MAYOR KURTZ'S WEEKLY UPDATE FOR NOVEMBER 6, 2020

Safety & Security Improvements

Technical Services and the IT Department have installed an upgraded surveillance camera with night-vision on top of the Crown Centre building on Rockside Road.

The new long-range security camera provides high-resolution images and can capture the entire Rockside Road/I-77/I-480 area.

Police Chief Michael Kilbane said the crime-solving technology allows dispatchers to identify the vehicle make, type, color, and license plate day or night.

During a Safety Committee Hearing this week, Chief Kilbane discussed a plan to blanket the Rockside Road and Granger Road areas with similar smart-cameras. The software identifies license plates in a matter of seconds, saving officers' valuable time. The City works closely with neighboring departments and has mutual aid agreements with surrounding law enforcement agencies and the National Park Service. Working together, the City is able to coordinate responses to major incidents, share intelligence and investigative resources.

Many communities, including Mentor, Willoughby, Eastlake, and Hunting Valley, are installing these cameras. After Houston, Texas installed cameras last year, they reported a significant decrease in crime and increased arrest of car thieves, robbery suspects, and parole violators.

Legislation to fund the smart-camera project will be introduced at the City Council meeting on Tuesday, November 10.

The City will also be issuing an RFP to hire a project design consultant firm to begin the process of evaluating the need for a remote police facility in the Rockside Road area. The competitive process will allow us to find the most qualified firm with specific law enforcement facility planning experience to analyze the volume and location of emergency calls, response times, possible sites, logistics, future needs and provide preliminary cost
estimates. This process will assist City leaders as we strive to find the best way to protect our business community, residents, and visitors.

**COVID-19**

The number of new **coronavirus cases in the U.S. has surged 45% over the past two weeks.**

On Thursday, Ohio reported nearly 5,000 new cases. The number of Ohioans who have died with COVID-19 is close to 5,500, and more than 233,000 have tested positive since the pandemic started. It is a grim and vexing situation as the holidays and winter approach.

The Ohio Department of Health released an updated COVID-19 travel advisory this week for seven states reporting positive testing rates of 15% or higher: **Alabama, Idaho, Iowa, Kansas, Montana, South Dakota, and Wyoming.**

Ohioans who travel to these states are asked to quarantine for 14 days after they return home. Ohio also has voluntary 14-day quarantine in effect for visitors from these seven states. **Five states were removed from Ohio's travel advisory list:** Mississippi, Nebraska, Nevada, Utah, and Wisconsin.

**Wreaths-Across-America**

If you would like to sponsor a holiday wreath for Wreaths-Across-America Day on Saturday, December 19, please download the [order form here](#). The deadline is December 9, 2020.

**Civic Center**

The Civic Center was thoroughly cleaned and sanitized after the election to prepare the **Community Services side to open next Monday, November 9,** for **RESIDENTS who have pre-registered for programs or services. The guest policy has been temporarily suspended.**

The temporary operating hours for residents-only are Monday - Friday, 7 AM to 5 PM. The Front Desk has Plexiglas and social distant floor markers installed for the safety of patrons and employees.
Anyone entering the Civic Center building must properly wear a mask in the building and follow the new guidelines:

New Policies | Adult Programs
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- Registration Required - no walk-ins.
- Maximum 10 participants per program.
- Participants will be required to wear a mask during the program and stay socially distant from other participants.
- Participants must not arrive more than 10 minutes before the start of the program. Early arrivers will be asked to wait in their vehicle.

Planned Programs
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- Socially Distanced Bingo
  - Mondays, Noon – 2 pm
- Movies & Munchies
  - Every other Wednesday starting at 12:30 pm
  - Wednesday, November 18th: *Knives Out*
  - Wednesday, December 2nd: *Little Women*

Anyone who is not feeling well, or has ANY symptoms of illness is asked to please stay home. Residents can sign up for programs or services online at www.independenceohio.org or call the Community Services Department at 216-524-7373. More information about all the programs at the Civic Center can be found in the November Community Spotlight.

Expanded Wi-Fi at Liberty Station
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The IT and Technical Services Departments are installing wireless access points at Liberty Station. It will be an added benefit when the City begins renting the facility and holding Safety Town.

Election 2020
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I am proud that more than 80% of Independence residents took the time to vote this year. Thank you.

You are part of the largest voter turnout in American history. A projected 159.8 million people cast ballots. Each vote demonstrates to the world that Americans value our democracy.

If you know someone who would like to receive Mayor Kurtz’s Weekly Update, please ask them to send their name and email address to CityHall@IndependenceOhio.org.