



## Mayor - City of Cortland

400 North High Street, Cortland, Ohio 44410

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### Annual Report of the Mayor to Cortland City Council February 16, 2010

#### **Introduction**

The primary purpose of this report is to document activities during FY 2009 and the condition of the City of Cortland at the conclusion of FY 2009. I want to thank my staff for their support throughout the year and everyone else that contributed to making this year a successful one for the city.

The city completed the year with continued financial solvency. We did not experience the reduction in income that many communities saw during 2009, primarily due to the fact that we do not collect an income tax. During 2009 we began work on the several major improvements to the City's water system that will result in more reliable service to residents at a significantly higher water pressure in most areas of the city.

#### **Finance**

The city completed 2009 with a total unencumbered fund balance of \$2,820,000 which is an increase of \$333,000 or 13% from the carryover 2008 balance. Total expenditures for FY 2009 were \$5,813,300, an increase of \$427,500 over 2008 expenditures. Receipts for FY2008 were \$6,145,600 an increase of \$701,100 or 13% from 2007.

The most significant balance increases were \$69,400 in the M & R fund, \$70,400 in the General fund, \$89,600 in the Fire Levy fund, and \$100,000 in the Fire Improvement fund. The most significant balance decreases was \$40,000 in the Police Levy fund. All other funds remained approximately the same as 2008 year end levels.

Audits for 2007 and 2008 were completed and resulted in no findings or citations.

## **Service department**

The focus throughout this year has been to continue to stabilize city services through improved problem resolution and tracking, adherence to procedures, and documentation of procedures and processes. Our objective continues to be to maintain long range capital plans for all city infrastructures. This will allow the city to plan for financial needs well into the future and continue to maintain or improve current levels of city services.

### **Water**

The unencumbered water fund balance increased from \$146,500 to \$166,200 with expenditures of \$519,300 to support the water department. Total revenues from water billings were \$565,600, a decrease of only 1.5 percent from 2008 with a reduction of over 7 % in water use from our 5 year average. This resulted from a restructuring of water and sewer rates to better match our cost structure, but not significantly increase the total price to residents.

Water pressure problems in higher elevation areas of the city should be solved with the construction of the new water tower. The projects identified to improve the water system and address the problems with low pressure are now underway. During 2009 we completed the upgrade of the water line from 6 inch to 12 inch along High Street from City Hall to Main Street. Construction of the new elevated storage tank at Willow Park began during 2009 and will be completed in late 2010. This project will significantly increase water pressure throughout the system. The addition of pressure reducing valves to create a lower pressure zone west of High Street and south of City Hall and the north well field development on Bradley Brownlee Road will also be completed in 2010. These projects along with a well field connector line from City Hall to Main Street will complete the upgrades to our water system required to support the future needs of the city.

### **Sanitary Sewers**

The unencumbered Sanitary Sewer fund balances decreased by 3% to \$683,300 with total expenditures of \$820,900 in 2009. Revenues from sewer were \$802,200 which were 10% below revenues in 2008. This reduction was due to both the reduction in sewer rates and the reduction in water usage.

The upgrade of the Southdale and Old Oak lift stations will be completed in the spring of 2010.

## **Storm sewers**

Upgrades and replacement of storm sewers on Heather Lane, Myrtle Avenue and Portal Drive were completed during 2009.

Funding through Eastgate of an upgrade to the storm sewers in the Stahl Avenue development was approved and engineering has started. Work will be coordinated with the installation of the water systems connector from City Hall to Main Street. This project will correct problems with the construction that limits our ability to flush the system and correctly size sewers for current requirements.

Funding through Eastgate of an upgrade to storm sewers on Heritage Lane and Emerson Circle has been obtained to complete work similar to improvements in the Stahl Avenue project. Work on this project will begin in 2010 or 2011 depending on other project activity.

## **Streets and Roads**

We continue to utilize the 10 year resurfacing cycle to determine paving plans for each year. This year the annual resurfacing project included over 312,300 square feet of resurfacing.

Streets included were Denman Avenue, Sunset Drive, Elm Circle, Lattin Street, North Bank Street, from Lattin to Market, Orchard Lane, Tessa Place, Maple Avenue from Orchard Lane to S. Colonial, Myrtle Avenue, Heather Lane, Woodview Drive, from Cricket Lane to S. Colonial, Diamond Way from Gemwae Dr. to Topaz Tr., Topaz Trail from Diamond Way to Turquoise Drive, Turquoise Drive from Topaz to Diamond Way, Onyx Place, Sawmill Drive and Sawmill Court.

In addition to the city paving project, the state resurfaced State Route 5 from Phillips Rice Road to the northern corporation limits. Application was made to Eastgate Regional Council of Governments for funding assistance for the city's share and the entire project was completed at no cost to the city.

Transportation Enhancement funds were secured for N. Mecca Street Pedestrian Enhancement. Sidewalks will be reconstructed between West Main Street and the northern corporation limits along North Mecca Street. Detailed Plans for the Project were completed and submitted to ODOT District Four for approval. The project will be bid this coming spring with construction this summer.

## **Police Department**

The unencumbered Police Levy fund balance decreased by 15% to \$216,300 with total expenditures of \$943,800 to support the Police department. Police levy expenses continue to exceed receipts and will result in future fund deficits as expenses continue to increase. The number of police officers was reduced due to a retirement of and decision not to replace an officer. The force continued to provide enforcement and investigative services at high levels due to the dedication of fulltime officers and a significant use of part time officers.

Lakeview schools agreed to provide \$10,000 toward continuing the School Resource Officer at their facilities for the 2009/10 school year.

## **Fire Department**

The unencumbered Fire Levy fund balance increased by 26% to \$434,900 with total expenditures of \$1,248,200 to support the Fire department. We continue to add to the Fire Improvement Fund which had a year end balance of \$196,000. Receipts for the fire department increased to \$1,350,700 primarily due to restoration of billing services for ambulance billings. Billing services were interrupted late in 2008 due to the death of the company owner.

There was a small increase in alarms during 2009 to a total of 1534. A state EMS grant for \$4,500 was awarded that was used for training and equipment for Fire Department personnel.

## **Other Initiatives**

### **Appearance and Aesthetics of the City**

The Cortland Beautification Association selected three residential properties and one business for the Cortland Pride Award. First Place Bank continued as the 2009 sponsor for the award. Three residential awards and a business award are planned for 2010.

**Attracting People to the Community** - A welcome letter and useful business and city information in plastic Welcome to Cortland bags are being given to all new water customers and other identified new residents. Over 820 packets have been distributed through the end of 2009.

**Parks and Recreation Facilities** - The city completed the installation of two Pickle Ball Courts on the Hockey Rink. The Cortland Community Foundation purchased two large pieces of equipment for the skate park. The funds for the equipment came from the "A Skate in the Park" fundraiser held in 2008 and a matching donation from

Trumbull 100. Service Department employees assembled and installed the 4' tall Bank and Half Pipe.

The City purchased the Bridge Point Play system and six (6) Tuff Clad benches from Gametime. The play system was geared to 2-5 years old and complemented the play system installed the previous year. Four (4) benches were installed around the play ground while two (2) were utilized at the skate park.

Respectfully Submitted,

Curt Moll