

Independence Around Town

Economic Development Newsletter

Third Quarter 2017

A MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

It is a bittersweet time of year as we say goodbye to another summer filled with fun activities and great community events. Just as we transition from one season to the next, the City is wrapping up many seasonal infrastructure projects and starting new initiatives including an exciting discussion about the future of our downtown. After much debate and planning, the City has engaged Environmental Design Group to assist in designing a new community greenspace on the former Independence Middle School property and developing streetscape improvement plans for Brecksville Road from Selig Drive to Daisy Avenue.



On September 20, the City hosted a project kick-off meeting to introduce the consultant and planning process to residents and stakeholders. This initial meeting also included group activities designed to elicit participant feedback and ideas regarding the downtown greenspace and streetscape projects. This meeting was the first opportunity for the public to participate in the planning process, but there are future public meetings planned along with a social media campaign to ensure everyone has an opportunity to be engaged. Please check the City [website](#) for announcements of upcoming public meetings.

On October 6, I will be hosting a luncheon and presenting my State of the City address. I look forward to sharing the progress and strides we have made over this past year. I have a great deal to review as we approach the end of 2017, and much to discuss as we look forward to 2018. Additional event details and registration information are available in a later section of this newsletter.

As always, my Administration and Economic Development team are here to assist you. We are committed to serving our business community and maintaining Independence as one of the best corporate environments in Northeast Ohio.

Sincerely,

Anthony L. Togliatti
Mayor

NOTABLE NEWS

PLANNING UNDERWAY FOR DOWNTOWN IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS



The City recently initiated a planning process designed to determine the future of the former Independence Middle School property and develop plans to remake the Brecksville Road streetscape from Selig Drive through downtown Independence. The City is partnering with Environmental Design Group

(EDG) in the design of both the streetscape and community greenspace planned for the former Independence Middle School property.

Approximately 65 individuals attended a public meeting on September 20 held at the Independence Civic Center. Meeting participants were provided with the project background, goals and next steps. There were also opportunities for those in attendance to provide input on important elements to consider when designing the downtown community greenspace and streetscape. The City and EDG will review and incorporate feedback from this meeting as plans are developed for these important downtown areas.

To learn more about the planning process and find information on future public meetings, please refer to the City's [website](#) or [contact](#) Jeremy Rowan, Economic Development Director at 216.524.4131.

PROJECT BEGINS ON BRECKSVILLE ROAD

While driving along Brecksville Road you may have noticed a large area has been cleared across from Cleveland Clinic Courts. Contractors for [Vista Springs](#) recently began preparing this 15-acre property to be the future home of an assisted living and memory care facility. Vista Springs Independence will be 86,000 square feet with 70 assisted living and 24 memory care units.



Plans are to have the facility open by the end of 2018.

NEW CUYAHOGA COUNTY WORKFORCE PROGRAM AVAILABLE

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 open positions.

Employers in any industry can receive support from Cuyahoga County to help them 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 contact the [Cuyahoga County SkillUp team](#) at 216.443.6930.

INDEPENDENCE BUSINESS VISITATION PROGRAM

The health of local employers is critical to Independence's economic vitality. Existing businesses make investments in facilities, create jobs and pay taxes that are at the heart of a strong local economy. For these reasons, the City maintains a Business Visitation Program with the aim of improving the lines of communication with the business community. During these on-site visits, a representative from the Economic Development Department meets with business owners and/or key management to garner concise, accurate, and up-to-date information about the views and needs of existing businesses.

To learn more about the [Business Visitation Program](#) or schedule a meeting, please [contact](#) Jeremy Rowan, Economic Development Director at 216.524.4131.

MAYOR'S STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS



Mayor Anthony Togliatti's State of the City Address and Luncheon is scheduled for Friday, October 6 at noon in the Independence Civic Center, 6363 Selig Drive. Doors open at 11:30am and the event is free.

For luncheon reservations, please call the Mayor's Office at 216.524.4131 by October 3

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.

[Mentis Neuro Health](#) has opened a new office at 6111 Oak Tree Blvd. The company provides neuro-rehabilitation services to individuals who have sustained an acquired brain injury.

[The General Insurance Company](#) has recently relocated from Valley View to a 32,000 sq ft office at 6200 Oak Tree Blvd.

The Oaktree Place building, 6111 Oak Tree Blvd recently added the [Ohio Alliance to End Sexual Violence](#) (OAESV) as a new tenant. The organization was previously located in downtown Cleveland.

Please join us in congratulating [MacroPoint](#), a freight-tracking platform company based in Independence, on its [acquisition by Descartes Systems Group](#).



We would also like to congratulate the Cleveland Cavaliers and Cleveland Clinic as they celebrate the 10-year anniversary of Cleveland Clinic Courts.

The organizations used this occasion to [announce](#) the continuation of their long-term partnership and the extension of naming rights to Cleveland Clinic Courts.

[Rea & Associates Inc.](#), a regional accounting and business consulting firm, has announced its intention to [merge](#) with Independence-based firm, [Walthall CPAs](#), on November 1, 2017. Walthall's Independence employees will continue to conduct business from their existing office space at 6300 Rockside Road. Congratulations to both firms on this exciting opportunity!

ODDS & ENDS

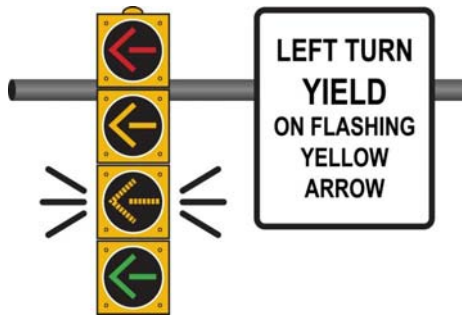
POLICE DEPARTMENT

What's up with those flashing yellow arrows on Rockside?

Significant upgrades have been made recently in the Rockside Road and I-77 area. Additional capacity has been added to the southbound entrance ramp and a second left turn lane was added for westbound Rockside traffic during peak hours for southbound I-77 access.

The traffic signals were also upgraded and coordinated to maximize traffic flow through the area. One of the new functions that may be unfamiliar to some drivers is the flashing yellow left turn arrow. A solid green turn arrow indicates that turning traffic has the right of way, a solid yellow arrow indicates that the signal is about to turn red. A flashing yellow arrow, which remains active much longer than the solid yellow caution signal, means that a left turn is permitted, but turning traffic must yield the right of way to oncoming traffic from the opposite direction.





If you have any questions regarding the flashing yellow left turn arrows, please contact [Chief Mike Kilbane](#) at 216.524.1234.

CONTACT THE INDEPENDENCE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR



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