

A Message From The Engineer's Desk ::

Dedicated Employee To Retire After 30 Years of Service

In just a few short weeks **Mary Sampsel**, Assistant County Engineer and Chief Building Official, will step away from her desk and into retirement. Mary served the public for the last 30 years, using her diverse skills to fill a variety of roles in our office. Early in her career, her responsibilities centered around the traditional county engineer duties involving roads and bridges. As our office expanded, Mary focused on the county's utility systems and ever increasing development. Any changes and new challenges seemed to come easy to her. Whether they truly did however was difficult to tell, as she always approaches things with her consistently calm demeanor.

As our building department grew, so did her involvement in our commercial/residential plan review and inspection programs. Mary transitioned into the role of Chief Building Official, becoming a leader in the discipline in Ohio.



Assistant County Engineer
Mary Sampsel

Those that have worked alongside Mary often will list similar attributes when describing her; bright, fair, well respected, funny, good tennis player, and so forth. I would concur with all of those, and add a few more...I don't know of an engineer that handled such a diverse number of responsibilities, often all within a singular day. It wasn't unusual to see her bouncing from one phone call to the next meeting to the muddy jobsite...all with no drama. With Mary, things just got handled, and she certainly has made a difference through the years, both in our office and in the community.

I'm going to miss working alongside her. I'll miss her quick wit and professionalism. But she is leaving behind a good team that she helped assemble and train.

And tennis league ladies, look out. She now will have more time on the court to perfect that wicked top-spin serve. Good luck, and Mary, play well.

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New Employee Welcomed ::

We are pleased to introduce our newest employee, **Jack Derr**. He was hired in September to fill the role of Chief Building Official (CBO) and Commercial Plans Examiner as Mary Sampsel, our current CBO, retires later this year.



Jack is a registered architect in the State of Ohio and holds a Bachelor of Architecture and Certificate of Business Administration from the University of Cincinnati.

He has served Hamilton County's Planning and Development Department for the past 10 years as Assistant Building Official and Senior Master Plans Examiner. He holds eleven certifications from the International Code Council and is a certified Building Official, Residential Building Official, Master Plans Examiner, and Building Inspector in the State of Ohio.

Prior to serving Hamilton County, Jack owned a small architectural firm for over 10 years that specialized in the restoration/renovation and adaptive reuse of historic structures. He brings over 30 years of valuable experience to the Engineer's office and will be an asset to the Building Department team.

Welcome Jack!

Building Inspector Passes National Test ::



Congratulations to **Building Inspector Larry Powell** for passing the ICC Residential Building Inspector's test earlier this year. The ICC test is a national exam covering the International Residential Code which is the base document for the Residential Code of Ohio.

Maintenance Workers Promoted ::

Randy Wiley and **Chad Weiser** were recently promoted to Maintenance Worker 3 positions in our Operations Division. Congratulations Randy and Chad!!

Open House Set For Sampsel's Retirement ::

Please join us on Wednesday, November 30th, as we honor **Mary Sampsel** and her 30 years of dedicated service. The open house will take place in the Commissioners Hearing Room at 233 W Sixth Street from 3pm - 5pm.

Salt Prices Set for 2017 ::

We were recently notified of the 2016-2017 rock salt bid. As in past years, we participated in a joint contract with ODOT. Being part of such a large pool of customers helps minimize material cost increases.

The price for this winter season will be \$ 48 per ton, about \$24 less than last year. Our supplier is Cargill, Inc. and the salt is stockpiled in Cleveland. We have not seen pricing this low since 2007.

Did You Know?

Engineer's Office May Have The Record of Information You're Looking For ::

One of the core duties of any public office is to keep and make available the records of its business. James Madison famously wrote, "A popular government, without popular information, or the means of acquiring it, is but a prologue to a farce or a tragedy; or, perhaps, both. Knowledge will forever govern ignorance: And a people who mean to be their own Governors, must arm themselves with the power which knowledge gives."

Several key factors are necessary for records to be considered available to the public. The records must be preserved, kept organized and made both accessible and discoverable.

The *Union County Engineer's Office* is responsible for many records. We keep property records like tax maps and records of surveys. We have records related to improvement projects to public infrastructure like roads, bridges and sewers. We have records related to the permits we issue through our regulatory processes. We keep records of maps, inventories, studies and other things related to the business of the County Engineer.

The records come in a wide variety of shapes and sizes. Some are very large like plan drawings or maps. Others are small like a set of index cards. Some are on papers in file cabinets or boxes. Others are bound in record books of various sizes. Still others are kept in digital files or databases.



Property records facilitate the protection of private property rights and claims to ownership. Other records provide insight as to how decisions have been made and how public money has been spent. These records are essential because they describe the details of actions taken and the many background stories which are necessary to truly understand the current picture.

Survey Records Update ::

The Union County survey records will soon be updated online. Coming later this fall, survey plats will be available through a temporary process of searching by parcel, while we continue to work on updating our existing online indexing.

New County Road Maps Coming Soon ::

The latest Union County Highway Map is currently in development. Engels Maps and Guides is producing the new map using our local GIS data. The maps are expected to be available before the end of the year.

Coming in 2017

Building Code Updates ::

New commercial buildings and additions to existing buildings will become more energy efficient in early 2017 when the state of Ohio starts enforcing the 2012 International Energy Conservation Code (IECC). This is an update to the 2009 IECC that has been in effect for the past five years. The 2017 Ohio Building, Mechanical and Plumbing Codes will take effect mid-summer and will be based on the 2015 ICC codes. This is an update from the current 2011 Ohio Building Codes.



No changes to the Residential Code of Ohio are expected in 2017.

Sanitary Sewer Plant Gets Upgrade

Mill Creek Estates WWTP ::

Construction is underway to upgrade the Mill Creek Estates Wastewater Treatment Plant. Bids were accepted on July 5 and AST Environmental was awarded the job. The project consists of the removal of one of three existing sand filters, and the installation of a tertiary disk filter. County forces will also be utilized to build a structure around the filter to prevent it from freezing in the winter months. This filter will allow the treatment plant to be able to treat the higher flows that come with large rainfall events, and keep the effluent to EPA approved levels. The total cost of the improvement is \$450,000.



Design Considerations for Basement Walls ::

Historically, homes in Union County have had problems with basement walls cracking, bowing and needing repairs. Codes and requirements have evolved from the early 70's and today walls are designed better and inspected more thoroughly.

Our plan reviewer checks the site plan to see what soil type is expected. High clay content soils exert a greater pressure on the wall and need more steel reinforcement. Some of our Union County soil types are outside of the Residential Code of Ohio (RCO) criteria and a professional engineer is needed to design the steel reinforcement.

Vertical and horizontal bar requirements are determined by prescriptive tables in the RCO and vary depending on wall thickness, height and soil type. Additional bars are needed on each side of a window opening or beam seat to keep diagonal cracks from occurring. Horizontal and vertical bars should be located within 1.25-1.50 inches of the inside face of the wall to have the most benefit in strengthening the wall from tensile forces. Granular backfill and a drainage system is needed behind the wall to reduce hydrostatic forces and pressure against the wall. Basement walls are required to be laterally supported at the top and bottom.

Union County inspectors check the foundation wall before the wall is poured (or cores filled for block walls) to see that the reinforcing is correct. They check it again prior to backfill to see that a drainage system is provided, the wall is water-proofed, etc. After the floor system is installed Union County inspectors check to see that lateral support is provided. Adhering to these standards and thoroughly inspecting the installation will improve the quality of foundations for current and future homeowners.



Crossroads Plan Nearing Adoption ::

The finishing touches have been put on a multi-jurisdictional planning effort to bring stability and set expectations for land use and development in southeastern Union County. **The Crossroads Plan** covers approximately 1,000 acres of land within Jerome Township and the City of Dublin, and includes land within the utility service areas of both Dublin and the City of Marysville. Funding for the plan was a shared effort between all jurisdictions involved.

Several well-attended community meetings were held to gather feedback from residents of both Jerome Township and Dublin. From these

meetings, it was gathered that traffic safety, the desire for high quality development and increased collaboration with different public entities were of the most vital items that needed to be addressed.

The Logan /Union/Champaign Regional Planning Commission served as the lead contact with the planning consultant, Planning NEXT, to develop a common plan for land use, utility service and economic development. As development pressures in this area in-

crease, it was important for these jurisdictions to coordinate and set forth a uniform vision for the undeveloped portion of this area, which amounts to almost half of the total study area.

Through many discussions and iterations, the plan was recently finalized and has been or is planning to be adopted by all of the jurisdictions shortly.

“..traffic safety, the desire for high quality development and increased collaboration with different public entities were the most vital items...”



Cosgray Road/S.R. 161 Intersection Upgrade ::

With the opening of Costco in early August near the intersection of Industrial Parkway and S.R. 161 in Jerome Township, there has been a significant influx of traffic to this already bustling area. This additional activity is a tremendous economic benefit to Union County, but also provides some challenges. We have seen some of the congestion relieved in this vicinity by the addition of a westbound left turn lane on S.R. 161 to Cosgray Road. However, with approximately 125,000 additional square feet of retail/restaurant space still planned within the **Dublin Green** development, incorporated with projected traffic growth from both existing and proposed developments within the area, a long term solution at this intersection is needed.

Design is currently underway for this permanent solution. A multi-lane roundabout is planned for the intersection of Cosgray Road and S.R. 161 which will add a northern leg for access to **Dublin Green**, and will allow current and future traffic to pass through the intersection both safely and efficiently. The design stage is currently on schedule to allow for completion of the roundabout by fall of 2017.



Funding for the roundabout is possible due to a multi-jurisdictional public/private partnership between the **Dublin Green** development group, City of Dublin, Franklin County and Union County.

Mitchell Crossing, Woodbine Village, The Reserve at New California and Jerome Village
In Other Development News ::

In addition to the Dublin Green development, several other development projects along the Industrial Parkway corridor are in various stages of planning and construction. *Mitchell Crossing*, a 48 lot single family development at the northwest corner of Industrial Parkway and Mitchell-Dewitt Road was recently completed and is starting to see some home construction on the site. *Woodbine Village* just wrapped up Section 2 of their single family home development, creating an additional 51 single family lots. Right and left turn lanes along Industrial Parkway were also installed with this phase to mitigate the additional traffic entering the site from the new access off of Industrial Parkway.

Recently starting construction is *The Reserve at New California* subdivision, located adjacent to Industrial Parkway, just northwest of the U.S. 42/Industrial Parkway intersection. This first phase will consist of 27 single family lots, with the ultimate buildout resulting in 165 lots. This subdivision will connect to the existing New California Woods subdivision and add an access point off of Industrial Parkway. Right and left turn lanes on Industrial Parkway will be constructed by the developer as part of this project.

Jerome Village continues to move forward with the residential portion of their mixed use master development. To date, over 800 single family lots have been platted, with close to 500 additional units in the planning and design phases. Although timing has not yet been determined, proposed educational, commercial, retail, office and town center space has been approved through Jerome Township and will eventually be constructed as part of the 1,500 acre development.

Coleman-Brake Road
Bridge Replaced ::

R&I Construction, from Tiffin, Ohio, recently finished completed the concrete bridge construction on Coleman-Brake Road over Buck Run in Union Township at a cost of \$664,000.



Culvert Work By
Force Account ::

27 culverts were replaced by county forces this year. Most replacements are completed in one day, but larger culverts may take up to three days to finish.



Resurfacing News

Sales Tax Dollars At Work in 2016

County Roads Resurfacing Projects ::

Chip Seal



Onyx



Micro Surfacing



County chip seal crews surfaced treated 82 miles of roadway this year. Work for this program was completed in 17 days at a material cost of approximately \$731,000. Lafayette-Plain City Road from SR 161 to the Union/Madison line had an ONYX Mastic Surface applied after it was chip sealed. Another new asphalt application, Micro Surfacing, a thin polymer modified asphalt emulsion, was placed on top of the recently chip-sealed Weaver Road. Both treatments will create a tough wearing surface, smooth out the chip seal, and control dust and loose stone.

Hot Mix Resurfacing ::

The Shelly Company recently finished this year's paving program. Just under nine miles of roadway were resurfaced at a cost of \$941,000. This year's project was funded by our portion of the 1/4% sales tax revenue and state grants. Darby Township also contributed to the program.



Pavement Marking ::

Oglesby Construction from Norwalk, Ohio was awarded our striping program this year. Centerline and edgeline markings are prioritized and striped based upon traffic counts, width, geometrics and the condition of existing paint. This year, 119 miles of roadway were striped at a cost of \$83,000.





Union County Engineer
Jeff Stauch, PE/PS
233 West Sixth Street
Marysville, Ohio 43040

Administrative Offices

P: 937.645.3018
www.co.union.oh.us/engineer
engineer@co.union.oh.us

Operations Facility

P: 937.645.3017

County Gets Technology Jolt From State and Federal Government ::

Recently, two separate announcements were made that stand to benefit *Union County* businesses, residents and economic development as a whole for years to come.

First, in mid-October it was announced that the Ohio Department of Transportation will be funding the installation of fiber optic infrastructure from the City of Dublin, through Marysville and to the Transportation Research Center (TRC) near Honda in East Liberty. The proposed fiber optics network will connect into Dublin's DubLINK fiber optic infrastructure to link the communities and strengthen the presence of high speed data exchange through the U.S. 33 corridor. This may allow the hundreds of existing businesses in the area the ability to access faster internet service, as well as greater capacity to transmit data. In addition, this infrastructure has the ability to attract new businesses to the area that require or desire this capability. Officials hope to have the initial fiber optic lines placed and in operation by late 2017.

Shortly after that news, it was announced that the U.S. Department of Transportation awarded an approximately \$6 million dollar grant to the City of Dublin, City of Marysville and *Union County* for the development of the Northwest U.S. 33 corridor as a "Smart Mobility Corridor." The grant will be used to install Dedicated Short Range Communications (DSRC) throughout the corridor in order to allow for connected and autonomous vehicle research. This infrastructure, coupled with the presence of 50-plus automotive related companies in this area, including Honda and TRC, provides the opportunity to create a proving ground to expand on the research and development of new and innovative automotive technologies.