

Butler County
Commissioners



Cindy Carpenter



Donald L. Dixon



T. C. Rogers



Director Highlights

Director's Highlights

The Butler County economy ended 2023 on a high note with a near record low unemployment rate of 2.8%. In fact, the unemployment rate in Butler County was almost one percentage point better than the State of Ohio and US unemployment rates of 3.7%.

Federal Reserve interest rate hikes cooled residential and commercial construction activity for most of 2023; however, November and December saw an increase in activity compared to the same period in 2022.

Regionally, the area added over 20,000 jobs in 2023, but losses in manufacturing jobs will need to be monitored in 2024. Health care, education, hospitality, and leisure activities saw the most employment gains.

The Port Authority began an ambitious "Strategic Plan" process while engaging with various community leaders to gauge how to best serve their communities.

The Regional Airport hired Josh Clayton as full-time on-site manager. The airport had been without a full-time staff person for six years. Josh has initiated an airport users group aimed at increasing airport traffic, revenue, and service delivery.

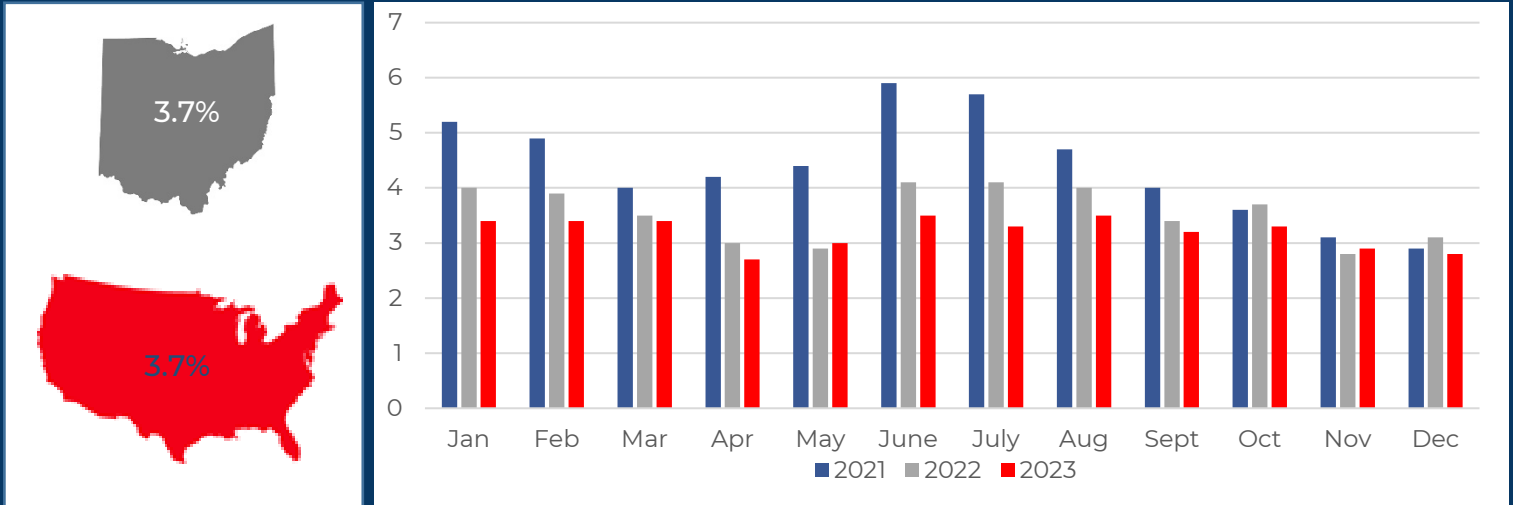
The Planning Division hired Craig Flaute as Planning Administrator. Craig's role is to oversee new subdivision development and staff the Rural Zoning Commission. Additionally, Craig will sever as the Geographic Information System (GIS) specialist for the department.

The Community Development Division distributed nearly all of its \$21 million US Treasury Emergency Rental Assistance funding to assist with rent and utility payments for low-income individuals impacted by COVID. Community Development is working with a consultant on a new HOME Affordable Rental Housing Development program.

Seth Geisler and Land Bank Board submitted two grant applications under the Ohio Department of Development Brownfield Remediation Program and Site Revitalization Program.

- David Fehr

Butler County's unemployment rate at the end of December 2023 was 2.8%. The County rate was almost 1% lower compared to the State of Ohio unemployment rate of 3.7%. The County rate was also better than the U.S. unemployment rate which was also 3.7%



Regional Employment Snapshot – Greater Cincinnati Region

Over-the-Year Change: Wage and salary employment in the Greater Cincinnati Region **increased 21,100 jobs** from December 2022 to December 2023.

Employment in the goods-producing sector increased 400 with gains in construction (+1,200) outpacing losses in manufacturing (-800).

Private service-providing employment increased 16,700 as gains in private educational and health services (+10,400), leisure and hospitality (+10,400), and other services (+1,100) exceeded losses in trade, transportation, and utilities (-2,600), financial activities (-2,300), and information (-300).

Professional and business services did not change over the year.

Government employment increased 4,000 with gains in state (+1,800), local (+1,700) and federal (+500) government.

Over-the-Year (2023) Change: Cincinnati Metropolitan Statistical Area

In Ohio: Brown, Butler, Clermont, Hamilton and Warren Counties. In Indiana: Dearborn, Ohio, and Union Counties. In Kentucky: Boone, Bracken, Campbell, Gallatin, Grant, Kenton and Pendleton Counties.

Construction	+1,200 jobs
Manufacturing	-800 jobs
Trade, Trans, and Utilities	-2,600 jobs
Information	-300 jobs
Financial Activities	-2,300 jobs
Professional and Business Svc	0 gain/loss
Educational and Health Svc	+10,400 jobs
Leisure and Hospitality	+10,400 jobs
Other Services	+1,100 jobs
Federal Government	+500 jobs
State Government	+1,800 jobs
Local Government	+1,700 jobs
Net Gain	+21,100 jobs

Companies with Existing Enterprise Zone Agreements

Company	Investment	Job Creation per Agreement	Actual Jobs Created	Jobs Retained
Planes Moving and Storage, LLC	\$2,692,053	30	33	227
Systecon Inc.	\$2,100,000	18	26	87
GE Aviation	\$40,000,000	0	1,122	1,400
Republic Wire #2(2)	\$46,000,000	40	N/A	160
RV Nation	\$5,550,000	24	24	50
Kemba Credit Union	\$33,687,038	40	67	175
Carvana *(1)	\$35,000,000	400 (200 YR 1)	226	0
Queen City Harley-Davidson	\$6,100,000	5	5	41
Magnode	\$72,600,000	171	171	275
Midwest Filtration *(2)	\$3,095,000	5	N/A	71
Total	\$246,824,091	733	1,674	2,483

*(1) Company has three years to create jobs

*(2) New agreement, will report next year

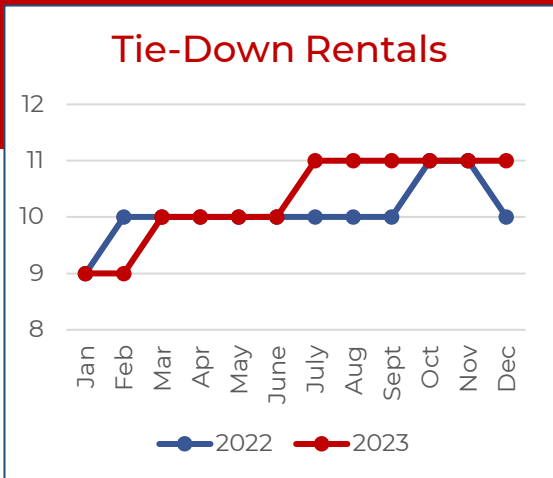
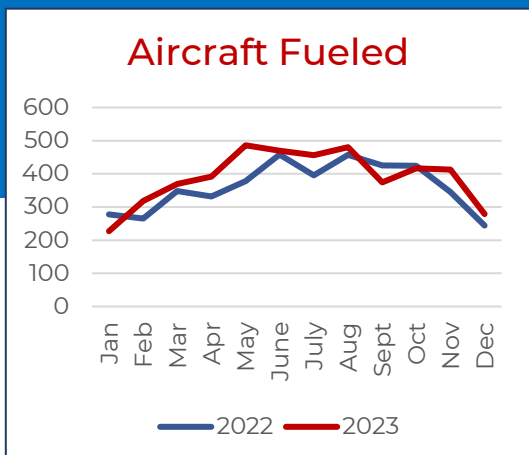
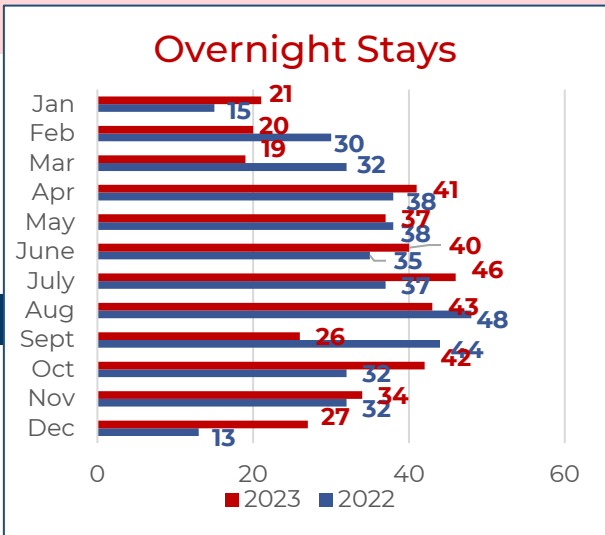
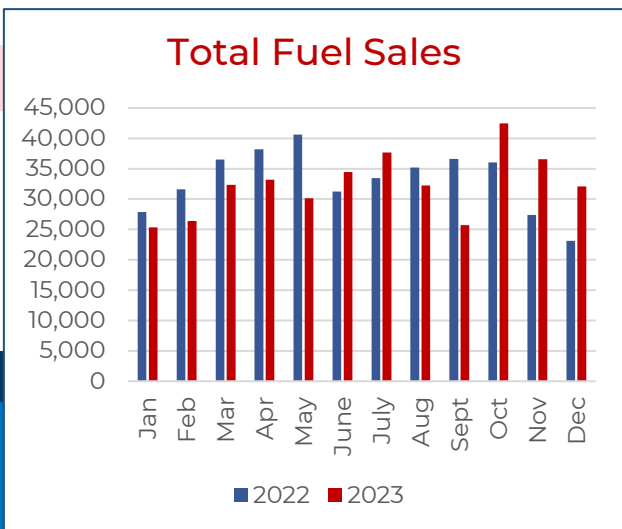
Republic Wire Continues to Grow

A copper and aluminum electrical building wire manufacturer is preparing to finally break ground on a major expansion project.

The newest expansion began in July 2023 and will be completed by July 2024. This will be the construction of a 320,000 square foot distribution and office facility in West Chester, OH. This new phase will create 40 new full time permanent job opportunities during the job creation phase, all while retaining 160 full time permanent jobs at the project site. Butler County granted the enterprise a 60% tax exemption for eligible real property improvements made to the project site for a 7-year exemption. This new project will be a \$46 million minimum investment.



Butler County Regional Airport – Hogan Field



More than 30 historic T-34 airplanes from around the US converged at the Butler County Regional Airport in June prior to the Dayton Airshow.



US Congressman Warren Davidson takes a tour of the Butler County Regional Airport.



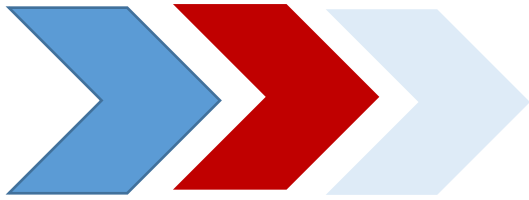


The Port Authority engaged with consultant Emil Liszniansky with Envision Group LLC. to craft a multi-year Strategic Plan for the Port Authority. Through a series of local government, business leaders, board members and stakeholder meetings, a Strategic Plan was crafted to provide a roadmap for the Port Authority. The draft plan was completed in December 2023 with the goal of formal adopting in 2024.

RECOMMENDATIONS & ACTION PLAN

The results of stakeholder engagement and assessment process demonstrate the need for BCFA to act in four thematic focus areas:

- **Invest** in a dedicated staff hire employed by BCFA and new service offerings for financial assistance leading to increased program revenue fees.
- **Administer** clear and transparent procedures investments along with project monitoring requirements and annual reporting showcasing the key performance metrics.
- **Promote** the new BCFA brand through a new website highlighting expanded service offerings, while marketing the new toolkit to prospective developers, and advocating for state and federal policy and investment that support Butler County as an economic engine.
- **Facilitate** the regular convening of local economic development partners and provide technical assistance in support of site assembly and readiness efforts



FAIRFIELD
TRADE CENTER



The Port Authority closed on \$57 million dollar **Fairfield Trade Center** constructed by NorthPoint Development. Located in the City of Fairfield on 83 acres of ground, the project will consist of two buildings totaling 609,000 sq.ft. When completed, the project is expected to bring 312 jobs and \$11.6 million in payroll to the City.

Land Bank

2023 Accomplishments

The Land Bank demolished 32 residential and commercial properties in 2023. Including this vacant commercial building in Middletown (BOTTOM LEFT). This property on Young Street had been vacant and tax delinquent before the land bank was able to clear the lot and transfer it to the City of Middletown for future residential development.

In total the Land Bank administered over \$650,000 in demolition and environmental projects in 2023. Total expenses in 2023 was \$747,004 and income was \$876,640, a total net gain of over \$129,000 to be used for future blight and environmental cleanup.



(ABOVE) The Butler County Land Bank was able to grant the City of Hamilton funds for the removal of abandoned gas tanks at the site of the city's new Justice Center. This allowed the project to stay on budget and on time.



(ABOVE) The Butler County Land Bank received the Ohio Auditor of the State Award for FY22.



BEFORE

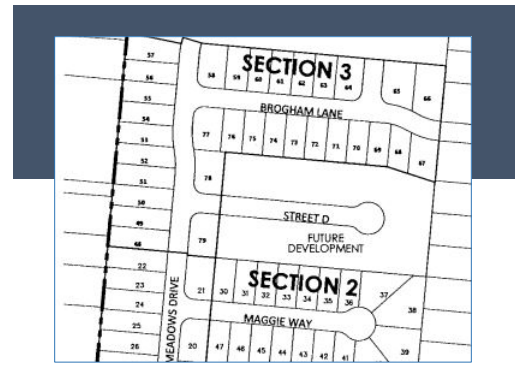
AFTER



Now: Clean lot ready for commercial use

Planning

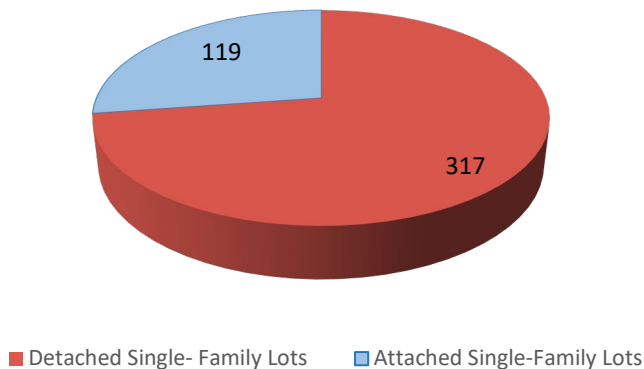
2023 proved to be another successful year for planning in Butler County. Overall, twenty-five zone changes, eleven re-plats, four preliminary plats and sixteen final plats were heard by the Butler County Planning Commission. With these, there were a mixture of developments consisting of single family residential, townhomes, multi-family, commercial and so much more.



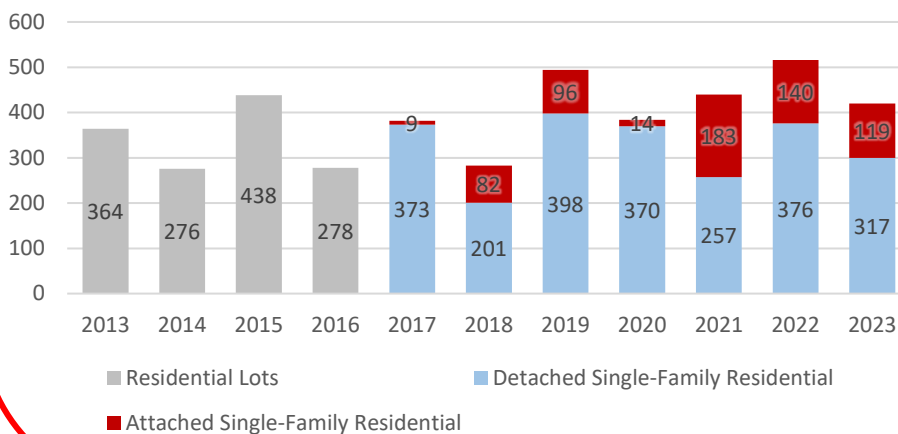
Development Areas

Freedom Pointe in Liberty Township has continued to see great growth with additional commercial lots being expanded in the area. Four new preliminary plans have brought 182 residential lots through the county. The diverse building types in the County provides housing availability to a large range of ages including new home buyers and retirees. Along with the new developments came zone changes, showing the ever-growing county with the new challenges of today. With these zone changes, land can be accommodated to be suited to the area and provide the best development to that unique area of the county.

2023 Residential Lots



Recorded Residential Lots



The Community Development Division administers more than \$1.2 million in Community Development Block Grant Funds, more than \$900,000 in HOME Funds, \$1.7 million in CDBG-CV funds, over \$550,000 in CoC funds to aid the homeless and over \$21 million in US Treasury Emergency Rental Assistance. These funds are used for a variety of local programs as selected by the Board of Commissioners.

Location	Project	Costs	Status
City of Fairfield	State Route 4 Sidewalks	\$130,000	Complete
City of Oxford	College at Elm Site Improvements	\$130,000	Complete
Village of Millville	Curb and Storm Pipe Repair	\$89,624	Under Construction
Village of Seven Mile	Catch Basin Repairs	\$233,075	Complete
Village of Jacksonburg	Curb and Catch Basin Repair	\$74,500	Under Construction
Reilly Township	Walking & Fitness Trail	\$31,000	Complete
Milford Township	Community Center Improvements	\$81,499	Complete
Hanover Township	Community Center Parking Lot	\$124,000	Complete
County-Wide	SELF Emergency Home Repair	\$75,000	Complete
County-Wide	BCRTA Job Shuttle	\$25,000	Complete
County-Wide	Demolition Program	\$30,000	Complete
County-Wide	Fair Housing	\$15,000	Complete
County-Wide	SELF Volunteer Home Repair	\$24,955	Complete

Family Assistance 2023	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Emergency Home Repairs	4	7	5	4	0	0	2	2	3	2	0	0	29
Down Payment Assistance	2	0	2	1	5	3	3	5	2	1	1	1	26



Community Development



HOME & CDBG-CV Funds

These photos are of HOME and CDBG-CV projects. CDBG-CV funds have been utilized to install new playground equipment, creating a pocket park on Milton Street in Fairfield Township. HOME funds have been utilized to construct two single-family affordable homes and the new YWCA Hamilton facility.

One of the homes constructed by Habitat for Humanity volunteers is picture below. The homes are in the City of Oxford and were purchased by low-to-moderate-income first-time homebuyers in April 2023.

The new YWCA Hamilton facility is at 1570 Grand Boulevard, Hamilton, OH and includes 45 permanent supportive housing apartments and 15 domestic violence emergency shelter units.



Building & Zoning

'Mega' Bass Pro set to open Spring 2024 in West Chester

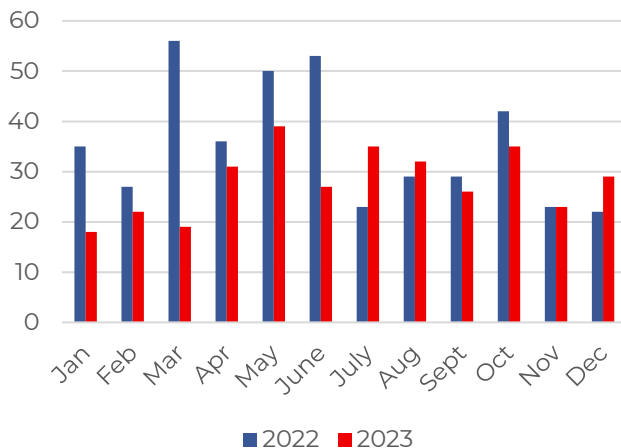


The new 'Mega' Bass Pro Shop is set to open Spring 2024 and will feature a 20,000 square foot restaurant, hand-painted murals depicting local scenery, a large aquarium stocked with native fish species and a boat showroom sure to wow everyone.

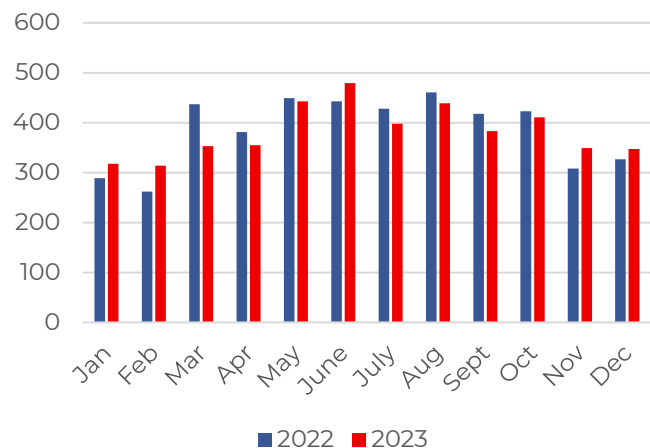
Within walking distance from Top Golf and Main Event, this new 'Mega' Bass Pro Shop will surely add to the exciting ambiance of the Streets of West Chester and bring more revenue to the area.

Although it's sad to see the old Bass Pro in Forest Park go, it's an exciting time for the Streets of West Chester to gain such a solid addition.

Single Family Building Permits

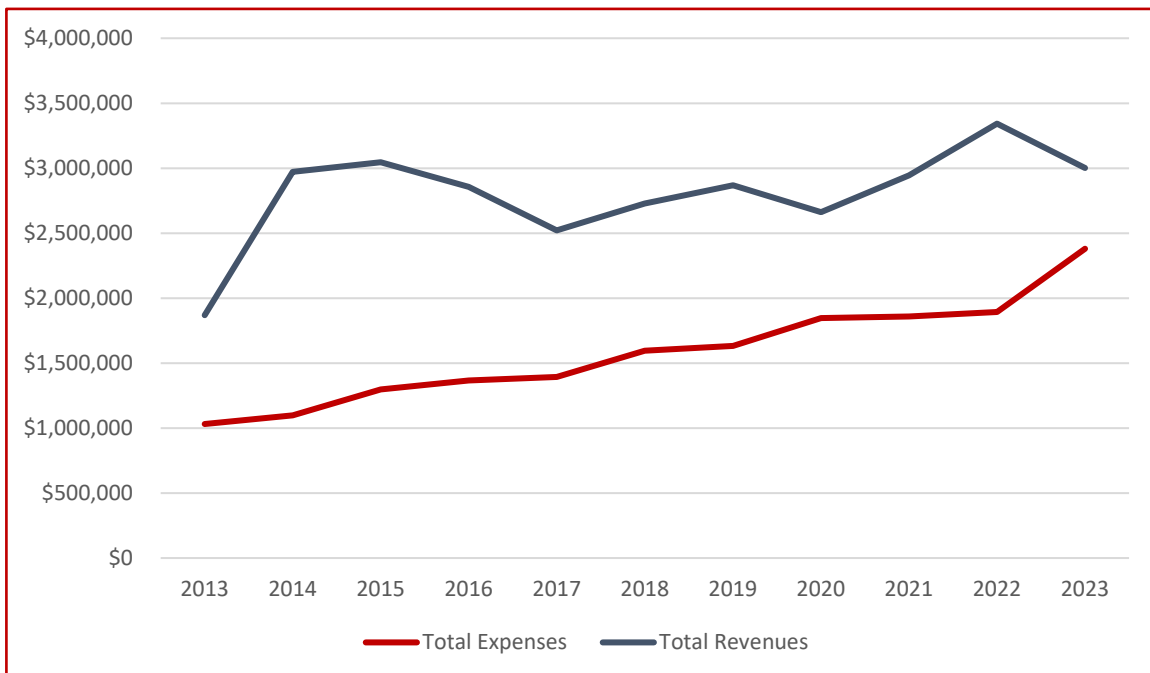


Commercial Building Permits



Annual Revenues and Expenses 2013-2023

Year	Total Expenses	Total Revenues	Yield
2013	\$1,031,449	\$1,868,827	\$837,378
2014	\$1,098,238	\$2,972,284	\$1,874,046
2015	\$1,297,385	\$3,047,009	\$1,749,624
2016	\$1,367,132	\$2,857,478	\$1,490,346
2017	\$1,392,697	\$2,520,374	\$1,127,677
2018	\$1,595,390	\$2,729,406	\$1,133,016
2019	\$1,633,112	\$2,869,337	\$1,236,225
2020	\$1,846,814	\$2,662,060	\$815,246
2021	\$1,859,606	\$2,944,379	\$1,084,773
2022	\$1,894,303	\$3,342,770	\$1,448,467
2023	\$2,380,258	\$3,002,441	\$622,183
Total:	\$17,396,384	\$30,816,365	\$13,418,981





DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT,
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
David Fehr



BUILDING & ZONING
ADMINISTRATOR
Dennis Dickard



AIRPORT MANAGER
Josh Clayton



ZONING & FLOODPLAIN
MANAGER
Uche Adigwe



BUILDING & ELECTRICAL MANAGER
Chris Oliver



ELECTRICAL INSPECTOR
Randall Grizzle

ELECTRICAL INSPECTOR



BUILDING INSPECTOR
Harold Spellman



BUILDING INSPECTOR
Jason Cummins

PLANS EXAMINER

PLANS EXAMINER



PERMIT SPECIALIST II
Elaine Messerman



PERMIT SPECIALIST I
Deseray Alcorn



PERMIT SPECIALIST I
Rebecca Cooper



PERMIT SPECIALIST I
Heather Jestice



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATOR
Susan Ellerhorst



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PLANNING ADMINISTRATOR
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ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY



DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM COORDINATOR
Brenda Todd-Finnell



DEVELOPMENT SPECIALIST LAND BANK
Seth Geisler





Butler County

— DEVELOPMENT —