

# 20-20 Vision for 2030

*Development of the South Russell Village Strategic Plan*

Mayor William G. Koons, Ph.D.

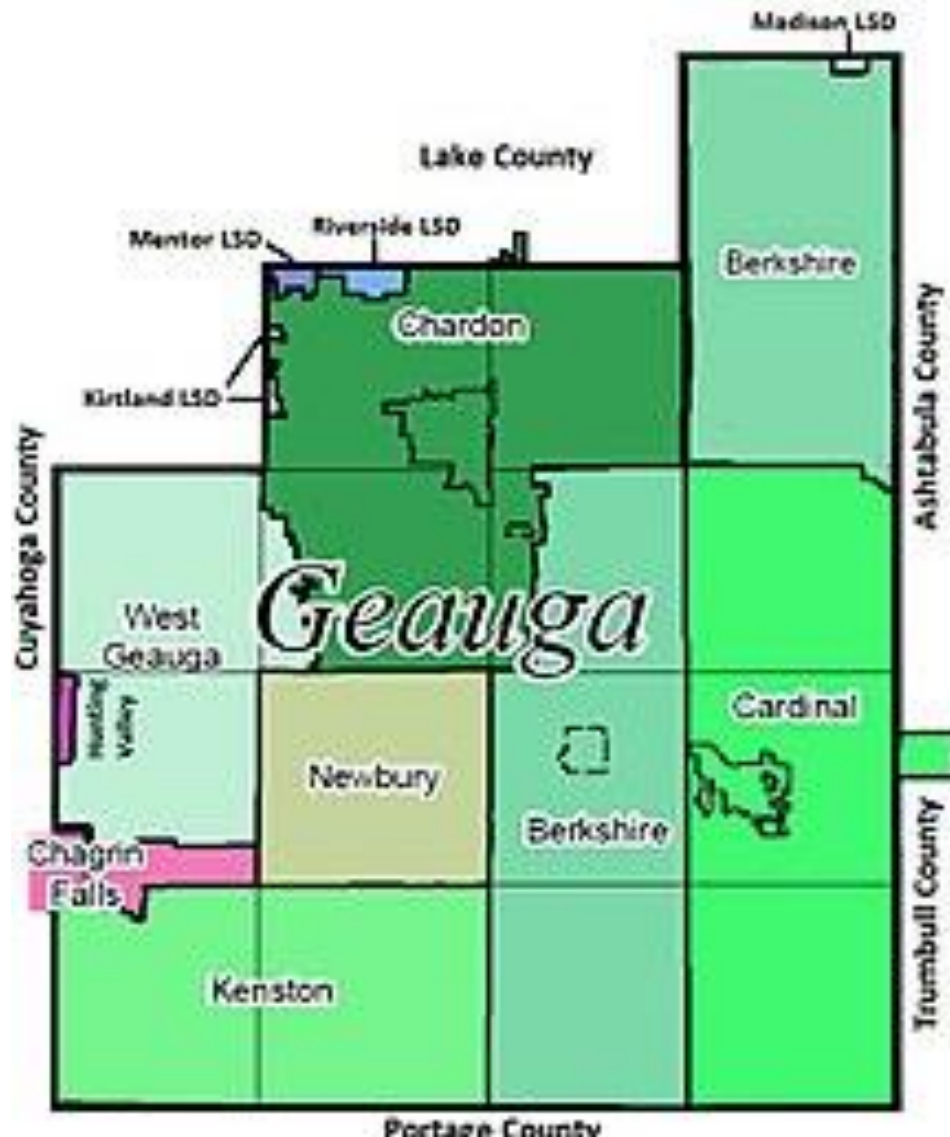
Cleveland State University

2019 Certified Public Manager Program 2020

# Mission Statement of South Russell Village

- ▶ The mission of South Russell Village is to serve the residents of the Village by:
- ▶ Providing a high-level of essential services
- ▶ Planning for future needs while preserving the character of the village
- ▶ Promoting an attitude of professionalism and impartiality among village officials and employees in a fiscally responsible manner.

# Geauga County School Districts



# South Russell Village Park



# Village Government

- ▶ Mayor and six council members serve four-year terms
- ▶ Building, Finance, Police and Service departments
- ▶ We pay over \$1,000 a day to Chagrin Falls for EMS/fire services
- ▶ Architecture Review Board three residents, paid, three-year terms
- ▶ Board of Zoning Appeals five residents, four-year terms
- ▶ Planning Commission five residents, six-year terms

# South Russell Village

- ▶ Four square miles, one stop light
- ▶ 1,400 homes with 3,800 residents
- ▶ 120+ businesses
- ▶ 13 full-time employees
- ▶ 3.5 million dollar budget
- ▶ Geauga County
- ▶ “Suburb of Chagrin Falls”
- ▶ **What could go wrong?**

# Residents' Issues

- ▶ PTSD lighting v. Kill your chickens
- ▶ School custodian, 6'6", 250 lbs., tears over storm water
- ▶ WIIIFM? What is in it for me?
- ▶ "South Russia"
- ▶ Private community roads and bridge
- ▶ Identity Chagrin Burntwood Tavern, Chagrin Cleveland Clinic, Chagrin Yoga
- ▶ Income tax payments to CCA or RITA?

# Challenges

- ▶ The 2015 strategic plan contains unfinished items from the 1999 plan
- ▶ Council meetings, held on the second and fourth Monday of each month, last over two hours, with 10-20 pages of minutes
- ▶ Verbal confrontation among council members
- ▶ Three-page letter read by a member of council about another member
- ▶ Verbal confrontation among mayor and council members
- ▶ Lack of civility, direction and decorum
- ▶ Special council meeting called to clean a ditch and remove a dirt pile
- ▶ An account ran \$100,000 in the red with no comment from anyone



# Engineer Firm Search

- ▶ SRV employed the same engineering firm for over twenty years, paying the firm approximately \$60,000 a year for engineering services
- ▶ We decided to do a RFP of interested firms
- ▶ Began in February and ended in September
- ▶ Conflict of interest among members of council?
- ▶ “I have known your father for over forty years”
- ▶ “We go way back”
- ▶ We kept our relationship with our current engineering firm who said: “We spent more time and had more meetings on your \$60,000 contract than we have had on multi-million dollar contracts.”

# Rental House



# Rental House Eviction of an elderly, bed-ridden widow and caretaker son

- ▶ In 2004, SRV purchased a two bedroom ranch home, appraised in 2020 for \$240,000, to prevent development of the property
- ▶ The latest renter paid over \$65,000 in rent over 3.5 years
- ▶ Village averaged \$6,700 profit each year after paying taxes, sewer, insurance, lawn care, etc.
- ▶ Renter built a ramp and sidewalk at renter's expense
- ▶ Council votes to evict and tear down the home

# November 2019 Election Ballot

- ▶ Contested elections were rare in SRV
- ▶ The incumbent mayor running for re-election was opposed by an incumbent member of council
- ▶ The mayor recruited a resident to run for council to defeat a member of council up for re-election

# February 2020 council meeting

- ▶ Voices raised among council members over part-time employees working from 8:00 - 4:00 with no time off for lunch or a mental break. Two days later emailed apologies were exchanged among council members.
- ▶ Only female building department employees required to mark their time sheets by the minute they arrive on the job. For example 7:51 a.m. for a female would be 8:00 for a male employee.
- ▶ “Who told the Department Head to invite an architect to make a proposal on how to remodel service garage before first talking about the idea with members of council?” Silence



Sometimes I felt like I was being sacked!



# Personality Test ESFJ-A

## “The Consul”

### People Mastery

- ▶ Extrovert
  - ▶ Sensing/Observant
  - ▶ Feeling
  - ▶ Judging
  - ▶ Assertive
  - ▶ My dominant style is analytical
  - ▶ Body Language and voice improvements needed to better show compassion when dealing with people
  - ▶ The five full-time employees, excluding police officers, were asked to take the same 16-point personality test and provide the results to me only.
- |            |
|------------|
| Introvert  |
| Intuitive  |
| Thinking   |
| Perceiving |

# Possible Conflict Solutions I

- ▶ Ohio Municipal League workshop on “How to be a Council Member”
- ▶ Twenty-two page handout on how to be a council member
- ▶ Committee binders with employee job descriptions, previous budgets, previous committee minutes
- ▶ Retreat/Team Building/Strategic Planning workshop
- ▶ Township Association, Geauga Growth Partners, Chagrin Valley Mayors, etc.



# Possible Conflict Solutions II

- ▶ **Focus on Customer Service**
  - ▶ Goals, Mission, Vision and Values
- ▶ **Process Improvement**
  - ▶ No ambushes, no secrets, no lack of 'heads up'
- ▶ **Budgeting finished early**
  - ▶ Not the last meeting in December

# Possible Conflict Solutions III



## What is a Strategic Plan?

- ▶ “A disciplined effort to produce fundamental decisions and actions that shape and guide what an organization (or other entity) is, what it does, and why it does it.”  
(Bryson, 2018)

# Strategic Plan Timeline

- ▶ December 2019 One-on-one, one-hour interviews with present and future council members and department heads
- ▶ January 2020 Interviews with members of the ARB, BZA and PC
- ▶ April Council members attend Ohio Municipal League training on *How to perform your duties as a member of council*
- ▶ May Community survey mailed
- ▶ June Retreat, team-building, strategic planning event
- ▶ September Town Hall meeting
- ▶ October 2020 Strategic Plan approved by council

# Strategic Plan Topics

- ▶ Vision Dreams about the future
- ▶ Mission ORC., local ordinances
- ▶ SWOT Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats
- ▶ Strategic Issues Alternatives
- ▶ Stakeholder Analysis
- ▶

# Solution # 1 One-on-one, one-hour, individual structured interviews with council members

- ▶ What was the one thing you were most proud of that happened during 2019?
- ▶ What one thing that occurred during 2019 council year would you like to change?
- ▶ Name three accomplishments of your committees during 2019.
- ▶ Name three things you were unable to accomplish during 2019.
- ▶ What was your reaction to the transfer of \$100,000 to cover an account deficit?
- ▶ What should be three goals for the village to achieve in 2020?
- ▶ What should be three goals for the village to achieve over the next five years?

# Solution # 1 One-on-one, one-hour, individual structured interviews with council members

- ▶ Describe how the village will be different in 2030.
- ▶ Should the village build a bunny sledding hill?
- ▶ Should the village build a Veterans Memorial Park?
- ▶ Should the village pick up branches and leaves in the fall?
- ▶ Should we limit recycling trucks to every other week instead of weekly pickup?

# Solution # 1 One-on-one, one-hour, individual structured interviews with council members

- ▶ Rate our building department on a scale of 1 to 10
- ▶ Rate our finance department on a scale of 1 to 10
- ▶ Rate our safety department on a scale of 1 to 10
- ▶ Rate our street department on a scale of 1 to 10
- ▶ What changes in your performance do you plan to make in 2020?
- ▶ What changes in my performance would you like me to make in 2020?
- ▶ Follow up comments



# Council members' responses question about most proud:

- ▶ Playground, voting against eviction, playground, playground, bridge construction and two storm water projects, 5 Of 7 council responded
- ▶
- ▶ Two weeks before the vote on the playground, four of six council members spoke against building a playground.
- ▶ The night of the vote on the playground, with council chambers filled with young parents and their children, council voted 6-0 for a playground.

## Solution # 2 One-on-one, one-hour, individual, structured interviews with department heads.

- ▶ What was the one thing you were most proud of that happened during 2019?
- ▶ What one thing that occurred during 2019 council year would you like to change?
- ▶ Name three accomplishments of your committee(s) during 2019.
- ▶ Name three things your committee(s) were unable to accomplish during 2019.
- ▶ What should be three goals for the village to achieve in 2020?
- ▶ What should be three goals for the village to achieve over the next five years?
- ▶ Describe how the village will be different in 2030.
- ▶ Rate your department on a scale of 1 to 10

## Solution # 2 One-on-one, one-hour, individual, structured interviews with department heads.

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- ▶ What changes in my performance would you like me to make in 2020?
- ▶ Follow up comments

Department Heads were asked to develop, along with their council committee, five-year plans for the following:

- ▶ Carpet
- ▶ Computer/Electronics/Phones
- ▶ Exterior doors, roof, siding, windows
- ▶ Electric/Generator
- ▶ Furniture
- ▶ Miscellaneous
- ▶ Paint
- ▶ Parking
- ▶ Plumbing
- ▶ Vehicles

Department Heads were asked to develop, along with their council committee, three performance goals and three personnel needs to improve their department's performance:

- ▶ Performance goal # 1
- ▶ Performance goal # 2
- ▶ Performance goal # 3
- ▶ Personnel need # 1
- ▶ Personnel need # 2
- ▶ Personnel need # 3

Architecture Review Board  
Board of Zoning Appeals  
Planning Commission meetings:

- ▶ Each committee was asked to tell what was the best thing that happened in 2019
- ▶ Each committee was asked to tell what one or more things they would like to see changed in 2020

# Survey Monkey Questionnaire mailed to every home and available online

Agree Strongly    Agree    Neutral    Disagree    Disagree Strongly

- ▶ I would recommend living in South Russell Village to a friend
- ▶ SRV taxes are fair
- ▶ Our EMS/Fire/Police services are excellent
- ▶ The quality of snow removal by our street department is excellent
- ▶ We should pick up branches and leaves each fall
- ▶ SRV should limit recycling trucks to every other week instead of weekly
- ▶ SRV should create a Veterans Memorial Park by installing five flag poles for each branch of the military
- ▶ SRV should spend \$50,000 to build restrooms at the park
- ▶ This space left open for your comments or questions

# Strategic Plan Timeline

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# Questions?

- ▶ I am the Mayor and Head of Council. Some villages have the roles divided.
- ▶ Three Township Trustees have equal, limited authority/responsibility
- ▶ How did this situation develop?
- ▶ Clarification of roles, egos, turf
- ▶ Collegiality v. Weakness?
- ▶ Does the community know what is going on?
- ▶ In hindsight, what would I have done differently?