



The City of Parma

NEWSLETTER

Ongoing projects and economic growth move Parma forward

By Tim DeGeeter



This past February, local broadcaster Dick Russ interviewed me again for my annual State of the City, which was held at our Donna Smallwood Activities Center. During the recorded interview, we covered infrastructure, economic development, environmental initiatives, the new golf course event center and clubhouse, as well as other important city matters.

I was pleased to report the city continues to see a reduction in flooding

due to our partnership with Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District and the work of our city engineers. Between 2023 and 2025, NEORSD is investing more than \$30 million in stormwater and sewer projects. For details, turn to page 10.

We continue to make improvements to waterlines through Cleveland Water's Suburban Water Main Renewal Program and to major roads through partnerships with Ohio Department of Transportation and Cuyahoga County Department of Public Works. Also, our Service Department is spending more than \$5 million on repairs of 40 neighborhood roads during the 2024 and 2025 repaving seasons. Read pages 10 and 11 to learn more.

The local economy is doing well. We have growth in all sectors: health care, manufacturing, retail, restaurants and the service industry. General Motors keeps investing in new equipment at the plant. Another major employer, UH Parma Medical Center, has completed its multi-million-dollar expansion and continues to provide award-winning service.

Additionally, the city has set the stage for major new retail tenants to fill some vacancies in shopping centers. As always, we meet with developers and retailers and offer competitive incentives to bring their businesses to Parma.

Last fall, Be Inspired Sweet Treats, a specialty candy shop, opened at 6137 Ridge Road. National drive-through coffee chain 7 Brew literally dropped into place at 1075 West Pleasant Valley Road on May 20 and will open this summer. ALDI will be moving into the former Save A Lot store on Ridge Road with plans to open its 22,235-square-foot grocery store this fall. Also, First Watch restaurant and McAlister's Deli will be taking over the former 1.8-acre YMCA property on Ridge Road.

These new businesses are adding to our growing selection of grocery stores, shops, restaurants and culinary options, which is why I often refer to Parma as a foodie town.

Regarding environmental initiatives, West Creek Conservancy transferred nearly 100 acres of restored land to Cleveland Metroparks. The former Parmadale campus and Padua soccer fields will become part of West Creek Reservation's trail network. West Creek Conservancy's Executive Director Derek Schafer offers more details on page 12. He and Service Department Director Tony Vannello also provide insight on our reforestation of Walters Grove Park on page 9.

As we enter summer, many residents have inquired about plans for the new Ridgewood Golf Course event center and clubhouse. Parma City Council approved the architectural designs of the 15,400-square-foot facility (see page 14), which will year-round serve everyone, not just golfers. We are hoping to break ground in late summer or early fall. I will update residents on the progress of this major economic development project in the next newsletter.



Local broadcaster Dick Russ interviewed me for my State of the City.

I hope to see residents enjoying our two additional pickleball courts this summer and families taking advantage of the three new playgrounds in our parks. I am looking forward to our dedication of the new Ridgewood Basin at Anthony Zielinski Park, 11 a.m., Saturday, Aug. 3. The fencing will be down, and we will see the new layout. Save the back page of this issue to remember this event and all our upcoming events.

James Blair takes command of Parma Police Department



Mayor Tim DeGeeter swears in James Blair as new police chief.

In late February, James Blair was sworn in as Parma's new chief of police. He took over for Joseph Bobak, who retired in early February.

Blair has worked in the Parma Police Department for 32 years. He has served as a shift sergeant, traffic unit sergeant, shift commander and detective lieutenant and commanded the department's Administrative Division and Patrol Division.

Before becoming Parma's 10th police chief, Blair served as deputy chief for four years. He holds a bachelor's degree in criminal justice from Tiffin University. He is a 2007 graduate of Police Executive Leadership College and 2008 graduate of Northwestern University's School of Police Staff and Command. He is also a 2015 graduate of the Certified Law Enforcement Executive Program and a 2016 graduate of the FBI National Academy in Quantico, Va.

"I am proud of our selection," Mayor Tim DeGeeter said. "Chief Blair has already faced some challenges since starting

in his new role and has done an excellent job."

The city's selection committee included DeGeeter, Parma Safety Director Bob Coury and Strongsville Police Chief Thomas O'Deens.

"Blair was a logical choice. He was an excellent deputy chief," Coury said. "This has been a seamless transition."

Blair now oversees all department responsibilities, as well as 109 full-time officers and 10 special officers.

"I would not be in this position if it weren't for the hard work and support of all the members of the Parma Police Department," Blair said.

Blair's successor, Kevin Riley, has assumed the role of deputy chief.

Riley began his career in law enforcement in 1992 after serving in the U.S. Air Force. In 1999,

he joined Parma Police and has served as a detective and supervisor, public information officer and on the SWAT team. Most recently, he was the commander of the Administrative Division, Patrol Division and Detective Bureau.

Riley is a 2015 graduate of Northwestern University's School of Police Staff and Command, as well as the Police Executive Leadership College. He holds an associate degree in Law Enforcement from Cuyahoga Community College, a bachelor's degree in technical education from The University of Akron and a master's degree in criminal justice from Michigan State University. Riley is also a 2021 graduate of the Public Leadership Credential Program at Harvard Kennedy School. He is finishing a second master's degree.



Deputy Chief Kevin Riley

First responders expected to go all out for Parma's 22nd Annual Safety Fair

The Parma Safety Fair is **11 a.m. to 2 p.m., Saturday, Aug. 17** at the Justice Center, 5555 Powers Blvd. Now in its 22nd year, the free event attracts a huge crowd.

Firetrucks, police cars, motorcycles and other safety equipment will fill the parking lot. Planned activities include K9, drone and grease fire demonstrations; free fingerprinting for children; and visits with

firefighters, EMS workers and police officers. First responders will offer safety tips and answer questions. Children can test their bicycle safety skills in the Kids Zone and receive free bike helmets.

The UH AirMed helicopter is expected to return this year, weather permitting. "Everybody loves watching it land. It is a fan favorite," Mayor Tim DeGeeter said.

Another popular attraction coming back is a simulated housefire. Using small fire-hoses, children spray water on a fake fire to knock down pretend flames.

"The city partners with numerous organizations and businesses to cover costs," DeGeeter said. "The event gives first responders the chance to interact with the public in a fun informative way."



Ward 1 — Monica Wilson

Spring has finally arrived.

In April, I walked Ward 1 and met many residents while handing out “Save the Date” cards. It was heartwarming to hear about residents’ joys and concerns firsthand.

Knocking on more than 725 doors and interacting with more than 1,000 people was a rewarding experience. I have truly enjoyed getting to know the heart of our community.

Mark your calendars!

- **Home Buying Seminar:** Thinking about buying or selling a home? Do not miss the free Home Buying Seminar at Cuyahoga County Public Library’s Parma-Snow Branch, Saturday, June 22, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. This seminar is valuable for anyone entering the housing market as a first-time buyer or seasoned buyer/seller.
- **Ward 1 Safety Meeting:** Attend a discussion on safety in Ward 1, Tuesday, June 25, 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at PITT OHIO. Pizza and light refreshments will be served.
- **Ward 1 Picnic:** Save the date for a fun-filled Ward 1 Picnic at Petruska Park, Sunday, Aug. 25, 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Meet your neighbors and enjoy some community spirit!

It’s a privilege serving as Ward 1 councilwoman. To stay updated on Ward 1 news, send your email address to mwilson@cityofparma-oh.gov. If you need anything, contact me at 440-409-7354 or mwilson@cityofparma-oh.gov.

Ward 2 — Debbie Lime



It amazes me every day how wonderful the neighbors are that reside in our area – from the residents who had their beautiful daughters make “Welcome Home” signs for their neighbor coming home from the hospital to residents who check daily on their neighbors and lend a helping hand taking them to doctors, shopping and cooking.

This past Christmas, several residents baked and made cards for homebound neighbors in Ward 2. The joy this gave our neighbors was wonderful.

We should all work together to continue to build a stronger community. Help one another. If you know of a senior, be a good neighbor and offer a helping hand. The joy it will bring will be a great feeling!

The warmer weather brings about all the activities for spring and summer. Please enjoy one or more of the great activities or events such as the We Are Parma Proud-sponsored fireworks at Rib ‘N’ Rock, St. Charles Borromeo Church’s Summer Carnival and the We Are Parma Proud Picnic. Mark your calendar for this year’s Polish Village Garage Sale, June 13, 14 and 15 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., as well as the Ward 2 Safety Meeting, Thursday, Sept. 19, 6 p.m. at Fire Station 1, 5625 Pearl Road. I hope to see you at one of these summer activities.

As always, it is a pleasure to serve you. If I may be of any assistance, please contact me at 440-845-1714 or email me at limeward2@gmail.com.

Ward 3 — Mark Casselberry



There are major infrastructure and environmental projects that will impact Ward 3.

A 2023 Cuyahoga County Healthy Urban Tree Canopy

Grant covered the cost of 200 trees the city planted in May at Walters Grove Park. As these trees mature, they will add to the city’s tree canopy.

Phase 2 of the Ohio Department of Transportation repairing and repaving of

Brookpark Road between West 52nd Street and West 10th Street will be completed at the end of 2024.

Also, Phase 2 of the Krueger Avenue sewer improvement project will begin this year. The \$2.3 million project will impact homes between West 44th Street and West 48th Street. Each homeowner in this area will receive new storm and sanitary lateral connections. Parma Engineering Department is working on securing money for Phase 3 of this project, which is estimated at \$4 million.

West Creek Veterans Basin in Veterans Memorial Park will help alleviate flooding in downstream neighborhoods, including homes north of the project. Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District

will increase the size of the basin, add native plants and install an ADA-compliant pedestrian path around the basin. Construction of the \$4.9 million project is expected to begin in the fourth quarter of 2024.

The Ward 3 Safety Meeting will be Tuesday, June 11, 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at VFW Post 1974, 4305 Woodrow Ave. First responders and city leaders will share with residents how they work together to make Parma a safe community.

It is my pleasure to serve as councilman. Ward 3 residents needing assistance can contact me at 440-842-6710 or mcasselberry@cityofparma-oh.gov. Follow me @MarkCasselberryParmaCityCouncilman Ward3 on Facebook.



Ward 4 — Kelly Zacharias

I hope to see many Ward 4 residents at summer events, including the Ward 4 Safety Meeting, Thursday, June 13, 5:30 p.m. at Cuyahoga Community College's Public Safety Training Center Pavilion, Western Campus. Wards 5 and 7 will join us. Bring the family to see firetrucks and police cars, hear safety presentations and tour the premises.

Another collaborative ward event will be on Sunday, Sept. 22 when Wards 4, 6 and 9 come together for the Quarry District Picnic at West Creek Reservation's Keystone Pavilion. It will be a Sunday Funday from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. as we cookout, listen to music and get to know our neighbors.



Although Oliver & Co. can shred paper, I recommend not using pets to do the job. Instead, I suggest residents take confidential documents to the Shred Day & Food Drive, Saturday, June 15, 9 a.m. to noon at Constellation Schools rear parking lot, 5983 West 54th St. Residents are encouraged to bring nonperishable food or give a monetary donation to receive the service. Donations will benefit All Faiths Pantry.

For assistance, I can be reached at 216-290-2644 or kzacharias@cityofparma-oh.gov. For news about Ward 4, follow me on Facebook@KellyZacharias4ParmaWard4.

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Ward 5 — Allan Divis

This past March, I chaired the annual Parma World Water Day at West Creek Reservation's Watershed Stewardship Center. We had more than 700 people attend this family-friendly event, which was a big increase over last year's attendance of about 450 people. Special thanks to our partners and to Watershed Stewardship Center Manager Bethany Majeski and Naturalist Peter Frank who set up demonstrations and activities that included interactive stream tables, sand tables, petting fishponds, a bean bag toss, crafts and science shows.



Videos ran throughout the day showing the positive impact of the Center's projects and the city's strategic approach to alleviate flooding in Parma. Look for information about next year's date in a future Ward 5 column.

Also, the Ward 5 Safety Meeting is Thursday, June 13, 5:30 p.m., at Cuyahoga Community College's Public Safety Training Center Pavilion at the Western Campus. Wards 4 and 7 will join the meeting. Bring the family to see firetrucks and police vehicles, hear presentations from Parma safety forces and tour the premises where many area first responders receive training.

Ward 5 residents can contact me anytime. Call me at 440-888-7213 or email me at adivis@cityofparma-oh.gov.

Ward 6 — Kevin Kussmaul



Last December, Ward 4 Councilwoman Kelly Zacharias, Ward 9 Councilman Rob Euerle and I hosted our WinterFest event at West Creek Reservation's Watershed

Stewardship Center. With more than 300 people attending this family fun event, WinterFest is a new annual tradition.

Through the city's Community Services and Economic Development Office, a



Hundreds attended WinterFest.

homeowner over the age of 65 can get an \$80 voucher for furnace cleaning. Starting the workweek of July 22, a resident can call Community Services at 216-661-7372 to schedule an appointment to pick up a voucher.

Residents can watch Parma City Council meetings while they are being live-streamed or see a recording of a past

meeting. Visit www.cityofparma-oh.gov/en-US/City-Council and click on Recorded Council Meetings to view the meetings.

The Ward 6 Safety Meeting is Thursday, Aug. 8, 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at my home, 3160 Hetzel Drive. A rain date is scheduled for Thursday, Aug. 15, same time.

On Sunday, Sept. 22, 1 p.m. to 4 p.m., Ward 6 residents are invited to the annual Quarry District Picnic at West Creek Reservation's Keystone Pavilion. Wards 4 and 9 will be joining us.

Residents can reach me at 440-823-6608 or kkussmaul@cityofparma-oh.gov and follow me on Facebook @KevinKussmaul, Parma City Councilman Ward 6. I am honored to serve Ward 6.

Ward 7 — Kammy Coyle Shuman



I hope everyone is having a great year. The weather and eclipse that happened in April has me feeling such an overwhelming sense of happiness!

Ward 7 has been busy with sewer and road projects. I am happy to report that Sprague Road is finished and beautiful. Thank you to all who were patient during construction.

We had a successful ward meeting in April. Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District went over the \$20 million in projects happening in Ward 7. We have the Big Creek stream restoration near Ridge Road, Baldwin Creek Dell Haven Basin improvement and Baldwin Creek Bonny Banks Basin improvement to address flooding in the Stormes Drive area. We are also asking for improvements at Bonny Banks Park, where we have a little library. For more details about NEORS D projects, turn to page 10.

The Ward 7 Safety Meeting is Thursday, June 13, 5:30 p.m. at Cuyahoga Community College's Public Safety Training Center

Pavilion at the Western Campus. Wards 4 and 5 will be joining us. We are collaborating with the safety director, fire and police chiefs, law director and mayor. Bring the family to see firetrucks and police cars, hear presentations from our safety forces and city leaders, tour the premises and have some fun!

Tony and I enjoyed our first year of empty nesting with both our children attending The Ohio State University. Our son, Anthony, turned 21 and is in his final year of undergrad. He will apply to medical schools this summer while working in Columbus with a urologist. Our daughter, Elizabeth, is done with her first year and excited to be working at Cleveland VA's pharmacy internship program. We are very proud of them.

Being in this position for three years has been such a gift. I have learned from my residents and feel an incredible sense of community and kindness. I see neighbors helping each other all the time.

I know every situation is not perfect when we have such a large city to maintain, but I appreciate residents reaching out and asking for assistance or offering me assistance in my position. I can be reached at 440-884-2138 or kshuman@cityofparma-oh.gov. For the latest Ward 7 news, follow me on Facebook @shumanward7. Love all, serve all.

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Ward 8 — Amanda Boyd

Here's to my first five months in office! I am grateful to all the residents, fellow council members and city leaders who have been so wonderful and welcoming in my first quarter on council. I am fortunate to serve as the Ward 8 representative and take my role in earnest.



5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m., Thursday, July 25 in the Parma Circle on Ridge Road. The rain date is Wednesday, July 31, same time and location. I have plans to add something extra special, along with what our incredible Police Department and Fire Department are already providing. Look for forthcoming fliers and follow me on Facebook @AmandaBoyd – Ward 8 Parma City Council for details closer to the date.

American Structurepoint presented to Parma City Council this past winter the second round of renderings of the Ridgewood Golf Course's new event center and clubhouse. The architectural renderings show multiple views of the facility. Construction will begin this summer. When the facility opens in summer 2025, it will be available to the entire community, not just golfers. Residents can rent the event center for a celebration or simply relax at the clubhouse patio and take in the view – golfing is not required for either. Read the article on page 14 to learn more about this major economic development project.

What has been going on? What is to come? The Service Department will be crossing off some action items on its list, which include removing tree stumps, dead limbs and debris from city islands and pocket parks, as well as gazebo maintenance and cleanup.

We really are fortunate to have amazing departments in our city who work hard to ensure all city wards are maintained.

The first combined Ward 2 and Ward 8 Block Party is scheduled for Saturday, June 29, 4 p.m. to 9 p.m. at Parma Circle's Stanbury/Renwood island. Ward 8 residents should not hesitate to contact me with any questions.

Also, save the date for the Ward 8 Safety Meeting, which is

Even though it has only been a short time that I have been in office, getting to know Ward 8 residents and handling day-to-day tasks has truly been an honor. I look forward to the rest of the year and beyond. I can be reached at 330-607-5537 or aboyle@cityofparma-oh.gov.

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Ward 9 — Rob Euerle

I am thrilled to invite Ward 9 residents to the annual Ward 9 Safety Meeting, Thursday, June 20, 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at Discount Drug Mart, 6115 State Road. This meeting is a fantastic opportunity to meet our dedicated police and fire department teams, learn about their diligent work and essential safety protocols, and hear how they

ensure our community remains a safe place to live, work and play. A rain date is scheduled for Thursday, June 27, same time and location.

As part of our ongoing commitment to community safety and improvement, I remind everyone it is important to be vigilant. “See something, say something” is how we all play a pivotal role in keeping our neighborhoods safe and well-maintained. Residents who encounter a large pothole, notice a missing street sign or see a burnt out streetlight should report it. Even if it is a building code issue, residents should not hesitate to reach out. Observations are invaluable, and with everyone’s help, we can address these issues promptly.

Contact me with concerns or suggestions at 216-418-8342 or reuerle@cityofparma-oh.gov.

Let’s work together to keep Ward 9 a great place to live. Everyone’s involvement is crucial to our success, and I look forward to seeing many Ward 9 residents at the safety meeting.

City auditor explains budget process



Auditor Brian Day

The city passed a 2024 permanent appropriations budget on March 14.

To give a brief overview of the budget process, the city operates on a temporary budget in

the year’s first three months. The law allows this option for municipalities to operate as more accurate figures and data needed for approving a balanced permanent budget are not available until the current year’s first quarter.

For many years, Parma has followed a thorough and transparent budget process. Budget hearings are conducted in the city council finance committee. Normally, budget hearings are broken into three separate sessions, giving city council adequate time to review and question each department’s requested appropriations. The public is always encouraged to attend budget hearings, which this year were Feb. 12, 21 and 27.

There have been budgets more challenging in the past few years compared to the 2024 budget. One factor that signifi-

cantly impacted available resources and made passing of the 2024 budget a little less challenging was the American Rescue Plan Act.

ARPA was a federal stimulus bill that provided funding to state and local governments because of the COVID-19 pandemic. In following ARPA fund guidelines, the city was able to expense \$2.3 million of police and fire salaries from the general fund to the 2023 ARPA fund. Consequently, this gave the city a higher general fund beginning balance in 2024. It is important to note that while ARPA funds were fiscally beneficial to the city during the pandemic, these were one-time dollars and not a part of regular revenue resources.

City contracts with labor unions are another important factor to consider with the 2024 budget. These three-year contracts expired at the end of 2023 and are now in negotiations for new contracts. In preparation for potential wage increases, the city has set aside funds in the budget.

Not considering the funds for potential wage increases, the 2024 approved budget is roughly \$900,000 more than the 2023 budget, which is about a 1 percent increase and an indicator of good fiscal stewardship.



Shred Day & Food Drive

Shred Day & Food Drive is Saturday, June 15, 9 a.m. to noon at Constellation Schools, rear parking lot, 5983 West 54th St. Drivers must enter from West 54th.

No registration is required, but each driver must show proof of residency with a driver’s license, gas bill or electric bill. There is no limit on the amount of documents shredded. Residents are not required to stay while their confidential documents are being shredded, but they must secure their documents in tied bags or covered boxes. Paper documents can’t be bound with rubber bands, paper clips or binders, and no plastic folders or sleeves will be accepted because these materials jam the shredding machine.

“Residents are being asked to bring nonperishable food or give a monetary donation to receive the service. Donations will benefit All Faiths Pantry,” said Mayor Tim DeGeeter.

Consumer advocacy instilled at young age



State Representative
Sean Patrick Brennan

During my 19 years on Parma City Council and now as state representative, I have been a consumer advocate. This focus stems from my childhood.

After my dad abandoned us, my mom lost the house, and she hesitantly applied for food stamps. We moved into a trailer park, and life remained financially challenging. I recall with sadness my mom buying groceries. Back then, food stamps were coupons torn out of a booklet, so everyone in line knew the person using the booklet was on welfare. It hurt my heart when I heard people murmur things like “white trash” and question what my mom had in the cart. I also recall how little costs, such as postage stamps, were difficult, let alone buying food and paying the electric bill.

I currently serve on the Ohio House Public Utilities Committee. Many good ideas come before the committee – energy efficiency, solar power and other programs that I support. When one digs deeper into some of these bills, however, hidden costs for Ohio consumers are found.

It takes a lot of courage to stand up to the big utility companies and others who support some of these costly programs. I am often the lone voice speaking for the people. I know there are many Ohioans struggling to make ends meet. When I am told it is only another \$1.50 a month, I remind folks in the room we are talking about real money. I am pleased to say my work has resulted in preventing some of these added costs. Know that I will continue to advocate for consumers despite the pressure.

If my office may be of service, call us at 614-466-3485 or email us at rep14@ohiohouse.gov. Visit ohiohouse.gov/members/sean-p-brennan to learn more about my work and to sign up for my monthly newsletter. It is an honor to serve you!



Flamingo perched in Parma

A 7-foot-tall, 150-pound aluminum pink flamingo quietly landed and permanently perched itself next to the Parma sign in Anthony Zielinski Park last December.

California-based metal art design company The Metal Zoo created the statue. The project was hatched when State Rep. Sean Patrick Brennan began a campaign in fall 2023 to raise money for the display. The goal was quickly reached when resident Bob Funk gave \$2,000. Funk donated the money to honor his wife and daughter, who both died from breast cancer.

“The flamingo lawn ornament, once a Ghoultardi joke about Parma, is our unofficial mascot,” Mayor Tim DeGeeter said. “With the bird having a prominent spot in a city park, residents have the last laugh. In fact, the flamingo represents beauty, balance and love, making Parma the perfect place for this tropical bird.”

Tuma’s work on bond ordinance helps move event center project forward



Law Director
Scott Tuma

On April 1, Parma City Council unanimously approved Ordinance 37-24. This ordinance authorized the issuance of up to \$14 million in bonds to help fund the balance of the Ridgewood Golf Course event center and clubhouse.

Following the vote, I commended City Council for continuing to support this legacy project of which I helped procure the initial funding of \$4 million.

For several weeks, I have worked diligently with our bond counsel on Ordinance 37-24. I am honored to have played a

part in bringing this project over the finish line, both in my current role as Parma law director and prior role as Cuyahoga County councilman in District 4. It is truly amazing to have witnessed how far this project has come in such a short amount of time.

These bonds will provide the necessary funding to complete this generational project. I take great satisfaction knowing this project, one in which I worked tirelessly helping to procure both the initial funding for demolition of the old clubhouse and construction of the new event center during my time at Cuyahoga County, is on track toward imminent groundbreaking and eventual construction. This is an economically transformational project, which will positively impact Parma and surrounding communities for decades.

City and West Creek partner to help reforest Walters Grove Park

In another round of tree plantings, West Creek Conservancy and City of Parma partnered on an Urban Tree Canopy Grant – this time to benefit Walters Grove Park.

For two weeks in May, West Creek oversaw the planting of more than 200 trees at Walters Grove to help restore the park's tree canopy. A 2023-24 Cuyahoga County Healthy Urban Tree Canopy Grant for \$115,400 covered the costs of purchasing and planting trees at the popular Walters Avenue 12-acre park. Bartlett Tree Experts, On-Call Equipment and ZScape Horticulture worked together to get the 1.5-inch and 2-inch caliper balled and burlap trees in the ground.

West Creek selected the variety of native species that will work best for the site. "Native trees can more easily adapt to

changes in temperature, humidity, weather patterns or other environmental shifts in our area, which increases their odds of survival. They grow well with our soil, rainfall, wildlife and insects. For example, some native flowering trees depend on local pollinators for pollination," said Mayor Tim DeGeeter.

Klyn Nurseries in Perry, Ohio, supplied the trees, which included oaks, maples, poplars and other native species.

West Creek Conservancy Executive Director Derek Schafer said Walters Grove was selected because the park needed trees, and the space allowed for impact planting, a requirement of the grant.

In addition to providing beauty, shade and a habitat for wildlife, the trees will also help dissipate the volume and flow of stormwater.



Visitors to Walters Grove now see many new trees in the park.



Golf course gets new trees on Arbor Day

On Arbor Day, April 26, city workers planted 10 trees on Ridgewood Golf Course, north of Hole 2 and near Loyola Drive's west end. West Creek Conservancy helped the city choose trees that will work best on the course. The new trees will add to the course's tree canopy and replace other trees the city removed earlier this year that were dead or dying.



Wastewater & Stormwater Management

Mayor Tim DeGeeter and Parma City Council offer the following update on sewer and stormwater improvement projects city engineers oversee:

Recently Completed Projects

- * Fenway Drive storm/sewer improvement, \$150,000
- * Krueger Avenue sewer improvement, Phase 1, \$1.6 million
- * Numerous catch basins and manhole structures were repaired or replaced as part of the ongoing neighborhood street pavement program, \$1.5 million

Total Cost: \$3.25 million

2024 Projects

- * Daleside Drive sewer improvement, \$200,000
- * East Linden Lane pump station replacement, \$1 million
- * Krueger Avenue sewer improvement, Phase 2, \$2.3 million
- * Rustic Trail relief storm/sewer improvement, \$225,000
- * Valley Villas, York and State roads septic abatement, \$2.5 million

Total Estimated Cost: \$6.23 million

Future Projects

- * Green Acres Avenue sewer improvement, \$1.5 million
- * Krueger Avenue sewer improvement, Phase 3, \$4 million
- * Meadow Lane headwalls and stormwater drainage improvements, \$1 million

Total Estimated Cost: \$6.5 million

Cleveland Water's Waterline Replacements

Cleveland Water works with the city to replace 100-year-old waterlines via its Suburban Water Main Renewal Program.

2023 Completed Project

- * Sprague Road, West 130th Street to York Road (part of the Sprague Road widening project)

Total Cost: \$1.8 million

2024 Projects

- * North Avenue, State Road to Broadview Road, \$2.8 million
- * Velma Avenue, Pearl Road to West 54th Street, \$2.2 million
- * New waterlines, connections, fire hydrants and asphalt overlay on the following streets:
 - Russel Avenue, State Road to West 51st Street
 - Torrington Avenue, State Road to West 24th Street
 - Tuxedo Avenue, State Road to West 24th Street

Total Estimated Cost: \$10 million

Future Projects

- * Brookview Avenue, State Road to Broadview Road, \$1.5 million
- * Grovewood Avenue, West 24th Street to Broadview Road and Laverne Avenue, Pearl Road to West 54th Street, \$1.6 million for both streets

Total Estimated Cost: \$3.1 million

NEORS D stormwater and sewer projects address flooding in Parma

Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District works with city engineers to manage stormwater and sewer projects. Following is a list of NEORS D projects:

Big Creek Upper Ridgewood Basin

NEORS D has completed construction of the \$3.6 million stormwater basin. The new basin has more stormwater storage capacity to help alleviate flooding in the downstream area. The upper embankments were planted with native plants, but the new vegetation will take three to five years to fully establish. An ADA-compliant pedestrian path with benches and an educational story walk will connect Ridgewood Lake Drive to Zielinski Park's Splash Pad, pavilion and gazebo. We Are Parma Proud is hosting its Picnic in the Park at 11 a.m., Saturday, Aug. 3 at the park and will start the celebration with a dedication ceremony for the new basin and greenspace.

Big Creek Flood Reduction Sprague Road

The completed \$1.4 million project replaced the Sprague Road culvert and acquired two properties immediately downstream to increase flood storage. This project helps capture stormwater runoff from Parma and North Royalton along Sprague. Both cities contributed \$35,000 toward project costs.

Baldwin Creek Bonny Banks Basin

The \$2.5 million expansion project will begin this summer to further reduce flooding in the Stormes Drive area. This will enhance the \$1.9 million Stormes Drive relief culvert project NEORS D constructed last summer.

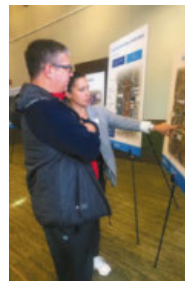
Baldwin Creek Dell Haven Basin

Property from Parma City School District and Holy Family Catholic Parish was acquired in 2023. Design was completed in January 2024, and construction will begin the second quarter of 2024. Esti-

mated at \$6.5 million, the basin will manage stormwater at Pleasant Valley and York roads.

Big Creek Restoration Near Ridge Road

This 1.5-mile stream restoration project will stabilize eroding streambanks, protect threatened infrastructure and increase floodplain storage to reduce flooding in the Big Creek Watershed. Estimated at \$12.1 million, construction is slated for the fourth quarter of 2024.



Mayor DeGeeter views basin plans.

West Creek Veterans Basin

A redesigned basin in Veterans Memorial Park will help alleviate flooding in downstream neighborhoods. Construction of the \$4.9 million project should start the fourth quarter of 2024.

Road Construction News

Mayor Tim DeGeeter and Parma City Council offer the following road construction update:



- The \$11.9 million Cuyahoga County Department of Public Works project to widen **Sprague Road** and improve sanitary, stormwater and waterlines between West 130th Street and York Road in Parma and North Royalton was completed in 2023.
- The Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) \$11.5 million project to repair and repave **Brookpark Road** between West 130th Street and State Road was completed in 2023. Work will begin between State Road and the I-480 eastbound entrance in 2024.
- The \$4.6 million **Ridge Road** repair and resurfacing project from Pearl Road to Flowerdale Avenue in the cities of Parma, Brooklyn and Cleveland was completed in 2023.
- A Cuyahoga County project to repair and repave **Snow Road** from Ridge Road to Broadview Road is divided into two phases: Ridge Road to State Road and State Road to Broadview Road. Engineering design work on Phase 1 began in 2023 (Ridge to State). Currently, Phase 1 construction is estimated at \$2.5 million. Construction is expected to begin in 2025.
- Parma Service Department is spending more than \$5 million on roadway repairs of **40 neighborhood streets** throughout the 2024-25 repaving seasons.

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West Creek Conservancy transfers soccer fields and Parmadale to Metroparks

By Derek Schafer, West Creek Conservancy executive director

Cleveland Metroparks reached a historic milestone following the addition of more than 100 acres to West Creek Reservation in December 2023, which included the former Parmadale campus and Padua soccer fields.

Since 2017, West Creek Conservancy led the environmental cleanup and restoration of the 80-acre former Parmadale campus and removal of 18 brick structures. The Conservancy also oversaw the stream and floodplain restoration of the adjacent 19-acre property, formerly the Padua soccer fields. These major additions to the western portion of West Creek Reservation will provide more recreational opportunities for park visitors.

Following acquisition of both properties, a variety of property, environmental and infrastructure surveys had to be completed before work could start. After the surveys provided the data needed to determine the next steps, environmental cleanup, abatement and demolition of structures began and required years of work.

It cost more than \$1.8 million to demolish and clean up the Parmadale property. About \$520,000 was spent on demolition and restoration of the former Padua fields. Both projects included assistance from various resources: Ohio Public Works Commission, Clean Ohio Greenspace, Ohio Environmental Protection Agency, the 319 Program, James Cox Foundation, Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District, Ohio & Erie Canalway Association, Cuyahoga Land Bank and Metroparks. Plus, many private donors contributed to the projects.

Now that the properties have been transferred, Metroparks plans to expand the reservation's trail network and create a future greenway connection to the Cuyahoga Valley National Park and Towpath Trail. It will also protect the natural resources, including trees, streams and the surrounding watershed.

"With this significant expansion of West Creek Reservation, thanks to the support and partnership of the West Creek Conservancy, Cleveland Metroparks has passed a major milestone 106 years in the making with the protection and conservation of more than 25,000 acres of parks across 49 communities," said Cleveland Metroparks CEO Brian Zimmerman.



A drone shot of the former Padua soccer fields shows how the property looked when transferred to Cleveland Metroparks last December.

The Conservancy's mission is to enrich the lives of all people in Northeast Ohio by conserving natural habitats, restoring the ecological value of the region's lands and waters, and expanding opportunities to connect people from all cultures to experience nature and discover the great outdoors. The organization regularly partners with the Sewer District, City of Parma and Metroparks to protect natural spaces, restore water resources and create greenway trail systems for residents to enjoy.

How to volunteer for West Creek Conservancy

When you volunteer for West Creek Conservancy, you help preserve natural areas, open spaces, streams and waterways for future generations. Opportunities range from stream cleanings, community plantings, event support and office work. For volunteer opportunities, visit www.westcreek.org/support-us/volunteer or contact the Conservancy at info@westcreek.org.

City and NEORS D working with West Creek to buy homes in floodplain

City of Parma and Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District, in conjunction with West Creek Conservancy, are purchasing homes that encroach upon Baldwin Creek. Homes located on Pleasant Valley Road from York to Ann Arbor experience flooding from overland flow, or stormwater runoff from the road and Baldwin Creek overtopping its banks. The city and NEORS D are purchasing homes on a voluntary basis to remove structures from the floodplain.

“The city is buying homes at fair market value following a thorough appraisal process. After the homes are purchased, they will be demolished and the land restored to a natural floodplain,” Mayor Tim DeGeeter said.

The city is using a \$1.6 million Ohio Emergency Management Agency Hazard Mitigation Grant to cover 90 percent of

the acquisition and demolition of up to eight residential structures that experience flooding in the Baldwin Creek Watershed. NEORS D will cover the remaining 10 percent.

Additionally, NEORS D is acquiring a number of Pleasant Valley Road properties using funding from the Regional Stormwater Management Program in preparation of a future Baldwin Creek stormwater project to help reduce flooding in the area and improve water quality. The project will include stream realignment and restoration components to allow Baldwin Creek better access to the floodplain, resulting in slower velocities, volume reduction and less erosion. If property owners along Pleasant Valley want more information, they can contact Nicole Velez, watershed team leader, at velezn@neorsd.org or 216-881-6600.

Both the city and NEORS D have partnered with West Creek Conservancy, which has been working individually with homeowners in the flood zone.

“Through the city and NEORS D, we can work with property owners who flood, as well as those where stream restoration is necessary. Similar to what we’ve done for nearly two decades, it is a corridor approach that will reduce flooding and protect local infrastructure and water quality,” said Derek Schafer, West Creek Conservancy’s executive director.

“Old infrastructure in inner-ring suburbs like ours can’t handle stormwater volume and velocity in flood zones during heavy rain events. Several of the nearly 30 eligible homes have been demolished, increasing the floodplain on vacant lots. We anticipate additional homes being removed in the future,” DeGeeter said.

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Ridgewood Golf Course event center construction begins this summer



patio grill, pro shop, staff office, storage space and restrooms.

Year-round, six golf simulator bays will bring in residents and revenue.

“We are approaching this as a business. The course has turned a profit for several years during the warm months, but we now want to generate revenue all year,” DeGeeter said. “We consider this a major economic development project.”

To address flooding issues, the design includes the raising of the lower-level parking lot, which will also offer easier access between the lot and the building.

The new event center and clubhouse features ample outdoor entertainment areas.

Details are coming together for the new Ridgewood Golf Course event center and clubhouse. Architecture and engineering firm American Structurepoint released artist renderings of the one-level facility in February.

The design of the 15,400-square-foot facility includes event space and a clubhouse with a lobby separating the two. The rentable event center can host up to 180 guests and will be available year-round. The clubhouse grill and lounge will also be available year-round and for everyone to use, not just golfers.

“The facility will be for everyone. Residents can come here to have a beverage, sit in the lounge or on the patio, and take in the view,” said Parks and Recreation Director Mickey Vittardi.

The layout showcases Ridgewood’s asset – the picturesque golf course. “We want to take advantage of the view. Visitors can look out onto the ridge,” said Ed Kagel of American Structurepoint.

The facility’s design has ample outdoor seating with patios, open entertainment areas and a pavilion for large gatherings. Sections of the patios are under an overhang, offering guests protection from the sun or rain.

The event center – independent of the clubhouse area – has a warming kitchen, bar, walk-in cooler, storage area, bride’s room, coat room and restrooms. Two removable walls can divide the hall to customize the space for smaller groups.

In the clubhouse, there will be a kitchen, lounge,

“There was an incline between the lower lot and upper lot that divided the two and made access harder. With parking on one level, we are addressing flooding and accessibility, as well as increasing parking. We expect to have more than 200 parking spaces,” said Service Director Tony Vannello, who is working with the architects.

The city expects to break ground this summer after it relocates the temporary triple-wide trailer clubhouse away from the construction site and turns Hole 13 into a combination Hole 13-14.

“We are making these adjustments to keep the golf course open during construction,” Vittardi said. “The course makes money, and we already have outings scheduled for the season.”

The city expects construction of the facility to be completed in 2025, the same year the golf course will be celebrating its 100th anniversary.



The layout offers a view of the golf course’s picturesque hillside.

Smallwood Activities Center and PCSD partner to bring back Senior Prom

Prom season marks that time of year when dressing up, dining out and dancing through the night is a formal affair for seniors – senior citizens, that is.

Donna Smallwood Activities Center and Parma City School District partnered to bring back the pre-pandemic event. Held



Seniors dance after dinner.

April 19 at Normandy High School, 180 senior adults from Parma, Parma Heights and Seven Hills attended the free event, and Parma Heights Mayor Marie Gallo and Mayor Tim DeGeeter stopped by.

“When I heard about the Senior Prom years ago, I thought it was a great idea, and it sounded like a lot of fun. Our liaison to PCSD, John Schweitzer, remembered this being a popular event and connected us with all the right people to make this prom hap-

pen again,” said Activities Center Director Erin Lally, noting grant money from the Cuyahoga County Department of Senior and Adult Services covered the costs.

The Activities Center registered guests, hired the D.J. and provided transportation. Normandy and Valley Forge key clubs arranged for photography, designed prom tickets and decorated the cafeteria as an enchanted garden. Normandy’s award-winning culinary students prepared and served the Italian-inspired meals. After dinner, guests snapped photos in the photo booth, danced to their favorite hits and mingled with each other and the students.

“The more exposure seniors have with students, the more they see there are a lot of nice kids with talent in our school district. And the students see our seniors living an active lifestyle,” Schweitzer said.

“Intergenerational activities are generally a smashing success, and this is proof people really care about one another in our community,” Lally added.

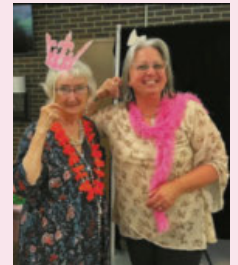


Photo booth fun.

“Intergenerational activities are generally a smashing success, and this is proof people really care about one another in our community,” Lally added.

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Upcoming Events

June

June 6, We Are Parma Proud Fireworks, Tri-C Western Campus, dusk
June 6 – 9, Rib 'N' Rock, Tri-C Western Campus
June 8, Pools Open, noon – 8:30 p.m., daily
June 9, The Polka Pirates, Anthony Zielinski Park, 6:30 p.m.
June 11, Ward 3 Safety Meeting, VFW Post 1974, 6 – 8 p.m.
June 13, Wards 4, 5 & 7 Safety Meeting, Tri-C Western Campus, Public Safety Training Center's Pavilion, 5:30 p.m.
June 13 – 15, Polish Village Garage Sale, 9 a.m. – 4 p.m., each day
June 15, Shred Day & Food Drive, 9 a.m. – noon,
Constellation Middle and High Schools, rear parking lot
June 16, The Highlighters (big band), Anthony Zielinski Park, 6:30 p.m.
June 20, Ward 9 Safety Meeting, Discount Drug Mart, 6 – 8 p.m.
(Rain Date, June 27, same time and location)
June 23, Brian Dorr (*Great American Song Book selections*),
Anthony Zielinski Park, 6:30 p.m.
June 25, Ward 1 Safety Meeting, PITT OHIO, 6 – 7:30 p.m.
June 29, Run-Walk for Pierogies, Tri-C Western Campus, 7:30 a.m.
June 29, Wards 2 & 8 Block Party, Parma Circle's
Stanbury/Renwood Island, 4 – 9 p.m.
June 30, The Alley Katz (variety), Anthony Zielinski Park, 6:30 p.m.

July

July 4, Independence Day Parade, Ridge Road, 10 a.m.
July 7, Northcoast Mix (variety), Anthony Zielinski Park, 6:30 p.m.
July 25, Ward 8 Safety Meeting, Parma Circle on Ridge, 5:30 – 7 p.m.
(Rain Date, July 31, same time and location)

August

Aug. 3, Ridgewood Basin Dedication, Anthony Zielinski Park, 11 a.m.
Aug. 3, We Are Parma Proud Picnic, James Day Park, 11 a.m. – 2 p.m.
Aug. 8, Ward 6 Safety Meeting, 3160 Hetzel Drive, 6 – 8 p.m.
(Rain Date, Aug. 15, same time and location)
Aug. 8 – 10, Citywide Garage Sale, 9 a.m. – 4 p.m., each day
Aug. 17, Parma Safety Fair, Justice Center, 11 a.m. – 2 p.m.
Aug. 17, Pools Close
Aug. 24, Ukrainian Village Independence Day Parade, 11 a.m.
Aug. 25, Ward 1 Picnic, Petruska Park, 1 – 4 p.m.
Aug. 30, Donna Smallwood Activities Center's Picnic in the Park with
Desmond & Molly, James Day Park, noon

September

Sept. 2, Labor Day, Last Day for Splash Pad
Sept. 14, Nature Forum, West Creek Reservation, 1 – 4 p.m.
Sept. 19, Ward 2 Safety Meeting, Fire Station 1, 6 – 8 p.m.
Sept. 21, City Council Shred Event, Parma Armory, 9 a.m. – noon
Sept. 22, Wards 4, 6 & 9 Quarry District Picnic, Keystone Pavilion,
West Creek Reservation, 1 – 4 p.m.

October

Oct. 10, Katz Consultants' Landlord & Tenant Training, 6 – 8 p.m.,
Parma City Hall, Council Chambers
Oct. 26, Treat & Greet, Polish Village, 11 a.m. – 2 p.m.

*For the latest updates, follow Facebook @CityofParma.
For information about Recreation sports registration dates, go to
Parks and Recreation at www.cityofparma-oh.gov.*