

## Independence Around Town

### Economic Development Newsletter

First Quarter 2017

### A MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

As we head into the second quarter of 2017, the City of Independence continues its efforts to ensure our community remains a great place to conduct business. In cooperation with City Council, my Administration is busy working to complete existing infrastructure projects such as the improvements at the I-77/Rockside Road Interchange, while new infrastructure projects including the replacement of the sanitary sewer serving the Rockside Wood Boulevard North area are just getting underway.



Infrastructure and the efficiency of traffic flow in our Business Districts are of the utmost importance to us, and therefore, any future projects which can result in improvements in these areas remains a top priority.

In the first quarter of 2017, the City approved plans for the community's first assisted living and memory care facility. The Vista Springs project will fulfill a need for our residents, while also providing a catalyst for future development in this section of the Rockside Road Business District.

The City is also moving forward with plans to demolish the former Independence Middle School. For many years, this structure has been an impediment to the redevelopment of our downtown. I believe the removal of this building will be the impetus for further private and public investments in downtown. Although this historical building served the City well for ninety-five years and the memories it created for those who attended this educational facility will forever be cherished, its removal will spark a renewed vision for downtown Independence.

As we move toward spring, it is again time to start planning for outdoor activities. Please remember the outside pavilions in Elmwood Park are available for Independence businesses to rent for work sanctioned events. The City has also recently enacted legislation regulating food trucks in our Business Districts. To learn more about the new permit process for food trucks, please see Police Chief Mike Kilbane's article in this newsletter.

As always thank you for your investment in the City of Independence, and

please remember that my door is always open! Have a great spring!

Sincerely,

Anthony L. Togliatti  
Mayor

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## NOTABLE NEWS

### CONSTRUCTION UPDATES IN THE ROCKSIDE ROAD BUSINESS DISTRICT

Anthony Allega Cement Contractor continues to make progress with new traffic signalization and street lighting work in connection with the Rockside Road Widening Project by the former BP gas station.

Now that spring is upon us, the warmer weather will allow for the following construction activities to commence:

- stone sub-base and concrete paving for the mainline widening work across the former BP gas station frontage (Summit Park Drive to the I-77 southbound entrance ramp) [read more...](#)

### ASSISTED LIVING AND MEMORY CARE FACILITY APPROVED

Vista Springs recently received approval to construct an 85,000 square foot building with 70 assisted living and 24 memory support units at 6046 Brecksville Road. In Northeast Ohio, Vista Springs currently operates similar facilities in Macedonia, Parma and is under construction in Concord Township. The company plans to begin site work at the Independence location in early summer and have the project complete by 2019.



Vista Springs will be the first assisted living and memory support facility in Independence.

### NEW WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM UNDERWAY

Cuyahoga County recently launched a [new workforce development program](#) called SkillUp. The new SkillUp service assists employers with identifying skilled jobs and training pathways to help employees acquire the necessary skills for the company's open positions.

Employers in any industry can receive support from Cuyahoga County to help

train existing employees, new employees, or workers provided by temporary staffing agencies - upskilling workers from lower-wage and lower-skill jobs to higher-wage, higher-skill jobs.

For more information about the new SkillUp service please view this [information sheet](#) or contact the Cuyahoga County SkillUp team at 216.443.6930.

## **RESERVING ELMWOOD PARK'S OPEN AIR PAVILIONS**



Businesses located in Independence can reserve the open-air pavilions in Elmwood Park. The facilities are available for office-sanctioned events between the hours of 10 a.m. - 4 p.m., Monday thru Friday.

Please contact the Independence Recreation Department by calling 216.524.3262 for additional information and to make a reservation.

## **IT JOB FAIR PART OF TECH WEEK 2017**

Launched by OHTec in 2011, [Tech Week](#) (April 21 - 30) is an annual initiative to support, celebrate and engage the local tech community. Tech Week includes programming that supports entrepreneurs, executives, students, educators and other stakeholders of the IT industry.

One of the signature Tech Week events is the annual Linking IT Talent to Opportunity job fair. This year the event is scheduled for April 26 from 12:00 - 3:30 p.m. at the Brecksville Community Center. To learn more about the Linking IT Talent to Opportunity job fair please see the event [information sheet](#) or contact [Shawn DaVis](#), Greater Cleveland Partnership at 216.592.2324.

## **FREE RECYCLING SEMINAR FROM THE SOLID WASTE DISTRICT**

The Cuyahoga County Solid Waste District (CCSWD) will offer a business recycling seminar on April 20 from 5:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. During the seminar, CCSWD staff will teach attendees how to create successful workplace recycling programs, techniques for improving existing workplace recycling programs and tips for contracting waste and recycling services.

For more information and event registration, please visit the CCSWD [website](#) or call 216.443.3732.

## **DEMOLITION OF FORMER INDEPENDENCE MIDDLE SCHOOL APPROVED**

Independence City Council recently approved the proposal of B&B Wrecking and Excavating for the asbestos abatement and demolition of the former Independence Middle School in downtown Independence. The building has been vacant for over ten years and its demolition will pave the way for future improvement projects planned for downtown Independence. The project is expected to begin in mid-April and be complete in six to eight weeks.



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## WELCOME NEW BUSINESSES/BUSINESS UPDATES

Help us keep the community up-to-date on our newest neighbors! Drop us a line when you learn of a new business calling Independence home. Please join us in welcoming the following new businesses.

The following restaurants have recently opened in Independence.

- [\*\*The Tavern of Independence\*\*](#) is now open at 5530 Brecksville Road.
- **OHIYO 68** is serving Asian inspired cuisine at the Independence Square Shopping Center, 6531 Brecksville Road.
- The fast-casual Middle Eastern restaurant, [\*\*Naf Naf Grill\*\*](#), has opened its first Ohio location in Liberty Commons, 6714 Rockside Road.

[\*\*Area Temps\*\*](#) and [\*\*Champion Personnel Systems\*\*](#) have both relocated to Freedom Square III, 4511 Rockside Road.

[\*\*Redwood Living\*\*](#) recently moved into office space at 7500/7510 East Pleasant Valley Road. The company had previously been located in Beachwood.

[\*\*The Government Employees Insurance Company \(GEICO\)\*\*](#) has moved into office space in Freedom Square II, 6000 Freedom Square Drive from the Hanna Building in downtown Cleveland.

[\*\*W.A. Smith Financial Group\*\*](#) has relocated from Seven Hills to Corporate Plaza II, 6840 Rockside Woods Blvd. South.

Two Independence companies have recently been in the news. Both [\*\*Sterling Talent Solutions\*\*](#) and [\*\*Certified Security Solutions\*\*](#) were recently featured in regional publications that profiled the companies.

[\*\*Zsignal Solutions, Inc.\*\*](#) recently announced its decision to relocate its headquarters from Akron to Independence. [\*\*The City of Independence partnered with Cuyahoga County\*\*](#) to assist the company with a portion of its relocation costs. The company plans to grow to 48 employees with a \$4.8 million payroll by the end of 2019.

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# ODDS & ENDS

## POLICE DEPARTMENT

In response to interest from our business community, the City of Independence has enacted legislation to allow mobile food trucks to operate in our business districts. Permits for food trucks can be obtained from the police department at no charge. The operator will need to show that they have a current food service license from the Cuyahoga County Health Department or any other health department in the state, and they will also need to provide permission from the property owner or manager at the location they intend to operate.



In order to ensure the health and safety of patrons, the mobile food trucks are required to comply with all applicable health and fire codes and inspection requirements. In the near future the permit application will be posted on the City [website](#), along with specific permit requirements. We are excited to provide the opportunity for some of the varied and highly popular mobile food vendors in the area to bring their business to Independence!

If you have any questions regarding mobile food vendors, please contact [Chief Mike Kilbane](#) at 216.524.1234.

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## CONTACT THE INDEPENDENCE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR



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