

# Aurora

From the Mayor's Office



Dec. 2016



## Need a ride?

The city has a great new amenity, Aurora Transportation Program, which provides transportation to Aurora seniors and adults with disabilities for medical appointments and routine errands. It began operating the first week in July and has become very popular. As of the end of November we had 45 applicants signed up and provided 188 scheduled trips. The program is free for locations within Aurora; \$5 each way for distances 10 miles or fewer; and \$8 each way for distances greater than 10 miles. Travel for routine errands and other events may be to locations within a 10 mile radius, and travel to medical appointments may be to locations within a 20 mile radius and

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## Happy Holidays!

Dear Neighbor,

So many thanks for your 76% support for the Fire-EMS levy renewal that was on the November ballot! This will help maintain the quality of equipment and service which our Aurora Fire Department is proud to provide under the incomparable leadership of Chief David Barnes. The \$880,000 generated by the levy funds five full-time firefighter/paramedics, rescue vehicles, and equipment including medical equipment.

Many of you have noticed the building going on around Aurora, whether it is the very obvious building at the 43/82 intersection – a new Starbucks – or in The Lakes or on west 82. The Starbucks should open in early spring, and Forest Ridge on 82 should soon be approved to build a model home. Just so you know, city departments, committees and I closely scrutinize proposed development in our city and hold builders and developers accountable on many levels. Appearance, infrastructure, traffic and stormwater impact are some of my key concerns, and detailed documents and plans have to go through multiple re-

views before a project can begin. We also keep our wonderful schools advised of anticipated residential growth for their own planning. I take the impact on our overall community very seriously as



Ann Womer Benjamin

**Aurora was approached by several communities to handle their dispatching services.**

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we carefully balance the opportunities which growth can provide with preserving the charm, character and historic beauty of Aurora. Ultimately, people really like to come here!

We are in an exciting time in Aurora, with many improvements being implemented and opportunities being seized. Our strong business community provides important financial support for key projects through its tax revenue to the city. I expect the outdoor recreation site at Hartman to move forward in a more visible way next year, sidewalk installation will continue, and we will work on our beautiful Town Center to make it more visible, vibrant and attractive.

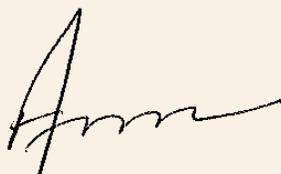
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Mayor's Letter continued from page 1

As we brainstorm improvements in the Town Center, we are mindful of the consistent Master Plan admonition to address parking, district identity, and connectivity to help the Town Center reach its potential as a "City destination and gathering place." The expansion of off-street parking at Kiwanis Moore Park, installation of walkways and sidewalks, the creation of a new Pioneer Park with the historic Deed House, and the expansion of the Aurora School of Music and the opening of the 1815 Tavern have gone a long

way toward meeting some of these issues. With the renovation and growth of the beautiful Aurora Inn at the northern end of Chillicothe's Historic District to anchor that gateway, we expect to work on Town Center and Historic District improvements in the coming year. There are a lot of exciting projects ahead!

With thanks for your partnership,



Ann Womer Benjamin,  
Mayor of Aurora



Changes at the state level to consolidate 911 services along with increasing costs for dispatching agencies have caused smaller communities to explore options including combining services. You might remember that Aurora was proactive and opted to purchase a new 911 system late last year to preserve our 911 service. This year Aurora was approached by several communities to handle their dispatching services and now provides dispatching services for Community EMS servicing Garrettsville, Freedom Township and Nelson Township; and for Garrettsville Fire Department, and Hiram Police and Fire Departments. There is no cost to Aurorans because the city is charging for these services and has added part-time staff to manage the coverage. Aurora residents still receive the high quality service expected, and Aurora is in a stronger position to retain its own 911 services in the event the state compels further consolidation.

**Need a ride? continued from page 1**

including Hillcrest Hospital and University Suburban Health Center. The service is not available for residents in nursing, assisted living or retirement facilities. **For more information about the program or to register contact the City of Aurora Transportation Program at 330-995-8795.**

## What is a Master Plan?

This next year the city will embark on its Charter-mandated five-year update of the Aurora Master Plan. A master plan is a long-range plan for a community showing an overall development concept that includes structural design, landscaping, infrastructure, service provision, and present and future land use, and serves as a guide for the city in future land use decisions.

I recently appointed, with Council's confirmation, nine citizen representatives to a Master Plan Review Commission (MPRC) to review and update Aurora's Master Plan: Jennifer Stanley (Ward 3), Shannon Keibler (Ward 4), Joan Tomko (Ward 6), Dale Moravec (Ward 2), Matt Gilm-

ore (Ward 4), Evan Webster (Ward 2), Nicholas Austin (Ward 2), Laura Stith (Ward 5), and Lucy Zarmy (Ward 1). These individuals are not on any other city committees and will bring fresh perspectives to the discussion. With input from the Mayor and administration, City Council, the Planning Commission and the public, the panel will examine and outline recommended land use for the next twenty years, address existing and projected problems with city development and provide suggested solutions to resolve them. The MPRC will forward its recommendations within the year to the city's Planning Commission and then to City Council for final consideration.

# My office is open!

Thank you for your comments, thoughts and ideas. Please feel free to stop by, contact my office at City Hall at

330-995-9126 or email [mayor@auroraoh.com](mailto:mayor@auroraoh.com). Together, let's keep Aurora moving in the right direction!



Dick Bliss received a city proclamation from the Mayor for being inducted into the National Wrestling Hall of Fame.

Aurora's successful audit merited the Auditor of State's Clean Audit award which the Mayor received from Jim Armeni, the Eastern Regional Liaison for Auditor Dave Yost.



Mayor with Attorney General Mike DeWine who spoke at 3Chamber Luncheon.



Jack Burge, Diana Fierle and Brad Ehrhart of Portage Development Board and Mayor visited with Christopher Gilmore, President of Godfrey & Wing, Inc., as part of the Mayor's regular outreach to the business community.



Mayor and Girl Scout Troop #90222 enjoyed discussion and cupcakes in her office at City Hall.



Mayor spoke at the Veterans Day ceremony at Veterans Memorial Park.



In October Ms. Skonieczny's 2nd grade class at Craddock Elementary School hosted the Mayor as guest reader.



U.S. Senator Rob Portman visited Aurora on July 4th for the second year in a row, touring the city including the renovated Deed House.

## Message from Council

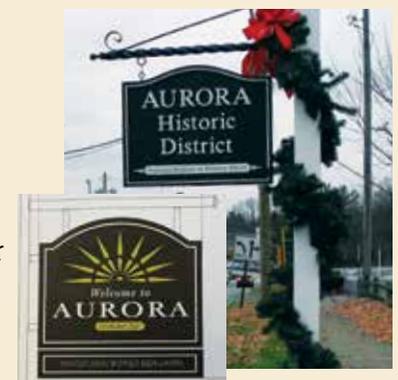
by Councilman John Kudley

American democracy is resilient and has withstood such political tests as the recent heated presidential election. Know that such "politics" are not part of the operation of the City of Aurora. While the members of the administration and Council may have political party affiliations, governmental discussions, deliberations, and decisions are free of political party platforms. The Mayor and the nine Council members are voted upon in non-partisan elections. And, while people may attempt to identify a member as a Democrat, Republican, or Independent, the members have never made their affiliation an issue. What works best at the local level is not political rhetoric but a true and pervasive desire on the part of your elected officials to rise above politics and work diligently to maintain a community that has outstanding schools, is attractive to business, is thoughtfully planned and developed, has excellent safety forces, and is proud of its historical heritage.

## A New Face for the City

New city signs welcoming residents and visitors to the community are expected to be installed in the spring. They will be placed on State Route 82 at the Twinsburg and Mantua borders, State Route 43 at the Bainbridge and Streetsboro borders, and State Route 306 at the Bainbridge border. The signs have a look comparable to new Historic District signs that were placed earlier this year. Look

for those at the entrances of the designated Historic District areas on 43, 82, 306 and Pioneer Trail.



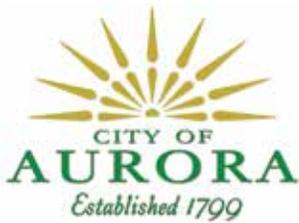


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44202

Mayor Ann Womer Benjamin  
130 S. Chillicothe Road  
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## Connecting the Community

## Keep in Touch!

Please call me at 330-995-9123,  
or email me at [mayor@auroraoh.com](mailto:mayor@auroraoh.com).  
Thank you for working with us!

**Police/Fire Emergency** – 911

**City Hall** – 330-562-6131

**City Council** – 330-995-9125

**Mayor's Office** – 330-995-9126

**Parks & Recreation** – 330-562-4333

**Planning, Zoning & Building** – 330-562-9564

**Service** – 330-995-9116

**Water & Utilities** – 330-995-9109



Photo taken by Jeff Gerber

## Coming Up...



In March 2016, the Ohio Department of Natural Resources announced that Aurora was officially chosen to host the 2017 Tree City USA Ceremony. The event, scheduled for May 10 at the Bertram Inn, is expected to draw over 200 representatives from cities across northeast Ohio who will come to Aurora to participate in the ceremony and spend the day in our community.

The city is continuing its efforts to improve connectivity with more than 3,000 feet of new sidewalks expected to be installed along portions of S. Chillicothe Road. Our progress depends on the ability to get easements from homeowners and, of course, the weather.

We also continue to work with Portage Parks, northern Portage communities, and Solon in an effort to connect a hike and bike trail, and we are contracting for engineering work for a path connecting the former golf course trail to E. Pioneer Trail.