

## MAYOR'S MESSAGE

Craig A. Stough 1/17/2019

### "City of Sylvania Update"

Recently I had the opportunity to speak at the Sylvania Area Chamber of Commerce January luncheon and give an update about the City of Sylvania, and would like to share the same information with you.

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. 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.

In order to remain competitive with newer, outer ring communities, we have ongoing programs to improve all that Sylvania has to offer, including quality neighborhoods, City services and infrastructure, community appearance, and our downtown. The City of Sylvania is nearly built-out with little undeveloped land, so we are helping to identify and redevelop old or underutilized sites. Two new residential developments are under construction on McCord Road and on Alexis Road.

Construction of Phase II of the River Trail has been completed with more than 2/3 funded by State of Ohio grants, and provides a walking/biking path connecting east and west Sylvania under US 23. We also used State grants to rebuild Main Street with a new streetscape and replace aging utilities north of Ten Mile Creek to Monroe Street. Sylvania Avenue between McCord and King Roads will be repaved this year in cooperation with Lucas County. We also have a new library on King Road, and the existing library on Monroe Street has been expanded and remodeled.

A wonderful synergy of the Chamber of Commerce, Sylvania Arts Commission, Redbird Downtown Sylvania Association and Heritage Sylvania, continues to make for a vibrant downtown and attract new business and community interest. We have Art Festivals, a Fall Festival, a weekly Farmers Market and Art Walks held the first Friday of each month. Vacant buildings have been sold to new owners for redevelopment, including Fiddle Stix and Inside the Five Brewery. And thanks to the Sylvania Area Chamber of Commerce for their vision and investment in the beautiful decorative lighting over Main Street.

Land for new development created by clearing old buildings east of the downtown hotel has been marketed for redevelopment and City Council has unanimously accepted a purchase offer from Republic Development to construct 206 luxury apartments with parking below, in total a \$36 million investment. With Port Authority funding in place, the property sale is expected to close this month and construction begin this summer.

The 2019 City Operating Budget is balanced with no services cut, no employees laid off and no taxes raised. Operations have been made more efficient, overtime has been reduced and equipment life has been extended. Income tax receipts continue to rise slowly, but steadily, as businesses continue to grow and move into Sylvania.

We are already preparing for the 2020 census. Our numbers will be up with the City perhaps over 20,000 and the Township over 30,000. People want to come to Sylvania to live and invest. That has raised our property values by 14%, higher than anywhere else in the area.

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

