

ANNUAL REPORT 2018



A message from the **COMMISSION PRESIDENT & CITY MANAGER**

Slingshot, Bicentennial style. That is exactly what Sandusky is experiencing today. After years of work by the Bicentennial Commission, and a full year of celebration, Sandusky's momentum is accelerating.

Why? That part is as simple as it is difficult to re-create. But when an entire city, including our citizens, schools and corporate leaders believe in their community and then get together behind a great staff and a critical strategic plan, things happen.

More streets repaved, more dead trees taken down and even more planted to replace them, more sidewalks repaired, more parks refreshed and reimagined, more public waterfront access planned than ever before, more houses rehabbed, more condemned buildings knocked down, more businesses opened, \$300 million in construction and the long list continues. A key measure: more income tax, not just because of Issue 8 but also because there is simply more economic activity. Increased revenues drive additional investments in Sandusky and our neighborhoods, bettering the lives of Sanduskians and attracting more people to choose Sandusky as home.

I chuckled when someone recently asked why a community of our size was trying to do all of this at once. After decades of neglect, Sandusky owed this to itself. And when momentum like this comes, it builds on itself just as success begets success. Sandusky is attracting regional and state attention and investment because of our innovation and can-do attitude.

It is already time to start work on a new five-year strategic plan. The last time we dreamt bigger than we had in a long time, and we have since executed on the plan in a deliberate and methodical way. Everyone who wishes will again have a voice in shaping the plan ahead.

Revolutionary changes are already occurring to communications, transportation, the workplace, education, land usage, health care, manufacturing, entertainment and government. These changes will only gain speed. A great sorting is occurring and cities that continue to plan for change will flourish and so will their residents.

Due to the efforts of every single person reading this report, Sandusky is today ready to continue harnessing that change to benefit the many citizens and constituencies proud to call Sandusky home.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. Murray Jr."

Dennis Murray, Jr.
Commission President

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eric Wobser".

Eric Wobser
City Manager

CITY COMMISSION & ADMINISTRATION

All of the accomplishments listed in the 2018 annual report were made possible by the support of the City Commission and Administration.



City Commission

- Legislative accomplishments included:
 - Created a Public Arts and Culture Commission and adopted the Public Art Master Plan.
 - Expanded the smoking ban to include vaping along public waterfront parks, piers, plazas, and the bicycle path.
 - Expanded the city's anti-discrimination legislation to include sexual orientation, gender identity, or expression as forms of discrimination and to ensure all persons within the city have equal access to employment, housing, public accommodations, and education.
 - Passed a resolution authorizing the first special energy improvement district project with Imagine Baking.
 - Passed a resolution proclaiming Sandusky as a welcoming and safe community for immigrants.
 - Established a transient overlay district.
 - Passed a resolution supporting the Landing Park Project and taking steps through the grant writing process to begin the park project.
 - Passed a 10-year, 75% residential tax abatement on rehabilitated or newly constructed housing.
 - Partnered with Sandusky City Schools on the creation of two pieces of tax increment financing to support the construction of the Sandusky Bay Pathway and other infrastructure improvements.



Finance

- Implemented Phase II of the Financial Software Upgrade Project (utility billing update).
- Implemented the Online Bill Pay Project for utility payments with Invoice Cloud and Software Solutions.
- Received awards from the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA) and the Auditor of the State of Ohio.



IT

- Designed, bid and managed installation of the new security system, physical network, and network infrastructure at the new city hall location.
- Implemented a new back-up solution while reducing costs.
- Installed a new security system at the transit facility.
- Expanded the Fire Department emergency communication network.
- Upgraded the Sewer Plant and Sewer Maintenance SCADA systems to a new and more robust system.
- Uploaded 559 items to ArcGIS Online, which included:
 - 45 maps
 - 201 new datasets
 - 12 publicly shared web applications



Law

- Prepared 248 Ordinances and 55 Resolutions.
- Filed 9,919 criminal filings in Sandusky Municipal Court and processed 67 Prosecutors Field Forms through the Law Department (requests by citizens for filing criminal charges).



Human Resources

- In 2018, the city hired over 100 employees. This included full-time, part-time, and seasonal positions.
- Successfully negotiated three union bargaining agreements: International Association of Firefighters, Local 327 (IAFF), American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees Council 8 (AFSCME), and Fraternal Order of Police (FOP).

CITY COMMISSION & ADMINISTRATION

A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO THE CITY OF SANDUSKY EMPLOYEES WHO RETIRED IN 2018:

21
YEARS

RUDY AGEE

27
YEARS

KAYE BUREL

30
YEARS

PHIL FROST

GRANT FUNDING/PRIVATE CONTRIBUTIONS

Various grants were awarded for projects during the course of 2018. Thank you to our local, state, and federal partners for making this possible:

- Anonymous
- Cedar Fair
- Erie County Community Foundation
- Erie County MetroParks
- Erie County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)
- Erie County Solid Waste Management District
- Firelands Regional Medical Center
- Friends of the Greenhouse (FOG)
- Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI)
- Lake Erie Shores and Islands (LESI)
- Ohio Active Transportation Fund
- Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR)
- Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT)
- Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (OEPA)
- Ohio Public Works Commission (OPWC)
- Sandusky City Schools
- Sandusky Bay Rowing Association
- United States Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA)

PRIVATE CONTRIBUTIONS

- American Quality Stripping – *Boy with the Boot restoration (In-Kind)*
- Nanette Guss – *Cemetery operations*
- Balconi Monument, Inc. – *Pedestal for MLK bust (In-kind)*
- Barb Werry and the family of Teddy and Leatha Elkins – *Burial site for US Veteran*
- Barnes Nursery – *Drive-Thru Drop-Off Day marketing*
- Construction Equipment & Supply – *Lift for holiday decorating (In-kind)*
- Cyclone Services – *Drive-Thru Drop-Off Day marketing*
- Goodwill Industries – *Drive-Thru Drop-Off Day marketing*
- Memorial Bench Donations:
 - Betty Jean Guss
 - Cedar Point Garden Club
 - Glenda Boykin
- The Pioneer Committee – *MLK Bust at the Freedom Shrine Washington Park (In-kind)*
- Powertrip Motorsports – *Boy with the Boot restoration (In-Kind)*
- SealMaster – *Wounded Warrior parking spots at Jackson Street Parking Lot and Shoreline Park (In-kind)*
- Wendy Allen – *Horticulture/tree planting*



LIVABLE CITY

Sandusky's neighborhoods will benefit from a comprehensive approach that improves housing stock, eliminates blight, invests in neighborhood amenities and builds strong safety programs.

FOCUS ON IMPROVING NEIGHBORHOOD INFRASTRUCTURE

- Completed the Campbell Street and Gartland Avenue reconstruction projects that included improvements to sewer and water systems, sidewalks, tree lawns, and reconstruction of roadways.



- BIWW and Water Distribution staff successfully completed a three-year survey with the Ohio EPA and received zero violations. They also worked extensively with the Ohio EPA to implement multiple, system-wide programs in an effort to meet increased regulations.

- The BIWW Water Lab passed several re-certification processes and performed more testing than ever before while continuing to ensure safe, palatable drinking water to city residents and visitors, in-coordination with Water Distribution.
- The Backflow Program became operational and the Backflow Integrity Specialist completed over 100 industrial surveys which aim to protect the water supply from contamination.
- In partnership with private contractors, Forestry planted over 100 new trees, trimmed 166 trees and removed 300 dead trees and/or stumps.
- The City was recognized as a Tree City USA community for 28 consecutive years and qualified for a grant that will aid in the planting of approximately 270 trees near local waterways to reduce runoff in 2019.
- Completed an extensive site selection and cost-analysis process that led to the selection of the former American Crayon Factory property as the future location for the Justice Center.



Hancock Street Resurfacing

LIVABLE CITY



INFRASTRUCTURE AND BEAUTIFICATION UPDATES AT CITY PROPERTIES AND PARKS:

- Completed the renovations of Foxborough and Central Parks, including installation of new, ADA-accessible playground equipment and upgrades to the basketball court and installation of a shade shelter area with picnic tables at Central Park and updated signage at Willard C. Grathwol Field.



- Upgraded the Freedom Shrine in Washington Park, including installation of a bronze and marble monument dedicated to Dr. Martin L. King, Jr.
- Rededicated the Cholera Cemetery and added a butterfly pollinator patch to strengthen the City's Monarch City designation.

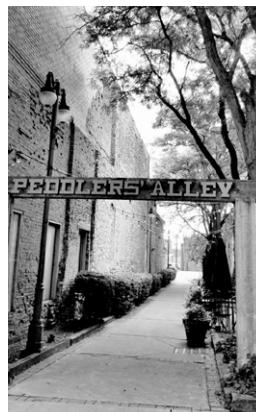


- Upgraded the splash pads at Huron and Lions Parks and constructed a small building at the Huron Park splash pad.
- Installed and maintained a temporary splash pad at Churchwell Park.

- Restored the Boy with the Boot statue atop of the Washington Park fountain.



- Installed LED lighting and restored the fountains at Dauch Park.



- Remediated brush and performed ground-leveling along various shoreline properties to improve aesthetics and waterfront views.
- Installed decorative lighting at Peddler's Alley and added planters on Hancock Street.
- Completed Federal ADA upgrades at the Amtrak Station.
- Improved landscaping at the Venice Road Connector.

- Upgraded amenities such as seating, grills, and drinking fountains and infrastructure such as play areas, shelters, and baseball diamonds at various parks, including: Amvets, Historic Erie Blvd. Gateway Park, Dorn, Farwell, Huron, Jaycee, Kiwanis, Lions, Mills Creek Golf Course, Orlando Pace, Shoreline, Sprau, Veterans Memorial, Washington, and Wilbert.

- Installed three Memorial Benches, dedicated to the following:
 - Mary K. & Earl L. Carrier
 - Jesse Pearson, Jr. "Peanut"
 - Cedar Point Garden Club

IMPLEMENT HOUSING PROGRAMS TO MAINTAIN SUPPLY & STIMULATE DEMAND

- Committed nearly \$828,000 of new funds across all four programs (rehabilitation, exterior improvements, down payment assistance, landscaping), including in model blocks.
- Leveraged an additional \$2.8 million+ (\$1 million+ in 2017, \$134,000 in 2016) in private construction investment and 60 home purchases (51 home purchases in 2017). Of the 60 homes purchased using the Down Payment Assistance program:
 - 27 were previously vacant (23 in 2017, 11 in 2016)
 - 52 were purchased by a first time home buyer (25 in 2017, 27 in 2016)
 - 24 were purchased by residents moving from outside the City of Sandusky (22 in 2017, 8 in 2016)
- 242 total houses were assisted (145 in 2017, 97 in 2016)

NOTE: some overlap due to landscaping being used with other programs:

 - 60 Down Payment Assistance (51 in 2017)
 - 21 Substantial Redevelopment (10 in 2017)
 - 161 Exterior Improvements (includes 36 landscaping projects in 2018 and 97 in 2017)
- Passage of City-wide Residential Tax Abatement (10-year, 75%).



504 Lockwood Avenue Before and After



1524 Campbell Street Before and After

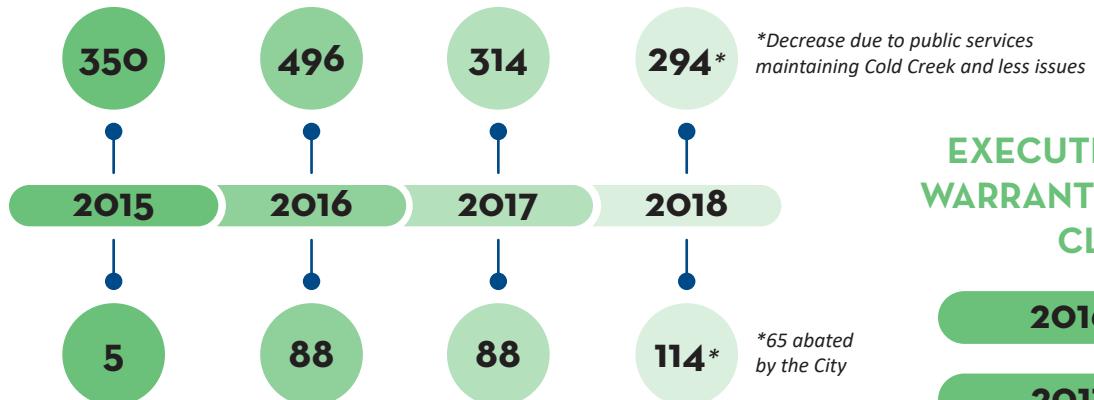
LIVABLE CITY



BRIGHT ELIMINATION & CODE ENFORCEMENT

- Maintained seasonal weed cutting and nuisance staff at four FTE's. However, extended their calendar year through November (as opposed to October).

TALL GRASS ABATEMENTS

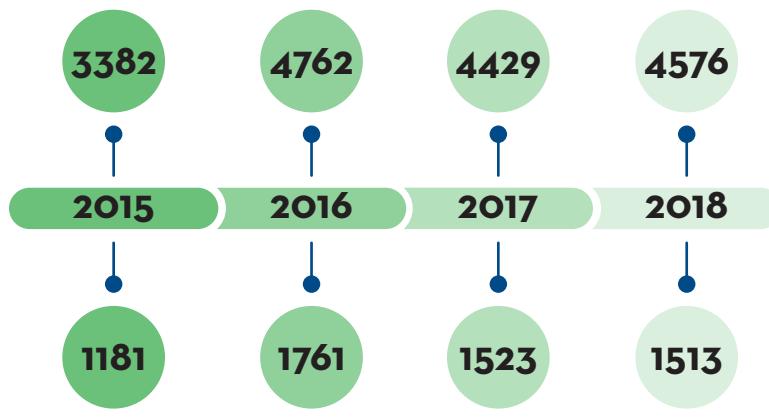


EXECUTION OF SEARCH WARRANTS FOR PROPERTY CLEAN-UPS



BOULEVARD/TRASH ABATEMENTS

INSPECTIONS



VIOLATIONS



BUILD COMMUNITY & TARGET NEIGHBORHOOD INVESTMENT

The Sandusky Neighborhood Initiative currently targets six neighborhoods (First through Fifth Street Neighborhood, South of Kilbourne, Cove District, Garden District, West End District, and Southside District) focusing on anchor projects, placemaking investments, and a designated model block area for each neighborhood. Through the course of the five year initiative (2017 – 2021), funding includes \$600,000 for the neighborhoods and \$600,000 for model block areas. Funding is a combination of general city dollars and a generous donation from the Dorn Community Foundation.

- Hosted a neighborhood cleanup in each one of the six Sandusky Neighborhood Initiative neighborhoods. A dumpster was provided during the day of each cleanup allowing residents to dispose of unwanted materials.



• Southside District

- Debuted the Shelter Program in conjunction with New Jerusalem Baptist Church to provide overnight shelter during extreme cold weather events.



• South of Kilbourne

- Coordinated 100 college students from Beulah Beach, in conjunction with the New Day Resource Center, helping residents along the Hancock Corridor with minor exterior improvements (mulching, painting, etc.).



- Partnered with New Day Resource Center and Derrick's Diner to hold a Community Fall Fun Day.
- In conjunction with Derrick's Diner, worked with a local artist (Derek Brennan) to design and paint a mural on the side of Derrick's Diner representative of food and community.



• Cove District

- Installed the “hook” sculpture on the Meigs Street boundary of the Cove District. A neighborhood ice cream social event was held to debut the 19 1/2 foot, stainless steel sculpture to neighborhood residents.

• Garden District

- Central Park received upgrades including new play equipment, a resurfaced basketball court and new backboard and rim, a shade structure, and over 700 feet of new sidewalk along the Northern side of Monroe Street.

• First through Fifth Street Neighborhood

- Converted an unused structure obtained due to tax-delinquency and transformed a longstanding blighted property into a beautiful neighborhood gateway, featuring a pavilion structure holding picnic tables, benches, and a bike rack.



LIVABLE CITY



SUPPORT NEIGHBORHOOD SAFETY

Police

- Continued to implement programming and strategies to aid officers in their interactions with the public. Community engagement opportunities included Touch a Truck, Coffee with a Cop, Subzero with a Hero, and participation in other community programs and events.
- Continued officer engagement with members of the public:

PARK WALKS

2016	865
2017	1450
2018	1440

NEIGHBORHOOD WALKS

2016	751
2017	1158
2018	975

BUSINESS WALKS

2016	723
2017	1881
2018	1845

- Revised the department's policy and procedure manual (151 policies and 75 procedures) through a partnership with Lexipol.
- Police department personnel trained 2,698 hours (2,795 hours in 2017 and 1977.5 hours in 2016)

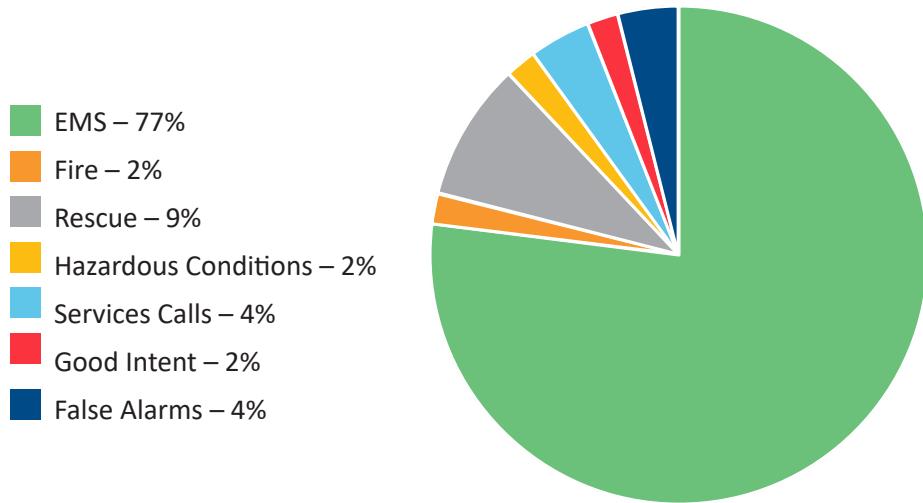


- Promoted Dawn Allen from Sergeant to Lieutenant, the first female in Sandusky Police Department history to reach that rank.



Fire

- Fire department personnel generated 6,293 reports in 2018:



- Sandusky Fire provided mutual aid 30 times and received mutual aid 29 times.
- Sandusky Fire trained 5,502 hours.
- Addition of a Community Impact Officer to interact with residents and community organizations.
- The Community Impact Officer and fire personnel participated in 130 hours of community service.





VIBRANT CITY

Vibrant City strategies are designed to strengthen Sandusky's regional economy by leveraging existing assets, partnering to create new opportunities, and supporting entrepreneurs and small businesses.

REVITALIZATION OF VACANT BUILDINGS AND BLIGHTED LAND

- Completed the abandoned gas station clean-up of the former Sunoco site which made the property developable to a commercial standard.
- Sold the former Sunoco and Hoppers Mobile Home Park sites to The Forest Sandusky for utilization as one of Ohio's first medical marijuana dispensaries.
- Completed additional testing and development of a remedial action plan for Wisteria Farms and currently bidding the second and final phase of demolition.
- Completed \$575,000 in demolition of six acres at the former American Crayon facility.
- Completed Phase II activities at the former Fisher Drug on Hancock Street and working with a private party and owner on redevelopment opportunities.
- Committed \$50,000 to the Sandusky Central Catholic Athletic Boosters for the acquisition and demolition of 407 W. Jefferson which was necessary in order to demolish the condemned commercial buildings at 428 and 432 Decatur Street.
- Began environmental due diligence work on six commercial properties.

DEVELOP AND ATTRACT A TALENTED WORKFORCE

- The city partnered with BGSU and Cedar Fair to develop the BGSU/Cedar Fair School of Resort Management. The groundbreaking will occur in 2019 with completion in 2020.



Rendering of the BGSU/Cedar Fair School of Resort Management

SUPPORT ENTREPRENEURS & SMALL BUSINESSES

\$445,000 committed to 24 projects and businesses

Leveraged nearly \$3.5 million in private investment equating to \$7.72 in private investment for every \$1.00 of city investment

Contributed to an increase in nearly 80 new jobs with \$5,600 in city investment per job created

Creation and passage of the Cleveland Road/Sports Center and Downtown/Battery Park TIFs, in partnership with the Sandusky City Schools.

NOTABLE PROJECTS INCLUDE:

Brew Tours • Erie County Community Foundation façade and new offices • Gundlach Sheet Metal Works expansion
Landmark Kitchen Bar interior buildout • Maca Root Juice Bar & Eatery buildout

Renaissance Too Properties redevelopment of 125 E. Water Street for the new home of Lake Erie Shores and Islands



Gundlach Sheet Metal Works Expansion



Erie County Community Foundation Interior Offices



The Maca Root Juice Bar & Eatery, interior



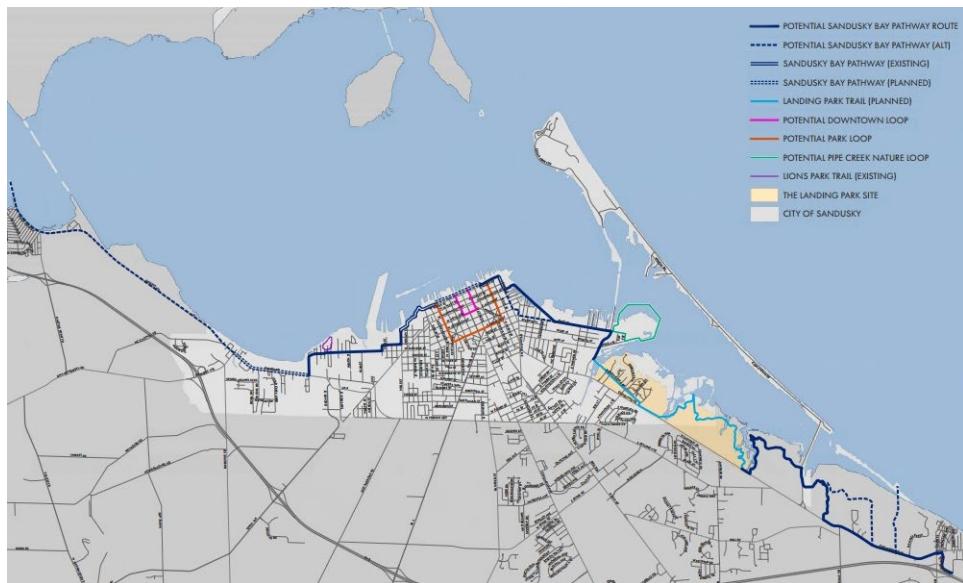
CONNECTED CITY

Sandusky must be connected to the global economy and the region and must work to provide a more seamless connection from its neighborhoods to employment, Sandusky Bay and downtown.

WALKING & BIKEABILITY

The Sandusky Bay Pathway Update is a re-envisioning of the 2006 Sandusky Bay Pathway Study that explored ways of connecting the residents and visitors of Sandusky to Downtown and the waterfront. The purpose of this update is to research and determine new and additional ways to accomplish these connectivity goals, while also validating the original plan framework.

The study area stretched from west of the city limits, east along Route 6 and the waterfront corridors of the city to the planned Landing Park development beginning at Castaway Bay. The City of Sandusky served as the project lead and sponsor, with the help of a robust team of stakeholders including members from: City of Sandusky Staff, Erie MetroParks, Erie Regional Planning Commission, and the Murray Legacy Fund. Environmental Design Group was hired to conduct the study.



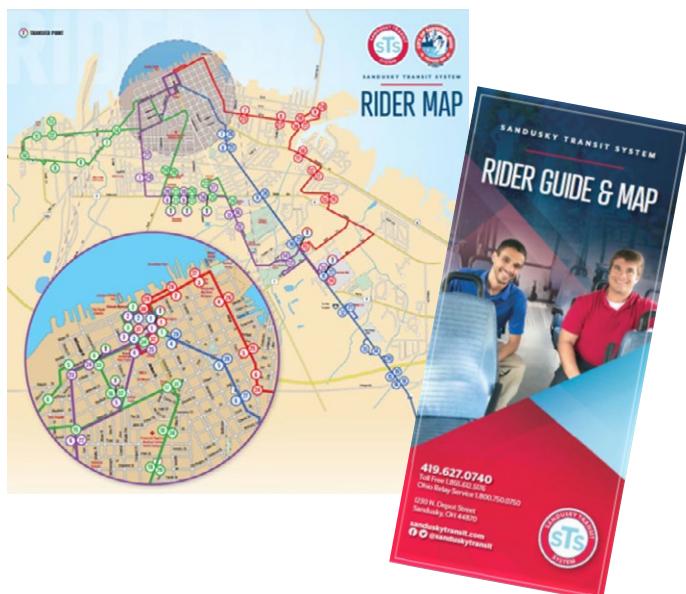
Sandusky Bay Pathway

PUBLIC TRANSIT

- Created a Downtown Transit Hub at the intersection of Washington Street and Wayne Street in which all lines meet at the top of each hour. This allows riders ease of transfer between the various lines.
- Updated amenities at eight locations including benches, garbage cans, and bike racks.
- Increased outreach and public relations efforts through the rebranding of Sandusky Transit System including a new logo, brochures, and maps, the addition of a social media presence and outreach efforts throughout the community. This lead to an increase in ridership and awareness.



Downtown Transit Hub



New Sandusky Transit System logo

- Updated signage to correlate more directly with new maps and color-coded routes.
- Created a partnership with Cedar Point to provide employees with transportation outside of the park.



Updated amenities

- Partnered with Kalahari to offer a Kalahari Employee Discount pass which is expected to generate roughly \$50,000 annually.
- Established a presence on Google Maps which provides transit users and visitors an easier way of navigating the routes and connecting multiple modes of transportation available in Erie County.



DESTINATION CITY

As people choose to live in the same type of places as they visit, investing in projects that benefit both tourists and residents has become paramount.

ARTS & CULTURE

- The City of Sandusky, as recommended by the Bicentennial Vision Plan, passed legislation dedicating one percent of admissions tax collected towards the creation and implementation of public art. In order to ensure public participation, the city also created a Public Arts and Culture Commission to provide guidance to staff in the creation of the Public Art Master Plan.
- The Public Arts and Culture Commission partnered with the Lange Trust to support a temporary outdoor sculpture exhibit, which will run through September of 2019.
- The Sandusky Neighborhood Initiative incorporated public art in several projects including the fish hook sculpture in the Cove District and hired a local native to work with a small business in the creation of a mural.



DESTINATION DOWNTOWN

- Broke ground on the reconstruction of the Jackson Street Pier, which will create an improved pier that will maintain and enhance all functional aspects, including but not limited to, parking, ferry services and viewing opportunities, while providing new opportunities for use by residents and visitors.



- Supported H2 Productions in the creation of a small business program to attract new tenants to various properties including The Marketplace at Cooke.
- Passed legislation providing financial incentives for the redevelopment of the vacant, historic Feick Building, which also secured State and Federal Historic Tax Credits.
- Lake Erie Shores and Islands relocated their offices to Downtown Sandusky.



Rendering of the Feick Building



RECREATION & WATERFRONT

- Expanded the Recreation Department Staff from two full-time positions to three full-time positions, with one position focusing on Sandusky's youth.



- Laid the groundwork for RecDesk, an online registration system for all programs and camps which will be available for residents in early 2019.
- Hosted two Youth Summits with over 30 community organizations attending.
- Served the youth of the community by offering out-of-school options, including the Spring Break Camp, Summer Playground Program, a new "Living the Wildlife at Pipe Creek" camp and Winter Break: A New Year, New You Camp, which debuted in 2019.



- Offered free programming, with the help of local business sponsorships and partnerships, including:
 - Movies by the Bay which offered six movies at the Paper District Marina.



- Pier Pressure which provided Saturday morning workouts in downtown Sandusky with a rotating schedule of local gyms/trainers.
- Bayfront Bazaar & Brew which was held at the Sandusky Bay Pavilion on four Wednesdays and included local merchants, craft beer, and local music.
- The Recreation Department continued to promote health and wellness for all ages with two annual walking/running events that included the Boy with the Boot Bicen10k & Family Relay and Dot the i, Block the M.





CELEBRATED CITY

The Bicentennial provides an opportunity to redefine Sandusky, celebrate assets and build on the City's proud history.

2018 – THE BICENTENNIAL

- Raised over \$500,000 in private dollars to celebrate the bicentennial year with unique events, year round programming and legacy projects.
- Hosted four pillar events to bring the community together and celebrate on a grand scale including: the Bicentennial Ball, Festival of Sail and evening concerts, Founders' Weekend parade and Firelands Symphony Orchestra Concert with fireworks, and the Winter Kickoff Festival.
- Hosted a monthly history series, *Bicentennial Banter*, covering topics from ice harvesting and fishing to the Underground Railroad, with the collaboration of every Sandusky museum and historic institution.
- Collaborated with both public and parochial schools, the Sandusky Library and Sandusky Recreation to provide robust youth programming including the Love Letters to Sandusky project, bands playing in the parade and Firelands Symphony Orchestra concert, Sandusky Rocks summer reading program, and more.
- Used local partnerships to create specialized marketing and media content, including: The *Sandusky Register* commemorative editions, coverage from the national Weather Channel on Festival of Sail and Mama Duck, and much more.
- Conservatively estimated 75,000+ individuals participated in the bicentennial year, participated in a bicentennial project, attended an event, or volunteered their time.



CREATE STRONG WEB AND SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCE



Twitter: 1,724 followers



Facebook: 7,552 followers • Videos earned 50,000+ views



Instagram: 1,142 followers

Twitter: largest tweets

1. Announcement of new BGSU school with 15,455 impressions

City of Sandusky @cityofsandusky
 Big news was just released by @cedarpoint, @bgsu & @MarousBrothers as the site for the new university has been selected in downtown Sandusky!
 We are so excited to welcome students in 2020 and to offer this one of a kind program.
<http://www.sanduskyregister.com/story/201812140012...>

Impressions	15,455
Total engagements	166
Link clicks	85
Likes	26
Profile clicks	24
Detail expands	21

2. "Cold outside"/winter ice sailing with 7,826 impressions, 337 engagements

3. Meet Tom Horsman with 7,693 impressions, 683 engagements

4. Unique place with 6,678 impressions, 391 engagements

5. Meet Rooted Juice Bar 6,248 impressions, 604 engagements



City of Sandusky
 @cityofsandusky

We'd like to give the warmest welcome to Rooted Juice Bar & Eatery. This clean eating option is delicious and will give you the energy needed to conquer the day!
 *Located at the rear of @PaddleClimbOH #sanduskyeats #food #avocadotoast

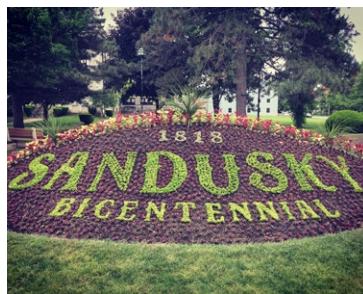


7:53 PM · 16 Dec 2018

21 Retweets 55 Likes

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Instagram photos





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City Commission

Commission President – Dennis Murray, Jr.
Commission Vice President – Dick Brady
Commissioner – Nikki Lloyd
Commissioner – Greg Lockhart
Commissioner – Wes Poole
Commissioner – Naomi Twine
Commissioner – Dave Waddington

Department Heads

Planning Director – Angela Byington
Law Director – Trevor Hayberger
Public Works Director – Aaron Klein
City Commission Clerk – Kelly Kresser
Chief Development Officer – Matt Lasko
Police Chief – John Orzech
Finance Director – Hank S. Solowiej, CPA
Fire Chief – Richard Wilcox
City Manager – Eric Wobser