



THE STATE OF OUR CITY

Dear Residents,

As I enter the third year of my term as your Mayor, I feel it is important for me to share with you an overview of where we have been, what we have accomplished and what we need to do now to face today's challenges and prepare for the demands of the future. To that end, this edition of Cityview is a comprehensive summary of the State of the City address I delivered earlier this year.

Facing down a projected \$1.8 million deficit without cutting services to residents or the business community was clearly at the heart of Mayor Michael P. By-

rne's first State of the City address delivered on Thursday, April 19th at the Cassidy Theatre. The speech, enhanced with a power-point presentation, came at the mid-point of his first term.

The Mayor emphasized that, "I am not out to re-create our city. We are what we are, a bedroom community that features a park within a half-mile walking distance of nearly every residence and a city with a small but diverse business base ranging from mom-and-pop storefronts to world headquarters. Parma Heights is, and has always been, a small-town oasis in a convenient, central location. My goal for the future is to continue to build on and develop these strengths."

The Deficit

Calling 2010, "the most challenging time our city has faced," Mayor Byrne examined how the deficit reached a monumental \$1.8 million through shortfalls in income tax revenue, re-evaluated property values, rising benefit costs and an unusual 27 paycheck cycle. He then went on to say, "We faced the challenge, dealt with it and have emerged stronger, leaner and ready to face the challenges of the future." He outlined measures ranging from restructuring of departmental director positions, pay re-

ductions, furlough days and salary freezes to employee contributions to health care costs as major players in tackling the deficit. The Mayor stepped away from the podium to directly address the audience regarding the necessity of implementing a rubbish fee in 2011. After thanking them for their understanding, he offered his assurances that, "Council and I are working to reduce the fees. The new Green Refuse and Recycling contract will help to lower fees in the long run."

Moving forward, Byrne noted further state cuts to the Local Government Fund and the state's elimination of the Estate/Inheritance Tax will create added financial challenges and require additional measures. To that end, the Mayor promised to continue to aggressively pursue grants, particularly for road improvements, and to institute shared services with surrounding communities in an effort to reduce costs while improving services.

During his swearing-in ceremonies in 2010, Byrne mentioned two areas that he said he would immediately focus on strengthening: economic development and recreation. Two years later, he still strongly believes that "these two departments are priorities and are vital to Parma Heights moving forward."

Economic Development ♦ 884-9600 x32

In 2010, Byrne appointed Joseph E. Sebes to the newly-created post of Director of Community & Economic Development to oversee retention of businesses and recruitment of new businesses. Sebes also assumed the responsibility of coordinating and writing the majority of the city's economic development grant applications.

The Economic Development Department has generated over \$1.3 million in total projects supported by over \$1 million in grant funding during 2010 and 2011 alone. The Mayor stressed that all departments have been successful in the task of seeking out and applying for grant monies. "I am encouraged with what we have been able



Photo courtesy of the Sun News

to achieve in two years," Byrne said.

The Mayor also pointed out the city's savvy use of technology to market itself and the business community. Beginning with updating the city's website in the first year of his term to the addition of a complete online inventory of available commercial locations throughout the city, Mayor Byrne stressed the city's commitment to assist the business community. He noted Parma Heights is one of only three Ohio cities to offer an on-line shopping tool free of charge to business owners and consumers. Called *Shop Parma Heights*, the service is easily accessed through the city's website. *Shop Parma*



Heights lists all businesses in the city by name, category and map location and links each business to its own micro-page. Business owners have the abil-

ity to edit their page and link it to any number of social networking options. "To date, nearly 90 businesses are actively involved and more are joining every day," Byrne said.

The city continues to be on the leading edge with public/private partnerships, he noted, citing two examples in the Greenbrier Commons: the Cassidy Theatre and the former Ice Rink. "We have recently signed a lease with the Cassidy Theatre non-profit to continue producing plays right here on this stage, and a lease with NEO Soccer right across the way."

The Mayor pointed out that another example of a public/private partnership is visible near the corner of Pearl and Stumph Roads with work being done on the future Colombo Park. "The city was able to purchase the property with a Community Development Block Grant with the agreement that the property owner, Margaret Colombo, would create a greenspace/garden dedicated to her late husband," he explained. "More information on the park and the generous woman who is making it happen will be featured in the second annual issue of our city's magazine, *Take A Look At Parma Heights*, coming out in August."

Noting that the issue would feature the business community, Byrne added, "As you know, there are no quick fix solutions to improving our problem with vacant stores. I believe in the building by building, block by block, street by street approach."

To illustrate his point, he concluded the State of the City address with a detailed tour of the city's business districts and highlighted recent investments, expansions and activity including the Drifter Bag World Headquarters acquisition



of the former Integrity property; the world headquarters of Realeflow LLC; the new, expanded Fratello's Pizza location on West 130th; and the transformation of the old Enterprise Car location into a new AT&T store, to list only a few.

Byrne concluded his business segment by thanking both existing and new business owners "too numerous to list" and asking audience members to "please frequent these local businesses...they have supported our city – let's support them!"

Recreation Department ♦ 884-9600 x37

Byrne said he believes that a successful recreation program that provides as many options as possible for residents of all ages is key to the city's health. To achieve that goal, he increased the position of recreation director from a part-time to full-time position and appointed Tom Moran to the post. The Mayor noted that this year, for the first time in two years, the city recovered fiscally to the point that a complete Recreation Brochure was printed.

"In order to keep young families, as well as encourage new families to locate to Parma Heights, we must be able to provide as many amenities as possible," he said, noting that the city's lack of a recreation center posed a huge challenge. "So we did the next best thing. In 2011, we signed an agreement with the City of Brooklyn which established a partnership between our cities."

The partnership allows Parma Heights residents access to the Brooklyn Recreation Center and all its amenities including an indoor swimming pool, racquetball courts, weight room, ice rink and numerous activities at a reduced rate as compared to Brooklyn's usual non-resident fees.

The Mayor also noted an ongoing successful emphasis on growing the baseball/softball leagues, as well as starting a T-ball league and flag football league. "We aggressively pursued baseball, softball, and soccer teams affiliated with the C.Y.O. program and now provide fields for approximately 70 games a year. In return, the city receives compensation for the use of the fields," he added. An emphasis is also being placed on city-offered fitness classes for youths and adults.



The Mayor reported that after the success of the concert series at the Centennial Celebration, he is looking forward to the new Summer Concert Series that Parma Heights is producing this year in partnership with Cox Communications and the City of Parma. Full details

of bands and dates are available on the Parma Heights website: www.parmaheightsoh.gov.

The Centennial Celebration in 2011 revealed an unexpected interest in a Family Movie Night. "The city is planning to expand this event this year," Byrne said.

Family Movie Night
 Bring your chairs, blankets, food and drinks
(no alcoholic beverages permitted)

Saturday, July 14th ♦ Kung Fu Panda 2
Saturday, August 4th ♦ TBA
9:00 p.m. (NEO Soccer rain location)

"Our parks truly are the gems of Parma Heights," he said, pointing out several improvements, again using grant funding and partnerships. At Radlick Park, Parks & Recreation grant funds combined with a Lowe's



Toolbox Grant, a partnership with the Parma City School District and community support have produced dramatic changes. "The Parks grant paid for the demolition of the old tennis court and creation of a walking trail. Petitti's Garden Center and several residents donated trees. Lowe's provided the materials and students from the Parma City Schools Carpentry Program built the pavilion designed by their teacher," Byrne explained.

He added that a school partnership is also evident at Kurtz Park, which now has completely remodeled bathroom facilities thanks to the hard work of the students.

Safety Department ♦ 884-9600 x37

"As your Mayor, I will always place the highest emphasis on providing a safe and secure community in which to live and raise your family. I want to assure you that I will continue to work closely with our Safety Director, Chiefs and Council to make sure our forces are properly staffed, trained and educated, as well as supplied with the necessary equipment and vehicles," stated Mayor Byrne.

Additionally, the city will soon be part of the CodeRED Emergency Communications Network which will give city officials the ability to notify residents by telephone about emergency situations or important community alerts. According to Byrne, the system is capable of sending messages to specific areas of the city or to the entire city, as needed, in the event of power outages, gas leaks, flooding or law enforcement emergencies. "In es-

sence, CodeRED creates a reverse 9-1-1 effect, allowing us to notify affected households at a speed of 1,000 calls per minute. That's almost as quickly as city officials become aware of the situation," he explained.

The CodeRED service will be free to residents who will also be offered the option of signing up for a Weather App package that would allow them to be contacted directly by the National Weather Service when a severe weather alert is issued for the city. *Sign up now for this valuable service online at www.parmaheightsoh.gov by clicking on the CodeRED icon.*



Byrne also reminded the audience that since 1998, the Parma Heights Police Department has offered "Are You OK?"; a free, confidential service for the safety of seniors, shut-ins and disabled persons. Under the "Are You OK?" program, a computer calls the subscriber at a specified time each day. Once the party answers, the computer registers that the person is all right. If the party does not answer, the computer places a follow-up call. If there is no response, a police dispatcher is alerted and will attempt to call again or reach a designated contact person. *To apply, please contact the Police Department at the number below.*

Police Department ♦ 884-1234 (non-emergency)

Unlike other communities who are laying-off officers, in 2011, the Parma Heights Police Department hired three new officers. In addition, testing is now underway in anticipation of potential retirements this summer. The Mayor said that five fully-equipped replacement cruisers were put into service in 2011, and five additional cruisers will be added this year.

Until January, 2012, the police department relied on a 40-year-old method to administer the department's payroll reporting and task scheduling. Now upgraded to a new software package, the new system will significantly reduce the time required to report payroll to the finance department and schedule manpower while increasing accuracy and efficiency.

Shared services are a hallmark of Byrne's cost-saving efforts and the Mayor reported that our police department is partnering with the Parma Police Department in four key areas: mutual response on major crime scenes, mutual response from technical accident investigators on serious accidents or fatalities, an agreement for Parma Heights to house prisoners at the Parma Justice Center and a joint Auxiliary Police Unit.

Fire Department ♦ 885-1717 (non-emergency)

“Despite budget constraints, we have never dropped below the daily minimum staffing level. In fact, during a recent study, Parma Heights ranked 2nd in Cuyahoga County for response time,” he said. This year the department will be hiring three new firefighters to replace three retirees.

“Numerous examples exist of outstanding services provided by both our Police and Fire Departments. However, many of us saw our safety forces in action firsthand during the August 16, 2011, fire at Yorktown



Lanes. Only minutes after appointing our new Safety Director, Brent Collins, the call came in. Swift action saved a family-owned icon in Parma Heights with the

fire being brought under control in approximately ten minutes,” he continued. Yorktown Lanes re-opened after over \$3 million in fire restoration and renovation. He thanked the owners, the Cottrell family, for their commitment and dedication to the City.

Senior Center ♦ 888-4416

Mayor Byrne stated that Parma Heights has a very active Senior Center located in the Educator apartment building located at 9275 North Church Drive. Under the direction of Judy McLaughlin, the center delivered 15,000 homebound meals, served nearly 17,000 meals in the lunchroom and provided over 20,000 trips with our three senior center vans.

Residents 60 years of age or older are invited to participate in the Senior Center activities and programs. Transportation services include transit to medical appointments, grocery stores, the library, local malls, businesses and restaurants. Day trips to local attractions are also offered as well as trips to the Playhouse and Cassidy Theatres. The mayor added that the city is currently working with other communities to share services and provide additional programs for seniors.

Building and Service Department ♦ 884-9607

The Mayor reported that the Building Department is made up of rental, commercial and residential property maintenance inspectors as well as a Home Foreclosure Division. The Rental Property program has been in effect since 2006. In 2011, Council passed an ordinance requiring that all foreclosed properties register with the Building Department. “This registration enables the city to better track these properties,” he said.

“Unfortunately, when I took office in 2010, reductions of staffing in the Service Department had to be made due to the budget deficit. The Service Department lost six employees through retirement and layoffs. The Service Department, as with all departments, was asked to do more with less, and they did,” Byrne said. In 2011, the department was able to hire two new service workers. Additionally, with the implementation of the automated refuse/recycling contract, two workers previously assigned to the city’s recycling truck were able to be permanently assigned to day-to-day-operations.

Byrne gave a brief summary of the new contract, noting that its adoption made Parma Heights one of the first cities in Cuyahoga County to have automated trash collection and calling it “the most efficient and cost effective system available today, saving tax dollars by reducing disposal



costs while conserving natural resources.” He reminded the audience that the new system is just beginning and the city will be there to assist them with any problems or concerns that might arise.

He noted that Acting Service Director Michelle Teresi reported increased involvement in community recycling events held at the service garage.

In June, 2012, Mayor Byrne appointed Dennis Patten as the new Service Director and former Acting Director Michelle Teresi to the position of Building, Housing and Recycling Coordinator.

Upcoming Community Recycling Events
 Parma Heights Service Garage ♦ 6184 Pearl Road:

Recycle Your Computer
 Saturday, August 25th
 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Scrap Tire Collection
 Friday, September 28th
 9:30-11:30 a.m. & 12:30-3:00 p.m.

NEW! Weekend Refuse Drop-Off
 2nd and 4th Saturdays
 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Storm Flooding

The Mayor reported that according to City Engineer Daniel Neff, the Cuyahoga County Department of Public Works (CCDPW) has inspected and maintained approximately 145,455 feet of sanitary main

lines and over 15,500 feet of storm main lines since the July, 2011 storms. Over 200 catch basins have been cleaned and repaired and the Mayor said he expects this work to continue throughout 2012. With the goal of greatly reducing infiltration of storm water to the sanitary sewer system, dampers will be added to sanitary manholes.

"I am pleased to announce that we have just obtained a grant for \$138,600 to help with a few of our sanitary sewer issues. Through a cooperative effort with the Cuyahoga County Sanitary Department and the Cuyahoga County Department of Public Works serving as the administrator for federal block grant dollars, the City of Parma Heights will be contracting to have sanitary sewers relined along portions of Blossom Avenue between Sutherland and Commonwealth, and Woodview Boulevard between Sutherland and York," he said. "The relining will help reduce storm water infiltration thereby reducing the risk of sewer backups."

The Mayor stated that the construction on Stumph Road will be completed ahead of schedule and should be done by early August, 2012. He also reported that the city has obtained a grant to assist in the reconstruction of a portion of Ackley Road from Denison to Brookmere. Work is expected to be completed in 4-6 weeks.

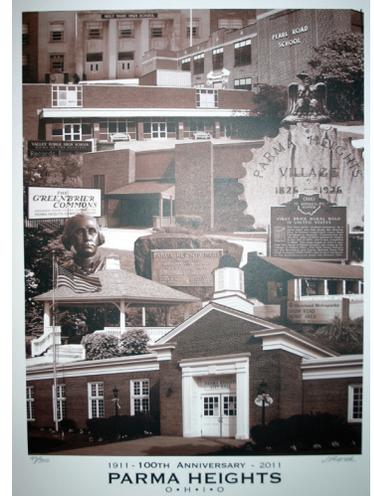
Greenbrier Crossings

The Mayor noted that his address would not be complete without an update on the Greenbrier Crossings property located at West 130th and Pearl which was sold at Sheriff's Auction to Wells Fargo Bank on January 23, 2012, for approximately \$1.8 million. The property was transferred to ATC Realty Sixteen, Inc. on February 23, 2012. The judge assigned to the foreclosure case distributed the sum of the proceeds of the sale for payment of property taxes that were due on those properties. The judge also ordered approximately \$450,000 to be held in escrow by the Sheriff of Cuyahoga County pending further order of the court. "The Service Department has been working with the land owner to have the property maintained on a regular basis. We are hopeful that we can finally have some cooperation in this respect and that it will not be necessary to go to court to make the owner comply with our codes. In the event the property owner does not work with the city in this respect, the City Prosecutor Thomas J. Kelly has been instructed by me to immediately cite the property owner to enforce city codes regarding property maintenance issues." The Mayor also reported that there is interest in the Greenbrier Crossings parcels and the Economic Development Department has been providing information and answering inquiries about the property on a regular

basis. "It is my hope that I will be able to report to you sometime this year that we are moving forward with a developer to make this property productive once again," Byrne stated.

Civic Organizations

Mayor Byrne welcomed the Greenbrier Art League back to Parma Heights and the Cassidy Theatre. He pointed out that the Parma Heights Garden Club is offering Parma Heights Cityscape posters by nationally-renowned Cleveland artist and photographer Jim Ptacek for purchase as a fundraiser for their re-greening of Parma Heights efforts. A poster is on display in Parma Heights City Hall and anyone interested in joining the Parma Heights Garden Club or making a donation to the organization is encouraged to call Kathy at (440) 888-9178.



Mayor Byrne also took a few minutes to discuss the Community Garden and the planned 9/11 Memorial, anticipated to be completed in the Fall of 2012.

In conclusion...

I want to thank you for the honor of serving as your Mayor. Parma Heights is, was, and will always be, a great city to live, work, raise a family and retire. Your safety will always be one of the most important priorities and providing you with excellent services and programs is what my administration strives for every day.

If you have a question or need assistance, do not hesitate to contact any city department at the number listed herein or feel free to contact my office at 884-9600 x15 or by email at mayoroffice@parmaheightsoh.gov.



Like our Facebook page to get valuable updates and information or visit our website at: www.parmaheightsoh.gov

YOUR ELECTED CITY COUNCIL



Ralph Kolasinski
Council President
Ward 1



Lesley DeSouza
Ward 2



JoAnn Koch
Ward 3



Marie Gallo
Ward 4



Jim McCall
Council Pro-Tem
At-Large



Anthony Stavole
At-Large



Robert Verdile
At-Large

You can reach your members of City Council at 440-884-9600 ext. 35
or e-mail council@parmaheightsoh.gov

In this Issue:

Mayor Michael P. Byrne's State of the City Address

The address can be viewed with a
Cox Cable link on the city website:

www.parmaheightsoh.gov

SUMMER BAND CONCERTS

Greenbrier Commons ♦ 6:30 p.m.

July 29th ♦ Tom Mroczka & Music Box ♦ *Polka Music*

August 5th ♦ Liverpool Lads ♦ *Beatles Music*

August 12th ♦ 147 Band ♦ *Motown Music*

August 19th ♦ Fred Sivillo ♦ *Variety Music*

August 26th ♦ Al Battistelli ♦ *Variety Music*

In the Greenbrier Commons

AUGUST 4th AND 5th

COMMONS
WEEKEND IN THE

Join us for our annual

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6281 Pearl Road
Parma Heights, Ohio 44130

Parma Heights is a Fair Housing Community

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