



# *Gregory P. Kurtz*

**Mayor**

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**To: Council Members & City Directors**  
**From: Mayor Kurtz**  
**Subject: Administrative Update for August 21, 2020**

## **Water Mitigation**

Many residents have been contacting my office and other City departments about water issues on their property. Some residents have standing water in their yards after heavy rain or in the spring when ice and snow melt. Others are experiencing water encroaching into their homes and basements.

There are many causes for basement water problems, including cracked foundations, plugged downspouts, and blocked window wells.

There is also "urban flooding," which occurs when paved surfaces lose their ability to absorb rain. The excess storm water fills yards, basements, and parking lots.

I recognize that even a minor water intrusion can be destructive and costly. The City works hard to clear debris from clogged sewers, storm water basins, swales, and waterways to improve drainage and lessen the impact of nature's wrath on people and property.

Because the demand is high, the City must prioritize calls based on the impact the water is having on a resident's property. The City is not able to solve everyone's problems.

The only way to successfully mitigate these problems is to consider the impact on property owners, City finances, and public safety. I am spearheading a plan to give residents an affordable "option" to assist them with making repairs and participate in flood prevention measures. I will present my proposal to the City Council at a future meeting.

## **Reducing Energy Costs**

Utility bills can take a big chunk out of anyone's monthly budget. I want to find out if we can save our residents and local businesses money by competitively negotiating a lower rate for electricity and other utilities.

We will be discussing consumer cost savings strategies with representatives from **First Energy Advisors** at the **Utilities & Sewers Committee Meeting next Tuesday, August 25, from 4:30 – 5:30 PM.**

**First Energy Advisors** have assured me that if they were brought on to serve as an aggregator or intermediary, they could coordinate competitive bidding for our utilities. The goal is to bring down costs for residents and the business community.

Among the other issues on Tuesday's agenda:

- A general update on the storm/flood call list.
- An update on the Lafayette Road, rear-yard drainage project.

If you would like to attend the virtual meeting via Zoom, please [register here](#). Questions or comments can be emailed in advance of the meeting to [beald@IndependenceOhio.org](mailto:beald@IndependenceOhio.org).

### **Economic Development**

I have not forgotten what residents told me when I went door to door last fall. They want to see downtown redevelopment. However, there are different community expectations. For many, a planned housing development that includes maintenance services is a priority. It will keep existing residents in Independence if they choose to downsize.

Others would like to see more aesthetically pleasing walkable spaces, shopping, parks, and recreation venues. We are working through all of these desires and have engaged Dimit Architects to help us navigate and include these aspects in a marketable development concept.

We've also talked a lot about the Northwest Quadrant, sometimes referred to as Patriots Village, our last large chunk of developable land along the Rockside Road corridor.

This week, my team met with Carnegie Companies, owner the Independence Square Shopping Center and Industrial Realty Group (IRG), which is developing concepts for Patriot's Village off of Rockside Road.

My goal is to keep moving forward to explore the types of development(s) that make sense for each area. Because the process will involve residents and other stakeholders, there is no time to waste. Economic growth is vitally important to our City's economy. It allow us to provide residents with the quality of life they seek.

### **Covid-19 Misinformation**

This week, parents called my office after hearing that people who have tested positive for the coronavirus are *quarantined at local hotels*. **THIS IS FALSE.**

When the pandemic began,. Cuyahoga County hotels were part of a "contingency plan" to handle a possible overflow of patients from hospitals. Fortunately, we have not had

a spike in cases like other cities. Our outstanding local hospitals have handled all COVID-positive patients. People who have been exposed to a positive patient, but do not have symptoms, are told to quarantine at home.

Months of social distancing and for some, a job loss has tested people's patience. I want to make sure misinformation does not add additional stress to residents' lives.

### 55+ Lunches

You are a special part  
of this community &  
I care about you!  
Stay healthy!

**Mayor Gregory P. Kurtz**



The Community Services team did it again! This week they provided curbside delivery of 460 pre-ordered lunches to our 55+ residents.

Remember, the menus can be found in the Community Spotlight magazine. To make a reservation, call 216.524.7373.

### Making the Most of Summer!

It was great to see so many families enjoying the talent of homegrown country singer Kurt Freeman when he performed at Thursday's Summer Community Concert. Because of the Independence High School grad's popularity, the concert was moved to the Fieldhouse.





### August 27 Summer Concert



Summer doesn't last forever, so we need to get outside and enjoy it while we can. Next Thursday, August 27 [Juke Box Heroes](#) will be performing at the Summer Community Concert on Public Square. The [Southern Thangs Grub Truck](#) will also be there.

### Oktoberfest Postponed, but....

An Oktoberfest celebration that was initially scheduled for the end of September has been postponed. However, the City will be hosting a drive-through **Clambake on Saturday, September 26.**

Residents will be able to pre-order “**Ready to Heat**” **Clambakes** and drive-up to the Civic Center for curbside delivery. It's the same friendly system that has been working exceptionally well for residents picking up their 55+ lunches every week. There will also be chicken tenders and mac and cheese for children. More information will be available in the September Independence Post and on the City's website.

*If someone forwarded this email and you would prefer to receive it directly from Mayor Kurtz, please send your email address to [CityHall@IndependenceOhio.org](mailto:CityHall@IndependenceOhio.org).*