

ANNUAL REPORT
Craig A. Stough, Mayor

2015

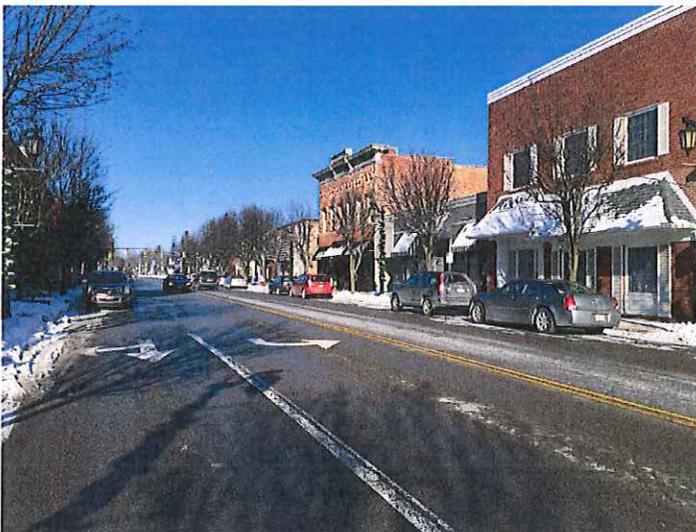
Sylvania is a great place to be! We have excellent schools, great recreation programs and venues, desirable neighborhoods and housing stock, excellent healthcare services, an active senior center, solid infrastructure and efficient city services. We are also a university town with Lourdes University. Sylvania's quality of life continues to be among the highest in the region, and quality of life is the main reason people and business come to Sylvania.

For Sylvania to remain competitive with other communities, however, we must continue improving all that the community has to offer. The City of Sylvania is nearly built-out with little undeveloped land, and is no longer an outer ring community. We are redeveloping old sites, updating our infrastructure and improving our city services while making them more efficient.

The City is also improving its "curb appeal" appearance to attract new residents and businesses with street improvements, better signage (and removing old signs), street light improvements, attractive street banners and more flowers on the streets and bridges.

The downtown continues to welcome new businesses and is growing stronger and attracting more economic activity. ProMedica completed construction of a new \$37 million Health and Wellness Center and is bringing 300 employees to the old Starlite Plaza. The new Heartland at ProMedica Comprehensive Rehabilitation and Skilled Nursing Center to replace the Lake Park care facility on the Flower Hospital campus is also opening.

Land for new development created by clearing old buildings east of the downtown hotel is being marketed and is attracting renewed interest for bringing new businesses and jobs to Sylvania. Underutilized sites around the City are being reviewed for reinvestment and redevelopment. The City purchased the First Baptist Church on South Main, on the market for over a year, to ready it for redevelopment and include it in an expanded Community Reinvestment Area.



Downtown Sylvania



ProMedica Health and Wellness Center



Heartland at ProMedica Comprehensive Rehabilitation and Skilled Nursing Center

Sylvania was fortunate to have several groundbreakings and ribbon cuttings for new facilities in our community this year. When businesses and institutions choose to locate, renovate or add to their facilities, it is a positive economic sign for our community. They will all improve our quality of life, attract new residents and provide new job opportunities. Here is a list of some of these new investments in our Sylvania community.

On August 6th, Sylvania Country Club dedicated its new aquatic center. It includes a beautiful new pool expansion, slide, toddler pool and pool house that will attract new members. Although not open to the public, it is an asset making Sylvania more competitive with other communities.

On August 12th, I was privileged to attend the groundbreaking ceremony for the new Toledo – Lucas County Library Branch at King Road and Sylvania Avenue. It will be the first new library branch in the library system since 1984 and promises to be a great asset to the Sylvania community. It will offer the newest in library technology and services in a beautiful new building. When the new library branch opens in about a year, Sylvania will have a library branch near each high school.

The new artificial turf, field lights and scoreboard at Northview High School Stadium were dedicated on August 26th. This is a wonderful cooperative project of the Sylvania Schools and Lourdes University to provide a collegiate quality field in Sylvania. Not just a football field, it also has been widened for a full 75 yard wide soccer field and also lacrosse. The artificial turf will safely allow much more play in all weather conditions.

Lourdes University had a groundbreaking for its new Recreation Center on September 2nd. The new building is being built on the Lourdes Mid-Campus between McCord Road and Convent. It will include a 1,000 seat arena as well as a variety of health and recreation rooms to attract new students and athletes. Lourdes continues to grow as a great asset for the Sylvania Community.

Lastly, funding and schedule was finalized for the extension of the River Trail from Harroun Road to Monroe Street to be bid and construction started in 2016. Thanks to Flower Hospital for providing \$400,000 in funding for this project.

All in all, the future looks bright for Sylvania! Sylvania is a great place for families and businesses!



New Aquatic Center at Sylvania Country Club



New Sylvania King Road Branch Library now under construction



Proposed Lourdes University Recreation Center

2015 Capital Improvement Projects

The City of Sylvania completed several capital improvement projects during 2015. Some were financed in part by State of Ohio grant funds. All were publicly bid or utilize State of Ohio pre-bid term prices to take advantage of the competitive prices available. No tax increases or property owner assessments were made. All of these projects improved Sylvania and help keep our community one of the best places to live and work in northwest Ohio.

Residential Street Microsurfacing

- \$213,120 construction costs utilizing Ohio Department of Transportation Cooperative Program to provide pavement rehabilitation on approximately 3.5 miles of residential streets. Microsurfacing consists of applying a polymer-modified asphalt emulsion based resurfacing material to the existing pavement surface. This application will provide a hard wearing surface on structurally sound pavements with the primary goal of extending pavement life by covering cracks, stop unraveling, reduce water infiltration and oxidation deterioration. Suitable streets in the Grove Bel Estates, Little Farms (Plat One), Eaglewood (Plat One, Two and Three), Highland Meadows Park (Plats 3, 5 and 6) neighborhoods were completed.

Erie Street Waterline Replacement – updated undersized section just west of Monroe Street - \$175,620.

Downtown Main Street Midblock Crosswalk Replacement - \$20,000.

Harroun Park Erosion Control - \$82,000 (100% grant funds).



Storm water and erosion control project at Harroun Park

Water System Improvements

A water system leak detection investigation was completed on 87 miles of main water lines and 130 miles of service lines. You may have seen the testing company driving around the community, sometimes on a golf cart. A listening device was connected to 1,269 fire hydrants and 875 valves.

Seventeen leaks were detected varying in size from 2 ounces per minute to 35 gallons per minute. That is very good for a municipal water system the size of Sylvania's, perhaps in part because our system is relatively new compared to many systems.

None of the leaks were detectable above ground, but were located and repaired. The net savings to the City as a result of the repairs is estimated to be \$89,000 annually.

The City will continue daily monitoring of our water meters, both on the purchased side and on the sold side, and determine when new leaks develop and need repair in the future.

Area Mayors Meet to Discuss Water

Several area mayors met September 3rd in Perrysburg to discuss current water treatment and delivery systems, water crisis preparation plans, and options available for future water sources and treatment. The meeting proved to be a frank discussion of the water challenges facing the Toledo metropolitan area and the opportunities to make water a regional asset to attract new businesses, jobs and residents.

The meeting was the second in a series of mayor's forums hosted by Perrysburg Mayor Michael Olmstead, and followed up on issues discussed at the initial forum on June 22nd. The meeting was well attended including the mayors of Toledo, Maumee, Sylvania, Holland, Bowling Green, Whitehouse, the administrator of Oregon and two Lucas County Commissioners. Several area service directors and treatment plant operators were also in attendance.

Following the August 2014 water crisis, Mayor Olmstead led a discussion about Perrysburg's and other communities' preparations for future "Do Not Drink" water emergencies. Communities reported having bottled water reserves, portable water purification systems and emergency water distribution plans. As the summer wound down, a toxic algae event becomes less likely, however, households should always be prepared with a bottled drinking water supply in the event of any emergency.

The heart of the forum discussion was reports of the various water studies underway in the region. TMACOG is overseeing a water rate study expected to be complete this fall for the City of Toledo that will project water costs in three scenarios – if all current customers of Toledo remain, if Toledo loses suburban customers, and if Toledo becomes part of a regional water system. All suburban contracts are set to expire in the next 10 to 15 years, and some customers are leaving, such as Waterville choosing to buy water from the City of Bowling Green.

The Wood County Economic Development Corporation has a study underway to review water service throughout Wood County, with the study expected to be complete later this year. Fulton County is studying switching its water supplier from Toledo to the City of Archbold.

Finally, the City of Sylvania has a study underway to update a 1998 cost projection for building a separate water intake and treatment facility in southeast Michigan on a site and right-of-way previously acquired following the 1998 study. A number of area communities are contributing to the cost of the study. The study will estimate the cost of three possible scenarios: a Sylvania only system, a southeast Michigan and western Lucas County system, and as part of a regional system including Toledo. The study is scheduled for completion in early 2016.

Water should be a regional asset attracting jobs and residents from areas of the country facing water shortages. Instead, the August, 2014 Toledo water crisis gave our region a black eye for water not safe to drink. The studies underway are looking to provide cost efficiencies and treatment redundancy in our water supply so we no longer face "Do Not Drink" water emergencies.



Maumee Mayor Rich Carr, Lucas County Commissioner Tina Skeldon-Wozniak, Sylvania Mayor Craig Stough, Whitehouse Mayor Angela Kuhn, Perrysburg Mayor Michael Olmstead, Toledo Mayor Paula Hicks-Hudson, Lucas County Commissioner Peter Gerken, Holland Mayor Mike Yunker

Residents Signing Up for Emergency Alerts

During mid-January, the City of Sylvania partnered with Lucas County and launched an electronic emergency alert system that issues text messages and/or emails about Sylvania emergencies and other events to registered subscribers. As of late January, over 400 phone numbers and emails had been registered.

The alert system is free and offered to anyone choosing to opt in, whether they are Sylvania residents, business owners, community visitors or whoever. The City of Sylvania has joined with Lucas County and other local communities for this new system of electronic emergency alerts.

Public sign-up is available by visiting www.lucascountyalerts.com and entering your name and desired contact information. Scroll to the listing for the City of Sylvania and make your selections for which categories of notices you wish to receive. When residents enroll they can sign up for Sylvania-specific notices, including notifications about boil and water advisories, street closures, events and other Sylvania emergencies.

Lucas County Alerts will also provide public notification for countywide emergencies to include, but not limited to snow emergencies, tornadoes and amber alerts. Lucas County Alerts supplements other current emergency warning methods such as the outdoor warning sirens, the television emergency alert system, and tone-activated weather radios.

The City of Sylvania is partnering with Lucas County, City of Toledo, City of Oregon, Village of Whitehouse, Monclova Township, Springfield Township and Sylvania Township for these community alerts. Community alerts go beyond emergency alerts, providing our residents community information about road closures, leaf pick up, trash schedules, etc.

The partnership between local communities and Lucas County provides an efficient and cost effective system for the County and local communities to keep their residents informed. The cost for Sylvania to participate in the county system is \$2,500 annually. The cost is low because it is shared among all participating communities. The August water crisis, where residents around metro Toledo were instructed not to drink the water for more than two days because of an algae-related toxin, is exactly the kind of emergency this alert system will help with quick notifications and updates.

I encourage all interested Sylvania residents to sign-up. There is no cost to do so, and the alerts you receive may help keep your family safer and more prepared.

Wonderful October Weekend

Beautiful weather and excellent planning lead to a wonderful Fall Festival on October 18th in downtown Sylvania. Thousands of residents and visitors filled Main Street for the 29th Annual Fall Festival, including our guests from Sylvania's Sister City of Woodstock, Ontario.

The Fall Festival Parade was spectacular. Both the Northview and Southview Marching Bands participated, appearing in Halloween costumes in lieu of their regular band uniforms. Many children walked in the parade, also in Halloween costumes or with twirling groups, cheer groups or others. The Shriner miniature cars were in the parade, as were two camels and horses, and many more floats and vehicles.

Lourdes University President David Livingston served as Grand Marshal. Lourdes held its first Homecoming celebration the same weekend, with student representatives also riding in the parade.

Many booths were open along the parade route in downtown Sylvania. Food vendors, church groups, levy groups, candidates, retailers, etc. rented the spaces, which added to the festive atmosphere and also helped raise funds for the Sylvania Area Sister City Commission.

The Sylvania Sister City Commission was the sponsoring and planning agency again this year, and what a wonderful job they did. My congratulations and thanks to them all, especially Michelle Atkinson, John Bolster and Katie Cappellini for organizing the parade and festival activities.

The Sister City Commission also welcomed representatives from Woodstock, Ontario, including Woodstock Fire Chief Scott Teglar, and hosted them at a Sister City Dinner on Saturday night. The Sylvania Southview Marching Band will be traveling to Woodstock to march in their annual Santa Claus Parade on Saturday evening, November 21st. Our high school marching bands are always warmly welcomed in Woodstock and are a great addition to their parade.

Also on Sunday, I was privileged to attend the Dedication Ceremony, hosted by the Sylvania Community Arts Commission, for the new ceramic mural in front of City Hall. The mural depicts animal and plant life in the Oak Savannah areas of Sylvania and Lucas County.

The mural was commissioned by the Arts Commission and created by Sylvania Franciscan Sister Jane Mary Sorosiak. This beautiful piece of art will be a part of our community's public art for many years to come. Thank you to the Arts Commission and to Sister Jane Mary for their wonderful efforts creating this unique artwork in downtown Sylvania, and also to the Stansley family for their help building the mural wall.



New ceramic mural created by Sister Jane Mary Sorosiak

Regulating Charitable Donation Containers

Many of you had probably noticed the growing number of charitable donation containers appearing around the City of Sylvania in some of the large retail center parking lots. Based on their growing numbers, the lack of maintenance of some of them, resident complaints about their appearance and the complaints of the parking lot owners, Sylvania City Council is considering legislation to regulate and control the donation containers.

City Council's efforts began in 2014 in the Zoning and Annexation Committee as the donation container complaints increased. The Committee reviewed the appearance concerns as well as concerns that the containers pose a health risk and fire hazard as they overflow with items and become a dumping area for old mattresses, furniture and trash.

Moving forward, the Committee contacted many of the donation container owners and solicited input about their organization, donation process and container maintenance. Many of the containers are operated by charitable organizations, but some are operated for profit. Some of the containers are well maintained and serviced regularly, while others are not.

The Committee also heard from representatives of Kroger and Starlite Plaza that some of the containers have been placed on their parking lots without permission. In Kroger's case, some container owners ignored Kroger's request to remove their containers.

In response, legislation was approved in 2015 creating Chapter 1167 – Charitable Donation Containers in the City's Code to regulate the containers. All unattended containers, other than on school, church or community center property with the owner's permission, must be registered and pay an annual \$100 fee. Placing containers without registering them will result in a \$250 impoundment fee plus \$20 per day while impounded.

Further, the containers cannot exceed four cubic yards in size and can be no nearer than 200 feet to residential dwellings. Container owners must provide regular maintenance and clean-up around the containers to remove trash as well as donation items left outside the containers. The legislation permits only one donation container per property.

Sylvania Welcomes Marathon Classic LPGA

This year's tournament was held July 16th through 19th with pro-am events scheduled earlier in the week. The LPGA brought thousands of fans and media representatives into Sylvania. Our local restaurants, shops, and hotel benefit from the many visitors to our community.

The tournament also greatly benefits local charities serving Sylvania and Lucas County. Over the years, the LPGA tournament has raised over \$8.7 million for 140 northwest Ohio and southeast Michigan children's charities. This year's tournament benefited 20 area children's charities.

The tournament has become a highlighted stop on the LPGA tour. It was voted 5th favorite of all the stops. The purse has grown substantially to \$1,500,000. All four rounds of this year's tournament will be televised live in the U.S. and 160 countries around the world by The Golf Channel.

The tournament has become a huge event in Northwest Ohio/Southeast Michigan attracting over 70,000 spectators. The Marathon Classic will once again provide free admittance to all active police officers, firefighters and military personnel along with one guest. Kids under the age of 17 were also admitted free into the tournament as long as they were accompanied by an adult.

Highland Meadows Golf Club, the sponsors and the over 1,000 volunteers and sponsors that make the LPGA tournament a success every year deserve our thanks. The members of Highland Meadows have hosted the LPGA since 1990 and the course and facilities are always in great shape. Local residents and golf fans donate thousands of hours for hole marshalling and the many jobs that must be done well for a successful tournament.

Sylvania prides itself on being a great place to live, work and raise a family, and the LPGA Tournament helps enliven and enrich the lives of our residents every year. The tournament brings the excitement of national attention to our community. Our residents are treated to competitive golf at the highest level. And our young people see first-hand from world class athletes that hard work and practice can lead to success.