grace Petitjean  
*Intern*

## Message from the Director

The Portage County Regional Planning Commission (RPC) had another unusual year in 2021, as did most everyone else. The COVID-19 pandemic waned enough for us to work in the office but continued to delay in-person meetings for the RPC Board. The pandemic continues with uncertainty, but we all continue to adjust and operate.

In the midst of all this, we did have a shared Grant Writer until Kailey McMullen left in September and then the position was eliminated as the County Commissioners added their own Grant Administrator. We also added a second Community Planner in June while benefitting from having interns from Kent State University to help keep the office functions rolling.

We were able to receive some 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 services 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 (Zoom or in-person) as needed, and assisting with mapping data as requested. We also sit on several boards representing Portage County in a local and regional setting.

Some exciting projects that occurred in 2021:

RPC completed the **Brimfield Land Use Plan**, which was an update to their 1988 plan that previously had a minor update in 2004. This plan included surveys from approximately 500 participants and a hands-on department meeting with the Brimfield Trustees and department heads.

RPC completed an update to the **Subdivision Regulations**. These will be reviewed on a continuous basis with the next major update to occur in 2024.

RPC **began work on the Portage County Vision and Comprehensive Plans.** Portage County has never adopted a County-wide comprehensive plan before.

RPC began the **Ravenna Historic Structures Inventory.** We hope this project will add historical awareness and potential tourism, with an increased knowledge of Ravenna's rich history. The intent is to expand to other communities and do similar projects for them.

Looking ahead to 2022, we seek to restart and build on the accomplishments of the last couple of years. We are looking forward to completing the County's first comprehensive plan and vision plan. We continue to actively seek grant funding opportunities on behalf of our communities and for projects that will benefit our residents. We will be taking a long-view of how the RPC staff can best serve our member communities. We will be re-evaluating staff strengths and weaknesses and chart a path that propels our agency and communities forward. 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***

- Section 5.30 (Building Regulations)
- Section 5.34 (Garage Requirements)
- Section 5.41 (Required Lots, Yards & Open Space Unaffected by Change in Ownership)
- Section 5.42 (Minimum Lot Width at Street)
- Section 5.44 (Minimum Lot Width at Building Setback Line)
- Section 5.50 (Minimum Front Yard Setback Clearance)
- Section 5.51 (Minimum Side Yard Width)
- Section 5.52 (Minimum Rear Yard Depth)

#### ***Brimfield Township***

- Uses Not Come Before the BZA for Ruling

#### ***Charlestown Township***

- Shipping Containers/Storage Containers

#### ***Franklin Township***

- Chapter 6, Section 6021.01.A.56.N.8 (Landscaping and Buffering Requirements)

#### ***Freedom Township***

- Section 508.0 (Penalty)
- Section 509.0 (Schedule of Fees, Charges and Expenses)

#### ***Randolph Township***

- Chapter 5, Section 545.03(F)(a), Minimum Setbacks, Front Yard

#### ***Ravenna Township***

- Adding Chapter 15, Food Trucks

#### ***Rootstown Township***

- Chapter 150 (Definitions) – Definition of Hotel
- Section 210.01 (Add P-R (Parks & Recreation District) to the List of Zoning Districts)
- Section 230.05.C (Agricultural Uses), Section 230.06 (General Regulations of Structures and Construction), and Section 230.06.A (Minimum Construction Standards)
- Section 310.03.B (Open Space/Recreational) (Schedule of Permitted Uses), Section 310.04 (Lot Requirements), Section 310.09.D (Accessory Use Regulations for O-C, R-1, R-2 & R-V Districts), and Section 310.10 (Residential District Regulations), (Regulations for Home Occupations)
- Section 320.06.C (Minimum Standards)
- Section 350.03 (Commercial District Regulations), (Schedule of Permitted Uses), Section 350.03.C (Schedule of Permitted Uses, General Commercial/Retail), Section 350.09.B (Accessory Use Regulations for Commercial District)

- Section 370.08.B & C (Accessory Use Regulations for Industrial District)
- Section 390.06.A.A. (Supplemental Regulations for Specific Uses)
- Section 410.12.A (Improvements & Maintenance Standards)
- Section 470.08.A (Minimum Distances from New Structures)
- Section 610.03 (Zoning Certificate Application Requirements for all Residential, Commercial & Industrial Application)
- Section 620.02 (Development Plan Review Required)
- Section 640.03 (Public Hearing by the Board)
- Minimum Sign Setback from Street
- Animal Husbandry

### ***Shalersville Township***

- Incorporate Design Guidelines into the Zoning Resolution
- Solar Panels & Political Signs
- Administration Authority
- Add Backyard Chickens to Section 331 (Permitted Uses) and to Section 339 (Non-Permitted Uses)
- Section 363-G (Area Regulations, Maximum Building Height)
- Accessory Buildings

### ***Windham Township***

- Home Renewable Energy Systems

### **Zoning District Amendments**

- Brimfield Township Rezoning From R-O (Residential Office) to I-C (Integrated Commercial), Brimfield Development Ltd., applicant
- Brimfield Township Rezoning From R-3, Medium High Density Residential to I-C (Integrated Commercial) on Tallmadge Road, Nicholas Parianos, applicant
- Franklin Township Rezoning From R-1, Low Density Residential District to R-O (Research Office) on Powdermill Road, Back Nine Holdings, applicant
- Franklin Township Rezoning From R-2 to R-4 on Rhodes Road, Vermillion Acquisitions, LLC., applicant
- Franklin Township Rezoning From R-1 and C-1 to R-2 on State Route 59 and Powdermill Road, Robert Benjamin, Heritage Development, applicant
- Nelson Township Rezoning From L1 (Light Industrial) to C1 (Community Commercial), 12157 State Route 88
- Rootstown Township Rezoning From R-2 to L-I and R-2/R-V to L-I on Tallmadge Road, Jeffrey Parsons, applicant
- Rootstown Township Rezoning From R-2 to R-V on Tallmadge Road
- Rootstown Township Rezoning From C-2 to L-I on Lynn Road

### **Zoning Resolutions and Mapping**

Several communities revised their zoning resolutions and updated zoning maps to reflect development trends. New official zoning maps were created for Brimfield, Rootstown, Ravenna and Mantua Townships as well as the City of Streetsboro. Mapping assistance for proposed text amendments was provided to the City of Streetsboro and Franklin Township.

## Portage County Subdivision Regulations

The Subdivision Regulation Update Committee finalized the updated plan in May of 2021 and the County Commissioners approved the updated regulations in June of 2021. We plan on doing minor adjustments as needed and a more comprehensive review every three years.

### Subdivisions

Major subdivision activity increased in 2021.

### Land Divisions and Subdivisions in Portage County 2021

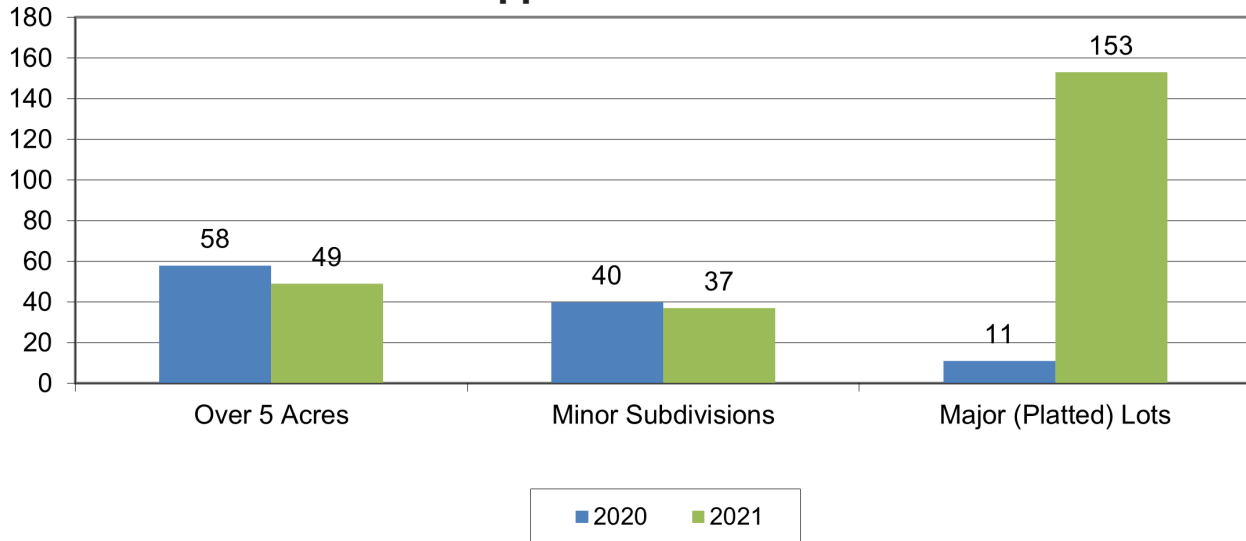
Over 239 lots were created in 2021 with three variances from the Subdivision Regulations were approved for conditional approvals.

Township	Over 5 Acres	No. of Lots Created by Minor Subdivisions	No. of Lots Created by Major Subdivisions	Total
Atwater	2	0	1	3
Brimfield	4	2	38	44
Charlestown	0	0	0	0
Deerfield	0	2	0	2
Edinburg	0	2	0	2
Franklin	2	0	108	110
Freedom	7	4	0	11
Hiram	5	4	2	11
Mantua	2	3	0	5
Nelson	7	7	0	14
Palmyra	1	0	0	1
Paris	1	0	0	1
Randolph	0	8	0	8
Ravenna	2	0	4	6
Rootstown	3	2	0	5
Shalersville	8	0	0	8
Suffield	3	3	0	6
Windham	2	0	0	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>239</b>

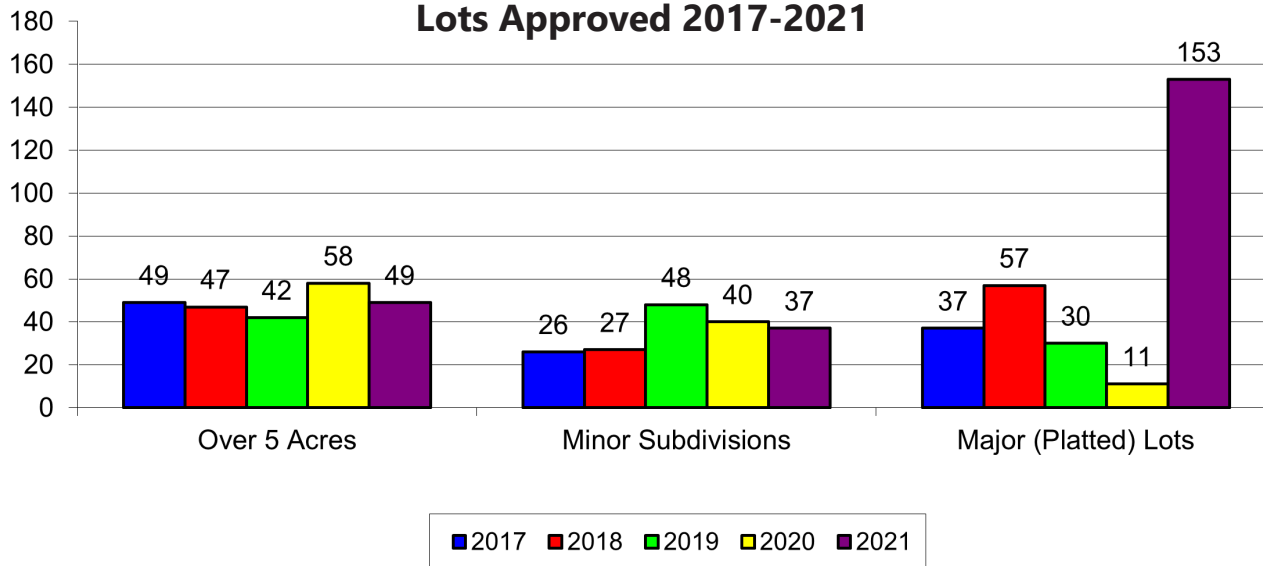
Note: Transfers to an adjoining property owner = 46 (Not included in table).

## Land Divisions and Subdivision Lots Approved

**Land Division and Subdivision  
Lots Approved 2020 - 2021**



**Land Division and Subdivision  
Lots Approved 2017-2021**



## Community Development

*PCRPC administered \$295,222.21 in CDBG Community Development Grant Program and Critical Infrastructure Grant funds for the Portage County Board of Commissioners with the following results:*

### 2020 CDBG Allocation Grant

- **Haven of P.C. Water & Sewer Improvements Project** - Funds were used to construct water and sewer lines and to pay the tie-in fees associated with the water and sewer to allow the building located at 2645 State Route 59 in Ravenna Township to be used as a homeless shelter.
- **Windham Community Center Project** – The project was awarded for the proposed improvements to the existing south, west, and east walls (stage walls) of the Windham Community Center located at 9647 East Center Street. Construction is expected to start in Spring 2022.
- **Freedom Township ADA Project** – Funds will be used to put in two handicap parking spaces at the Freedom Township Hall located at 8966 State Route 700 and two parking spaces at the one room schoolhouse located at 7276 State Route 303. In addition, one ADA compliant unisex restroom will be added at the schoolhouse and two restrooms will be upgraded to ADA Standards at the Freedom Township Hall. Project went out to bid twice and no bids were received. It is anticipated to go back out for bid in Spring 2022.
- **Streetsboro Senior Assistance Program** – Funds were used to provide snow removal, yard mowing and leaf removal to benefit elderly/handicapped low to moderate income residents in the City of Streetsboro.
  - Lawn Mowing: To date 65 households have signed up and 113 vouchers have been returned.
  - Leaf Removal: To date 57 households have signed up and 72 vouchers have been returned.
  - Snow Removal: To date 77 households have signed up and 58 vouchers have been returned.



*Top: Construction of the water and sewer lines.*

*Bottom: The Haven of Portage County common area.*



*Above: Freedom Township schoolhouse.*

### 2021 CDBG Critical Infrastructure Grant

- **Windham Village-** An amount of \$444,000 was awarded to replace 1,600 linear feet of waterlines along with 1,500 linear feet of sidewalk along Maplegrove Road, completing a neighborhood loop from



North Main Street to East Center Street. Sidewalk and ADA ramps will be replaced, which provide ADA access along the corridor and stop curb repairs where service laterals need to be replaced. Several new water valve installations and tie-ins will complete the upgrades. It is anticipated that project will go out to bid by mid-summer 2022 and construction to start in fall 2022.

- **City of Ravenna-** An amount of \$253,600 was awarded to replace 930 linear feet of waterlines as well as remove one fire hydrant on Pratt Street. Once Pratt Street is excavated to replace the waterlines, 930 linear feet of deteriorated sidewalks and curb ramps will be upgraded to ADA standards. It is anticipated that project will be out to bid in March and construction will be completed in 2022.

### **CDBG Target of Opportunity COVID-19 Response (CDBG-CV)**

The State of Ohio received CDBG-CV funds through the Coronavirus Aid Relief and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) and is being administered by the Ohio Department of Development's Office of Community Development. Office of Community Development is using these funds for public services and public facilities projects to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.

A CDBG-CV application was submitted for the replacement of hard surface flooring and HVAC updates at the Family & Community Services Supportive Housing Program funded, permanent supportive housing and transitional housing located in the City of Kent. The application is currently pending and award announcements are expected to be made by the end of February 2022.

### **2021 Downtown Revitalization Target of Opportunity Program**

A pre-application was submitted for the rebuilding of the sidewalks and steps into a new patio area for a building located on the east side of Main Street, north of Prospect street in the Village of Mantua. The work will include a retaining wall, a set of steps to the new patio and walkway level, an ADA compatible access ramp entry, and continuous railings with handrails at the stairs and ramp.

Staff is looking at alternative sources of funding to cover the cost of the above scope of work and will look into submitting a Downtown Revitalization Target of Opportunity Grant for the renewal of the storefronts and façade of the building in 2022.

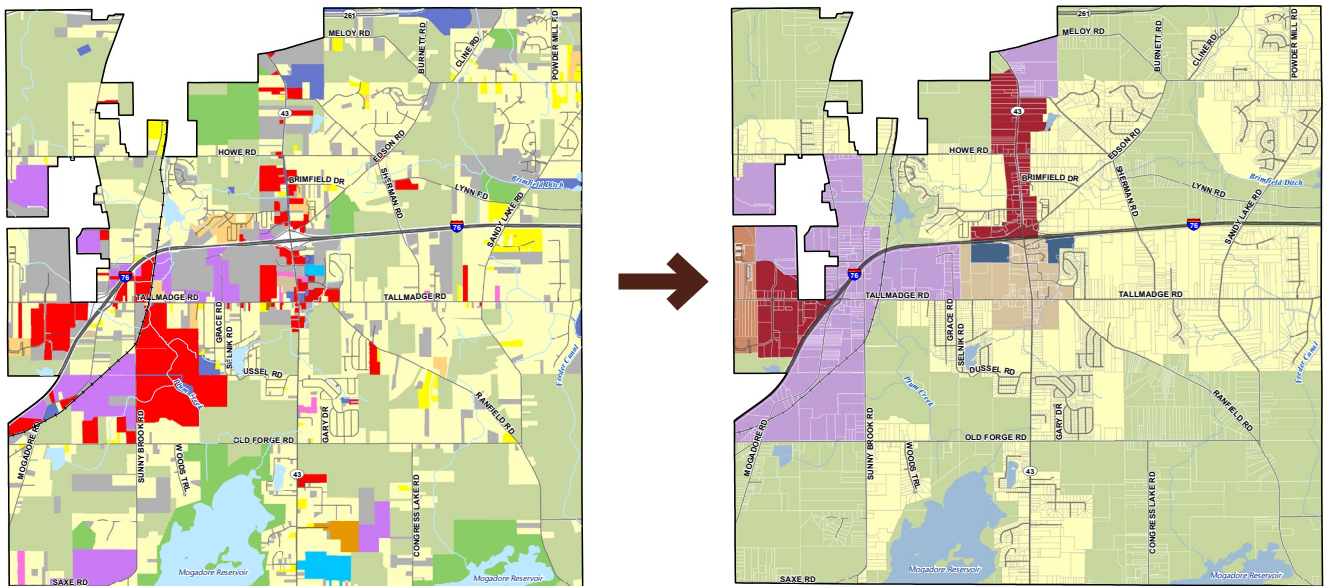
### **2021 Residential Public Infrastructure Grant**

A pre-application was submitted to obtain grant funds to construct a new public wastewater collection system that will address water quality violations in the Babcock & Motz Allotment, Sammar, Cloverlawn, High Knoll and Chinn 1st, 2nd & 3rd Allotments in Ravenna Township. A full application will be submitted once a Permit-to-Install has been secured.

## Projects and Mapping Activities

### Brimfield Township Land Use Plan

RPC finalized the Brimfield Township Land Use Plan with current maps and conditions, assessments, demographics, and recent accomplishments by the Township. The plan includes responsible partners and agencies that should be involved with implementing the plan. The Plan, along with a summary StoryMap, was completed in May. The StoryMap may be viewed at <https://arcg.is/1CDPXa>.



Brimfield Township Existing Land Use (2020) and Future Land Use (2050).

### Portage County Vision and Comprehensive Plans

Work on Portage County's first Vision and Comprehensive Plans began in July and RPC held the first committee meetings in Fall. The plans will contain goals for the County to work toward over the next 10 to 30 years. The Vision Plan is expected to finish in Spring 2022 and the Comprehensive Plan in Fall 2022.

### Ravenna Historic Structures Mapping

RPC received a grant to work on an interactive map of historic structures in Ravenna City. The map will result in guided tour of structures in Ravenna City with information on their historic or architectural significance as well as current and past pictures of the buildings. The map is expected to be finished by Winter 2022 to coincide with the beginning of the Ohio Heritage Year in 2023.



Downtown Garrettsville.



Cleveland Worsted Mills, Ravenna. Demolished in 2022.



## Other Mapping Activities

- Address and street maps were created for Brimfield, Palmyra, Paris, and Windham Townships.
- Non-conforming lot maps were created for Palmyra, Nelson, and Windham Townships.
- 8 map and data requests from the public.
- Mapping assistance provided to the Portage County Land Bank and the City of Streetsboro on an as needed basis.
- Community Reinvestment Area maps and reports updated for Ravenna City and Streetsboro.
- Asset mapping tables for 2021 are available at <https://www.portagecounty-oh.gov/asset-mapping>
- Interactive maps were begun for planning and zoning activities involving RPC and are expected to be finalized by end of 2022.
- Maps were created for the 44 Project in Rootstown.
- Hiram Village maps were created for a development project in the Village's southeast quadrant.

## Committees

### Celebrate Portage!

RPC is a core participant in Celebrate Portage! which is a grassroots effort to acknowledge the good to great things that happen in Portage County. Celebrate Portage! has a dinner to recognize people, businesses, and agencies across the County and the good to great deeds that they do. In addition to the dinner, Celebrate Portage! is the primary sponsor of the Ravenna Car Show which had over 3,000 cars and 15,000 spectators in 2021. Finally, we distributed five (5), \$500 Community Grants to support local events that were inclusive to anyone who wanted to participate. Watch out for 2022's line-up of activities!

*Celebrate!*  
PORTAGE!



Ravenna Car Show 2021.

### Grants

#### Coronavirus Emergency Supplemental Funding (CESF) Grant

In February of 2021, Adult Probation was awarded CESF funds of \$53,623.17 for preparation and response to the Coronavirus for any one of the following Program Purpose Areas:

- Law Enforcement Programs
- Adult and Juvenile Corrections
- Community Corrections Probation and Parole
- Court Programs
- Victim Services Programs

#### Ohio TechCred Program

Ohio's TechCred Program gives employers the chance to upskill current and future employees in today's tech-infused economy. Employers who submit successful applications will be reimbursed up to \$2,000 per credential when current or prospective employees complete eligible technology-focused credentials. Portage County received a total \$24,153 to improve current employees' skills.

#### Communities of Support

In June, Portage County received \$50,000 as part of a Communities of Support grant. The grant focused on priorities that are critical to ensure the necessary collaborative cross-system work can best meet the needs of children and families: (1) Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act (CARA) plans of safe care; (2) Qualified Residential Treatment Program (QRTP) level of care assessments; and (3) Community-based aftercare planning for children discharged from residential treatment settings.

#### Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Grant

RPC submitted, on behalf of Portage County Water Resources, a grant related to HB168. Water Resources received approximately \$3.1 million. Projects receiving funds will improve access to clean drinking water and wastewater infrastructure.

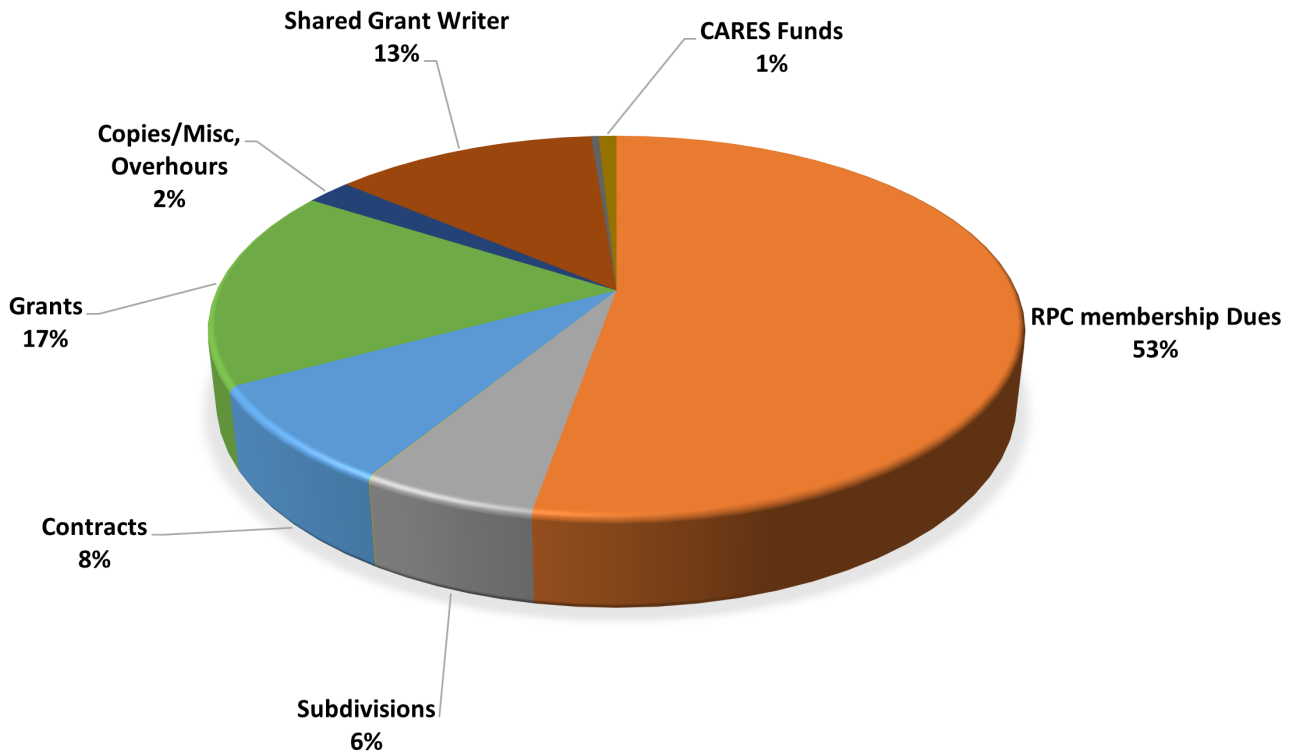
#### Grant Writing and Community Partners

In a year and a half, the shared grant writing position helped to bring in over \$5,000,000 to the County which is a pretty good return on investment.

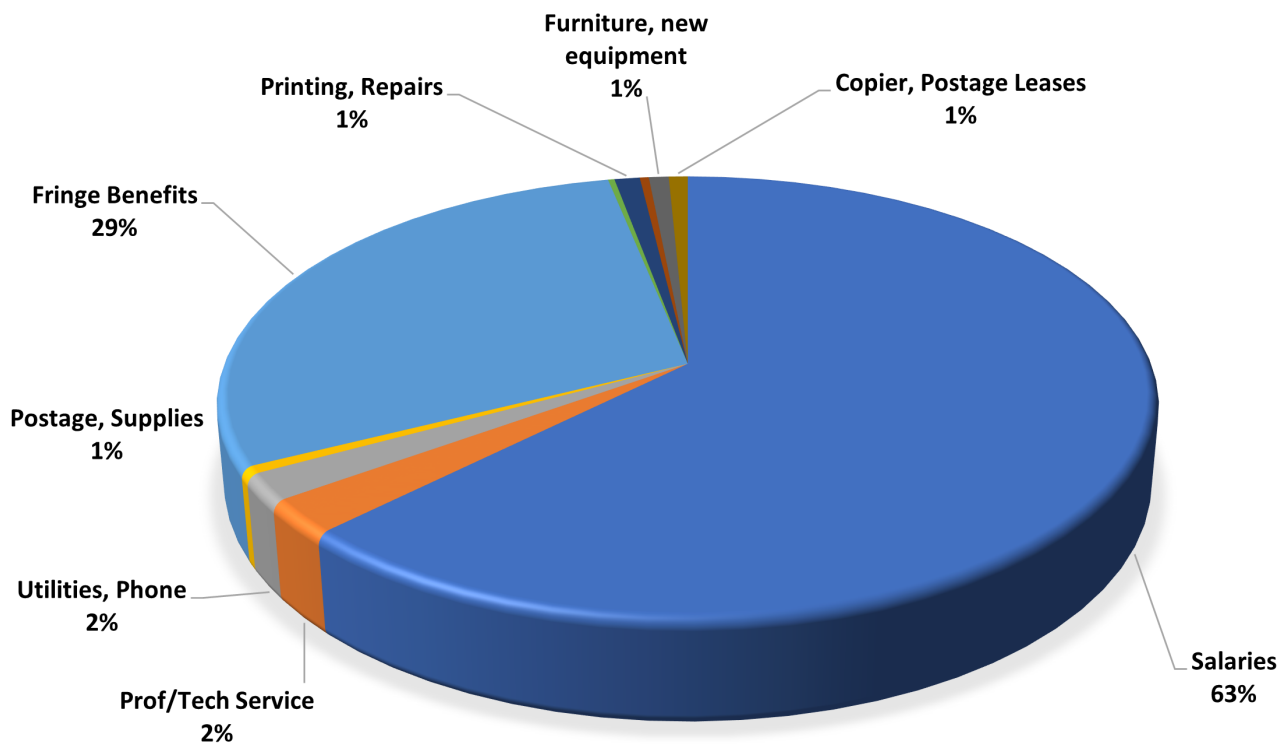


## Financial Report

### 2021 Revenue Sources



### 2021 Expenditures



# Portage County Regional Planning Commission 2021 Financial Report

<b>Beginning Cash Balance</b>		<b>\$49,140.36</b>
<b>REVENUE</b>		
<b>RPC Membership Dues</b>		\$231,959.12
<b>Subdivisions</b>		\$25,995.00
<b>Copies/Misc./Overhours</b>		\$9,402.41
<b>Rental Income</b>		\$120.68
<b>State Grant (Tech Cred)</b>		\$1,580.00
<b>Contracts</b>		
Brimfield Township Land Use Plan	\$3,632.57	
Ravenna City CHIP Fair Housing	\$1,947.89	
Septic Program	\$7,266.56	
Jack W Schafer Trust	\$10,000.00	
Land Bank	\$649.50	
Streetsboro City Admin (2020 Formula Grant)	\$13,219.94	
<b>Total Contracts</b>	<b>\$36,716.46</b>	<b>\$36,716.46</b>
<b>Grants</b>		
2020 CDBG Formula Grant Admin	\$35,648.23	
2020 CDBG Fair Housing	\$8,655.54	
Ravenna City Critical Infrastructure	\$587.16	
Vision Plan	\$11,844.70	
Portage County Comprehensive Plan	\$18,146.57	
<b>Total Grants</b>	<b>\$74,882.20</b>	<b>\$74,882.20</b>
<b>Shared Grant Writer</b>	<b>\$55,197.46</b>	<b>\$55,197.46</b>
<b>Refund/Reimbursement</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>
<b>Care Funds</b>	<b>\$3,711.32</b>	<b>\$3,711.32</b>
<b>TOTAL REVENUE/BUDGET</b>		<b>\$488,705.01</b>

**EXPENDITURES**

Salaries	\$279,745.48
PERS	\$39,034.33
Medicare	\$3,807.89
Workers Comp	\$4,755.54
Unemployment	\$ -
Health Insurance	\$82,905.53
Insurances (bldg & bonds)	\$ -
Maint/Custodial Contract	\$ -
Utilities	\$7,637.42
Telephone	\$1,174.20
Contract Services	\$ -
Professional & Technical Services	\$1,298.00
Audit Services	\$ -
Computer Services	\$ -
Legal Services	\$10,000.00
Repairs (equipment, rental, bldg.)	\$2,315.00
Advertising	\$171.25
Postage	\$450.00
Supplies	\$1,955.96
Photocopying/Printing	\$2,221.39
Dues/Periodicals	\$964.60
Travel/Training	\$1,606.88
Food Supplies	\$ -
Furniture	\$1,449.45
Equipment	\$2,103.19
Copier/Postage Meter Rentals	\$3,395.49
Loan (multi purpose building)	\$ -
Building Improvements	\$ -
Reimbursement/Refund	\$ -
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$446,991.60</b>

**ENDING CASH BALANCE** **\$41,713.41**

\* Unaudited Financial Information

# Members

## Atwater Township

John Kovacich  
Lynn Whittlesey\*

## Brimfield Township

Mike Hlad  
Lauren Coffman\*

## Franklin Township

Joseph Ciccozzi

## Freedom Township

Roy Martin  
Jeffrey Derthick\*

## Garrettsville Village

Mayor Rick Patrick  
Tom Collins\*

## Hiram Township

Steve Pancost  
Jack Groselle\*

## Hiram Village

Robert Dempsey  
Frank Hemphill\*

## Mantua Township

Matthew Benner  
Sandy Engelhart\*

## Mantua Village

Ben Prescott (to 11/16)  
Tammy Meyer (Present)

## Nelson Township

Mike Kortan  
Joe Leonard\*

## Palmyra Township

Sandy Nutter  
Bradley Vaughan\*

## Paris Township

David Kemble  
Dan Spicer\*

## Randolph Township

Victoria Walker  
Susan White\*

## City of Ravenna

Mayor Frank Seman  
Dennis West\*

## 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 (to 11/10)  
Tom Brett (Present)  
Cheree Taylor\*

## PARTA

Clayton Popik  
Denise Baba\*

## Portage County

Vicki Kline  
Sabrina Christian-Bennett  
Matt Adelman\*  
Anthony Badalamenti

## Portage Park District

Allan Orashan  
Chris Craycroft\*

## Water Resources

### Department

John Vence  
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 District  
Habitat for Humanity  
Home Builders  
Association  
NEOMED

\*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

