



# **Village of Covington, Ohio**

## **Strategic Plan and Vision**

Originally adopted May 17, 2021

Last Updated: May 31, 2022

# **Village of Covington, Ohio**

## **Strategic Plan and Vision - 2022**

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# **Executive Summary**

## **Introduction:**

Covington is a village in Miami County, Ohio and was incorporated in 1835 on the site of the 1793 Fort Rowdy. Laid out in 1816, Covington was previously known under the names of Friendship, Newberry, and Stillwater. A post office called Stillwater was established in 1825 and changed to the name of Covington in 1836.

Today, Covington is a quiet, warm and friendly community which embraces small-town values. It is an agricultural and environmental community due to the surrounding farms and beautiful natural landscapes of the Stillwater River and Greenville Falls.

Covington is represented by six elected council members and one elected mayor who set the goals, objectives, and vision for the Village's future. This document is intended to formalize that strategic vision into easily understandable concepts and allow for the Village to track its success at completing objectives and meeting the expectations of its residents and business owners.

This Strategic plan is intended to be updated once a year, preferably in the first quarter of the year, to allow a clear understanding of the vision of the Village for that year.

The original Village of Covington Strategic Plan was adopted May 17, 2021. When updated, each date of modification will be listed below:

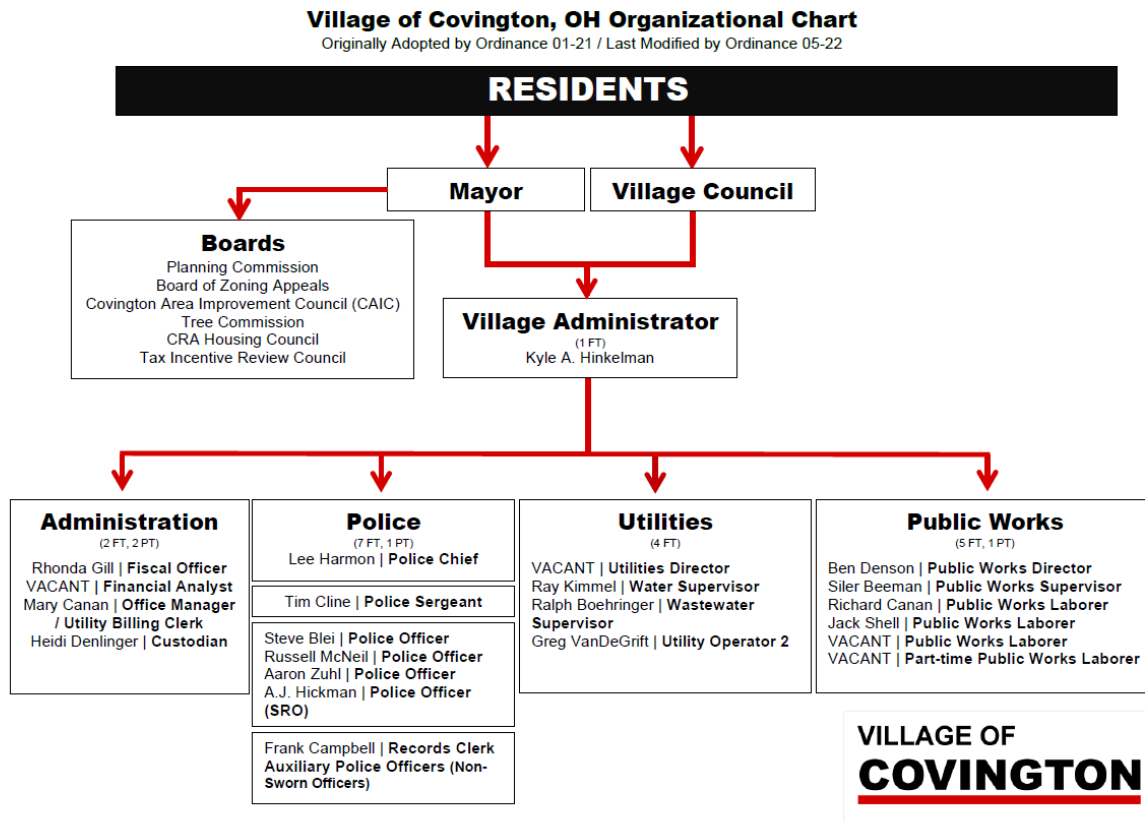
- Original Adoption – May 21, 2021
- 1<sup>st</sup> Update – May 31, 2022

## **Departments:**

Covington provides services to its residents, businesses, and visitors with an efficient organization made up of the following departments:

- Administration
  - Finance / Tax
  - Planning & Zoning
- Police
- Village Services
  - Public Works (Streets, Trash, Parks)
  - Utilities (Water, Wastewater)
- Covington Fire and Rescue (associated)

## Staffing:



Over the last year the Village has reevaluated the staffing of the Utilities and Public Works Departments and has had one resignation.

The Village currently has 3 full-time, and 2 Part-time employees within the Administration Department, 6 full-time sworn Police Officers with one police administrative staff, 3 full-time utilities employees, and 5 full-time public works employees for a total of 18 full-time and 2 part-time employees.

## Strategic Priorities and Vision Statements

As part of the adoption of this Strategic Plan and Visioning document we have adopted a clear vision statement and stated our main values. This strategic plan is intended to prioritize objectives, create goals, and have benchmarks to show the changes as they are being made. This document is intended to act as a consistent reminder, both internally for Village Staff, and externally for the residents and businesses of Covington, of the direction the Village is moving.

### **Vision**

“To provide services to residents, businesses, and civic organizations that are cost-effective, transparent and responsible. The Village will continue to enhance the quality of life for those in who live here while keeping the small-town character that is beloved.”



## **Our Values**

Both the vision and all the Village's priorities are founded on the following basic values that guide all of the actions of the Village and reflect what is expected from employees and elected officials:

### **Authentic.**

The Village of Covington has a character that needs to be prioritized. This is not just how the buildings are constructed and how the Village has grown over the years. This is in HOW these changes occur. The Village will prioritize growth and development only when it is authentic to the Village and builds on the proud history we hold dear.

### **Transparent, Open, and Honest Government.**

Covington will always provide open and fair processes in its dealings with residents, businesses, and visitors. The Village will hold public meetings on a regular basis and make those meetings available to be viewed later. The Village and its employees will use social media and its website to publish and report as much information as is available to the public. The Village will explain why decisions are made, so the community can understand the impacts.

### **Managed Services.**

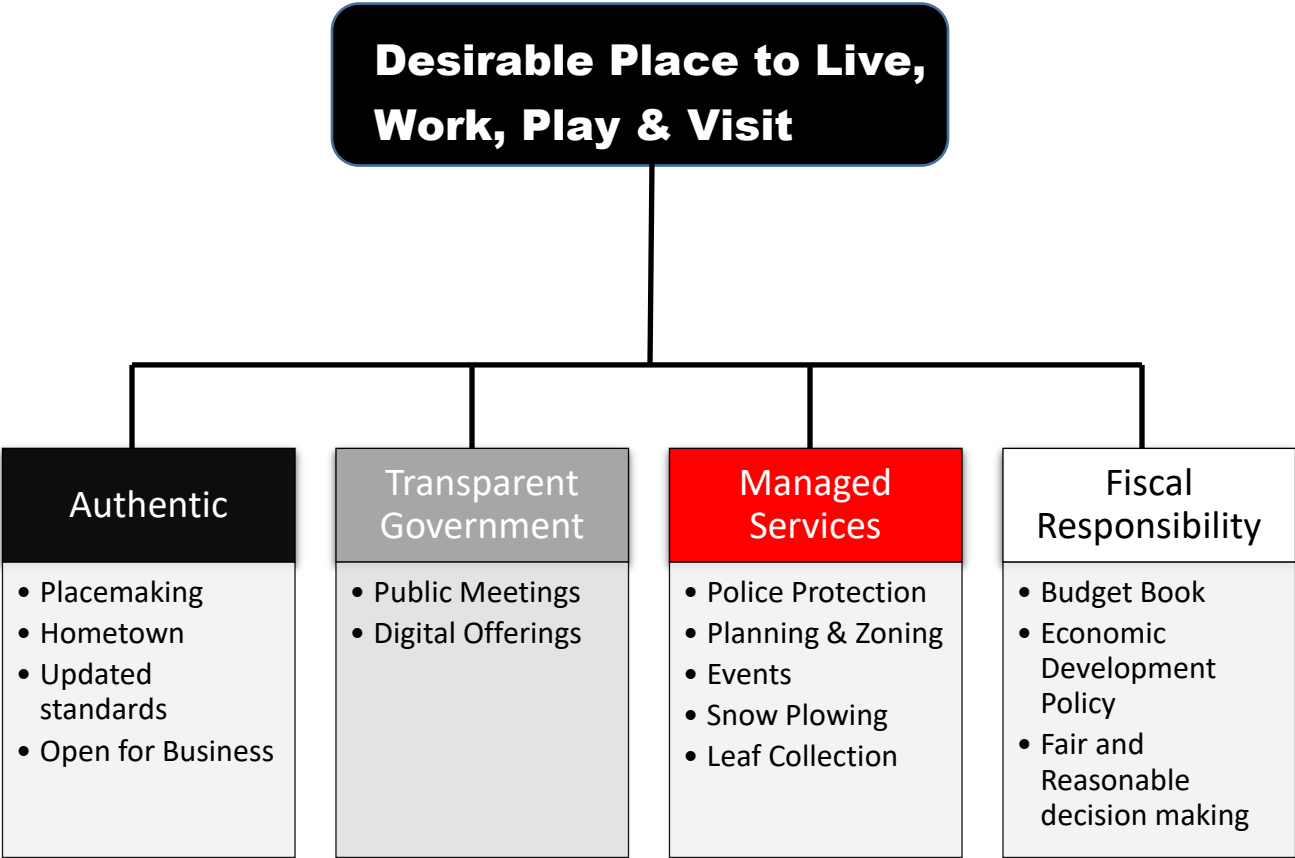
The Village provides services to all residents, businesses, and non-profits. It is our goal to make sure those services being provided are the most efficient services in terms of low cost, high quality service. That is reflected in the Village employees' attitude towards the work, in the effort to reduce costs and spending where possible, and in the budgetary framework that prioritizes replacement of defective or deficient equipment that costs the Village over time.

### **Fiscal Responsibility.**

The Village and its employees will always hold the responsibility of using public resources as immensely important. The Village will balance its annual spending and look for ways to bring in new revenue sources to strengthen our bottom line. The Village will publish a Budget Book for each year that clearly walks through the purchases for the year, the budget line items and the previous year's expenses and revenues. Covington will provide high quality services while being cognizant and efficient with the funds we are provided.

# Strategic Framework

In the end, all the efforts the Village will go to in order to plan, implement, and achieve whatever goals are set out is because of the constant desire to create a place that people want to live, work, play and visit. The vision statement along with this concept help to guide our values.





## Goals and Benchmarks

As part of the Strategic Plan and Visioning for the Village, the four components below are generally the categories that will cover all future planning efforts of the community. Each component will be detailed, and specific benchmarks will be established to help to judge if efforts are being completed to meet these categories intent.

### **Authentic**

The Village of Covington is a unique place where priorities mix. The Village will continue to put policies and regulations in place that enhance the built environment, while protecting our agricultural and undeveloped areas. Village Staff will work to bring high quality development that meets the needs of our growing community but keeps our hometown character.

### **Transparent, Open, and Honest Government**

The Village of Covington strives to provide government that is open, transparent, and efficient for our community. The Village will always make policy decisions that are for the betterment of the community in the long term, without leveraging the short-term priorities that are necessary.

### **Managed Services**

The Village of Covington will work to become a better managed community. This will be accomplished by assuring that the Village focuses on its own people and the priorities of the Village residents, businesses, and non-profits. The Village will actively search for ways to better provide services and plan for future needs in the Village.

### **Fiscal Responsibility**

The Village of Covington strives to provide government that is open, transparent, and efficient for our community. The Village will always make policy decisions that are for the betterment of the community in the long term, without leveraging the short-term priorities that are necessary.



# Authentic

## Goals:

1. Incorporate the new brand into the Village signage, design elements, and throughout various opportunities.
2. Review, update and maintain the Zoning Code to assure the highest level of development within the Village, including detailed development standards.
3. Survey residents, community members, and businesses to determine what they value the most about living, working, and recreating in the Village.
4. Create master plans to clearly layout the future priorities of development in the Village.
5. Maintain standards, specifications, and design criteria to provide quality service while maintaining costs.
6. Create a Downtown Master Plan that clearly states the vision for the new streetscape along High Street once the 2022 roadway project is completed.

## Benchmarks

Measure	Target Date	Responsibility	
1	Update the Zoning Ordinance to include updated sections on topics relevant to the Village.	Ongoing	Administration / P&Z
2	Create a detailed Downtown Development District / Master Plan that has unique standards and requirements for maintenance, upkeep, and future development.	2022-2023	Administration / P&Z
3	Complete a Village survey that asks questions about growth for the Village and development of the Village.	2022-2023	Administration / P&Z
4	Create a Comprehensive Plan for the Village of Covington that documents the Village and provides a guide to future development.	Ongoing	Administration / P&Z

# Transparent, Open, and Honest Government.

## Goals:

1. Continue to develop the Village website and social media platforms to provide more information to the residents, businesses, and community partners.
2. Create procedures for all financial, human resources, and other Village processes that are clear, concise, and transparent.
3. Adopt a budget for the next fiscal year in November or December of the year prior, with a budget priority meeting held in October.
4. Broaden the Capital Improvement Projects and Equipment Replacement Fund objectives to manage future needs.
5. Create a Facilities Management Plan to clearly identify the needs of the Village related to land, buildings, equipment, and growth.
6. Make taxes, fees, bills, and all other costs more transparent in why they exist and detail what they are paying for.

## Benchmarks

Measure	Target Date	Responsibility	
1	Create internal procedures for all job descriptions and workflow processes at the Village.	Ongoing	All Departments
2	Create a dashboard that clearly shows where taxes are going in the Village of Covington.	2022	Administration
3	Update Open CheckBook and make sure it is easily accessible to the general public.	2022	Administration
4	Make Council Meetings easier to understand, to participate in, and provide feedback on by the general public.	2022	Administration
5	Create a Facilities Master Plan that identifies priorities related to land acquisition, building construction, and equipment needs	2022	Administration

# Managed Services

## Goals:

1. Provide additional services to the general public like notary services.
2. Create an online database for issuing complaints or concerns about roadway, sidewalk, and other infrastructure issues.
3. Create more planning efforts in the Village including studying future growth, service needs, and facility needs.
4. Have the Village of Covington be a more visual presence throughout the community, through branding, wayfinding, and placemaking.
5. Create new programs that help to support residents and businesses update their properties.

## Benchmarks

	Measure	Target Date	Responsibility
1	Develop and publish infrastructure standards for all roadways, catch basins, sidewalks, parks, and other infrastructure.	2022	Village Services
2	Update and confirm roadway repavement schedule annually	Ongoing	Village Services
3	Create a schedule of improvements for current park amenities.	Ongoing	Village Services
4	Create a comprehensive wayfinding signage package.	2022	Administration
5	Sidewalk Program	Spring 2023	Administration
6	Dedicate at least \$100,000 annually to the paving or repaving of streets within the Village.	Ongoing	Village Services / Administration
7	Creation of a Home or Business Improvement Program that allows residents and businesses to apply for matching funds to complete projects.	2023	Administration

# Fiscal Responsibility

## Goals:

1. Develop the Downtown Redevelopment District, Community Reinvestment Area, and Covington Investment Corporation as well as other economic development tools.
2. Utilize the Capital Improvement Plan and Equipment Replacement Fund to detail future needs and purchases for the Village without the need for debt.
3. Create an Economic Development Roundtable that meets Quarterly to discuss needs and concerns related to businesses within the Village.
4. Build out an estimated Five-Year budget that takes existing and future studies into consideration.
5. Get quotes, plans, and studies that allow for the Village to leverage grant funding more actively.

## Benchmarks

Measure	Target Date	Responsibility	
1	Remove the majority of short term (less than five years) debt from the Village debt service obligations.	Ongoing	Administration
2	Have an economic development roundtable with business owners within Covington 4 times per year.	Ongoing	Administration
3	Apply for grants related to Schoolhouse Park, the Wastewater Treatment Facility, Demolition of properties, and roadway projects	2022	Administration
4	Recreate economic development tools that have not been used recently, to allow the Village to be nimble when working with future development opportunities.	Ongoing	Administration
5	Create a long-term plan for growth, development, and costs associated.	Ongoing	Administration

# Annual Update | 2022 Priorities

Each year there will be specific projects or priorities that will take more time or will require more effort to accomplish. For the 2022 year the items below will be projects or ideas that will be prioritized to be substantially completed by the end of the year.

1. **High Street Roadway Project** – Work with ODOT to have a project that focuses on traffic and safety. Assure the final product meets the needs and expectations of the Village.
2. **Schoolhouse Park Project** – Hold a groundbreaking for Phase 1, work on additional grant funding for projects within the park and continue to collect and utilize private funding to help match public funding and grants.
3. **Trails / Bike Paths / Bike Plan** – Work with residents and businesses along the proposed future Bike Trail to get a draft plan that can be utilized to begin planning and funding a future, primarily off-road, bike trail in the future.
4. **Community Building Events** – With the success of Covington Hometown Christmas, try and add additional events to the schedule that help build community in small ways.
5. **Wastewater Treatment Facility** – Work with the engineers to create a project that is able to be funded and serves the needs of the Village for the next 45 years.