



Community Review

The City of Middletown Annual Report
2019



Middletown Acting City Manager Susan Cohen



Dear Middletown,

As you have seen in our community and will read in these pages, 2019 was a year of continued reinvention for Middletown.

New leaders emerged, new businesses opened, and new projects ranging from airport upgrades to park construction improved quality of life and created new opportunities for our residents.

In the past year, we worked to finalize our master plan to help diversify and modernize our local economy. We are already seeing the fruit of this work; more than \$1 billion in construction projects has been invested in the city over the past several years as Middletown evolves and grows.

Together, we are building on the strong foundation created by those who have served our community well. We're at our best when we're working together to create a collaborative, welcoming environment for businesses and residents alike to thrive.

Thank you for all you do to make Middletown open for business and ready to welcome us all home.

#TogetherWeRise,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Suz Cohen".

Susan Cohen



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Economic Development



Construction, strategy key for Middletown in 2019

In 2019, the City worked to finalize its new master plan, which was developed by residents and city leaders to help improve Middletown's economy, image and quality of life. Details on the process and progress can be found at <https://www.cityofmiddletown.org/198/Master-Plan>.

Over the last four years, Middletown has enjoyed more than \$1 billion in construction projects as the city upgrades and grows. One example is the expansion of Kettering Health Network. Just one year after opening a new \$32 million facility, KHN is revesting with a build-out of 6,000 square feet of shell space.

For Middletown to continue to grow, the city needs businesses both large and small to prosper. In 2019, Middletown's Small Business Development Center became the first center ever to have 100 percent client satisfaction surveys, indicating strong partnerships at work.

The City is open for business – but also recreation and leisure. In 2019, the MetroParks of Butler County team invested more than



1,300 hours of operational, land stewardship, programming, public safety and volunteer resources along the Middletown section of the Great Miami River Trail. Bicentennial Commons – home to AK Pavilion and the MetroParks River Center – serves as a reprieve for bicyclists, runners and pedestrians. Volunteer trail ambassadors spent more than 320 hours on the trail assisting and welcoming visitors to Middletown in 2019.



Downtown Middletown



Downtown Middletown open for business

Ten new businesses. Thirty-eight new full-time employees. Sixteen events with nearly 14,000 visitors. By all counts, 2019 was a booming year for downtown Middletown!



Local artists freshened for-lease storefront space with their displays, and Heritage Ohio certified Downtown Middletown, Inc. as one of 24 Main Street Programs in Ohio for the third year in a row. Design work began on the downtown connector to the Great Miami Riverway bike path, making streets and sidewalks safer for both bike and pedestrian traffic.

Throughout downtown, small actions added up to big impacts in 2019. For example, by adding a \$1 fee to the application submission for Middletown's Designated Outdoor Refreshment Area (DORA) program, \$6,000 was raised and invested back into keeping downtown visitor-ready.



Middletown Regional Airport



Education, infrastructure improvements propel Middletown Regional Airport forward

In 2019, Middletown Regional Airport worked with Butler Tech to launch a two-year “Aviation Exploration” program. Nearly 25 percent of the program’s participants are from Middletown. The school’s hangar at MWO allows instructors to provide hands-on training for students working toward a pilot’s license and avionics certification.



Airport upgrades in 2019 included:

- Conclusion of a nearly \$500,000 project for taxiway lighting replacement, marking the completion of updates to all major lighting and safety systems in the last five years.
- Installation of a self-serve system provides 24/7 service for anyone flying into MWO, allowing the Airport to better compete with other local airports.



Public Safety

Legacy of service and bravery visible in 2019



MIDDLETOWN DIVISION OF POLICE

Major David Birk – a department veteran of more than 22 years – became Middletown’s police chief in late 2019 following the retirement of Rodney Muterspaw.

Officers Austin Mooney and Sheoki Reece ran into a burning house fire in January, saving two residents inside the home. Both officers received the Ohio Fire Service Hall of Fame’s First Responder Award, as well as heroism awards from the Ohio Fire Marshal. Officers Mooney and Reece are the first Middletown officers to earn these awards.

New additions to the department continued to improve service to the Middletown community. Three new canine officers joined the force in 2019, supporting crime and narcotics reduction. Through the Military Exchange Program, Middletown secured a Mine-Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) vehicle for training and use in active shooter situations.

MIDDLETOWN DIVISION OF FIRE

In 2019, the Middletown Fire Department began to implement operational adjustments based on a study conducted by the Ohio Fire Chief’s Association. The department now has at least 17 personnel on duty each day, with two dedicated engine companies, two dedicated medic units and two combination companies available at all times.

The department earned the American Heart Association’s 2019 Mission LifeLine EMS Gold Achievement Award for Cardiac Care. This honor recognizes the work of pre-hospital providers like emergency responders and their collaboration with medical personnel to treat patients with cardiac issues. The department earned a Silver Achievement Award in 2018.



Health Department

Looking ahead focus for Health Department in 2019

In 2019, the Middletown Health Department saw years of community efforts culminate in success: a substantial decrease – more than 50 percent – in rates of overdoses and deaths from overdoses.

The Community Health Partnership was born from the former Heroin Summit and will focus on helping the City use a holistic approach to wellness and trauma education.

In 2020, the Community Health Partnership will meet quarterly.

In addition, quality and improvement were two focus points for the Middletown Health Department in 2019 as it worked to obtain certification through the National Public Health Accreditation Board. Accreditation is expected in 2020, providing a tangible example of the department's accountability and dedication to continuous performance.



Finance



Transparency remains a top priority for Finance

Throughout 2019, Middletown's Finance Department worked to provide residents with clear, easy-to-understand information. The City's first-ever Popular Annual Financial Report (PAFR) was released to deliver residents with basic but thorough information about tax revenues, service charges, operating funds, economic outlook and more. The report earned an Outstanding Achievement award from the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA).

The City earned two additional GFOA recognitions in 2019:

- Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for the 2017 fiscal year Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR)
- 32nd year in a row
- Distinguished Budget Presentation Award for the 2019 budget
- 25th year in a row

Administrative Services

“Better than before” common theme for Administrative Services

The City made upgrades to the Robert “Sonny” Hill Community Center, including improved indoor/outdoor lighting, new HVAC systems/controls and roof modernization to help enhance the Center’s mission of providing a safe and fun space for people of all ages.

Two city neighborhoods will get facelifts in 2020, thanks to efforts underway in 2019:

- The City Historic Commission recommended the historic designation of the Oakland Neighborhood to the City Council, based on the anticipation that the historic district creation will spur investment and improvement.
- The City Planning Commission and City Council approved an amendment to the final development plan for the Sawyer’s Mill subdivision to allow for the construction of an additional 260 homes. The project is expected to be completed by the end of 2022.

Additionally, Middletown Municipal Court Prosecutor Ashley Bretland, Detective Brook McDonald and police officer Lindsey Schwarber received the 2018 MADD (Mothers Against Drunk Driving) Award of Excellence for having a significant impact on reducing impaired driving in the community.



Middletown Public Works



Public Works at work for Middletown

Construction of the **Bull's Run/Sunset Park Green Infrastructure Basin Project** began in the summer of 2019. This ongoing work utilizes a natural and sustainable design method to mitigate stormwater, redirecting water from near Sheldon Road and Santa Fe Drive to a one-acre green infrastructure basin at Sunset Park.

The project also offers many new features for the park, including walking paths, picnic areas, an educational overlook plaza and a new playground. The project will include the installation of new playground equipment and improved ADA accessibility, as well as a new shelter with café and picnic tables. Completion is expected in Spring 2020.

The City and its partners at Duke Energy began to **upgrade all streetlights to LED bulbs**, which typically last two to three times longer than traditional bulbs. This will result in significant annual energy and maintenance savings, as well as provide brighter lighting and fewer street light outages.

The **Central Avenue Project** began its design phase in 2019. The project will replace pavement, curb, sidewalk, and water main services, and provide street lighting consistent with the Downtown Master Plan. Construction is scheduled for 2022.



PW&U Administrative Assistant Nicole Clark (third from left) was named the Kingswell Seminary City Employee of the Year.

GALLONS, HOURS AND TONS OF SERVICE FOR MIDDLETOWN IN 2019

181 number of TREES removed or planted

974.5 HOURS L of litter collection

7,389.3 MILLION gallons of wastewater treated

4,418 TONS of ASPHALT used in pothole patching & water cut repairs

243.7 million avg. daily gallons of wastewater treated

regular employee hours for snow removal **691**

OVERTIME 701 employee hours for snow removal

3,937.5 MILLION gallons of potable water produced



City of Middletown Council

Pictured left to right:
Joe Mulligan, Vice Mayor
Monica Nenni, Council
Nicole Condrey, Mayor
Ami Vitori, Council
Talbott Moon, Council

City Council meets on the first and third Tuesdays of each month in Council Chambers at the City building at 5:30 p.m.



Keep in Touch!



Find us on social media or online at:
www.cityofmiddletown.org

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