



CITY OF CHILLICOTHE

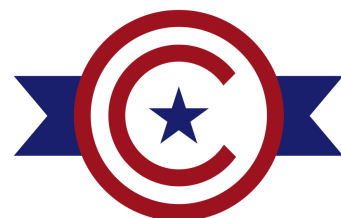
# PLANNING DEPARTMENT

2022 ANNUAL REPORT

LUKE FEENEY, MAYOR

ASTI POWELL,  
DIRECTOR OF PLANNING  
& DEVELOPMENT

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# OVERVIEW

The Planning Department was established in 2022 through a full-time Director of Planning & Development. Below is a brief overview of the major projects assigned to the department in the first year, with more detailed information through the remainder of this annual report.

**Comprehensive Plan**- Chillicothe's last comprehensive plan was completed in 1948. Since then, the City has experienced significant growth and change. The Choose Chillicothe process set to create, with the community, a new, modern comprehensive plan for the City of Chillicothe.

**Ross County Land Bank** - A separate entity from the city, the Land Bank was revived in 2022, led by the Planning Director and Chaired by Mayor Feeney, to improve the quality of neighborhoods.

**Community Engagement** - Following the success of the Innovation Track, the Planning Department was tasked with embedding community engagement across departments and increasing access to engagement opportunities for residents.

**American Rescue Plan Act Funding** - Chillicothe received \$2.2 million in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds in response to the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency. The Planning Department led the development of the spending plan based on community input.

**Department Support/Grants** - The Planning Director worked across Departments to bring in nearly \$7M in grants to support citywide operations.

Lastly, the Planning Department presented best practices and case stories from the City of Chillicothe through several different **speaking engagements**:

- American Planning Association (APA) Central Ohio Conference
- Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana APA Planning Conference
- Center for Public Impact Innovation Track Program
- Center for Public Impact Activating Innovation Program



# COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Choose Chillicothe



A comprehensive plan is a strategic guide that expresses the values and aspirations of a community and sets forth a long-range vision and actions for development, housing, environment, economic development, transportation, and related topics. Chillicothe's last comprehensive plan was completed in 1948. Since then, the City has experienced significant growth and change. The Choose Chillicothe process set to create a new, modern comprehensive plan for the City of Chillicothe.

Public input was fundamental in the 12-month process. A 38-person Steering Committee representing the diversity of the community was selected to drive the process and hundreds of residents, stakeholders, and community leaders contributed their energy and ideas throughout the year at more than 10 engagement opportunities.

The result is a collaborative vision for the city, a set of seven goals and 73 plan actions, and three

concept site plans to be completed over the next 10 years.

**Vision:** Leadership then and now. Chillicothe celebrates its history while striding forward, eagerly led by a community with culture, health, education, financial security, and quality of life.

## Goals

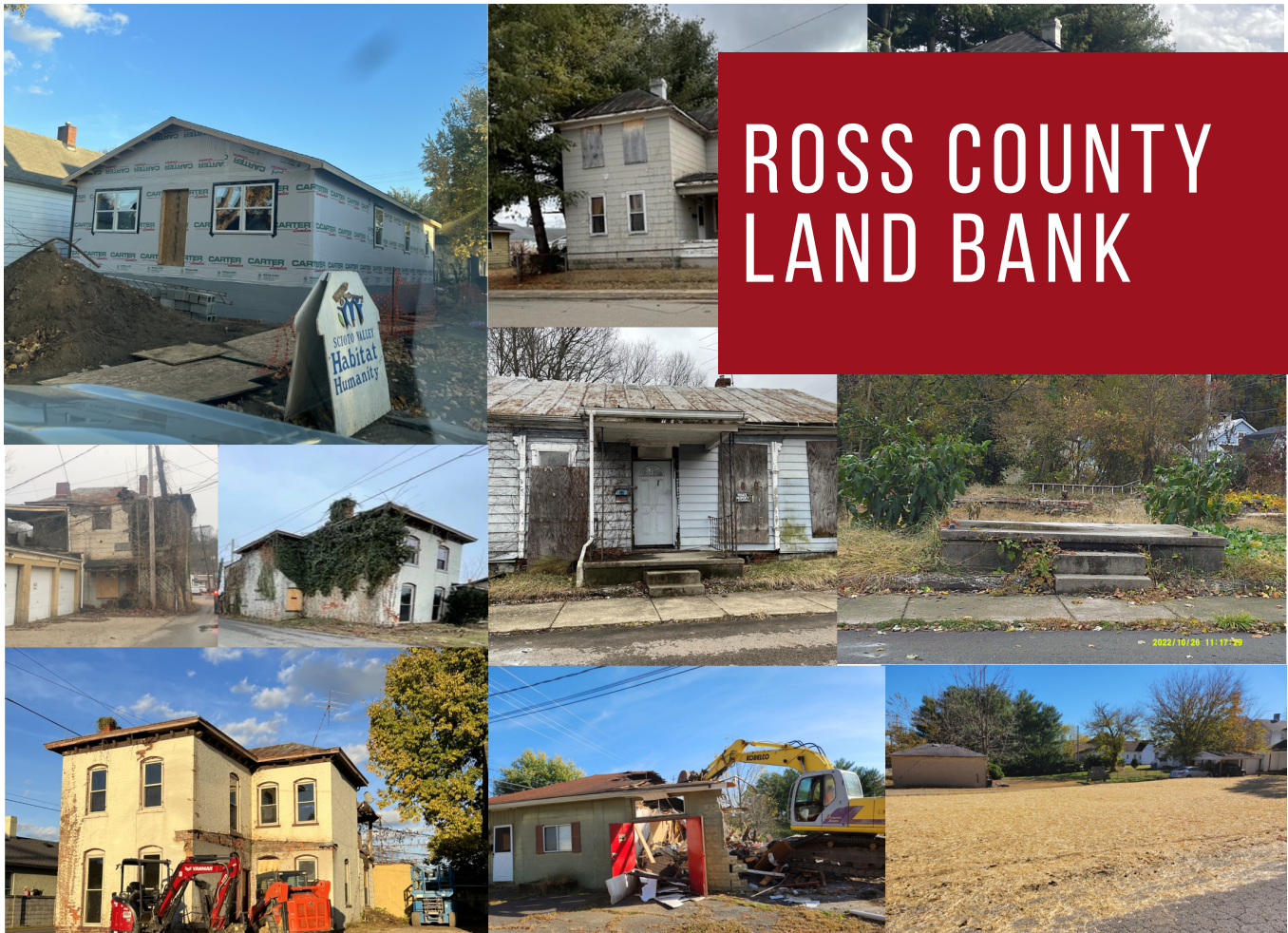
1. Guide (Land Use)
2. Flourish (Public Health)
3. Reside (Housing)
4. Experience (Public Amenities)
5. Thrive (Economic Development)
6. Link (Transportation)
7. Achieve (Implementation)

## Concept Plans

- Riverside District
- Tiffin Property
- Yoctangee Park

The comprehensive plan can be viewed on the city's website.





The Ross County Land Reutilization Corporation (Ross County Land Bank) works to improve the quality of neighborhoods, increase land values, create diverse housing opportunities, and return properties to the tax rolls. While a separate entity from the city, the Land Bank is led by the city's Planning Director and the Board is chaired by Mayor Feeney.

In 2022, the Land Bank received two grants to eliminate blight and revitalize neighborhoods.

First, the Land Bank was awarded a **\$629,800 from the Building Demolition & Site Revitalization Program** to demolish 28 blighted and vacant residential properties and the Westerly Wastewater Treatment Plant. Utilizing this grant has assisted the City in code enforcement and resolving blighted properties that have been of issue for many years.

At the end of 2022, a \$743,756 Brownfield Remediation Fund grant was awarded to assess

and/or remediate four Brownfields in Ross County. Additionally, the Land Bank received a technical assistance grant through MORPC to complete a Phase II Environmental Assessment at the CSX Property off Main Street.

In addition to demolition and remediation, the Land Bank also disposed of several properties during 2022. One property was donated to the Scioto Township, one property was donated to the Ross County Commissioners to support the Lucy Webb Hayes Heritage Center, and a third property was donated to the **Scioto Valley Habitat for Humanity** to build home #35. Each of these properties previously housed blighted residential structures on them that were demolished in previous years and greened. Two additional vacant properties were purchased by Habitat for Humanity for future builds and nine vacant lots remained available to the public for sale at the end of 2022.



# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

## Help us design the new Sixth Ward Neighborhood Park!

We're exploring adding a new park in the Sixth Ward! Share your input on what the park could look like.

FINISHED



## American Rescue Plan: Think Big Chillicothe

We want to hear from you! The City of Chillicothe has received \$2.2M in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds in response to COVID-19 Public Health Emergency. Learn about the US Treasury guidance on these funds and share your input on how to allocate them.



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## Complete Streets

Complete Streets are streets that safely

FINISHED



## Chillicothe Trolley

Let us know how and where you'd like to

FINISHED



## Choose Chillicothe

Choose Chillicothe is a community-driven

In 2021, the City went through a year-long process through the Bloomberg Harvard Leadership Initiative to redesign the transit system. The program taught the team to apply human-centered design to big challenges in the city, and showed great success in providing higher quality services for the community. In 2022, the Planning Department focused on embedding that approach throughout departments.

In addition to hosting various in-person engagement opportunities, the Planning Department launched a new online engagement dashboard, **Engage Chillicothe**. The platform provides residents with a central online hub where they can learn about ongoing City projects and initiatives, share ideas, discuss proposals with fellow community members, and make their voice heard on the issues that matter to them.

The goal of the Engage Chillicothe platform is to

include the community more inclusively and more often in local decision-making processes and to increase transparency about how decisions are made. Residents and stakeholders can use Engage Chillicothe to get informed, ask questions, and provide feedback about City initiatives.

The dashboard launch with four projects and will continued to be used across departments, providing residents an opportunity to engage when and where they have time and stay up to date on key projects.

Since launching, the platform had nearly 300 residents enroll and more than 900 unique visitors.

All residents are invited and encouraged to make an online account by visiting **[engage.chillicotheoh.gov](https://engage.chillicotheoh.gov)**



# AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT

The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) is a \$1.9 trillion federal rescue plan designed to help communities recover from the economic and health impacts of COVID-19. Chillicothe received \$2,275,403 in ARPA Funds. Following the announcement of ARPA funds, the Administration identified several areas of high need from regular community feedback, existing plans, and local data to facilitate the conversation on how to best spend the ARAP funds.

First, four two-hour in-person brainstorming sessions called Think Big, Chillicothe were hosted. Residents were asked to share their ideas on how to improve the community as it related to education, economic development, housing, parks and public spaces, city infrastructure and services, and health. During those sessions, **more than 300 ideas** from community residents were collected. Those in attendance were asked to vote for their favorite ideas of the night.

Next, the top 15 ideas from the Think Big, Chillicothe sessions were shared in detailed on

the City's online engagement platform, Engage Chillicothe. The community was asked to prioritize spending around these projects through a **participatory budgeting exercise**.

Finally, a spending plan was presented to City Council for approval, allocating funds to 10 projects:

- **Stormwater, Sidewalk Repair**
- **Fire Dept Radios**
- **City Park Upgrades**
- **Improved Lighting in Parks & Public Spaces**
- **Amphitheatre/Amory**
- **Homelessness Assistance**
- **Home Repair**
- **Affordable Housing**
- **Basic Life Skills**

Implementation for these projects is set for 2023-2024. Progress on these projects can be tracked at [engage.chillicotheoh.gov](https://engage.chillicotheoh.gov).



# CITYWIDE GRANTS + OPPORTUNITIES



The Planning Department provided departmental support through grant writing. The City received over \$6.8M in grant funds through the Planning Department in 2022 and several in-kind awards.

**Ready to Launch Grant - Transit - \$75,000** - Supported the on-demand transit pilot including covering salary and fringe for drivers, tablet upgrades, software, and marketing and advertising of the new service.

**FTA 5311, 5339, and OTPP Grants - Transit - \$3,560,896** - These funds provided normal operating support for the Transit Department including capital items and implementing the on-demand service fulltime.

**COPS De-escalation Grant - Police - \$200,000** - These funds supported the purchase of a de-escalation simulator and to fund a Licensed Social Worker for two years in the Police Department.

**COPS Violent Crimes Grant - Police - \$1,600,000** - Grant funds increase police staffing by eight officers, provided retention bonuses to the Police Department, sign-on bonuses, and recruitment materials.

**Building Demolition & Site Revitalization Program - Land Bank - \$629,800 + Brownfield Remediation Fund - Land Bank - \$743,756** - Discussed under the Ross County Land Bank section of this report.

**OhioSE Prepared Communities** - Facilitated by Bricker and Eckler LLP, the provided a strategic action set to address unique economic development needs of the city.

**City Health Dashboard** - The City of Chillicothe was added to the City Health Dashboard, providing data from national sources at the city and, where possible, census tract level.

**Small Nation Technical Assistance** - Small Nation consultants provided a Downtown Development Assessment including two storefront renderings allowing the city to bring together public, private, and nonprofit entities together to discuss continuing growth of our Downtown.





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**Engage.ChillicotheOH.Gov**