



Fairfield County, Ohio

Popular Annual Financial Report

for the year ended December 31, 2023

**Issued by Carri L. Brown, Ph.D., MBA, CGFM
Fairfield County Auditor**

Two Glaciers Park

7636 Clearcreek Rd SW, Lancaster

COVER PHOTO: Clear Creek near Hannaway Covered Bridge in Two Glaciers Park – Fairfield County Park District

THEN (2005-2021) Two Glaciers Park was first acquired in three parcels at different times using Clean Ohio grant funds and landowners' matches. Johnson Covered Bridge needed repairs to its canopy. A complete renovation saved it for future generations to enjoy. A parking lot was constructed, benches were installed next to Clear Creek, and picnic tables were added.

The heavy spring rains of 2017 created an emergency situation. Clear Creek flood waters carried a large tree downstream that smashed into Hannaway Covered Bridge and knocked the bridge off its abutments. A complete restoration had to be made.

In 2020, a master plan for Two Glaciers Park was developed. Park neighbors and County residents were invited to an open house to view and discuss the plan.

NOW (2021-Present) A wetland mitigation project led by The Nature Conservancy has been completed. Approximately 12 acres of new wetland habitat were created. Our partners at US Fish and Wildlife Service planted nearly 120 acres of upland wildflowers and grasses, and an additional 46 acres of floodplain mix.

In 2022, a generous donation by The Bill and Joyce Hague Foundation allowed Fairfield County Park District (FCPD) to purchase the 40 acres that had separated the existing properties of the park. It is the largest park in the District at just over 356 contiguous acres.

TOMORROW (2024 and Beyond) FCPD has been awarded H2Ohio grant funding for two wetland projects totaling almost 33 acres; construction will begin in 2024. Future plans call for installation of several miles of trails, restrooms, another parking lot, natural play areas, and bridge maintenance.

Although the park is not yet fully developed, even now the Johnson and Hannaway bridges can be enjoyed. It is a peaceful getaway just minutes from downtown Lancaster.

Additional copies of this Popular Annual Financial Report (PAFR) may be obtained from:

Fairfield County Auditor's Office
210 E. Main Street
Lancaster, OH 43130

Requests can be made at (740) 652-7041.

A PDF version of this report is available online at:

<https://www.co.fairfield.oh.us/auditor/fc-financial-reports-ACFR-PAFR.html>

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Government Finance Officers Association

Award for Outstanding Achievement in Popular Annual Financial Reporting

Presented to

**Fairfield County
Ohio**

For its Annual Financial Report
For the Fiscal Year Ended

December 31, 2022

Christopher P. Morill

Executive Director/CEO

AWARDS

Fairfield County participates in various awards programs sponsored by the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA). Each individual program has certain requirements that must be met in order to qualify. During fiscal year 2022, the County received the following financial awards:

Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting

Given for outstanding preparation of the Annual Comprehensive Financial Report

The County received this award in 2022 for the 34th consecutive year.

Award for Outstanding Achievement in Popular Annual Financial Reporting

Given for outstanding preparation of the Popular Annual Financial Report

The County received this award in 2022 for the 22nd consecutive year.

Citizens of Fairfield County



I am pleased to present the Fairfield County, Ohio Popular Annual Financial Report (PAFR), for the year ended December 31, 2023. This report provides a brief analysis of the sources of County revenues and where those dollars are spent, the County's financial position, an overview of local economic trends, and major goals and accomplishments. Above all, it is designed to present a readable and understandable financial report.

The information in this report was drawn from the financial information appearing in the 2023 Fairfield County Annual Comprehensive Financial Report. The Annual Comprehensive Financial Report was prepared in conformance with generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) and was audited by the Ohio Auditor of State, receiving an unmodified opinion. An unmodified opinion means that the general-purpose financial statements of the County are fairly presented in all material respects. The Annual Comprehensive Financial Report consists of approximately 338 pages of detailed financial statements, notes, schedules, and reports.

The PAFR is a condensed, more user-friendly financial report intended to provide highlights of the primary government from the County's Annual Comprehensive Financial Report. The Annual Comprehensive Financial Report contains information from all Fairfield County funds and is designed to bring greater awareness of the financial condition of our County to its citizens and other interested parties.

This report is unaudited and is presented on a non-GAAP basis. The major differences between GAAP and non-GAAP reporting deals with not including component units and in the presentation of segregated funds, as well as full disclosure of all material financial and non-financial events in notes to the financial statements. Individuals who desire to review GAAP basis, full disclosure financial statements should refer to the County's Annual Comprehensive Financial Report, which is available from the County Auditor's office and online at:

<https://www.co.fairfield.oh.us/auditor/fc-financial-reports-ACFR-PAFR.html>

The Fairfield County Popular Annual Financial Report is presented as a means of enhancing the public's confidence in County government and the stewardship of its elected officials through reader-friendly financial reporting. As you review the following pages, I invite you to share any questions, concerns, or recommendations you may have. Please call the Fairfield County Auditor's Office at (740) 652-7020 with questions, comments, or suggestions regarding this report.

Kindest regards,

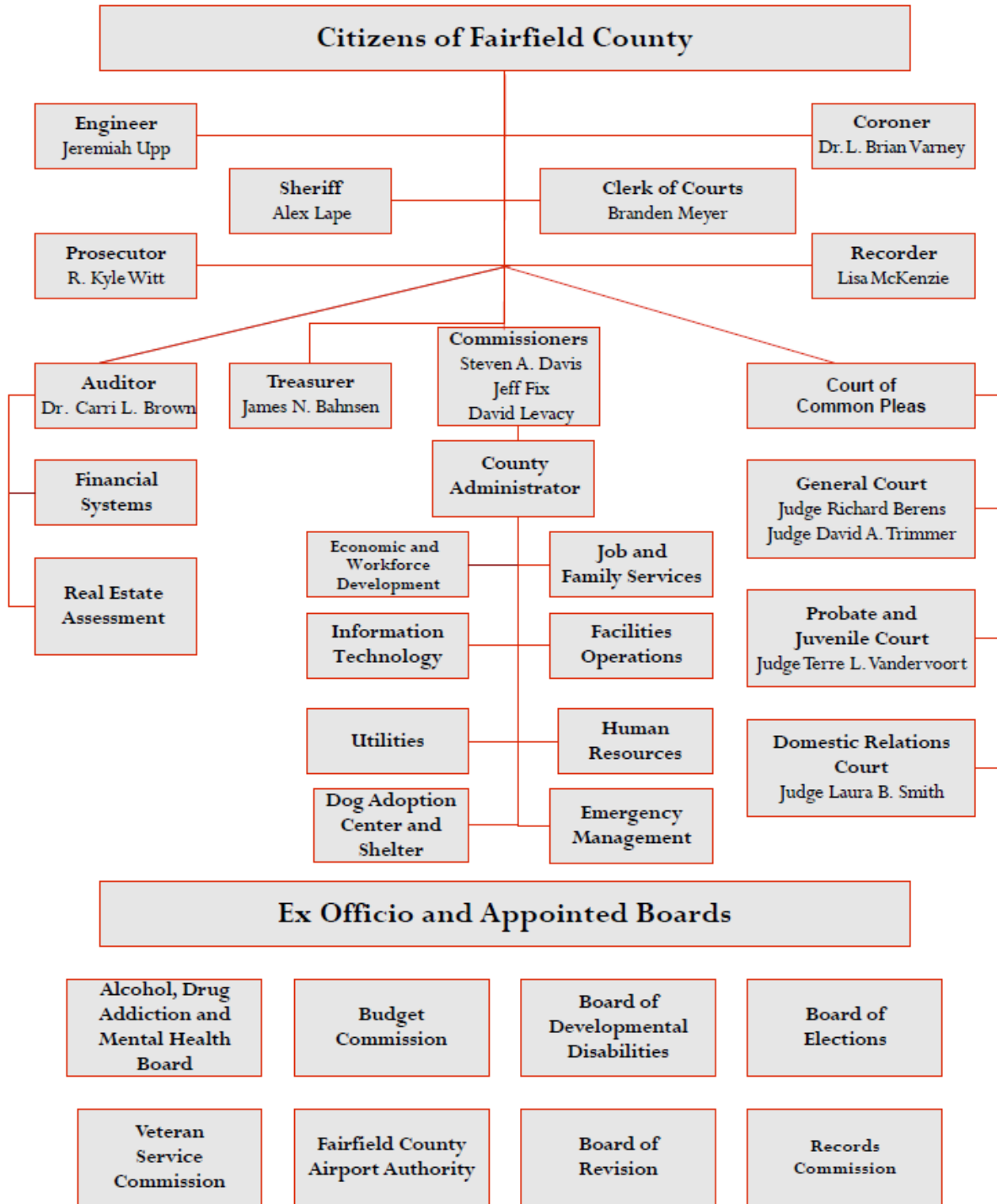
A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Carri L. Brown". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Carri L. Brown, PhD, MBA, CGFM
Fairfield County Auditor

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Your Fairfield County Government

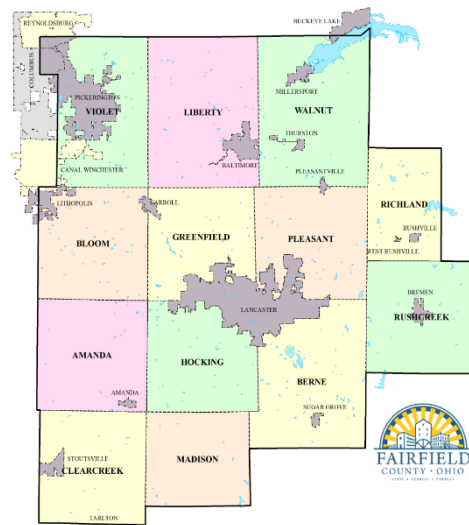
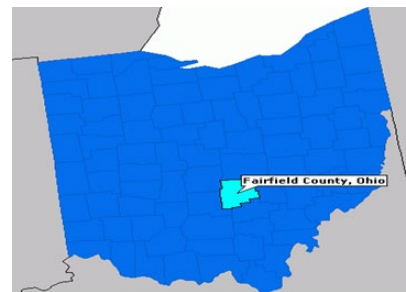


GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE

The County government has only those powers conferred upon it by the State of Ohio Constitution and Statutes. A three-member Board of Commissioners, a County Administrator, twelve other elected officials, and various department heads govern the County. As part of the “checks and balances” system, the elected officials and department heads manage the internal operations of their respective divisions with the Board of Commissioners authorizing expenditures and serving as the budget authority, the taxing authority, and the contracting body. Each Commissioner serves a term of four years.

In addition to the County Auditor, who serves as the Chief Fiscal Officer and the Tax Assessor, there are seven elected administrative officials, each of whom operates independently as set forth by Ohio law. These officials are: Clerk of Courts, Coroner, Engineer, Prosecutor, Recorder, Sheriff, and Treasurer. All of these officials serve four-year terms. The following judges are elected on a countywide basis to oversee the County’s judicial system: two Common Pleas Court Judges, a Probate/Juvenile Court Judge, and a Domestic Relations Court Judge.

The County provides citizens with a wide range of services including the following: human and social services, health and community assistance services; civil and criminal justice system services; road, bridge, and building maintenance; water and sewer utility services; and general and administrative support services provided by the offices of the Commissioners, Auditor, Treasurer, Prosecutor, and Recorder.



FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

The County's financial activities are accounted for primarily in governmental activities where the focus is not profit or loss, but rather on services rendered and the cost to provide those services. The County's business-type activities, similar to those found in the private sector, are accounted for in operation funds known as the Sewer and Water Enterprise Funds.

Revenues are monies the County receives from a variety of sources to pay for the services it provides.

Program Revenues include:

- *Charges for Services* – licenses, permits, and other fees, fines, forfeitures, settlements, rent, leases, and charges paid by the recipients of goods or services offered by County programs.
- *Operating (and Capital) Grants, Contributions, and Interest* – grants and contributions received from other governments, organizations, and individuals that are restricted in some manner; investment earnings that are restricted to meeting the operational or capital requirements of a particular program.

General Revenues are those revenues that are not classified as program revenues. All taxes, even those that are levied for a specific purpose, are considered general revenues.

- *Unrestricted Grants and Entitlements*- Revenue from grants and pass-through monies administered by the State of Ohio that are not restricted on their use.
- *Unrestricted Interest and Contributions*- Monies earned through the County Treasurer's investments of cash on hand not needed for current period services; donor contributions that do not specify any restrictions.

Expenses are the amounts spent to provide services to citizens.

Legislative and Executive expenses are the costs incurred for the County's administrative offices, including the Auditor, Commissioners, Treasurer, Prosecutor, and Recorder.

Legislative and Executive - Intergovernmental expenses are Commissioner allocations made to local governments.

Judicial expenses are the costs of administering justice through the Fairfield County Courts system.

Public Safety expenses are the costs of the Coroner, Probation, and Sheriff's departments.

Public Safety - Intergovernmental expenses are the costs to assist in operating the Fairfield, Hocking, and Athens Counties Council of Governments on Major Crimes Investigations Unit.

External Portion (Public Safety, Public Works, and Human Services), are the costs of the limited risk health insurance program for employees of various external agencies within Fairfield County.

Public Works expenses are the costs incurred by the Engineer to maintain county roads and bridges.

Public Works - Intergovernmental expenses are the costs incurred by the County's Fiscal Recovery Special Revenue Fund for local governments.

Health expenses include services provided by the Developmental Disabilities Board, Dog Adoption Center and Shelter, and the Alcohol, Drug Addiction and Mental Health Board.

Health - Intergovernmental expenses are the costs incurred by the County's Fiscal Recovery Special Revenue Fund for local governments.

Human Services expenses are the costs of operating the Job and Family Services and Veteran Services Commission departments.

Urban Redevelopment and Housing expenses are the costs of the urban improvement program.

Urban Redevelopment and Housing - Intergovernmental expenses are costs to operate the Community Development Block Grant program on behalf of other local governments.

Transportation expenses are costs related to the County owned property located at the Fairfield County Airport.

Interest expenses are interest payments made for County debt.

Sewer and Water operations expenses are the costs to operate the County's business-type activity, providing sewer and water services to ever growing portions of the County.

FINANCIAL ACTIVITY STATEMENT

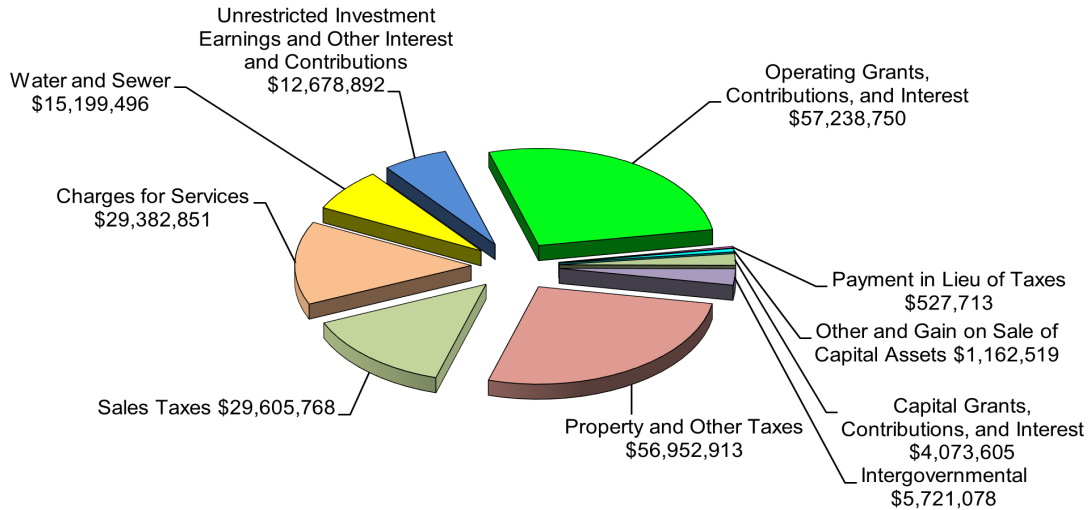
The **Changes in Net Position Statement**, traditionally known by many as the income statement, is designed to provide a record of the money received and spent by the County during the past year.

	Governmental Activities		Business-type Activities		Total Primary Government	
	2023	2022	2023	2022	2023	2022
Revenues:						
Program Revenues:						
Charges for Services	\$ 29,382,851	\$ 24,879,150	\$ 10,390,642	\$ 10,049,824	\$ 39,773,493	\$ 34,928,974
Operating Grants, Contributions, and Interest	57,238,750	45,344,447	-	-	57,238,750	45,344,447
Capital Grants, Contributions, and Interest	4,073,605	4,843,795	4,742,106	5,506,181	8,815,711	10,349,976
Total Program Revenues	90,695,206	75,067,392	15,132,748	15,556,005	105,827,954	90,623,397
General Revenues:						
Property Taxes	50,210,443	46,391,567	-	-	50,210,443	46,391,567
Permissive Real Property Transfer Taxes	3,292,857	3,709,119	-	-	3,292,857	3,709,119
Permissive Motor Vehicle License Taxes	2,786,885	2,746,938	-	-	2,786,885	2,746,938
Lodging Taxes	662,728	545,607	-	-	662,728	545,607
Sales Taxes	29,605,768	29,324,856	-	-	29,605,768	29,324,856
Payment in Lieu of Taxes	527,713	-	-	-	527,713	-
Intergovernmental	5,721,078	5,631,973	-	-	5,721,078	5,631,973
Unrestricted Investment Earnings and Other Interest	12,677,792	(5,010,888)	61,700	26,495	12,739,492	(4,984,393)
Unrestricted Contributions	1,100	1,325	-	-	1,100	1,325
Gain on Sale of Capital Assets	-	43,682	-	-	-	43,682
Other	1,162,519	1,295,708	5,048	116,596	1,167,567	1,412,304
Total General Revenues	106,648,883	84,679,887	66,748	143,091	106,715,631	84,822,978
Total Revenues.....	197,344,089	159,747,279	15,199,496	15,699,096	212,543,585	175,446,375
Expenses:						
General Government:						
Legislative and Executive	24,531,128	19,412,105	-	-	24,531,128	19,412,105
Intergovernmental	1,854,779	1,601,310	-	-	1,854,779	1,601,310
Judicial	9,626,900	7,012,835	-	-	9,626,900	7,012,835
Public Safety	31,230,194	22,892,495	-	-	31,230,194	22,892,495
Intergovernmental	639,112	319,322	-	-	639,112	319,322
External Portion	792,153	607,994	-	-	792,153	607,994
Public Works	16,173,562	14,582,668	-	-	16,173,562	14,582,668
Intergovernmental	939,929	486,611	-	-	939,929	486,611
External Portion	389,540	299,030	-	-	389,540	299,030
Health	36,381,912	25,642,636	-	-	36,381,912	25,642,636
Intergovernmental	559,010	148,255	-	-	559,010	148,255
Human Services	40,609,583	32,625,160	-	-	40,609,583	32,625,160
External Portion	127,587	110,743	-	-	127,587	110,743
Urban Redevelopment and Housing	448,174	16,400	-	-	448,174	16,400
Intergovernmental	52,902	263,449	-	-	52,902	263,449
Transportation	311,507	325,102	-	-	311,507	325,102
Interest	1,091,044	1,068,778	-	-	1,091,044	1,068,778
Sewer System	-	-	4,373,663	4,104,395	4,373,663	4,104,395
Water System	-	-	4,121,720	3,647,106	4,121,720	3,647,106
Total Expenses.....	165,759,016	127,414,893	8,495,383	7,751,501	174,254,399	135,166,394
Increase in Net Position	31,585,073	32,332,386	6,704,113	7,947,595	38,289,186	40,279,981
Net Position - Beginning of Year.....	310,229,245	277,896,859	81,631,534	73,683,939	391,860,779	351,580,798
Net Position - End of Year.....	\$341,814,318	\$310,229,245	\$ 88,335,647	\$ 81,631,534	\$430,149,965	\$ 391,860,779

Net position for governmental activities increased by \$31,585,073 for 2023. This is attributed mainly to increases in revenue in the areas of charges for services, operating grants, unrestricted investment earnings and other interest, and property and sales taxes. Operating grants increased due to increases in federal and State grant awards. Property taxes increased due to increases in the assessed valuations from 2022 to 2023 due to the increase in the housing market, the increase in public utility company assets within the County, and due to the 2023 triennial property valuation. Sales taxes increased slightly due to increases in inflation rates of goods and services which directly impact sales taxes as well as a strong economy within the County. Unrestricted investment earnings and other interest reflected an increase due to increases in the interest rates, increases in cash balances for investing throughout the year, and due to the fluctuations in the fair values of investments as of year-end due to the economy. Increases in expenses occurred in 2023 primarily due to the recognition of the net pension/OPEB liability (assets).

WHERE THE MONEY CAME FROM

Fairfield County Revenues for 2023 \$212,543,585



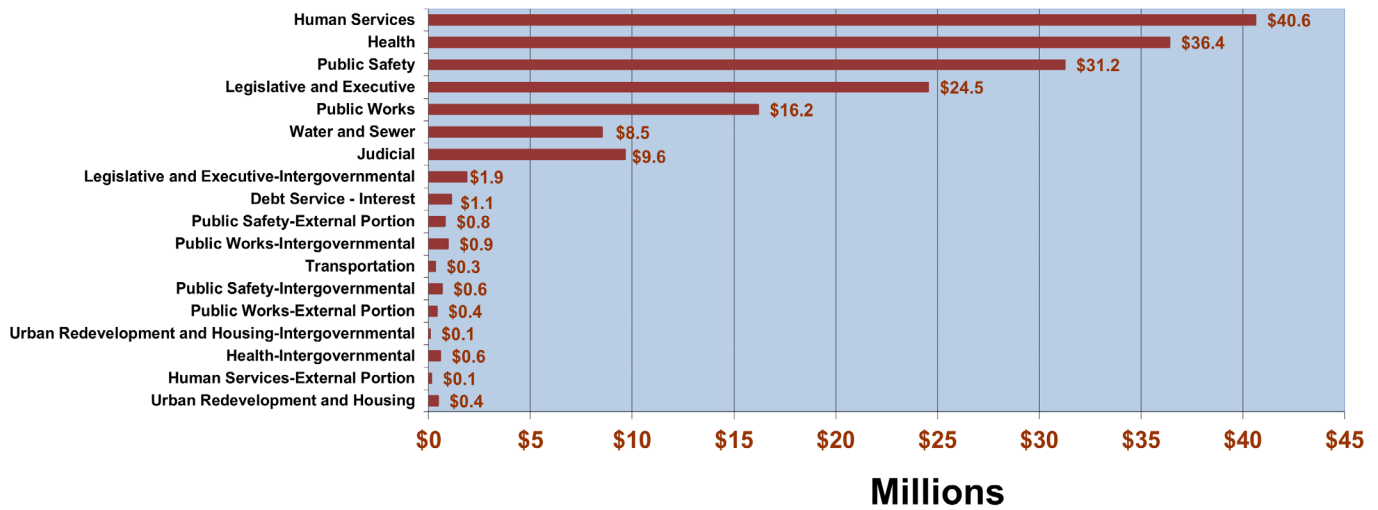
The primary government revenues presented here is reported in the 2023 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report's government-wide statement of activities. The chart depicts revenues by source. The table below summarizes revenues by source and shows the percentage increases (decreases) in relation to the prior year.

REVENUES	2019 ACTUAL	2020 ACTUAL	2021 ACTUAL	2022 ACTUAL	2023 ACTUAL	% CHANGE FROM 2022
Taxes	\$ 64,510,374	\$ 73,680,032	\$ 81,271,528	\$ 82,718,087	\$ 87,086,394	2.06 %
Grants and Contributions	44,725,382	57,352,539	49,323,249	55,820,215	67,033,433	16.73 %
Charges for Services	20,538,870	21,951,791	23,047,950	24,879,150	29,382,851	15.33 %
Water and Sewer	11,607,551	12,520,090	12,542,175	15,699,096	15,199,496	(3.29) %
Unrestricted Interest	3,592,037	1,676,646	(524,176)	(5,010,888)	12,677,792	139.52 %
Other and Contributions	1,639,134	3,525,258	7,941,612	1,340,715	1,163,619	(15.22) %
	<u>\$ 146,613,348</u>	<u>\$ 170,706,356</u>	<u>\$ 173,602,338</u>	<u>\$ 175,446,375</u>	<u>\$ 212,543,585</u>	17.45 %

County revenues increased by \$37,097,210 or 21.14 percent for 2023. This increase is mainly due to increases in taxes, grants and contributions, charges for services, and unrestricted interest which were mentioned on page 6. The County received \$11,213,218 of new State and federal grants during 2023. This amount included the recognition of operating and capital grants for the federal American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) reimbursable grant funding in the amount of \$6,910,776. The ARPA unearned revenue liability decreased during 2023 to \$12,627,248. As the unearned revenue liability is decreased, the recognition of revenues occurs. Property taxes increased in 2023 due to increases in the assessed values from 2022 to 2023 in the amount of \$1.137 billion due to increases in the housing market, the increase in public utility company assets within the county, and due to the triennial property valuation. Sales tax increased due to an increase in inflation rates of goods and services which directly impacts sales tax as well as a strong economy within the County. Unrestricted investment earnings and other interest reflected a large increase due to cash available for investing, improved interest rates of investments, and improvements in the economy. The unrestricted investment earnings and interest includes \$10,153,260 assigned from other County funds, while the general fund earned \$1,984,456.

WHERE THE MONEY WAS SPENT

Fairfield County Expenses for 2023 \$174,254,399



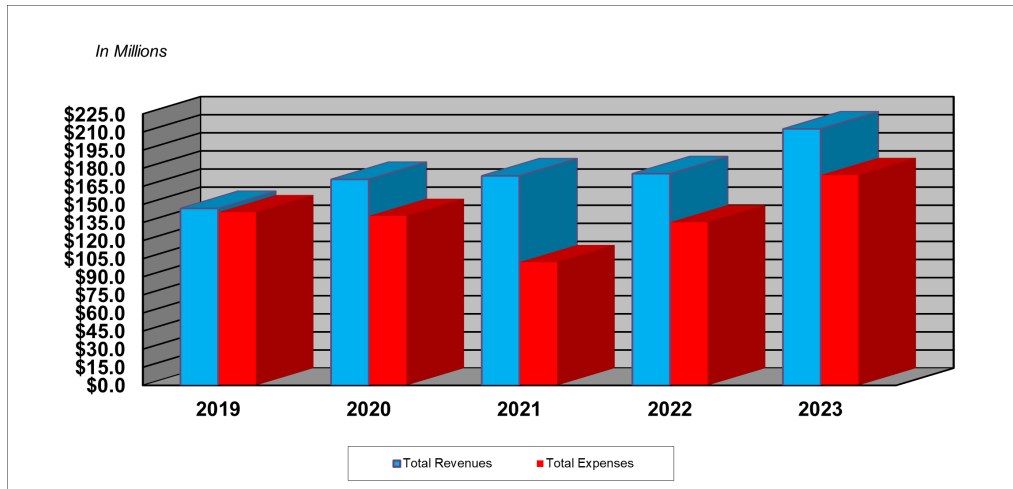
The primary government expenses presented here is reported in the 2023 Annul Comprehensive Financial Report’s government-wide statement of activities. The chart depicts expenses by function. The table below shows expenses by function, and the percentage increases (decreases) in relation to the prior year.

EXPENSES	2019 ACTUAL	2020 ACTUAL	2021 ACTUAL	2022 ACTUAL	2023 ACTUAL	% CHANGE FROM 2022
Human Services	\$ 32,870,167	\$ 33,755,959	\$ 24,375,582	\$ 32,625,160	\$ 40,609,583	32.76 %
Health	27,815,291	27,892,750	20,921,971	25,642,636	36,381,912	51.33 %
Public Safety	27,202,067	25,766,807	14,608,881	22,892,495	31,230,194	57.07 %
Legislative and Executive	19,695,531	18,221,816	13,245,603	19,412,105	24,531,128	38.65 %
Public Works	13,706,603	13,572,530	12,086,624	14,582,668	16,173,562	13.16 %
Water and Sewer	7,989,477	7,865,557	6,574,452	7,751,501	8,495,383	11.31 %
Judicial	8,468,554	7,791,342	4,753,343	7,012,835	9,626,900	54.99 %
Legislative and Executive-Intergovernmental	2,361,477	1,811,142	1,526,078	1,601,310	1,854,779	16.61 %
Debt Service - Interest	1,348,832	1,178,392	1,120,985	1,068,778	1,091,044	1.99 %
Public Safety-External Portion	592,073	588,369	550,599	607,994	792,153	33.45 %
Public Works-Intergovernmental	-	-	-	486,611	939,929	- %
Transportation	280,995	321,951	325,641	325,102	311,507	(4.17) %
Public Safety-Intergovernmental	394,013	365,161	767,847	319,322	639,112	41.65 %
Public Works-External Portion	309,647	304,157	251,024	299,030	389,540	36.06 %
Urban Redevelopment and Housing-Intergovernmental	394,436	813,729	659,795	263,449	52,902	(31.91) %
Health-Intergovernmental	-	-	-	148,255	559,010	- %
Human Services-External Portion	54,443	44,876	94,239	110,743	127,587	17.87 %
Urban Redevelopment and Housing	58,925	154,410	216,103	16,400	448,174	199.80 %
Total	\$ 143,542,531	\$ 140,448,948	\$ 102,078,767	\$ 135,166,394	\$ 174,254,399	38.29 %

The County’s largest expenses are reflected in human services, health, and public safety service areas. The largest number of employees for the County are in these service areas; therefore, they had the most significant increases in 2023 expenses. Each of these expenses increased in 2023 due to the recognition of increased net pension/OPEB liabilities. Overall County expenses increased by \$39,088,005 or 28.92 percent for 2023.

REVENUES AND EXPENSES TREND ANALYSIS

Past Five Years

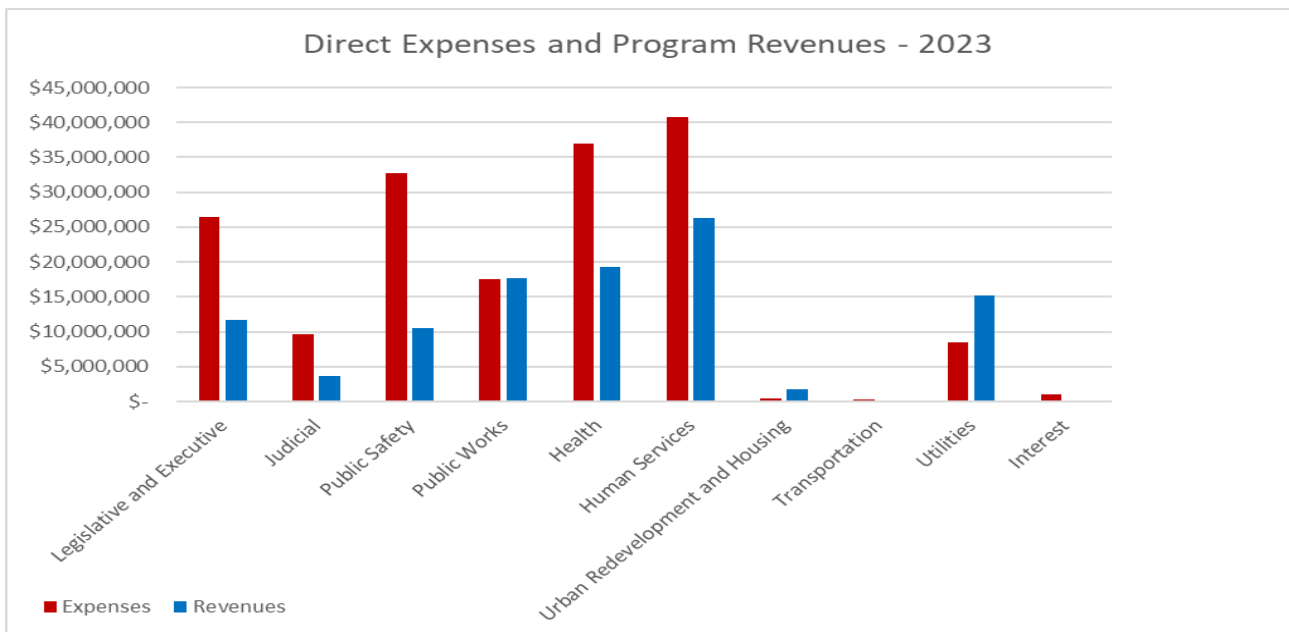


COUNTY PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

This chart compares direct expenses and program revenues for each major function of the County. **Direct expenses** are specifically associated with a service, program, or department and therefore clearly identifiable to a particular function. **Program revenues** include (1) charges paid by the recipient of the goods or services and (2) grants, contributions, and interest that are restricted to meeting the operational or capital requirements of a particular program.

The comparison of direct expenses with program revenues identifies the extent to which each governmental function is self-financing or else draws from the general revenues of the County. The County’s human services, public safety, health, and legislative and executive, expenses accounted for the majority of costs not covered by program revenues. Portions of the health and human services excess costs were funded with the County’s tax revenues. All of these excess costs were also partially funded with the County’s general revenues.

Direct Expenses and Program Revenues



FINANCIAL POSITION STATEMENT

The **Statement of Net Position**, traditionally known by many as the balance sheet, is designed to provide a picture of the major components of the primary government's financial position at the end of the year.

	Governmental Activities		Business-Type Activities		Totals	
	2023	2022	2023	2022	2023	2022
Assets:						
Current and Other Noncurrent Assets	\$ 279,164,435	\$ 263,995,851	\$ 43,581,172	\$ 39,470,108	\$ 322,745,607	\$ 303,465,959
Capital Assets	229,793,334	223,200,852	57,568,743	56,233,680	287,362,077	279,434,532
Total Assets	<u>508,957,769</u>	<u>487,196,703</u>	<u>101,149,915</u>	<u>95,703,788</u>	<u>610,107,684</u>	<u>582,900,491</u>
Deferred Outflows of Resources:						
Deferred Charge on Refunding	30,628	52,836	173,980	256,629	204,608	309,465
Asset Retirement Obligations	77,795	81,685	636,293	662,060	714,088	743,745
Pension	36,101,181	14,400,954	816,374	315,102	36,917,555	14,716,056
OPEB	5,587,877	843,092	126,564	16,430	5,714,441	859,522
Total Deferred Outflows of Resources	<u>41,797,481</u>	<u>15,378,567</u>	<u>1,753,211</u>	<u>1,250,221</u>	<u>43,550,692</u>	<u>16,628,788</u>
Liabilities:						
Current and Other Liabilities	23,955,076	31,396,566	1,707,427	1,454,372	25,662,503	32,850,938
Long-Term Liabilities:						
Due Within One Year	5,289,034	4,851,560	1,863,214	1,783,891	7,152,248	6,635,451
Net Pension Liability	87,056,784	27,373,054	1,956,472	590,098	89,013,256	27,963,152
Net OPEB Liability	1,815,014	-	41,250	-	1,856,264	-
Other Amounts Due In More Than One Year	37,553,374	36,518,277	8,402,913	10,088,849	45,956,287	46,607,126
Total Liabilities	<u>155,669,282</u>	<u>100,139,457</u>	<u>13,971,276</u>	<u>13,917,210</u>	<u>169,640,558</u>	<u>114,056,667</u>
Deferred Inflows of Resources:						
Property Taxes	50,822,521	49,956,982	-	-	50,822,521	49,956,982
Deferred Charge on Refunding	30,656	36,591	18,074	27,111	48,730	63,702
Leases	258,860	91,681	544,269	439,988	803,129	531,669
Pension	1,483,758	32,433,039	20,186	722,982	1,503,944	33,156,021
OPEB	675,855	9,688,275	13,674	215,184	689,529	9,903,459
Total Deferred Inflows of Resources	<u>53,271,650</u>	<u>92,206,568</u>	<u>596,203</u>	<u>1,405,265</u>	<u>53,867,853</u>	<u>93,611,833</u>
Net Position:						
Net Investment in Capital Assets	195,468,180	188,041,641	49,136,830	46,596,802	244,605,010	234,638,443
Restricted	126,859,111	121,882,211	69,639	285,667	126,928,750	122,167,878
Unrestricted	19,487,027	305,393	39,129,178	34,749,065	58,616,205	35,054,458
Total Net Position	<u>\$ 341,814,318</u>	<u>\$ 310,229,245</u>	<u>\$ 88,335,647</u>	<u>\$ 81,631,534</u>	<u>\$ 430,149,965</u>	<u>\$ 391,860,779</u>

Assets are those items owned by the County that will provide a benefit in the future.

Current and Other Noncurrent is the amount of physical cash held by the County and the amounts that are owed to the County and are expected to be paid over the course of the next twelve months.

Capital Assets represents furniture, equipment, vehicles, land, buildings, water/sewer lines, and road and bridge infrastructure that provide economic benefit greater than one year.

Deferred Outflows of Resources represent a consumption of net position that applies to a future period and will not be recognized as an outflow of resources until then.

Deferred Charge on Refunding results from the difference in the carrying value of refunded debt and its acquisition price.

Asset Retirement Obligation results from the difference in the asset retirement obligation liability and the amount that has been amortized over the life of the assets to date.

Pension/OPEB represents the differences between expected and actual experience and County contributions subsequent to the measurement date.

Liabilities are those items that the County owes to individuals, companies, other governments, and lenders.

Current and Other Liabilities are those payments that the County owes to individuals or companies who supply goods and services and to employees for salaries, associated benefits, and accrued leave.

Long-Term Liabilities are those payments that the County owes to lenders, individuals, companies, or amounts owed to other governments outside the County.

Deferred Inflows of Resources represent an acquisition of net position that applies to a future period and will not be recognized as an inflow of resources until that time.

Property Taxes represent the amounts for which there is an enforceable legal claim as of December 31, 2023, but which were levied to finance 2024 operations.

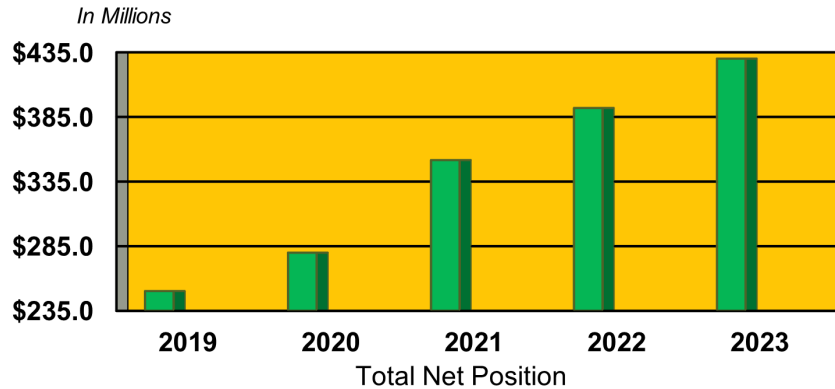
Deferred Charge on Refunding results from the difference in the carrying value of refunded debt and its acquisition price. This amount is deferred and amortized over the shorter of the life of the refunded or refunding debt.

Leases represents the amount owed to the County that will be received in a future period and will not be recognized until that time.

Pension/OPEB represents the differences between the projected and actual earnings on pension plan investments and change in proportionate share.

TOTAL NET POSITION TREND ANALYSIS

Past Five Years



Net position is the difference between assets and liabilities and can serve as a useful indicator of the government’s financial position. During 2023, the net position of the County increased \$38.3 million or 9.8 percent. The application of GASB 68 and GASB 75 reporting for pension and OPEB liabilities (assets) has caused some fluctuations over the years. GASB 83, Certain Asset Retirement Obligations, was implemented in 2020 which restated 2019. GASB 87, Leases, was implemented in 2022 which restated 2021. GASB statements 94, 96, and 99 were implemented in 2023, but had no change on prior year net position. For more information, refer to the County’s Annual Comprehensive Financial Report and the Management’s Discussion and Analysis.

SUMMARY OF CAPITAL ASSETS

Capital assets are defined as property and equipment owned by the County and purchased by each department as needed. This summary is the total dollar amount of governmental and business-type activity assets, net of depreciation/amortization, held by the County. Capital assets increased from \$279.4 million in 2022 to \$287.4 million in 2023, a net increase of \$7.9 million. The increase is primarily due to the current year buildings and improvements, equipment and furniture, and infrastructure. Business-type activity capital assets showed an increase from 2022 to 2023 due to construction in progress and approximately \$2 million in capital contributions from developers in the form of sewer and water lines.

	Governmental Activities		Business-Type Activities	
	2023	2022	2023	2022
Land	\$ 7,033,349	\$ 6,668,349	\$ 3,669,826	\$ 3,517,855
Construction in Progress	11,239,702	12,419,051	1,239,298	1,688,519
Buildings and Improvements	62,037,767	56,271,086	9,922,499	10,352,309
Improvements Other Than				
Buildings	7,670,515	7,271,510	-	-
Equipment and Furniture	5,065,302	3,768,846	165,156	138,926
Infrastructure	131,706,819	132,552,026	42,204,455	40,393,713
Vehicles	3,830,692	3,316,618	271,771	142,358
Intangible Right to Use - Lease				
Buildings and Equipment	851,033	933,366	-	-
Intangible Right to Use -				
Subscription Software	358,155	-	95,738	-
Total Capital Assets, Net	<u>\$ 229,793,334</u>	<u>\$ 223,200,852</u>	<u>\$ 57,568,743</u>	<u>\$ 56,233,680</u>

THE COUNTY'S DEBT INSTRUMENTS

As of December 31, 2023

The County employs the use of several different types of debt instruments for short and long-term financing. Fairfield County's bond credit ratings is "Aa2" which demonstrates the County's very strong creditworthiness relative to other United States municipal or tax-exempt issuers or issues. The benefits of the "Aa2" rating are that the County has lower interest costs when it issues debt in comparison to a less favorable bond credit rating and enables the County to get finance easily for growth and expansion of facilities.

Special Assessment Bonds are issued to pay for improvements benefiting property owners. The property owners repay the County over a period of years for the debt.

General Obligation Bonds are long-term debt instruments that are repaid from the County's general revenue sources. They are backed by the full faith and credit of the County.

Long-Term Loans are debt instruments issued by the State of Ohio for a shared electronic document storage and retrieval system and various public works projects. The County's General Fund, Sewer Fund, and Water Fund, respectively, will repay the balances.

Leases Payable are contracts made by the County's departments for the leasing of building space and assets such as copiers. The departments pay for these contracts from their annual budgets.

Subscriptions Payable are agreements made by the County's departments for the use of subscription-based software from vendors. The departments pay for these contracts from their annual budgets.

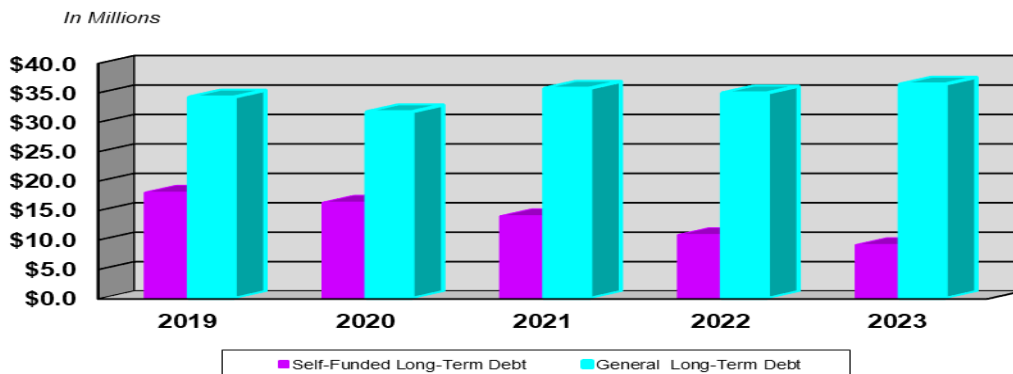
SUMMARY OF DEBT OBLIGATIONS

For the Year Ended December 31, 2023

	Governmental Activities		Business-Type Activities		Totals	
	2023	2022	2023	2022	2023	2022
Special Assessment						
Bonds.....	\$ 103,000	\$ 208,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 103,000	\$ 208,000
General Obligation Bonds....	35,057,410	33,733,685	7,099,152	8,626,281	42,156,562	42,359,966
Long-Term Loans.....	175,000	225,000	1,785,758	1,965,741	1,960,758	2,190,741
Leases Payable.....	851,033	933,366	-	-	851,033	933,366
Subscriptions Payable.....	358,155	-	95,738	-	453,893	-
	<u>\$ 36,544,598</u>	<u>\$ 35,100,051</u>	<u>\$ 8,980,648</u>	<u>\$ 10,592,022</u>	<u>\$ 45,525,246</u>	<u>\$ 45,692,073</u>

DEBT OUTSTANDING TREND ANALYSIS

Past Five Years



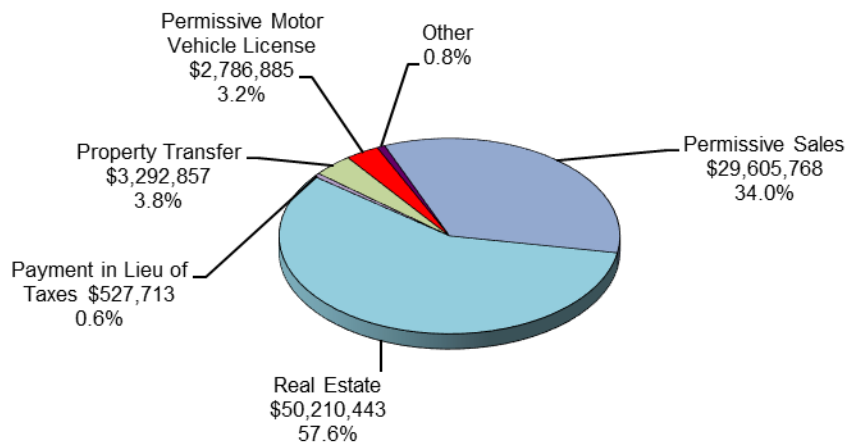
Self-Funded Long-Term Debt are debt obligations whose principal and interest are payable from revenue sources for which the debt was originally issued. Self-Funded Long-Term Debt at the end of 2023 was \$9,083,648. General Long-Term Debt at the end of 2023 was \$36,441,598.

TAX REVENUES

During 2023, the County’s governmental activities received \$87.1 million in tax revenue and \$106.6 million in total revenues. Real estate property taxes account for approximately \$50.2 million or 57.7 percent, real property transfer taxes approximately \$3.3 million or 3.8 percent, and lodging taxes approximately \$.7 million or 0.8 percent for approximately \$54.7 million, or 51.3 percent, of total governmental revenues. Sales taxes, which are received from the State for vendor collections of the tax paid, provided approximately \$29.6 million, or 27.8 percent, of total governmental revenues. Motor Vehicle licenses provided approximately \$2.8 million or 2.6 percent of total governmental revenues.

Breakdown of Tax Collections in 2023

\$87,086,394

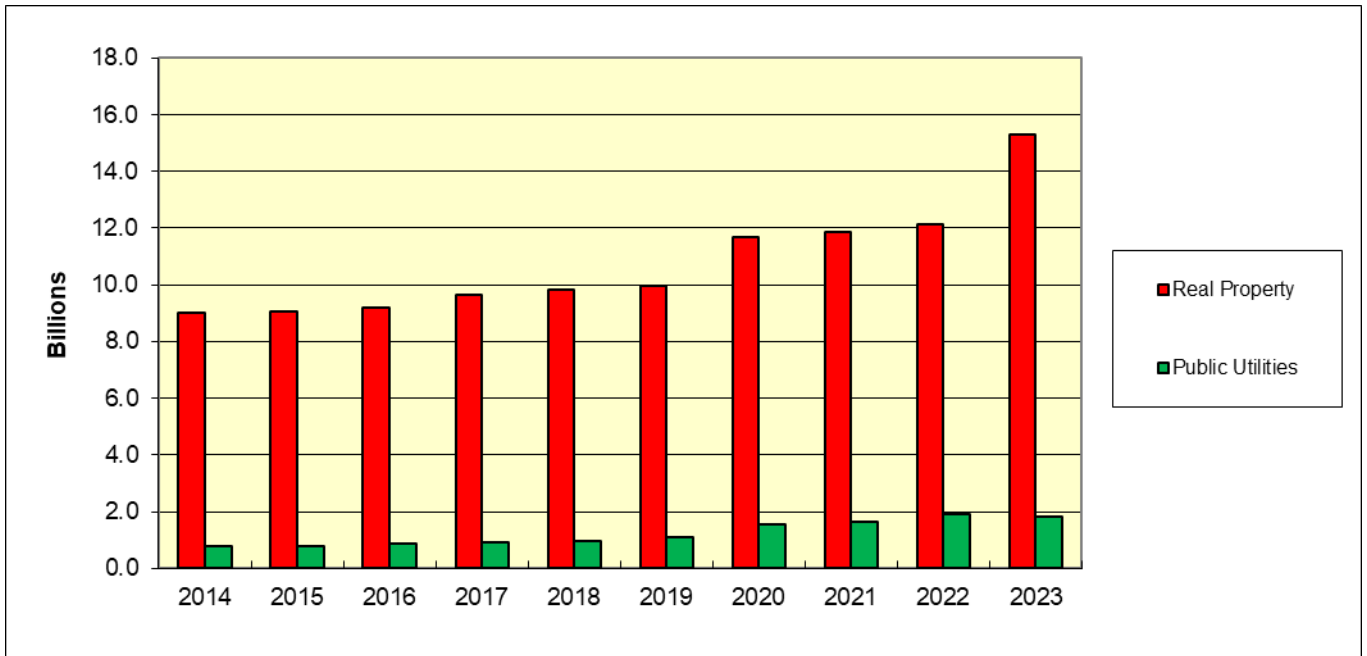


Ten Largest Taxpayers in County in 2023

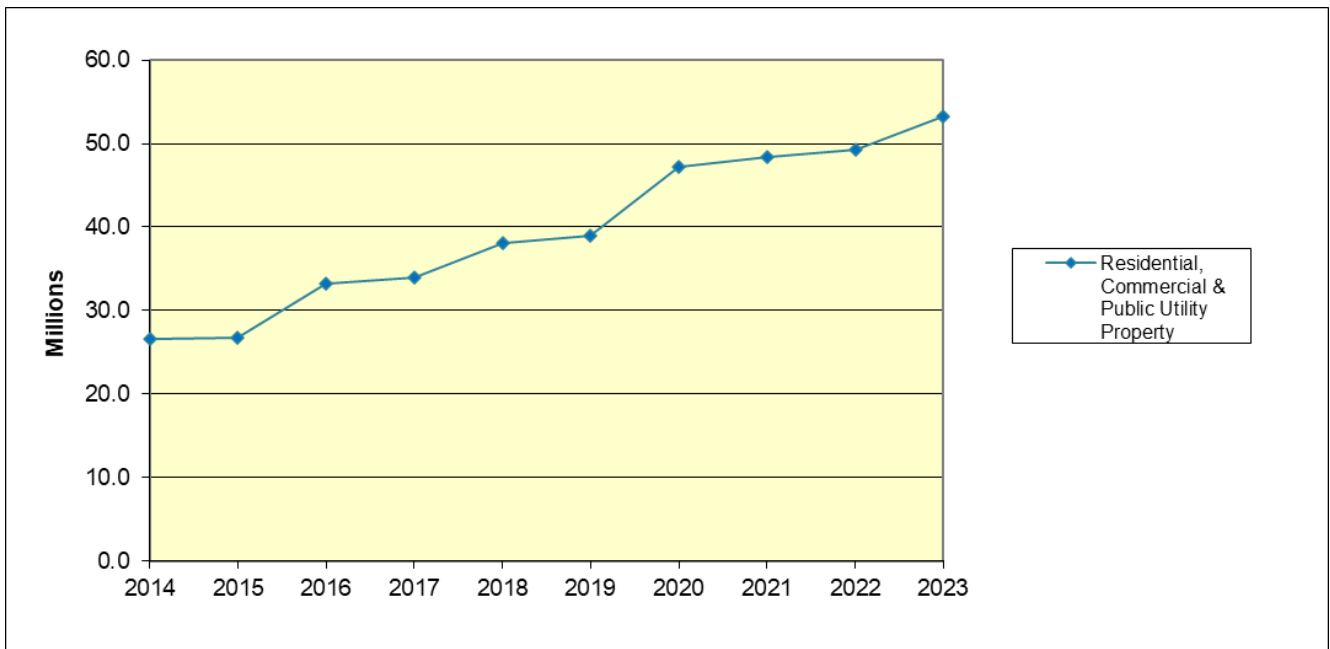
Enterprise	Nature of Business	Value to be Taxed
Columbia Gas Transmission	Public Utility	\$ 206,880,610
Ohio Power Company	Public Utility	\$ 81,446,990
American Electric Power Ohio Transmission Company	Public Utility	\$ 67,108,910
Rockies Express Pipeline LLC	Public Utility	\$ 48,184,340
South Central Power Company	Public Utility	\$ 38,626,910
Texas Eastern Transmission	Public Utility	\$ 16,492,260
One Point Three, LLC	Developer	\$ 10,745,000
Columbia Gas of Ohio Inc.	Public Utility	\$ 8,927,870
Zane Properties Corporation	Developer	\$ 7,486,730
The Flats on Memorial LLC	Apartments	\$ 7,471,040

PROPERTY VALUES AND TAX COLLECTIONS

Property Values for the Last Ten Years

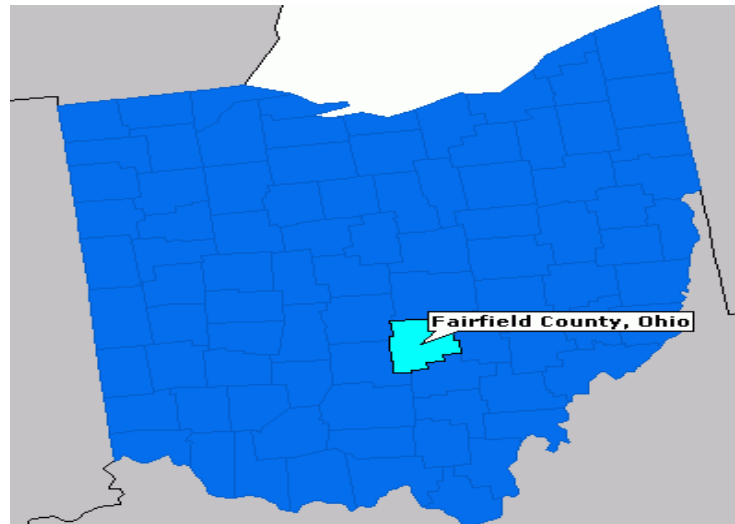


Property Tax Collections for the Last Ten Years



GASB Statement No. 34 requires tax collections to be presented on the accrual basis of accounting which recognizes revenue in the year for which the taxes are levied. The property tax collections chart reflects current tax collections and do not include homestead and rollback. Property tax collections increased during 2023 due to the increase that occurred in assessed valuations in 2022 and 2023.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF FAIRFIELD COUNTY



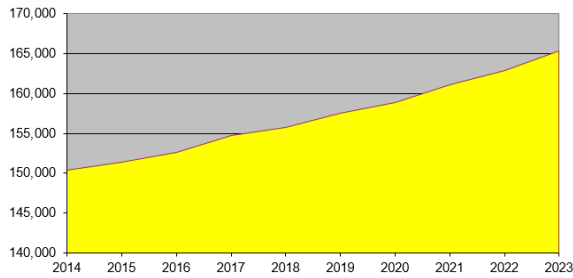
The County of Fairfield was created by proclamation of the Northwest Territory on December 9, 1800. Residents named the county after the area’s “fair fields.” Located in the south-central portion of Ohio, Fairfield County is adjacent to Licking, Perry, Hocking, Pickaway, and Franklin Counties. The County is predominantly rural, with less than two percent of the County’s 506 square miles consisting of urban areas.

PRINCIPAL EMPLOYERS

<u>Employer</u>	<u>Nature of Business</u>	<u>Number of Employees</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Percentage of Total County Employment</u>
Fairfield Medical Center	Health Care-Hospital	2,004	1	2.56%
Pickerington Schools	Public School	1,314	2	1.68%
Fairfield County	Government	936	3	1.20%
Lancaster City Schools	Public School	811	4	1.04%
Kroger	Grocery	824	5	1.05%
Oneida	Manufacturing	714	6	0.91%
NIFCO	Manufacturing	570	7	0.73%
City of Lancaster	Government	531	8	0.68%
Magna	Manufacturing	496	9	0.63%
Thompson Concrete	Construction	400	10	0.50%
Total		<u>8,600</u>		10.98%
Total Employment Within County		<u>78,300</u>		

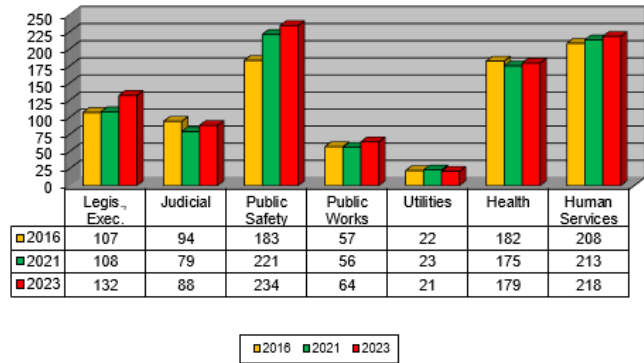
FAIRFIELD COUNTY DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

COUNTY POPULATION



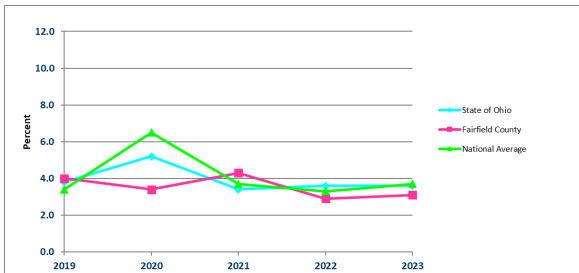
Information provided by The Ohio Department of Development from 2014 to 2023. According to population estimates, 165,360 people reside within the County.

COUNTY EMPLOYEE WORKFORCE



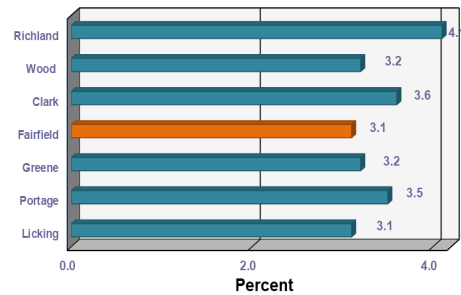
Employees above listed by Function of Government. These employees are paid from revenues in the governmental funds and in the enterprise funds.

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE TREND



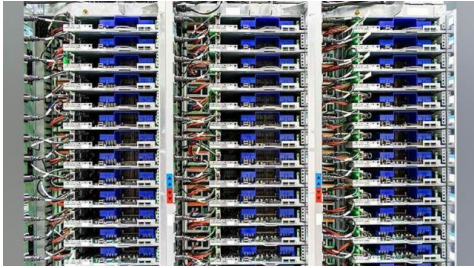
In 2023, the County's unemployment rate remained steady at 3.1 percent as compared to 2022. While the National Average rate saw a slight increase in 2023 from 3.3 percent to 3.7 percent, the County's unemployment rates are lower than both the State average and National average.

COMPARABLE UNEMPLOYMENT RATES FOR 2023



Source: Office of Workforce Development, Bureau of Labor Market Information. In comparing Fairfield County's unemployment rate to other counties, Fairfield County remains stable and constant with most counties of similar size in the State.

MAJOR GOALS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS



In 2023, Google invested more than \$2 billion into the State of Ohio, building one of their data centers in Lancaster. The tech investment will bring other opportunities and open doors for businesses that may want to call Lancaster home. This investment into Fairfield County will fuel the community growth as a technology hub.



Magna International, an auto supplier that designs, develops, and manufactures automotive systems, assemblies, and components is making a nearly \$6 million investment into the local plant, which will create more jobs while retraining the nearly 400 it has currently. The County provided \$100,000 for their expansion and investment into Fairfield County.



OhioHealth opened its 15th hospital, OhioHealth Pickerington Methodist Hospital, at 1010 Refugee Road in Pickerington. The hospital was built on over 30 acres of undeveloped land on-site, expanding from the northern side of the current campus. Over 500 new jobs were generated with the \$178 million investment in the community. This hospital brings new services, such as labor and delivery, trauma and infusion services.



The Fairfield County Workforce Center continues to expand its programs. In 2023, the center was named the Workforce Program of the Year from the Ohio Economic Development Association (OEDA). Highlights of the center's activities include a county grant to Alleguard for training to support their \$900,000 project expansion; CDL training to help fill the gap in the growing transportation industry; an expanded parking lot to add 108 parking spaces; an all-girls STEM camp; and summer camps for middle-school students.

MAJOR GOALS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS



Fairfield County is home to multiple festivals and community events that engage hundreds of volunteers and attract thousands of residents and visitors. One such festival is the 10-day Lancaster Festival which holds more than 50 events at 20 locations throughout the County during the last two weeks in July. This festival focuses on fine art and music. According to a recent economic impact study of the Lancaster Festival, each dollar of a grant or donation produces \$13.67 in economic impact locally and an additional \$3.58 for the State of Ohio. The festival generates 99 jobs in Fairfield County.



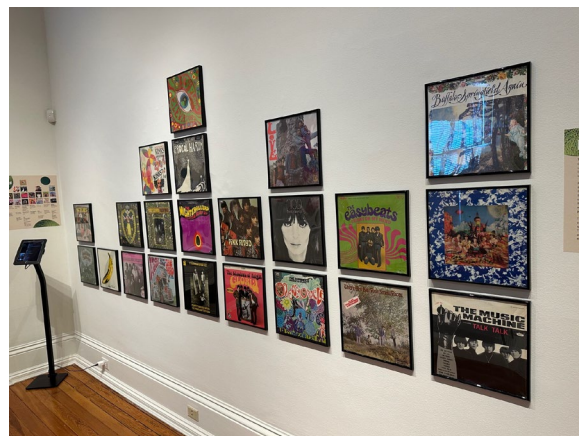
Fairfield County is encouraged with multiple partnerships that promote the Buckeye Lake Region. The Buckeye Lake Region Corporation (BLRC) was officially formed in September 2017. The BLRC is a tri-county alliance between Licking, Perry, and Fairfield counties and is open to all political and civic entities in the tri-county region. The Buckeye Lake Region Corporation coordinates, manages, and executes initiatives that support tourism and development in the area.



Federal recovery grants were provided to the Fairfield County Agricultural Society to support the Fairfield County Fair. The purpose of the grant was to support things related to tourism and the travel industry that were negatively impacted by the pandemic. The County continues to support the Fair. Each year more than 100,000 people attend the Fairfield County Fair, which is the last County Fair held in Ohio during the Fair season.

MAJOR GOALS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Located in Lancaster at the Reese Peters House (a County-owned building), the Decorative Arts Center of Ohio is one of four museums in the area. The Decorative Arts Center of Ohio engages the community with innovative and stimulating exhibitions, delivers arts education, and showcases historical architecture in the area. There are exhibits, public programs, art classes, and workshops for all ages. Currently, the County has a codified 1.5 percent hotel/motel lodging tax to support the Decorative Arts Center of Ohio.



HOW TO CONTACT US

December 31, 2023

Fairfield County Website <https://www.co.fairfield.oh.us>



ELECTED OFFICIALS

Board of Commissioners

Steven A. Davis (740) 652-7090
Jeff Fix (740) 652-7090
David Levacy (740) 652-7090

Auditor

Dr. Carri L. Brown. (740) 652-7020

Clerk of Courts

Branden Meyer (740) 652-7388

Coroner

Dr. L. Brian Varney (740) 652-2865

Engineer

Jeremiah Upp..... (740) 652-2300

Prosecutor

R. Kyle Witt..... (740) 652-7560

Recorder

Lisa McKenzie (740) 652-7100

Sheriff

Alex Lape (740) 652-7900

Treasurer

James N. Bahnsen. (740) 652-7140

Court of Common Pleas:

General

Judge Richard Berens (740) 652-7422
Judge David A. Trimmer..... (740) 652-7423

Court of Common Pleas:

Probate and Juvenile

Judge Terre L. Vandervoort (740) 652-7485

Court of Common Pleas:

Domestic Relations

Judge Laura Smith (740) 652-7440

PRINCIPAL APPOINTED OFFICIALS AND DEPARTMENT HEADS

County Administrator

Aundrea Cordle (740) 652-7090

Deputy County Administrator

Jeff Porter (740) 652-7895

Board of Elections, Director

Brett Riffle (740) 652-7000

Facilities Operations, Manager

Jon Kochis (740) 652-7961

Dog Adoption Center and Shelter, Warden

Leighann Adams (740) 687-3647

Utilities, Director

Tony Vogel (740) 652-7120

Department of Job and Family Services, Director

Corey Clark (740) 652-7890

Alcohol, Drug Addiction and Mental Health Board, Director

Marcy Fields..... (740) 654-0829

Developmental Disabilities Board, Superintendent

David Uhl..... (740) 652-7220

Emergency Management, Director

Jon Kochis (740) 652-7960

Economic Development, Director

Richard Szabrak (740) 652-7162

Information Technology, Administrator

Daniel Neeley (740) 652-7075

Real Estate Assessment, Director

David Burgei (740) 652-7055

Financial Systems, Director

Beverly Hoskinson (740) 652-7042

Veteran Services Commission, Director

Park Russell (740) 652-7920