

Master Plan - 2024
City of Sheffield Lake

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Introduction and Purpose

Purpose of the Master Plan

The purpose of this Master Plan is to examine the current state of the City and develop short and long term goals and plans to ensure efficient growth and responsible utilization of City resources. It will be used to develop strategies that help to inform improvements to the city. An effective Master Plan should be the guiding document to provide a safe and comfortable community for its residents.

History of Sheffield Lake

The land which is now Sheffield Lake was at one time claimed by the State of Connecticut. That state's claim was for the land between its latitudes, from the Pennsylvania border westward for 120 miles. This was the origin of the Western Reserve. Politically, the Western Reserve was first considered a Connecticut colony; later it became part of the Northwest Territory until Ohio organized as a state in 1803. The General Assembly of Connecticut decided to sell approximately three million acres to fund Connecticut schools. The Connecticut Land Company was formed for this purpose, and Moses Cleveland was hired to survey the land. The survey divided the land, and the shareholders in the Connecticut Land Company selected various portions of the land. Sheffield Lake is in Township 7 in range 17. That portion was selected by William Hart. Captain John Day and Captain Jabez Burrell of Sheffield Massachusetts purchased the land from Hart, who had never seen it.

Day and Burrell sold land to Obadia Deland, Joshua Smith, Col. Joseph Fitch, Solomon Fitch, Issaac Burrell and Henry Austin. The two Burrells, Day and Smith explored the area in June, 1815, and selected land for themselves and friends. Joshua Smith and his 17 year old son, Douglas, were the first to arrive and settled on November 13, 1815. They were joined a few days later by Samuel B. Fitch and Asher Chapman. In February 1816, Freeman Richmond and his wife, the first woman not native to the land, arrived. Henry Root, his wife and six children arrived in April. Captain John Day's family arrived on July 27, 1816, and Captain Jabez Burrell's came to the area on August 11. They called the area Sheffield Township.

The Lake Shore Electric Street Car Line was laid in 1897, and the northern section was developed into a recreational area. In 1920, because of the difficulty of crossing the Black River, the residents east of the river voted to withdraw from Sheffield Township, and formed the Village of Sheffield Lake. The northern end of the Village was mostly clay and large trees, and not good for farming, while the southern portion had better farm land. The northern land was good for recreation, vineyards, pastures, and commercial fishing with nets hung from poles driven into the lake bed. In the early 20th century the Sheffield Lake area consisted mostly of summer homes and cottages. Due to the diversity in the southern and northern portions, on October 16, 1933, the area was split into Sheffield Village and Sheffield Lake. After the census, Sheffield Lake became a city.

Population

According to the 2020 U.S. Census, the population of the City of Sheffield Lake was 8,957. 17.8% of citizens are under 18 years old. 19.9% are over 65 years old. The average age in Sheffield Lake is 45

As of the 2022 census data, there are just over 4,000 homes in Sheffield Lake, 76.5% of homes are owner occupied units. The median house value is \$143,300. There is an average of 2.16 persons per household.

The economy of Sheffield Lake, OH employs 5.04k people. The median household income is \$61,699.00 and \$37,181 per capita income.

Results of Community Survey

A survey of the residents of Sheffield Lake was conducted by the administration with both paper copies and online completion options available. Approximately 466 survey forms were returned. The results were published on May 2024. A summary of the major findings are as follows (**Full results in appendix**):

Business and Economic Development

- ~67.5% of respondents feel there is not enough retail development in Sheffield Lake
- 71.9% would like to see expansion of retail development.
- 57.9% support industrial expansion if appropriately located and served.

Zoning and Property Maintenance

- 34% of respondents said zoning enforcement was okay with 11% stated enforcement was poor.
- 83.3% felt how properties were maintained has an impact on the character and desirability of Sheffield Lake.
- About 50% of respondents would like heavy or strict enforcement with only 1.3% feel there should be no enforcement.
- 40.6% of respondents felt unsightly or dilapidated properties were Fairly or Very Apparent.

Roads, Drains, and Water

- 44.5% said the road conditions were okay 18.5% were poor and 31.8% stated conditions were good.
- 38% felt the water and sewer system were good or excellent, 32% felt it was okay while 22% felt they were poor.

Police and Fire

- 72% percent of those responding feel the police services are Good or Excellent.
- 79% said Fire services were good or Excellent with 69% feeling EMS services were good or Excellent.
- 61% stated they would support a levy for safety forces with 27.6% stating they were unsure if they would.
- Reasons to support a safety service levy were as follows: 57.2% additional police, 53.9% additional firefighters, 45% new police equipment and 46.7% for new fire/ems equipment.

Lakefront Development

- 76% believe the city should prioritize lakefront development or lake front access.
- 61% would like a pier.
- 69% would like a boardwalk.
- 64% would like an expansion of the beach and 64% would like a restaurant on the lake.
- As for activities on the lake, top responses were 62% would like kayaking, 64% would like fishing, and 48% would like jet skis.

Recreation Development

- 80% of respondents feel recreation opportunities were generally or extremely important.
- 41% felt recreation opportunities in the city were okay while 25% felt they were poor.
- 46.3% said they would like a Recreation or Fitness facility.
- Equipment respondents would like to see at the parks are:
 - a. Skate bowl – 18%
 - b. Swings – 57.7%
 - c. Jungle gym – 48.7%
 - d. Splash pad – 60.7%
 - e. Concession stand – 39.5%
 - f. Viewing and seating area – 64.3%
 - g. Fitness equipment – 40.4%
 - h. Sports fields (specify): - 33.6%
 - i. Equipment rental – 20.4%
- Activities respondents want to see at the parks are.
 - a. Sports leagues – 49.3%
 - b. Training classes – 25.2%
 - c. Yoga – 27.6%
 - d. Fitness classes – 37.5%
 - e. Tournaments – 32%
 - f. Community events – 74.1%
 - g. Walking – 72.1%
 - h. Biking paths – 62.3%
- 85% of respondents said walkability in the city is generally or extremely important. 5.2% said it was generally or extremely unimportant.
- 72.4% felt the city should explore more development of a trail system.

State of the City and Recommendations

City Government

Organization and Elected Officials

The City of Sheffield Lake has a charter with an elected mayor, and city council. All elected officials serve a four-year term. The City Council includes a President of Council, three Councils at Large, and four Ward Councilpersons.

Appointed Officials

Full-time appointed officials are the Finance Director and Service Director. Also appointed are the Law Director, Prosecutor and Magistrate.

The major appointed committees for the City, which operate outside of City Council, are:

- Zoning Board of Appeals,
- Civil Service Commission
- Park Board
- Planning Commission.

Existing Municipal Facilities

Municipal Buildings

Current State:

With some exceptions, the condition of existing municipal facilities is acceptable. The lack of adequate space places a burden on the efficient operation of many departments within the City.

Identified Needs:

Consideration should be given to the expansion of the existing municipal buildings. City hall has gone over some updates but eventually a new city hall should be in consideration. Separating the city hall from the Police and Fire Departments would give more room to both departments especially if both departments continue to expand in number and resources. The separation could convert the current city hall into the Sheffield Lake Safety Center. Alternative sites should be considered for a new city hall.

Creating an inclusive city

Inclusion is highly essential in a city as it means everyone feels welcome and valued. It's about embracing diversity and making sure we are taking an equitable approach to providing and connecting all citizens regardless of age, gender identity, race, class and ability to needed resources and opportunity.

When a city is inclusive, it becomes a vibrant and thriving community where everyone can contribute and feel like they belong. The purpose is to create a place where everyone can live, work, and play together.

There are several ways Sheffield Lake can become more inclusive to disabilities. First, ensuring that public spaces and buildings are accessible to people with disabilities is crucial. This includes ramps, elevators, and designated parking spaces. Additionally, providing accessible information and communication, such as braille signage and captioning, is important. Promoting employment opportunities and accommodations for people with disabilities is another key aspect. Lastly, involving people with disabilities in decision-making processes and creating awareness and education around disability rights can contribute to a more inclusive city.

All-inclusive playgrounds have a huge impact on children with disabilities. They provide a safe and accessible space within the community where kids of all abilities can play together. It promotes inclusivity, friendship, and understanding among children. It helps break down barriers and allows children with disabilities to fully participate and enjoy the benefits of outdoor play. Furthermore, it fosters empathy and teaches everyone the value of inclusion. It's mutually beneficial for everyone.

Parks and Recreation

Completing a park audit and developing a full master plan for the parks is highly recommended. This would make sure all the space at the parks will be considered and properly used. The City should engage with a firm or company in the field of recreational development to create and develop a plan, drawings, and exhibits of equipment for use at the parks. Having this plan would complement this master plan and allow direction for approaches to funding for each project. Below are suggestions for consideration of this plan. The city should focus and create state of the art parks that can attract visitors and serve citizens of all ages. Per the survey referenced above 44.7% of respondents said the City should prioritize existing and new park sites and 42% felt we should prioritize improvements to existing parks. The consensus from the respondents is clear that parks and trails should be prioritized by the City.

Lakefront Parks

There are five lakefront parks that adorn the City of Sheffield Lake make it unique and stand out as a city of its size. While relatively small in footprint, these properties provide its residents the opportunity to enjoy many of the benefits of living near Lake Erie. Benefits such as; boating, fishing, swimming, water-skiing and more. Whether one wishes to relax and take up an enticing view or jump waves in a jet ski, Sheffield Lake has the potential to offer all. All of the lakefront parks are accessible from Lake Road, Route 6.

From east to west these parks are:

- Erie Shores
- Shell Cove
- Westshore
- Community
- Lakewood Beach.

These parks are featured on the Lake Erie Circle Tour and U.S. Bike Trail.

Aside from overall community wellness benefits, the economic potential of these lakeside assets must be considered. An aggressive approach to grants and development within the park system could lead the community into an economic resurgence. No other feature can do as much to make Sheffield Lake a more desirable place in which to live. All along the Lake Erie shoreline, residential property has become extremely desirable and annually increasing in property value. The City must take advantage of the benefits its lakefront parks can provide to its citizens.

Taking a common-sense approach to the application of recreation and custom tailoring each lakefront park to our specific advantages, the following improvements are recommended:

Erie Shores Park:

Recommended Improvements:

Bike trail, rest area, biking theme, picnic area. Currently (2024) the park is undergoing an update process.

Rationale:

Promote connectivity and access to our Lake Front as 85% of respondents said walkability in the city is generally or extremely important. Additionally, 72.4% felt the city should explore more development of a trail system and 62.3% wanted additional biking paths.

Shell Cove Park

Recommended Improvements:

Specialized Park, possibly underwater preserve area, pedestrian pier, terraced land and boardwalk with lake access, historical or archeological theme, offshore protection. These improvements would necessitate additional parking in the area.

Rationale:

Provide increased Lake front access and activity as 76% of respondents believe the city should prioritize lakefront development or lake front access.

Currently the park is split with the BHS Memorial Park. The BHS Memorial section of the park is completely funded and maintained by BHS Alum. To compliment the hundreds of honored classmates of the BHS Alumni Memorial Park, a digital directory would aid in locating the engraved brick which they have come to visit. Presently, over 500 Brookside students are memorialized with bricks, benches, trees, boulders, rose bushes, and more. A directory installed at the entrance would assist the visitor to the location by multiple means; alphabetized names, year of graduation, and display a visual chart of the layout of the property. A similar format to compare is the Storybook Trail where “pages” are interactive to the viewer.

To enhance and develop the BHS Alumni Memorial Park, a brick wall would need to be constructed on the west side of the property, extending 30’ to the north, at a graduated angle. The wall would start out 6’ tall behind the rose garden and diminish to nothing as it approaches the vantage points of the view of the lake. This enhancement of the property would be to acknowledge the achievements of deceased alumni. The policy of the park is to only identify those honored by their activities during their high school tenure. This project would allow further honoring of our deceased classmates. This brick wall would be a different layout style entirely. It would display vertical plaques attached to the brick fronts. To view this wall of honor, the visitor would travel on a newly constructed walkway which would adjoin the south end of the existing walkway at the entrance and travel to the patio cornerstone.

Westshore Park (Civic Center)

Recommended Improvements:

A pedestrian walking pier, public beach and terraced park setting with boardwalk.

Rationale:

61.6% of respondents of the above survey indicated a desire for a pier and 64.7% asked for more fishing opportunities. A pier at this park would enhance our visibility along the lakeshore, open up additional recreational opportunities, bring in economic revenue via visitors and expand business to supply the recreational needs of residents and visitors alike. If plans for a recreation center across the street come to fruition the addition of a pier would make this area a hub for the city and an example for the county of public lake access.

Community Park (Library)

Recommended Improvements:

Expansion of the boat launch with a boardwalk viewing area, bike trail access, pier and an enclosed lakefront observation area near the library.

Rationale:

With 69.7% of survey respondents believing a lakefront boardwalk is a good way for Sheffield Lake to achieve lake front development, the boat launch is a good place to start. A Boardwalk from the boat launch to the dip in lake road behind the local business would give the public access to the lake, shore up the business and cities shorelines from erosion, and encourage development at the shopping center across the street. The city should better study and understand the approach of Euclid, Ohio in obtaining their boardwalk. This would help expedite the process.

Lakewood Beach Park:

Identified Recommendation:

Bicycle and pedestrian access, bike trail rest area, tables and shaded area for events.

Rationale:

Provide increased Lake access and activity as 76% of respondents believe the city should prioritize lakefront development or lake front access. This would provide opportunity to encourage use of the beach will allow for events and group activity.

Other Parks and Outdoor Facilities

Aside from the lakefront parks Sheffield Lake has five additional neighborhood parks. These parks offer various recreation opportunities including athletic fields, picnic areas and playground equipment.

These parks are located throughout the city as follows:

- Freedom Park
- Ferndale
- Gary Green
- Warren Guenther
- Memorial Park

The neighborhood parks throughout the City could benefit from improvements as indicated:

Freedom Park

Recommended Improvements:

Playground, expanded dog park, shaded picnic area, spaces for roller blading, biking and skateboarding, lighted walkways and paved parking.

Remove, replace & expand the asphalt walking trail west of the basketball court.

In 2024 a community garden was added to the park. Water access for dogs and the garden would be a strong addition.

Rationale:

These improvements would increase use and variety at the park.

Ferndale Park

Recommended Improvements:

Redesign to accommodate the nature bike trail, recreation department building with decked area for sitting and reading area, along with Police sub-station for bike trail, playground (new playground equipment is much needed), new fencing for baseball field, lighted walkways and paved parking and a concession stand. Expanding the skate park to entail a concrete bowl. Make the Basketball court a full court for recreation and tournaments. There are currently plans for a new water tower at this park. Removing the dirt hill for park additions like an amphitheater for community events would be ideal.

Rationale:

The amphitheater improvement would allow summer concerts, movies in the park, and even weddings.

The skate park enhancements would be beneficial with the growth of Shred with Ed.

Gary Green Memorial Park

Recommended Improvements:

New equipment has recently been added. Additions could be spaces for rollerblading and biking, shaded picnic areas, lighted walkways and easy access paved parking, lights for Lincoln Blvd Bike Trail. A splash pad for this park has been in the works and is highly recommended. Adding a concession stand, shaded seated area, and outdoor fitness area.

Rationale:

Improved accessibility for all ages and families.

Guenther Park

Recommended Improvements:

Soccer fields, playground, shaded picnic areas, bike trail and lighted walkways and paved parking. Adding a community garden and a basketball/pickleball court for recreational activities would be a preferred addition.

Rationale:

Increase opportunity for sports leagues.

Memorial Park

Recommended Improvements:

Redesigned to designate the community's appreciation of veterans that have served our country. Making this park one for reflection, observation and relaxation would add to the theme of honoring the City's fallen heroes.

Rationale:

Promote those who served and provide a great park for reflection.

Bike Lanes

Bike lanes on the north and south sides of Lake Road, U.S. Route 6, provide safe bicycling opportunities for both residents and visitors. The lanes connect to those in neighboring communities, and have the potential for being an attractive route and promoting a positive image of Sheffield Lake. The development of the lakefront parks, as indicated above, would further enhance the Lake Road bike lanes and better accommodate cyclists.

Bike lanes running south off the U.S. 6 Bike Lanes to the community's schools and parks should be developed.

Lakefront Connectivity Plan & Trails

The city is successfully implementing a phased approach in realizing the construction of the connectivity trail along Lake Road. Currently the boat launch to the covered bridge (Phase 1) is constructed and includes an 8' concrete path with RRFB crossings at the launch and library. TLCI & ODOT Systemic Safety Funds will support Phase 2, 3a, and 5 with construction scheduled in 2025 & 2026. These phases will connect the covered bridge to the Community Center, including RRFB crossings, and beyond to Harris Road. Phase 5 will include intersection upgrades, new traffic signals, and pedestrian improvements and span from Elm Street to Cove Beach. These phases represent \$3.04 million dollars supported by federal grants. Additional phases should continue to be pursued in combination with trail expansions and connections which currently include the Brookside Trail & the Lincoln Nature Trail.

Funding for Parks and Bike Lanes

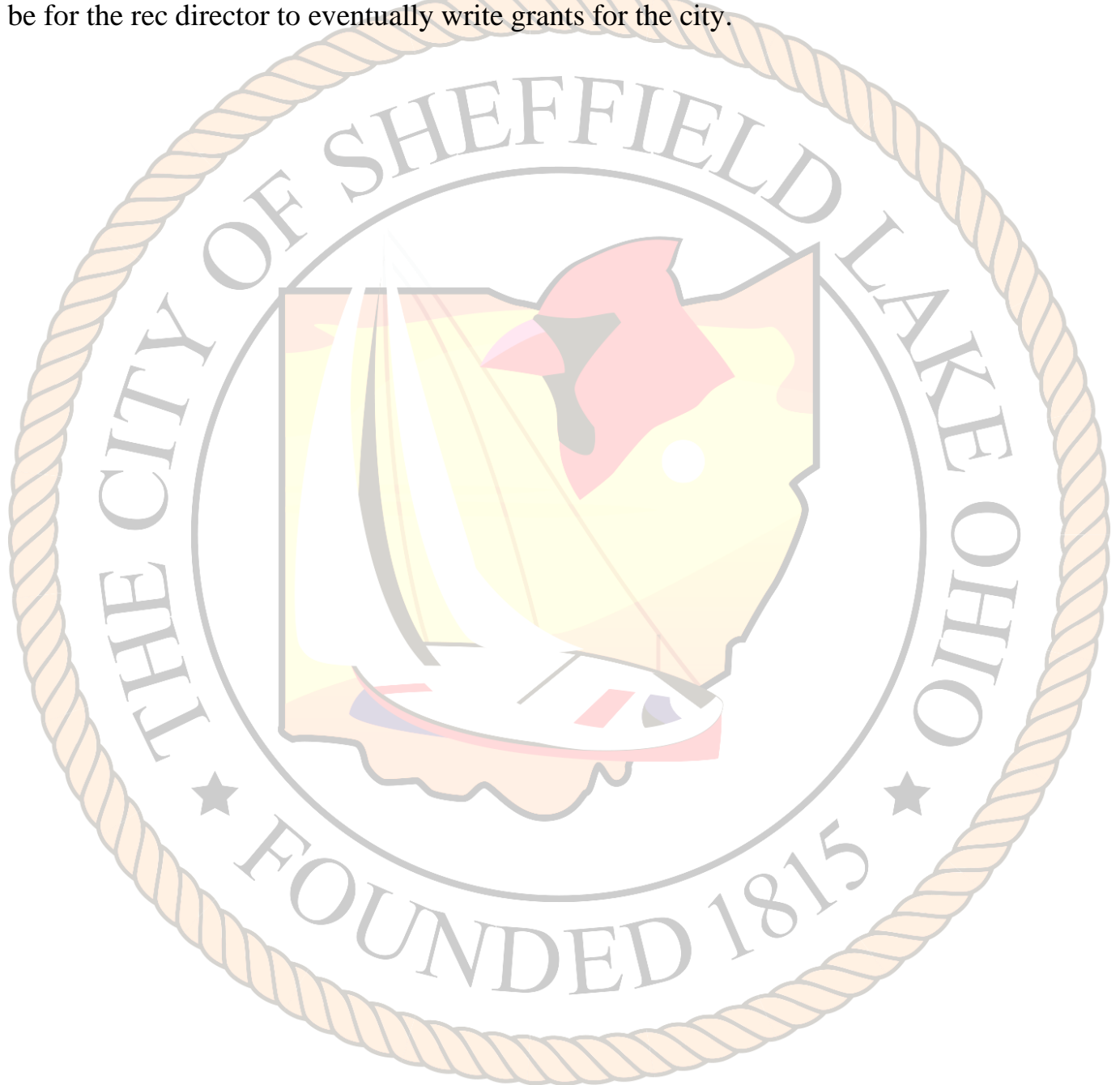
The improvements to parks and bike lanes should be carefully studied. This should include cost estimates, the interest of the public, and benefits as related to cost. A list of priorities for park and bike lane improvements should be developed based on those criteria. The availability of grants should be thoroughly researched, and, if available, applications to obtain these should be made. Consideration should be given to presenting a small permanent improvement levy or bond issue specifically earmarked for these improvements. If such an issue is presented to the voters, the public must be specifically thoroughly informed of what projects will be undertaken and the rationale for each.

Recreation

Please refer to the survey results in the appendix of this document to see the full list of activities the respondents wanted to see in the city. Some of the major ones mentioned were sports leagues, fitness classes, community events, and additional walking opportunities.

A recreation center for the residents of Sheffield Lake would be a valuable asset. Options for funding include marketing sponsorships, transitional state and federal grants, uses of programs like the pace program, and low interest bonds. Having a field house/recreation center would allow for programs that will yield revenue for the recreation department and city as a whole. The land that was purchased across from the community center is the ideal place for such a project. It would make the area a center hub of the city and encourage use of the community center and its public lake access across the street.

In, 2024 the City created and appointed a Recreation Director to spearhead recreation opportunities and development. Their major priority will be to create programming for citizens of all ages. The parks and community center should have recreational, vocational, and educational programs year-round. The goal is to develop programs for all citizens no matter the age. With a recreation department in place the city would be able to obtain more grant funding due to having a structure in place to administer such grants. The goal would be for the rec director to eventually write grants for the city.



City Services

Police Department

The Sheffield Lake Police Department's authorized manpower includes the Police Chief, Three Sergeants, and eight patrolmen. There are four full-time dispatchers.

The Sheffield Lake Police Department hires part-time employees to supplement their full-time staff as needed.

There are currently ten cars' vehicles in the Police Department's fleet. Nine of them are Ford Explorers and one Dodge Charger. Two of the nine Explorers are not currently equipped for road operations. The Police Department would like to bring our vehicle numbers back to historical numbers of fifteen cruisers. As of 2024, the department will add 5 new Dodge Durango's to the fleet through a partnership with Enterprise who will help manage the fleet going forward.

The radios in all the patrol cruisers have been upgraded to the Harris Radio System, adding the MARCS radio system as a back-up in 2024. This addition allows the police department to communicate to all departments in Lorain County with functionality for VHF, MARCS, and HARRIS.

The Police Department is currently below approved manpower levels, as many departments are. Upon hiring and replacing vacant positions, we hope to resume community engagement initiatives. The Sheffield Lake Police Department established the 12-officer approved man power levels over twenty years ago. As crime has evolved our staffing levels need to follow suit. Over the coming years we hope to seek more grant opportunities to add additional man-power to the department. The Sheffield Lake Police Department could better serve the community with a staff of 17 full-time police officers. This would include expansions of our patrol, investigative, and community outreach programs.

The Police Department is using grant money and general fund money for the rehabilitation of the basement. This area has not been utilized as work space for over a decade. This will allow officers more room to work. This area is over 10 times the size of the current report room which is approximately 5x8 feet. This project includes replacing old carpeting, wood paneling, light fixtures, and the addition of an HVAC system. Over the coming years we hope to remodel additional work spaces to better assist with workflow and productivity.

Fire Department

The City is served by thirteen firefighters, including a chief and three lieutenants. All of the full time firefighters also trained paramedics. One lieutenant and three firefighters are on duty for each twenty-four hour shift.

The City of Sheffield Lake has mutual aid agreements with all fire departments in Lorain County through the Mutual Aid Box Alarm System (MABAS). This arrangement provides the equipment and manpower needed in special circumstances, and it helps provide a more favorable insurance rating for the City's residents.

While fighting fires is considered a fire department's main function, the Sheffield Lake Fire Department devotes as much, if not more, time providing paramedic services to the community. This valuable service adds minimal cost to the department because it is provided by firefighters already on duty.

The department keeps current with the latest techniques by sending its officers and firefighters to classes annually, and having the knowledge passed on to the remaining firefighters in local training sessions. This policy should be encouraged, and adequate funding should be maintained for training.

Two engines, two ambulances, one pick-up truck and one command vehicle are the vehicles operated by the department. One of the engines is a 1996 E-One model, and is 28 years old reaching the end of its useable life. A plan must be developed to replace the 1996 engine which is reaching the end of its useful life.

While the ambulances and pick-up truck are in reasonable condition, a long-term plan for the replacement of these vehicles should be developed. Squad 71 (2023), Squad 72 (2013), Unit 66 (2014), Command 73 (2014), Engine 63 (1996) and Engine 61 (2008).

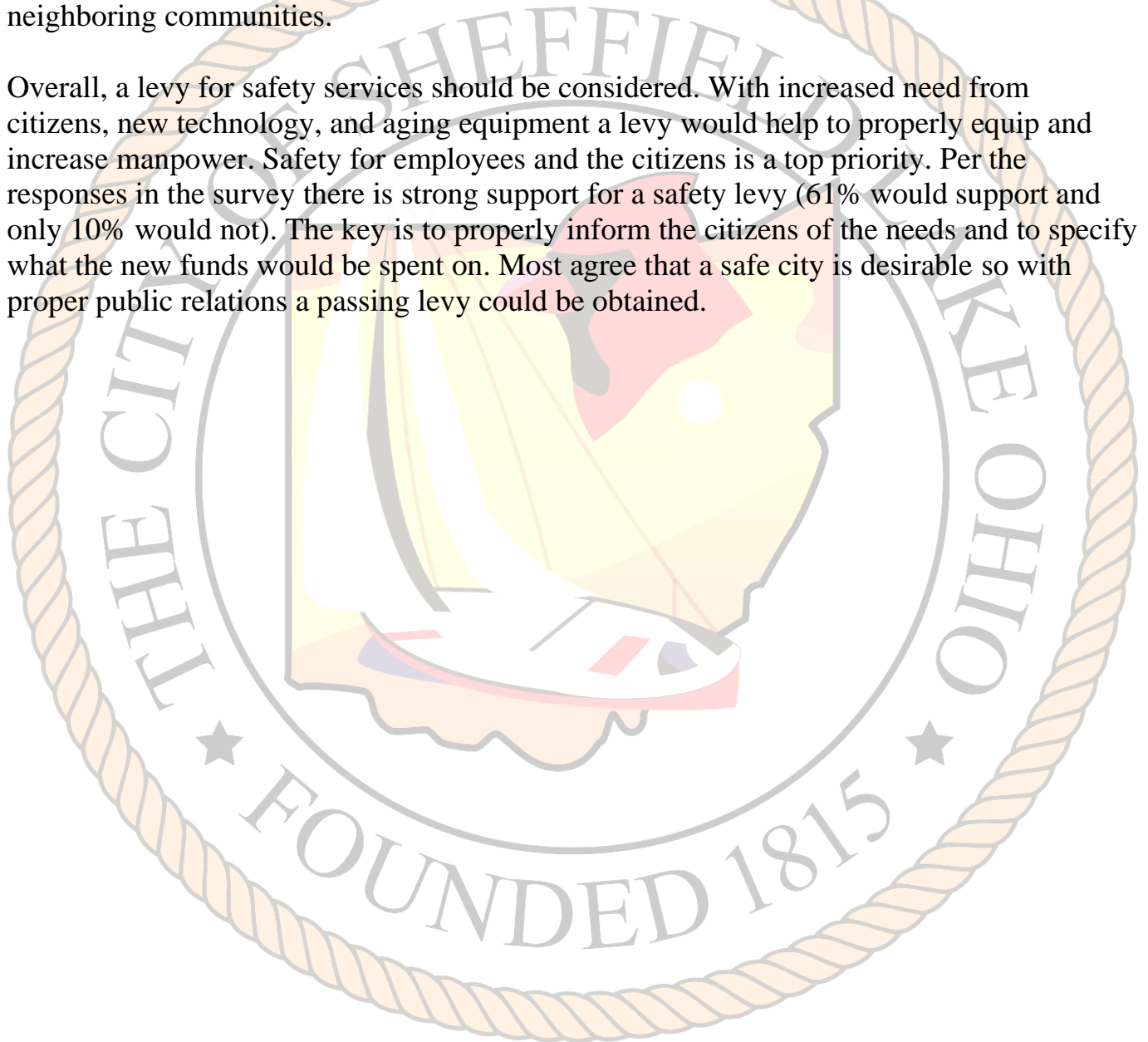
Providing adequate safety equipment to any employee of the City is necessary, and this is especially true for the personal protection equipment for firefighters. All of the firefighters' turnout gear was replaced in 2015 and is due for replacement in 2025. The department should be provided with the turnout gear needed to operate safely and efficiently. In order to accomplish this, a regular replacement schedule should be established. In addition, the department's self-contained breathing apparatus should be replaced in 2029. Both the turnout gear and self-contained breathing apparatus should be replaced every 10 years according to NFPA standards.

The fire station is becoming overcrowded, and lacks some of the features needed for an efficient operation. A study should be undertaken to determine the condition of the fire station, and the adequacy of the space available. This will give the City the information needed to decide i

f the station needs only minor upgrades, needs a major overhaul, or needs to be replaced. If replacement is the answer, it should also be determined what it would take to make the existing building useful to other departments of the City.

Major new developments within the city, especially senior citizen complexes, may require resources beyond the current capacity of the fire department's equipment and manpower. At this time, the City is looking into increasing staffing levels in the fire department to meet the increased call volume and reduce the dependance on mutual aid from our neighboring communities.

Overall, a levy for safety services should be considered. With increased need from citizens, new technology, and aging equipment a levy would help to properly equip and increase manpower. Safety for employees and the citizens is a top priority. Per the responses in the survey there is strong support for a safety levy (61% would support and only 10% would not). The key is to properly inform the citizens of the needs and to specify what the new funds would be spent on. Most agree that a safe city is desirable so with proper public relations a passing levy could be obtained.



Service Department

The Service Department is operated under the administration of the Service Director. There are ten employees responsible for the maintenance of the streets, water system, storm and sanitary sewer systems, and parks. There are two support staff members in the utility department who are responsible for the office operation. The building department has one full-time inspector and one part-time clerk. The department is supplemented with a commercial building inspector and electrical inspector. These positions are paid a flat retainer fee and per inspection fee.

The Service Department has significantly improved its equipment inventory. From 2017 through 2024 newer additions include two new backhoes, a new track machine, two new 5 ton plows, two new F-550's with plow, a new sewer vac, a new sewer camera system, a new street sweeper, two new water department vans, new zero turn mowers, a new skid steer with trailer(s), new leaf collection equipment and a bucket truck. The departments also have various trucks and specialized equipment in varied condition and configuration. Maintenance programs, and continued acquisition and replacement of aging equipment should be realized. Public services continue to expand and need the support of quality equipment and trained staff. Additional staff would enhance and compliment public services.

Building codes should be enforced, and a certified building department should be considered so that all commercial, multi-family and industrial building codes can be enforced by the City. Revenue from permits and fines could partially offset the cost of this charge. Improving property values and enhancing the ascetics of the overall city through code enforcement and programs like the CHIP program are of high priority.

Roads

The City of Sheffield Lake is approximately 2.45 square miles in area. There are approximately 47 miles of developed roads. The main roads in the City have all been rebuilt/paved from 2017 through 2023. The secondary streets such as Irving Park Blvd. and Ivanhoe have also been rebuilt/paved in recent years. The use of NOACA pavement ratings and fund sources such as OPWC should be pursued annually to maintain and rebuild roads. There are some dead-end streets which cause access difficulties for safety, snow removal and refuse vehicles. A passage of a .25% increase in income tax was to specifically address the road conditions.

Paving

A schedule of paving and repaving of streets has been developed and should continue. The priorities should be based on the condition of the streets, drainage and the traffic patterns.

The current practices of professional engineering and inspection in road design and construction should be followed when practicable.

Water

Water is provided to the residents by the City, which is licensed by the Ohio EPA as a Class I Water Distribution System. Water is purchased by the City from Avon Lake, and to a lesser degree from the City of Lorain. There is one water tower in Sheffield Lake. At this time, it is not in service and should be replaced. Over the last five to seven years the city has actively begun replacing aging water lines in the distribution system. Capital improvement plans have been developed and should continue to be updated. A fair amount of water mains will reach their useful life over the next decade and annual replacement of sections should remain a priority for the department. All water meters throughout the city were replaced in 2016 and include an automated metering system. This has resulted in significant improvements to lost water revenue. Meters are anticipated to remain efficient through 2030. Financial planning along the way for another changeover of meters is prudent. The city must remain compliant with current and future requirements of the OEPA. Examples include backflow prevention programs and system water quality monitoring.

Sanitary Sewers

Except for eleven homes with septic tanks, all developed property is served by sanitary sewers. With the assistance of lift stations, sewage is sent to the City of Lorain's Black River Sewage Treatment Plant. Infiltration of storm water into the sanitary system is a concern. The City is charged by the amount of sewage sent to the Black River Plant, whether it consists of storm water or sanitary sewage. The cost of processing storm water is ultimately paid by the residents through higher rates. The Service Department has implemented a program to determine the source of storm water by means of a television camera system. The causes for the infiltration of stormwater into the sanitary sewer system should be identified and corrected. Sanitary sewer systems are also now addressed in capital improvement plans. Relining of existing lines, joint grouting and continued maintenance must remain a priority. Some improvements have been realized over the last several years and grant dollars should be pursued to accelerate rehabilitation to the sewer system.

Storm Sewers

Storm water is drained into Lake Erie through a series of ditches and storm sewers. As noted above, some storm water is infiltrating into the sanitary system. Some existing outfalls to Lake Erie are not adequate to drain all areas effectively. Additional outfalls for

storm water need to be installed. Drainage ditches throughout the City should be maintained, and residents should not alter the ditches in any way which would affect the flow. Preventing contamination of stormwater, especially caused by runoff from the roads, must be addressed to be in compliance with federal regulations. The current practice of enclosing residential ditches should continue.

Natural Gas and Electricity

The City is part of NOPEC, an organization of communities, which among other things, contracts to provide natural gas and electricity to its residents. NOPEC negotiates with suppliers to obtain the most reasonable rates. Residents may opt-out of the program and choose their own supplier.

Telephone and Cable

Cable and internet service are currently available through Breezeline, Brightspeed and Spectrum. These companies also can provide landline phone services in addition to CenturyLink. The city should encourage cellular improvements through towers and/or associated equipment upgrades.

Refuse Disposal

The City of Sheffield Lake contracts with Republic for refuse disposal. Fees are paid to the City for this service. The city should continue to develop a service for those who are physically unable to bring down their own trash.

Other Public, Commercial and Industrial Facilities

Public Schools

The City of Sheffield Lake is part of the Sheffield-Sheffield Lake City School System. Within the City limits are Forestlawn and Knollwood Elementary Schools. Part of the school system, but located in the Village of Sheffield, are Brookside intermediate school and Brookside High School.

Private Schools

A former public school, Tennyson Elementary School, was sold and now operates as a private charter school, Northern Ohio Adventist Academy

Library

The residents of the community are served by the Domonkas Library, which is a branch of the Lorain County Library System. The resources of most of the libraries in the Greater Cleveland Area are available to the patrons of the local facility through its cooperative agreements. The library sits on the shore of Lake Erie, and with its newly remodeled building and many services it is an outstanding benefit to the city.

The land is owned by the City but the library was granted a one hundred year lease. It is a prime spot for future development on Lake Road. If an opportunity appears and the library agrees to move locations it should be explored.

Churches

Within the City are the following churches: United Church of Christ, Steel City Church and St. Thomas Catholic Church. Churches of other denominations are located in surrounding communities.

Commercial

The City has approximately 49 businesses located within its borders.

Improving Existing Commercial Conditions

Every effort should be made to encourage commercial businesses to comply with building codes. Businesses should be encouraged to improve the outward appearance of their property if necessary. Consideration should be given for tax relief for the improvement of the exterior appearance of commercial property. A regular inspection schedule for all commercial structures should be maintained. Unoccupied commercial structures should meet the same requirement as those in use regarding the safety of electrical, plumbing, heating and building envelope.

Commercial land, whether or not it has a structure, should be free of debris, and stored material and equipment unless the zoning permits that use. Stored material should be screened from view as determined by ordinance.

Encouraging New Commercial Development

Commercial development of new and existing facilities should be encouraged through various incentives and cooperation. Incentives such as tax abatements and TIFS should be considered. This could provide a needed boost to the City of Sheffield Lake's tax base.

An in-depth study by the City of contracted professional firms should be undertaken to determine the most advantageous use of all land within the City. The possibility of rezoning any commercial, industrial or residential real estate that would make the community more desirable should be considered. Special attention in this study should be paid to lake front property. Different uses of the lake front should be given strong consideration. This type of development may require rezoning of some land. Careful consideration must be given to the location for this type of lake front development.

Industrial

At the time of this report, there are very few businesses which could be classified as industrial.

Encouraging New Industrial Development

The use of incentives and tax abatement should be used to attract light industry. The study committee or professional firm discussed above in "Encouraging New Commercial Development" above could examine the possibilities. New industry could provide an additional tax base to the City.

Residential

At the time of this report there are approximately 4,147 households in the City and 4,520 housing units. Of the units 92% are occupied and 76% are owner occupied. There are also hundreds of apartments and some condominium and townhome units.

Vacant Land

Because much of the City was originally divided into lots with 35 foot frontage, and current zoning requires larger lots, there are some lots which are not buildable. This can create less than desirable situations in some areas. When an undeveloped lot which is too small for a house remains between two homes or a home and street corner, the owner of the lot should be required to keep the lot mowed and free of debris.

In 2022, the City revised its zoning code. Finding ways to use lots too small to build on was discussed but a solution was not found. The city should find ways to make such lots

usable by citizens. Allowing for smaller homes to be built on these lots would make them more desirable and should be seriously considered.

New Housing

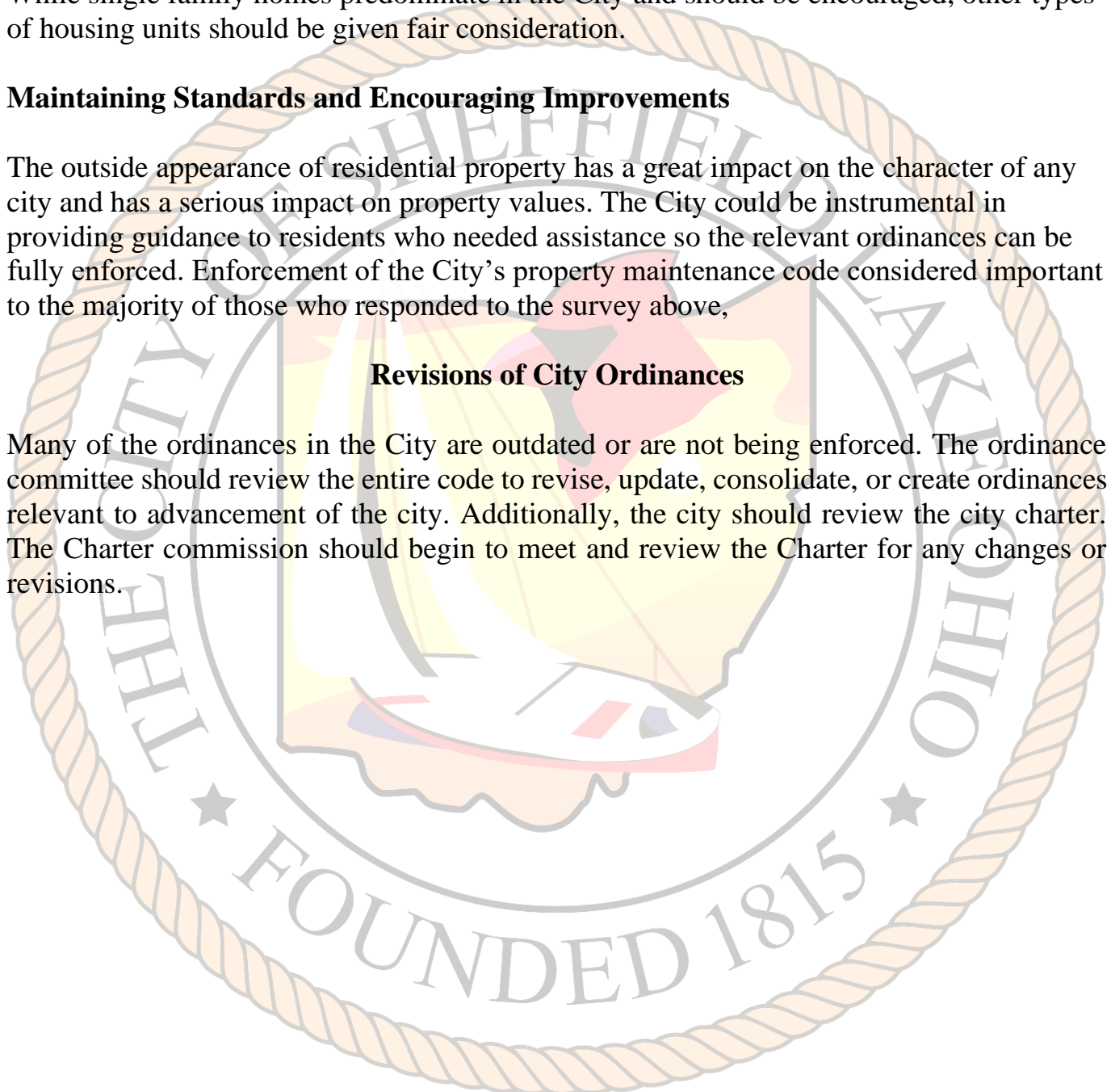
While single family homes predominate in the City and should be encouraged, other types of housing units should be given fair consideration.

Maintaining Standards and Encouraging Improvements

The outside appearance of residential property has a great impact on the character of any city and has a serious impact on property values. The City could be instrumental in providing guidance to residents who needed assistance so the relevant ordinances can be fully enforced. Enforcement of the City's property maintenance code considered important to the majority of those who responded to the survey above,

Revisions of City Ordinances

Many of the ordinances in the City are outdated or are not being enforced. The ordinance committee should review the entire code to revise, update, consolidate, or create ordinances relevant to advancement of the city. Additionally, the city should review the city charter. The Charter commission should begin to meet and review the Charter for any changes or revisions.



Zoning

Spot Zoning

Further spot zoning should be strongly discouraged. After the demolition of a building on any parcel of land which had been spot zoned, that land should revert to its original zoning.

As the most important asset of the city is the lake, the city should review the zoning of the lake front. Much of the lake front is zoned residential with a small portion for commercial use. Those who responded to the survey strongly indicated the importance of lake front development and recreation opportunities. It would be beneficial for the site to review lakefront zoning and consider amendments such as mixed use.

Changes

After the study of commercial and industrial development suggested above, portions of Lake, Abbe and Lake Breeze may require rezoning.

Because of the 35 foot lots in the City, and the requirements of much larger lots for building homes, a slight modification of this zoning should be considered. It is suggested that any land with at least 70 feet of frontage, but less than the minimum requirements for that zoning, would be granted an automatic variance under the following circumstances only: There are occupied homes whose property lines are adjacent on both sides of the property, and those homes were occupied on or before January 1, 2003.

Sources of City Income

City Income Taxes

The City has an income tax on payroll of 2%. One percent is appropriated in the general fund, and .25% is earmarked for road improvement. A credit of one-half of one percent (.5%) is granted to residents working in another city which has an income tax of at least one percent.

Local Property Taxes

See the appendix for a breakdown of the property taxes paid by residents of the City.

Conclusions

While keeping everything as it is today may be comfortable, the fact is things will get better or they will get worse. Enforcing building codes to maintain an attractive community is important. Developing a plan for the future is vital. There are three likely options:

The first is to keep things as they are. This means keeping services as they are, and asking the public for tax increases if budget reductions become necessary but insufficient to maintain services.

The second course of action is to thoroughly research what is needed to improve the City's facilities and services, present the case to the public, and ask for appropriate tax increases. The history of the community's voting record indicates it may be willing to increase taxes if the issues are clearly stated and earmarked for specific services and improvements.

The third option is to take full advantage of the location of the City and do what is needed to develop the lakefront. This could be the catalyst to make other portions of the City attractive to commercial interests and perhaps light industry. We must be willing to carefully consider the proposals of developers, and encourage their efforts to invest in the City, especially when it coincides with our vision for our community. This would increase the taxes collected by the City and encourage non-residents to come to Sheffield Lake to spend their money. While this option does not eliminate the need for future tax increases, it should reduce the need by shifting some of the burden to new businesses and their customers.

Appendix

SHEFFIELD LAKE CITY

SCHEDULE A				
SUMMARY OF AMOUNTS REQUIRED FROM GENERAL PROPERTY TAX APPROVED BY BUDGET COMMISSION, AND COUNTY AUDITOR'S ESTIMATED TAX RATES				
FUND	Amount to Be Derived from Levies Outside 10 Mill Limitation Column II	Amount Approved by Budget Commission Inside 10 Mill Limitation Column IV	County Auditor's Estimate of Tax Rate to Be Levied	
			Inside 10 Mill Limit V	Outside 10 Mill Limit VI
General Fund		479,752	2.440	
Police pension Fund		58,986	0.300	
Sinking Fund and bond		110,107	0.560	
Fireman's Fund		58,986	0.300	
Police	368,292			5.140
2006 Library	334,900			2.200
2016 Library	114,170			0.750
Fire	387,300			5.670
Ambulance & E.M.S.	160,732			2.000
TOTAL	1,365,394	707,831	3.600	15.760
SCHEDULE B				
LEVIES OUTSIDE 10 MILL LIMITATION, EXCLUSIVE OF DEBT LEVIES				
FUND	Maximum Rate Authorized to Be Levied			
General Fund:				
Special Levy Fund:				
Fire Levy authorized by voters on 11/04/86 continuing years.	2.000			
Police Levy authorized by voters on 6/08/82 continuing years.	1.500			
Fire Levy authorized by voters on 11/04/86 continuing years.	1.930			
Police Levy authorized by voters on 6/08/82 continuing years.	1.900			
Ambulance & EMS Levy authorized by voters 6/07/83 continuing years.	2.000			
Library Levy authorized by voters 5/04/2021 for not to exceed 5 years. Beginning 2021 Duplicate Expiring Last Collection 2026	2.200			
Library Levy authorized by voters 5/04/2021 for not to exceed 5 years. Beginning 2021 Duplicate Expiring Last Collection 2026	0.750			
Police Operating Levy authorized by voters 5/06/97 continuing years.	1.740			
Fire Operating Levy authorized by voters 5/06/97 continuing years.	1.740			
	15.760			

