



## *in the loop*

by Mayor Kevin Hardman  
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**Dear Fellow Residents:** In the first two “In the Loop” newsletters, I shared information regarding road improvement projects for 2018. The residential road repaving program has started; therefore, please use caution while driving in these areas. Also, the Fields Ertel Road improvements, from SR 42 to the Copperfield Subdivision, will be starting in the middle of July — the road will be closed to thru-traffic. Although the closure will cause a short-term traffic disruption, this is a highly anticipated road improvement.

This newsletter will focus on the City’s fiscal health, as reviewed by the State Auditor’s Office, and will also provide some interesting tidbits from various City departments.

Have a great summer!

### Financial Health of our City

I would like to share some information regarding the City’s fiscal health based on an unbiased review from the State’s Auditor’s Office. That office recently released a 2016 assessment of the fiscal well-being for each County and City in the State. The City of Sharonville’s report, as well as others from throughout the State, can be found here: <https://www.ohioauditor.gov/FHI/>

The purpose for the Auditor’s report is to as-

proach for when an entity is at the point of being declared in fiscal emergency, watch or emergency.

Similar to the Auditor’s report last year, we are happy to report that Sharonville compared very well against others throughout the state as well as those within Hamilton County. Our report contains a “positive” outlook on 14 of the 17 indicators with no serious or critical issues.

For comparison purposes, historical data indicates that entities with at least six “critical” indicators are in a state of high fiscal stress and entities with a combination of eight critical and cautionary indicators may experience fiscal stress in two to three years. Fortunately, we are far from those positions.

One indicator, related to property tax trends, was not applicable to the City. Since the City has not collected a property tax in many years (mid-1980s), we are proud of this accomplishment!



sist governments in recognizing early signs of fiscal stress in order to take a proactive ap-

## Financial Health of our City—continued from Page 1

We did have two “cautionary” indicators, associated with unrestricted assets/general fund balances. These are minor in nature compared to other categories and are only “cautionary.” With that said, rather than increasing our General Fund balance, we were excited to invest these dollars back into the fabric of the community with an aggressive residential street repaving program in 2017 (doubling our typical program) and focusing on other needs. The situation is the same in 2018 as we are in the process of having perhaps the largest street repaving program in the City’s history (nearly 4 times the typical program); planning to construct a new Police Facility; creating a new stretch of sidewalk on Plainfield Road, and continuing to make improvements in our Parks and Community Center.

Even with the above, the only cities in Hamilton County to have better results than Sharonville in the 2016 State Auditor’s report were the Cities of Harrison, Loveland, Montgomery, Indian Hill, and Wyoming.

## Department Annual Reports

On an annual basis, spread throughout the year, the City’s Department Managers update City Council on accomplishments within their departments. We recently heard annual reports from the Convention Center, Fire, Economic Development, Recreation, and Community Development Departments. Other departments will be featured in future newsletters.

**Community Development** The Community Development Office is responsible for strategic planning initiatives, construction inspections/approvals, property maintenance inspections, and zoning enforcement. In 2017, the department answered over 10,700 public inquiries, while also providing 639 commercial inspections (total construction value of \$37 million) and 346 residential inspections (construction value of \$2.3 million); addressing 268 property maintenance and zoning code complaints; and inspecting nearly 500 storm-water detention basins and outfalls from throughout the City.



**Convention Center** Approximately 200,000 people attended 391 functions at the Center, classified as follows, in 2017 – 43 consumer shows; 25 tradeshow; 179 meetings; 69 banquets; 22 conventions; and 53 “special” events. 383 events occurred in 2016.

Customer survey results, for items such as customer service, cleanliness of the facility, and food quality/portion size, occur after each event -- in a scale from 1 (poor) - 5 (excellent), the Convention Center’s results were all 4.6 or higher.

Jim Downton, the Convention Center’s Executive Director, received the “Excellence Ruby” Award from the State of Ohio’s Travel Association for his “Get Inspired!” marketing campaign.

## [...More Annual Reports](#)

**Economic Development** Through direct assistance from our Economic Development Director, Chris Xeil Lyons, approximately 350 new jobs were created in 2017 while nearly 300 jobs were retained within the City. This followed an extremely successful two-year span as the City was able to attract nearly 1,400 new jobs while retaining over 1,500 during 2015 and 2016. In 2015, Sharonville was named by [www.nerdwallet.com](http://www.nerdwallet.com), as the 6<sup>th</sup> best community in Ohio to start a new business!

Last year, nine (9) Sharonville companies made the Deloitte Cincinnati USA 100 list for the largest privately-held companies making significant economic and civic contributions to the region. The companies were as follows: Jurgensen at #28; Pilot Chemical (#35); Dubois Chemical (#39); Clark Power Services (#41); Champion Home Exteriors (#45); West Chester Protective Gear (#65); Dental Care Plus (#86); Loth Holdings (#93); and Xtek (#96). Thank you for choosing Sharonville as your home!

In 2017, the City also established the Small Business Alliance, which focuses on addressing the unique needs of small businesses within our City and encouraging business

collaboration with one another. Programs that started included the City's small business façade improvement program; monthly networking opportunities featuring City representatives, as well as other noteworthy topics such as social media opportunities; downtown events, such as the Sharonville "Night Market;" and other unique ideas such as the Downtown Small Business Open House, where "I Love Sharonville" Christmas Ornaments were provided to those who visited a certain number of establishments. Other ideas are currently being implemented such as the Sharonville Food Train, which I hope many of you are participating in. Information can be found at [www.sharonvillefoodtrain.org](http://www.sharonvillefoodtrain.org)



We are fortunate to have a well-respected Economic Development Director who is currently serving as the Ohio Economic Development Association's President in 2018.

**Fire Department** Last year was the 100-year anniversary for your Fire Department. On July 31<sup>st</sup>, 1917, the department was officially formed as a result of a fire that occurred on March 31<sup>st</sup> of that year, destroying a warehouse, garage and several barns (\$25,000 damage) and injuring several people. Fast-forward to 2017 where the department made 4429 calls for service (up 18% since 2016) – 1,644 were fire-related and 2,785 were EMS-based.



The Fire Department performed 1030 business inspections, working to ensure that the companies are safe for employees and customers. The department also provided supplemental services to the community, organizing events such as an open house and touch-a-truck; installing 159 car seats; visiting 27 homes to install 63 smoke detectors; replacing smoke detector batteries in 37 homes; hosting 25 CPR classes issuing 210 certifications; and holding 12 First Aid classes with 89 certifications.

### Fire Department—cont'd...

In addition to these efforts, the Fire Department's Nurse, Jen Ely, performed over 250 patient visits throughout 2017. Based on Jen's efforts, along with others at the department, the City's Food Pantry recently started a partnership with the Free Store Food Bank which will reduce food costs while also expanding the program (ability to host mobile food pantry events). In 2017, 510 individuals were helped by our food pantry.

Last, through the efforts of community volunteers and business donations, the City's Christmas Fund outreach program served 53 families last year, providing nearly \$60,000 worth of gifts, food, hygiene supplies, gloves, hats and scarfs to families in need! Thank you to all of those associated with this wonderful program!



**Recreation Department** The annual report for the Parks and Recreation Department was presented by Director Sue Koetz. Based on internal numbers, the Community Center and Pool Complex had over 150,000 visits in 2017. Last year was a key year for our Parks and Recreation programs as money was set aside for a significant playground improvement at Gower; for a Gorman Park Improvement Plan (public input will be asked for in the near future) and for a renovation of the multi-purpose room/old gym (August/September timeframe) and fitness center. A lot of exciting things are certainly taking place!

The Center's main gymnasium floor was also resurfaced in 2017. The two basketball courts were named after Pat Schehr, who retired in 2017 after a long-tenure as the City's Park Maintenance Supervisor, and Sue Koetz, Parks and Recreation Director, who retired this spring. With the resurfacing, the City sought out sponsorships for the new floor – thank you to Ison Family Restaurants (e.g., Hauck Road McDonalds); the Sharonville LaRosa's; and Elliott & Bradley Plumbing, who agreed to be partners in this effort! Additional sponsorship opportunities on the floor and elsewhere exist.



2017 was the first full year for our Silver Sneakers program. If you are a senior citizen and are unaware of this program, I would urge you to contact the Center for details as your membership to the facility may be free, depending on your insurance provider. There are other similar programs as well that we can discuss with you.

Thank you Sue for all of your efforts through the years! Michael Blomer, who many of you are already familiar with at the Center, is the City's new Recreation Director.