



# The Village Grapevine

A PUBLICATION OF THE VILLAGE OF YELLOW SPRINGS

## INVESTING IN OUR FUTURE



**JOHNNIE BURNS**  
VILLAGE MANAGER

As we begin a new year, the Village of Yellow Springs has a number of budget-approved projects aimed at strengthening and maintaining our vital services and infrastructure. Local governments are constantly balancing competing priorities and must seek funding from other levels of government to meet these needs. From maintaining essential infrastructure, to ensuring affordable housing for all, these challenges present opportunities to innovate and serve our community.

As a village, we take pride in owning and operating our own utilities—water, sewer, and electric—allowing us to maintain full control over the services that power our community. Investing in these systems is often an invisible necessity. Much of the critical infrastructure, including underground pipes, lines, and equipment, goes unnoticed, yet it forms the backbone of our daily lives and future growth. While the cost of maintaining and upgrading these systems can be high, the long-term benefits are clear: a reliable, sustainable, and self-sufficient community that will continue to thrive for years to come.

In addition to overseeing our utility enterprises, we are responsible for a variety of other important areas. These include economic development, such as promoting our Center for Business & Education, maintaining our streets, ensuring public safety, and managing parks and recreation, including preservation of cherished spaces like the Gaunt Park pool and Youth Center. Each of these plays a vital role in the overall fabric of our village.

Although Yellow Springs is home to just over 3,700 residents, we consistently welcome a high volume of visitors who come to enjoy our unique shops and restaurants, special events and green spaces. This increased traffic puts additional strain on our infrastructure. It's our job to find ways to welcome visitors while ensuring the long-term sustainability of our village. The decisions we make today will shape the quality of life for generations to come.

To the right, you will find a breakdown and explanation of the high priority capital improvement projects for 2025, projects that will help us meet our goals and ensure a bright future for Yellow Springs.

## 2025 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

### Electrical Improvements

We are making several upgrades to improve the reliability of our electrical system. A new center circuit will help balance the load across the village, improving reliability on both the east and west sides. We're also replacing outdated reclosures, which help restore power quickly during outages. These new units will be safer, more reliable, and provide faster responses. In 2024, we recorded just 26 outages, the lowest number since we began tracking in 2014. Additionally, we are upgrading all electric meters to smart meters that provide real-time data, allowing us to spot and address issues before they lead to outages.

### Water Improvements

Improvements to our water system include creating a complete water model with Choice One Engineering, that maps the village's water distribution from the plant to customer homes. This will help us assess how changes like new pipes or system expansions affect water flow. We will also install Variable Frequency Drives (VFDs) on the wells to improve energy efficiency by regulating motor speed, which reduces electricity use. These VFDs will also help in minimizing PFAS, a group of harmful chemicals that can contaminate water supplies. Additionally, we're upgrading our chlorine pumps with more durable, easy-to-maintain peristaltic pumps. We've also received a \$20,000 Ohio EPA grant to drill and create monitoring wells upstream of our well field to detect potential contaminants before they reach the wells.

### Sewer Improvements

We will make key sewer improvements in 2025, including upgrading manholes with new interior coatings and seals to prevent water intrusion. We will also continue reinforcing pipes through sliplining, building on work done in 2024. Additionally, 10 curb catch basins will be rebuilt to improve drainage, and 5-10 catch basins will be replaced throughout town to enhance stormwater management and reduce flooding risks.





## An Invitation to Serve



Greetings to all, and of course, Happy New Year to you and yours.

My first missive of 2025 is to announce to the community that this will be my last year as your mayor. Eight years in this office has felt like the right amount of time to be "an active and engaged" public official, something I promised to do when first campaigning back in 2017. The past 7 years have whizzed by and thus begins my final year in office. Trust me, I'll be enjoying every aspect of the job for the last time, just as I did during my final year of teaching at McKinney Middle School.

I wanted this announcement to appear at the beginning of the year to give anyone who might like to run for the office an opportunity to mount an effective campaign. Remember, by Village charter, the mayor is "recognized as the official head of the Village for all ceremonial purposes," and runs the Mayor's Court. Just like the requirements to be a Council member, the mayor must reside in the Village and be "an elector" of the Village, i.e., a qualified voter. Anyone who has questions about what the office entails is invited to give me a call. You can come on up to the office and ask any questions you'd like. Let's talk.

Mayor Pam Conine



## John Bryan Youth Center & Gaunt Park Pool

In 2024, the John Bryan Youth Center **averaged 25 kids each day** and served around **16 meals every evening**, Monday through Friday.

With our new kitchen space, we have been able to provide even more meals for the kids. We received generous donations from the Beloved Community Project, Current Cuisine, and regular meal contributions from Who's Hungry? Soup Kitchen.



Hot chocolate at the Youth Center.

Thanks to donations and fundraising, we were able to offer a variety of free group activities. These included extra field trips to the Cincinnati Zoo and Kings Island, a community Trunk or Treat event, free public movies at the Little Art Theatre, and a pottery class with John Bryan Pottery.

We also took the kids to the pool every week, attended local sports and school events, and purchased new bikes for bike ride field trips in 2025.

Last summer, the Gaunt Park pool **averaged 88 visitors per day**, with our highest attendance **reaching 304 people** in one day.

We hosted a lifeguard certification course, hired one of our staff members from it, and plan to offer the course again in 2025. Our staff also gave free swimming lessons to kids in the community, and with help from the Yellow Springs Community Foundation, we were able to replace our lift chair.

Lastly, we continued to support the Yellow Springs Aquatic Club, also known as the Sea Dogs, throughout the year. We're excited for another year of fun and community activities in 2025!



Samantha Stewart  
Parks & Recreation Supervisor



## 2024 Year In Review



### February 28 Storm Recovery

Unexpected high winds took down multiple power lines along Bill Duncan Park. With mutual aid from neighboring communities, power in the village was restored in under 24 hours.



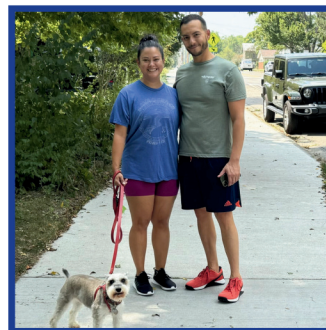
### Water Main Replacement

Thanks to a \$1.6 million award from House Bill 168, the Village was able to replace water mains throughout the community. This entire project was fully funded through external grant awards.



### Upgraded Water Meters

New encoder-style meters were installed in every home across the village, with 84% of the \$886,550 project cost covered by a grant from the Ohio Public Works Commission.



### Dayton Street Multimodal Path

The new multimodal path along Dayton Street opened in 2024, with full funding provided by the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT).



### April 8 Total Solar Eclipse

The village hosted scores of visitors, more than any other community in the region, for this highly-anticipated celestial event.



### Water Tower Rehabilitation

The Village's south water tower was fully rehabilitated, both inside and out, with old paint and sealant sandblasted off and replaced with modern materials. Both water towers are now painted blue.



### Sewer Relining Project

Sewer pipe relining was completed around the Fair Acres neighborhood, installing new lines within the existing pipes. Sliplining expedited the work and significantly reduced the overall cost.



### Spring Meadows Groundbreaking

Fischer Homes broke ground on the first house built in the new 90-home subdivision off Wright Street.



## Revitalizing History

The former Union Schoolhouse, located at 314 Dayton Street, is undergoing a significant renovation and expansion that will transform it into the new home for WYSO. This project carefully merges the building's historical significance with modern functionality. Once complete, the space will total 24,536 square feet, accommodating WYSO's production facilities and offices, as well as offices for Iron Table Holdings, the development company of local resident Dave Chappelle. A small retail space featuring local culture will also be included. Additionally, the facility will offer a classroom, conference room, and auditorium to support community events and live audiences.

Architect Max Crome, owner and founder of Crome Yellow Springs, has focused on preserving the Union Schoolhouse's historic charm while ensuring the building meets the needs of its modern occupants. Crome has designed a careful balance of old and new.

"I grew up here in town. I put everything I could into the project. The basis of the design for the interior of the old building was a gathering space and a place for the community to come together, so I wanted to create one big open space. In doing so, we've reused every last salvageable brick," said Crome. "The new building will be state-of-the-art, with WYSO upgrading to all new broadcasting equipment."

The new addition to the building, which spans 12,396 square feet, will include modern materials such as a wood rainscreen and burnished block, offering a contemporary contrast to the original brick structure that will remain intact.

The renovation has encountered several challenges and delays throughout its development. These have included supply chain disruptions and construction-related complexities, such as unforeseen structural issues that have impacted the original timeline.



Another view of the design by Max Crome.



Rendering of the new home of WYSO.

Perhaps the biggest setback was when water infiltration was detected in the basement. Eventually, excavation was required, essentially creating a moat around the entire structure. It was then discovered that the limestone foundation of the building was completely crumbling. The solution was to wrap the entire foundation with a new concrete reinforcement, install new drainage and waterproof the basement, which saved the building and the overall project.

Despite these issues, the project continues to move forward, with the vision of creating a space that blends historical preservation with cutting-edge facilities.

Luke Dennis, General Manager and President of WYSO, expressed the importance of the new headquarters for the station's future.

"WYSO's new headquarters at the Union Schoolhouse will transform the ways we work with the community and with each other as an internal team. It will have so many wonderful features our current building lacks: a prominent location adjacent to our bustling downtown; a state-of-the-art classroom space; a performance space with room for up to 100 guests from which we'll be able to broadcast live and plenty of offices and common spaces for our growing team," said Dennis. "We can't wait to be in there. The progress continues steadily and we aim to begin installing and testing our broadcast equipment by late spring. We are so grateful to be partnering with Iron Table Holdings on this exciting project."

This project is more than just a building transformation; it's a reflection of the ongoing evolution of WYSO's mission to serve the Yellow Springs community and beyond.



**Meg Leatherman**

Planning & Economic Development Director

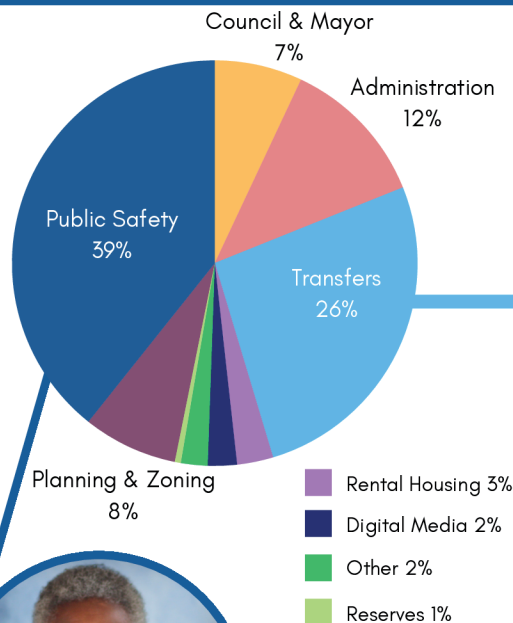


## 2025 General Fund Expense Projections

The Village of Yellow Springs has projected total expenditures from its General Fund to be **\$5,204,077** in 2025. This fund is vital for supporting the services and operations that make our community such a unique and vibrant place to live. The General Fund is a key part of the Village's budget, but it represents only a portion of the total funds, with other dedicated funds supporting specific projects and services.

The accompanying pie chart illustrates how these projected expenses are distributed across different categories. "Transfers" is broken down further in the additional graphics to the right, providing a closer look at how this portion of the General Fund is allocated.

The General Fund is primarily supported through two main sources of revenue: Income Tax and Property Tax. These funds help ensure the Village can maintain services such as public safety, parks and recreation, and support other community projects.



Parks  
54%



Affordable Housing  
20%



Streets  
16%



Facilities  
Capital  
4%



Village  
Broadband  
3%



Economic  
Development  
3%



### Florence Randolph, Community Outreach Specialist

[florence.randolph@yellowsprings.gov](mailto:florence.randolph@yellowsprings.gov)

#### A Vital Resource for Our Village

In 2017, the Village created the position of Community Outreach Specialist to enhance access to social services and better support the needs of our residents. Florence Randolph serves in this role, which is funded by the General Fund. Florence serves as a crucial member of the Yellow Springs Police Department by facilitating connections within the community. Florence works tirelessly to

connect residents with vital resources, including mental health support, housing assistance, medical care and more, by partnering with a network of local agencies and organizations.

In 2024 alone, Florence responded to 109 calls alongside the Police Department, providing compassionate support to those in need. Beyond these immediate interactions, Florence ensures ongoing follow-up to address long-term needs and help individuals access additional resources. Her expertise and commitment have made her an invaluable asset to the

Village, strengthening our social fabric and ensuring that residents, visitors, and at-risk populations receive the support they deserve.



**Paige Burge**  
Chief of Police





## Economic Development

The Village of Yellow Springs continues to thrive as a vibrant hub for creativity, food, fitness, and more. Here's an update on the latest business developments:

### New Businesses:

- **In Salon** (120 Dayton St.) - A unique blend of beauty and retail, In Salon offers a full range of hair services alongside a curated boutique of fashionable items.
- **Lucky Bunny Tattoo** (115 Glen St.) - This new tattoo shop brings skilled artistry and a welcoming atmosphere to Yellow Springs.
- **YS Smokehouse** (1535 Xenia Ave.) - A must-visit for barbecue lovers, YS Smokehouse offers a mouthwatering array of smoked meats and classic sides.

### Existing Businesses Expanding:

- **Cresco Labs** (1130 Springs Way) - Cresco Labs continues to grow! Since the legalization of adult-use cannabis in August 2024, Cresco's staff has nearly doubled from 85 employees to 145, marking a 71% increase in their workforce.
- **Yellow Springs Baking Company** (108 Dayton St.) - Known for its delicious baked goods, Yellow Springs Baking Company has opened a new location to serve even more customers.



*Cannabis cultivation at Cresco Labs.*

### New Tenants at Millworks Business Center (305 N Walnut St.):

- **Nook Overland** (Building H) - Specializing in off-road camper sales, Nook Overland brings adventure to your doorstep with its selection of rugged campers.
- **Nukes Baseball** (Building G) - For baseball enthusiasts of all ages, Nukes Baseball offers top-notch training facilities.
- **Truitt Fitness** (Building F) - Owned by local Kyle Truitt, this new gym at Millworks focuses on personalized fitness and group training.

As Yellow Springs continues to grow and evolve, these businesses are adding to the unique character of the village. Keep an eye on these exciting developments as 2025 unfolds!

## Sparks' Notes

Water main breaks are a common issue, especially when temperatures fluctuate. These temperature changes can put stress on the pipes. For example, ductile iron, which is commonly used in our system, doesn't flex well under extreme conditions. However, unlike other materials, these pipes have the advantage of being easily repaired with a band when damage occurs.

Breaks often happen where backfill has settled. When a break occurs, the Village is alerted through public reports, and our team quickly responds by excavating the affected area. In most cases, the break is repaired using a repair band to restore

service. "Always be safe and observant when water mains are being fixed. As we are working hard to get the mains back in working condition, be wary of ice that may have formed on the road because of the break. If you see something, say something," says Ben Sparks.

We appreciate your patience and understanding as we work to maintain our water system!



**Ben Sparks**  
Supt. of Electric & Water  
Distribution



*Village employee Lucas Valley installing a repair band at a recent water main break.*



## Village Employee Milestones



20  
YEARS

**Samantha Stewart**  
Parks & Recreation Supervisor



17  
YEARS

**Brad Ault**  
Supt. of Water & Wastewater



17  
YEARS

**Naomi Watson**  
YSPD Sergeant



15  
YEARS

**Judy Kintner**  
Clerk of Council



14  
YEARS

**David Meister**  
YSPD Officer



13  
YEARS

**Tanner Bussey**  
Streets, Parks & Sewer Foreman



11  
YEARS

**Johnnie Burns**  
Village Manager



11  
YEARS

**Jeff Beam**  
YSPD Officer & Property Room Manager



11  
YEARS

**Jeff Horn**  
Water Treatment Operator



11  
YEARS

**Ben Sparks**  
Supt. of Electric & Water Distribution

## New Faces at the Village



**Lynda Highlander**  
Accounting & Payroll Manager



**Cameron Fortin**  
Leadership Team Assistant



**Noah Grooms**  
YSPD Officer



**Sarah Crosby**  
YSPD Dispatcher





POSTAL CUSTOMER  
Yellow Springs, OH 45387

## Village of Yellow Springs

100 Dayton Street, Yellow Springs, Ohio 45387  
937-767-7202 | [www.yellowsprings.gov](http://www.yellowsprings.gov)

### VILLAGE COUNCIL / CLERK

Kevin Stokes, President  
[kevin.stokes@yellowsprings.gov](mailto:kevin.stokes@yellowsprings.gov)

Gavin DeVore Leonard, Vice President  
[gavin.leonard@yellowsprings.gov](mailto:gavin.leonard@yellowsprings.gov)

Carmen Brown, Council Member  
[carmen.brown@yellowsprings.gov](mailto:carmen.brown@yellowsprings.gov)

Trish Gustafson, Council Member  
[trish.gustafson@yellowsprings.gov](mailto:trish.gustafson@yellowsprings.gov)

Brian Housh, Council Member  
[brian.housh@yellowsprings.gov](mailto:brian.housh@yellowsprings.gov)

Judy Kintner, Council Clerk  
[clerk@yellowsprings.gov](mailto:clerk@yellowsprings.gov)

### VILLAGE STAFF

Johnnie Burns, Village Manager  
[johnnie.burns@yellowsprings.gov](mailto:johnnie.burns@yellowsprings.gov)

Paige Burge, Chief of Police  
[paige.burge@yellowsprings.gov](mailto:paige.burge@yellowsprings.gov)

Michelle Robinson, Finance Director  
[michelle.robinson@yellowsprings.gov](mailto:michelle.robinson@yellowsprings.gov)

Meg Leatherman, Planning & Economic Development Director  
[meg.leatherman@yellowsprings.gov](mailto:meg.leatherman@yellowsprings.gov)

Utilities Office  
[utilitybilling@yellowsprings.gov](mailto:utilitybilling@yellowsprings.gov)

YSPD (Non-Emergency)  
767-7206

### MAYOR / CLERK

Pam Conine, Village Mayor  
[mayorpam@yellowsprings.gov](mailto:mayorpam@yellowsprings.gov)

MacKenzie Baird, Clerk of Mayor's Court  
[mackenzie.baird@yellowsprings.gov](mailto:mackenzie.baird@yellowsprings.gov)

## PUBLIC MEETING SCHEDULE

**Village Council**  
First & Third Mondays at 6:00 PM

**Planning Commission**  
Second Tuesday at 6:00 PM

**Environmental Commission**  
Second Thursday at 6:00 PM

**Public Arts and Culture Commission**  
First Thursday at 6:30 PM

Check out our YouTube channel to watch livestreams of  
Village Council and Planning Commission meetings:

[youtube.com/@yellowspringscommunityaccess](https://youtube.com/@yellowspringscommunityaccess)



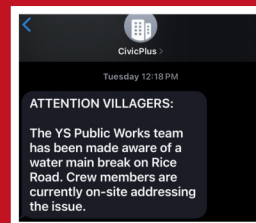
SCAN ME



### SIGN UP FOR NON-EMERGENCY ALERTS FROM THE VILLAGE



SCAN ME



Text **YellowSprings**  
to 38276

STREET CLOSURES | UTILITY WORK | EVENT INFORMATION | AND MORE

### Village Grapevine Editorial Staff / Contributing Writers

Elyse Giardullo, Project Lead | [elyse.giardullo@yellowsprings.gov](mailto:elyse.giardullo@yellowsprings.gov)  
Ben Guenther, Digital Media Manager | [ben.guenther@yellowsprings.gov](mailto:ben.guenther@yellowsprings.gov)  
Cameron Fortin, Leadership Team Assistant | [cameron.fortin@yellowsprings.gov](mailto:cameron.fortin@yellowsprings.gov)



This newsletter is printed on recycled paper.