

Aurora

From the Mayor's Office



Dec.
2018



Business Growth Continues

Economic Development Director Jack Burge and I visit businesses in Aurora regularly to make sure they have what they need to remain strong in our community. This year a number of them have indicated positive revenue growth: one operations manager said recently that his company had experienced the best October in years, and another business owner indicated that his business was up 20% in 2018. Others have added or are adding shifts and contemplating expansions in Aurora. This year Aurora is welcoming Trelleborg, the Swedish company that is consolidating its U.S. operations in Aurora with a brand new facility in the industrial park, and most of you have seen by now the phenomenal facility McMaster-Carr has constructed on south 43 to provide warehouse and distribution space. Aurora business is thriving!

Dear Neighbor,

Paddock River Preserve, pictured in the banner, is the new name for the beautiful acreage on Trails End that once was a golf course. In 1943 Harold "Pappy" Paddock acquired the Aurora Country Club and worked to improve the design and layout of the course and clubhouse to increasing popularity. At the time, Mr. Paddock operated a Moreland Hills course and was a renowned golf architect. So with a nod to the wonderful history of the property and the recent restoration of the river that runs through it, the Paddock River Preserve will be a landmark to be enjoyed for years to come. We hope to dedicate the

park sometime this spring.

Wet and chilly weather prevented the park dedication this fall, pushing paving well into November and curtailed the completion of our planned E. Pioneer lane addition in front of the Library. Paving is particularly tricky because asphalt plants



Ann Womer Benjamin

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Your Council Members are George Horvat, President; Reva Barner; Kathi Grandillo; Harold Hatridge; Denny Kovach; John Kudley; Amy McDougald; Jim Vaca; and Scott Wolf.

Read their message on page 3

2019 Budget Before Council

The proposed budget for next year was presented to Council in November and proposed General Fund expenditures are 4.45% less than last year's budget. The budget includes almost \$7 million in funding for critical projects on the horizon, including water line engineering, two new culverts, further stormwater measures for Geauga Lake, and engineering for dam improvements at Sunny Lake.

But fun things are included as well, such as sidewalks – adding to our 6,000+ feet of new sidewalks installed in the last five years – new playground and skate park equipment, and further improvements to Hartman Park such as restrooms and pavilions.

The city is also planning for the future in this budget, providing funding for a second salt dome to house a more reliable supply of winter

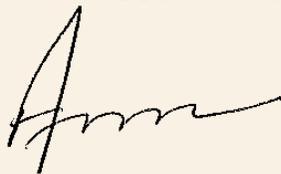
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usually close in November, so our paving contractor worked evenings to get the work done. Paving was also an issue with the E. Pioneer project, because if we had allowed the digging to begin in November, we were risking that paving would not have been completed before the plants closed for the winter. Therefore, after much consideration, the city and contractor agreed to postpone the project to June, after school is out, and the city received a credit from the contractor since the job was not done on schedule. The city continues to do pothole repair throughout the winter, so please let us know when you see something that needs attention.

Meanwhile, leaves came down all of a sudden in a windy storm, and then of course it snowed, so the city has been dividing its trucks between snow plowing and leaf pick up. Once again weather impacts what we can do, so your patience is appreciated.

I hope you will be able to enjoy our many parks during the winter, since winter and snow provide a beautiful landscape in which to enjoy nature. Happy holidays to all!



Ann Womer Benjamin,
Mayor of Aurora

Truck & Tractor Night/National Night Out Draws Crowd



A large crowd watched as Metro Life Flight landed in Aurora.

City of Aurora Safety Forces and Parks and Recreation Department joined forces on Tuesday, August 7th to present a wonderful event at Kiwanis-Moore Park. Truck & Tractor Night, a family favorite that offers a close-up look at trucks, tractors, and safety vehicles, combined with National Night Out, an annual, nationwide campaign to enhance the relationship between neighbors and safety forces in the community. Over 800 community members enjoyed a cookout, entertainment, and raffle prizes. Highlights included a visit by Life Flight, tours of the Aurora Police Department, bounce houses and music. Mark your calendars for this event to return next summer on Tuesday, August 6th.

News On Sludge

Aurora operates two wastewater treatment plants for the city's sanitary sewer system which are in need of significant modernization, highlighted in a report prepared by Stantec last year. While noting that both plants should be able to serve Aurora into the future, Stantec stated that the critical

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OPPOSE THE POLES!

Residents should be aware of FirstEnergy's plans to acquire the Norfolk Southern Railroad right-of-way ("ROW") and install 70-foot-tall transmission towers across Aurora. The city is OPPOSING this project that would deface our beautiful city, impacting Spring Hill Park, the Aurora Audubon Sanctuary, Paddock River Preserve, historic homes on Route 82, the historic Station District, the Oaks, Route 306 homes, Barrington, Tara and the Villas. The company has not demonstrated the need for these towers and has balked at alternate routes, burying the lines, or other less intrusive upgrades.

FirstEnergy has indicated that it will hold a meeting early in 2019 to gather public opinion, and we hope that residents will come out in force to oppose this plan which would change Aurora forever.



Always Moving Forward



The Mayor, Council President George Horvat, Councilman Scott Wolf and city employees worked the concession stand and cheered the Greenmen on to victory during City of Aurora Night at Veterans Stadium.



The Mayor, Economic Development Director Jack Burge and Portage Development Board President Brad Ehrhart checked in with Godfrey & Wing President Chris Gilmore recently.



Ralph Lauren had a grand re-opening in October at Aurora Premium Outlets.

The Mayor helped Mike and Monika DelCiello cut the ribbon at their restaurant's grand opening in August.



The Mayor was a guest at the Villas Homeowners Association summer party.



Lt. Marotta, Captain Sharp, Mayor, Chief Barnes, Fire Fighter Sirk and Assistant Chief McBirney are pictured at a recent fire promotion ceremony.

Officer Vickie Yendriga, Fire Chief Barnes, Mayor and Economic Development Director Jack Burge tended the booth at the Fall Festival and Business Showcase.



Longtime Aurora resident and Korean War Air Force veteran Ronald Paul Tomallo, father of Councilwoman Kathi Grandillo, received a certificate of recognition and pin from Major James Law of the Mansfield National Guard at Independence Village's Veterans Day celebration.



Cub Scout Pack #3269 visited Aurora City Hall in pursuit of the Arrow of Light badge.

Message from Council

*George Horvat, President
Aurora City Council*

Seasons Greetings!

It's hard to believe another year is almost over. It has been a very busy and productive year for Council, starting with the approval of a new Master Plan at the beginning of the year.

We saw many longtime city employees retire, and they will be sorely missed, but we were very fortunate to have added new employees and directors who will continue to provide the excellent service that we have all come to expect.

There were many new developments and businesses that opened in the city too numerous to mention, many park improvements and upgrades and an extremely busy activity schedule for all residents.

As Council Members, we are honored to work for you, the citizens of Aurora, in conjunction with the Mayor and her administration. We wish all of you a wonderful holiday season and a very Happy New Year.

Making Progress at Hartman Farm

It was a busy construction season on Town Line Road! Phase Two of the Hartman Farm project includes adding two soccer fields, four ballfields, and a large gravel parking area to the southern portion of the 127-acre property. The weather dampened efforts to complete the seeding of the fields this year, but the contractor will return in early spring to finish this phase of the exciting recreation project. Weather permitting, we look to move recreational soccer onto the three new soccer fields this

spring. Baseball teams could be playing on the new ballfields as early as next fall, when cross country enthusiasts can also look forward to the introduction of the first official course in Aurora. Plans are underway on the north side to continue improvements to a living tree museum that will include a walking tour of over 400 species of trees. We appreciate your support as we work to develop this property into a first-class park and recreation facility that will make our community proud.



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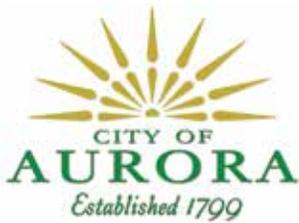
Cable 9



COMMUNITY FOCUS

Cable 9 is now known as Community Focus, which provides over 100 hours of weekly programming on Spectrum channel 1021 including the Aurora Mayor's monthly interview and City Council meetings.

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Thank you for working with us!

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Photo taken by Jeff Gerber

2019 Budget Before Council
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salt, bringing IT services in-house to better address the city's growing technological needs, and moving salaries from the Fire Levy Fund to build that fund up for future capital investments in the Fire Department. Overall, this budget balances needs and wants to continue providing the amenities and reliable infrastructure that Aurora residents and businesses expect and deserve.

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need is "to replace outdated equipment." A phased plan for these improvements has been developed, the first focusing on sludge.

To help fund these critical upgrades, the city is considering a sewer rate increase of 4%; the sewer rate has not been increased since 2010. To help fund ongoing capital improvements in water – such as new water lines – the city is also considering a \$5.00 water capital fee increase. The last water rate increase not directly tied to Portage County increases was in 2012. These increases would only affect sewer and water users.