

## MAYOR'S MESSAGE

Craig A. Stough 8/26/2021

### "Downtown Sylvania"

Have you visited downtown Sylvania recently? I have never seen it looking better or more active!

Buildings are being restored and new businesses are moving in. The overhead lights and balloons make downtown Main Street a very special place year-round. And the flowers planted all around are beautiful.

The downtown is benefitting from the community minded efforts of many people and organizations, all lending their energy, ideas and hard work.

The Sylvania Area Chamber of Commerce, the Red Bird Arts District Downtown Sylvania, the Sylvania Arts Commission, Heritage Sylvania and all the businesses downtown have done a great job envisioning, working together and improving the downtown.

The City of Sylvania administration also sought out a talented Sylvania native to prepare an updated Downtown Market Analysis and Masterplan. Michelle Johnson grew up in Sylvania and is Director of Community Planning and Design at the Environmental Design Group.

She brought her experience about Sylvania together with experience and expertise in what makes downtowns successful for businesses, residents living there and the community as a whole.

Michelle was also chosen because of her expertise in downtown grant writing and the establishment of Tax Incremental Financing (TIF) Districts or Special Improvement Districts (SID). Those possibilities are all being explored now.

The study process took over a year and was approved last March. Downtown businesses, residents and property owners were invited to public meetings and to review the plan as it was developed and offer their ideas and input.

The study contains an analysis of the mix of downtown businesses and living opportunities, and suggests what is needed and possible to continue the recent growth and success. Five downtown areas were studied for possible redevelopment, as well as potential infill improvements. The study is available for viewing on the City's website: [CityofSylvania.com/government/publications](http://CityofSylvania.com/government/publications).

Studies such as this have occurred in Sylvania about every ten years, and have proven useful for taking stock of where we are and what the future could hold. They create discussion and ideas. The masterplans are visions and possibilities to encourage current property owners, businesses and developers to invest in downtown Sylvania.

What great progress is being made! Our downtown is thriving with new investment, new businesses, reconstruction of historic old downtown buildings and the construction of new buildings. It has become a hub of community business, cultural activities and civic pride. Just recently, downtown Sylvania was voted the Best Suburban Downtown by the Toledo City Paper.

